

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

“ 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.

---

---

VOLUME XIV]

DECEMBER 1927

[NUMBER 8

---

---

## PRAYER

ॐ

संगच्छध्वं संवदध्वं संबो मनांसि जानताम् ।

समानो मंत्रस्तमिति स्तमानी ।

समानं मनस्सहचित्तमेषाम् ॥

समानी व आकृतिस्समाना हृदयानिवः ।

समानमस्तु वो मनो यथा वस्तुसहासति ॥

Brethren! meet together; talk together; let your minds apprehend alike!

Common be your prayer, common be your end; common be your purpose; common be your deliberation.

Common be your desires; united be your hearts; united be your intention, so that there may be a thorough union among you!

RIG VEDA, x, 191,

SPIRITUAL TALKS OF  
SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

(Continued from the last issue)

- Q. What rules are to be observed regarding food ?  
Shall I accept whatever is offered to me or make any distinction ? Which is better, Madhukari (food gathered by begging from house to house like a bee) or food brought by chance ?
- A. At the time of Sadhana, a little discrimination in food is necessary. For there are some kinds of food which produce sleep, drowsiness, etc. ; and they are the worst enemies to a Sadhaka ; therefore it is always advisable not to take them at all. To eat much of sweet or sour thing is bad and *Kolai-dal* or any preparation of it is also greatly harmful to the growth of spiritual life. Things such as these stir up the *Tamas* (ignorance) in man. As a result he feels drowsy at the time of meditation and cannot make any progress in the spiritual path. So an aspirant must be very careful about his diet and eat only such food as are easily digestible. Under no circumstances he must fill more than two-thirds of his stomach and a third must be kept empty for the passage of the air. This will increase your strength and energy and you will be able to devote it to good account. But if you overload your stomach and keep no space for the passing of the air, you will have to spend all your energy in digesting the food. You will find no energy or inclination for meditation, and thus it will be a positive loss to you. Moreover, it may tell upon your health. As you know full well that good health is favourable to Sadhana, you must keep it by all means and hoard in something now when everything is in your favour,

As regards Madhukari, it is a very pure thing. It does not bind you to any obligations. But if you accept food from a particular person, it does so, and a fraction of your merit will go to that person. Madhukari is specially beneficial to those who cannot continue the flow of meditation without break and consequently requires some time for diversion. And instead of whiling away their time of diversion in idle talks, if they utilise it in Madhukari, they are thereby not only saved from the sin of killing time in vain, but also keep themselves free from the obligation of giving a portion of their merit in return for their food from any particular person.

- Q. Is the vow of silence necessary at the time of Sadhana? If so, what is to be done when some unavoidable circumstances compel its break or when the mind becomes irritated because of it?
- A. No, the vow of silence is not required as you understand by it. Forced silence and wild lavishing in talks both have their evil effects on man. To be silent in mind is surely better than the external silence, and so always try to follow the former. Moreover, instead of binding you with any forced silence, if you talk only so much as is required, it will not only do you no harm but will give you the same result as is attained by one observing absolute silence.
- Q. How much clothing should a Sadhaka require? And to what extent, heat and cold are to be borne up? If any body offers any clothes to keep the body up from the ravage of heat and cold, should it then be accepted?
- A. As for clothing, you should keep only as much as is barely necessary to keep the body healthy and protect it from heat and cold. And bear in mind

that if those of delicate health practise much austerities, they will verily have their deserts. Your ideal is to realise God, not to exhibit unnecessary hardship. And as for the acceptance of any offer, you must sincerely judge it with reference to your utmost necessity. You may accept an offer only when you really feel a want for it ; otherwise reject it at once. To accept anything from any body for the purpose of hoarding is a sin unpardonable on the part of a Sadhaka.

- Q. I know that both your noble self and the Lord have endless grace on me. Only bless me to realise it fully and well. Bless me also that my faith and devotion to you may be firm and unflinching. As I feel I have no power to do anything without your help, make me do as it pleases you—won't you—venerable sir ?
- A. There's infinite strength in you. Never lose faith in yourself my boy, verily God is in you. And His grace too. He is gracious to all. Know it for certain that it is through His endless grace alone that you are able to be here under the banner of the Ramakrishna Order. It is again through His grace that you have found a good man to give you food and shelter during the period of your Sadhana. Have faith, therefore, have firm faith in Him. Work hard with unshakeable determination and He will make you know everything. Strive on unceasingly. You will know Him and you will realise His endless grace. Don't spend your time in vain. Go on with your Sadhana as instructed by them—the disciples of Sir Ramakrishna and continue it till you realise Him in this very life. Don't be troubled with big questions any more. Do something positive and make the best of this opportunity and be blessed.

I have answered all the questions. Now try to live them in life. From your letter I understand that the gentleman who has been giving you food and shelter is really a devotee. Rich men seldom spend money in good deeds ; and those that do so are very few in number. Your host has been doing so much for you ; see that his money is not wasted. You should live there in such a way that from your conduct his inclination for spending more in good deeds may be gradually increased. And as your benefactor will have a share of your merit and demerit both, do there only such work that will not make him suffer hereafter. Take care, don't run after name and fame. For, these things you would have plenty at home. Once when you have come out of their clutches try your utmost not to fall a prey to them again. Pray to Him with a sincere heart that even the least taint of this desire for name and fame may not soil your good heart. My love and best wishes to you and to our friend, your kind host. I always pray to the Lord that your desire may be fulfilled. May He give you good sense and make a man of you.

---

## KARMA YOGA

ITS NATURE AND ITS GOAL

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

Action is the law of life. But mechanical action is a burden and not a blessing. It is the duty and privilege of man to see far into things and to govern his life in a purposive way. Karma Yoga tells us in what way we can make action a means to higher ends. Mere movement leads to further mere movement. Purpose and guided movement alone leads to regnant peace.

When we reflect about the real nature of the soul we realise that it is the illuminer of the mind and is beyond the mind.

Time, space and causation are the conditions and forms of thought. The succession of ideas gives us the idea of time; the existence of ideas gives us the idea of space; and the idea of sequence gives us the idea of causation. But if we realise how the soul is the common factor in waking life, dream and deep sleep and is the witness of the mind, the senses, the body and the outside world, we can well realise how it is above and beyond time, space and causation. This self-awareness of the identity of the soul is the sheet-anchor of Indian philosophy. It is well stated in the *Panchadasi* by Sri Vidyananya.

नोदिति नास्तमेत्येका सविदेका स्वयंप्रभा ।

The self-luminous radiance of the soul doth neither set nor re-arise upwards for ever.

Such being the nature of the soul, our activities are blessed if they lead us to that realisation. What is the means of arriving at this result? For this end we should understand the real nature of knowledge and work. All that nature brings to us is a series of vibrations. It is the mind that converts vibrations into sensations. Similarly the relativity of things and the fact that our body and ourselves and our mind are merely fragments of the cosmos really outside of ourselves must be constantly remembered by us. When we remember these aspects, work has a new meaning and value and purpose and result to us. If we identify our soul with the body, the senses and the mind, attachment increases and work done with attachment merely perpetuates itself and does not bring any higher results to us. But if we realise our true nature and then realise how the instruments of work which we use are really a portion of the cosmos, detachment increases and work done with detachment leads us to the permanent bliss of self-realisation and God realisation. If we merely revel in variety and acquisitiveness, our soul gets entangled more and more in sense-life. If we seek unity and renunciation, our soul rises to the highest heights of self-awareness and self-realisation. Self-knowledge is no doubt already in us but the process of unselfish work enables us to have a full and conscious realisation of it, just as we realise the measure of our strength through the discipline of a task.

Such is the Karma Yoga as apart from mere action. The diversities of past Karma have caused the present diversities of life. The infinite and infinitely various seeds of Vasanas (tendencies) sprout forth everywhere, grow and realise themselves in desires and then in actions. These in their turn

intensify the Vasanas (impressions and tendencies). And so the wheel goes on. "Reaction is the law of life." The best proof of the past existences is the present existence. The effect must have had a cause. Hence we must try to control our desires and subdue our Vasanas. Otherwise the varieties of work and Vasana and fruit will eclipse our real nature. Hence selfish action will only enlarge the values of desire and tendency, and will never lessen it. Therefore we must triumph over selfish action. How is this to be done? One means is, contemplating about the real nature of the soul as stated already. Another is the realisation of the real nature of our body, our senses and our mind. Another is doing work in the spirit of the repayment of a debt to humanity. We are born with the debts—the debts to our ancestors, the debts to our Rishis, and the debts to the gods. By working for the continuity of racial life, for the continuity of racial learning and racial worship we cancel these binding debts. Selfish desire of acquisition cannot co-exist with the desire of freedom from debt by doing righteous action to free ourselves from our debts. Another means is the doing of work as an act of carrying out the commandments of God. Another is doing it as a worship of God. (ईश्वराराधना) Another is surrendering the fruits of action to God to dispose them as best as He likes. These are the various aspects which will help us to realise Nishkama Karma (unselfish work) and lead us through it to the supreme bliss of God-love and God-realisation.

