THE ELEVENTH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-THREE, WAS A RED-LETTER DAY OF INDIA. FOR IT WAS ON THAT DAY THAT HINDU RELIGION AND CULTURE SO LONG RELEGATED TO A PLACE OF NEGLIGENCE AND PITY, CAME TO BE RECOGNISED BY LEADERS OF THOUGHT AND CULTURE OF EVERY CIVILIZED NATION AS THE GRANDEST OF ALL RELIGIONS. IT WAS DONE IN A MANNER PECULIAR TO INDIA AND INDIA ALONE.

IT HAPPENED LIKE THIS. TO CELEBRATE THE FOUR HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA BY COLUMBUS A WORLD FAIR WAS ORGANISED IN CHICAGO. ALONG WITH IT WAS HELD A PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS. THE ORGANISERS OF THIS PARLIAMENT SENT OUT INVITATIONS TO HEADS OF EVERY GREAT RELIGION FOR SENDING THEIR REPRESENTATIVES. THE OSTENSIBLE OBJECT OF THIS GRAND ENDEAVOUR WAS TO DETERMINE WHICH WAS THE BEST AMONG THE RECOGNISED RELIGIONS. HINDUISM DID NOT GET ANY INVITATION. FOR THE ORGANISERS REGARDED HINDUISM AS A CRUDE FORM OF RELIGION SUITABLE FOR PRIMITIVE PEOPLE ONLY. HOWEVER, URGED BY SOME YOUTHS OF MADRAS—HE HIMSELF ALSO FELT A CALL FROM ABOVE AS WELL—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA WENT THERE.

THE SWAMI WAS A YOUNG MAN OF BARELY THIRTY YEARS OF AGE. HE WENT TO REPRESENT HINDUISM AS HE LEARNT IT AT THE FEET OF HIS GURU, SRI RAMAKRISHNA DEV. BUT AS HE WENT THERE UNINVITED AND WITHOUT ANY CREDENTIAL THE DOORS OF THAT GREAT ASSEMBLAGE WERE FIRST SLAMMED ON HIS FACE. THIS BAFFLING SITUATION WOULD HAVE DISSUADED ANY OTHER PERSON FROM MAKING FURTHER ATTEMPTS IN THE MATTER. BUT THE SWAMI WAS NOT THE PERSON TO YIELD TO ANY OBSTRUCTION OR DIFFICULTY, HOWEVER FORMIDABLE. HE PERSISTED IN HIS ATTEMPTS AND AT LAST SUCCEEDED IN GETTING ENTRY INTO THE PARLIAMENT AS A DELEGATE REPRESENTING HINDUISM.

ON SEPT. 11, 1893, THE PARLIAMENT OPENED WITH DUE SOLEMNITY AND GRANDEUR. SWAMI VIVEKANANDA, HITHERTO UNKNOWN TO NAME, FAME OR RECOGNITION, COULD HARDLY UTTER HALF A SENTENCE, ‘SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF AMERICA,’ BEFORE HE CAME TO BE RECOGNISED AS A WORLD FIGURE! UNDOUBTEDLY, HE WAS THE MOST OUTSTANDING PERSON IN THE PARLIAMENT.
Ramakrishna Mission Shilpapitha Main Building

Swami Santoshanandaji, Founder Secretary at the Opening of the Shilpapitha.
Swami Santoshanandaji and Swami Vishwashrayanandaji in the Rabindra-Prafulla Centenary.

Swami Santoshanandaji, Swami Vishokanandaji, Swami Dhyanatmanandaji, Swami Vishwashrayanandaji with Dr. Satyendra Nath Bose in the Shilpapitha.
of Religions. Hearing Swamiji, the savants of every civilized nation started looking upon the Hindu religion with awful admiration.

The news of the unprecedented success of the Swami reached India in no time. It simply electrified the whole country. India awoke from her age long slumber!

Thus was proved to the hilt the veracity of the prophecy about him of his Guru, Sri Ramakrishna, who emphasized that never before was born in the world a great personality like Naren—for that was the name of Swamiji before he renounced the world—nor would there again come one like him.

But the Swami knew no peace, no happiness. His heart was aching for the down-trodden, poverty-stricken, hungry millions of his countrymen. Rolling on the floors of his wealthy hosts he would pass night after night shedding bitter tears for them. The sad contrast between the financial condition of the American masses and his own countrymen filled his heart with unspeakable agony. He would send up piteous prayers to the Divine Mother for redressing the unbearable condition of the Indian masses. His intense feelings, his heart-rending prayers and deep anxiety for finding out ways and means for raising the poor, the ignorant, dumb millions of Indians from their unimaginably sad plight did not go in vain. He succeeded in finding out sound and unfailing methods for their uplift.

According to him, for the regeneration of India the country should be flooded with spiritual ideas, and education must be carried to the farthest corner of the country. He put a question to himself: What made all the difference between the economic condition of the Indian and American masses? 'Education' was the answer he got.

While discussing the right type of education for our country Swamiji laid special emphasis on technical education. To quote his own words: "We need technical education and all else which may develop the industries, so that men instead of seeking for service may earn enough to provide for themselves and save something against a rainy day." The Swamiji's plan was that India should send spiritual emissaries to the West, and the West should send technical experts to India. Thoughts of a seer like Swami Vivekananda never go in vain. Now the West is sending her technicians in ever-increasing numbers to help India develop various industries. And India? Even from the days of Swamiji she has been sending eminent messengers of spirituality to America and Europe.

Regarding Technical Education Swamiji used to say: "It would be better if the people got a little technical education, so
that they might find work and earn their bread, instead of dawdling about and crying for service."

The most epoch-making finding and declaration of Swami— and he was the first person to do that— was that the life-force, the very vitality of our nation, lies in her spirituality. So long as that current runs strong and vigorous, the nation will go on flourishing in every respect. But if she ever changes that force for anything else, India must die! So in all his teachings the Swami was never tired of repeating that the force of spirituality must be kept pure and strong!

In conclusion let us listen to him again for learning our lesson: "What we want are Western Science coupled with Vedanta, Brahmacharya as the guiding motto, and also Shraddha and also Faith in one's own self."

Reprint from 'Shilpapitha Patrika' 1965
SOME THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION AND MORAL AND SPIRITUAL VALUES

Swami Mumukshananda

The question as to how to make our education oriented in the light of the moral and spiritual values that have sustained human civilization through the millenia has been engaging the attention of our educationists and Government now-a-days. The great reformers, patriots and educationists of our country like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath, Mahatma Gandhi and Sri Aurobindo and a host of others also advocated and sought to bring about a synthesis between our age old moral and spiritual values on the one hand and the social values which science, technology and democracy have stressed upon in modern times. In unambiguous terms they denounced a ‘valueless’ education. Mahatma Gandhi says, ‘By education It mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man—body, mind and soul. It would try to develop courage, strength, virtue, the ability to forget ourself in working towards great aims. This is more important than literacy; academic learning is only a means to this greater end...I would feel that if we succeed in building the character of the individual, society will take care of itself.’ (Quoted in ‘Great Educators’ by K. K. Mukherjee, page 155-157).

