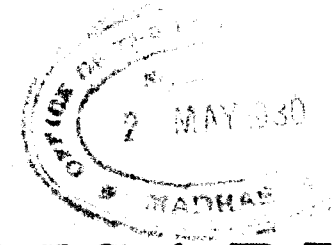


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THE VEDANTA KESARI

"LET THE LION OF VEDANTA ROAR."



VOL. XVI, No. 12 : APRIL, 1930.

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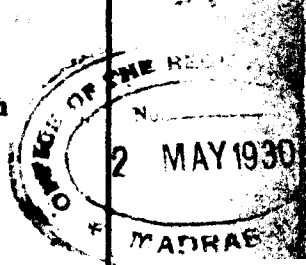
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"Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

"Let me tell you, strength is what we want

And the first step in getting strength is to uphold

The Upanishads and believe that 'I am the Atman.'"

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Vol. XVII]

APRIL 1930

[No. 12

PRAYER

ॐ

माधेनि सामकुण्डला वराजसंखेषु

ध्यायन्ति श्रीगुरुदेवो वन्द्यो विविक्ते ।

पश्यन्ति योगियुग्माः पुरुषं परमं

दृग्मेवमेव भवति मेऽयं स दीनबन्धुः ॥

यन्ममकीर्तिनामः श्रवणोऽपि नृने

हि द्वाखिलं कलियुगे भुवनं पुनानि ।

दग्ध्वा ममाधमखिलं कहेणक्षणेन

दृग्मेवमेव भवति मेऽयं स दीनबन्धुः ॥

He the Unborn of whom the persons skilled in the chanting of the Samas sing in sacrificial ceremonies; on whom the sages possessed of self-control meditate in solitude; whom the Yogins realise in their own body as the Purusha; may He, the Friend of the poor, reveal Himself unto my vision.

He, by being devoted to the singing of whose name even the unclean ones become purged of all their impurities and veritably purify the world, may He, the Friend of the poor, having burnt all my sins by His merciful glance, reveal Himself unto my vision.

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THE MASTER'S VISIT TO THE RESIDENCE OF
SRIJUT JAYAGOPAL SEN

II (Contd.)

VISHISHTADVAITA AND SRI RAMAKRISHNA

Neighbour : Sir, why is the world called Maya ?

Sri Ramakrishna : So long as God is not realised, everything else is to be given up as "not this", "not this". Those who have attained Him know that He Himself has become everything. Then one realises that He is Maya, Jiva (soul) and Jagat (universe)—all together. If one asks you about the weight of a Vilva fruit after the shell, pulp and seeds have been separated from one another, will you leave the shell and the seeds apart and weigh the pulp alone? No. You will have to take into account the shell and seeds also along with the pulp. Then only will you be able to tell correctly the weight of the Vilva fruit. The shell is, as it were, the Jagat (universe), and the seeds the Jivas (souls). At the time of discrimination or analysis Jiva and Jagat are considered non-Atman (non-God) and hence unreal. Then the pulp alone is regarded as real, and the shell and seeds unreal. Later on, one realises that all these taken together form one whole. One knows then that the shell and seeds are made of the same substance as the pulp, and the term Vilva fruit implies all these.

"After analysis comes synthesis. Butter is inseparable from butter milk, and butter milk from butter. If there is butter milk, there must be butter also. If there is butter, there must be butter milk also. If there is the Atman (God), there must be non-Atman—Jiva and Jagat—also.

The phenomenal world implies the Absolute; and the Absolute implies the phenomenal world. He who is realised

* Translated from Bengali originally published in Bengali.

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

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as God has become Jiva and Jagat. The man of realisation sees that He alone has become everything—father, mother, child, neighbour, man, animal, good and evil, purity and impurity and everything."

SENSE OF SIN AND RESPONSIBILITY

Neighbour : Sir, are there then no sin and virtue ?

Sri Ramakrishna : Yes, there are ; and again there are not. So long as the Lord retains the ego in the Jiva, there would remain the idea of diversity, and along with it, the sense of sin and virtue. In a very few persons only He wipes away the ego completely, and they go beyond all sin and virtue, good and evil. So long as God is not realised, there will certainly remain the conception of diversity and with it the sense of sin and virtue. You may say in so many words, "Sin and virtue have become the same to me ; I do as the Lord makes me do." But in fact you know in your heart of hearts that those are mere words ; for whenever you do anything wrong you feel the qualms of conscience. After God is realised He may leave in the devotee the ego of a "servant" if He so wills. In that state he thinks of God as the Master and himself as His servant. Such a devotee likes to have only Divine talks and Divine service and dislikes ungodly persons and ungodly acts. So you see in such a devotee even the Lord keeps up the idea of diversity.

Neighbour : Sir, you say, "Live in the world after realising God." Can God be realised ?

THE UNKNOWN AND THE UNKNOWABLE

Sri Ramakrishna : He cannot be known with the help of the senses or the worldly mind. But He can be known through the pure mind free from worldly desires.

Neighbour : Who is it that can know God ?

Sri Ramakrishna : Who is there to know Him as He is ? It is enough if we know Him as much as we require. The small potful of water is more than enough for me, what should I do with a well full of water ? An ant goes to

a sugar hill. What would it do with the whole hill? One or two grains of sugar are more than enough for it.

Neighbour: We are, as it were, in a state of delirium. So like the patient how can we be satisfied with only a small potful of water? We want a huge quantity of water. Similarly we want to know everything of God.

THE DISEASE OF THE WORLD AND ITS MEDICINE:
TAKE REFUGE IN HIM ALONE

Sri Ramakrishna: Yes, that is true. But there is the medicine for the disease too.

Neighbour: Sir, what's that please?

Sri Ramakrishna: It is keeping the company of holy men, singing the glory of the Lord and praying to Him constantly. (Offering flowers to the Divine Mother) I prayed,—‘Mother, I do not want (relative) knowledge. I offer to Thee all knowledge and ignorance; dost Thou bless me with the purest devotion.’ I never asked for anything else

“Like disease, like medicine. In the Gita the Lord has said to Arjuna, ‘Do thou take refuge unto me. I will save thee from all sins.’ Take refuge unto the Lord, and He will bless you with the right understanding. He will take the entire charge of you. He will cure you of all diseases. Is it possible to know Him with our puny intellect? Can a vessel having the capacity of one seer contain four seers of milk? And again, is it possible to understand Him unless He gives us the understanding? Hence I say, ‘Take refuge unto Him; let His will be done.’ He does everything through His will. Verily, man is powerless without Him.”

PATH TO PEACE

Craving for peace and happiness is an inherent instinct of human nature. For, however much one may try to stifle the insistent cry of the inner being for peace divine, there come moments in every life when that still voice of the soul becomes distinct and audible and awakens a new aspiration for a higher condition of existence. But like the faint glimmer of a lightning flash, the light of life that at times illumines the horizon becomes again covered with the clouds of bewildering thoughts, and the life glides on along its wonted course with its usual zest for petty joys and cares. But this oblivion notwithstanding, the inner voice of the soul cannot altogether be hushed into silence; it reasserts itself and all of a sudden gives a rude shock to the rosy dreams of life and more often than not upsets the whole plan of earthly campaign. This is indeed one of the most baffling mysteries that surround the whole span of human existence, and from the dawn of creation there have been tireless attempts to solve the deep problems of life. Various schools of philosophy have also been ushered into being through this never-ending search after the light of wisdom. It is a common experience that the desire to know the fundamental verity of life is never so keen as when the sweetest and the most carefully nursed dreams of our life are smashed to pieces and the hardest knocks are received as the meed of our honest toil even at the moment of our greatest triumph. Like a pendulum our life swings between a smile and a tear. For, the ups and downs like the rise and fall of a wave on the surface of a sea are the inevitable lot of our sublunary existence. Prompted by an irresistible desire to drink the cup of life to the lees, man gets hopelessly entangled in the slough of sense-objects and feels satisfied so long as they pander to the lowest instincts of his nature. But the inevitable reaction with the consequent moral inanition sets in after a brief period of enjoyment; for this world with all the wealth of its beauty and variety can hardly satisfy the innate craving of the human soul for something real and permanent—a state of unbroken continuity of peace and happiness that knows no change or diminution under any condition of existence. This quest after peace is the spontaneous outcome of man's deep-seated love for freedom

from the bondage of the world. But very few can realise the true significance of the eternal struggle that is raging ever and anon in the inmost chamber of the human heart. Many have even drifted away into a life of rank atheism and met with a moral shipwreck in the very prime of their life. Some have carried on the struggle still further but eventually have broken down in utter despair and given up the search as an unprofitable task in life. But bolder souls there were in the past as there are in the present, whose enquiring minds could hardly be frightened by the swirling waves of the adverse forces of life or ensnared by the panorama of worldly vanities. In this life there come golden moments to these heroic souls when a part of the cloud that hides the sun-light moves away and they catch a glimpse of something beyond—away beyond its vanities, joys and sorrows. They feel that the senses are not all and that the eternal craving of the soul for peace could hardly be satisfied with the evanescent pleasures of the world. This struggle to get beyond the limitations of the senses, to grasp the Infinite—this striving after the realisation of the highest bliss—constitutes the grandest and most glorious of all the efforts that man can make. This is indeed a discontent divine that is perpetually beating in the breast of man and demanding satisfaction since time immemorial. We hear the same voice, the same impatient cry of the human soul in the sacred scriptures of the ancients :—

केनेषितं पतति प्रेषितं मनः केन प्राणः प्रथमः प्रैति युक्तः

केनेषितां वाचमिमां वदन्ति चक्षुः श्रोत्रं क उ देवो युनक्ति ॥

“By whom willed and directed does the mind light on its subjects? By whom commanded does *prana*, the first move? By whose will do men speak this speech? What Intelligence directs the eye and the ear?”