In the lower forms of creation hunger and sex are the predominant sources of action. In man, however, the love of the body expands into wider circles of love. The love of family, of society, of state, of humanity, of all living creatures, of the whole universe, of God—these are the sources alike of new duties and of new realisations. Duty is the discipline that sets free the love in us. Hence man has an ever increasing discipline of duty to attain the highest heights of freedom and love. Duty is the dictate of unselfishness. Love is the realisation of bliss in unity that dawns upon us as the result of unselfishness. Only then we can become God-like, because in the case of God His Duty is Love and His Love is Duty. It is only when our Karma Yoga blossoms in love of all and devotion to God that it attains its real consummation. The Bhagavatha declares well : धर्मः स्वदुहितः पुत्रां विष्वक्तेजकथासुयः । नोत्पादयेद्यदिरतिं भ्रम एव हि केवलम् — If Dharma properly practised does not create a love of God and His gracious acts of love for all, it is a mere burden and nothing more.

The secret of work is work without attachment. योगः कर्मसु कोशलम् (Yoga is the very dexterity of work) declared the lord in the *Bhagavad Gita*. Attachment is better than mere inertia, but non-attached work is the best of all. It is the true benediction of life. Success attends it as it is His work. The fulfilments of the river is in the ocean. In the same way the truly blessed work is that which leads to the greatest auspiciousness of the soul. That is the supreme test of the value of work. Does it lead us to love man and God or does it take us away from the love of man and of God ?

Equally needful are the purification and concentration of the mind. Each mind is in touch with the minds of all and with the cosmic mind. The impure and limited minds cannot meet and mingle owing to the obstructive layers of ignorance and desire. But the removal of the clouding layers results in cosmic realisation and bliss. There lies the secret of thought-transference, mesmerism, hypnotism, clairvoyance, clairaudience and other wonderful powers of the mind. It is concentration that is the real dynamo of mental power. The finer powers and energies always dominate the coarser in the values of the mind as in the value of matter. By Yoga we can attain such control over Prana that we can cure our maladies and the diseases of others. It is only when Yoga leads us to greater self-mastery and to services of others and to love of God that it fulfils its real place in the life divine.

The eternal secret about the inter-relation of past Karma and future perfection through present effort was revealed by the supreme sage and statesman Bhishma when he said that exertion is greater than destiny. This great teaching is the best refutation of the oft-asserted libel that Hindus are fatalists and have no inherent initiative and forcefulness of nature. It is the Hindus that know the elements of that tremendous complex called life and the secret by which life can be transformed into the super-life.

It is hence wrong to deify Karma into a destiny and to quail before it. What is created by action can be destroyed by counter-action. Karma is a law of our inner nature and can be modified by other laws. Gravitation pulls down ; but we can throw by our energy a stone above so as to counteract the force of gravitation. The stone no doubt comes back owing to the magnitude of the earth. But suppose the up-going stone is met



suddenly by a new-created sphere which comes swiftly near it, it gets attached to the latter and is free from the gravitational force of the earth. When we throw our love above and the sun of grace comes near, the Karmic force of desire on our soul cannot affect us in the least. We become attached to the higher and greater sphere of the life divine and can rise above the mere earthiness of desire into the heaven of love and service and renunciation.

The fact is that Karma is a complex phenomenon. We are the ancients of the world and have gone through many realms and experiences. Good and bad actions bear fruit; let them do so. Good and bad Vasanas (tendencies) manifest themselves. There is our battle ground. Intensify the good and curb the bad. There is our choice and there, our chance. Intense pain may come as the result of a past sin. We cannot avoid it, as what has been done has been done. But we can meet the pain in a new spirit and even turn it into a blessing. By seeing its genesis and fortifying my soul by faith and love and purity, I may even make it a means of greater faith and love and purity.

The world is our theatre. Our past tendencies and desires may induce us to take a mean and lowly part. But we can, God willing, intensify our good tendencies and desires and reject the suggestions of our bad tendencies and desires, and assume and act a noble and worthy part on the stage of life. When you find a sick man, one tendency tells you,—Why do you interfere? Let him suffer; and another tells you,—Help him and cure him. Curb the former and intensify the latter. The former is due to selfish desires in the past births; the latter is due to unselfish desires therein. These express the soul and those cloud and obscure it. Go to Him for strength and realise yourself. The Lord says in the Gita :—

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्यद्भूरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः ॥

मनस्तु परा बुद्धिर्या बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः ॥

एवं बुद्धेः परंबुद्ध्या संस्तभ्यात्मानमत्मना ॥

जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम् ॥

The senses are said to be superior (to the body); the mind is superior to the senses; the intellect is superior to the mind, and that is He (the Atman) Who is superior to the intellect. Thus knowing Him Who is the superior of the intellect, and restraining the self by the Self, destroy, O mighty-armed, that enemy, the unseizable foe, of desire."

Karma is thus a result and force. The direction and power of this force can be constantly modified and lessened. It can be minimised; it can be deflected: it can be even stopped and reversed. It all depends on *our* present contribution and *His* grace. We must learn to see clearly the net-work and labyrinth of causes. If we do so, Karma ceases to be an *incubus* and becomes a *liberator*. The bondage of Karma and the freedom of God-love cannot flourish side by side and when the latter comes, the former must depart. It is by this means that Karma Yoga achieves for us the *Sammumbonum* of existence (i.e.) the realisation of Sachchidananda.

---

## SELF-KNOWLEDGE

*By Swami Atulananda*

Once a man of renown, I think it was Dr. Johnson, when approaching death was visited by a priest. The good priest spoke to him about the life hereafter, and advised him to think of his future state. The doctor was slightly annoyed and replied, "Sir, one thing at the time. I am still in this world, when I have departed from here it will be time enough to think of the other world."

This answer has been applauded by many. Superficially the answer seems sound and not without wit. But looking at the question a little closer we find that the dying man was not very logical, that his understanding was not so profound as is often believed. It shows that the doctor shared the but too common belief that religion bears fruit in the future only, that it is a preparation for the life hereafter, that it means trouble now in the hope of future enjoyment.

The materialist argues that the future is uncertain, let us therefore enjoy the present. Why renounce the pleasures of this life for a dubious happiness hereafter? There is no proof for immortality, your reason is based on faith, on belief in scriptures and the statements of so-called sages. We want substantial proof, demonstration. At the same time he himself is helpless when we ask him for proof to substantiate his unbelief. If he cannot accept our arguments in favour of immortality, neither can he provide us with proofs to the contrary, neither can he convince us that death is the end of our existence. The question remains

hanging in the balance. My arguments do not satisfy him, nor has he proof sufficient to satisfy his own unbelief. The best he can come to is agnosticism. He has no reason to believe, neither has he reason to disbelieve. To him it remains an open question. Therefore, he says, let us shelve the question, why waste time and energy in a vain attempt to solve what is insolvable.

To such men we have little to say. Immortality cannot be demonstrated to the senses. We cannot analyze it, we cannot weigh or measure it, we cannot subject it to sense perception. We cannot make mortal what is immortal. And that is what we would have to do, should we try to demonstrate immortality by scientific methods. Science can deal only with compounds, with what can be taken apart, broken up, transformed, manipulated. But that which is immortal is single, a unit. It cannot be split up, it cannot be made subject to change. It is altogether beyond the realm of physical science.

Science is limited and can deal only with limited subjects, with the laws of nature. But the Immortal is beyond limitations, beyond nature and laws. That is why religion and science are too often at war. For though *we* say that religion is the highest science, to the ordinary scientist this seems only juggling with words. He does not accept a science that surpasses his limited conceptions.

But men of spiritual realization say, scientific investigations are insufficient. They reveal knowledge of the external universe but not of the substance, the Real, behind the ever changing world. If you desire to know the Immortal you must steer in a different direction. Follow the path pointed out by the sages and you will come in contact with proof sufficient to change your unbelief into firm conviction, into absolute certainty.

This challenge is thrown out to the world. From the remotest past the voice continues to vibrate, "Neither by wealth nor progeny, nor by much labour is the Immortal revealed to man. It can be known by means of faith, devotion and meditation. He who sees the Immortal in this universe of death, the life eternal amidst all fleeting things, he who realizes the one who never changes, unto him belongs eternal peace, unto none else, none else."

It is all good and well to say, I live in the present, I don't worry about the future, but is not that like the school-boy who

cannot be made to take an interest in his studies? The boy wants to enjoy the present moment, to play and fritter away his time, heedless of what may become of him when he grows up. He sees no sense in learning that for which he has no immediate use. He does not understand that no labour is lost, that all these early efforts go to form his mind and character, to make him a useful, efficient man.

The doctor of whom we spoke did not deny that life may continue after the death of the body, but he considered all thought and labour given to that future existence so much waste of energy and time. He did not understand that soul improvement is a necessary factor in the process of evolution. Life hereafter is a continuation of the present life, under different conditions. What we are here, we will be there, the same personality, the same character, the same mind, the same state of soul development.

Ordinarily we do not remember our previous births, we have forgotten our past lives. But this does not mean that our efforts of one life do not bear fruit in the following birth. The scientist has forgotten most of what he had learned in childhood, the linguist does not remember all the rules of grammar. We do not remember the entire process through which we have become efficient in whatever it may be. But though now forgotten, these early efforts have become incorporated into our being, they form the basis on which our present knowledge rests.

It is thus also with the evolution of the soul. Life experience, soul experience, is gathered in every birth. The circumstances under which this experience was gained are forgotten, but the result remains. What the soul became in a previous life it is still when born again. What we are when we pass away from this world we will be when we are born again, that is, our inner make-up will be the same. We see how every child is different from every other child. One soul, even at birth is different from every other soul, because we have all learned different lessons, we have all profitted in different degrees by the opportunities offered in previous births.

Each life lived is but a chapter in the book of Life. If we have grasped the full meaning of that chapter we need not turn to it again, we take up a new chapter. But if we have been negligent and turned over the pages without absorbing what

they have to teach we shall have to be born again and again till we have learned our lesson.