None is perhaps more emphatic on this point than Swami Vivekananda. He asks: ‘Education...which does not bring out the strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy and the courage of a lion—is it worth the name?’ —and says, ‘Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there undigested, all your life. We must have life-building, man-making character-building assimilation of ideas... We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded and by which one can stand on one’s feet...What we want is Western science coupled with Vedanta, Brahmacharya as the guiding motto and also Shraddha and faith in one’s own self. (Swami Vivekananda on India and Her problems p. 51)

That there has been, of late, a decline of the eternal values in the academic world of ours is obvious. The disastrous consequences of such decline we experience in

Head of the Ramakrishna Ashram, Rajkot, and Trustee, Ramakrishna Math and Misson.
our day-to-day life. The causes accounting for the decline of the values in education seem to be mainly three. First, the study of science, technology and other subjects which have good money-earning prospects, has, of necessity, acquired topmost importance. And the syllabi of these subjects, in almost all cases, provide no reading material which directly or indirectly deal with the ennobling values of human culture. Art, literature, music and painting, not to speak of religious literature, are, as it were, banished from these syllabi. Secondly, most of our students are not only led not to read good literature to enable them to appreciate and inculcate the highest values in life but they are positively open also to literature which impresses on them the uselessness of such values; which are, so to say, “anti-value” literature. Thirdly, students, like all of us, unconsciously learn to imbibe many things from our social environment. But it is unfortunate that men whose lives and characters are shining examples of the moral values are becoming rarer in all walks of life, even in educational institutions. The inevitable result is that most of our students get no education in value—either through good literature which few of them read or through the living examples which are rare.

* * *

The different Education Commissions appointed during the past fifty years or so, have again and again emphasized the need of introducing value-oriented education. Some wise methods and lines of actions have also been suggested. But possibly owing to the lack of bold initiative and capable men these suggestions have not been given effect to. One of the remedies they have recommended is the introduction of the high class value-oriented literature at all levels of education. Such study will appealingly and imperceptibly train the pupils’ mind to love, appreciate and then to emulate in their lives the values of truth, beauty, moral greatness, self-sacrifice, courage, loyalty and the like. It is not necessary that there should always be, separate text-books containing such reading materials. Whenever possible the existing literature which the students (particularly those at the school level) are to read as part of their curricula should be so re-written or re-compiled as to serve this purpose. These Commissions have also recommended the study of the lives of the spiritual leaders of mankind such as Gautam Buddha, Confucius, Zoroaster, Socrates, Jesus Christ, Shankara, Mohammed, Kabir, Nanak, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda; and also some selections of universal character from the scriptures of the world like the Upanishads, the Bhagabatgita, the Koran, the Bible, the Dhammapada, the Zend Avesta, and the Guru Granth Sahib, but not such
literature as support a narrow and dogmatic view. "We should not prescribe books which feel an obligation to prove their religions as true and often that it alone is true".*

The Committee on the Standard of University Education (1959) has raised a pertinent question in this connection: whether there is, at present, any scope for the inclusion of such studies in the syllabi, say, of science and technology. Supporting its views by authentic data it has pointed out that the inclusion of the study of such subjects will not only do no harm to the scientific and technological courses but will also enrich and sweeten these studies. To quote it: "It is sometimes argued that since professional courses are so crowded with technical curricula, very little room can be found in them for the study of other subjects. But the practice of many advanced technological institutions in the West like the M. I. T. and Cal, Tech. in the U. S. A. support the belief that technological courses are enriched by their association with the study of human values." (Report on "The Standard of University Education" page 2)

* * *

Both the Radhakrishnan Commission (1948-49) and the Kothari Commission (1964-66) have removed a misapprehension regarding the scope and necessity for teaching religious literature in our secular state. It is true that there is no state religion in India. It is also true that purely Government institutions cannot impart religious training; but there is no bar whatsoever in giving education and information about different religions. "To be secular is not to be religiously illiterate" as Radhakrishnan Commission has put it. On two weighty considerations, they have argued, the study about different religions is not only anti-constitutional but also a necessity.

First, a calm dispassionate and reverential study (as is best possible in the serene atmosphere of the class rooms) of the fundamental principles of ethics common to all religions, will enable the students to inculcate these principles and values in their lives. Secondly "it is necessary for a multi-religious democratic state like ours to promote a tolerant study of all religions so that its citizens can understand each other better and live amicably together". (Report of the Education Commission 1964-66 page 11)

It is sometimes, argued, that for the cultivation of the abiding values, moral education is enough and religious education is unnecessary. Leaving aside the consideration of the relation between morality and religion we admit that there may be men

*University Education Commission (1948-49) page 302.
of morally exalted character, who are not *avowedly religious* but *religious in essence*. But, for common people it is very difficult to follow morality for morality's sake. Besides, without such a comprehensive spiritual goal to follow, arbitrary practice of some virtues can neither fully chasten nor satisfy human mind. Besides "We have to understand that the great virtues of loyalty, courage, discipline and self-sacrifice may be used for good or bad ends. These are essential for a successful citizen as well as for a successful villain. What makes a man truly virtuous is the purpose for which he lives, his general outlook of life"... (Therefore) unless morality is taken in a larger sense so as to embrace religion at its best) it is not enough. (Vide : Report of the University Education Commission 1948-49 page 299). Swami Vivekananda was, therefore, uncompromising on this point and he said, "Religion is the innermost core of education" but lest we confuse religion with sectarian attitudes, rituals and other minor details he hastened to add, "I do not mean my own or any one else's opinion about religion. The true eternal principles have to be held before the people" (Education"—Swami Vivekananda, page 89).

* *

For the purpose of the education in values in general, and religious and moral education in particular, the study and teaching value-oriented literature has its utility but it has its own limitation too. Books can supply us with information and kindle our good impulses to a certain extent. But they are imperfect tools. They cannot touch our whole personality or guide us in the formulation of physical and mental habits which are the central aims of all value-education. Value-education is not mere acquaintance with certain values. Primarily, if not exclusively, it is moulding our thought-habits in accordance with those values. Hence, other practical measures are necessary. The University Education Commission has prescribed a method of silent meditation before the beginning of the daily sessions in educational institutions. But what the Commissions have stressed most is the quality of the setting, the atmosphere, the lives and characters of the teachers and workers of the educational institutions. If the students are allowed to live in an elevating atmosphere where love, fellow-feeling, honesty, self-sacrifice, patriotism, dutifulness, absorption in art, literature or science are not merely talked about but practised, and practised not on occasions but on all days of years, they will imperceptibly and spontaneously imbibe these virtues, make them part and parcel of their lives. Swami Vivekananda, therefore, laid utmost emphasis on a system where students live with the teachers of the most exalted character. "My idea of education is *Guru griha-vasa*. Without the
personal life of the teacher, there would be no education...one should live from his very boyhood with one whose character is a blazing fire and should have before him a living example of the highest teaching.” One may say that this is not a practical proposition because most of our students have to live with their parents and in society. So what is the way out?

So far as the formation of physical and mental habits is concerned students learn a lot from personal lives of their parents in particular and members of the society in general. What is necessary, therefore, is not only to purify the academic atmosphere of the schools and colleges but also the mental atmosphere of the society as a whole. It would be wrong not to admit the fact that the decline in values in the academic world is part of a greater decline in values and idealism in the society. And this decline cannot be successfully checked unless remedial measures are taken simultaneously on all fronts,—in schools and colleges; residential homes and clubs, offices and mercantile firms. Readers of Vivekananda literature will recall his appeal, efforts and plans for the propagation of cultural education among the masses and the womenfolk of the country. The idea behind such plans of Swamiji is to purge the social atmosphere of all debasing ideas and to reinvigorate it. It is no doubt a stupendous task to revitalize the social atmosphere of the country with moral and spiritual values. It requires the co-operation of students and teachers, guardians and all other responsible members of the society. The magnitude or the task should not, however, dishearten us. The temporary gloom around us should not darken our vision. There are still in all walks of life, particularly in the educational profession, men of moral integrity and covetable values. Numerically they are small no doubt, but the impression they leave on the minds of their students (and also on others who happen to have their company) is deep and lasting. The more we can increase their number by leading our own lives according to their idealistic pattern, the quicker will be the solution. All healthy movements of a society begin on a small scale with the bold initiative of certain persons of high idealism and gradually gain momentum as they proceed. Let us all join our hands with the forces of goodness working in the society, and try to strengthen them, instead of spending our energy in sheer criticism. By so doing we can contribute our mite towards averting the crisis.