कस्मिन्नु भगवो विज्ञाते सर्वमिदं विज्ञाते भवति ।

“What is that, OBhagavan, which being known everything becomes known.” A bolder and more tenacious soul of Nachiketa would knock even at the portal of the realm of Death in his tearing quest after Truth and would not turn away until he could wring out the deepest secrets of life from him :—

येयं प्रेते विचिन्विता मनुष्येऽस्तीत्येके नायमस्तीति चेके ।

एतद्विद्यामनुशिष्टस्त्वय ऽहं बराणामेष वरस्तृतीयः ॥

“This well-known doubt as to what becomes of a man after death,—some say he exists and some, he does not,—this I should like to know, being taught by thee. This is the third of my boons.” Such are indeed the ever-recurring doubts and queries that eternally sway the human mind and it is only the boldest and the most persistent of souls that are ultimately blessed with the highest knowledge and filled with the infinitude of peace and happiness.

This search for the eternal verities of life began almost on parallel lines both in the external and the internal worlds. Grand and marvellous were the answers the seeker got from the outside Nature. But the Indian mind could hardly remain satisfied with the profound truths snatched from the bosom of the external world. It wanted to search further and dived deep into its own soul. The Upanishads the treasure house of the accumulated wisdom of the ancient saints and seers reveal the gradual working of the human minds towards higher and higher ideals till the ultimate goal of human aspiration is reached. It is under the impulsion of the human soul to grasp the Infinite, to rise to the highest altitude of life, in short, to realise the fundamental unity of being, that the minds of humanity have threaded different paths. The desire of an Alexander or a Hannibal, of a Caesar or a Napoleon to conquer the world, the silent application of a scientist in the sanctum sanctorum of his laboratory to compel Matter to reveal its secrets, the untiring nocturnal vigil of an astronomer in the sequestered nook of his observatory with his eagle-eye turned upon the sky to peer into the mysteries of the region above, the abstraction of a philosophic soul rapt in the thought of human destiny, ‘the madding crowd’s ignoble strife’ to meet the daily needs of a starving life and the heart-rending cry of a God-loving soul for the vision divine,—all are but attempts to satisfy the hunger of the soul and represent, however crudely, the varied expressions of the same supreme urge to know the ultimate Truth of human existence. That single impulse expresses itself in a variety of forms and seeks satisfaction in multiple ways. There is no end of this quest—no solution of the complex problems of life until unity is realised in the diversity of things. For duality on any plane of human consciousness is associated with fear and pain. So the scripture also says :—

“द्वितीयात् वै भयं भवति ।” “उदरमन्तरं कुरुते अयं तस्य भयं भवति ।”

"Fear comes from a sense of duality." "Even the slightest sense of differentiation (in the Atman) causes fear." The giant minds of the sages of the Upanishads therefore plunged into the depth of the human soul and sought the solution of life's problems from within. They emerged from their bold striving after Truth with a soul-stirring message of hope and inspiration and proclaimed with all the force of their realisation the grandest experiences of their spiritual life. Their message comes to our ears even to-day ringing through the silence of centuries, from the dim past ages and enkindles a new hope in the breast :—

"श्रुत्वन्तु विश्वे अमृतस्य पुत्रा आये धामानि दिव्यानि तस्युः ।

वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तं आदित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ।

तमेव विदित्वाऽतिमृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यते अयनाय ॥"

"न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः ।

तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥"

"भयादस्याग्निस्तपति भयात्तपति सूर्यः ।

भयादिन्द्रश्च वायुश्च मृत्युर्धावति पञ्चमः ॥"

"Hear, ye children of Immortal Bliss, ye residents of region celestial ! I have found the Ancient One who is beyond all darkness, and effulgent as the burning sun. Knowing Him alone, ye shall be saved from death once for all ; for there is no other way than this for the attainment of Bliss Eternal." "There the sun shineth not, nor the moon and the stars. There even the lightning flasheth not, what to speak of fire. All shineth after Him who shineth. All this is illumined by His radiance." "From fear of Him the fire burns ; from fear the sun shines ; from fear, Indra and Wind, and Death the fifth speed." Thus the seers of India came face to face with the cosmic Intelligence the primordial Cause of all causes and rose ultimately to the apprehension of their own identity with the Supreme Brahman." "एतदात्म्यमिदं सर्वं तत सत्यं आत्मा तत्त्वमसि श्वेतकेतो ।"—"All this visible world is the Atman—the Truth. Thou, O Shetaketu, art That." This indeed is one of the grandest of all truths revealed unto humanity—a truth that proclaims the eternal freedom of the human soul and its potential divinity and identity with the Brahman Absolute.

But they did not stop merely with the announcement of this profound truth of human existence. The various paths suited to the different temperaments of the aspirants were also outlined in

all their minutest details. Human mind is but a storehouse of manifold Sanskaras and every individual chalks out his own line of action in accordance with the particular type of thought that predominates in him. The grandest idea in the religion of the Vedanta is that all individuals are able to reach the same goal by following any one of the paths that have been broadly generalised in the scripture into four—viz., those of Jnana (knowledge), Karma (work), Bhakti (devotion), and Yoga (psychology). But it must be borne in mind that "these divisions are not very marked and quite exclusive of each other. Each blends into the other. But according to the type which prevails we name the divisions. It is not that you cannot find a man who has no other faculty than that of work, nor that you cannot find men who are more than devoted worshippers only, not that there are not men who have more than mere knowledge. These divisions are made in accordance with the type or the tendency that may be seen to prevail in a man." As a matter of fact, amplest scope has been provided in the scriptures for the fullest culture of the latent powers of the human mind. But such is the irony of fate, we are being constantly led away from the true orbit of our life by the will-o'-the-wisp of worldly pleasures, and receiving hard knocks in return. The scriptures have traced all our misery and bitterness in life to our attachment to the transient conditioned existence, and it is needless to emphasise that we have no hope of catching even a glimpse of that Infinite Freedom beyond so long as we struggle to cling to the little joys and pleasures of life. It is only by giving up our attachment to this little universe of the senses or of the mind—this little life—that we can attain to that freedom which is the goal of the noblest aspirations of mankind. "The old man must die"—so did the old Christians say. In fact this little individuality of man that seeks its satisfaction in the little universe of the senses must die, and it is only by dying that we can live. The selfishness of man that shows itself in thousand and one acts of pettiness—in acts that are calculated to feed his own limited notion of happiness—must die, must go for ever ; for real religion begins where this little universe of the senses ends. Sense-bound, we more often than not forget that the more we destroy the tendency to project the tentacle of selfishness, the more we advance on the path of true and ever-lasting happiness and absolute fearlessness. 'All misery comes from fear, from

from the pursuit of his ideal. The control of the mind has therefore been emphasised as the essential feature in the practice of religion. So does the scripture say :—

आत्मानं रयिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु ।

बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च ॥

इन्द्रियाणि हयानहुर्विषयास्तेषु गोचरान् ।

आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तेत्याहुर्मनीषिणः ॥

यस्तु विज्ञानवान्भवत्ययुक्तं मनसा सदा ।

तस्येन्द्रियाण्यवश्यानि दुष्टाश्चाहव सारथेः ॥

विज्ञानवानसारथिर्यस्तु मनः प्रग्रहवान्नरः ।

सोऽध्वनः परमाप्नोति तद्विष्णोः परमं पदम् ॥

“Know the Atman as the lord of the chariot, the body as only the chariot. Consider the intellect as the charioteer, and the mind the reins. The senses, they say, are the horses, and their roads are the sense-objects. The wise call Him the enjoyer (when He is) united with the body, senses and mind. For him who is not possessed of discrimination, and whose mind is always uncontrolled, the senses are not controllable as wicked horses of a driver. *But the man who has a discriminating intellect for the driver and a controlling mind for the reins, attains the end of the journey, that supreme place of Vishnu.*” For, far beyond the senses, the mind and the intellect in the innermost sheath of golden hue is that stainless indivisible Brahman, the pure, the light of all lights. That is what the knowers of the Atman know. And when He that is both high and low is seen, the knot of the heart is untied; all doubts are solved; and all his Karma is consumed.

The greatest victory that humanity can achieve and which is worthy of the highest endeavour is the victory in the realm of the spirit. Mighty empires can be built on the strength of the sword; powerful nations may even be conquered by the force of arms but a single freak of Nature can pulverize into atoms the most splendid handiwork of man. But there is no power on earth that can dislodge a realised soul from the throne of his spiritual empire when he is fully established there. Bold and firm, he stands under all circumstances with the knowledge of Brahman burning undimmed in the realm of his heart. This

is in fact the greatest empire that a human soul can aspire to and this is the mightiest of all the forces that humanity is heir to. But this life of spiritual culture is not a smooth sailing. There are many boulders in the sea of life and none but the cautious and experienced pilot can steer clear of the unknown dangers lying hidden under the surface of the sea. There are, besides, moments of depression; failure is not unoften the guerdon of honest endeavour. But under all conditions of life the aspirant must make a bridge of all successes and failures in life and forge ahead with steady and unfaltering steps relying on the strength of his own Atman. For it is one's own Atman that is the greatest friend of one and one must look within for inspiration and guidance. So does the Bhagavad Gita say :—

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥

“Let self in man be raised by Self
Let him not make a hell for self.
For Self alone is self's true friend :
Self also is the foe of self.”

It is only the tireless self-effort that brings victory at the feet of the aspirant. The priceless treasures of life lie hidden behind the screen of our mental horizon. The scriptures have again and again pointed out the hidden secrets of our life—the fount of Peace and Joy everlasting—and warned us also against the dangers that beset the path. The heroic ones who can advance with heart within and God overhead in the teeth of all the adverse forces of life are alone blessed with the vision of that Infinite Peace and Beauty at the dawn of which the poet is struck dumb, the painter's pencil drops from his hand, and the sculptor stands motionless, and they sing with proud elation :—

“Calmed are the clamours of the urgent flesh ;
Hushed is the tumult of the boastful mind ;
Cords of the heart are loosened and set free,
Unfastened are the bondages that bind,
Attachment and Delusion are no more.”

OM SHANTIH ! SHANTIH !! SHANTIH !!!

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

By B. Venkanna, B. A., L. T.

[The writer of this article had the privilege of sitting at the holy feet of the Swami in Castle Kernan in Madras during the year 1908, and he got most of his doubts cleared up. As the writer could not attend the Swami's classes, he missed much valuable information, and had to be satisfied with the printed lectures of the Swami. The last interview the Swami gave to the writer was in the year 1910 at the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Basuvangudi, Bangalore City. The interview lasted for more than an hour in one afternoon, and the Swami who was then suffering from consumption and very severe cough answered all the questions put to him on the Vedanta and the Puranas, and manifested his gracious nature in spite of his incurable malady.]