Religion shows us the means how to become alert, intelligent, industrious students of life. It shows us how to finish our course with expediency. It teaches us to study life in all its phases. What am I? What is this 'I' that directs the mind and senses? What is that inner being in me, my very life centre?

"The body is like a pillow case," said Sri Ramakrishna. Within the body dwells the real man. Subtler than the body is the mind. But there is a still subtler, the One who directs the mind. The mind is changeable, but the Director of the mind changes not. He is the same in pleasure and pain, in failure and success, in childhood, youth and old age. Who is this Actor, acting through the body and mind? Our personality is a disguise, it hides the real Actor.

Religion reveals to us the real actor, the eternal, unchangeable spark, the Life, the soul of man, the real I. It reveals ourselves to ourselves. It is the search for That in our being which is unseen but seeing, as the Upanishads put it. "That which is not heard but hearing, unperceived but perceiving, unknown but knowing. He is the only hearer, the only perceiver, the only knower. He is thy real self, the Ruler within, the Immortal. Everything else is delusion and fraught with evil."

Religion then is not simply a question concerning life hereafter. It is a question of the present as well, of all life, present and future.

Words are often confusing, they often hide the true meaning of what we wish to express. How much clearer would it be to many if for the word religion we substituted the term self-knowledge, for the word God, the term Inner-self. And why make so much of the life hereafter instead of considering Life as a whole, past, present and future?

We want to know ourselves, what we really are. When I say that we want to know God, we get confused, because we do not realize that God is but another name for the eternal I in us. The soul of man which is the soul of every being, is the one and only God. "there is" all else is a fleeting manifestation. The real "I" and the real you, and the real in every form of manifestation is one and the same God, We are like the waves on an

ocean of Existence, which is called God. He pervades the entire universe. He is your soul, my soul, the soul of saint and brute. He is the eternal spark of consciousness, the eternal life in all that lives. It is said in the Upanishad, "Thou art the bee hovering over the flower, Thou art the green parrot in the forest, Thou art the thundercloud, Thou art the ocean. Thou art without beginning, and infinite. From Thee the worlds have sprung."

Here lies our kinship. On the surface we are all different. In manifestation we differ, but in spirit, in Reality, we are One. It is God, the real I, Who speaks and acts through you, through me, through all creation. There is but one soul, one real I, one self. So the ancient Rishi sang, "Thou art the woman, thou art the man, thou art the boy and the girl, and the old man trembling on his staff. Thou art all in all in the universe." And again, "Through every mouth He eats, through every hand He works. Concealed in all beings dwells the Atman as butter in milk. Find Him, Oh man, churn the mind that the spirit may float uppermost in your consciousness. Seeing the Atman abiding in all beings, and all beings in the Atman, one reaches the state of Bliss."

To know Him, is the object of religion; to know Him here and now. Knowing Him now, we shall know Him through all eternity.

Religion does not mean preparing for one-self a nice place in Heaven; it is the sincere search after Truth, the truth of our own being. He who knows himself rises beyond all heavens. He has become one with that eternal Existence in which heavens and earth and all spheres, good and bad, float as bubbles on an ocean. "Even in this life," says the Gita, "they have conquered heaven, whose minds are firmly fixed on the Supreme. Yea, such are said to live in God."

This external life is but a shadow compared to our true existence. Our real self is sporting in the guise of our personality. But not until we tear off the mask shall we be able to see the Atman, our real self. It is not easy to do this. We have been wearing the disguise so long, we have so firmly fastened it on to the soul. Our ego is the mask. We must tear it asunder. Then the glory of the real self will shine, "Even as the moon emerging from the eclipse shines in her own glory." "The serpent of ego," says Sri Sankaracharya, "hides the jewel of Bliss,

the Atman. This serpent must be destroyed before we can take possession of that jewel."

There are many ways to kill the serpent. These ways are the different religious paths. "The way is long and weary, difficult to tread, like walking on the sharp edge of a razor; yet despair not. Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached." We may follow the path of action, or of devotion, or of self-analysis, it matters not, for all paths lead to the same Truth. "Blessed are they whose hearts are set on that Supreme Knowledge. The rest welter in a world of confusion."

Sometimes it is objected that if God is my own real self, then there is no room for prayer and worship. I cannot pray to, or worship myself! But is it really so? Is not all religion a struggle within myself? Is it not a constant appeal to the good, the holy, the divine in ourselves? Is it not a constant fight against our lower nature? And is not this appeal equal to prayer? Certainly. We may cry from the bottom of our hearts,—Oh, Thou divine Self within, manifest Thyself, assert Thyself, subdue my lower nature, lift my consciousness unto Thy presence, reveal Thyself to me!

This method need not appeal to every one. Some may prefer to worship God in some external form. And why not? He who is the self in man is also the self in higher and lower manifestations. We may adore Him in the saints, in God-men, in Avatars like Buddha or Jesus. He is the self in all. He is omnipresent. He is in the idol, in stone and wood. All worship is justified if it is sincere. He is the merciful One, the same to all, a Father, a Mother, a Friend. He hears the voice of His devotees. "He answers our prayers, He hears our supplications."

Another question may arise. How can God reveal Himself to us? How can He come to us? He is omnipresent, how can he come or go? He is my very Being, the nearest of the near.

But, coming, here does not mean moving in space. Revealing, does not mean changing His form, or appearance. When my eyes are closed, I don't see the light. I open my eyes and I see the light. Light came, but it did not move or change. To the blind the world of phenomena seems far distant, though near at hand. A little film covering the eyes is all that separates him from the visible universe. When the film is removed, light has

come, the world has appeared, the Universe stands revealed. But the change was not in anything external, it was in himself, in the blind man.

So it is with God. He never comes or goes. It is our vision of Him that is either clear or obstructed. It is our spiritual eye that is either opened or closed. What is in our consciousness we see, we perceive, the rest lies in obscurity. When we are not conscious of God He seems far away, we call for Him, we do not realize His eternal presence.

On a hazy day we do not see the glorious ranges of snow-covered mountains. A stranger to the hill country cannot even imagine that there are snow peaks so near. Suddenly the haze lifts and a sight of unspeakable grandeur reveals itself. Then we call out, "The mountains have come!" But what happened? The obstruction was removed, and the unseen stood self revealed. A delirious man calls for his wife to come to him. The wife is seated at his bedside, holding his hand, bathing his burning brow. But the patient sees her not, he thinks her far away, he is not conscious of her presence. The fever comes down, normal consciousness is restored, and the man sees his wife. He rejoices, and calls out, "O, you have come at last, where have you been so long?"

And thus it is with God. He is always near. But our consciousness is taken up with other things, and we do not see Him. Though so near, still He seems so far away. When the cloud of ignorance and self delusion is lifted, then we become conscious of His presence. As haze of worldly thoughts becomes thinner, we become conscious of Him, little by little, till the haze has evaporated and we see Him in all His glory, enthroned in our own hearts.

How is this brought about? The sincere heart will find the way. "Search and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." Knock at the door of your own heart, for there the spirit resides. Enter within your own being, brush aside the tumultuous thoughts of your mind, meditate and pray, and within yourself you will find the abode of God, the haven of peace. We do not have to go here or there; neither does He descend from some throne above the clouds. Heaven, and the God of heaven are within you.



Through devotion, meditation, prayer, we may enter into the great silence of our own being. By shutting out the light of the external world and all its clammering demands and ever-changing unrealities, we come upon the Light within, the self-luminous Soul, the Life eternal which is beyond all darkness, all despair. "When with that Light the mind is overpowered, then does it see no more dreams," says the Upanishad. "Then Bliss is experienced. Who, verily, knows the unfading One, in Whom the whole universe is nestled, he into all-knowing enters." "Therefore," says another Upanishad, "worship the Self alone, for He is dearer than son, or wealth, or power. And worshipping Him, the object of your love will never perish."

Let us try to know the self, let us make this the main object of our lives. Says Yajnavalkya, "He who reaches that state which lies beyond hunger and thirst, beyond passion and sorrow and death, he knows the Atman and he gives up all other desires, even the desire for the enjoyments of different heavens. He is the true Yogi. Renouncing all desires, stand in thy real strength, know thy self."

What we strongly desire we certainly shall attain. Let us then long for that great Treasure Which once we possess It can never again be taken from us.

This our present existence is but a fleeting dream. It seems so real to us now. All dreams seem real while they last. But those who have awakened from their sleep have realized the difference between this passing life and man's eternal existence.

That awakening comes after long search and religious practice. Some practices help to correct bad, obstinate habits of thought and deed. But the higher practices open up our spiritual vision. The highest vision is to see God as our real Self, and Him in everything. That vision comes only to those who have become perfectly pure in mind. And purity of mind the scriptures tell us comes through practice. "Through renunciation of all passions and worldly desires," says Sri Ramakrishna. The Vedanta has laid down the lines of progress and discipline. It leads the aspirant step by step to the highest realization. And it tells us that the door to the Highest opens only to the brave, the persevering, the most sincere. So long as we shrink

from discipline we cannot enter through the gate of knowledge. Truthfulness, purity, love for all beings, and meditation, these are the keys that unlock the gate which admits us to higher spiritual truths. The sages practised these virtues.

Sri Ramakrishna said, "To purify the mind it is necessary now and then to go into solitude, to cut one-self off from one's every day surroundings. As the pearl-oyster after catching a rain drop dives down to the bottom of the sea to develop it into a beautiful pearl, so the aspirant must catch hold of Truth, and then retire into solitude to make that Truth a living reality to himself." In ordinary social life there is a constant clash and friction of ideas and forces which disturb the serenity of the mind. Therefore solitude is recommended.