We are building a civilization, not a factory or a workshop. The quality of a civilization depends not on the material equipment or the political machinery but on the character of man. The major task of education is the improvement of character.

—Report of the University Education Commission (1948-49)
THE ORIGIN OF LIFE: A CHEMIST'S VIEW
Dr. Gurunath Mukherjee

It is believed that our planet was born some 4800 million years ago as a product of condensation of cloud and dusts. The dust contained a huge amount of radioactive elements decay of which in the earth's interior had produced much heat and originated volcanic actions. As a result, the temperature on the earth's surface was much higher than it is now, Earth's atmosphere at that time was very much reducing, as it was rich in hydrogen, nitrogen, ammonia, methane and water vapour. Hydrogen, due to its high reactivity, soon disappeared with time and the concentration of more oxidised components such as carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide etc. built up gradually. The early atmosphere was devoid of any free oxygen and life most likely have originated under significantly reducing conditions. Oxygen appeared only as a product of photosynthesis which started much later. Isotope dating of the oldest known organic material, viz., *Fig Tree* shale deposits in South Africa and fossil remains of bacteria which appeared similar to those known today, dates back to 3,300 million years. Life must have started much earlier, possibly 4,000 million years ago.

Out of 92 naturally occurring elements, the nature has selected only the following 27, viz., O, C, H, N, P, S, Cl, Na, K, Mg, Ca, Mn, Fe, Co, Cu, Zn, B, Al, V, Mo, I, Si, Sn, Ni, Cr, F and Se to constitute the living matter and to play role in one or more physiological functions. Though all the elements constituting living matter are abundant in nature, their distribution in biology is not in proportion to their occurrence in the earth's crust. Oxygen (47), silicon (28), aluminium (7.9), iron (4.5) and calcium (3.5%) are the most abundant elements in the earth's crust, whereas, the five most abundant elements in the living matters are oxygen (65), carbon (18), hydrogen (10), nitrogen (3) and phosphorous (1.1%) which constitute over 97% of the mass of most cells. Compounds of these five elements, therefore, posses unique molecular fitness for the processes that collectively constitute the living state. Rest of the essential elements make up only about 1-3% of the living matter, nevertheless, they play vital roles.
in the living activity. These five major elements of the living system are the constituents of most organic compounds. But organic compounds, apart from their existence in the living matter, occur only in traces in the earth’s crust. Question may arise as to how the first cell did acquire its characteristic organic building blocks, i.e. the premordial biomolecules? There are ample evidences that amount to suggest that early in the history of the earth, organic compounds first appeared as products of reactions between various inorganic constituents of the geosphere and atmosphere. The necessary energy of activation for these reactions was supplied by electric discharge in the atmosphere, ultra violet radiation from the sun, heat and other forms of energy. The resulting small organic molecules accumulated in the primitive sea and thence started the period of chemical evolution which continued for about 1500 million years. Soviet biochemist A. I. Oparin (1920) was of the opinion that the simplest biomolecules viz., amino acids, sugars, nucleic bases etc. were spontaneously produced through natural physical and chemical processes out of small molecules such as methane, ammonia, water vapour etc., which were the constituents of primitive atmosphere. J. B. S. Halden of England was also of the same opinion. These, views arose much controversy until Stanley Miller (1953) through his epoch making earth simulating experiments could provide evidence of abiatic formation most of these biomolecules. He took a mixture of methane, ammonia, water vapour and hydrogen gas, which were believed to prevail in the primitive atmosphere, in a closed glass apparatus, subjected the gas mixture to an electric discharge at 80°C for several days and finally analysed the contents. The gas phase contained carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide and nitrogen. To his astonishment he identified significant amounts of water soluble organic compounds such as a number of amino acids viz., glycine, alanine, aspartic acid, glutamic acid etc present in the proteins, together with simple organics viz., formaldehyde, formic acid, acetic acid, propionic acid, succinic acid, lactic acid, etc. in the chilled dark coloured condensate. Similar products were also obtained by using a mixture of carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, nitrogen and hydrogen gas instead of methane, ammonia and water vapour. Using different types of energy sources such as X-ray, ultraviolet light, silent electric discharge, shock wave etc. almost all types of biomolecules viz., all the amino acids present in the proteins, sugars, nucleic bases such as adenine, guanine, cytosine, thymine, uracil etc. as are building blocks of DNA and RNA were produced.
To rationalize these observations Miller postulated that hydrogen cyanide was first produced through the reaction of methane, nitrogen, carbon monoxide and ammonia. This hydrogen cyanide subsequently served as the precursor of all the nitrogenous organic matters. Electric discharge in the atmosphere converted methane into ethylene and other hydrocarbons. The latter reacted with hydrogen cyanide to produce nitriles, which on reaction with water produced the fatty acids. $\alpha$-hydroxynitriles produced by the reaction of ethylene with hydrogen cyanide and water vapour reacted with ammonia to produce $\alpha$-amino nitriles, which on further reaction with water might have produced $\alpha$-amino acids. Under the influence of electric discharge, $\alpha$-amino acids could also be produced by the reaction of methane with ammonia and water vapour. Glycine and cyanamide were produced when hydrogen cyanide in dilute aqueous solution was irradiated with ultraviolet light. This gave further support to Miller’s view. Condensation of 5 molecules of hydrogen cyanide might have produced the nucleic base adenine and similar condensation of formaldehyde could have produced the sugar ribose which formed the backbone of DNA structure. Identification of amino acid in the meteorite (Murchison) in 1972 revealed the ability of nature to synthesise biomolecules from basic ingredients even under relatively hostile environment as in inner solar system.

The next step in the chemical evolution was the development of chemical links between these precursor molecules. Covalent links between organic molecules were formed through condensation reactions, which in majority of the cases involved the removal of one or more water molecules from the monomeric units. Such dehydrating condensation reactions could take place either under anhydrous condition, particularly at high temperature, above the boiling point of water or in the presence of chemical condensing agents. S. W. Fox and his coworkers produced polypeptides by heating mixtures of amino acids at 130-180°C. However, though such temperature might prevail near the volcanoes, heating of most organic compounds particularly the sugars would be destructive. So thermal condensations do not seem likely to have produced such fragile biomolecules as polysaccharides and polynucleotides.

It is, therefore, attractive to think that chemical condensing agents played their roles in the prebiotic formation of polysaccharides, polynucleotides, polypeptides, lipids etc. Hydrogen cyanide, cyanamide etc. are known to serve as a condensing agents for many organic reactions. Absorption of the precursor molecules on the surface of some abundant materials such
as clay and apatite etc. might have led to their condensation. Condensation of amino acids to produce polypeptides on the surface of montmorillonite clay under mild condition was demonstrated by A. Katchalsky. Role of adenosine triphosphate (ATP, in biological condensation reactions in vivo are well known today. It is, therefore, reasonable to think that most of the primitive biological condensation reactions might have taken place in the presence of polyphosphate as condensing agents. Polyphosphates were abundant, as these could be produced from orthophosphate minerals at high temperature prevailing near the volcanic regions. L. E. Orgel and his group produced pyrophosphate under mild condition by warming a mixture of orthophosphate and urea or ammonium salts. G. Schramm, C. Ponnampuruma and others demonstrated the formation of polypeptides from the mixture of amino acids, glucose polymers from glucose, polynucleotides from mononucleotides from nucleic bases, phosphate and ribose using polyphosphates as condensing agents.

