

## The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna: The Missing Text

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“I have made a literal translation, omitting only a few pages of no particular interest to English-speaking readers.”—Swami Nikhilananda, *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*

“Those ‘few pages of no particular interest’ contain some of the most revealing and significant passages of the entire text.”—Jeffrey Kripal, *Kālī’s Child*

In *Interpreting Ramakrishna: Kālī’s Child Revisited* (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2010), we examined Ramakrishna scholarship from its inception over a century ago and contextualized Jeffrey Kripal’s *Kālī’s Child* (Chicago University Press, 1995)<sup>1</sup> within that framework. We also analyzed the history and the many-sided implications of the controversy surrounding *Kālī’s Child* and studied the issues of interpretation and translation in cross-cultural contexts using the book as a case study. To keep the size of the book within manageable limits, we could not implement our original plan to include in the book the portions of the Bengali source text *Śrī-Śrī-Rāmakṛṣṇa-Kathāmṛta* that were not translated by Swami Nikhilananda in his *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (New York: Ramakrishna Vivekananda Center, 1942). We are pleased to provide that text here, as a supplement to *Interpreting Ramakrishna*.

After informing his readers that the *Kathāmṛta* is “the central text of the tradition” and also “the centerpiece” of *Kālī’s Child*, Jeffrey Kripal goes on to claim that the *Kathāmṛta* is “the source of much nervousness within the tradition” (KC, 3). Those within the tradition have been both amused and surprised by this information. From our own experience spanning four decades within the tradition as well as from our close acquaintance with those who have been a part of the tradition much, much longer, we have yet to find anyone who was nervous about the contents of the *Kathāmṛta*. The charge of censorship in the English translation would be irrelevant here, as we—and those people we know—have read the *Kathāmṛta* in the Bengali original. Yet Kripal claims his endeavor to be “recovering the text” (KC, 3–4) in order to unveil “Ramakrishna’s secret” (KC, 4–7).

It is, of course, possible to assume that insiders are so benighted as to not even notice, far less understand, “the secret of Ramakrishna.” This is the tacit assumption made in *Kālī’s Child*, where Kripal equates their lack of understanding of Ramakrishna’s secret with the rejection of the theory of evolution by Christians and of jihad as a

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<sup>1</sup> Hereafter, *Kālī’s Child* is abbreviated to KC in the parenthetical references.

psychological category by the Muslims (Kripal 2004, 203). Not only are Ramakrishna's devotees, and especially those unfamiliar with "western critical theory (such as psychoanalysis and feminist literary theory)" (Kripal 2002, 203), seemingly incapable of understanding Ramakrishna, but Ramakrishna himself—we are told—had no clue about himself. Kripal writes with admirable confidence that the revelations he unveils in *Kālī's Child* would "deeply affect" Ramakrishna if he were alive and "if he could fully understand" the book (KC, Ibid). Against the background of such eye-widening claims, those who have little to no knowledge of Bengali have no way to verify the accusation of suppression and censorship in the absence of a "full" English translation of the *Kathāmṛta*.

Swami Nikhilananda's *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (1942) was the first complete translation of *Śrī-Śrī-Rāmakṛṣṇa-Kathāmṛta*. The history of the various translations of the book has been addressed in Chapter One of *Interpreting Ramakrishna*. Nikhilananda did not claim to have translated every word. On the contrary, he was candid in acknowledging in his Preface that he had omitted "a few pages of no particular interest to English-speaking readers" (Nikhilananda, vii). *Kālī's Child* contests this, claiming that the missing pages, in fact, "contain some of the most revealing and significant passages of the entire text" (KC, 4). These conflicting views have been a bone of contention since 1995, when the first edition of *Kālī's Child* was published.

Here, then, brought together for the first time are the portions which were not translated in Nikhilananda's *Gospel*. "English-speaking readers" now need take neither Nikhilananda nor Kripal at his word. They can see for themselves what was omitted and make their own judgment whether these pages are "of no particular interest to English-speaking readers" or whether they contain "the most revealing and significant passages of the entire text." Readers can judge for themselves whether the omission of the following pages in Nikhilananda's *Gospel* leaves that book a "bowdlerized" text.

For our part, while we tend to agree more with Nikhilananda's assessment, we cannot say that the missing portions of the text are "of no particular interest to English-speaking readers." Nikhilananda based his judgment on the readers of his generation who lived and grew up in the early part of the last century. Today the situation is markedly different. Certainly many of the omitted passages are inconsequential—often containing details that most readers will find excruciatingly tedious—but it cannot be denied that there are some portions which do add more to our knowledge of Ramakrishna, if only marginally. To however small an extent, the information fills out more of what was not previously known about Ramakrishna to the English-speaking reader. As importantly, the missing text provides the non-Bengali reader a larger and more intimate view of M and his utterly devout attitude toward Ramakrishna.

Nikhilananda removed much of M's extremely lengthy yet carefully etched description of every possible facet of the Dakshineswar temple and its environs. In reviewing a new English translation of the *Kathāmṛta*'s fourth volume (Sri Ma Publications, 2007), William Page compares its translation to Nikhilananda's 1942 translation, and remarks: "M's original text started off with a long first chapter describing the Kālī temple complex at Dakshineswar. In the new translation, this goes on for fourteen pages, and it is boring in the extreme. The average Western reader coming to Sri Ramakrishna for the first time will throw the book down in exasperation after reading five pages. Swami Nikhilananda solved this problem by omitting the first chapter. Instead, he wove a condensed, two-page description of Dakshineswar temple into his masterful introduction. In doing so, he wisely followed the First Commandment for any writer: 'Thou shalt not annoy the reader.'"<sup>2</sup>

Nikhilananda also removed M's extensive ruminations about his own spiritual life, connected as they were to his contemplation of Ramakrishna. The missing text allows the reader to see how much M's diaries were, in fact, M's meditation upon Ramakrishna. When M told Girish, "I am writing this for myself only," we can see why he said it and what that meant to M.

Not appearing in Nikhilananda's translation are some specifics of Bengal's Kartābhajā practice, such as the "Five M's" (*pañca makāra*). In 1942, mention of menstrual fluid and semen would not have found a receptive audience in North America and probably would have served only to verify Americans' worst fears about Hindus who worshiped evil and engaged in wild debauchery—a claim that Vivekananda and his successors, even to the present day, repeatedly encountered. The reader will also note that Nikhilananda did not translate Ramakrishna's "lotus vision" literally. Rather than translating *ramaṇ* as "intercourse," Nikhilananda opted for "commune":

This is a very secret experience. I saw a boy twenty-two or twenty-three years old, exactly resembling me, enter the Sushumnā nerve and commune with the lotuses, touching them with his tongue. He began with the centre at the anus and passed through the centre at the sexual organ, navel, and so on. The different lotuses of those centres—four-petalled, six-petalled, ten-petalled, and so forth—had been drooping. At his touch they stood erect.

When he reached the heart—I remember it distinctly—and communed with the lotus there, touching it with his tongue, the twelve-petalled lotus, which was hanging head down, stood erect and opened its petals. Then he came to the sixteen-petalled lotus in the throat and the two-petalled lotus in the head blossomed. And last of all, the thousand-petalled lotus in the head blossomed. Since then I have been in this state. (Nikhilananda, 830)

A more literal translation would be:

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<sup>2</sup> William Page, "The Gospel and the Kathamrita," *Vedanta Kesari* (August, 2008): 302–305.

This is a great secret. I saw a twenty-two or twenty-three year old young man, who looked like me, entering inside the suṣumnā nerve and having intercourse with the vulva-shaped lotuses with his tongue. First the anus, the penis, the navel—the lotuses with four petals, six petals, ten petals had been drooping, they became erect.

When he came to the heart—I remember this clearly—after having intercourse with the tongue, the drooping twelve-petalled lotus became erect and bloomed. Then the sixteen-petalled lotus in the throat and the two-petalled lotus in the forehead. In the end the thousand-petalled lotus bloomed. From that time, I have been in this state.

It is important to keep in mind that Nikhilananda’s translation is not incorrect. It is not literal but a literal translation is not necessarily the best way to convey what Ramakrishna was saying in Bengali. Nikhilananda omits “vulva-shaped” in his description of the lotus. It is hard to imagine the word “vulva” even being printed in 1942 in the United States, apart from medical texts. We can recall the censorship that Henry Miller and others faced. It was mid-twentieth-century American sensibilities—not “renouncer censorship”—that governed Nikhilananda’s decision not to translate this passage literally. If the “renouncers” were interested in censoring any scandalous “secrets,” they would have suppressed the Bengali original, not an English translation. But neither were the passages found scandalous or offensive, nor were any in the Ramakrishna movement interested in “censoring” anything.

Further, the “vulva-shaped” description of the lotuses sounds, and feels, very different from the Bengali *yonirūp padma*. This is a point that is often missed and requires more discussion. What may sound charming and innocent in one language may well sound crude, vulgar or simply infantile in another. While *yonirūp padma* sounds neither particular sexual or clinical in Bengali, “vulva-shaped lotus” manages to have strong hints of both in English.

What is inevitably missing in any English translation of M’s *Kathāmṛta* is a reproduction of the distinctive voices of M and Ramakrishna. While M’s language is educated, correct, reverential and meditative, Ramakrishna’s is uneducated, quirky, often funny, free-wheeling. His verb endings are sometimes wrong (confusing, for example, the correct verb endings appropriate for *tumi* and *āpni*). While Ramakrishna’s Bengali seems to have taken the Bengal countryside with him, more or less unaffected by Kolkata, M is his antithesis. Yet there is no way of conveying this in the English translation, since all these colorations are ironed out in a language that cannot convey these telling subtleties.

If the language homogenizes the voices found in the *Kathāmṛta*, the cultural differences between Bengal and North America/Europe are often homogenized as well. But not always. While some of these cultural differences were cured by Nikhilananda by simply omitting them altogether, some cultural differences are all the more stark by

virtue of the fact that the concepts entailed do not find a ready, or even correct, translation in English. These issues remain thorny and unresolved. While we can assure the reader that *yonirūp padma* does not carry the mood that it does in the English “vulva-shaped lotus,” unless the reader has some background to place this information in context, there is no way to truly process this information.

When we look at the *Gospel* as a whole—all 1,063 pages of it—and compare it with the *Kathāmṛta* as a whole, it is evident that Nikhilananda exercised his editorial discretion with care and responsibility. The *Gospel* omits the brief 1400-word biography of Ramakrishna that M offers in the first volume of the *Kathāmṛta*. Nikhilananda replaced that with a much longer biography—seventy-one pages, no less—in his “Introduction” to the *Gospel*, incorporating all the data which M had presented. Also omitted from the English translation were the details of the phases of the moon, the month and the date according to an Indian calendar which precede most new entries in M’s diaries. Here is a sample:

*Kathāmṛta*, 325: Āj Budhvār, (10-i āśvin) Bhādrāmāser kṛṣṇa daśamī tithi, 26-śe September, A.D. 1883.

Translation: Today is Wednesday (10 Aśvin), the tenth day of the dark fortnight in the month of Bhādra, September 26, 1883 of the English calendar.

What the *Gospel* offers is simply the English date, skipping the other details. Nikhilananda occasionally omits as well the names of some individuals mentioned in the *Kathāmṛta*: we know nothing about these individuals and they play no part in the *Kathāmṛta* other than they happened to be present on a given day. Similarly, the frequent repetition of a few songs in the *Kathāmṛta* is sometimes avoided by Nikhilananda; in the *Gospel* the text of such songs is given once in full and, when repeated, the *Gospel* gives only its first two lines. Finally, as already mentioned, a few passages containing words or phrases that, when translated into English, would have undoubtedly offended the sensibilities of Western readers in the 1940s were paraphrased or condensed. Concerns regarding these omissions have been addressed at length in Chapter Five of *Interpreting Ramakrishna*.

The *Kathāmṛta* begins with a lovingly rendered description of the Kālī temple, which even for a Bengali reader is probably too much information. This has been omitted from the *Gospel*, but Nikhilananda included a summary of this description in his Introduction to the book. Omitted also is the Appendix entitled “Vivekananda in America and in Europe,” which quotes lengthy passages from Vivekananda’s lectures, which—to M’s mind—showed how faithfully and effectively Vivekananda broadcast the message of Ramakrishna to the world. The topics covered in this Appendix include spiritual experience, harmony of religions, karma yoga, renunciation, selfless work, the doctrine

of incarnation, and Tantra. It is a pity that this was not included in the *Gospel*, because this section indicates that M had no doubt that the teachings of Vivekananda were based on what he had learned from Ramakrishna. It is interesting to note here that nowhere in *Kālī's Child* is there a reference to this 41-page long Appendix from the *Kathāmṛta*—which appears at the end of the fifth volume. This omission was necessary as it would have seriously undermined the thesis that posits a clear “renouncer/ householder division” (KC, 13), claiming that Vivekananda deviated from the teachings of Ramakrishna.

More significant than the omission of the Appendix entitled “Vivekananda in America and in Europe” from the *Gospel* was the omission (and sometimes the condensation) of M's own reflections on Ramakrishna's words and what Ramakrishna's life meant to M. Not every reader is curious about M's view of Ramakrishna, so the omissions seem reasonable. However, M's reflections (sometimes subtitled *Sevak Hrdaye*, “In the Heart of the Servant”) do serve one useful purpose: they tell us of M's own state of mind, his perception of Ramakrishna, and the profound esteem with which he held Ramakrishna. Had these reflections been fully translated and included in the *Gospel*, it would have been difficult for the readers of *Kālī's Child* to accept Kripal's interpretations—based, as they are, on manufactured evidence and textual distortions. Take, for instance, the following (*Kathāmṛta*, 899):<sup>3</sup>

*“Īsvar ke joto lābh hobe, tatoi bicār kombe. Tāke lābh hole ār śabda bicār thāke nā. Takhon nidrā —samādhi.” Ei boliyā Narendrer gāye hāt bulāiya, mukhe hāt diyā ādar koritechen o bolitechen, “Hari Om, Hari Om, Hari Om.”*

*Keno e-rūp koritechen o bolitechen? Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa ki Narendrer madhye sakkhāt Nārāyan darśan koritechen? Er-i nām ki mānuṣe īsvardarśan? Ki āscarjja! Dekhite dekhite Ṭhākurer saṁgya jāyiteche. Oi dekho bahirjagater hūmś coliyā jāiteche. Er-i nām bujhi ardhabāhjadāsā— jāhā Śrī Gaurāṅger hoiyāchilo. Ekhono Narendrer pāyer upar hāt—jeno chol koriyā Nārāyaner pā ṭipitechen—ābār gāye hāt bulāitechen. Eto gā-ṭepā, pā-ṭepā keno? Eki Nārāyaner sevā korchen, nā śakti soncar korchen?*

*Dekhite dekhite āro bhābāntar hoiteche....*

Translation: “The nearer you approach God, the less you will reason and argue. When you attain him, there is no more sound of reasoning and arguing. Then there is sleep—samādhi.” Saying this, he gently stroked Narendra's body and affectionately touched his chin, uttering “Hari Om, Hari Om, Hari Om.”