Swami Ramakrishnananda was known as Sasi Bhushana Chakravarti before he became an ardent admirer and devoted disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa at Dakshineswar, near Calcutta, in Bengal. He was called Sasi by his Gurudeva and Gurubhais. He was born in the year 1863 of very orthodox Brahmin parents. The father, Iswara Chandra Bhattacharya, was a devout worshipper of Kali, the Blissful Mother of the universe. In the year 1902 when Swami Vivekananda thought of worshipping Kali, he sent for Swami Ramakrishnananda's father. The son had fully inherited his father's devotion, and he used to worship the Divine Mother every year during the Dasara for twenty-four hours at a stretch—from six o'clock in the morning till six o'clock of the next morning without moving from his seat at the lotus feet of the Blissful Mother during the whole period of worship. He had a sound mind in a sound body. He was tall and robust, and had a very commanding personality. Strange to say, even his strong body could not long maintain its vigour owing to the very heavy work which he had continually to do from 1897-1911. In 1910 he had an attack of consumption, which made him unfit for continuing classes on the Gita, the Upanishads and the Bhagavatam in different parts of the city of Madras. He had to take rest, and was succeeded by Swami Sharvananda in 1911. Very often Sasi Maharaj had to cook his food, and deliver two or three lectures in Madras on the same day.

As a student, he was very hardworking and intelligent, and had such concentration of mind that he could master even the most difficult subjects of study very easily. He was fond of Mathematics, Literature (both English and Sanskrit), History, Science, Philosophy and Religion. Even long after he had become a Sannyasin, whenever he could find some leisure, he would read Sir Walter Scott's Novels and work hard problems in Trigonometry. He would always keep the mind engaged in some useful work. He was a profound scholar

in Sanskrit, and had a thorough knowledge of the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, the Brahma Sutras and the various Puranas.

Like all college students at Calcutta at the time, he was surrounded by an atmosphere of materialism and scientific scepticism. In his college days he was a tutor to a son of Keshab Chandra Sen the famous Brahmo leader, and became a member of the Brahmo Samaj. As the Brahmos wished to revise Hinduism and do away with caste and all ceremonial forms of worship, and emphasise only the formless aspect of God which can be prayed to and meditated upon, they were not able to satisfy all types of mind even among the educated classes. The explanations offered by the famous Brahmo leader on religious topics were not quite satisfactory to Sasi Bhushana Chakravarti, and so he was on the look-out for some Mahapurusha or sage who could clear up his doubts and difficulties. He and his cousin Sarat Chandra Chakravarti were living and studying together in Calcutta. They heard at this time (1893) that a Paramahansa was living at Dakshineswar, about five miles from Calcutta, and that he could clear up all doubts in religious matters. One day both of them went to see Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa at Dakshineswar, and were quite satisfied with his teachings and manifestations of Divine power.

No one can see God even by reading all the sacred scriptures of the world, and no problems of life and death and supersensuous perception can be solved thereby. One has to seek a Guru who has realised God, and serve him with unselfish devotion; it is by such a Guru's grace that one can get all doubts cleared up, and can see God.

Sri Ramakrishna being a Jnani, Bhakta, Yogi, Karmi, etc.,—a perfect harmony of all types in one—could be the ideal teacher of humanity for all time. He could know by looking at any one's eye all about his or her past, present and future. So he was able to adapt his teaching to the nature and capacity of those that came to him for enlightenment. And therefore he would never give the same teaching to all indiscriminately. When he saw Sasi Bhushana Chakravarti and Sarat Chandra Chakravarti, he at once said that they were both followers of Christ in a previous incarnation. Of course such statements never appeal to scientists, and they have no faith in many births. If ordinary mortals cannot read their own past, they have no right to disbelieve those sages who can read the past, present and future of every being. It is a spiritual truth that every one will know all about one's previous births only in one's last birth. But there is no such thing as last birth in the case of God, as he has to incarnate whenever Dharma declines and Adharma prevails.

Sri Ramakrishna passed away in the year 1886 after fifty years of earthly existence, and during the years 1883-1886 Sasi Bhushana Chakravarti was now and then coming to Dakshineswar, and learning spiritual truths at the feet of his Gurudeva. During summer, Gurumaharaj was fond of taking ice, and so during one of his visits to Dakshineswar, Sasi tied a lump of ice in his cloth, and travelled all the distance from Calcutta to Dakshineswar on foot in the hot midday sun, thinking that he should reach Dakshineswar as quickly as possible, and present to Gurudeva the ice which he liked most. It never occurred to Sasi that the ice might melt on the way and that his trouble might be in vain. Strange to say, the lump had not melted at all. This is proof positive that intense devotion to God or Guru works miracles.

In the year 1886 when Sri Ramakrishna was at Cossipoor Garden, and was suffering from a serious throat complaint, which was the result of talking to devotees, disciples and admirers for about twenty-hours out of the twenty-four each day for several months, Sasi and a few other disciples gave up going to their homes, and stayed all the time with their Guru attending to his needs and comfort with perfect devotion both day and night by turns. Sasi was attending on the Guru at the time of his passing away, and saw with his own eyes all that happened to the Gurudeva; he has also described in detail all the incidents in connection therewith; and he has said that he never saw Gurudeva more happy, calm and cheerful than on the day of his throwing away the mortal coil. Sri Ramakrishna then appeared like a child smiling and about to be taken up by the Divine Mother in Her arms. The Master did not feel any excruciating pain at the time of death; on the other hand, every disciple and devotee actually saw the eternal bliss of the Master, and the supreme joy that he felt as an innocent child of the Blissful Mother of the universe.

After the passing away of the Master, some of his disciples gave up the idea of returning to their homes, and took up Sannyasa, and lived together at the Baranagore Math under the benign leadership of the pet disciple of Gurumaharaj—Swami Vivekananda, who looked after their physical comforts and spiritual Sadhanas. When they all left the Math, where they were living together, with the object of either visiting important places of pilgrimage or practising religious austerities in the Himalayas, there remained only one in the Math—Sasi—for nearly twelve years conducting the daily worship of Gurumaharaj there and practising meditation. It was this extreme self-sacrificing devotion of Sasi that got him the name of Ramakrishnananda from Swami Vivekananda, who gave each disciple of Gurudeva, a new name when they took up Sannyasa. Swami Vivekananda had

thought of taking the name of Ramakrishnananda for himself, being the pet disciple of the Master, but when he found that Sasi deserved the name better than himself, he freely gave it to him.

When Swami Vivekananda returned from the West in 1897 after defending and upholding the glory of Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in the United States of America in September 1893, and after delivering a number of lectures on Vedanta and starting Vedantic centres both in America and England, he thought he should take up the work of India and organise religious centres in different parts of it to teach Vedanta—the life-giving and man-making religion—to the Indians, and to remove their physical intellectual, moral and spiritual ignorance and misery in all forms.

Swami Vivekananda never wanted to make a new sect in the name of Sri Ramakrishna, and so he told his Gurubhais to remember the life of the Master and follow his universal and unsectarian teachings, which were as broad as the sky and as deep as the ocean. Swami Vivekananda, being the mouth-piece of Gurumaharaj, taught only what Gurudeva had taught or would have taught himself. Swami Ramakrishnananda too taught only universal verities of religion like his Gurudeva.

Swami Vivekananda specially chose Sasi to organise a centre in Madras, and open Ashramas and Maths in the Deccan and also in Burma. Swami Ramakrishnananda at once commenced his work in Madras in right earnest, and gradually enlightened the educated public of Madras on all questions of God, soul and nature by holding regular classes in different quarters of the city and lecturing on the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, Brahma Sutras, Bhagavatam, etc. As time went on, he opened Ashramas and Maths in various important places and made arrangements for the spread of the Vedanta. He would never touch any coin or money, and he kept the vow to the end. He was very orthodox and defended all the scriptures of the world. The Swami passed away in Calcutta in 1911 after fourteen years of very hard work in Southern India.

Sister Devamata who stopped in Madras for two years as the guest of Sasi Maharaj, and learnt many things in connection with the Vedanta from him has published some works containing her experiences in India in general, and in Madras in particular.

Swami Ramakrishnananda was to Sri Ramakrishna, what Hanuman was to Sri Ramachandra. The Swami has published most of his important lectures, and some class talks have appeared in monthly magazines. His unselfish work is destined to bear everlasting good fruits. He was a man of the highest realisation, and every word that he uttered or wrote is pure truth. He taught the

most abstruse metaphysical things in the simplest way, for he knew them so well. His words and sentences could be understood in only one way, and that the true way. This was an advantage which helped many to understand many things in the shortest time. Like his Gurudeva, he adapted his teaching to the student's nature and attainments. No energy of his was ever wasted. He became so popular that he was almost worshipped as a saint.

Some of the teachings of Swami Ramakrishnananda may be mentioned here for the benefit of the aspirants after truth:—

1. Regard God as the highest, and give up everything for the sake of God.

2. Practise meditation on God every day.

3. Love all, teach all, and take every one to the highest goal, viz., realisation of God, irrespective of caste, creed, sect or nationality.

4. Forgive and forget all injuries received from others.

5. Take every one where he or she stands, without blaming them for their worldly or spiritual poverty and ignorance, and help them on until each one realises the highest Jnanam, Bhakti, eternal freedom and bliss—in fact, until each one realises the supreme goal.

6. All privileges must go, except the privilege of unselfish service to humanity with supreme devotion and love.

7. No one, according to the highest truth inculcated in the Vedanta, is superior to another, for the same God resides in all. Therefore, hate none.

8. It is the function of education and religion to help each one so as to manifest completely that perfection and divinity which is already inside each one, and which is one's inalienable birthright.

9. The difference between man and man is not one of kind, but of degree; one manifests more of divinity than another; and the purest soul manifests most. Men like Sri Ramakrishna only appear to be men, but in reality they are ever living in the highest spiritual plane holding communion with God, entirely forgetful of their body, mind and ego. When such come down to a lower plane, they begin to teach spiritual truths, and immediately after fly back to God, whom they never forget even in their dreams. Such men are the salt of the earth, as it is said in the Bible. God sends such men to each part of the earth whenever there is need. So no one need fear that God forgets us—poor mortals.