Hydrogen ion and hydroxyl ion were the two primitive catalysts provided by sea water. Many minerals also showed activity as heterogeneous catalysts. Enzymes came much later. Catalytic capacity of the enzymes appeared first, their substrate specificity came gradually with evolutionary development. The first precursor of modern enzymes could produce very small enhancement of rate, e.g., only by several folds as compared to $10^8$ to $10^{20}$ folds enhancement by some of the modern enzymes.

The first structure possessing entity was not necessarily a modern cell which is complete with membrane, nucleus, chromosome, ribosome, enzyme and the capability of metabolism and self-replication. Solutions containing polymers of sugars, amino acids etc. have a remarkable tendency to break up into smaller droplets containing the polymer in the same concentration, due to which the surrounding water molecules get free from these dissolved solutes. Possibly a group of such polymeric molecules associated with each other into a stabilized structure through hydrophobic interactions in such a way that their nonpolar parts associated to form micelle like structures. This was due to the tendency of the surrounding water molecules to seek their position of maximum entropy (freedom). This phenomenon is called coacervation, which is very common with highly hydrated polymeric substances. This yielded clusters having hydrophobic interior and hydrophilic outer surface. These preformed macromolecular components were gradually covered with boundary or membrane and started functioning as a primitive cell when one or more of these macromolecules in the interior acquired some catalytic activity. However, the
minimum requirement for life was the capacity of one or more of these informational macromolecules to direct their self-replication. Different components which were collected in the droplets began to interact with one another due to their close proximity. Some of these interactions rendered the droplets unstable, as for example by change of pH, thereby causing the droplets to breakup once more. Other interactions stabilized the droplets which began to grow and collect into themselves more and more chemicals, both organic and inorganic. As a coacervate drop can not grow beyond an optimum size, these splitted into smaller fragments having the same composition as that of the parent droplet. In this process metal ions acting as catalysts for favoured reactions and nucleotides functioning as coenzymes became bound to the peptide polymers to produce the proto-enzymes. This process continued over hundreds of million of years. By this time ocean became highly populated with these stable, reproducing and semiliving droplets. At some stage proteins and nucleic acids emerged as independent and mutually synthesizing macromolecules to produce the DNA-RNA-protein complexes, which are known today as responsible for genetic information transfer and heridity.

As the coacervates continued to accumulate, the ocean gradually became depleated of organic materials. Evolutionary processes must have had arisen at this stage to produce the required organic compounds. Nature inevitably selected those coacervates which were able to make use of the available inorganic materials and solar energy to make up the deficit of organic substances. Probably at this stage of chemical evaluation the mechanism of photosynthesis came into existence. Once the photosynthesis started functioning, oxygen began to appear in the atmosphere and the stock of sugars and other organic compounds in the ocean started rising sharply once again. A self-regulating carbon cycle, heterotropes and autotropes came into play and this opened the era of life as we know today. Close analogy between the elemental composition of sea water and blood plasma provided further support to the view that life started very much in the ocean.

A system can be described as living when it is capable of self-replication and mutation. The key feature of today’s living organisms is their ability to accurately reproduce themselves. Though there is no experimental answer to the question as to when and how the process of self-reproduction started, it still remains deeply fascinating. It is a futile exercise to attempt to draw a sharp line of demarkation between the living and non-living things. The
dividing line is not as broad as are the differences between a fertilized ovum in the womb and a full grown adult or between a pair of raw and half-boiled eggs. Though it is only the extremes that one can precisely define, nevertheless, one extreme is transformed into the other through an infinite series of steps. But this is not meant to say that life reduces to mere chemistry and physics. The biological principles which express the organising relationship between macromolecules, cells, organisms, exist on their own right. The development and evolution of the living system is meaningful only with temporal, realistic and molecular approach. The principles of natural science are materialistic. One need not take recourse to principles outside those in the material world, to understand the existence and origin of life.

Three things are necessary to make every man great, every nation great:

i) Conviction of the power of goodness.
ii) Absence of jealousy and suspicion.
iii) Helping all who are trying to be good and do good.

—Swami Vivekananda
Wordsworth—a Lover and Philosopher of Nature

Narayanchandra Routh

2nd Year, English Honours, Vidyasagar College.

Wordsworth, in his contemplation, so deeply merged in communion with Nature that he used to have ecstatic experiences. One day Prof. Hastie of Scottish Church College, where Narendranath [later Swami Vivekananda] was a student, while explaining the ecstatic experience, remarked that it was a very rare one not seen nowadays. Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa of Dakshineswar, is the only person known to him to have such an experience at present. Incidentally, this chance remark was instrumental in leading Narendranath to his Guru.

With the aforesaid rare quality of a saint we observe Wordsworth’s some other great qualities in his two great poems—“Tintern Abbey” and “Immortality Ode” which speak volumes of his philosophy of Nature.

We get the trance-like state of mind in his poem “Tintern Abbey.” He composed this poem on his way back from revisiting the Tintern Abbey—a famous ecclesiastical ruin situated on the bank of the river Wye. His first visit to the place was five years ago. He owes to the memory of this visit, a noble gift. This gift is the “blessed mood”—a happy tranquil state of mind, a mood of spiritual ecstasy in which he found relief from the painful experiences of life. It produced in him the trance-like state in which his breathing activity was almost suspended, the very blood-circulation flowed very slowly and the mind became full of divine joy.

On his second visit to Tintern Abbey he was accompanied by his sister Dorothy. This second visit is the source of this great poem and it shows different stages of Wordsworth’s love for nature.

On his first visit to Tintern Abbey he was attracted by the external beauties of Nature like many other poets of his own and subsequent ages. This attitude to Nature is like a boy to whom Nature is an “appetite with its aching joys and dizzy rapture”. But in his mature age when he is visiting the Abbey for the second time, his love for Nature is intellectual and spiritual, because he has heard the still, sad music of humanity and found an inter-relation between Nature and Man.

According to Wordsworth, Nature should be the moral teacher of Man, the best mother, the guardian and the nurse. In “Tintern Abbey” he has told his sister Dorothy that “Nature never did betray the
heart that loved her”, that Nature can give the impression of quiet and beauty and that it gives man lofty thoughts. So he tells Dorothy:

“Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk.”

He believed that Nature is the source of joy to man in its “ordinary, familiar, everyday mood.” It has the healing effect on troubled minds and sorrow-striken hearts.

Wordsworth—the poet-philosopher of Nature—regarded Nature as a living personality. He believed that there is a divine spirit pervading all the objects of Nature. This belief has also been revealed in “Tintern Abbey”. He tells us that he has felt the presence of a Divine Soul in the setting sun, the wide ocean, the living air, the blue sky, the mind of man etc. He feels the rolling of this spirit through all things—

“A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thoughts,
And rolls through all things.”

This belief in a Being or Divine Soul permeating all things of Nature is called Pantheism—the identification of God with Nature.

Wordsworth’s another great poem “Immortality Ode” reveals his two great philosophical ideas or theories—the prenatal existence and the recollection of it in childhood. These theories go back to Plato, but he did not take it from him; he rather took it from Coleridge and Henry Vaughan. But whatever may be Wordsworth’s indebtedness to others his theories get validity from his intense personal experience. In his childhood he sees “the earth and every common sight” apparelled in celestial light and invested in the glory and freshness of a dream. But, in his mature age he cannot perceive that heavenly radiance. But a little reflection enables him to find out the cause of it. He feels that after birth the child gradually loses his memories of heavenly life and does entirely so in his mature age. As soon as the child is born the earth spreads before him a panorama of earthly pleasures to bind him to the worldly life and the child begins to follow the ways of his worldly-minded elders. All these make the child forget his heavenly memories in mature age. Yet even in mature age men get glimpses of that memory through calm spiritual contemplation.