The attainment of spirituality requires exertion and sacrifice. But once the goal is reached, we are told, there is no more danger. Then we may mix again with others. Then we will be strong enough to brave the current of life, we will be able to steer free from pitfalls and dangers. Then our lives will be only for the good of others.

God-men like Christ and Buddha and Sri Ramakrishna, men of realization, selfless, were able to lift the burden off others. These are the highest type of men, and the greatest workers. But before they undertook to help others they prepared themselves for the task. In solitude they struggled till Truth was realized. Then they returned to society like avalanches of spiritual power. And their work was immortal, for all eternity. Bereft of all personal motives, immovably fixed in the realization of their identity with all creation, they served humanity every moment of their lives. These God-men have shown us the way. May it be our attempt to walk in their footsteps. "Let the worldly-wise praise or blame, let the goddess of fortune smile or frown, let death come this moment or after many years, he alone will attain to self-knowledge who swerves not from the path of Truth."

# LIFE SKETCH OF RAMDAS

THE PATRIOT SAINT OF MAHARASHTRA

*By Swami Gunatitananda*

It was only recently that the tercentenary birthday of Shivaji the founder of the Maharashtra Empire was celebrated with great fervour and enthusiasm right throughout India. The fact that this year it was made an All-India celebration is proof positive of the national awakening that augurs well for the future of India. Shivaji was an invincible hero, a first class statesman, an adept in the art of diplomacy and withal, a great devotee who combined in him the highest chivalry and a thorough grasp of the goal of life. He had great talents, possessed supreme power and evinced remarkable bravery—qualities which were fostered, nourished and kept ablaze by Ramdas to whom he owed not a little. It is proposed to give below a brief history of the life of Ramdas who was both the spiritual and political Guru of Shivaji.

A study of the world's history incontestably demonstrates the existence of the mysterious law of Nature that where there is a demand there is always also the supply. This law holds good not only in the realm of matter but also in the spiritual world. We see great personalities appearing on this globe from time to time to meet a special need, to fulfil a certain mission, to deliver a certain Divine message or to impart an impetus to the country, nation or community in which they are born. They come with Divine power and they do not fail to get, as they march on in their lives, suitable persons to help them in carrying out their special work in this world. They are equipped, so to say, with just the qualities of head and heart as will ensure the fruition of their mission. Through self-control, strict discipline and severe austerities they prepare themselves, consciously or unconsciously for the huge task that Providence has meant them. Witness the lives of Buddha, Christ, Mahommed, Chaitanya and Sri Ramakrishna. To the galaxy of these saints belongs Samarth (able) Ramdas, the hero of our narrative. To form an adequate idea of the value of the life of Ramdas and of the part he played in the formation and rise of Maharashtra, a knowledge of the then political situation of Maharashtra is absolutely necessary. During the reign of the Moghul Emperors Shahjahan

and Aurangzeb, Hinduism was in danger of being obliterated from India. Hindus were being trodden down by the fanatic Mahommedans who were bent on converting them to Mahomedanism by all means in their power. No method was too low for them. They spared no pains—allurement, threat, force were being freely used to proselytise the Hindu. Some embraced Islam for fear of losing their property, others for preserving the chastity of their wives while others for acquiring the good will of the Emperor and through it enormous riches. Hindus were thus helpless and their condition was simply deplorable. In fact the Hindu Society was in danger of getting wrecked for want of a bold leader who could steer clear of all danger. Just at this juncture there arose on the horizon of Maharashtra Ramdas shining in Divine Light.

Samartha Ramdas was born of Suryaji Pant Thosar who was a Kulkarni of the village called Jambagon. Suryaji Pant Thosar was a Devastha Brahmin of Aswalayam Shakha and was neither rich nor poor. He was an ardent worshipper of Suryanarayan. He had a wife by name Ranu Bhai who was known for her chastity, modesty, love and kindness. Of such a pair was born Ramdas as their second son, the first being Gangadhar known afterwards as Sresta. This second son was born in the year 1608 on the auspicious day of Sri Rama Navami on which Sri Rama, the well known incarnation of Vishnu, was born. The parents christened him as Narayan. While a boy he was shrewd active, energetic and playful. He was fond of climbing trees, jumping into rivers and swimming. In due time he was put in school and there he was known for his diligence. As was the custom in those days he was taught Sanskrit just sufficient to know all about daily rites,—Sandhya, Deva-Puja, Agni-Karya,—the study of the Vedas being left to his option. He was also taught to write Modi characters which were in use then. In his fifth year the Upanayana (thread-wearing) ceremony was performed and thence forwards he observed the routine duties of a Brahman Batu. The object of education in those days was, more than the acquisition of material knowledge, to ground the beginners in religious ideals, in spirituality and to make gods of men. He had a great aptitude for learning so much so that before he attained his twelfth year he had acquired a good knowledge of the Upanishads, the Gita, Bhagawat and Ramayan. And there arose in him a craving for spiritual knowledge. During this period his elder brother, Sresta, used to

give initiation to many people who went to him. This all the more kindled Ramdas's thirst for the Truth and though but eight years old he approached his brother and expressed his desire to be initiated. The elder brother wanted him to wait till he grew a little older, at which he got greatly vexed, secretly left the house and went into the temple dedicated to Maruti (Hanuman the servant of Rama) and stayed there long without the knowledge of his brother or mother, immersed in prayer. Maruti took pity on him and appearing before him asked him what he wanted. The young Narayan without in the least getting nervous boldly replied, "I want nothing but Anuraga" meaning thereby initiation. Maruti thereupon meditated for sometime and invoked Sri Rama to appear before the boy and confer on him the desired boon. The boy was thus blessed with a vision of Sri Rama with Sita and Lakshman. Before the vision disappeared the boy was christened Ramdas—the name by which Narayan was ever afterwards known—and Sri Rama is said to have enjoined on him the duty of undertaking the revival of Hindu religion and of securing solace and comfort to weeping hearts—a task in which he was promised help from a king who would be born in a Maharashtra family living by the side of the river Krishna. Ramdas quietly returned home and was pursuing his studies until his 12th year when he lost his father.

Then came the turning point in his life. The widowed mother and his affectionate brother who became his guardians soon arranged for his marriage. Many relations and friends were invited and the marriage ceremony was going on in full swing. Preliminary ceremonies and rites being over, the Brahmins who presided at the marriage held the screen between the bride and the bridegroom according to the custom and began to chant *Mangalashṭaka Mantra* repeating at the end twice सुसुद्धीं शुभमंगलं सप्तदानं the meaning of which is "This is the auspicious moment (in your life) be on your alert or keep awake." The poet Moropant has very beautifully said "In all places, Brahmins at the auspicious time of marriage have said "be awake" but it was given only to Ramdas to grasp the inner meaning of it—my salutations unto him." To a minute observer and deep thinker Hindu Scriptures appeal in one way and to the dull in another way. While to the one the Hindu Scriptures appear to lay down mere conventionalities which have to be mechanically and formally observed, to the other they give a note of warning hearing which the goal of life becomes easily attainable. The

mind of Ramdas, not tainted by worldly thoughts and desires, free from "Kanchana and Kamini" was pure as crystal and at once reflected in lurid colours the meaning hidden in or intended to be conveyed by the Mantra referred to above. When he heard the words "be on your alert or keep awake" uttered twice his keen and untrammelled intellect at once pointed out to him the danger and exhorted him to decide at once the course he should take. And Ramdas as if by instinct got up and boldly ran out of the house bestowing not even the least thought on how his guardians would feel or how the assembled guests would feel insulted.

Our young Bramacharin with burning Vairagya in his heart straightway went to Panchavati in Nasik and there selected a place called Takli where he spent twelve complete years in severe penance, meditation and prayers. Tradition has it that he used to stand in the waters of the Godaveri for hours and hours together, fully engrossed in making japam and that his concentration was so great that he was unmindful of the fish bites on the lower part of his body. It is rather unfortunate that no detailed account of his Sadhanas has been preserved; suffice it to say that many and varied should have been the Sadhanas he practised as is evidenced by the wonderful Siddhis (powers) he possessed and the high spirituality he attained.

After finishing the Sadhanas in which he was strenuously engaged for twelve long years and during which he led a life of seclusion in forest, he took to Parivrajaka life (life of wandering) and travelled all over India from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin mingling with people of all grades and circumstances associating with mendicants of all denominations and moving with itinerant monks whose rule of life is not to stay in any place for more than three days. During this period of his life he initiated many thirsting souls and established temples in various places for the worship of Sri Rama, his Ishtam (chosen deity). In the temples he established he made all the necessary arrangements for the daily Pujah and appointed one of his own disciples to be in charge of each. As was expected of the monks of his order he visited the four great places of pilgrimage—the Chaturdhama—the Badri-Kedar in the Himalayas, the Sethu-Bandha Rameswar in the South, Jagannath Puri in the East and Dwaraka in the West. In this Parivrajaka life besides various other places of pilgrimage he is

said to have visited also Ceylon finally returning to Nasik. And all his possessions these twelve years were a pair of wooden sandals, a rosary in his hand, another round his neck, and a Yogadanda (a monk's stick) in the hollow of which he carried writing materials of his work the *Das Bodha*. And all his clothing was a long conical cap upon his matted locks and a Gerua (ochre) coloured cloth round his loins.