10. God will surely come to each one of us if we only earnestly and sincerely pray to Him as Prahlada did.

11. God is all-powerful and all-gracious, and ever ready to help each one of us; and it is our fault if we forget Him, and love only transient pleasures of the external world.

12. We can never love God and the world, and hope to see Him.

13. The perfect Jnani sees nothing but God; whereas the best Bhakta is ever with God.

14. One should realise God first, and forsake one's individual salvation and live to enjoy the purer pleasure of doing good to the world like Lord Buddha.

15. Jnanam is great, but it cannot by itself give everlasting peace.

16. Unselfish devotion and service to a Mahapurusha or all-knowing sage can alone give eternal peace.

17. Do good and be good, and thus escape all evil and suffering.

18. Evil is ultimately good, for without evil we cannot think and find ways and means of overcoming it. Because much of our knowledge consists in defining evil and finding its remedy, the existence of evil is a means of enriching our knowledge. There would be no progress, no civilisation if there were no evil. The highest knowledge and experience will be necessary to combat evils and successfully overcome them. Evils are thus at the very foundation of our wisdom. Therefore we ought not to complain of evils, but be grateful to them.

19. Good and evil are obverse and reverse of the same coin as it were; for what is good under one set of conditions is bad under a different set of conditions. It is good for a healthy athlete to consume much ghee, but it is death to a typhoid patient to consume the same quantity. Hence in reality nothing is really good or bad. It depends entirely upon circumstances.

20. As Sri Krishna says in the Gita, evil is the result of our work done with attachment to fruits. If we work without attachment, then we suffer no misery. Do any amount of good to the world, but be not attached. Do not expect any personal profit of any sort; be absolutely unselfish—this is the advice of Sri Krishna.

21. God-realisation can come only during moments of intense misery and suffering. So we ought not to fear misery in any form, but ought to welcome it and manifest our infinite power of resistance and endurance.

22. Immortality can be reached by renunciation alone, and never by works, progeny or wealth. So any search after worldly treasure or heavenly pleasure is not the right way to secure eternal life, knowledge and bliss. We have to renounce everything that is ephemeral and think of God only all the twenty-four hours of the day for ever and ever, and then only God will be pleased to confer on us Satchchidanandam or eternal life knowledge and bliss.

23. God is very hard to please. He is pleased only by those who manifest the maximum amount of purity, humility and unselfish love, and He tests each applicant to His grace and mercy by inflicting the most diabolical misery on him, and at last saves those who exhibit supernatural patience, perseverance and uncomplaining obedience to His Will. This being God's nature, there is no use of our blaming it. We should, like Christ, ever say "Thy will be done."

24. Both good and evil exist only in the mind, and not outside in the external world; and so if we wish to kill evil alone or good alone it is impossible, and therefore we shall have to kill both good and evil, i. e., we shall have to kill our mind, and then only we shall be eternally conscious of our infinite nature which is all-blissful. This is the view of Vedānta.

25. Egoism is the most persistent and obstinate Devil in us; and unless we receive help from God, we cannot conquer the Devil. Unless we conquer the Devil in us—the old Adam in us, selfishness in us, our lower nature—we cannot see God. The moment egoism dies or is rendered powerless, we have the vision of God.

26. No man can be completely satisfied unless he can live for ever, and unless he can know everything, and also unless he can be happy for ever and ever. This state can be attained by one and all by the practice of Raja Yoga under the guidance of an experienced Yogi. This is the method best suited to all atheists, agnostics and pure materialists.

27. Lord Buddha declared that Nirvāṇa is the end of sorrow, and that every one can realise that state by means of the highest Jñānam. Without Jñānam, evil cannot be destroyed. To get the highest Jñānam we must "be good and do good" to all men and animals.

28. Ahimsa or non-injury by thought, word and deed will lead every one, as the Jains say, to the supreme goal.

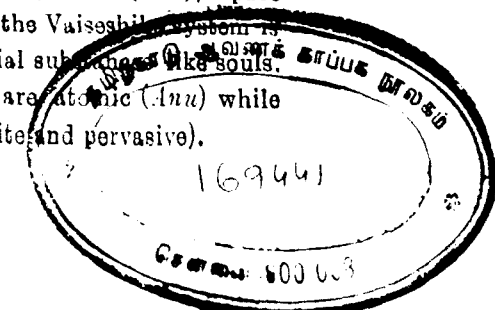
THE VAISESHIKA SYSTEM

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B. A., B. L.

The Vaiseshika system of Kanada is so called because it deals specially with *Viśeṣa* a particularity, viz., the pluralism of souls and of atoms. It is the philosophy of distinctions and particularisations. It aims at analysis rather than at synthesis. It gives battle to Buddhistic phenomenalism while it accepts the Buddhist view that there are two sources of truth, viz., perception and inference; it affirms that souls and objects are facts and not mere mental states. It is similar to the Nyaya system in its views about the self and in its atomic theory of the universe but it stresses more the categories of the universe and works out more fully the atomic theory of the universe. Prastapada's *bhashya* on the Vaiseshika Sūtras of Kanada is as famous as Vātsyāyana's *bhashya* on the Nyaya Sūtras of Gautama.

The Vaiseshika system admits four kinds of right knowledge, viz., perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*liṅgika*), remembrance (*smṛiti*) and intuitive and superconscious experience (*arshajñāna*). It admits Yogic perception which leads to the experience of the soul (*atmapratyakṣa*). It includes within inference three other sources of knowledge, viz., comparison (*upamāna*), tradition (*aitihya*), and scripture (*śabda*). Both the Nyaya and the Vaiseshika attribute the truth of scripture to the inspired perception of truth by the sages and their transmission of the same in unbroken succession. The four varieties of invalid knowledge are doubt (*samsāya*), misconception (*viparyaya*), indefinite knowledge (*anādhyavasāya*), and dream (*swapna*).

The Vaiseshika doctrine affirms a sixfold classification of *Padārthas* (categories), viz., *Dravya* (substance), *Guna* (quality), *Karma* (activity), *Sāmānya* (genus), *Viśeṣa* (species), and *Samavāya* (inherence or inseparability). Later Vaiseshika expounders such as Sridhara and Udayana and Sivāditya added to these *abhāva* (non-existence) as an additional category. Kanada affirms that substance and quality and action have an objective existence, and that *Sāmānya* and *Viśeṣa* and *Samavāya* are logical categories (*buddhyapekṣham*) but are real and not merely subjective or *Sūnya*. It says clearly that *dravya* (substance) is objective and that the Buddhistic view that there is no substance apart from its qualities is opposed to our direct and intimate experience. The substances are earth (*prithvī*), water (*apah*), light (*tejas*), air (*vāyu*), ether (*ākāśa*), time (*kāla*), space (*deśa*), self (*ātman*), and mind (*manas*). Thus the Vaiseshika system is not materialism because it affirms non-material substances like souls. It says that earth, water, air, fire and mind are *anū* (atomic) while time, space, *ākāśa*, and *Ātma* are *vibhu* (infinite and pervasive).



The Vaiseshika view of the soul is similar to that of the Nyaya and is equally defective. It says that the soul, in its natural state is devoid of intelligence and has cognition only when it is connected with the body. It affirms, like the Nyaya, a plurality of souls, and says that the number of souls is infinite. It affirms also Iswara (God) like the Nyaya system. The attempt of some modern savants to deny this and say that Kanada does not mention God at all cannot be regarded as successful (see the sutras I, 1, 3, and X, 2, 9.). But God is not given any important place in the system.

In the system of Kanada, the distinguishing doctrine is that of the Anus, atoms. His theory of Anus is parallel to the theory of the Tanmatras in the Samkhya philosophy. He says that the atom (paramanu) and the Doyanuka (double atom or dyad) are invisible while the *tryanuka* or *trisarenu* (triad), consisting of three *doyanukas*, is visible and are of the size of a mote in a sunbeam. Max Muller points out that this view is not found in Greek atomic theory and that the Vaiseshika system was not derived from a Greek source. Further, the Greek philosophers say that atoms have only quantitative differences and not qualitative differences. According to Kanada they have qualitative differences also. Dr. Radhakrishnan points out also that "for Democritus and Epicurus, the atoms are by nature in motion while for Kanada they are primarily at rest." He says also, "Another fundamental difference between the two lies in the fact that while Democritus believed it possible for atoms to constitute souls, the Vaiseshikas distinguish souls from atoms, and regard them as co-eternal existences. The Greek atomists developed a mechanical view of the universe, God being banished from the world...The atomistic view of the Vaiseshika is thus coloured by a spiritual tendency which is lacking in the Greek counterpart of it."

The atomic theory held the field in the world of thought for centuries till modern science has replaced atoms by infinitesimal centres of electric energy as the ultimate constituent of the universe. The atom has now broken up into electrons, each atom being regarded as a system of electrons. Thus matter has not only been explained but has been explained away as electricity, as wittily observed by Mr. Balfour. But the fact that Indian thought adumbrated the atomic theory in a profoundly modern way many centuries ago is a most noteworthy fact.

The defects of the Vaiseshika doctrine are varied and obvious. It attributes pleasure, pain, desire, hatred and effort, besides knowledge to the soul. It says that the soul is in itself *jada* (devoid of consciousness). It attributes the cosmic order to a power called *adrishta*. It does not attribute such cosmic order to the will or *Sankalpa* of

God. It does not give God any high and exalted place in the scheme of things. It has not realised and affirmed His immanence and transcendence and supreme glory. By emphasising Anus and Adrishta, it failed to stress the glory and power of God adequately. It describes beatitude as freedom from Gunas and not as a state of absolute and eternal bliss (*ananda*). Dr. Radhakrishnan says well, "An atomistic pluralism is not the final answer to the intellectual demand for a rational interpretation of the universe. The Vaiseshika view has been keenly criticised and overthrown in Sri Sankaracharya's *Bhashya* on the Vedanta Sutas.

THE IDEAL BEFORE US*

By Srimat Swami Shivananda

To-day is a very auspicious day. It is the birthday of Hari Maharaj. He was a great soul, pure and holy like Shukadeva. From his early age he used to study the Gita, Vivekachudamani and other scriptures. Then he knew by heart. He was a Yogi and ascetic, and was by nature contemplative and fond of solitude.