Thus Wordsworth’s love for Nature and his excellent philosophical ideas of Nature as a companion of man have been expressed in different aspects in his above two great poems. The difference of his attitude to Nature from that of the other Romantic poets like Shelley, Keats, Byron; his emphasis on the moral influence of Nature. his spiritual communion with her distinguish him from the other poets of the Romantic Age.
ABOUT THE FOUNDER
Swami Santoshananda

The Founder-Secretary of this Students’ Home, before joining the Ramakrishna Order, was known as Surendranath Mukherjee. A brilliant student, he got his B.Sc. degree in 1913 from the Presidency College, Calcutta, and passed his M.A. in English in 1916. Just after graduation, he started a coaching-class *cum* Ashrama, which gradually came to take the shape of the present Students’ Home. As soon as the results of the M.A. Exam. were out he snapped all ties with his family. Between 1914 and 1916 he came in contact with some of the direct disciples of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, and felt drawn towards the fold. He was initiated by Srimat Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj of hallowed memory about the middle of 1918. He had his *sannyasa* in 1923 from Srimat Swami Shivanandaji Maharaj, and came to be known as Swami Nirvedananda (popularly known as Anadi Maharaj).

The Swami tried with success to the last day of his life for giving a practical shape to some of the educational ideals set forth by the illustrious Swami Vivekananda for the uplift of the country. His contribution towards shaping the educational policies of the Ramakrishna Mission is outstanding. A vastly erudite scholar, a powerful writer, an eminent thinker and, above all, a deeply spiritual soul, he wrote a number of books of abiding interest. The qualities of his head and heart earned him the genuine love and esteem of the Brotherhood. He was a Trustee of the Ramakrishna Math and a member of the Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission. Born on July 19, 1893, the Swami breathed his last on November 15, 1958.
MAHASAMADHI OF SWAMI ABHAYANANDA
(BHARAT MAHARAJ)
(1890-1989)

It is with profound sorrow we announce that Swami Abhayananda, widely and endearingly known as Bharat Maharaj, entered into Mahasamadhi at 00.07 hours on Friday, 18 November 1989, at our hospital, the Ramakrishna Mission Seva Pratishtthan. He was 100 years old.

The Swami, known in his pre-monastic life as Atul Chandra Guha, hailed from Majkhara, a village in the district of Dhaka (now in Bangladesh), and was born in the year 1890. While studying in the National H. E. School, Dhaka, he became associated with a patriotically inspired and politically active group of freedom-fighters known as ‘Anushilan Samiti’ of Dhaka under the leadership of a famous revolutionary Sri Pulin Chandra Das. Consequently he had to discontinue his further studies.

He once came to Calcutta to seek some guidance in political activity from Aurobindo Ghosh, and afterwards, as destiny would have it, went to Belur Math to stay for a few days. As it turned out, ‘few days’ stretched into few weeks under the loving persuasion of Swami Brahmananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and the first President of the Ramakrishna Order. This was divine intervention that brought Atul in contact with most of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Gradually he began to feel that political pursuits would not help him gain the spiritual fulfilment his heart was seeking. Subsequently he joined the Ramakrishna Order in 1909 at Belur Math. Soon his name was changed to Bharat. After some three years he had the good fortune of being initiated (in 1912) by Sri Sarada Devi, the Holy Mother and he had his sannyasa in 1920 from Swami Brahmananda.

Bharat Maharaj, stayed and worked at the Belur Math for the greater part of his life. After spending about five years initially at the Belur Math, he was posted as ‘Manager’ of Advaita Ashram, Mayavati.

There he stayed for sixteen long years. He was elected as a Trustee of Mayavati Advaita Ashram in 1923. He was called back to Belur Math in 1930
to shoulder greater responsibilities, first as the Joint Manager of the Math and later as the Manager from 1966. He was chosen as a member of the Working Committee at the Headquarters from 1936 to 1940 and again from 1944 to 1946. He was elected as a Trustee of the Ramakrishna Math and a member of the Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission in 1947.

Bharat Maharaj possessed a magnetic and deeply mystical personality, which has left a lasting and vivid impression on the minds and hearts of all who came in contact with him. He was the local guardian of Smt. Indira Gandhi, our former Prime Minister, during her stay at Shantiniketan. He lent her his moral support with fondness and fatherly concern till her last days. He used to identify himself with visiting individuals, families and groups from different parts of India and abroad, irrespective of their creed, caste, language or religion. His pragmatic strong common-sense, his depth of love, concern and fellow-feeling, and his selfless yet personal interest and influence in helping or advising men and women of all walks of life with their own problems and predicaments had made Bharat Maharaj a house-hold word of unfailing comfort and solace to many.

On behalf of all students and ex-students of the Students’ Home along with the students and teachers of the Shilpapitha this Institution offers its respectful salutations to the sacred memory of the revered Swami.
A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE INSTITUTION

The Idea:

The best service that can be rendered to a society is to spread the right type of education among the children so that at the end of their education the youths may go out as real men—able, efficient and willing to serve their own families, and also to do their best towards the uplift of the country.

According to Swami Vivekananda education is a misnomer if it is not essentially man-making. He defined education as “the manifestation of the perfection already in man.” He wanted our young men to develop “muscles of iron, nerves of steel and hearts of adamant.” According to him, physical culture and training of the will and emotions should occupy a very important place in any healthy scheme of education. Moreover, the pupils have to be made culturally self-conscious. He pointed out the fact that the present system lacks these essentials of man-making, character-building education. To remove these defects the Swami suggested that we should revive some of our old ideals and techniques and co-ordinate the same with the requirements of modern education.

What it is:

The Students’ Home is a branch centre of the Ramakrishna Mission which is a society registered under Act XXI of 1860.

This voluntary educational organization is run on the lines of the ancient Gurukula system adapted to changed conditions of the modern age. It is an humble experiment of social service on the lines suggested by Swami Vivekananda. Being a residence for college students, it is also licensed by the Calcutta University as a non-collegiate hostel. The boys residing in this institution get an opportunity of receiving man-making education under the care and guidance of monks. They are given a training calculated to chasten their imagination, broaden heart, expand their intellect and develop their practical aptitude. So far the results of the supplementary home training have been quite encouraging, being marked by a harmonious development of head, hand and heart of the trainees. The students here really learn to combine simple living with high thinking.

A no less important feature of the Home is its charitable aspect. It is specially meant for meritorious students of slender means, who are helped through the course of their college education with board, lodging, fees, books, clothing, etc., free of all costs or at a partial cost, according to their requirements. A few paying boarders, eager to undergo the training imparted to the inmates, are also admitted; but their number is never allowed
to go beyond one-third of the total roll-strength.

Boys just passing the Madhyamik or its equivalent & Higher Secondary Examinations and seeking admission in colleges under the University of Calcutta, are generally eligible for admission here.

Home-training:

The object of the training imparted here is to help the trainees develop the nobler sides of their personality. This is sought to be done in the following manner:

A favourable environment is created so that the boys may put forth voluntary efforts to reach the ideal. Not a shade of distinction is made between paying and non-paying boarders. Distinction on account of caste is out of the question. These go a long way to free the inmates from the baneful effects of any complex, specially associated with charitable institutions.

The over-all success of the Home training is borne out by the fact that in their respective fields of activities, most of the ex-students have been giving highly satisfactory accounts of themselves.

Some features of this training are given below:

Cultural:

Every morning and evening the boys gather in the prayer-hall to offer congregational prayer.