On his return from pilgrimage, he wished to see his mother and brother. So he went to his native place Jambagon. Thus after having lived a wandering ascetic's life for twelve years he entered his native village and went to the temple of Maruti first where he got his initiation and worshipped the deity who had showed him the Light and guided him in all his wanderings. Then he went to his house and entered it loudly uttering the words "Jai, Jai Raghuvir Samarth"—words which he used to utter whenever he went for alms. His mother hearing these words directed her daughter-in-law to give alms. Sresta's wife accordingly came out with alms at which Ramdas said "I am not come here as a mendicant to take alms." From the not unfamiliar voice the mother took him to be her son and asked, "Who is it? Is it Narayan, my child?" Up came the reply "Yes mother. It is I". So saying he prostrated at her feet touching them with his head. What joy resulted from this meeting between son and mother after the lapse of nearly twenty-four years can better be imagined than expressed. The old mother who had lost her eyesight by constant weeping for the son who had run away caught hold of him with her hands and taking him by her side constantly passed her hand over his body. After a little time the mother told her son "Naroba, (that is the name by which she used to call him) you have grown big! How I long to see you with my physical eyes! But alas! how to get the sight?" This moved the heart of Ramdas and he invoked his diety Rama and fervently prayed to him to restore his mother her eye-sight. And then he gently touched her eyes with his fingers. At once, by the grace of the Lord, she got her vision back, and unbounded was the joy of the mother to see her son. And she exclaimed "What Naroba! All this witchcraft have you learnt with the help of some ghosts. Oh! Tell me the name of the ghost that restored my eyesight." Then on the very spot Ramdas composed a song which says, "Oh mother! that ghost is none other than the resident of Vaikuntha (abode of God) who came to Ayodhya to be born as the son of Kausalya for the purpose of exterminating

Ravana and Kumbhakarna" and so on. Listening to this the mother became ecstatic and embraced her son again and again. His brother who was inside engaged in worship hearing all this, came out and embraced Ramdas with a brother's joy. After spending a few days in the company of his old mother and brother, he took leave of them saying that the deity in the temple on the side of the Krishna had imposed on him a duty which required his presence elsewhere. At this time he was thirty-six years old, the first twelve years of his life having been spent at home, the second twelve years in Panchawati in Tapasya and the next twelve years in Parivrajaka life. This brings the Sadhana period of his life to a close and we shall hereafter see him launching in right earnest on his life's mission—the building up of the Maharashtra nation on a religious basis.

---

## EDITORIAL NOTES

### The Question of Indian National Unity

"Being of one mind is the secret of society. And the more you go on fighting and quarrelling about all trivialities such as Dravidian and Aryan and the question of Brahmanas and non-Brahmanas and all that, the further you are off from that accumulation of energy and power which is going to make the future India. For mark you, the future depends entirely upon that. This is the secret—accumulation of will power, co-ordination, bringing all, as it were, into one focus." These memorable words uttered more than three decades ago by the great patriot-Saint of Modern India, standing on the very soil of Madras, we Indians should bear in mind to-day more than ever. Distinctions and differences there are in all countries. And India is no exception to the rule. But what is most unfortunate in the India of to-day is that to the old factors of disunion, there have been added new ones introduced by Western civilisation, and all these are tending to divide the Indian people into countless factions positively imperilling the welfare of the country. The old differences between the so-called Aryan and non-Aryan, Brahmanas and non-Brahmanas, high-caste and out-caste, Hindus and Mohammedans are still there, nay are being accentuated at many places. Besides these, there have come into being the new



social divisions of capital and labour, and also political parties of various types, and all these are making confusion worse confounded by their quarrels and dissensions. No wonder then that the unsympathetic critic would look upon India as a land of chaos. But this is certainly not the correct view. The true seer sees in the present disturbed state of the country only the signs of a new awakening leading the Indian people to a greater unity and co-ordination than what existed in the past. Lovers and well-wishers of the country should not, therefore, feel depressed in any way. They should, on the other hand, put forth organised efforts to achieve the ideal of Indian national unity more enthusiastically than ever.

### **The Immensity of the Task**

The task of bringing about the unity of the Indian people is not an easy one. Neither is it such an impossibility as is supposed by many. And the hope of the future lies in the fact that in the midst of the vigorous propaganda and counter propaganda carried on in the country by the so-called religious and political zealots, the vast mass of the Indian people are as yet unaffected by the evil of communalism. Even those who have come under its sway are in the main giving expression to a new consciousness that, instead of being suppressed, should be given a higher turn and direction. The problem of Indian national unity is thus more constructive than destructive. And it has got the two fold aspects, communal as well as national. There must be realised the solidarity of the diverse sections of each community, and along with it, the foundations of national unity should also be laid, on the love and goodwill of the members of all communities. There is really no clash between the communal and national well-being. The former finds its fulfilment in the latter. It is the failure to recognise this fact that is mostly responsible for the conflict between our communal and national movements, that is proving to be greatly detrimental not only to the best interest of the country but also to that of the communities themselves. But this clash need not continue any longer. For the sake of our national regeneration it is essential on our part to look upon the problem of unity with a wider vision. The different communities are inseparable parts of the one indivisible Indian nation. The primary interest of any community should not, therefore, be ruthlessly sacrificed in the name of the nation. Neither should national welfare be thoughtlessly imperilled for the sake a particular community

whatever it may be. Let us make the unity of the community a stepping stone to the unity of the entire Indian people. And in strengthening the weaker members of the social organism let us also look to the well-being of the collective body of which they are the component parts.

### **Aryan and Non-Aryan**

Of all the communities in India, the Hindu society is unfortunately the most disunited. It consists of two thirds of India's three hundred millions, and as such its solidarity is an indispensable condition of the Indian national unity. But unfortunately various causes divide the Hindus to-day. Besides those that are due to the misapplication of the highest ideals of the Hindu religion, there are also some wrong theories propounded mostly by the so-called orientalist of the West, that are doing incalculable harm to Hindu society. The first of these is that the Aryans were a race of outlanders who invaded India, occupied the country by force of arms, and imposed their Government and culture on the aborigines supposed to include the ancestors of those who call themselves Dravidas and Adi-Dravidas in Southern India. But the earliest of the Vedic scriptures speak of a different tale. India was the motherland of the Aryans and Dravidians, nay of all the other races that lived and thrived on the soil from time immemorial. New races and tribes also came,—some as invaders and some as settlers, but almost all of them became fused beyond recognition into the mighty body of Hindu society. It is futile to try to divide this synthetic people with the help of a theory that cannot stand the test of truth. In the words of Swami Vivekananda, "We are, in spite of our various castes, and in spite of the modern customs of marriage restricted within the sub-divisions of a caste (though this is not universal), a mixed race in every sense of the word. Whatever may be the import of the philological terms "Aryan" and "Tamilian," even taking for granted that both these grand sub-divisions of Indian humanity came from outside the Western frontier, the dividing line had been, from the most ancient times, one of language and not of blood. "Such words as Aryans and Dravidians, are only of philological import, the so-called craniological differentiation finding no solid ground to work upon."

### **Hinduism—a Synthetic Religion**

Another "monstrous lie" believed in by many an unwary Hindu is that Hinduism is nothing but Brahminism, a religion that originated from Brahmins alone. Nothing can be further

from the truth. Hinduism represent the eternal religion revealed to the Rishis or "seers of truth"—to the prophets, saints and sages who were by no means the monopoly of any particular caste or class. Among the Upanishadic teachers there were Kshatriya kings—"non-Brahmin's in South India phraseology—who gave instructions even to Brahmin students. To this caste also belonged Rama and Krishna—the greatest of the incarnations of God—according to the Hindus of all sects and creeds. The glory of Hinduism has been upheld and proclaimed by an unbroken succession of saints and sages who sprang up from not only Brahmin and other high castes but also from the so-called untouchable classes. Modern Hinduism is not the religion of the Upanishads merely. It has been enriched by the religious ideas contained in the vast mass of Puranic scriptures as well as in the provincial and vernacular literature, ancient, medieval and modern. It is the synthesis of the various streams of culture, that have arisen and met on the soil of India. Just as the original Hindu society, with culture as its central theme, has assumed vast proportions through the assimilation of new elements, so has its religion, Hinduism, grown into a mighty cultural stream by the rise and inclusion of various systems of religious thought professed by innumerable sects and creeds free to follow their own laws of growth and to lead man step by step to the pinnacle of the highest spiritual glory. Hinduism is the great heritage left to us by the Vedic Rishis, the Upanishadic seers, the Puranic teachers, the Shaivite and Vaishnavite saints and philosophers of South India, and also by the Mahratha, Bengalee and North Indian saints and reformers. These are the makers of modern Hinduism; and they flourished in all ages, lived in different provinces, spoke diverse languages, and were born in communities both high-caste and out-caste. Many of the Puranic sages were even of questionable parentage, but they rose to the high eminence they enjoyed in Hinduism owing to their unique spiritual powers. It is therefore preposterous to brand as Brahminism a religion that is in every sense of the term the product of the religious genius of the entire Hindu community, consisting of Brahmins and non-Brahmins alike, of different racial stocks Aryan, Dravidian, Negrito-Kolarian, Mongolians and others.