Why was he doing that and saying that? Was Sri Ramakrishna seeing Nārāyaṇa in Narendra? Is this what is called seeing God in human beings? How wonderful! He was fast becoming unconscious. Look, he is losing consciousness of the external world. This, I think, is what is called “the state of partial external consciousness” (*ardha-bāhya daśā*), which Caitanya had

<sup>3</sup> All references from the *Kathāmṛta* are from the edition published by Udbodhan Office, Kolkata (1986).

experienced. His hand was still on Narendra's foot, as if he was massaging the feet of Nārāyaṇa. Then he gently stroked Narendra's body. What was the reason for all this stroking of the feet and the body? Was he serving Nārāyaṇa or was he infusing Śakti (*śakti sañcār*)?

Gradually a change came over his mind ...

It is interesting to see how *Kālī's Child* (KC, 228) deals with this passage (see Chapter Six of *Interpreting Ramakrishna*). After eliminating the context (the utterance of "Hari Om, Hari Om, Hari Om"), Kripal translates an innocuous Bengali phrase *gāye hāt bulāitechen* in two different ways, each with bias intact: "caressing the body" and "rubs and presses Narendra's body." Further, M's rhetorical questions are presented in *Kālī's Child* as if they are M's doubts which remain unanswered.

This interpretation would lose all credibility if M's thoughts on the same day, recorded in the *Kathāmṛta*, had not been bypassed in *Kālī's Child* and, alas, were omitted even by Nikhilananda. What did M feel as he returned home that evening? This is what he writes (*Kathāmṛta*, 902):

"How loving he is!—he is mad about Narendra, he cries for Narayan. He says, 'These and other boys—Rakhal, Bhavanath, Purna, Baburam, and others—are Nārāyaṇa himself, who has taken the human form for my sake.' This love is not human; I see that this is love for God. These boys are pure souls; they have not touched women with the idea of sex. Greed, egoism, and jealousy have not tainted them through worldly activities. So there is greater manifestation of God in these boys. But who has this insight? Thakur has this insight. He can see everything—who is attached to the world and who is simple, broad-minded, and devoted to God. That is why when he meets devotees of this type, he sees them as Nārāyaṇa and serves them. He arranges for their bath, for their rest, and weeps to be able to see them. He visits Kolkata often and inspires others to bring them from Kolkata in a carriage. He often tells the householder devotees, 'Invite them home and feed them, and that will be good for you.' Is this worldly love, or is this pure love for God? If it is possible to have an elaborate sixteen-item worship and service in an image made of clay, why would it be not possible to have that worship in a pure human body? Moreover, these pure souls have accompanied the Lord in every incarnation. These are his companions in life after life.

"He forgets the external world when he sees Narendra. Then he forgets the human Narendra, the 'apparent person,' and begins to see the 'real person.' His mind merges in the boundless Saccidānanda, seeing whom he sometimes becomes speechless, motionless and quiet, or sometimes he repeats Om, or sometimes, like a child, he calls out to Mother. He sees a greater light of Saccidānanda in Narendra. He calls out 'Narendra, Narendra' like one mad.

"Narendra does not believe in avatars; why should that matter? Thakur has divine eyes: he sees that it could be because Narendra is hurt, thinking that God is one's own, God is our own Mother, not an adopted Mother, so why doesn't God make us understand? Why doesn't God illumine the heart in a flash? That is why, I think, Thakur said:

Do you feel that your pride is wounded?  
So be it, then; we too have our pride.

“God is our closest relative; who else can we get upset with if not with him? Blessed is Narendranath: this great soul loves you so much. Seeing you his mind becomes enkindled with the thought of God so easily.”

In the following section we present the portions from the *Kathāmṛta* that were not translated by Swami Nikhilananda. In order to make it easy to determine the exact location of the omitted portions, the passages in the following section end with a few words of the immediately succeeding sentence and the page number from the *Gospel*. The details of the phases of the moon, the month and the date according to an Indian calendar which precede most new entries in the *Kathāmṛta* are not included in the following section. Some of the examples which have already been cited in *Interpreting Ramakrishna* are also not included here, as are the repetitions of the songs in the *Kathāmṛta*.

The translation we provide retains the Bengali words “Thakur” (pronounced Ṭhākur) and “Paramahāṁsadeva” which are often used in the *Kathāmṛta* to refer to Ramakrishna. Nikhilananda usually translates these words as “Master.” The reader is encouraged to read our translation with a copy of Nikhilananda’s *Gospel* at hand in order to contextualize the passages below. We have occasionally added information in brackets to provide context in some places. Some words which defy any English equivalent have been left in italicized Bengali, occasionally followed by a brief explanation in brackets. The footnotes in the following section are M’s. We have used the Udbodhan edition of the *Kathāmṛta* (Kolkata: Udbodhan Office), vol. 1 (1986) and vol. 2 (1987), and the Chennai edition of the *Gospel* (Chennai: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1980).

## The Missing Text

*Kathāmṛta*, 8

Today is Sunday. The devotees have a holiday, so they are coming in groups to the Kālī temple at Dakshineswar to have darśan of Paramahāṁsadeva. His doors are open to all. Thakur speaks with whoever visits him. Holy men, paramahāṁsas, Hindus, Christians, members of the Brahma Samaj, Śāktas, Vaiṣṇavas—all come. Blessed is Rani Rasmani! It is due to the power of your good work that this beautiful temple has been established, and people are getting the opportunity to have darśan and to worship the living deity (*sacal pratimā*), this great soul.

The Kālī temple is about two and half kroś [about five miles] north of Kolkata. It is on the bank of the Ganges. The Kālī temple can be entered after alighting from a boat and going up the broad steps to the east. Paramahāṁsadeva used to bathe at this ghāṭ.

Immediately after the steps is the cāndani [roofed terrace], where the guards of the Kālī temple stay. Their cots, wooden trunks, and a couple of glasses are sometimes seen lying about in the cāndani. When the elite of the neighborhood come to the Ganges for a bath, some of them sit in the cāndani gossiping as they apply oil on their bodies. Some of the wandering monks and nuns who come to receive prasāda from the temple dining hall also wait in the cāndani until the kitchen bell rings. Occasionally one may see a bhairavī, wearing ochre robes and with a trident in hand, sitting there. When it is time, she too will go to the dining hall. The cāndani is exactly in the center of the twelve Śiva temples: six of these are to the north of the cāndani, and the other six are to its south. Those going by boat see these twelve temples and say, “That is Rasmani’s Temple.”

To the east of the cāndani and the twelve temples is a brick-floored courtyard. Lining the middle of the courtyard are two temples: to the north is the temple of Rādhākānta, and to its south is the temple of Mother Kālī. In the temple of Rādhākānta is the image of Rādhākṛṣṇa, facing west. One has to use the steps to go up to the temple. The temple floor has marble tiles. From the ceiling of the front porch of the temple a chandelier is suspended; it is not in use now, so it is covered by a red cloth. A doorman keeps guard at the temple. There is an arrangement to unfurl the canvas blinds in the afternoon to keep the sunlight from disturbing the deities. The blinds cover all the niches of the arches in the porch. In the southeast corner of the porch is an earthen barrel filled with Ganges water. Near the temple-door is caraṇāmṛta [consecrated water from worship]. Devotees bow down before the deity and drink the caraṇāmṛta. In the temple are the images of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Sri Ramakrishna was appointed to do pūjā in this temple in the years 1857–58.

In the temple to the south, there is a beautiful stone image of Kālī. Her name is Bhavatariṇī. The sanctum floor has black and white marble stones and an altar connected with steps. On the altar is a thousand-petalled lotus made of silver, on top of which is Śiva lying prostate with his head toward the south and feet toward the north. Śiva’s image is made of white marble. Standing upon his heart is the beautiful stone image of Śyāmākālī, with three eyes, wearing a Benares celi, and decorated with a variety of ornaments: around her lotus feet are anklets nupur, gujaripañcam, pāñjeb, cuṭki, jabā and bilvapatra. Women in western India wear pāñjeb. Mathur Babu had arranged for it to fulfill the wish of Paramahansa-deva. In Mother’s hand are a gold bracelet and amulet. On her forehead are varieties of bangles such as bālā, nārikel-phool, pounce and a bracelet. On her arms are tāḍ, tābij and bāju. The amulet (tābij) has a cord. Around Mother’s neck are a gold necklace, a seven-layered pearl necklace, a thirty-two layered gold necklace, a garland of heads made of gold, and a star-shaped necklace. On her head is the crown; in her ears are kānbālā, kānpāś, phooljhumkā, caudāni, and māch. In her nose is a ring set with a pendant. In the two left hands of the

three-eyed Mother are a human head and a sword; with her two right hands she bestows blessings and freedom from fear. Around her waist are a girdle of human hands, nimphal and komarpāṭā. In the northeastern corner of the temple is a beautiful bed, where Mother rests. On one of the walls a cāmar [a yak-tail fan] hangs. Bhagavān Sri Ramakrishna has used this cāmar many times to fan Mother. Upon the lotus-seat on the altar is water in a silver glass. On the bottom is a line of cups, in which there is Mother's drinking water. Upon the lotus-seat, toward the west, is an image of a lion, made from an alloy of eight metals; to the east are a lizard and the trident. To the southeast of the altar is a vixen; to the south is a bull made of black stone; and to the northeast is a swan. On the step leading to the altar, on a small throne made of silver, is the Nārāyaṇaśīlā [the stone emblem which symbolizes Viṣṇu]; on one side are Baṇeśvara Śiva, and also the image of Śrī Rāma, named Rāmlālā, made from eight metals and obtained by Paramahansa-deva from a monk. There are also other deities. The image of the goddess faces south. In front of Bhavataṛiṇī, that is, exactly to the south of the altar, the ghaṭa has been installed. This is the auspicious ghaṭa [a water vessel in which the goddess's presence is invoked], which is colored with vermilion, covered with flowers at the end of every worship, and decorated with garlands of flowers. On one side of the wall is a copper vessel filled with water, where Mother washes her face. On top is a canopy and behind the image is suspended a beautiful cloth from Benares. On the four corners of the altar are pillars made of silver. On its top is an expensive canopy, which enhances the beauty of the image. The temple is well-proportioned. Some of the niches in the hall are covered by sturdy doors. A guard sits near one of the doors. A vessel filled with caraṇāmṛta is kept at the entrance to the temple. The temple is surmounted by nine domes with spires: on the lower edge are four domes, in the middle are four, and one is on top of them all. One of the domes is now broken. Paramahansa-deva had worshiped in this temple and in the temple of Rādhākānta.

### *Prayer Hall*

In front of the Kālī temple, that is, to the south, is a beautiful and big prayer hall. On its top are carved images of Mahādeva Śiva, Nandī, and Bhṛṅgī. Before entering Mother's temple, Sri Ramakrishna used to salute Mahādeva with folded hands, seeking his permission to enter the temple. Running from north to south of the prayer hall are two rows of very high pillars, upon which rests the roof. The two wings of the prayer hall are to the east and the west of the rows of pillars. A theatrical performance is held in the prayer hall when there is a worship during a big celebration, especially on the day of the Kālī Pūjā. In this prayer hall, Rasmani's son-in-law Mathur Babu had performed the ceremony of Dhānyameru [ceremony of the mound of cereal] on the advice of Sri

Ramakrishna. It was in this prayer hall that Sri Ramakrishna had worshiped a bhairavī in the presence of all.

#### *Store Room, Kitchen, Guesthouse, Sacrificial Altar*

On the western side of the open-air courtyard are twelve Śiva temples, and to the other three sides are one-storied rooms. In the rooms on the eastern side are a storeroom, a kitchen where food is cooked for the deities, a dining hall for guests, and a room each to make luchis, to keep bhog [food offerings] meant for Viṣṇu and Mother, and to keep naivedya [sanctified food]. If the guests and sādhus do not eat in the dining hall, they have to go to the treasurer in the office. When the treasurer instructs the store manager, the sādhus can take provisions from the storeroom. To the south of the prayer hall is the place meant for animal sacrifice.

The food prepared for the Radhakanta temple is vegetarian. There is a separate kitchen to cook the offering meant for Kālī. In front of the kitchen, servants cut fish with big knives. On the new moon night a goat is sacrificed. The offering is done by two o'clock. In the meantime, guests, sādhus, Vaiṣṇavas, and the poor gather in the dining hall, each with a leaf plate. The brahmins have a separate place to sit. The brahmin employees have separate seats. The prasād meant for the treasurer is sent to his room. When the owners of the temple come from Janbazar, they stay in the kuṭhi, and the prasād is sent there.

#### *Office*

In the row of rooms to the south of the courtyard are the office and the residences of the employees. The treasurer and the clerks always stay there, and the store manager, maids, servants, priests, kitchen assistants, brahmin cooks, the gatekeepers and others visit this place all the time. Some of the rooms are locked; in them are furniture, carpets, canopies belonging to the temples. A few of the rooms in this row functioned as storerooms on the occasion of the festival to celebrate Paramahāṁsadeva's birthday. To the south of these rooms, food would be cooked for the festival.