Swami Vivekananda took him to America after great persuasion. As Hari Maharaj was orthodox, he did not readily agree to go to America. But he loved Swamiji so much that he could not but yield to his request. He lived in the West for nearly three years. By contact with him the lives of several persons were completely changed. On his way back to India he heard of the passing away of Swamiji, and was overpowered with grief. He had a great desire to meet Swamiji and open his heart to him. But he was sorely disappointed. After a short stay at Belur he left for Brindavan. Five years he spent in those parts. At Bulandshar, Nangal (near Hardwar) and other places on the banks of the Ganges he devoted himself to spiritual practices for a long time.

What a great love he had for the Order! He felt it had been formed through the will and command of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna. He knew how deeply Swami Vivekananda also loved the Order. And the instructions he had left for promoting its well-being were very dear to his heart. During the last days of his life at Benares, even though he was ill, he wonderfully, worked for the good of many people.

* Substance of a talk given in Bengali at the Belur Math on the 14th January, 1930 in connection with the birthday celebration of Srimat Swami Turiyananda, known as Hari Maharaj—one of the greatest of the monastic disciples of Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna.

In his life there was not the slightest blemish. It was full of virtue, purity and holiness. It was an embodiment of Karma, Bhakti, Jnana and Yoga. The duty of you all lies in cultivating his virtues. This without doubt will enable you to elevate yourselves.

How intensely Swami Brahmananda loved him! They lived together for five years in the Panjab, Sindh, Rajputana and other places. They were very intimate with each other; but yet, while living together Hari Maharaj would sometimes, remain silent without exchanging a single word with Swami Brahmananda, may be, even for several days without a break! Swami Brahmananda used to say that at times it was impossible to understand the moods of Hari Maharaj.

Look back a little. You will find that this Order and its activities are not being led by the whim and fancy of anybody. They had their beginning at Cossipore in the service rendered to the Master during his illness. The doctors asked us to serve him heart and soul. Many of us were students, and some left off their studies and nursed him by turns. This service brought us all together and led to the origin of the Order.

How shall we realise the Truth?—this was the uppermost thought in the mind of Swami Vivekananda. He travelled far and wide; and when he went to Madras, he saw the distinction between the Brahmin and the Shudra, between the Shudra and the Pariah, and the afflictions and miseries of the people; and his heart expanded in love and sympathy. Later on he went to America, attained great success and came to be honoured by many. He then wrote to Sashi Maharaj (Swami Ramakrishnananda) at the Alambazar Math, "Look, Shashi, I now understand, it is all the Master's work. Why he loved me so much, why He taught me so much, I see it all now." Getting his letter, it occurred to us that we too must do something. Then we felt we must study. But we had no money with us to buy books or anything. A devotee came from Bombay. He gave some money, and with that we purchased two volumes of Webster's Dictionary. We next got an almirah, a desk and other things, and the desire for work and service also came to possess us. Whoever says that the spirit of work is ours speaks falsehood. It was Swamiji who brought us together as an Order, and none else. Those who criticise do not know the history of the Order. Swamiji started it at the instance of the Master.

In those days Swamiji used to go to the shrine room very regularly both morning and evening, and meditate for a long time. Two or three weeks before he passed away, we were once standing under the mango tree in the courtyard of the Math. Swamiji just came down from the shrine room, and abruptly said, as if seeing a

prophetic vision, "Look here, this current that has now begun, will flow on for seven or eight hundred years." Then followed other talks.

Of this movement we have seen a little; you all will see much more. Many fine young men will be coming to join us. We have been here witnessing all this growth from the beginning. Believe me it is Sri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother—the Protectress of the universe—that are guiding the movement. It is not you or any of us that are doing it. When doubt comes, look back a little, and you will know the truth. Let there be any amount of disturbance or difficulty. Nothing shall continue for long.

If any one thinks that the organisation is moving at the sweet will and pleasure of any body, his mind is really clouded. But even such persons will progress when they rely on Sri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother for their support. For the Lord's mercy is unconditioned. Bhagawam Sri Krishna has said in the Gita:—

"I have, O son of Pritha, no duty, nothing that I have not gained, and nothing that I have to gain, in the three worlds; yet, I continue in action. If ever, I did not continue in work, without relaxation, men, O son of Pritha, would in every way, follow in My wake. If I did not do work, these worlds would perish. I should be the cause of the admixture of races, and I should ruin these beings."

He who is the full embodiment of Godhood has nothing to gain or lose. Even then He works out of His mercy for mankind, and this mercy is unconditioned.

When many persons unite for carrying on a work, it is natural that troubles should arise occasionally. But they will all be over in time. In an organisation no work is possible without a person at the head. We have Swamiji's rules, and our work will go on under the guidance of these rules. You may also seek my advice. You are no longer children, and you need not be told, "Do this and do that" on every occasion. When really necessary, I shall certainly give you advice.

A few direct disciples of the Master are still living, and here I am with you always. But I am old and ill, and too weak to go even downstairs. My nature is also not to interfere in anything. I know, I am firmly convinced that Sri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother are with us. There is no need for me to say much. You all trust me, you freely consult me and I give you my best advice.

Along with work if Japam and meditation are continued regularly, there will be no trouble; we have certainly to work. Our life is not for passing in places like Hardwar or Hrishikesh living on

Madhukari Bhiksha.* Swamiji himself went to Hrishikesh and came back with this experience. A stay at such a place is good for a time but not for all times. While at Dakshineswar the Master made us beg, but that was to make us get rid of our egoism. One should live on alms for a short time just to overcome the pride of birth, learning, etc.

Do you not see Swami Vivekananda went to America and returned after doing so much work? There also how much he used to meditate! Without doing the prescribed meditation and prayer no good work can be accomplished. As regards work some representative members of the Order should meet together and consider all its aspects and decide upon a particular course. This will certainly conduce to the general welfare; it will not lead to anything wrong. Each person will give his suggestion and when a decision is taken after considering all the suggestions given, it can do no harm.

What a trouble because of egoism that makes us feel 'this act will be to my loss and that to my profit'! My children, meditation and prayer are absolutely necessary. These must be constantly practised. Everything else will be righted then. In meditation forget work, Order, monastery and everything, and remember only the Lord's presence and your existence. Slowly your existence also has to be forgotten. If work leads to egotism, is it good work? No, it is bad work. If you feel the presence of God in man, that makes real service. Will such feeling come easily from the beginning? No. At first one must try to cultivate it believing in the words of the Guru, and then do the work. Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother and Swamiji have said so; believe them and work.

This much I have understood: Sri Ramakrishna is the Founder of Righteousness, and Swamiji its organiser. Sri Ramakrishna is the aphorism and Swamiji is the commentary. It is from the facts in Sri Ramakrishna's life that Swami Vivekananda received his idea of service. Sri Ramakrishna told Mathur Babu in Deoghar, seeing the destitute and famine-stricken Santals there, "Give them some oil for bathing, a cloth each for wearing and at least one full meal. If you don't, I shall stay with them. And let all the pilgrimage go. You are the Divine Mother's treasurer. Why can you not give?" Again, there was a failure of crops for years in Mathur's estate near Ranaghat Kushtia, and this ended in a severe famine. There also Sri Ramakrishna insisted on Mathur's remitting the rents, saying that he was but the Keeper of Mother's wealth, and must excuse payment. What a great compassionate heart Swamiji had! Seeing all this he laid down the path of service.

* Cooked food begged from door to door (like honey gathered by bee from flower to flower), and considered to be purifying.

Swami Brahmananda used to say, "Give fourteen annas of your mind to God, and it is enough if you do service with the remaining two annas." In the Gita Sri Krishna has said, "I exist, supporting this whole world by a portion of Myself." The Purusha Sukta also says, "A fourth of Me is the entire universe, and the remaining three fourths exist as the Immortal in the Heavens". The Lord supports the universe by a part of His infinite power. Him we must remember and meditate on constantly. Tulsidas has said, "With the mouth utter Rama's name, with the hand do His work". Living on alms at Hrishikesh is not our ideal. Hari Maharaj loved solitude greatly and lived in Hrishikesh and such other places for a long time. Even he said, "We are cheats. Do we really meditate all day long" At best we practise meditation for three or four hours, and idle away the rest of the day. Living a life of begging with the right spirit is good for six months or at most a year. It is preferable that two Sadhus stay together.

I have got another thing to say. It is very good to study. When it is not possible to make Japam and meditation, Scriptures may be studied, and this engages the mind well. Hari Maharaj always used to keep books such as the Gita, Chandi, Vivekachudamani, Upanishads, Vedanta Suktas, etc., with him. He used to study much, and this was itself a meditation. He would take up the thoughts of a few passages in the Gita or the Upanishads and meditate on them. Really, reading is very good, it is very beneficial. I have seen in Kankhal Sadhus walking four miles for going out to answer the calls of nature. They would waste three or four hours in useless wanderings.

In us, I see, there is always a feeling of responsibility. It does not leave us after a good meditation, nay, not even after Samadhi. Sri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother came for the good of the world. We are their servants; how can we escape the responsibility of carrying on their Mission?

As regards real meditation, it only lasts for a very short time. While meditating for two or three hours, one may perchance succeed in getting deep meditation like a flash of lightning for a minute or two, and that too by His grace. But this means much; it produces very valuable results.

To-day is the birthday of Hari Maharaj. I pray to the Lord, "May you all be blessed. May you all get true knowledge and devotion! May you all progress, go ahead, go ahead." This is my only prayer to Him.

INDIA'S NATIONAL SOLIDARITY

By Swami Nirlepananda

When discussing India's past political history, we, now-a-days are apt to connive at the well-known but all too-important fact that *Ind is a veritable continent by herself*. Her mere physical geography, her stupendous extent and vastness, stood a great way in forbidding formation of a political cohesion and compactness; specially, was it so, in ancient days, when the unifying powers of steam, electricity, wireless, etc., were undreamt of. Looked at in this light, it was comparatively easy for a France, a Spain, a Great Britain or a Holland (even before Marconi) to rise respectively one after another each like one man with one idea, one all-absorbing, fiery life-principle before impending, attacking, onrushing alien armies to pollute their fair, free faces by depriving them of their much-prized liberty.