They observe birthdays of spiritual leaders like Sri Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, Sri Chaitanya, Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and others, as well as of Mahatmaji, Netaji and Rabindranath. The Independence Day and the Republic Day are also suitably observed by them. They perform Kali Puja here, and participate in the Durga Puja and other celebrations at the Belur Math.

In the Students’ Home they live under the affectionate care and guidance of the monks of the Ramakrishna Order.

Regular socio-religious classes are held with them.

Intellectual:

The boys are encouraged to extend their range of studies beyond their college curriculum by properly utilising the Students’ Home library which contains a good number of well chosen books.

They bring out a manuscript magazine entirely by themselves.

Students reading in different classes get thorough coaching in almost all the subjects.

Occasional discourses by eminent scholars are arranged. Educational tours are organized.

Physical:

The boys are encouraged to have regular physical exercise.

There is one full-size playground for outdoor games and sports.
His Holiness Srimat Swami Bhuteshanandaji Maharaj, at Students’ Home (1976)

Swami Gahananandaji presides over Juva Sammelan 1981
Students' Home boys are learning some thing.

"SELF HELP IS THE BEST HELP"
There are two large tanks affording plenty of scope for swimming and rowing.

*Training in leadership of Social Service:

According to a routine drawn by themselves the boys, under their own initiative, perform all household duties except cooking. They are to keep their rooms as well as the campus clean and tidy unaided by any servant. The nursing, if any one of them falls ill, is also done by them.

Through our vocational wing the boys, if willing, may have experience in agri-horticulture, animal husbandry and pisciculture.

*Its Growth through Stages:

The Students’ Home was started in a rented house in Calcutta in 1916 and became a branch of the Ramakrishna Mission in 1919.

In October, 1932, the institution was shifted to its permanent residence in Dum-Dum. In 1941, the Students’ Home was again removed to a rented house, as its own premises were requisitioned by the Government. This requisition was followed by permanent acquisition in March, 1947.

Its present site, about 38 acres in area, situated in Belgharia, 24-Parganas, was purchased after independence. Towards the end of 1950, the development work of the plot of land was taken in hand and construction work was started in 1951.

On the 14th April, 1954, the Students’ Home once more moved into its own permanent residence.

* * * * *

We are glad to announce that by the Grace of Sri Guru Maharaj the Home is completing this December the 73rd year of its useful existence. We take this opportunity to record some pleasant informations below:

(a) The students’ willing participation in the smooth running of the Home was noteworthy. Special mention should be made about their big part in the planting of paddy seedlings & harvesting of about half of the total paddy yield.

(b) We are proud to mention that two of our Ex-students namely, Swami Atmasthananda and Swami Satyagahanandana have been elected Trustees as well as Assistant Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, of the Ramakrishna Math and Members of the Governing Body of Ramakrishna Mission.

(c) We are happy to note that three of our publications have reached or gone beyond the 10th edition. A new edition of ‘Religion and Modern Doubts’ by Srimat Swami Nirvedanandaji Maharaj has been published.

(d) The contribution to the General Fund during the last 24 months rose to the total of Rs. 2,57,510/- the ex-students’ contribution amounted to 45% of the total contribution.

(e) The Project for the repair of campus
roads at a cost of Rs. 1.83 Lakhs has since been completed.

(f) Educational Tour:
1987-88, 1988-89, 1989-90:
An Educational Tour was conducted each year under the leadership of our two monastic members with 30 students to Puri, Bhubaneswar, Konarak and neighbouring places of historical importance. The Tours took place in May '87 and May '88 and were enjoyed immensely by the Students. Another tour to Varanasi, Prayag and neighbouring places with about 30 students took place in Oct. 1989, which was also very much educational for the participants.

Students' Roll:
The number of boarders during the year 1987-88 and 1988-89 stood at 100 as many as 61 of whom were totally free and 9 half-free.

Book Bank:
Through the munificence of Dr. P.B. Sarkar Trust and Swami Achityananda Memorial Fund, the Book Bank has been a boon to the inmates. Text-Books as well as reference books worth nearly Rs. 11,300/- have been added during the two years.

Observances and Celebrations
a) Raja Maharaj Utsab:
Swami Brahmananda Day—popularly known as 'Raja Maharaj's Utsab' and which may also be termed as Foundation Day, was celebrated on 24.12.87 and 24.12.88 with due solemnity. Sri Sri Thakur Puja, Bhajan and Sadhu-Bhakta-Seva were the main items. The function on 24.12.88 was graced by Revered Srimat Swami Bhutesharanandaji, Vice-President (at present President), Swami Hiranmayanandaji, the then Gen. Secretary, Swami Atmasthanandaji, Assistant Secretary and many other senior monks of the Order, from far and near. In this connection we would like to quote a few memorable lines of Srimat Swami Nirvedanandaji Maharaj from an article published in the Silver Jubilee Souvenir, 1941:

"Since 1920, the 24th of December has come to be a red-letter day in the Students' Home. For it was on this day of that year that the Students' Home was consecrated by the holy presence of Srimat Swami Brahmananda. It was like a visit of the Son of God. It is still fresh in one's memory like a luminous vision of something exceedingly sweet, majestic and inspiring. He came, with a retinue of monks and devotees, at about nine in the morning and left before dusk. During the whole day, the house brimmed with ecstatic joy. Was it under an enchantment? Every heart seemed to be stirred to its depths. The human plane and the Divine were spanned. The abode of eternal Peace and Beatitude was just in the offering. Did not God appear, for the while, to be within one's
easy reach? Yet it was no hypnotic spell. Divine Grace really did descend on the infant institution on that day and it was hallowed. It will ever remain a memorable day in the annals of the Students' Home:"

b) Swami Day 1988:

The 125th Birth Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda and the National Youth Day (Swami Yuva Divas) was observed here in a 4-day long celebration from 12th to 15th January. Youths of the neighbouring colleges, schools and clubs took part in the colourful procession, elocution and sports. Swami Shivamayananda, Principal and Swami Divyananda, Vice-Principal of Rahara College with many other dignitaries participated in various functions held on the occasion. Demonstration of physical feats, film-show etc. were also included in the programme.

Swami Day 1989:

Swami Yuva Divas and 126th Birth Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was performed through an elaborate programme of Football Tournament, quiz Contest and a public meeting from 26th Dec. '88 to 14th January, 1989. The meeting was addressed by Swami Divyananda, Principal, Rahara Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Centenary College. Swami Vimalatmananda and Swami Ajarananda of Belur Math, Sj. Amal Dutta, National Coach, Foot-ball, Sj. Sambhu Nath Mallick of West Bengal Sports Council and many other dignitaries attended the programme of Foot-ball Tournament. Youths and students of the locality showed keen interest in the programme.

c) Saraswati Puja:

Saraswati Puja was held ceremoniously in both the years (on 23rd January, 1988 and 10th February, 1989) followed by Saraswat Sammelan, which was organised on the next day. The Sammelans, on both the occasions, were presided over by Srimat Swami Satyaghanandaji, Treasurer, Ramakrishna Math & Ramakrishna Mission. Prizes, namely Swami Achintyananda Memorial and Suprava Dev Memorial were distributed by Principal Sri Ramakrishna Saran Dev, one of our distinguished ex-students on both the occasions.

d) Freshers' Reception:

The existing students formally received the freshers in the Pre-puja term both in 1987 and 1988. The days started with Vidyarthi-vrata-Hom in which the boys, new and old, took part. There were the usual reception meetings, refreshments, friendly Foot-ball matches, Film show on these auspicious occasions.

e) Kali-Puja and other celebrations:

The Kali Puja was performed with due solemnity and attended by more or less 3000 devotees from far and near. Birthdays of Sri Krishna, Sri Chaitanya, Sri Ramakrishna,
the Holy mother and their chief apostles were observed.