To the north of the courtyard is a row of one-storied rooms. Exactly in its center is the main gate. Like the cāndani, this too is guarded by the gatekeepers. Before entering through either of these two gates, people must leave their shoes outside.

#### *Thakur Sri Ramakrishna's Room*

Sri Ramakrishna's room is in the northwest corner of the courtyard, that is, to the north of the twelve Śiva temples. To the west of the room is a semicircular porch. It is from this porch that Sri Ramakrishna, facing west, saw the Ganges. Immediately adjacent to this porch is a path. To its west is the flower garden, followed by the

embankment. Beyond that is the Ganges, whose waters are sacred (*pūtasalilā*), who is the embodiment of all pilgrimages (*sarvatīrthamayī*), and whose waters make a sweet sound (*kalakalanādinī*).

#### *Nahabat, Bakultalā, and Panchavati*

To the north of Paramahansa's room is a rectangular porch, and to its north is the garden path. And to its north is a flower garden, following which is the nahabat [concert tower]. Sri Ramakrishna's old mother, and later the Holy Mother, stayed in the ground-level room of the nahabat. Next to the nahabat is the bakultalā and its ghāṭ. The women of the neighborhood bathe here. Paramahansa's elderly mother was cremated at this ghāṭ in the year 1877.

Further to the north of the bakultalā is the Panchavati. Sitting at the foot of this Panchavati, Paramahansa had performed many sādhanas, and in recent years he strolled here often with devotees. Occasionally he would go there after waking up late in the night. Thakur had the trees of the Panchavati—vaṭa, aśvattha, nimba, āmalaki, and bilva—planted under his supervision. Returning from his pilgrimage to Vrindaban, he had sprinkled here the holy dust of Vrindaban. Bhagavān Sri Ramakrishna had built a cottage on the eastern boundary of the Panchavati and had spent a long time there in contemplation on God and in austerities. The present rebuilt cottage is sturdy.

In the Panchavati there is an older vaṭa tree intertwined with an aśvattha tree. The two trees have seemingly become one. Due to age, the old tree is full of crevices and has become the residence of a variety of birds and other creatures. At its foot is a brick-built circular platform with steps. Seated on this platform facing northwest, Sri Ramakrishna had performed many sādhanas. With what longing (*vyākul*) he called on God, like a cow longing (*vyākul*) for her calf! Today that sacred seat is occupied by a broken branch of the aśvattha, the companion of the vaṭa tree. The branch did not break fully; it remained half-attached to the tree. I suppose no other great person who deserves to occupy that seat has been born yet.

#### *Jhāutalā, Beltalā, and Kuṭhi*

Further north of the Panchavati is a fence made of iron railing. On the other side of the railing is jhāutalā, a row of four tamarisk trees. A little distance to the east of the jhāutalā is the beltalā. Here also Paramahansa had performed difficult sādhanas. Beyond the jhāutalā and the beltalā is a high wall, to the north of which is the government's ammunition factory.

When one exits the courtyard through the main gate facing the east, one sees a two-storied building (kuṭhi) in front. When Rani Rasmani, her son-in-law Mathur Babu and others visit the temple, they stay in the kuṭhi. During their lifetime, Paramahansa

lived in the room to the west, on the ground floor of the kuṭhi. From this room it is easy to go to bakultalā and to have good darśan of the Ganges.

### *Vessel-cleaning Ghāṭ, Gājitalā, and the Two Gates*

Between the main gate of the courtyard and the kuṭhi there is a path. Going eastward along this path, one sees a beautiful pond with a built embankment. To the east of Mother Kālī's temple the pond has a ghāṭ which is meant to wash vessels, and near the path there is another ghāṭ. Near this second ghāṭ is a tree, and that area is called gājitalā. Going further eastward along the path there is one more gate—this is the main gate to exit the garden. This is the gate used by people from Kolkata and Alambazar. The people of Dakshineswar enter through a side gate. Those coming from Kolkata usually enter the Kālī temple through the main gate. This gate, too, is guarded by a doorman. When Sri Ramakrishna would return to the Kālī temple late at night from Kolkata, it was the guard at this gate who would unlock the doors. Paramahansa Deva would invite the guard to his room and give him prasāda of sweets and luchi.

### *Goose Pond, Stable, Flower Garden*

To the east of the Panchavati is one more pond called the goose pond (hāṁspukur). To the northeast corner of this pond are a stable and cowshed. The side gate is to the east of the cowshed. This gate can be used to go to the village of Dakshineswar. It is used by the priests and other employees who have brought their families to Dakshineswar and their children.

There is a path alongside the Ganges from the southern border of the garden to the bakultalā and Panchavati in the north. On both sides of this path are flowering plants. There are flowering plants also on the two sides of the path that runs from east to west beside the kuṭhi. The land between gājitalā and the cowshed, to the east of the kuṭhi and the goose pond, also has a variety of flowering plants, fruit-bearing trees, and a pond.

The plucking of flowers in Mother Kālī's garden begins very early in the morning as soon as the eastern horizon turns red amidst the sweet sound of the maṅgala āraṭi and the morning musical notes of sānāi filling the atmosphere. On the bank of the Ganges, in front of the Panchavati, there are trees bearing bilva and gulcī flowers. Sri Ramakrishna loved jasmine, mādhavī, and gulcī flowers. He himself had planted the mādhavī creeper that he brought from Vrindaban. On the land to the east of the goose pond and the kuṭhi, there are plumeria trees on the bank of the pond. Not far from them are jhumkā plants, roses, and kañcan flowers. On the fence there is aparājītā; next to it is jasmine interspersed with śephālikā. On the western side of the twelve Śiva temples are white oleander, red oleander, rose, jasmine, and bilva. There are a few dhustar

plants; their flowers are used for the worship of Śiva. There are also a few tulsi plants in high brick-built enclosures. To the south of the nahabat are bilva, jasmine, gardenia, and rose. Not far from the ghāṭ are lotus oleander and kokilākṣa. Near Paramahansa's room are a couple of kṛṣṇacuḍā trees, surrounded by bilva, double jasmine, gardenia, rose, jasmine, hibiscus, white oleander, red oleander, and also double red hibiscus and Chinese hibiscus.

There was a time when Sri Ramakrishna used to pick flowers. One day he was picking bilva leaves from the bilva tree in front of the Panchavati. As he plucked a leaf, a portion of the tree's bark was pulled off as well. Through a mystical revelation he realized how painful it must be for the One who dwells in everyone! From that time onward, he could not pick bilva leaves any longer. Another day he was plucking flowers and it was suddenly revealed to him that the flowering plants were each a bouquet, decorating the cosmic form of Śiva; it was as if Śiva were being worshiped day and night. From that day onward, he could no longer pluck flowers.

#### *The Veranda of Thakur Sri Ramakrishna's Room*

To the east of the Paramahansa's room is a veranda. One side of the veranda faces the courtyard, that is, it faces south. On this veranda Paramahansa sat with devotees often and spoke on spiritual matters or sang devotional songs. The other side of the eastern veranda faces north. On this veranda the devotees would come and celebrate his birthday; they would sit with him and sing devotional songs, and he would also often sit with them and have prasāda. On this veranda how many times Keshab Chandra Sen came with his disciples, conversed with him, and joyfully ate puffed rice, coconut, luchi, and sweets with him! On this veranda Sri Ramakrishna had entered into samādhi when he saw Narendra.

#### *An Abode of Joy*

The Kālī temple has become an abode of joy. Here there is daily pūjā of Rādhākānta, Bhavataṛiṇī Kālī, and Mahādeva Śiva. On the other side, one has the holy darśan of Bhāgirathī Gaṅgā for a long distance. There is, again, a beautiful flower garden, filled with the fragrance of a variety of beautiful flowers of various colors. In the midst of all this is an awakened being, intoxicated day and night by the love of God. It is a place of an eternal celebration of the Divine Mother. The sound of music continually emerges from the nahabat. It begins at dawn at the time of the morning āṛati. We hear it again at nine o'clock, when the worship begins. Then at two o'clock, when the deities retire for rest after the bhog-āṛati [āṛati after the food offering]. At four o'clock, the music starts again when the deities awake from rest and are performing their ablutions. Then

there is music again at the time of the evening āratī. Finally there is music from the nahabat at nine o'clock when the deities go to bed after dinner.

### *Kathāmṛta*, 33

Narendra took a tumbler and went toward the goose pond (*hām̐spukur*) and the tamarisk grove (*jhāutalā*) to wash his face. M began to walk here and there in the temple premises. After some time he went by the side of the kuṭhi toward the goose pond. He saw Thakur standing on the top of the steps on the southern side of the pond. After washing his face, Narendra was standing with the tumbler in his hand.

Sri Ramakrishna said to Narendra... *Gospel*, 91

### *Kathāmṛta*, 35

A little while earlier, Thakur was resting on the bed on the floor of his room.

Since his nephew ... *Gospel*, 93

### *Kathāmṛta*, 40-45

From Captain's house, Sri Ramakrishna came to Keshab Sen's house, which was named Kamal Kutir. With him were Ram, Manomohan, Surendra, M and many other devotees. All of them sat in the room on the second floor. Brahma devotees like Pratap Majumdar, Trailokya and others were also present.

Thakur had great love for Keshab. Accompanied by his nephew Hriday, Thakur had met him a few days after the Māgha festival in 1875, when Keshab was engaged in devotional practice along with his disciples in a garden at Belgharia. In the garden at Belgharia, Thakur had told him, "You are the only person whose tail has disappeared," meaning that Keshab had the capacity to renounce everything and stay away from his family or he could even remain with his family. When the tadpole sheds its tail, it can stay inside water as well as on dry land. Later in Dakshineswar, at Kamal Kutir and at the Brahma Samaj and other places, Thakur had often taught him in the course of conversation: "God can be attained through many paths and many traditions. It is possible to live with one's family after attaining devotion through periodic spiritual practice in a solitary place. People like Janaka lived with their families after attaining the knowledge of Brahman. He reveals himself if he is prayed to with intense longing. The worship of the Formless that all of you do is very good. When you attain the knowledge of Brahman, you will clearly realize that God alone exists, everything else is transient;

Brahman is real, the world is only an appearance. The Sanātana Hindu dharma accepts both the personal and the impersonal aspects of God. God is adored in many ways: śānta, dāsya, sakhya, vātsalya, and madhura. A flute player may play only a single note even though his flute has seven holes, but another whose flute also has seven holes plays many different notes.

“It doesn’t matter that you don’t believe in God with form. It is enough if you have faith in the Formless. Cultivate, though, the longing of those who believe in God with form. Your devotion and love will increase even more if you call on God as Mother. Sometimes be a servant of God, sometimes a friend, sometimes a mother, and sometimes a beloved. The best attitude is to love God and have no worldly desire. This is called selfless devotion. ‘I don’t want wealth or fame or anything. All I want is devotion to your lotus feet.’ The Vedas, the Purāṇas and the Tantras speak only of God (*īśvar*) and his divine play. Both the paths of knowledge and devotion are described there. Live in the world like a maid servant; the maid does all the household work but her mind is centered on her native place. She nurtures the children of her employer, addressing them as “My Hari,” “My Rāma,” but she knows well that the child is not really hers. It is very good that all of you are practicing spiritual disciplines in solitude. You will get his grace. King Janaka did a lot of spiritual practice in solitude. Only through spiritual practice is it possible to live in the world with detachment.

“In the Brahmo Samaj you give lectures for the good of all. But real good can be accomplished only when lectures are given after attaining God and having his vision. No good can come if one undertakes to teach others without receiving his command. There are signs to confirm that a person has attained God. Such a person becomes like a child or like an inert being or like one possessed or like a ghoul. This was the case with people like Śukadeva. Caitanyadeva used to be sometimes like a child and sometimes dance like one possessed. He would laugh, weep, dance and sing. When he was in Puri, he would often remain in samādhi, oblivious of the world.”

In this way, Sri Ramakrishna had given many teachings to Sri Keshab Chandra Sen in the course of conversations in many different places. After the first meeting in the garden in Belgharia, Keshab wrote in the Sunday, March 28, 1875, edition of the *Daily Mirror*:

We met not long ago Paramahansa of Dakshineswar, and were charmed by the depth, penetration and simplicity of his spirit. The never-ceasing metaphors and analogies in which he indulged, are most of them as apt as they are beautiful. The characteristics of his mind are the very opposite to those of Pandit Dayananda Saraswati, the former being so gentle, tender and contemplative, as the latter is sturdy, masculine and polemical.

And in the *Sunday Mirror* of March 28, 1875:

Hinduism must have in it a deep source of beauty, truth and goodness to inspire such men as these.

In the Māgha festival of January 1876, Keshab gave a lecture in the Town Hall on the subject “Our Faith and Experiences.” In that lecture also he dwelt for long on the beauty of Hinduism.

Sri Ramakrishna loved Keshab who, in turn, had devotion for Sri Ramakrishna. Almost every year at the time of the Brahma festival and also on other occasions, Keshab would go to Dakshineswar and bring Sri Ramakrishna to Kamal Kutir. Sometimes Keshab would take him alone with great devotion, just as one would a very close friend, to the worship room on the second floor of Kamal Kutir and quietly enjoy the bliss of worshipping God.

In 1879, at the time of the Bhādra festival, Keshab again invited Sri Ramakrishna to the tapovan of Belgharia. That was on Monday, September 15 (31 Bhādra 1286 B.S., Kṛṣṇā-caturdaśī). Again, on September 21, Keshab took him to Kamal Kutir so he could participate in the festival. It was at this time, when Sri Ramakrishna was in samādhi, that his photo was taken with the Brahma devotees. In that photo we see Thakur standing in samādhi, with Hriday supporting him. Keshab went to Dakshineswar and had darśan of Thakur on the day following Mahāṣṭami, which was on October 22 (6 Kārtik 1286 B.S., Wednesday).