### **The Curse of Untouchability**

"No religion on earth," observes Swami Vivekananda with a sorrowful heart, "preaches the dignity of humanity in such a

lofty strain as Hinduism, and no religion on earth treads upon the necks of the poor and the low in such a fashion as Hinduism." As the Swami further observes, the Hindu religion is not at fault. The principles of equality are there. But the Pharisees and Sadducees in Hinduism, instead of applying the ideals to their everyday life have invented inhuman laws and restrictions that have split Hindu society as it were into the two groups—the "touchable" and the "untouchable." The religion of the so-called orthodox is inseparable from "Don't touchism", and unfortunately it exists in more virulent form, in the South than in the North where, however, the Hindu-Moslem tension has become very acute. The question of Aryan and Dravidian, Brahmin and non-Brahmin are peculiar to Southern India. And it is the subtle Southern brain again that has also discovered pollution by sight and approach besides pollution by touch prevailing more or less in all parts of the country. The sufferings of the so-called "untouchables" are the greatest in the land of the philosophers Sankara, Ramanuja, and Madhva, where heart has not been allowed to grow as much as the brain. Whatever it is, the depressed classes are Hindus by faith, drawing inspiration from the Hindu scriptures in some form or other. And they have contributed their mite to the Hindu religion by giving birth to saints and teachers—Nanda, Tiruppan, Chokamela, Ravi Das and others—who have intensified Hindu spiritual life and are honoured even by the orthodox devotees of to-day. As such the out-caste communities form part and parcel of the mighty Hindu society, and their elevation should form an essential part of the general Hindu revival the signs of which are manifest all over the country.

### **The Problem of the Hindu Masses**

The uplift of the untouchable is one aspect of the larger question of the elevation of the Indian masses. But unfortunately there exists at present a great gulf between the classes and the masses almost as wide as that between the high-caste and the out-caste. The narrow mentality that dominates the minds of the so-called educated communities concerns itself with the welfare of the upper classes alone. The great truth that the nation lives in the cottage and that its salvation depends on the well-being of the masses is recognised by a few. At times the upper classes interest themselves in the people, but this mostly with a view to exploit them for the benefit of their political

parties. Nothing can be more suicidal to the good of the Indian nation than this. It is high time for the national workers to understand that the main problem of India lies in the cottage and in the village—the home of the nation. And the great task before them is to help the masses, to stand on their own legs economically, and solve the momentous problems that face them and the country. Besides this, another important work is to raise the cultural level of the people for the purpose of breaking down the barrier between the classes and the masses and establishing a greater solidarity between the two. Similar attempts were made from time to time by the reformers of the past. But the result could not be made permanent. It is because that Sanskrit learning and culture was not spread among the masses. However, we should now put sufficient stress on this important aspect of mass education of which religion should form an integral part. Speaking on this important problem observes Swami Vivekananda with a deep insight—“keep the motto before you—Elevation of the masses without injuring their religion.” “Teach the masses in the Vernacular, give them ideas; they will get information; but something more is necessary; give them culture. Until you give them that, there can be no permanence in the raised condition of the masses. There will be another caste created, having the advantage of Sanskrit language, which will quickly get above the rest and rule them all the same. The only safety, I tell you men who belong to the lower castes, the only way to raise your condition is to study Sanskrit. The only way to bring about a levelling of caste is to appropriate the culture, the education which is the strength of the higher castes. That done, you have done what you want.”

### **Hindu-Moslem Unity**

Hindu-Moslem differences stand as a great stumbling block in the way of Indian national unity. They have become more tense in the North than in the South; but they exist in some form or other all over the country. As such some proper basis should be found for their satisfactory settlement. The movement for organisation and conversion undertaken by the Hindus have given rise to a great animosity in the minds of the Mussalman propagandists who previously enjoyed a monopoly of conversion at the expense of the disorganised Hindu community. But Moslem leaders should clamour for special privileges no longer, but be ready to concede to others the rights they want for them-

selves. If both the Hindus and Mussalmans would try to preach their religions and gain converts by all legitimate means, many of the evils and abuses arising out of conversion and re-conversion would cease to arise at all. The killing of cows by Mussalmans and the playing of music before mosques by Hindus are the other two points of communal dissensions that are creating great troubles in the country. These so-called religious strifes are due not so much to religious faith as to communal rights. And the surest means of removing their root cause is not merely to pass resolutions in conferences, but also to promote inter-communal understanding by all practical means. Vigorous educative propaganda should be undertaken to counteract the evil influences of the fanatical preachers, whether Hindu or Mussalman, and to create at the same time in the minds of all a respect for the religion, life and property of others. It is a pity that Moslem preachers and masses are more fanatical and violent than their Hindu brethren. The many riots and assassinations that have taken place in recent times point clearly to this. Instead of being an object of pride it is a positive disgrace to Islam and Mussalman leaders should try to remove this slur by all means in their power. Islam entered India as the invaders' religion, and as such it has not yet been able to give up the spirit of militarism and aggression. Let it not any longer remain a foreign religion imbued with exclusive ideas of the Semites. Let it instead strike deep root in the soil of India and breathe the spirit of toleration and universalism that pervades her atmosphere. Our Mussalman brethren should also love their motherland as much as the Hindus, and take a greater interest in the good of their own countrymen than in that of their co-religionists abroad. It is unfortunate that many of them are, to quote the words of a sensible Mussalman writer, "callously indifferent to the great events at home," but evince the "wildest and most unnatural" concern with less momentous events in foreign lands inhabited by people who "happen to call themselves Mussalmans." At a time when millions of their co-religionists and countrymen were suffering greatly from exposure and starvation, Indian Mussalmans were busy in sending millions of rupees to support wars in distant lands that expressed its gratitude towards their Indian supporters by banishing the Khalifa and striking at the very roots of the ill-fated Khilafat movement itself. Mohammedans in India should be imbued with an intensive form of patriotism and also love the culture of

the land that has been the motherland of the forefathers of the vast majority of them. The Hindus also should look upon their Mohammedan brethren not as aliens but as children of India and inheritors of her culture. If both the communities would recognise their inner bond, the realisation of Hindu-Moslem unity will follow as a matter of course.

### **Strengthening of the Bonds of Unity**

The main solution to the problem of the unity of a deeply religious people lies greatly in the unity of religions. Causes of differences exist side by side with points of harmony, and the latter should be emphasised more than the former. Political, economic and social movements there must be. But all these should proceed in harmony with the genius of the Indian people. "Every improvement in India," observes Swami Vivekananda, "requires first of all an upheaval in religion. Before flooding the land with socialistic or political ideas first deluge the land with spiritual ideas . . . The first plank in the making of a future India, is the unification of religion." Whether we are Hindus or Mussalmans, Christians or Buddhists, all of us must claim our common heritage of spiritual ideas, and work for our common good with united hearts beating to the same spiritual tune. It is a happy sign of the times that this ideal of religious unity is being more and more recognised by thoughtful men of all religions in India. A great Moslem leader recently gave expression to it when he said—"I have an invincible faith in the essential harmony of spiritual ideals that are at the core of the world's religions—Hinduism, Christianity and Islam." What we want everywhere is a truly religious spirit. Instead of an unprogressive and fanatical religion we should have a dynamic and creative religion that will break down the encrustations of prejudices and superstitions passing by the name of religion, awaken in us the true spiritual sense that would take note of the essential truths common to all religions, and arouse in ourselves an intense religious fervour that would transform itself into national service in all fields of life, political and economic, aesthetic and literary, social and spiritual. Besides the religious bond, there are other factors of union,—the love of motherland, devotion to common ideals, and the awakening of a new consciousness of nationalism that is stirring the very depths of Indian life at present. Rightly does Sister Nivedita observe in her inimitable words about the unity of the Indian people—"With all alike, love of home, pride of race, idealism of woman, is a

passion. With everyone, devotion to India as India finds some characteristic expression. To the Hindu of all provinces, his motherland is the seat of holiness, the chosen home of righteousness, the land of seven sacred rivers, "the place to which sooner or later must come all souls in the quest of God." To the son of Islam, her earth is the dust of his saints. She is the seal upon his greatest memories. Her villages are his home. In her future lies his hope. In both, the nationalising consciousness is fresh and unexhausted. That which Asoka was, seated, two hundred and fifty years before Christ, on the great throne of Pataliputra, —What Akbar was, at Delhi, eighteen centuries later,—that, in the sense of national responsibility, every Indian man must become to-morrow. For this is the age, not of thrones, but of democracies; not of empires, but of nationalities; and the India that faces the sunrise of nations, is young and strong."

---

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### GREATER INDIA

It is now a well recognised fact that the ancient Hindu civilization did not confine its activities to the natural boundaries of the mother country as was for a long time wrongly held by many Western scholars, but allowed itself to flow into far off lands. It has been rightly said that the History of 'Ancient India was in its cultural side the history of the expansion of Hindu organisation and Hindu socio-ethical and philosophical ideals from the Punjab and the upper Gange valley. The sea could not bar its expansion eastwards. It crossed the seas to Suvarnabhumi (Burma) to Dwaravati (Siam) to Champa (Cochin China) to Kataha (Malaya) to Srivijaya (Sumatra) to Yavadvipa (Java) to Barhina (Borneo) to Bali and as some would have it went further till it touched the shores of the Americas. "The Vedic Rishis and the Buddhist patriarchs" a writer tells us however aspired to broadcast the products of their culture across the 'seven seas' and to share their *Amrita* or *triratna* with the humblest savage and lowly barbarian. The 'Dasyus' and the 'Danavas' who often came to spoil the rituals and ceremonies of the Vedic Rishis in the early Aryan settlements soon softened their opponents and bended their knees before the Aryan fire-altars; and the old Rishi of flowing white beard and stately matted locks, as he gave benediction to his new convert, never forgot to plant in his heart the seed of Aryan thought as



he marked his face and body with the symbols of holy ashes and the black spots of his homa libations." Writes a recent issue of the *Hindu Mission Bulletin* "The original peoples were converted to orthodox Brahminical Hinduism with Brahmin priests from India and Vedic sacrifices and this we know from Sanskrit inscriptions found in those lands: later on Buddhism followed suit. Even at the present day the people of Bali retain their Hindu Religion with the Hindu Gods, ritual of worship and philosophy and even the Hindu caste system. Brahminical Hindu Gods and Goddesses like Yama, Indra, Kubera, Saraswati, etc. are even to-day worshipped and honoured in Japan."