Some boys were given books by way of prizes for comprehensive development in both 1987-88 and 1988-89. The books were purchased out of the endowments for this purpose viz. Suprava Dev Memorial and Swami Achintyananda Memorial endowments as already mentioned. Colourful prizes were given separately for excellence in various physical feats and annual sports held during the years under report.

Ex-Students

Our ex-students’ contact with the Home is being steadily maintained. The ex-students standing committee met here regularly. The eighteenth Re-Union of past and present students will be held in December 1989. Arrangements are being made to publish a Souvenir which will be the Pre-Platinum Jubilee Number.

The following ex-students made their marks in their respective fields of activities during the recent years:

1. Sri Shanka Ghosh, Renowned Professor, Author and Poet received Rabindra Award 1989 for his Book Dhum Legeche Hritkamale.

2. Sri Naba Narayan Bandyopadhyay, Reader in Vedic Studies, Department of Sanskrit, Rabindra Bharati University, Calcutta.

3. Dr. Arun Kumar Dutta, M. B. B. S., Chief Medical Officer of Health, West Dinajpore.

4. Sri Phalguni Bejoy Ganguli, I. F. S., Addl. Secretary, Deptt. of Forest, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal.


7. Sri Ashis Kumar Thakur, General Manager, Planning and Development, Unit Trust of India.

Other Activities

a) Assembly Hall:

Occasional socio-religious discourses, music recitals and film-shows were arranged in the spacious Hall for inmates as well as the public.

b) Public Library & Free Reading Room:

The Vivekananda Centenary Library drew a large number of readers from the public as well as from Shilpapitha. As regards books, including foreign books the total number crossed the figure of 10,500 in the recent past. Daily average number of readers using the library was nearly 100. 30 Journals and periodicals and 5 News Papers were made available to the readers.

c) The Homeopathic Dispensary:

The Dispensary has been doing a
Swami Atmasthanandaji
and
Swami Satyagahanandaji
at
Bhratri Baran Utsab
in September, 1989

PICNIC
of the Students’ Home
Boys (1989)
Cricket Match
With Belur Vidyamandir

Swimming Competition

Pisciculture
yeoman's service to the local people on every Sunday. It treats nearly 200 patients weekly.

d) Financial Assistance to Students other than those of the Student Home 1987-88:
   i) 32 Students received Rs. 2,091.50 out of Bhanu Dasgupta Memorial Endowment.
   ii) 8 Students received Rs. 340.00 out of Krishna Chandra Memorial Endowment.
   iii) 10 Students received Rs. 1,040.00 out of R. C. D. Memorial Endowment.
   iv) 3 Students received Rs. 540.00 out of Pratip Kumar Basu Memorial Endowment.

Financial Assistance to Students other than those of the Students' Home 1988-89:
   i) 35 Students received Rs. 2,550.00 out of Bhanu Dasgupta Memorial Endowment
   ii) 5 Students received Rs. 540.00 out of Krishna Chandra Memorial Endowment.
   iii) 5 Students received Rs. 508.00 out of R. C. D. Memorial Endowment.
   iv) 7 Students received Rs. 810.00 out of Pratip Kumar Basu Memorial Endowment.

e) Daridra Narayan Seva:
   On every Thursday morning the Home serves khichuri to the poor people of the locality.

f) The Home distributed some Dhuties and garments to some needy persons during the years under report.

g) Annual Camp:

Annual Camp of the All India Vivekananda Yuva Mahamandal was held here very successfully from 25th to 30th Dec. 1987 in which more than 800 young men from different Provinces went through a week long programme of physical training and seminar etc. on the ideas and ideals of the Great Swami Vivekananda. Swami Tattwabodhananda, the then Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Seva Pratishthan inaugurated the Camp.

Swami Vijnanananda Smriti

a) On the 6th December 1987, the birth anniversary of Swami Vijnanananda Maharaj was celebrated at Swami Vijnanananda Smriti Bhaban at 108, Feeder Road, Belgharia with Puja, Bhajan and discourses etc. Srimat Swami Atmasthanandaji Maharaj, Assistant Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, presided over the religious meeting. Srimat Swami Satyagahanandaji Maharaj, Treasurer Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, late lamented Swami Anantaranaanda and Sri Anil Krishna Roy, Commissioner (Rtd.) of Calcutta Corporation spoke on the life and teachings of Swami Vijnananandaji Maharaj.

b) The Foundation laying ceremony was performed by Srimat Swami Hiranmayanandaji
Maharaj, General Secretary on 23. 9. 88 before a distinguished gathering.
c) On 22. 11. 88, the Tithi Puja of Swami Vijnananandaji Maharaj was observed on a very modest scale. Swami Swahananda, Head of the Vedanta Society of Southern California graced the occasion.

SHILPAPITHA

The Ramakrishna Mission Shilpapitha, a Government Sponsored polytechnic for 3-year Diploma Courses in Civil, Mechanical and Electrical Engg. was started under the auspices of the Ramakrishna Mission Calcutta Students’ Home in March 1958. Its Management vests in a Governing Body, the Shilpapitha Samsad, consisting of nominees of the Ramakrishna Mission, representatives of the State Govt., Central Govt., Industrialists, technologist and educationists. There is provision for altogether 480 students. They are roughly divided as: 180 in Civil, 180 in Mechanical and 120 in Electrical Engineering. For these boys besides the Principal, there are 26 Lecturers, 2 Foremans, 7 Demonstrators, 16 Workshop Instructors, 3 Laboratory Assistants, 11 Office and 28 Group Staff.

For its accommodation, Shilpapitha has a two-storied building viz the Administrative Block, four Workshops, a Central Store and a Canteen.

The Shilpapitha has a library of its own with about 10,000 volumes of books, 4 Dailies and 6 Periodicals. There is a Book Bank for the benefit of needy boys.

The Shilpapitha’s telephone number is 58-1650.

Students passing their Madhyamik or equivalent examination are eligible for admission here. Particulars are given in the prospectus of the Shilpapitha.

Results:

The following results of the Final Diploma Examination for the year 1987 and 1988 conducted by the State Council Govt. of West Bengal show evidently that they are highly satisfactory.

Results of Part-III (Final) Examination:

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<th>Appeared</th>
<th>1st Class</th>
<th>2nd Class</th>
<th>Total Passed</th>
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| D.C.E. | 39        | 32        | 1         | 33           | 85%
| D.M.E. | 53        | 42        | —         | 42           | 79%
| D.E.E. | 26        | 21        | —         | 21           | 81%

1988

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<th>Stream</th>
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<th>1st Class</th>
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| D.C.E. | 46        | 39        | 4         | 43           | 93%
| D.M.E. | 69        | 62        | —         | 62           | 90%
| D.E.E. | 31        | 27        | 1         | 28           | 87%
SWAMI VIJNANANANDA SMRITI

(INFORMATION AND APPEAL)

We have the pleasure to inform our friends that the ancestral property of His Holiness Srimat Swami Vijnananandaji Maharaj (1868-1938), situated at 108, Feeder Road, Belgharia (to the west of the Railway Station) has recently been transferred to the Ramakrishna Mission. For this, we offer our heart-felt thanks to all members of the family of Sri Maharaj and all devotees concerned.

The property consists of about 8 Cottahs of land with an one-storied pucca Building. It may be noted that though not the birth place of Swami Vijnananandaji, this residence was of vital importance to him. While living in this house he became intimate with Sri Ramakrishna and began his Sadhana. From this house, he completed his school education, passed the Entrance Examination from Hare School, Calcutta. He also passed his F.A. Examination as a resident of this house from St. Xavier's College.