At 1:00 pm on Wednesday, October 29, 1879 (13 Kārtik 1286 B.S.), the day of Kojāgar Pūrṇimā, Keshab again went along with devotees to meet Sri Ramakrishna in Dakshineswar. He went in a steamer, equipped with a barge, six boats and two sailboats, decorated with leaves and flowers. There were about eighty devotees, with musical instruments such as khol, cymbals, and drums. Hriday greeted Keshab and escorted him from the steamer. Singing the song, “Who is chanting the name of Hari on the bank of the Ganges / I guess Nitāi has come to distribute love,” the Brahma devotees accompanied them from the direction of the Panchavati. They sang: “The form of Saccidānanda is filled with beauty and bliss.” During the singing Thakur now and then entered into samādhi. On this day, after twilight and in the light of the full moon, Keshab led the Brahma worship on the ghāṭ.

After the worship, Thakur said: “All of you chant with me: ‘Brahma Ātmā Bhagavān,’ ‘Brahma Māyā Jīv Jagat,’ ‘Bhāgavat Bhakta Bhagavān.’” In the moonlight on the bank of the Ganges, Keshab and the Brahma devotees started repeating with Sri Ramakrishna those mantras with devotion and in one voice. When Sri Ramakrishna said, “Chant ‘Guru Kṛṣṇa Vaiṣṇav,’” Keshab said with a playful smile, “Now, sir, we cannot go that far. If we chant ‘Guru Kṛṣṇa Vaiṣṇav,’ people will consider us fanatics.”

Sri Ramakrishna smilingly said, “That’s fine. You Brāhmos should feel free to chant only as much as you can.”

After a few days (November 13, 1879, 28 Kartik), after Kālīpuja, Ram, Manomohan and Gopal Mitra came to Dakshineswar and met Sri Ramakrishna for the first time.

One day in the summer of 1880, Ram and Manomohan came to Kamal Kutir to meet with Keshab. They were very eager to know how Keshab Babu viewed Thakur. They said that, when asked, Keshab Babu told them, “The Paramahansa of Dakshineswar is not an ordinary person. At present there is no other person in the world greater than him. He is so beautiful, so extraordinary, he must be looked after with great care. His body will not last if not cared for. He is like a beautiful and valuable object that must be protected in a glass case.”

A few days after this, around the time of the Māgha festival in January 1881, Keshab went to Dakshineswar to have the darśan of Sri Ramakrishna. At that time many devotees such as Ram, Manomohan, and Jaygopal Sen were present.

On Friday, July 15, 1881, 1 Śrāvaṇ 1803 Śak (Kṛṣṇā Caturthi, 1288 B.S.), Keshab again picked up Sri Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar on his steamer.

Keshab was invited to and participated in the celebration that occurred when Thakur visited the home of Manomohan in November 1881. On that occasion, Trailokya and others had sung devotional songs.

Sri Ramakrishna was invited to the home of Rajendra Mitra in December 1881. Keshab too was present. The house was on Bechu Chatterjee Street in Thanthania. Rajendra was the uncle of Ram and Manomohan. Keshab was informed about Thakur’s visit and invited by Ram, Manomohan, the Brahma devotee Rajmohan, and Rajendra.

When Keshab was informed, he was in mourning at the passing of Aghoranath. The Brahma preacher Aghor had passed away in Lucknow on Thursday, December 8 (24 Agrahāyaṇ). All had thought that Keshab would not be able to come. When informed, Keshab said, “How is it possible that Paramahansa Mahāśay will be there and I won’t go? I’ll definitely go. Because of the mourning, I’ll sit separately and eat.”

Manomohan’s mother, Shyamasundari Devi, was a great devotee and had cooked for Thakur. Ram stood by him when he ate. On the afternoon of the day Sri Ramakrishna visited the home of Rajendra, Surendra had Thakur’s picture taken at Chinabazar. In the photograph we see Thakur standing in samādhi.

On the day of the festival, Mahendra Goswami recited from the *Bhāgavata*.

The Māgha festival in January, 1882, was held at the Brahma Samaj in Simulia. The worship and singing was held in the porch and courtyard of Jnan Chaudhuri’s home.

Both Sri Ramakrishna and Keshab were invited and were present on the occasion. It was here that Thakur first heard Narendra singing and asked him to visit Dakshineswar.

On Thursday, February 23, 1882, 12 Phālgun, Keshab came to Dakshineswar again along with devotees to have Thakur's darśan. Accompanying him were Joseph Cook and an American missionary, Miss Pigott. Keshab took Thakur on his steamer along with the Brahma devotees. Mr. Cook saw Sri Ramakrishna in the state of samādhi. Nagendra was present that day on the steamer. It was from him that M heard everything and, within the next ten or fifteen days, had the first darśan of Sri Ramakrishna in Dakshineswar.

After two months, in the month of April, Sri Ramakrishna went to Kamal Kutir to see Keshab. A little description of that visit is given below.

Sri Ramakrishna was sitting in the drawing-room ... *Gospel*, 94.

#### *Kathāmrta*, 47

The two-storied house was built along the lines of the British style. It was located in the center of the property, which was surrounded by a fence. On the western side of the house was the main entrance; to the south of the entrance was the gate. There were flowering plants in the area between the house and the fence on the west. Vidyasagar lived on the upper floor. To go up, one had to take the stairs in the room to the west. Upstairs there was a room toward the north and to its east was a hall. Vidyasagar slept in the room to the southeast of the hall. In the south was another room. These rooms were filled with very valuable books.

Lined near the wall were tastefully bound notebooks alongside the books. On the eastern end of the hall were a table and a chair. For his work, Vidyasagar sat facing west. Those who came to meet him sat on the chairs around the table. On the table can be seen papers, a pen, a bottle of ink, a blotting pad, a lot of letters, a bound book of accounts, and a few of the text books written by Vidyasagar. To the south of the chair was a room with a bed; that is where he slept.

What was written in the letters that were on the table? Some widow had perhaps written, "My infant child is orphaned; there is none to take care of him; you will have to help." Someone had written, "You had gone to Kharmata, so we didn't get the monthly stipend on time; we are in great difficulty." Some poor person had written, "I have a free admission in your school but I have no resource to buy books." Someone had written, "My family has nothing to eat; you must arrange to get me a job." Some teacher from his school had written, "My sister has become a widow and I have had to take her full responsibility. I cannot manage it with my current salary." Perhaps someone had written

from abroad, “I am in trouble here. You are a friend of the poor. Please send some money and save me from this imminent danger.” Someone else had perhaps written, “A date has been fixed for arbitration, you should come and settle our dispute on that day.”

The Master alighted, supported by M ... *Gospel*, 100

### *Kathāmṛta*, 49

He [Vidyasagar] wore a borderless cloth, a flannel shirt, and shoes. His head was shaven along the sides the way men from Orissa do. His bright, artificial teeth could be seen when he spoke. He had a large head, a prominent forehead, and a somewhat diminutive frame. He was a brahmin and wore the sacred thread.

Vidyasagar had many noble qualities. First of all, love of knowledge. Once he actually cried as he told M, “I had a great desire to study but could not do so. I didn’t get any time in the midst of my worldly responsibilities.” Second, compassion for all beings. Vidyasagar was an ocean of compassion. Seeing that calves didn’t get to drink their mothers’ milk, he had given up drinking milk for years, until he fell seriously ill, at which point he started drinking milk again. He didn’t use a carriage because “a horse cannot express his suffering.” One day he saw a porter suffering from cholera and lying by the roadside with his wicker basket nearby. Vidyasagar carried him home in his arms and began to serve him. Third, love of freedom. Because of a difference of opinion with the authorities, he resigned from his job as principal of the Sanskrit College. Fourth, he did not care for social conventions. Because of his love for a teacher, he showed up at the bridal shower of the teacher’s daughter. Fifth, his love for his mother and his strength of mind. His mother had said, “Isvar, I’ll feel very bad if you don’t attend your brother’s marriage,” so Vidyasagar walked all the way from Kolkata. The river Dāmodar had to be crossed along the way and there was no boat available, so he swam across the river and reached his mother’s side on the eve of the wedding in Bīrsingh, telling her, “Mother, I’ve come.”

In that mood he remained standing ... *Gospel*, 100.

### *Kathāmṛta*, 49

Was Thakur saying that the acquisition of mere money-making knowledge is a botheration for one who had no longing for the knowledge of Brahman?

Vidyasagar told someone to bring water ... *Gospel*, 100

*Kathāmṛta, 51*

Vidyasagar was a great scholar. When he studied in Sanskrit College, he was the best student in his class. He topped the class in every examination and got medals or scholarships. In due course he became the principal of Sanskrit College. He had acquired special proficiency in Sanskrit grammar and Sanskrit poetry. Being studious by nature, he had learned English through his own efforts.

Vidyasagar was very reticent ... *Gospel*, 101

*Kathāmṛta, 62*

They were probably wondering: Who was this great soul who loved God so much and who visited one home after another telling people that the only purpose of life was to love God?

[End of chapter] *Gospel*, 110.

*Kathāmṛta, 64*

A pond had four ghāṭs. Hindus drank water from one ghāṭ; they called it jal. Muslims drank from another ghāṭ and they called it pāni; the English drank at another ghāṭ and called it water; and some others at the remaining ghāṭ called it aqua.

God is one ... *Gospel*, 112.

*Kathāmṛta, 65*

Those days Hazra, Ramlal, Rakhal et al. were staying with Thakur. Sri Ramlal was Thakur's nephew; he worshiped at the Kālī temple.

Sri Ramakrishna was talking to Hazra ... *Gospel*, 112.

*Kathāmṛta, 66*

Only such things as blood, flesh, fat, saliva, worms, urine, feces.

[The last three in the list are omitted in Nikhilananda's translation.] ... *Gospel*, 113.

*Kathāmṛta, 91*

It was four in the afternoon. Thakur reached the steamboat in a rowboat. Vijay was with him. No sooner had he entered the boat than he lost outer consciousness and entered into samādhi.

M was standing in the steamboat, watching this. He had gotten into Keshab's boat at three o'clock and had come from Kolkata. He had a great desire to see the meeting between Thakur and Keshab, and their joy, and to hear them talk. Keshab had stolen the hearts of many Bengali youths like M with his good life and oratorical powers. Seeing him as a close relative, many had given him their hearts' love. Keshab had a Western education and he had studied Western philosophy and literature. Furthermore, he considered the worship of personal forms of the divine (*deva-devī*) as idolatry. It was indeed amazing that such a person had great devotion and faith in Sri Ramakrishna and would now and then come to have his darśan. M and others had been very curious to know where and how the meeting of these two minds took place. Thakur was, of course, a worshiper of the Impersonal, but he was also a worshiper of the personal forms of God. He meditated on Brahman but he also worshiped the images of gods and goddesses with flowers and sandal paste, and danced and sang out of love for God. He sat on a bed and wore a red-bordered cloth, a shirt, socks and shoes. But he was not a householder. He had all the characteristics of a monk. So people called him a paramahansa. On the other hand, Keshab worshiped the Formless, lived with his wife and children, gave lectures in English, wrote in papers, and held a job.

The passengers saw in front of them ... *Gospel, 132*

*Kathāmṛta, 92*

People are not always so fortunate to witness such a scene. At such times who can withstand the force of devotion toward the holy person in samādhi and which stony heart will not melt at this scene?

As the air in the room ... *Gospel, 132*

*Kathāmṛta, 93*

“A pillow and its case”—the indweller (*dehī*) and the body (*deha*). Was Thakur saying that the body is destructible and will not last? Only the dweller within the body is indestructible, so what is the point of taking a photograph of the body? What is the point in pampering this fleeting thing called the body? Perhaps it is appropriate to worship only God who is the inner controller and who dwells within the human heart?

The Master continued ... *Gospel*, 133.

*Kathāmṛta*, 107

He loved the Brahma Samaj very much. The members of the Samaj too were very devoted to him. On the previous day—that is, on Friday afternoon—he had accompanied Keshab Chandra Sen and his disciples from the Kālī Temple at Dakshineswar to Kolkata in a steamboat on the Ganges.

Sinthe is near Paikpara, about three miles north of Kolkata. I have said that the garden house was beautiful. The place was very remote and especially suited for contemplation on God. The owner of the garden house used to organize the festival twice a year, in fall and spring. For the festival he used to invite many devotees from Kolkata and the villages around Sinthe. That was how Shibnath and other devotees from Kolkata had arrived. Many of them have participated in the upāsana in the morning and were waiting for the upāsana scheduled for the evening. They had heard that in the afternoon a holy man would arrive and they would be able to see his joyful personality, drink his nectar-like words that intoxicate the heart, hear his melodious singing, and see his unique dance filled with love for God.

In the afternoon the garden was filled with many people. Some were sitting on the wooden benches under a canopy covered with creepers. Some were walking alongside the pond with their friends. Occupying the best seats, many were already in the hall in anticipation of Sri Ramakrishna's arrival. At the entrance of the garden was a shop selling betel leaves. Upon entering, one felt as if the place was getting ready for worship and a drama performance was scheduled for the evening. Joy had filled all the four quarters. The blue autumn sky was reflecting this joy. A breeze of joy was blowing through the trees and creepers in the garden. It was as if the sky, people and animals, trees and creepers were all singing in unison:

Today a blissful breeze is blowing through the heart  
filled with the sacred rays of the divine.

It was as if all were hungry for the vision of God. It was at this juncture that the carriage bringing Sri Sri Paramahamsadev arrived in front of the hall. Everyone stood up respectfully to receive him. He had arrived and the people, converging from all directions, surrounded him.

In the main portion of the hall a platform had been set up. That place was filled with people. In front was a corridor and Paramahamsadev sat there. People were there too. At the back of the corridor were two rooms, which were also filled with people. People stood in the doorway with eagerness. The steps leading to the corridor spanned from

one end of the wall to the other. Even those steps were filled with people. Not far from the steps were two or three trees, and behind them was a canopy covered with creepers, where there were a few wooden benches. From there people looked at the holy man eagerly and anxiously. There were rows of flowering plants and fruit-laden trees and, between them, a path. All the trees were rocking slightly because of the breeze, as if they were joyfully welcoming him with bowed heads.

Thakur Paramahamsadev sat down with a smile. All eyes were then focused on his joyful form. It was like a theater where, until the curtain is raised, some in the audience laugh, some discuss worldly matters, some walk alone or with friends, some eat betel leaves or chew tobacco. As soon as the curtain goes up, however, everyone stops talking and watches the play with single-minded attention. Or it was as if the bees who had been sitting on different flowers left them when they found a lotus and rushed to drink the honey from the lotus flower.