During the last 30 years much research work in the islands of South Eastern Asia has been done by Dutch Scholars like Kern, Brandes, Krom for reconstructing the history of those regions. We are glad that Indian Scholars are now beginning to take up this research work. Professor Kalidas Nag who returned recently from Bali and was amidst us declared in a speech in Madras that "the people of greater India left a marvellous history and even now while one travelled through Indo-China (Champa) one saw there glorious monuments of Indian art and culture and felt as if their ancestors were yet living." The Professor in his article on "Greater India Revisited" in the October number of the *Modern Review* gives us an interesting picture of the library of a Balinese Pandit. "Sitting in the outhouse on a long wooden seat, so similiar to the Indian model", he writes, "the Balinese Pandit Dijilantik showed me one by one, the manuscripts of the Mahabharata, the Brahmanda and Vishnu Puranas, the Dharmasastra of Manu and Bhrigu, the Rajaniti etc., till I almost forgot that I was thousands of miles away from India, the original home of these Sastras which I saw in Balinese garb." There is a vast field of research open to Indian Scholars. Let us also hope, as the Professor wishes, that Indian universities and learned societies will take steps to unravel this closed chapter of India's ancient glory.

#### AHIMSA AND BUDDHISM

In his article on "A plea for Buddhist Reform" Mr. Daljit Singh Sadharia, in the August number of the *Young East* asks the Buddhists to repudiate the "demoralising" doctrine of Ahimsa—this "scientific obscurantism"—and incorporate in the Buddhist system the teaching of science instead. The writer would like to hold Ahimsa as an accretion to Buddhism from the past ages

and not as a part of the Buddhistic doctrine. "The fourth great and most dangerous defect of Buddhism," he points out, "is its ahimsaism". And then states that this doctrine has not a little contributed to the emasculation of the Indian people and their fall into the present state of slavery and servitude. In his hatred of this tenet he wants to shove off this "sin" on other shoulders. He writes : "It must at once be admitted that this demoralising doctrine did not originate with Buddhism as wrongly supposed by many, but was preached and practised long before Buddha's time. The man who erected it into a religion was that degenerate Mahavira, the founder of Jainism " It seems evident that the writer is ignorant that this doctrine is as old as the Vedas and that the doctrine is a part and parcel of the Sanatana Dharma of the Hindu. For, the Vedas enjoin मा हिंस्यात् सर्वभूतानि cause no injury to any being—अहिंसा परमो धर्म—Non-injury is the highest Virtue.

Ahimsa, the Aryan Dharma places in the first rung of the ladder for the aspirant of the highest bliss; so does the Rajayoga draw the attention of the Sadhaka first and foremost to the principle of Ahimsa. When we declare that this doctrine is older than Buddhism or Jainism we should not be understood to mean that the Lord Buddha did not preach this doctrine nor wish to have it as a tenet of the religion, he founded. The Dhammapada is one of the earliest authorities on the teachings of the Lord Buddha. It was recognised and accepted at the council of Asoka in 240 B.C. as a genuine collection of His sayings. And learned scholars of Buddhism have since declared that the Dhammapada "breathes the very spirit of the teacher" in whose solemn precepts men hear the voice of Sakyamuni summoning them to the life of contemplation, of strenuous mind culture." Therein we find him warning the monks thus : "Whoso seeks his own pleasure by another's pain, is entangled in hate and cannot get free," And again "To all life is dear, judge them by thyself and forbear to slay or to cause slaughter." Nor is this the only place where we find him expounding this great doctrine of Ahimsa. In his "Aryan Truth of the Way leading to the ceasing of Woe", he raises the question : "And what brethren is Right Aim ?" ; and answers it himself by saying in no uncertain voice, "The being set on Renunciation, on Non-Resentment, on Harmlessness, that brethren is called Right Aim." Even though reformers of Buddhism may cast aside that beautiful story told of the lord Buddha's readiness to sacrifice his very life for a goat they cannot

but admit that the doctrine of Ahimsa which finds a place in the Dhammapada is His. No true Buddhist could therefore consider that the doctrine of Ahimsa is an accretion, much less stigmatise it as "degenerate" as the writer has done.

We find it to be one of the cardinal doctrines in all the great religions of the world. It has found a place in the Hindu Scriptures, in the Bible, and in the Quran. Nay even the Hedonist of the present day has tried to explain in his own way this innate higher nature of man. In our own times, its greatest exponent, Mahatma Gandhi explains it "as a complete absence of ill-will against all that lives" and in his warm advocacy of it says, "It embraces even sub-human life, not excluding noxious insects or beasts. They have not been created to our destructive propensities. If we only knew the mind of the Creator, we should find then their proper place in His creation. Non-violence is therefore in its active form good-will towards all life. It is pure love \* \* We pretend to believe that retaliation is the law of our being, whereas in every scripture we find that retaliation is nowhere obligatory, but only permissible. It is restraint that is obligatory. Retaliation is indulgence requiring elaborate regulating. Restraint is the law of our being. For highest perfection is unattainable without highest restraint."

If Ahimsa has been put before mankind as an ideal worthy to be followed from the days of the Vedas up to the present day then how is it that the present writer condemns this doctrine in Buddhism as unsound? He believes "this mischief" is producing "such dire results" and "is an enemy of patriotism." "Though there were other causes" the writer observes, "it was this mischievous cult of non-killing which contributed" to India's downfall. May we remind the writer that the mighty empires of the Mauryas and the Guptas, that of Kanishka and Harsha flourished in this soil of India between Buddha's time and the Mohammedan conquest. Some of the greatest names of Indian History—that of Asoka, Kanishka, Harsha—were all connected with Buddhism—so we have to look elsewhere than this cult of non-killing for the downfall of India. Evidently it is "the present state of slavery and servitude" of India that makes it necessary for this reform in Buddhism. Asks the writer, "What would have happened had Japan practised Ahimsa in her dealings with the Western Powers? She would certainly have lost her independence and could not have occupied the proud position in the

council of the nations which she is enjoying today. It was the sword that brought the haughty Czar to his reason and checked the tide of European imperialism. It is the physical force that counts most in international politics. There is nothing in this world but centres of force in constant evolution, in unceasing action and reaction on each other. The will to power and to subject to its dominion is the fundamental fact of the life of the universe. The doctrine of Ahimsa is wholly opposed to the teaching of the theory of evolution." Ahimsa does not tally with the Darwinian theory! That is why the writer wants to reform Buddhism according to Western standards of civilisation. To the writer the world is all in all. To the Buddha the world was worth nothing at all. The world is without permanence or purpose, no reality and no purpose save that of retribution; man's only happiness is to escape it. The calm and peaceful frame of mind is the only happy one—"the promise of a rest hereafter ineffable and placid," to this end must man endeavour. Such is the substance of the Buddha's teaching. How can this tally with the ideal of one moving in a materialistic world? Hence comes the conflict. But the writer's love for Buddhism would not allow him to give it up; he would therefore remould it according to his ideals to "fit the modern mind" and "this age of enlightenment and progress". But the Buddhism which the writer wishes to be a world religion cannot be the great glorious faith chalked out by its founder, the Lord Buddha.

#### CHRISTIANISING INDIA

Lord Meston, formerly Governor of the United Provinces addressing the Gloucester Diocesan Convention held recently in Cheltenham remarked in the course of his speech that Christianity was the only solution for the tremendous problems which faced India and hence the utmost necessity of patching up their own differences for the great task of Christianising India. It was not as a protagonist of Christian missions, but as one who knew and loved India where he spent the best part of his life, he said, that he uttered this frank and honest statement. In short Lord Meston believes in the "Civilizing" nature of Christianity. It is not the first time that we hear such statements from responsible and well known men. When Englishmen who have spent the best part of their lives in India as Lord Meston has done utter such statements, no wonder that Englishmen in England "liken the people of India to wild beasts of a zoo" and declare that

Indians are "barbarian, barbarous, barbaric." Should India adopt Christianity for her own good and the good of the world? In no uncertain voice does the Christian missionary Rev. John Haynes Holmes speak about it in the Divali Art Annual of the *Bombay Samachar*. He calls upon India to be faithful to its own religion. Says he, "Be not deceived by Christianity! As embodied in the person of Jesus and as defined by the Sermon on the Mount and the two great commandments of the law, Christianity is a great and noble religion. Its precepts of love as taught and lived by the Nazarene, I would commend to all of them. But Christianity as preached by Churches, as practised by Governments, and as carried far and wide by soldiers and missionaries is an abomination. Having nothing of it Gandhiji has done many wise as well as noble things in his unparalleled career of political and spiritual leadership. In nothing has he been wiser and nobler than in acknowledging his grateful indebtedness to Jesus but steadfastly remaining a Hindu. I sometime wonder if religion, as organized anywhere, can ever save the race. Certain I am that if any religion can save any people, it will be no foreign cult or creed but its own faith from the spirit of its own life."