To have attempted to weld together in ancient days such a continent-like land as ours, as one entity, was undoubtedly something unique in our history, as well as in the history of humanity. Only in recent modern days it has been possible for the one distant British crown to hold sway over us as a single unit, by the grace of scientific advancements in various directions, with its own efforts behind everything, of course. For want of fuller, present-day available, quick inter-communications, Muslim rule in India could not be a total prototype of what we now have. Science has excellently played her part as a handmaid of political solidarity.

In the year of Grace Nineteen Hundred and Thirty, it has again become comparatively easy for us to think of a future India's national solidarity and of working, each one of us, his part towards hastening that coveted end,—when much to our satisfaction and fruition too, India will rise like one man for her national welfare,—political, economic, cultural,—and what not?

Scientific warfare and all that it means, has come to stay. Present day International Law has become incidentally after the Great War, extremely complicated. And after every similar killing-business in future each day growing in volume, inhumanity and thoroughness,—it will go on becoming more complex. Geographically small countries have been enabled with their scientifically full military, air and naval arrangements, to hold sway over seas and train themselves up as First, Second, Third or unnumbered class of Imperial Powers in the world to-day. This is all well-known to us who have the privilege to live out pages of present-day universal history.

India had in a greater, deeper sense in the past epochs, many different provinces within her, with (in one word) different culture-streams; with far fewer chances of mutual alliance. Differences in provincial life-processes still survive. But fortunately for us, we have more chances of inter-communication and understanding, more possibilities of forgetting our separateness, our seclusion, and being convinced of our compactness, our bond, our unity, our common self-interest. For instance, the modern post office has linked together by so quick a thought-interchange, two distant places in India like Khatra and Madras, which is a far cry, after all. Let us all be fully conscious of our golden link of connection and hold it fast to our bosom.

Let us at this stage, ponder over a particular point of ancient Indian political history. Perhaps quite unparalleled in the whole ancient history of the world, the Mauryan national Imperial Power (4th cent. B. C.) in the land of *Bharatavarsha*, under the wise, able and unequalled leadership of a (really Maharaja) Chandragupta with that famous, political genius, the ever vigilant, Kautilya as his fellow-worker and sponsor always by his side,—had the almost superhuman heart, the rare boldness to practicalise a political solidarity of the different Indian provinces under one crown, one sway, one State-ideal, one management. It was a huge experiment, a task which none but they could tackle. Although not logically, fully completed, yet, but for it again, they have left an indelible mark in the sea-sands of all history. It was veritably, literally worthy of a real prince among men. In Vedic times there were attempts merely for provincial political unity by a Prince or Princess like Sudasa; but what Chandragupta dreamt of and actualised to a great extent, superseded all Pre-Mauryan and even Post-Mauryan Independent India's political achievements.

Next, we come to education problem. It cannot be satisfactorily proved for good that there was lack of opportunities for secular education of the masses in bygone free days in any age. On the other hand there must have been sufficient of it, as in all independent lands. Unless we posit this, how can we explain such remarks of foreign travellers like Megasthenes that among Indians theft or falsehood were unknown? Can we wash these away as coming entirely from enthusiasts who neglected reality totally? An allied question will naturally crop up here. In what form universal primary education (if at all) flourished here in the age we are speaking of? Certainly, science not being in the stage as it now is, in those days when printing and books were unknown—oral and written devices mainly were resorted to. The vernacular *Kathakas* that still survive in our villages

served as powerful factors in our ancient characteristic mass education movement. There were the village doctors, *Purohitas* and *Gurumahasayas* too. Naturally first hand, direct methods in education (as later on in Socratic Greece) were the order of the day. Modern kindergarten system may be viewed as a mere re-discovery.

In matters of spiritual education there was certain amount of reservation. The doctrine of individual fitness (or thirst perhaps?) or *Adhikaravada* prevailed very strong. Generally speaking, the three upper castes—*Dvijas* at a certain stage of their lives were considered proper fields for receiving the spiritual seeds. This feature of Indian social culture history must not be lost sight of. Even in the Upanishadic days again, we have instances too of men allowed to enter the inner sanctum of spiritual Sarasvati (*Para Vidya*) whose castes were entirely unknown or ignored. But in the process of time as political fetters were forged for us, degeneration came. And the dangerous doctrine of monopoly of one caste in spiritual and sacred scriptural teaching asserted itself as uppermost. The *Bauris* of Bengal have been deprived of the advantage of Brahmanical ministration when persons die in their fold. Their souls are allowed to go unsaved for want of a socially approved system of *Sradha*. And any water touched and borne by them is polluted for the so-called higher castes. The village barbers do not shave them. This is extreme injustice,—an instance of our cruel social pin-pricks. Most shamefully we still call these errors of birth! And we were ruined thus step by step. But fortunately for us at every dark hour the light of unconventional, spiritually free saints saved us from utter ruin to some extent. But they too could not do much having not behind them the all too necessary Governmental sanction. In matters of scriptural education generally speaking (through hand-written *Punithis*) India south of the Vindhya seemed to be more rigid and stony than the other half. There were in the north the leaven of liberal movements like that of the *Jinas* and the *Bauddhyas*.

* * *

At every moment of our political history when we were ourselves and had our hands, our say, in the adjustment of national, Governmental budgets, we gave invariably good account of ourselves so far as universal primary, secular education was concerned, like all free men and women. Even in tracing the steps through which India lost her political power, her political privilege during Muslim and British days respectively, we find that she lost her independence part by part, province after province,—piecemeal. We don't know if history will not repeat itself once more here, and by the will of the God of Indian history and our concerted efforts we shall restore ourselves, be

ourselves by reversing the wheel of political destiny, province after province. At every turn we were not ourselves and became political serfs, hewers of wood and drawers of water, as they say, things were different. Maxmuller has somewhere recorded that even when *Bharatavarsha* was serving her Muslim political masters, in the province of Bengal alone there were 80,000 *Pathasalas* and *Makhtabs*. But where are they?

* * *

Let us look at Chandragupta in another light. His political jurisdiction included the whole of Beluchistan (what is known as the north western scientific frontier), the whole of *Uttarapatha* or Northern India, coming far down into the South as far as the Palar River. The rest of the extreme South was waiting to be included under one national rod. He was removed by Providence. The next long political regime of Asoka comes up now for our consideration and scrutiny. The whole of India (incidentally, the world) was, as if expectantly watching and awaiting, the completion of the national political process. It seemed as if the political evolution of India was well-nigh on the verge of reaching its red-letter or gala day, and the souls of all our previous political fathers were as if indetectively hailing that consummation. In their own ages they also in their own ways and capacities, were working in the same vineyard for the same end!

But that could not be so for Asoka. He mixed up issues. He took up the ochre-robe and instead of retiring from the royal throne, from the public political life, he still chose to remain where he was. He still seated himself upon material royalty. It was not the usually expected, matter of course. It was unnatural. It was deluding. He left undone what Chandragupta's action indicated to be his regal duty. He marred the political life of India. This serious action of his may be considered, from the standpoint of political principle, as a piece of Himalayan blunder, which he ought not to have committed,—he who had admirably negated his fleshy self.

Asoka forgot his *Kshatriya* tradition altogether. The ideal of non-killing on the part of kings was wholesale unapproved of by India's hoary political principles and sanction behind him. He set that aside and still wanted to remain a king. The Kalinga episode was too much for his un-kingly temperament. Supposing even that India lost ninety nine times what she got—viz., independence under one national king, still that proud, sweet remembrance would have survived and proved beneficial.

Let us come to an analogous, parallel instance. Prince Yudhis-thira after the battle of Kurukshetra became *sakalottarapathanayaka*,

master of the whole of Northern India. He also became a *Bhikshu*. But after he installed Parikshit on the throne with political India's approval, he retired from the regal field. Yudhisthira acted rightly. Asoka ought to have been a Yudhisthira, behaving likewise. If he (Asoka) felt the urge for adopting a monk-life as something irresistible he ought to have put his crown on somebody who had a mind *Kahatriya*-wise to complete India's dream of political unity under one national Raj. But he did not do it. Had he done that, he would have been called the first person—a hero, most ungrudgingly. It was most decidedly against India's royal tradition, transmitted through the experience of untold centuries. Faults or mistakes or misjudgments committed from responsible positions do not merely tell at once on the immediate environment of a nation. Their ill-effects dive deep, percolate,—persist long and ruin the whole future destiny of a people.

* * *

The modern age has come to our village cottage-doors; we should not wholly dispense with our own old methods in mass education. There is truth in that too. But we ought to supplement our programme by accepting recent contrivances. Ramakrishna has most wisely asked or urged us to be current coins in every way. Our poor percentage of literacy has become just now, an element of division, instead of holding, unifying us together to the unity-centre of our common Motherland. It is tending to disunite ourselves. But the only cure for it lies in added attempts to increase the percentage, individually and collectively.

SELECTIONS FROM THE ADHYATMA RAMAYANA

AYODHYA KANDA: CHAPTER I.

[Note: Sage Narada was deputed by Brahma the Creator to remind Sri Rama of the mission for which he incarnated on earth. He accordingly sought an interview with Sri Rama who in according him welcome with due reverence and respect said amongst other things that he—a householder—felt greatly blessed by his (sage Narada's) visit. Hearing these words the sage addressed the following prayer.]

SAGE NARADA'S PRAYER:
ALL ARE THE MANIFESTATION OF
LAKSHMI-NARAYAN

अथ तं नारदोऽप्याह राघवं भक्तवत्सलं ॥
किं मोहयसि मां राम वाक्यैर्लोकानुसारिभिः ॥ ९ ॥

9. On hearing these words, Narada said to (the scion of Raghu clan) Raghava, the Protector of devotees: Why dost Thou delude me, Oh Rama, by talking like ordinary worldly people?

संसार्यहमिति प्रोक्तं सत्यमेतत्त्वया विभो ॥
जगतामादिभूता या सा माया गृहिणी तव ॥ १० ॥

10. The statement of thine, Oh Lord, that Thou art a householder is too true. The Maya which is the primordial cause of the universe is, Thy consort.