[The above material is condensed in Nikhilananda's *Gospel*. Then--] At the sight of Shibanath ... *Gospel*, 145.

#### *Kathāmrta*, 142

The boat reached the Annapurna Ghaṭ at Baghbazar. The stars had just appeared when they reached Balaram's home in Baghbazar. It was the *caturthi tithi* of the *śuklapakṣa*; being winter, the weather was slightly cool. Vijay, Balaram, M and others returned home remembering Thakur Sri Ramakrishna's nectar-like teachings and holding his joyful form in their hearts.

[End of section] ... *Gospel*, 174.

#### *Kathāmrta*, 148

Many of the devotees of the "inner circle" had by now met Thakur. Narendra, Rakhal, Bhavanath, Balaram, M, Baburam, Latu and others had been regularly visiting him for more or less a year. For more than a year prior to them, Ram, Manomohan, Surendra and Kedar had been coming to Dakshineswar.

Almost five months ago, Thakur Sri Ramakrishna had visited Vidyasagar at his residence in Badurbagan. Two months earlier he had gone on a joyful cruise to Kolkata along with Keshab Sen, Vijay and other Brahma devotees in a steamboat.

Prankrishna Mukhopadhyay stayed in the Shyampukur locality of Kolkata. His native place was in the village Janai. He was an officer at the Kolkata Exchange and looked after the auction work.

Since he had no offspring ... *Gospel*, 174.

*Kathāmṛta*, 152

Did Yaśodā see Gopāl in the same way?

Presently he went into samādhi ... *Gospel*, 177

*Kathāmṛta*, 153

Was Thakur hinting at his own state in order to bless Prankrishna?

The Master continued ... *Gospel*, 179.

*Kathāmṛta*, 155

After the meal, Thakur rested a little on the small bed.

Later in the afternoon ... *Gospel*, 179.

*Kathāmṛta*, 168

Thakur’s mind was like a dry matchstick: it would ignite with a single strike. Ordinary people’s minds are like wet matchsticks: they won’t light up no matter how much you strike them. This is because their minds are immersed in the world.

He remained absorbed in meditation ... *Gospel*, 187.

*Kathāmṛta*, 173

The devotees listened with rapt attention to this teaching about the incarnations of God. Some of them thought: How amazing that the indivisible Saccidānanda, whom the Vedas describe as beyond the mind and the senses, appears before us as an ordinary human being. This must be really true, since Thakur Sri Ramakrishna says so. If it weren’t true, how is this holy man able to enter into samādhi while repeating “Rāma Rāma”? Certainly he was seeing the form of Rāma in the lotus of his heart.

Presently some devotees from Konnagar ... *Gospel*, 189.

*Kathāmṛta*, 173

The eyes were not satisfied at seeing that holy, beautiful form, rare even for the gods. There was the desire to see even more and to drown oneself in that ocean of divine beauty.

Thakur sat for his meal. The devotees too joyfully received prasāda.

After his meal ... *Gospel*, 190.

*Kathāmṛta*, 175

[RAMAKRISHNA:] “One person returned from relieving himself and said, ‘I saw a beautiful, red chameleon under the tree.’ Another person said, ‘I went under the same tree before you did—how could the chameleon be red? I saw with my own eyes that it was green.’ Another person said, ‘I know it well. I had gone there before you all and I have also seen that chameleon. It is neither red nor green; I saw with my own eyes that it is blue.’ Two others there said that it was blue, pale—various colors. In the end this led to a quarrel. Everyone was sure that what they had seen was right. Seeing them fight, one man asked what the matter was. When he heard their description, he said, ‘I stay under that tree and I know that creature. What each of you is saying is true. It is a chameleon—sometimes it is green, sometimes blue, different colors. Sometimes I see that it has no color at all. It is attributeless (*nirgun*).’

(*To the Goswami*) “How can you say ... *Gospel*, 191.

*Kathāmṛta*, 178

BRINDE JHI (*to Ramlal*): “Oh Ramlal, now give him his meal, and then give me mine.”

SRI RAMAKRISHNA: “Hasn’t Brinde been given her meal yet?”

Later in the afternoon ... *Gospel*, 193.

*Kathāmṛta*, 181

It was Thursday, 16th Caitra, the *kṛṣṇa-pañcami-tithi* of the month of Phālgun, and March 29, 1883, of the English calendar. Sri Ramakrishna was taking a little rest after his noon meal. The place was the familiar room in the Kālī Temple at Dakshineswar. In front was the Ganges on the western side. The Ganges in the month of Caitra. Around two o’clock the high tide set in. A few devotees had arrived. Among them were Amrita

and the sweet-voiced Trailokya, who had won the hearts of young and old many times through his songs on the glory of God at Keshab's Brahmo Samaj.

[Paraphrased as follows: "The Master had taken a little rest after his noon meal, when a few devotees arrived from Kolkata, among them Amrita and the well-known singer of the Brahmo Samaj, Trailokya.] ... *Gospel*, 194.

### *Kathāmṛta*, 187

Come brother, let us go again today to have the darśan of Thakur Sri Ramakrishna at the temple in Dakshineswar. We will see how he is immersed in joy with the devotees and how he is always filled with the thought of God in the state of samādhi. We will see how he is sometimes in samādhi, sometimes intoxicated with the joy of devotional singing, and sometimes speaking with the devotees like an ordinary person. On his tongue there is no talk other than that of God; his mind is always indrawn, and his behavior is like that of a five-year-old boy. He repeats the name of the Divine Mother with every breath. His behavior is like that of a five-year-old boy, totally free from egoism. A five-year-old is free from attachment to objects, ever joyful, simple and generous by nature. Only one teaching—God is real, everything else is impermanent, existing for a short time. Come, let us go see that child who is intoxicated with love. A great yogi, who is wandering alone on the shore of the ocean of infinity. He is, as it were, seeing something in that infinite ocean of Saccidānanda and, having seen it, is wandering intoxicated with love.

Today is Sunday, the *śukla pratipadā tithi* of the month of Caitra. Yesterday—on Saturday, the day of Amāvasya—Thakur had gone to the home of Balaram. The new moon night (*amāvasya*)—Mahākālī, all alone in the intense darkness, is sporting (*ramaṇ*) with Mahākāla. That is why Thakur cannot remain still on Amāvasya. That is why he is in a state of a child. One who sees the Mother day and night, and who cannot live without Mother is a child.

It was Sunday morning... *Gospel*, 200.

### *Kathāmṛta*, 190

Manilal Mallik's home was at Sinduriapati in Kolkata. He would invite many people for the annual celebrations of the Brahmo Samaj at Sinduriapati. He would invite Sri Ramakrishna for the celebrations. Manilal had a garden-house in Baranagore. He often went there alone and, from there, went to have darśan of Thakur. Manilal was truly a calculating man. He rarely came to Baranagore paying the entire cab fare. He first took the tram to Shobhabazar and from there shared a ride to reach Baranagore. He had no

lack of money. In later years he had once arranged for the maintenance of poor students by donating almost twenty-five thousand rupees.

[Paraphrased as: “Manilal was truly a calculating man, though he suffered no lack of money. In later years he set up an endowment of twenty-five thousand rupees for the maintenance of poor students.”] ... *Gospel*, 202

### *Kathāmṛta*, 212

Kashiswar Mitra’s home was in Nandanbagan. He was formerly a magistrate. He was a member of the Adi Brahma Samaj. He used to do his upāsana in his own home on the second floor in a big room and used to occasionally invite devotees for celebration. After he passed away, his sons Srinath, Yajnanath and others had organized similar celebrations for some time. It was they who have invited Thakur with great affection.

At first the Master sat in the drawing room ... *Gospel*, 219.

### *Kathāmṛta*, 213

It was summer. It was Wednesday (20 Baisākh), *Caitra kṛṣṇa daśami tithi*. May 2, 1883. Many Brahma devotees were wandering in the large courtyard or in the porch downstairs. Some of them such as Sri Janaki Ghoshal had come and sat near Thakur in the worship hall to hear him talk about God.

As soon as the Master entered ... *Gospel*, 219

### *Kathāmṛta*, 218

When Thakur first came to Kolkata, he stayed in Jhamapukur and did pūjā in many homes; occasionally he would go to Nakur Vaishnav’s shop and spend time happily. These days Nakur used to have darśan of Thakur every year on the occasion of the great celebration organized by Raghav Pandit in Panihati. Nakur was a Vaiṣṇava devotee and sometimes he too would organize celebrations. Nakur was M’s neighbor. When Thakur was in Jhamapukur, he used to stay in the house of Gobinda Chatterjee. Nakur had shown that old house to M.

[Paraphrased as: “He was a devotee of Gaurāṅga and had a small shop which Sri Ramakrishna had often visited when he first came to Kolkata from Kamarpukur.”] ... *Gospel*, 223.

*Kathāmrta, 220*

The musician was describing the condition of Śrīmatī: “Many cuckoos are chirping.” Their sound of chirping feels like the sound of thunder to Śrīmatī. So she calls out to Jaiminī, and says: “My friend, my prāṇa will not stay due to my separation from Kṛṣṇa. Keep my body on the branch of the tamāla tree.” The musician concluded his singing with the song describing the uniting of Radha and Kṛṣṇa.

[end of the section.] ... *Gospel, 224.*

*Kathāmrta, 223*

After listening to the music at Adhar’s home, Thakur has come to Ram’s home in Madhu Rai’s lane in Simulia. After studying to be a doctor, Ramchandra had in due course become the assistant chemical examiner at the Medical College and was a teacher of chemistry at the Science Association. He had built his home with his own earnings. Thakur had visited this place many times and so now it has become a great place of pilgrimage for devotees. Through the grace of his guru, Ramchandra tried to maintain a spiritual attitude as he raised his family. Thakur used to praise Ram profusely. He would say that Ram provided for devotees in his home and served them. Ram’s home was a great meeting place for devotees. Nityagopal, Latu and Tarak (Shivananda) had, as it were, become a part of Ramchandra’s household. They had stayed with him for a long time. In Ram’s home there was a daily worship of Nārāyaṇa.

Ram first brought Thakur to this home for worship on the day of Baiśākhī pūrṇimā, the festival of Phuldol. Almost every year he invited Thakur on that day and celebrated along with devotees. Many of Ramchandra’s disciples, who are like his children, observe the festival even now.

[Paraphrased as: “From Adhar’s house Sri Ramakrishna went to Ram’s house. Ramchandra Dutta, one of the chief householder disciples of the Master, lived in Kolkata. He had been one of the first to announce the Master as an Incarnation of God. The Master had visited his house a number of times and unstintingly praised the devotion and generosity of this beloved disciple. A few of the Master’s disciples made Ram’s house virtually their own dwelling place.”] ... *Gospel, 226.*

*Kathāmrta, 238*

Sri Ramakrishna (smiling): Yes, yes. In Vishnupur there is the registrar’s head office. If one can register there, then there is no problem at Goghāt.”

It was the day of the new moon. ... *Gospel, 237.*

*Kathāmṛta, 243*

One devotee has come with a new cloth wrapped around him. Rakhal had the nature of a child and was about to cut the cloth's end with a pair of scissors. Thakur said: "Why are you cutting it? Let it be. It looks nice like a shawl. [To the devotee] What is its cost?" In those days the cost of imported cloth was less. The devotee said that it cost a rupee and six annas for a pair. Thakur said, "Indeed—a rupee and six annas for a pair!"

After a while Thakur told the devotee, "Go, bathe in the Ganges. Hey, give him oil." When he returned after his bath, Thakur gave him a mango from the shelf, saying, "I am giving this mango to him. He has a graduate degree. How is your brother now?"

DEVOTEE: "Yes, his medicine is working. It will be good now if he works."

SRI RAMAKRISHNA: "Can you arrange a job for him? It is a chance for you to be his guardian."

DEVOTEE: "Once he becomes well, everything will fall in place."

After his meal ... *Gospel, 241.*

*Kathāmṛta, 270*

MANI: "Yes, you had told us the story of Bhīṣma."

SRI RAMAKRISHNA: "That's right. Tell us what I had said."

MANI: "Bhīṣma was crying on the bed of arrows. The Pāṇḍavas said to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, 'Brother, how surprising that grandfather, in spite of his great knowledge, is crying at the thought of death.' Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, 'Why don't you ask him why he is crying?' Bhīṣma said, 'I am crying with the thought that I couldn't understand at all the way God works. O Kṛṣṇa, you always move with the Pāṇḍavas and protect them at every step and yet there is no end to their problems.'"

Master: God has covered all ... *Gospel, 260.*

*Kathāmṛta, 270*

Near the tamarisk grove when I squatted to defecate ...

[Translated thus: Once I had entered the wood near the pine-grove, and was sitting there, ...]  
*Gospel, 260.*

*Kathāmṛta, 277*

You are like Sil from Ramjivanpur—half warm and half cold ...

[A phrase is omitted and the portion is translated thus: “I now understand your nature. It is half warm and half cold.] *Gospel, 264*

*Kathāmṛta, 278*

Thakur Sri Ramakrishna entered the home of Khelat Ghosh. It was about ten o'clock. The house and the large courtyard were lit by the moonlight. As soon as he entered the house, Thakur was overcome by bhāva. Ramlal, M and a couple of devotees were with him. It was a big spacious house. One had to go up to the second floor and walk some distance to the south along the porch, and then come eastward by facing north, in order to go to the inner rooms.

When they arrived there it seemed as if there was no one at home. They saw several big rooms and a long porch ahead of them.

Thakur was made to sit in one of the rooms in the northeast. He was still in a state of bhāva. The devotee who had invited him to the house came and welcomed him. He was a Vaiṣṇava and had on his body the religious markings such as the insignia on the forehead (*tilak*) and in his hand a pouch containing a rosary. He was old and related to Khelat Ghosh. He used to go now and then to Dakshineswar to receive Thakur's darśan. Some Vaiṣṇavas have a very narrow outlook. They criticize the Śāktas or the followers of the path of knowledge. Thakur now began to speak.