But it is a matter of great concern that this building, an witness of ups and downs of the nation for more than 110 years, was in a very dilapidated condition. It required immediate thorough repair and renovation, otherwise we had to run the risk of losing a sacred and holy spot altogether.

The Ramakrishna Mission Head Quarters, Belur Math, has rightly decided to preserve this property as a memorial to the great Swami and authorised the local branch, Ramakrishna Mission Calcutta Students' Home (Belgharia) to do the needful. Accordingly a cultural and utility centre, Swami Vijnanananda Smriti (Memorial) is coming into existence for the service and benefit of the general public.

The Students' Home with the help of qualified Engineers prepared an estimate of Rs. 5 Lakhs for reconstruction of the building and for all other essential works of the first phase.
The revised estimate is detailed below:

Cost of transfer of the property (already incurred) Rs. 30,000.00
Reconstruction of the Building where Sri Maharaj used to live Rs. 2,50,000.00
Construction of the Main Gate, Store, Out-house, Boundary Walls, Sanitary Privy etc. Rs. 1,00,000.00
Arrangements for Medical Unit, Reading Room, Religious Classes etc. for the General Public Rs. 1,20,000.00
Rs. 5,00,000.00

Construction work has just been completed. But money is badly needed for running the project.

To perpetuate in a befitting manner the sacred memory of the most revered Swami, and to make it an important utility centre (as mentioned above) we send our earnest appeal for funds to the generous public, including our devotees and friends. The cheque or draft should be issued in favour of “Ramakrishna Mission Calcutta Students’ Home”.

**OUR NEEDS**

With the active co-operation of the noble-hearted donors and generous contributions from the State and Central Governments, the buildings already raised in the Students’ Home campus can accommodate one hundred students at a time. But its inadequate resources can hardly maintain even sixty free boarders. This state of things has got to be improved so that the same facilities may be given to at least seventy free boarders at a time.

1. (Additional) Permanent Fund for maintenance of needy students of the Home Rs. 8,00,000.00
2. Road repairs and repairs of Buildings, Bathing Ghats, Reclamation of Tank, Improvement of Campus Rs. 3,00,000.00
3. Swami Vijnanananda Smriti (Funds for Maintenance) Rs. 5,00,000.00

It may be mentioned in this connection that an endowment of Rs. 35,000/- (Thirty five Thousand) is needed for maintenance and education of one full-free student.
The Building where Srimat Swami Vijnananandaji spent his boyhood

The New Building (1989)
Swami Vijnanananda Smriti Bhaban
Opening of
Swami Vijananananda
Smriti Bhavan
on 22.12.1989
Opening of
Swami Vijnanananda
Smriti Bhaban
on 22.12.1989
18th Milan Utsab
and
Pre-Platinum Jubilee
on 24th and 25th December,
1989
We send our appeal to the generous public whose active co-operation and liberal contribution enabled the institution to reach its present stage of growth.

Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged. Cheques/Drafts may be drawn in favour of “Ramakrishna Mission Calcutta Students’ Home”.


Vide PAN 4787 8E/109/69-70 dated 28.2.89

Ramakrishna Mission Calcutta
Students’ Home,
Belgharia, Calcutta-56

SWAMI AMALANANDA
Secretary

WE OFFER OUR GRATEFUL THANKS TO
THE DONORS AND ADVERTISERS.
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<td>8.</td>
<td>MB/MBBS</td>
<td>BHJS</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>HMB DMS/BMS</td>
<td>I. A. S.</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>L. M. F.</td>
<td>I. P. S.</td>
</tr>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>M. A.</td>
<td>I. F. S.</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>M. Sc.</td>
<td>Doctors</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>M. Com.</td>
<td>Engineers</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>M. Tech./M. Sc. (Tech)</td>
<td>Director/Dy. Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>M. E.</td>
<td>Chief/Dy. Chief Engineer</td>
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<td>Other P. G. Degrees &amp; Diplomas</td>
<td>Major</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>PRS</td>
<td>Lt. Col.</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>Ph. D</td>
<td>Brigadier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>D. Sc.</td>
<td>Major General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>M. D.</td>
<td>Wing Commander</td>
</tr>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>C. A.</td>
<td>Other Executive Officer</td>
</tr>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>Foreign Degrees</td>
<td>Scientists</td>
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<td>Journalists</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Businessmen &amp; Industrialists</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ex-students abroad</td>
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[ The list is not, however, exhaustive ]
HISTORY OF THE RE-UNIONS (Milan-utsab)
Kshitindra Kumar Chakravarty

The Institution Ramakrishna Mission Calcutta Students’ Home, took shape in September 1916. The first reunion, however, was held on 2nd July 1928 at Gouripur where at that time only the vocational wing was functioning. The Students’ Home was then running at 7, Halder Lane, Bowbazar and the first re-union was a one-day meet at Gouripur. Inspite of the inclement weather there was a good gathering and fortunately we have a photograph of the first re-union printed in the Silver Jubilee Souvenir of 1941.

The second re-union was held at Gouripur in 1938—ten years after the first one due to the exigencies of the transitional period. The third one in 1941 was celebrated as the Silver Jubilee of the Students’ Home. An attractive Souvenir was published with a detailed history of the Institution by its founder Swami Nirvedanandaji. The Re-union was held just after Kalipuja in Oct. after the Milan Utsab the Institution left Gouripur site which was requisitioned by the Government due to 2nd World War.

The fourth re-union in 1944 was held at 20, Harinath De Road. The fifth in 1947 and the sixth in 1950 were held at the same premises.

In 1954 after a lapse of four years the 7th re-union was held at the new site of the Students’ Home at Belgharia. It was celebrated as joint function with the restoration of the Ashram at its new site as well as the Centenary of the Holy Mother.

The 8th re-union in 1957, 9th in 1960 and 10th in 1963 were held at Belgharia. The 10th re-union was a combined celebration with the Swamiji Centenary. The 11th re-union in 1966 was the Golden Jubilee function of the Institution.

The 12th re-union was held in 1969 and the 13th in 1972. The 14th in 1976 was held as a part of the celebration of Diamond Jubilee of the Institution. The 15th re-union in 1979, the 16th in 1983, the 17th in 1986 are being duly followed by the 18th re-union this year 1989 with the additional privilege of celebrating the inauguration of the Swami Vijnanananda Smriti Bhavan.

We pray to the Almighty that the Platinum Jubilee celebration which is due in December 1991, may meet with every success.

Secretary, Ex-Students’ Standing Committee.
THROUGH EMINENT EYES

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

I visited the Ramakrishna Mission Students’ Home a few days ago and was exceedingly pleased with what I saw. Hostels of this kind are a crying necessity in a place like Calcutta. .......This institution deserves well of the Calcutta University and in fact of all who are interested in the welfare of the students. The fact that a serious attempt is made here to impart moral and religious instruction as also to make students live a good and pure life, is a further reason why I am interested in the success of the institution. [1924]

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee

.......The management deserves every praise for the excellent arrangements made, which are in full keeping with the noble traditions of the Mission. I can only hope the students who enter into life’s struggle from this Home will imbibe the true spirit of service and sacrifice and faithfully and courageously work for the uplift of their countrymen. [1940]

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

The Ramakrishna Mission Calcutta Students’ Home, in these fifty years, has done very valuable work and brought out many books of immense benefit to young men and women who are lost today in a world which is unable to pull itself out from its entanglements. To give them some secure anchorage is an important work and the Students’ Home has done it.

I congratulate the Students’ Home on its performance and wish it the best in the future. [1966]

(On the Occasion of Golden Jubilee Celebration—1966)