त्वत्सन्निकर्षज्जायन्ते तस्यां ब्रह्मादयः प्रजाः ॥
त्वदाश्रया सदा भाति माया या त्रिगुणात्मिका ॥ ११ ॥

11. This Maya which consisting of the three Gunas ever shines having Thee as her support gives birth to all creatures from Brahma downwards by virtue of her contiguity to Thee.

सूतेऽजस्रं शुक्लकृष्णलोहिताः सर्वदा प्रजाः ॥
लोकत्रयमहागेहे गृहस्थस्त्वमुदाहृतः ॥ १२ ॥

12. Beings, white black and red are continuously born in the mighty abode of the three worlds, of which Thou art said to be the resident.

त्वं विष्णुर्जनकी लक्ष्मीः शिवस्त्वं जानकी शिवा ॥
ब्रह्मा त्वं जानकी वाणी सूर्यस्त्वं जानकी प्रभा ॥ १३ ॥

13. Thou art Vishnu and Sita is Lakshmi; Thou art Shiva and Sita is Siya (or Parvati); Thou art Brahma and Sita is Sarasvati (the Goddess of learning); Thou art the Sun and Sita is the splendour.

भवान् शशाङ्कः सीता तु रोहिणी शुभलक्ष्मणा ॥

शक्रस्त्वमेव पौलोमी सीता स्वाहानलो भवान् ॥ १४ ॥

14. Thou art the Moon and Sita is the all-auspicious Rohini; ¹
Thou art Indra and Sita is Sachī; Thou art Agni and Sita is Swaha.

[Note: I. Rohini is the name of the fourth lunar mansion containing five stars (Nakshatra), and in mythology it is represented as one of the several daughters of Daksha and the favourite consort of the Moon].

यमस्त्वं कालरूपश्च सीता संयमनी प्रभो ॥

निर्ऋतिस्त्वं जगन्नाथ तामसी जानकी शुभा ॥ १५ ॥

15. Thou art the Yama—the Death himself and Sita is Samjamani the female principle; Thou art, Oh Lord, Niriti (the God of destruction) and, Oh Lord of the universe, Sita is Tamasi (the third of the three qualities of Nature).

राम त्वमेव वरुणो भार्गवी जानकी शुभा ॥

वायुस्त्वं राम सीता तु सदागतिरिति ॥ १६ ॥

16. Thou art Varuna, Oh Rama, and all-blissful Sita is Bhargavi;
Thou art Vayu, Oh Rama, and Sita is Sadagati (the ever-moving).

कुवेरस्त्वं राम सीता सर्वसंपत्प्रकीर्तिता ॥

रुद्राणी जानकी प्रोक्ता रुद्रस्त्वं लोकनाशकृत् ॥ १७ ॥

17. Thou art Kuvera, Oh Rama, and Sita is prosperity; Thou art the all-destroyer Rudra and Sita is Rudrani.

लोके स्त्रीवाचकं यावत्तत्सर्वं जानकी शुभा ॥

पुत्रामवाचकं यावत्तत्सर्वं त्वं हि राघव ॥ १८ ॥

तस्माल्लोकत्रये देव युवाभ्यां नास्ति किञ्चन ॥ १९ ॥

- 18—19. (In one word) Whatever is represented by the female sex in this world is the all-blessed Sita and whatever is represented by the other sex art Thou, Oh Raghava. Hence, Oh Lord, in the three worlds there is nothing besides you both.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

HINDUISM AND ISLAM

The science of philology is one of the branches of learning that have contributed much to the development of historical knowledge in the modern world. The services of this new science have, however, been not infrequently used in a way that seems ridiculous to a lay mind, by scholars whose hobby it is to weave webs of theories over the fancied resemblances of words. To this category belongs the recent attempt of Mr. Niamatullah Khan, "Gonbar", B. A., to discover some new affinities between Hinduism and Islam on the basis of the resemblance of a few words that his fancy seeks to trace to a common

linguistic origin. Mr. A. Hameed Hasan writes as follows by way of an exposition of this novel theory in the *Swarajya* of the 5th of March:— "According to the Puranas, the Sanathana Dharma Hindus believe in the three incarnations of God, viz., Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. Mr. Niamatulla Khan has succeeded on reliable historical facts in discovering during his recent researches that the Hindu trinity is not mythological but real, and that the three Hindu deities, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva were originally the prophets of God. According to his researches two of them are the prophets of Islam, and the third a son of another Prophet of Islam....." Brahma according to him is the Sanskritised form and corruption of the name of Prophet Abraham, and the Vedas are the inspired books of God revealed to Abraham through the Archangel Gabriel. Vishnu is the Sanskrit name of the Prophet Noah, the prefix "Vaish" being added to the name for the reason that he learnt the art of carpentry on the command of God and built the great canoe or boat to protect him and his family from the Great Deluge. Siva he says is originally Esau who was the eldest son of the Prophet Abraham and according to him the ancestor of all the Aryan races.

Continues Mr. A. Hassan, "The Aryans take pride that their ancestors migrated from the Central Asia, but they have apparently forgotten that their real fatherland was Sham, now known as Syria... It is earnestly hoped that important historical researches will tend to prove the affinity of Sanathana Dharma to Islam. Once the Arya Samajists in particular and Hindus in general recognised and admitted that Brahma, Vishnu and Siva are the Muslim Abraham, Noah and Esau and none else, the differences between Hindus and Muslims will cease and the affinity between them will increase."

Researches of this type will be more helpful in establishing the dependence of Aryan and especially Hindu culture on the Semitic civilisation than in creating more friendly feelings between the Hindus and the Muslims. There is again a strange irony in the fact that the propounder of this theory seeks justification for Hindu mythology from the traditions and stories current among the Jews as if the latter are all genuine history. The theory itself to our eyes is but a perversion of philology, the author having tried to establish an identity of personalities on the basis of a few common sounds in the Sanskrit and Hebrew names. The Hindu conception of trinity and the Hebrew conception of prophets have no traces of resemblance. According to the Hindu scriptures the trinity are neither prophets nor incarnations, but the three aspects of the Supreme Being in its threefold functions of creation, preservation and destruction. They are also accordingly conceived as possessing attributes, powers and personal adornments none of which are found in any form in the Hebrew prophets. In the whole range of Hindu mythology we never hear of Vishnu learning carpentry from any one, or making any boat to save his family from a deluge. Nor is Siva the son of Brahma as the theory of the writer seems to indicate. In view of such great gulf of difference in the conception of these personalities it is needless to point out the absurdity of a theory the whole basis of which lies in the resemblances between a few sounds and that too very much strained. In fact the writer himself feels it partly when he says, "One important fact must be borne in mind that according to the Bible and the Kuran, Noah and Abraham were the greatest enemies of idol worship. It is an irony of history that Hinduism is its votary." Thus the writer in his shrewd attempt to establish a close affinity between the conceptions of Hindu trinity and the Hebrew prophets, points out

inadvertently the fundamental difference existing between the teachings associated with the two, and thereby shows the absurdity of his own theory regarding the identity of their personalities. Hindu-Muslim relationship is not going to be made more cordial and harmonious by such fantastic theories; on the other hand they may even embitter the feelings all the more. Unity will be achieved only when priests and politicians cease to exploit the passions and prejudices of the masses for achieving their own selfish purposes. Affinity between the two great faiths should be sought to be established on other grounds that relate to the fundamental verities of spiritual life than on those of the chance coincidences of words and sounds only.

VEDANTISTS IN AMERICA

In these days of colour complex and racial animosities it is indeed a refreshing thing to note a few silver linings of cordiality and good will in the otherwise dreary texture of present day international relationship. Such indeed is the feeling that rises in one's mind when one reads the short article from the pen of Dr. Sudhindra Bose, appearing in *the Modern Review* of March 1930 under the caption of "Vedantists in America" wherein Dr. Bose gives an account of the work that Indian monks are doing in America. Writes Dr. Bose, "Modern India in its hurly-burly of politics, often forgets those noble souls who are spreading the light of Vedanta in America. Any one with half an eye can see that the message of these consecrated men has been beneficial not only in America but to India as well. On the one hand they have placed before America, torn and distracted by hundreds of Christian sects, an ennobling ideal of Universal Religion, and on the other they have helped to build a bridge of better understanding and appreciation between India and the New World..... Those who belittle the services of these self-less men are in the kindergarten state of their thinking....."

Referring to the Swamis and the extent and nature of their work he says, ".....The first Vedanta Society in America was founded by Swami Vivekananda in the city of New York in 1894.....To day there are six Vedanta centres served by nearly a dozen Swamis. They are all members of the Order of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda. The record of the activities of this group of devoted workers in the cause of humanity calls to mind the early Buddhist missionaries who went from India far and wide and preached the gospel of Gautama Buddha.....The Indian missionaries have not come to the United States with a mercantile outlook.....The religion of the Vedas as taught by Indian missionaries is as different from calico Christianity of Stanley as North Pole is from the South Pole. Moreover the Indian missionaries are men of education, culture and refinement. They are, without any exception, men of exemplary character.....It often thrills me to compare them with many Christian stalwarts like, for example, Sir John Hawkins—that pious English burglar and pirate who enjoined his men to 'love one another' and 'serve God daily' while he kidnapped African Negroes to sell them into slavery.....Christian missions in India, with a few exceptions, breed ill-will, hatred and hot antagonism.....Now, the Indian missionaries never meddle with American political and social problems. They confine themselves exclusively to the field of religion or to be more accurate, the message of Vedanta."

Referring to the scope and extent of their work he says: "The task of the Swamis is by no means easy. Most Americans are brought up on mass-emotions and seldom think rationally.....The

intellectual presentation of Vedanta is not always pleasant to the American 'sermon tasters'. The Swamis, so far as I know, keep Vedanta in its original purity and majesty and never stoop to adulterate it with healing and mystery-mongering. Moreover they do not seek to make converts, "Vedanta does not as yet appeal to the mass minds in America", confided to me Swami Prabhavananda of Portland. "It gains ground slowly, but surely. The ideal of universality and the logical explanations of the religion of Vedanta appeal to the reflective minds of the country....." The prospects of Vedanta work in this country, according to those who are in close touch with it, are bright. The demand for Vedanta societies is increasing rapidly. The people with whom the Swamis come into contact are mostly sympathetic towards India and Indian philosophy. One must not forget, however, they have to work against many handicaps: foreign customs, foreign tongue, opposition of Christian churches and inherited inertia....."