[Condensed to one paragraph: Khelat Ghosh's house ... began to speak.] *Gospel, 264.*

*Kathāmṛta, 280–81*

All were looking at the joyful frame of the great soul with single-minded attention. Not far from the room, the Ganges with her holy water was flowing southward alongside the western porch. In the rainy season she had a strong current, as if she was very eager to meet the sea. It was as if she, while on her way, wanted to see and touch the meditation-temple (*dhyān-mandir*) of the great soul.

Mani Mallick, an old Brahma devotee, ... *Gospel, 266.*

*Kathāmṛta, 284*

They did sādhanā according to Tantra, including the sādhanā of the five M's. Thakur is the Inner Controller (*antaryāmī*) and he knew their inner tendencies (*bhāb*). He had heard that one of them lived immorally under the guise of religion. Thakur had also heard that this man had an illicit relationship with the widow of the brother of a wealthy person and, under the guise of religion, this man used to practice the sādhanā of the five M's with her.

[abridged as] The gentlemen followed the cult of the Tantra. The Master knew that one of them indulged in immoral acts in the name of religion. The Tantra rituals, under certain conditions, allow the mixing of men and women devotees. ... *Gospel, 284.*

*Kathāmṛta, 293*

Viswanath was the lawyer for the king of Nepal, a representative of the king.

Narendra was ... *Gospel, 276.*

*Kathāmṛta, 299*

The devotee had brought a tumbler. Thakur had told him, "Bring me a tumbler, which the devotees can use for drinking water."

Eleven years had passed since M's friend Haribabu lost his wife. He did not marry again. At home he had his parents, brothers and sisters. He had great love and attachment for them and served them. He was about twenty-eight or twenty-nine.

When Sri Ramakrishna came out of the mosquito net ... *Gospel, 280.*

*Kathāmṛta, 301*

It was almost ten at night. The Kālī temple was not yet closed. M was talking with Ram Chatterjee as he walked in the large courtyard, going first to praṇām in the temple of Rādhākānta and then in the temple of Kālī. The moon had risen. It was the *dvitīya tithi* of the dark fortnight in the month of Śrāvaṇ. The courtyard and the temple domes looked beautiful.

When M returned to Thakur's room, he saw that Thakur was about to sit for his meal. He sat facing the south and his meal consisted of a little of *suji-pāyes* (farina pudding) and one or two *luchis* (small, flat bread). After a while, M and his friend made a praṇām to Thakur and took their leave. They had to return to Kolkata the same day.

[Paraphrased as: It was about ten o'clock. Sri Ramakrishna finished a light supper of farina pudding and one or two luchis. After saluting him, M and his friend took their leave.] *Gospel*, 281.

### *Kathāmṛta*, 321

[SRI RAMAKRISHNA:] Seeing my eating habits, he would ask whether I did sādhana with a bhairavī.

“One follower of the Kartābhajā sect described the Formless (*nirākār*) as God with the form of water (*nīrer ākār*). Hearing that, Gauri became very angry.

“At first he was a bigoted worshipper ... *Gospel*, 294.

### *Kathāmṛta*, 321

[SRI RAMAKRISHNA:] “I had planted a Tulsi plant in front of the Kālī temple and it died. I heard that it does not grow where there is goat-sacrifice.

He gave remarkable interpretation of Hindu mythology... *Gospel*, 294.

### *Kathāmṛta*, 323

It was about four o'clock. Thakur went toward the tamarisk grove to wash his face, etc. (*mukha-prakṣālanādi*). A carpet was spread in the southeast veranda of Thakur's room. Thakur sat there after returning from the tamarisk grove. Ram and others were present. Sri Adhar Sen belonged to the gold merchant caste (*subarna-banik*) and Ram had objected to Rakhal's eating food in Adhar's house. Adhar was a great devotee. The conversation centered on this.

A devotee was describing in a lighthearted way the nature of some belonging to the gold merchant caste. Thakur was smiling. The gold merchants love *roṭi* and simple curry; they didn't care for delicious dishes. They eat fine quality rice and with refreshments they need a few fruits; they love gooseberry, and so on. If a “food gift” (*tattva*) such as shad fish, sandesh, etc. is received—all of it will go to the homes of their in-laws. Those families, in turn, will send it to the homes of their in-laws. As a result, a single shad fish will keep circulating in fifteen or twenty homes. The women of the household do all the work, but the food is cooked by an Oriya cook, who goes from house to house, cooking an hour here, a couple of hours there, and so on. One cook thus cooks sometimes in four or five homes.

Sri Ramakrishna smiled and did not express any opinion of his own.

Toward evening ... *Gospel*, 295.

*Kathāmṛta, 325*

It was Wednesday (10 Aśvin), the tenth day of the dark fortnight in the month of Bhādra; September 26, 1883, of the English calendar. On Wednesdays the number of devotee visitors is less, because they all have their jobs. Devotees generally come when they have time on Sundays in order to have Thakur's darśan. M became free from work at half past one, and presented himself near Thakur in Dakshineswar temple at three o'clock. In those days Rakhal and Latu mostly stayed with Thakur. About two hours earlier Kishori had arrived. Thakur was sitting in his room on the smaller bed. M came in and prostrated. Thakur inquired about his welfare and spoke about Narendra.

[Paraphrased as: Wednesday, September 26, 1883. There were very few devotees with the Master, for most of them came on Sundays. Rakhal and Latu were living with him the greater part of the time. M arrived in the afternoon and found the Master seated on the small couch. The conversation turned to Narendra.] *Gospel, 296.*

*Kathāmṛta, 327*

[Ramakrishna, speaking about a Vedantin sādhu]: Both of us used to go out to defecate (*bāhje jetum*). Hearing that the pond belonged to a Muslim, he did not take water from there. He had studied grammar. Haladhari questioned him about grammar and they talked about vowels and consonants.

He stayed here for three days... *Gospel, 297.*

*Kathāmṛta, 330*

Thakur Sri Ramakrishna was sitting on the platform in front of the Kālī Temple at Dakshineswar. He saw the Mother of the universe in the image of Kālī. M and other devotees were sitting near him. It was September 26, 1883, the tenth day of the dark fortnight of the month of Bhādra. It was afternoon.

Thakur had said sometime earlier, "No one can calculate anything concerning God. His glory is infinite. What can human beings describe through words! Once an ant went to a sugar mountain and ate one grain, and its stomach was full. Then it thought, 'Now I'll go and take the whole mountain to my hole.'

"Can God be understood? That is why I adopt the attitude of a kitten, no matter where Mother keeps me. I don't know anything. A baby does not know how much wealth its mother has."

Sri Ramakrishna was praying to ... *Gospel*, 299.

### *Kathāmṛta*, 330

Earlier, M used to always go to Sri Keshab Sen's Brahma Samaj. After meeting Thakur he no longer went there. Sri Ramakrishna always talked with the Mother of the universe. Seeing that, M had become speechless. Hearing Sri Ramakrishna's teaching on the harmony of religions and seeing his longing for God, M was deeply impressed.

M had been visiting ... *Gospel*, 299.

### *Kathāmṛta*, 337

Sri Ramakrishna said, "A chameleon lived on a tree. One person saw him as green, another person saw him as black, the third person saw him yellow—in this way, many people saw him in different colors. They began telling each other: the animal is green, someone said red, someone else said yellow, and they quarreled. Then they all went to a person who was sitting under that tree. He said, 'I stay under that tree day and night. I know that chameleon. He changes his colors every moment. Sometimes he does not have any color.'"

Was Sri Ramakrishna saying that God has qualities and takes various forms, and also that God is without qualities and formless, and beyond speech and mind? Was he enjoying the sweetness of God through all the paths such as bhakti yoga and jñāna yoga?

Master (to Balaram's father): "Don't read books ... *Gospel*, 305.

### *Kathāmṛta*, 340

Fanatic Vaiṣṇavas don't much like people from other traditions. Balaram's father visited Sri Ramakrishna occasionally and did not have the characteristics of those kinds of Vaiṣṇavas.

MASTER: "Liberal-minded devotees ... *Gospel*, 307

### *Kathāmṛta*, 355

Keshab was critically ill. That is why his disciples and his family at home were so careful.

Sri Ramakrishna became more and more ... *Gospel*, 318

*Kathāmṛta*, 365

It was November 28, 1883, of the English calendar. On this day around four o'clock or five o'clock Sri Ramakrishna had gone to Keshab Chandra Sen's house called Kamal Kuṭīr. Keshab was ill and would soon leave this mortal world. After seeing Keshab, Thakur along with a few devotees arrived at the home of Sri Jayagopal in Mathaghosha Lane.

The devotees' minds were filled with thoughts. They saw that day and night Thakur was filled with the love of God. He had married but had not led a family life with his wife in the conventional sense. He was devoted to his wife, he worshiped her, spoke with her only of God, he sang devotional songs, he worshiped God, he meditated—there was no worldly relation at all. Thakur saw that God alone is true; everything else is illusory. He could not touch money, metallic objects, pots and cups. He could not touch women. If there was any contact, he experienced excruciating pain as if poked by a bone of the catfish. If money or gold was placed in his hands, his hand bent and assumed an abnormal posture and he was unable to breathe. When he threw them away, he was able to breathe normally again.

The devotees' minds were filled with thoughts. Is it necessary to renounce one's family? What is the use of studying? If I don't marry, then I don't have to take up a job? Is it necessary to give up one's mother and father? I have married and have a child, I need to take care of the family—what will happen to me? I, too, feel like remaining immersed day and night in the love of God. Seeing Sri Ramakrishna I think, What am I doing? He is thinking night and day of God continuously like the steady flow of oil, and I am night and day thinking of worldly objects. Getting his darśan is like the light seen in a sky that is otherwise covered by clouds. How can I solve the problem of life?

He has shown us so much, and yet there is still doubt in our minds?

Let me break the sand-barrier and fulfill my heart's desire. But is it really a sand-barrier? If there is true love for God, then there won't be any calculations. If the high tide comes in the Ganges, who can stop it? The love that sprang in Śrī Gaurāṅga and made him wear the loin-cloth of a monk; the love that freed Jesus from all other thoughts, that made him go into wilderness, and give up his body seeing the loving face of the Divine Father; the love that made Buddha renounce the joys of princely life and become a monk—if one gets even one drop of that love, this illusory world will be of no consequence.

Now what is the way for those who are weak, who do not have that kind of love, who are worldly souls, whose feet are shackled by māyā? Let us see what this loving monk says.

The devotees were thinking in this manner. Thakur was sitting in Jayagopal's drawing room with devotees—in front of him were Jayagopal, his relatives and neighbors. A neighbor was ready to begin the discussion. He came forward and began the conversation. Jayagopal's brother Vaikuntha was also present.

Vaikuntha, Jayagopal's brother, said ... *Gospel*, 325

### *Kathāmṛta*, 388

“There's the instance of Śukadeva. He had all knowledge on the tip of his tongue. In the books—scriptures—there is a mixture of sand and sugar. A spiritual person takes only the sugar and rejects the sand. A spiritual person accepts the essence.”

Was Thakur teaching by pointing to his own state by referring to Śukadeva and others?

The musician Vaiṣṇavacharan arrived. He sang the songs concerning the meeting of Kṛṣṇa with Subol (*subol-milan kīrtan*). After some time, Sri Ramlal brought prasāda for Thakur in a plate. After eating Thakur took some rest.

At night, M slept in the nahabat. Whenever Sri Sri Ma [Sarada Devi] came to the Dakshineswar temple to serve Thakur, she used to stay in the same nahabat. For the last few months she has been staying in Kamarpukur.

[Paraphrased as:] He carries all his knowledge on the tip of his tongue. There's the instance of Śukadeva. Books—I mean the scriptures—contain a mixture of sand and sugar. The sādhu takes the sugar, leaving aside the sand. He takes only the essence.” Vaishnavacharan, the musician, arrived and sang a few devotional songs. M spent the night in the nahabat. *Gospel*, 342

### *Kathāmṛta*, 389

M, Rakhal, Latu, Harish, Yogin and other devotees were also present.

Mukherjee: I am very happy ... *Gospel*, 342

### *Kathāmṛta*, 390

Is Thakur saying that it is not possible to attain the knowledge of Brahman if a lay person or a monk is attached to lust and greed?

Addressing Mr. Mukherjee ... *Gospel*, 343

*Kathāmṛta*, 397

Sri Ramakrishna was always in a state of samādhi, always busy teaching Rakhal and other devotees in order to awaken their spiritual consciousness.

Sri Ramakrishna was seated ... *Gospel*, 348

*Kathāmṛta*, 405

He said to the Vaiṣṇava, tell me the nature of your renunciation.

In the afternoon ... *Gospel*, 353

*Kathāmṛta*, 438

[Sri Ramakrishna is discussing with a visiting Tāntrik the use of wine in Tantric sadhana.]

SRI RAMAKRISHNA: Eleven containers, right?

TĀNTRIK: A measure of three tolā. It is for the sādhana using a corpse.

MASTER: But I cannot touch wine at all. ... *Gospel*, 374

*Kathāmṛta*, 438

[TĀNTRIK:] The stem of the lotus is Śivaliṅga, and the vulva-shaped primal power (*ādyāśakti*) dwells in the pistil.

M listened silently to the conversation. ... *Gospel*, 374

*Kathāmṛta*, 451

Is Thakur indicating that the one who is the Primal Power (*ādyāśakti*) is the same as one who has come in human form as Sri Ramakrishna?

At the Master's request ... *Gospel*, 382

*Kathāmṛta*, 458

Some of the devotees were perhaps thinking, Has Thakur attained the knowledge of Brahman? If he has had it, why is he saying 'I', 'I'?

Thakur continued: “One must renounce the ‘I’ ... *Gospel*, 387

*Kathāmṛta*, 461

Then he described the bhūcarī and khecarī mudrās and the śāmbhavī vidyā. Śāmbhavī—a person in that state goes anywhere without any specific purpose.