"Let India be India. You have much to learn from us, as we have much to learn from you. No race, or country, or civilization of all interchange is self-culture and self-respect." Whom are we to look to for guidance—the missionary of Christ who sees the rottenness of European Christianity or the Pro-Consul who is enamoured of his Christian 'Kultur' and Christian Civilization? We can only say with another missionary of Christ—the Rev. Mr. Sunderland, "If there is a land where nations and peoples have over and over and for long periods of times, acted like animals in the zoo or the jungle—springing at one another's throats and devouring one another that land is not India, it is Europe." Is India to adopt for its own future welfare that Christianity which has produced such visible and baneful effect upon mankind?

#### WHO BROUGHT THE IDEA OF DEMOCRACY IN INDIA ?

Said the same ex-Governor in the above reported speech that democracy was the last thing that entered the mind of the Indian people and democracy was "absolutely foreign to their conception." Time and again such false notions have been dinned into young India's ears by the West. But India of the ages ever believed these words of her own Rishis that स मंत्रजयते "Truth verily prevails," and in spite of these falsifiers of the West and their "Manasaputras" in this country to hypnotise young India, her children have been unfolding to the seekers of truth that democracy was nothing new to ancient India. Her history whether in the North or the South shewed that democratic life was not an unknown feature in politics or social life. But the ex-ruler of the United Provinces told his Christian audience that it was Britain that introduced the democratic principles into this ancient country. India's greatest scientist, Sir J. C. Bose in his inspiring address to the outgoing graduates of the University of Mysore answers

to this lie that the West is trying to perpetuate in the world Says Sir J. C. Bose, "I do not know of any other country in the world, except India, where sons of kings and commons were required to live a life of simplicity and perfect equality under a great teacher. In our great epic we read of a great tournament that was held before the Court of Hastinapura more than thirty centuries ago. Karna, the reputed son of a charioteer, had challenged the supremacy of Prince Arjuna. To this challenge Arjuna had returned a scornful answer; 'A prince could not cross swords with one who could claim no nobility of descent.' 'I am my own ancestor' replied Karna, 'and my deeds are my patents of nobility.' "This is perhaps the earliest assertion of the right of man to choose and determine his own destiny." What different angles of vision between the Westerners and the Orientals. !

#### TEE DUTY OF MUSSALMANS AT PRESENT

Dr. Suhrawady Judge of the Calcutta High Court in his message to the new weekly *Young Muslim* expresses his great pain and regret to find "Hindusthan the home of wisdom and Divine philosophy torn by the clash of conflicting interests and warring creeds" and speaks to his fellow Muslims to be true followers of their religion. "Believing," says he, "in the Gospel of self-effacement, self-abnegation and self-surrender (Islam) following a faith which derives its very name from peace (S.L.M.) belonging to a community whose daily greetings spell peace and good will (Salam), a humble disciple of the great Master whose glorious epithet is the mercy and peace maker of the worlds, I cannot think of any message today other than that of peace and unity, so eloquently preached by our holy faith which is being profaned by the foolish deeds of its followers." Islam has been maligned because of the profane deeds of its followers. Whatever Mohammed may have said and done his followers led by their "Moulvis" never have tried to establish Allah in the hearts of his followers by the Gospel of universal love. They have taught their flock a Muslim brotherhood and not a Universal brotherhood. If the youth of Islam inspired by the noblest teachings of the faith and the highest ideals of righteousness and piety assert themselves, we believe with Dr. Suhrawady that they can without difficulty overwhelm the militant aggression we see today in the fair name of Islam and drive the forces of violence into the back ground. The noble giver of this message has exhorted his fellow Muslims to remember and faithfully follow in letter and spirit the Quranic verse which in clear and unmistakable terms calls upon the faithful to co-operate for the advancement of the cause of truth and piety and sternly non-co-operate with sinfulness and transgression. This is the way to vindicate Islam—not by creating troubles for saving the head of a murderer. Let us hope that in the years to roll on we shall have a host of young Muslims worthy of the great religion Mohammed founded.

# NEWS AND REPORTS

## ORISSA AND GUZERAT FLOODS

The Ramakrishna Mission has been carrying on relief work at Hanspat in Dhamnagar Thana, South Balasore since September last and has also opened another centre at Dehurda in Bhograi Thana, North Balasore. The last weekly distribution consisted of 184 maunds of rice among sufferers belonging to 81 different villages. Total failure of crops has made the situation extremely grave and the relief works will have to be continued for several months. Sufficient funds are therefore necessary to cope with the situation. Our appeal has not yet met with any adequate response. We believe however that the cause of humanity will not go unheeded and that the poor sufferers will not fail to receive proper attention from the sympathetic public.

The Mission from its Bombay Branch Centre at Khar despatched a relief party to Cambay in July last immediately after the floods in Guzerat. The party opened a centre at Tarapur and extended the relief operation as funds permitted. The Mission is at present working in 92 villages from four relief centres over an approximate area of 400 square miles. Besides rice distribution 3,840 pieces of cloth have been distributed and food stuff sold at cheap rates. If sufficient funds be forthcoming re-building of huts will be taken up.

Contribution however small will be thankfully received and acknowledged. Address for sending help:—

(1) The President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math P.O. Dist., Howrah.

(2) The Manager, Udbodhan, 1, Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

(Sd.) SUDDHANANDA,

*Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission.*

### RAMAKRISHNA MISSION RELIEF WORK

**Accounts from June to November, 1926** *Sonthal Pergs: Scarcity Relief Work (June to August)*:—A centre was started at Jamtara from where 10 weekly distributions of rice and other food grains were given to 719 distressed inhabitants of 33 villages. Total quantity of rice distributed was 223 mds., 26 seers, 8 chts., dal 3 mds., gram 122 mds., seeds 60 mds., salt 20 mds. New cloth 50 pieces and old cloths 752 pieces.

Besides these, for the purpose of supplying drinking water 22 wells and one tank were dug and one tank was repaired. Distressed people were engaged in their works and received doles of rice for their labour.

**Midnapore Scarcity Relief Work (July)**:—A centre was started at Paikmajita from where 4 weekly distributions of rics were given to 1,077 distressed inhabitants of 45 villages. Total quantity of rice distributed was 136 mds.,

**Receipts and Expenditure for the above two centres**:—Received by donation Rs. 1,590-11-9. Sale proceeds of rice Rs. 4-15-0, from the Ramakrishna Mission Provident Relief Fund Rupees 24,01-8-3. Total Rs. 3,997-3-0.

*Expenditure* :—Rice bought Rs. 2,312-9-0, other food grains Rs. 630-13-9, cloths Rs. 49-5-0, transit Rs. 68-7-0, travelling and inspection Rs. 166-13-9, equipment Rs. 6-10-6, workers' expenses (for 9 workers) Rs. 101-12-3, establishment Rs. 19-3-6, stationery Rs. 5-14-9, postage Rs. 25-12-0, printing Rs. 6-2-0, pecuniary help Rs. 57-8-6, medical relief Rs. 8-2-3, agricultural relief Rs. 241-0-0, water scarcity relief Rs. 15-4-3, aids for hut building Rs. 268-0-0, test work Rs. 0-5-6, sacks Rs. 7-13-0, miscellaneous expenses Rs. 5-10-0. Total Rs. 3,997-3-0.

*Midnapore Flood Relief Work (from 22nd August to 17th November)* :—Five centres were started from where 2,106 mds., 27 seers of rice, 25 mds., 15 seers, chira and 1 md. of salt were distributed to 5,218 distressed inhabitants of 110 villages. Also 1,405 new cloths and 1,971 old cloths were distributed.

*Receipts and Expenditure for the above work* :—Received by donation Rs. 15,824-13-1½, sale proceeds of sacks and rice etc., Rs. 519-4-3, from the Ramakrishna Mission Provident Relief Fund Rs. 2,100-3-3. Total Rs. 18,444-4-7½.

*Expenditure* :—Rice for distribution bought Rs. 14,700-1-3, other food grains bought Rs. 413-2-3, cloths bought Rs. 970-12-0, sacks bought Rs. 231-2-9, transit charges Rs. 610-4-3, travelling and inspection Rs. 467-0-6, equipment Rs. 223-10-3, workers' expenses (for 20 workers) Rs. 619-12-7½, establishment Rs. 70-6-9, stationery Rs. 11-15-3, postage Rs. 70-5-0, pecuniary help Rs. 25-9-0, medical help Rs. 3-0-0, miscellaneous expenses Rs. 27-2-3. Total Rs. 18,444-4-7½.

This account was audited on the 10th February, 1927, and found correct by Mr. N. K. Majumdar, M.A., G.D.A., Government Certified Auditor, who is the Honorary Auditor of the Ramakrishna Mission.

We regret that we could not publish this account earlier.

(Sd.) SUDDHANANDA,

Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission,

The 21st November, 1927.

#### CYCLONE DISASTER IN NELLORE AND RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

The public are by this time aware of the havoc caused in Nellore by the recent cyclone. The report having reached us that the people had been rendered homeless and destitute, relief was considered absolutely necessary. Therefore the Ramakrishna Mission, Madras, despatched a party of workers on the 7th November, 1927, to inspect the affected areas and organise relief.

Relief has now been afforded to a good many people in the form of rice and clothes at a cost of a few thousands of rupees. Half-a dozen members of the Mission are still working in the field. Though the distress is spread over a wide area the Mission owing to paucity of funds has been forced to confine itself only to areas where the distress is acute. We take this opportunity of thanking those who have already contributed their mite towards this relief work. We hope to publish a detailed account later on.