The work of spreading the teachings of Vedanta was declared by Swami Vivekananda to be the chief item of his foreign policy. The only thing that Modern India can give to the West in exchange for what she has to learn from them in matters relating to science, industries and politics, is the teachings of Vedanta. The work that has been done in popularising this is small, but as the writer has indicated, it has received appreciation at the hands of a section of foreigners. What is required is that a larger number of young Indians possessing exemplary character have to go abroad for this purpose as the ancient Buddhist missionaries did in the days of India's cultural greatness.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE VEDANTA SOCIETY, CHICAGO, U. S. A.

The inauguration ceremony of the Vedanta Society of Chicago, U. S. A. was celebrated on the 19th of January at 8 P. M. at the New Masonic Temple. The delightfully decorated hall was filled up to its utmost capacity by a crowd drawn from the noblest of Chicago's society.

With glowing tribute to the memory of the great Swami Vivekananda who sowed the seeds of Indian Philosophy and Religion on the soil of Chicago during the World's Fair of 1893, Prof. Archibald G. Baker of the University of Chicago and Mrs. Carey W. Rhodes, a well-known social worker of Chicago, and a lover of Hindu Philosophy, introduced to the public Swami Gnaneshwarananda who came from New York to open the new centre at Chicago. A wire-less message of blessing and congratulation from Swami Shivananda, the President of the Ramakrishna Mission, Belur, India, and also messages of congratulations and good-will from all the Swamis of the Order now working in America, together with the messages of many prominent American ladies and gentlemen were read out which were highly appreciated by the audience.

Sreejutt Harindra Chattopadhyaya, the young poet of India, brother of Sreemati Sarojini Naidu, recited a poem of his own composition "The Light of the Soul" at the opening of the programme which created a wonderful atmosphere for the solemn occasion.

The Society is at present holding its regular Sunday Services at the New Masonic Temple Hall. The office and study room of the Society is located at the Plymouth Building, 417, S. Dearborn St., Room 901.

The newly established Vedanta Society of Chicago has removed a longfelt want, felt very keenly by all the Indians as well as those Americans who are familiar with the work of Swami Vivekananda in America.

TOURS OF SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

At the earnest request of friends Swami Yatiswarananda, President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission Branch, Madras left for Coimbatore on the 1st February, in connection with the opening of Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya, a home for the boarding, lodging and training of poor deserving boys.

On the 5th the Swami proceeded to Trichur to take part in the Fifteenth Annual Conference of the Vivekodaya Samajam which met to celebrate the birthday of Swami Vivekananda. Besides opening the seventh Vivekodaya Fine Art, and Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition, and distributing the prizes to the successful pupils and the exhibitors, he delivered three lectures on "The Spiritual Outlook", "The Practice of Religion" and "Swami Vivekananda's Message of Service" on the 7th, 8th and 9th. He returned to Madras on the 11th.

The Swami also visited Tindivanam on the 23rd in connection with the celebration of the birthday of Swami Vivekananda. He spoke on "Swami Vivekananda's Message of Dynamic Hinduism", laying stress on the fundamental unity of the Eternal Religion of India and the ideal of service embodied in it.

SWAMI GHANANANDA IN ANDHRA DESHA

Swami Ghanananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, Madras left for Andhra Desa on the 18th January last on a propaganda tour in connection with the work of the Telugu Section of the Publication Department of the Ramakrishna Math. He visited Nellore, Gudur, Rajahmundry, Ellore and Palakal. Besides explaining to a large number of friends the principles of the Vedanta and the activities of the Mission in conversations and private interviews, he spoke at Rajahmundry on "The Message of Sri Ramakrishna and the Ideals and Work of the Mission" on the 2nd of February at a meeting presided over by Rao Sahib Mr. C. V. Krishnaswami Ayyar, B. A., B. L., District and Sessions Judge. At Ellore he delivered a series of lectures and discourses from the 8th to the 12th of February at the invitation of friends. On the 8th and 9th he lectured on "Sri Ramakrishna and his Message to the Modern World" and "The Permanent Basis of Indian Nationalism". These lectures were presided over by Dewan Bahadur Mr. Mocherla Ramachandra Rao Pantulu and by Mr. S. R. Das, M. A., B. L. On the 10th he gave a discourse on "The Evolution and the Attainment of Perfection", comparing and contrasting the Eastern and Western conceptions of evolution and progress and answering a few questions by the audience at the end of the discourse. On the 11th he held a religious conversation and on the 12th he gave a class-talk to the students of the Municipal High School on "How to Supplement Modern Educational Training".

From Ellore the Swami proceeded to Palakal. After a brief stay there he came again to Nellore. On the 24th he addressed a large gathering of students of the Venkataswami Raja's College on "The Need

for Education on Indian lines". At the request of the Nellore Progressive Union he also delivered two lectures under its auspices on "Sri Ramakrishna: the Significance of His Life and Teachings" and "The Heart of Bharata Varsha" on the 25th and 26th February. These were followed up by a discourse on "The Different Paths of God-realisation" and a religious conversation on the 27th and 28th.

The Swami returned to Madras on the 1st of March.

ACTIVITIES OF SWAMI CHIDBHAVANANDA

Swami Chidbhavananda of the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Ootacamund, started on the 31st December last on a tour through Salem District. He visited Trichengode, Salem, Nanakkal, Krishnagiri, Dharmapuri and other towns. In most of these places he spoke in Tamil and sometimes in English at the invitation of the public on 'Hints on Education,' 'Introduction to the Bhagavat Gita,' 'Ideal in Life,' 'Temple worship,' 'The Gita as a universal scripture,' and 'The Practice of Religion.' The lectures and discourses were well appreciated. Besides, many of those interested in the ideals and work of the Ramakrishna Mission, enrolled themselves as subscribers to the Ramakrishna Vijayam and the Vedanta Kesari. During the tour which lasted for a month the principles of Vedanta as expounded by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were disseminated in many of the important places of the district.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF BHAGAVAN SRI RAMAKRISHNA

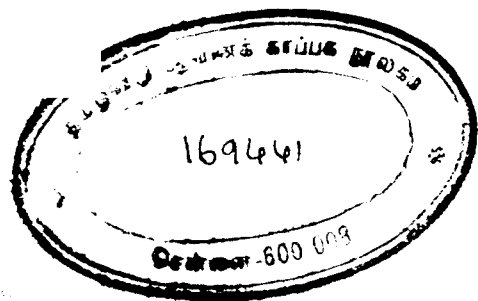
AT THE R. K. MATH, MYLAPORE, MADRAS

The Ninety-Fifth Birthday Anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated with great solemnity and devotion at the Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. The Thithi Pooja which fell on the 2nd of March was performed in a fitting manner with special worship and Homam. A large number of devotees partook of the holy Prasadam. The public celebration took place on the following Sunday, the 9th March 1930. As usual there were Bhajana and devotional music all through the fore-noon in the Ashrama hall which was decorated in a tasteful manner for the occasion. About two thousand poor people were fed sumptuously in the B. K. M. Students' Home premises. In the evening there was a public meeting with Mr. S. V. Ramamurthy, I. C. S. in the chair. Mr. A. Srinivasachariar, B. A., L. T. of Srivalliputtur spoke in Tamil on the "Divinity of Sri Ramakrishna" portraying in a masterly fashion the superhuman traits in Sri Ramakrishna's character by a thorough and exhaustive review of the Master's life. This was followed by an eloquent address in English by Mr. S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri, M. A., B. Sc., Bar-at-Law, Reader, Madras University. Mr. Sastri refuted in the light of Sri Ramakrishna's life and teachings the scathing criticism that Mr. Bertrand Russell has levelled against religion in his recent essay on "Religion and Civilisation". Miss Catherine Sherwood of Boston then spoke a few words about her impressions of the work of Vedantists in America. The learned President in his concluding remarks dwelt specially upon Sri Ramakrishna's experience of Sanadhi of which he tried to give an explanation in modern terms in the light of the space-time concept of relativists. Dewan Bahadur Mr. C. Ramanujachariar then proposed the usual vote of thanks to the lecturers and Chairman. The session came to a close with Mangalarathi and the distribution of Prasadam.

THE REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH CHARITABLE
DISPENSARY, MYLAPORE, MADRAS.

The management of the dispensary places before the public a report of the work done during the year 1929. It came into existence five years ago and has all along been rendering valuable help to the suffering poor without distinctions of caste or creed. The existence of this dispensary at Mylapore has been more than justified by a very rapid increase in the daily attendance of patients many of whom came even from such distant places as Saidapet and Rayapuram. Their number in 1926, the second year of its existence, was 5,109 whereas it rose to 30,932 in 1929 as against 18,222 in the previous year. This growing popularity of the institution is greatly due to the spirit of worship in which the work is carried on here as well as the loving care that is bestowed on the patients in the treatment of their maladies.

It is needless to point out that the work of the dispensary has immensely increased during the brief period of its existence. And the fulfilment of the following needs has become an urgent necessity for conducting its activities on a successful basis. These needs are: (1) *A Pucca Dispensary Building*:—The work is being continued as before in a small shed thatched with palroyra leaves. There being only one room it is quite insufficient to accommodate the growing number of patients, the doctor, the compounders, the stock of medicines and outfits. It is, therefore, proposed to erect a building on a suitable plot of land at an estimated cost of Rs. 10,000 against which a sum of Rs. 1734-7 has already been subscribed. Any one wishing to perpetuate the memory of his or her dear relation or friend can do so by contributing the amount required for constructing one or more rooms or the whole building. (2) *A General Fund*:—In view of the rise in the number of patients two whole time workers, besides the visiting honorary doctor, have to be engaged exclusively for the dispensary. The cost of maintaining these two monastic workers together with the expenditure for medicines come at present to Rs. 100 per month. To meet the growing demands on service more funds, medicines and honorary workers are necessary. (3) *Up-to-date Appliances and Outfits*:—For want of these many patients have to be denied service and the talents and experience of the honorary doctor too cannot be fully utilised. This management appeals to the generous public to come forward with their quota of financial support in aid of this noble cause. Any contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by Swami Yatiswarananda, President, R. K. Math and Mission, Mylapore, Madras.



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