MAHIMA: “There are fine passages ...” *Gospel*, 390

*Kathāmṛta*, 475

Among them were Manilal Mallick, Mahendra Kaviraj of Sinthi, Balaram, M, Bhavanath, Rakhal, Latu, Harish, Kishori (Gupta), Shibchandra, et al. Girish, Kali and Subodh had not yet joined the group. Sharat and Sashi had come only once or twice. Purna, younger Naren, and others had not yet seen him.

Sri Ramakrishna’s arm was in a splint. His arm was broken when, immersed in the state of bhāva, he fell down near the rail. The arm was broken recently and there was constant pain in the arm. Even in that condition, he was nearly always absorbed in samādhi and gave profound teaching to the devotees.

One day he was crying in pain and he entered into samādhi. After he regained normal consciousness he told Mahimacharan and other devotees, “If one does not realize Saccidānanda, then one has not achieved anything. It won’t happen unless there is deep longing (*vyākulatā*). I used to cry and pray, “O Master of the lowly! I am without any prayer and spiritual practice (*bhajan-sāadhan-hīn*). You must reveal yourself to me.”

That night again Mahimacharan, Adhar, M et al. were sitting in his room.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA (to Mahimacharan): “There is such a thing as unconditional devotion. See if you can attain that.”

He said to Adhar, “Could you massage this arm?”

Today is March 9, 1884. Mani Mallick and Bhavanath referred to ... *Gospel*, 400

*Kathāmṛta*, 481

Manilal Mallick was an old member of the Brahma Samaj. Bhavanath, Rakhal, and M would occasionally visit the Brahma Samaj.

Sri Ramakrishna then explained ... *Gospel*, 404

*Kathāmṛta*, 482

[Ramakrishna was describing the characteristics of an enlightened person:] Perhaps, like a child, he eats a berry while he is defecating. He does not feel impure after a nocturnal emission, knowing that the body is the result of semen. He does not see feces and urine as feces and urine.

To him everything is Brahman ... *Gospel*, 404

*Kathāmṛta*, 495

Hearing the story of the haṭha yogi, Mani (Sen) said, “Who is called a haṭha yogi? Haṭh [pronounced in Bengali as ‘hot’] means ‘hot.’”

Thakur later told the devotees about Mani Sen’s doctor, “I know him. I had told Jadu Mallick, ‘This doctor is useless. He is more stupid than even Dr. X [M does not mention the name of the doctor.]’”

It was not yet dusk ... *Gospel*, 413

*Kathāmṛta*, 500

After attaining knowledge, Rāma said, “I don’t want to live in this world.” At this Daśaratha sent for Vasiṣṭha, so he could dissuade Rāma. Vasiṣṭha said, “Rāma, if the world is separate from God, then you can renounce it.” Rāma remained silent. He knew well that there is nothing apart from God. As a result he did not renounce the world.

(To Prankrishna) “The fact ... *Gospel*, 418

*Kathāmṛta*, 512

The time was eleven o’clock.

Rakhal, M, and ... *Gospel*, 427

*Kathāmṛta*, 525

SRI RAMAKRISHNA: “Why don’t you say something?”

BANERJI: “A guru gave one person the mantra of a ram (*gārol*) and said, ‘The ram is your chosen deity (*iṣṭadevatā*).’ The person became enlightened doing the japa of the gārol-mantra. A grasscutter could cross the Ganges after repeating the name of Rāma.”

SRI RAMAKRISHNA: “Bring the women of your family ... *Gospel*, 437

*Kathāmṛta, 530*

Yesterday was Saturday, the night of the new moon. It was the month of Jyeṣṭha. Today was occasionally cloudy.

Suddenly there came a rain-storm. ... *Gospel, 440*

*Kathāmṛta, 531*

You know the story of the gold merchants—one says “Keshab,” another other says “Gopal,” one says “Hari,” another says “Hara.” In that story, “Gopal” means a cowherd! (*Everyone laughs.*)

In great joy, Surendra called out to Gopal, “Where is dear Kṛṣṇa?”

The musician sang ... *Gospel, 440*

*Kathāmṛta, 534*

Vijay said to Kedar, “This morning (in meditation) I saw you. But when I tried to touch you, there was no one.”

[End of chapter] *Gospel, 443*

*Kathāmṛta, 535*

Singing was going on in the main hall of the garden house. A white cloth was spread in the center of the hall with a few cushions. On the east and west of this hall were rooms and on the north and the south were verandas. In front of the garden house, that is, toward the south, there was a beautiful pond with a built embankment. Running from east to west, in the middle of the house and the pond, was a garden path. On both sides of the path were flowering plants, croton and other trees. There was another path that ran from the eastern side of the garden house to the gate at the north. That path was paved with red brick dust and, along both sides, there were also different flowering plants and trees such as croton and others. Near the gate, east of the path, there was another pond with an embankment. The poor people in the neighborhood used this pond for bathing etc. as well as for their drinking water. There was also a path on the western side of the garden house, and to its southwest was the kitchen. That day there was hectic activity, as Thakur and the devotees were to be fed there. Suresh and Ram were busy making arrangements.

Devotees had gathered in the verandas of the garden house as well. Some were strolling by themselves or with friends along the pond mentioned earlier. Some would occasionally come and rest near the embankment.

At Surendra's garden house, the kīrtan ... *Gospel*, 445

### *Kathāmṛta*, 542

The devotees also again came to Thakur after washing their hands at the southern ghāṭ of the pond, chewing betel leaf. They all sat down.

About two o'clock ... *Gospel*, 450

### *Kathāmṛta*, 550

Didn't those words echo in the heart of Pratap?

A few minutes later ... *Gospel*, 457

### *Kathāmṛta*, 552

In order to teach M, he started speaking about the devotees.

MASTER: "Tell me ... *Gospel*, 458

### *Kathāmṛta*, 557

Thakur said to M, "The other day I was going to visit your place. Where do you stay?"

M: "Sir, now I am in Telipara of Shyampukur, near the school."

SRI RAMAKRISHNA: "You didn't go to school today?"

M: "Sir, today is a holiday because of Ratha Yātrā."

After the death of Narendra's father, the family was facing difficulty. He was the eldest son and he had younger brothers and sisters. His father was a lawyer but was not able to leave behind any savings. Narendra was searching for a job to take care of the family. Thakur had told Ishan and other devotees to help Narendra find a job. Ishan was one of the supervisors for those employed in the Comptroller General's office. Thakur was always worried after he heard about the difficulties in Narendra's home.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA (to Narendra): “I have told Ishan about your situation. Ishan was one day there (in the Dakshineswar Kālī Temple) and I told him then. He knows a lot of people.”

Ishan had invited and brought Thakur to his home. For the occasion he had also invited a few of his friends. There would be singing and musical instruments such as pakhvāj, tablā, and tānpurā had been kept ready. A resident of the house brought a container filled with dough to be used for pākhvāj. The time was about eleven o'clock. Ishan hoped that Narendra would sing.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA (to Ishan): “I see the dough here. That means it will be a while before we eat?”

ISHAN (*with a smile*): “No, sir. It won't be so late.”

Some devotees were smiling.

[The Master joked about the delay in serving the meal.] One of the scholars ... *Gospel*, 462

#### *Kathāmṛta*, 560

They saw that, to celebrate the occasion of Ratha Yātrā, children were blowing a makeshift horn made from tāl leaves.

As the carriage stopped ... *Gospel*, 464

#### *Kathāmṛta*, 571

Thakur began to speak about Pandit Padmalochan. Padmalochan was the court-scholar (*sabhā-panḍit*) of the king of Burdwan.

It was about four o'clock ... *Gospel*, 473

#### *Kathāmṛta*, 574

Referring to a realized soul, I believe Thakur is hinting at his own condition.

“The jnāni reasons ...” *Gospel*, 476

#### *Kathāmṛta*, 583

SRI RAMAKRISHNA: “The “eternally perfect” (*nityasiddha*) person is like the homā bird. Its mother stays at a high altitude. After she gives birth, the baby starts falling toward the earth. During its fall, its wings sprout and its eyes open. But before its body can crash

on the ground, it flies upward toward its mother. ‘Mother, where are you? Where are you?’ See how Prahlada shed a stream of tears while writing the letter ‘ka.’”

Is Thakur explaining his own state by referring to the state of *nityasiddha* through the examples of araṇī wood and the homā bird?

The Master was pleased with ... *Gospel*, 483

### *Kathāmṛta*, 585

By describing the state of Chaitanya, is Thakur speaking about his own state?

(*To the pundit*): “One can ...” *Gospel*, 485

### *Kathāmṛta*, 587

Thakur is walking toward the south in the prayer hall along with devotees. Seeing the place where the sacrifice is done, the pandit said: “Mother cannot see the goat being sacrificed.” (*All laugh.*)

As Sri Ramakrishna was coming back ... *Gospel*, 487

### *Kathāmṛta*, 591

So he [Balaram] had invited Thakur to his home to celebrate the “Return Chariot Festival.” A small chariot would be pulled on the open-air veranda of the second floor of the outer apartment. Wednesday, June 25, was the day of the Chariot Festival. On invitation, Thakur had visited the home of Ishan Mukhopadhyay in Thanthania. On the same afternoon, he met Pundit Shashadhar for the first time in the home of Bhudhar on College Street. Three days earlier, on the preceding Monday, Shashadhar came to see Thakur for the second time at the Dakshineswar Kālī temple.

Upon being instructed by Thakur, Balaram had invited Shashadhar. The pundit taught people through his discourses on Hinduism. Was that the reason why Thakur was so eager to infuse śakti in him?

Thakur was speaking with the devotees. Sitting near him were Ram, M, Balaram, Manomohan, a few young men, Balaram’s father, and others. Balaram’s father was a very devout Vaiṣṇava. He generally stayed by himself at the home he had built in the holy town of Vrindaban and looked after the worship of Śrī Śyāmasundar. In Vrindaban, he spent the whole day engaged in the service of God. Sometimes he read devotional books such as the Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta. Sometimes he made copies of devotional

texts. Sometimes he prepared garlands of flowers and sometimes he invited fellow devotees and fed them. Balaram had persuaded him to visit Kolkata after writing him letters upon letters, so that he could have the darśan of Thakur. Thakur was telling devotees: “All religions have a sectarian bias, but this is especially so among the Vaiṣṇavas. Those who hold different views fight one another and don’t know how to see the harmony.”

MASTER (to Balaram’s father and others) ... *Gospel*, 489

### *Kathāmṛta*, 598

Chandra (Chatterjee), who belonged to the Kartābhajā sect, arrived. His age must have been between sixty and sixty-five. He recited only the verses of the Kartābhajā sect. He wanted to massage Thakur’s feet. Thakur did not allow him to touch his feet and said with a smile: “Now he is speaking in a calculating way.” The devotees began to laugh.

Sri Ramakrishna went to the inner apartment ... *Gospel*, 493

### *Kathāmṛta*, 601

Vaishnavacharan now began to do kīrtan, the song referring to the meeting with Subol. When the singer improvised, “dhā cannot come without rā,” Thakur entered into samādhi.

Pandit Shashadhar shed tears ... *Gospel*, 495

### *Kathāmṛta*, 603

Dr. Pratap was still seated. Thakur said, “Come there [Dakshineswar] once. Bhuban (Dhatri) has said that he will pay your fare.”

It was dusk ... *Gospel*, 498

### *Kathāmṛta*, 606

Was Thakur describing his own state here? He continued—

“There are two classes of ... *Gospel*, 500

*Kathāmṛta*, 612

Balaram had brought mangoes. Thakur told Sri Ram Chatterjee, “Take the mangoes for your son.” Nabai Chaitanya was sitting in the room. He was wearing a red cloth.

Thakur began to praise a medicine ... *Gospel*, 504

*Kathāmṛta*, 618

The devotees made praṇāms. After M made a praṇām, Thakur said to Adhar, “Will Dr. Nitāi not come?”

Arrangements were being made ... *Gospel*, 508

*Kathāmṛta*, 622

Sri Ramakrishna (*smiling*): [Referring to Hazra’s belly when Hazra danced] “It swings by itself, even when it is not moved.” (*All laugh.*)

Pandit Shashadhar’s host ... *Gospel*, 511

*Kathāmṛta*, 623

Narendra said that he had many times verified and found true that Thakur, in a state of bhāva, could see people in their totality, both the inner and the outer person.

Adhar had prepared a feast ... *Gospel*, 511

*Kathāmṛta*, 623

“A woman’s father-in-law was named Hari and her brother-in-law was named Kṛṣṇa. She had to chant the name of God but was not able to say ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa.’ So this is what she said when she did japa:

Phare Phrisht, Phare Phrisht, Phrisht Phrisht Phare Phare;  
Phare Ram, Phare Ram, Ram Ram Phare Phare.

Adhar was a low-caste Hindu ... *Gospel*, 511

*Kathāmṛta*, 623

SRI RAMAKRISHNA: [referring to a visitor] It was heard later that he used to sleep with his aunt.

[Translated as] MASTER: “We learnt later that he led an immoral life. ... *Gospel*, 511

### *Kathāmṛta*, 625

A day earlier, on Saturday, Thakur had visited the home of Sri Adhar Sen along with devotees. He had made everyone happy by arranging for the great celebration through Hari kīrtan.

Arrangements had been made ... *Gospel*, 512

### *Kathāmṛta*, 627

Many of them follow the path of Radha Tantra, and do their practices using the five elements (*pañcatattva*): the elements of earth, water, fire, air, and space—things such as feces, urine, menstrual fluid, and semen. All these are very dirty practices.

It is like ... *Gospel*, 513

### *Kathāmṛta*, 627

[RAMAKRISHNA:] “In that part of the country [Kamarpukur] I have seen a person who followed this path [Ghoṣpārā]. She was a woman named Sari [Sarasvati] Pathar. Those who follow that path share meals in each other’s homes but they won’t eat in the homes of those who follow other paths. The Mallicks ate at the home of Sari Pathar but they did not eat at Hriday’s home because, according to them, Hriday’s family were ‘strangers.’ (*Laughter*)

“One day I had gone to visit her home along with Hriday. I saw that she had made a beautiful grove of tulsi plants. She gave us fried gram and puffed rice, and I ate a little. Hriday ate a lot and then fell sick!

“The Bauls designate ... *Gospel*, 513

### *Kathāmṛta*, 638

Bṛndhābalī had told the King Bali, “What wealth indeed can you give to Brahmā?”

The aim of spiritual discipline ... *Gospel*, 521

*Kathāmṛta*, 639

Ram Chakravarti, who did worship in the Viṣṇu temple, entered Thakur's room. Thakur said, "Hello, Ram, did you tell Dayal about the sugar candy? Forget it, no need now to say anything more. A lot has already been said."

Sri Ramakrishna sat ... *Gospel*, 522

*Kathāmṛta*, 640

The two Mukherjee brothers, Jnanbabu, Younger Gopal, the Elder Kali and others arrived. Three or four devotees came from Konnagar. Rakhal was in Vrindaban with Balaram. News had come that he had fallen ill. Today is Sunday, *kṛṣṇa daśamī tithi*, 30th Bhādra, 1291. September 14, 1884.

Narendra was very busy with his mother and younger brothers after the death of his father.

Narendra was preparing himself ... *Gospel*, 522

*Kathāmṛta*, 641

In the course of the conversation, he [a newly arrived devotee] said, "Didn't the moon exist before the churning of the ocean (*samudra-manthan*)? Who will now determine all this?"

Smiling, M quoted the song, "Where did You get the garland of heads when the universe did not exist?"

SĀDHAKA (with irritation): "That is different."

The Master stood in the middle ... *Gospel*, 524

*Kathāmṛta*, 651

Meanwhile, the Mukherjees were waiting at the gate. Adhar was searching for Thakur.

Mukherjee (*smiling*): "Mahendra Babu ran away from there."

MASTER (to the Mukherjis, ... *Gospel*, 530

*Kathāmṛta, 652*

A toilet had been built to the south of the Kālī temple. That had started off a debate with Jadu Mallick, because adjacent to the toilet was Jadu’s garden.

Bholanath, manager of the garden, had given a legal deposition to a judge. After deposing he had become very anxious and told Thakur about it. Thakur had told him, “Adhar is a deputy magistrate. Consult him when he comes here.” Sri Ram Chakravarti brought Bholanath along with him to meet with Thakur and narrated to him the story of how Bholanath was filled with fear after giving the deposition, and so on.

Thakur became somewhat anxious, sat up on his bed, and asked them to tell everything to Adhar. After hearing everything, Adhar said, “That’s not a big matter. There will be only a little difficulty.” It looked like Thakur felt relieved of his great anxiety.

It was late ... *Gospel, 531*

*Kathāmṛta, 654*

M: “When Kṛṣṇa himself became all the cowherds and the cattle (after Brahmā had kidnapped them), the mothers of the cowherds, getting these ‘new’ children, stopped going to Yaśodā’s home. Even the cows mooed lovingly and followed these ‘new’ calves.”

Sri Ramakrishna: “What does that mean?”

M: “God’s power ... *Gospel, 533*

*Kathāmṛta, 664*

SRI RAMAKRISHNA (to M): “I used to do japa ... and enter into samādhi. How is his state of mind?”

M (*seriously*): “Very good.”

SRI RAMAKRISHNA (*smiling*): “Good, good.

I wonder whether ... *Gospel, 541*

*Kathāmṛta, 668*

“There is a message in a letter: ‘Send five seers of sandesh and one cloth with a border.’ Now the letter is lost, and the person anxiously searches for it everywhere. When the letter is found after much searching, the person reads it and finds what is

written in it: 'Send five seers of sandesh and one cloth with a border.' Then the letter is thrown away. It is not needed any longer. Now all that remains to be done is to pick up the sandesh and the cloth.

(To the devotees) "Gather all the information ... *Gospel*, 543

#### *Kathāmṛta*, 671

Thakur said to one devotee: "Please tell Ishan once about getting a job for him."

The carriage seemed ... *Gospel*, 545

#### *Kathāmṛta*, 685

Sri Ramakrishna (to M): "What did Jadu Mallick do?"

M (to himself): "Thakur is concerned about everyone's welfare. Like Caitanya, has he too taken birth to teach devotion?"

[End of chapter] *Gospel*, 557

#### *Kathāmṛta*, 691

Thakur had gone to Shibnath's home to see him, but they could not meet. Later Vijay had passed on the message but, pressed by work, Shibnath could not meet him even today.

MASTER (to Vijay and others): "Four ... *Gospel*, 562

#### *Kathāmṛta*, 696

CHUNI: "Sir, I came from Vrindaban ..."

Chunilal had gone to Vrindaban along with Balaram and had stayed there for a few months. He had recently returned to Kolkata as his leave of absence was over.

(To Harish) Was a day ... *Gospel*, 565

#### *Kathāmṛta*, 696

Surendra stayed for a long time. For a brief interval he had visited his home.

Surendra stood near ... *Gospel*, 566

*Kathāmṛta, 700*

On the previous day, the day of Mahāṣṭami, Thakur had gone to Kolkata to see the Durgā images. Before he went to Adhar’s house to see the image, he went to Ram’s house. Many devotees had gathered there. Thakur had entered into samādhi upon seeing Narendra. He had placed his foot on Narendra’s knee and, as he stood, he had entered into samādhi.

Presently Narendra arrived ... *Gospel, 569*

*Kathāmṛta, 714*

It was 17 Aśvin, 1291. Aśvin *śukla dvādasī-trayodaśī*. It was two days after Vijayā Daśamī. A day earlier Thakur had gone to Adhar’s house in Kolkata. There were many present there, including Narayan, Baburam, M, Kedar, and Vijay. Thakur had danced there along with the devotees to the accompaniment of devotional singing.

Latu, Ramlal ... *Gospel, 578*

*Kathāmṛta, 714*

Ramlal did the worship of Bhavatarīṇī Kālī.

Manilal Mallick ... *Gospel, 578*

*Kathāmṛta, 734*

[RAMAKRISHNA:] (*Smiling*, to Ramlal) “Hey Ramlal, remember how Hazra said, *antas bahis yadi haris?* It was like someone who said *mātāram bhātāram khātāram*, meaning to say, ‘mother eats rice.’” (*All laugh.*)

RAMLAL (smiling): “*Antar-bahir-yadi-haris-tapasā tataḥ kim.*”

SRI RAMAKRISHNA (to M): “Learn this hymn and chant it to me occasionally.”

A plate from Thakur’s room was missing. Ramlal and the maid Brinda were speaking about the plate, “Do you know about that plate?”

SRI RAMAKRISHNA: “Well, I don’t see it anywhere. It was here before. I had seen it.”

Two monks ... *Gospel, 592*

*Kathāmṛta, 740*

When a mother cooks fish, she prepares polão for one, but for another whose stomach is delicate she prepares fish soup. The same thing is to be given differently, depending on the person’s taste and capacity.

M: “That is true ... *Gospel, 596*

*Kathāmṛta, 742*

If the foreskin on the penis is cut as the Muslims do, then that is a bad sign. (*M and others laugh.*) (To M, *smilingly*) You better check that—that is a bad sign. (*All laugh.*)

Sri Ramakrishna paced the veranda ... *Gospel, 597*

*Kathāmṛta, 742*

[M and BABURAM:] And about that song: “Longing for Mother Śyāma’s feet, staying on the bank of a river.”

While pacing the verandah, ... *Gospel, 599*

*Kathāmṛta, 744*

“Ordinary people are called *mānuṣ*, but one whose consciousness is awakened is *mān huṁś*. You are *mān huṁś*.”

“I had already planned to hear your music ... *Gospel, 599*

*Kathāmṛta, 744*

Song: “Longing for Mother’s feet, staying on the bank of the river.”

Song: “The slayer of the demon Mahiṣa.”

When the Master heard the second song ... *Gospel, 599*

*Kathāmṛta, 744*

In the song, Nilkantha sang: “He in whose matted locks flows the Ganges holds the Divine Mother (*Rājarājesvarī*) in his heart.”

Presently he began to dance in an ecstasy of divine love. ... *Gospel, 599*

*Kathāmṛta, 744*

M: “The beautiful Gaurāṅga, the youthful dancer, fair as molten gold.”

MASTER: “Yes, yes!” ... *Gospel*, 599. M’s words are translated in the *Gospel* as: “About Sri Gaurāṅga?” The *Gospel* gives the words of the song in the following line.

*Kathāmṛta, 748*

“There is a view that whoever has breasts with nipples is a woman. Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa did not have nipples on their breasts.

Do you know the significance ... *Gospel*, 603

*Kathāmṛta, 770*

The morning worship was over. Sri Sri Paramaharṣadeva reached the place at 4:30 in the afternoon. His carriage stood in the middle of the garden. Very soon groups of devotees began to surround him. The altar of the Brahma Samaj had been set up in the main hall. In front of it was a courtyard. Thakur sat in the courtyard and the devotees sat circled around him.

The Brahma devotees ... *Gospel*, 623

*Kathāmṛta, 770*

On both the sides of the reddish garden paths were rows of trees bearing fruits and flowers. Today the devotees would be able to hear the voice of the Vedas emerging from the holy mouth of Thakur—it is the same voice that emerged from the mouths of the Aryan ṛṣis in the form of the Vedas; it is the same voice that was heard by the illiterate fishermen from the mouth of Jesus, who was the greatest sannyāsin in a human form, who dwelt in Brahman, whose heart bled at the suffering of people, who had compassion for devotees, who was an embodiment of devotion and filled to the brim with love for God; it is the same voice that had at one time emerged in the form of the Bhagavad Gītā in the holy land of the Kurus from the mouth of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The “conquerer of sleep and the son of Kuntī” [Arjuna], who was humble and thirsty, drank the nectar of teaching that emerged in a thundering voice from the mouth of Saccidānanda as the guru, who took a human form and the guise of a charioteer. Thus we read—

At the time of death, with an unswerving mind and devotion as well as the power of concentration, and fixing the prāṇa between the eyebrows, one who meditates on the supreme Being as

omniscient, ancient, the ruler, subtler than the subtlest, the sustainer of all, of inconceivable form, effulgent like the sun, and beyond darkness [of māyā], attains to that effulgent, all-pervading Being. I shall tell you briefly about the goal that the knowers of the Vedas speak of as imperishable, in which enter those self-controlled beings who are free from attachments, and desiring which people practice celibacy. [Gita, 8.9-11. The *Kathāmṛta* has only the Sanskrit original.]

Thakur Sri Ramakrishna sat down and, looking at the beautifully decorated altar of the [Brahmo] Samaj, bowed his head in salutation. Talks about God were given from that altar, so he saw the altar as a sacred space. He saw that it was the confluence of all holy places, as the talks there were about the Imperishable. Seeing the space where talks about God occurred, he became enkindled (*uddīpan*) with the thought of God, just as one thinks of the lawsuits and judges when one sees a courthouse.

Trailokya was ... *Gospel*, 623

### *Kathāmṛta*, 771

“Ignoring the category of *mahat*, letting go of the twenty-four categories, one sees within one’s own Self the truth that transcends all categories.” It was as if everything, including the organs of action and knowledge, the mind, the intellect, and the ego, has been wiped out. Only the body is present like a figure on a canvas. Once seeing a similar state of Kṛṣṇa, Yudhiṣṭhira and other Pāṇḍavas, whose minds were centered in Kṛṣṇa, had cried. At that time, Bhīṣma, the glory of the lineage of the Āryas, was on the bed of arrows, deep in meditation on God as the end drew near. The war at Kurukṣetra had just ended and it was naturally a time for grieving. Unable to recognize that Kṛṣṇa was in samādhi, the Pāṇḍavas had cried. They thought that Kṛṣṇa had given up his body.

Coming down a little ... *Gospel*, 623

### *Kathāmṛta*, 795

[M’s soliloquy] Come, brother, let us go and see him again. We will see that great soul, that child, who does not know anything other than Mother and who has taken birth for our sake. He will tell us how this difficult problem of existence can be solved. He will speak to the sannyāsins as well as the householders. His door is always open! He is waiting for us in the Kālī temple at Dakshineswar. Come, come, let us see him.

“Infinite repository of qualities and cheerful countenance and, hearing whose words tears flow.”

Come, brother, let us make our human birth meaningful by getting the darśan of Sri Ramakrishna who is the unconditional ocean of grace, whose appearance is charming, who is intoxicated day and night with the love of God, and whose face sports a smile.

It was Sunday, October 26, 1884. It was the season of Hemanta, and the *tithi* was *śuklā-saptami* of Kārtik. The time was two o'clock in the afternoon. The devotees had assembled in the familiar room of Sri Ramakrishna. On the western side of the room was a semicircular porch. The garden path to its west ran from north to south. To the west of the path was Mother Kālī's flower garden, following which was the embankment on the holy Ganges which flows toward the south.

Many devotees were present. The day was filled with joy. The ever-blissful Thakur Sri Ramakrishna's love for God was being reflected in the faces of the devotees. How wonderful! The bliss was reflected not only in the mirrors of the devotees' faces but also in the garden outside, on the leaves of the trees, in the variety of flowers that had bloomed, on the large bed of the Ganges, in the blue expanse of the sky which was emblazoned by the rays of the sun, and in the cool breeze carrying the droplets of water from the Ganges which emerged from the feet of Murāri. How wonderful! Really and truly, "sweet is the dust of the earth" (*madhumat pāṛthivam rajah*)—even the dust in the garden was filled with sweetness! I feel like rolling in this dust by myself or along with devotees. I feel like standing in one corner of the garden and watching for the entire day the mind-enthraling waters of the Ganges. I feel like lovingly hugging and respectfully conversing with the creeper bushes and the soothingly bright trees adorned with leaves and flowers. Thakur Sri Ramakrishna walks on this dust. Day after day he walks along these creeper bushes and trees. I feel like looking at the illumined sky to the exclusion of everything else, because I see that both the earth and the heavens are shining with the joy of love.

The priests at the temple, the doormen, the attendants, all appear to me as close relatives. Why does this place appear so sweet, like one's native land that is seen after many days? It seems as if everyone and everything—the sky, the Ganges, the temple, the garden path, trees, creepers, bushes, attendants, the devotees seated on their cushions—are made of one substance. It looks as if all of these may have been made of the same substance as that which made Sri Ramakrishna. It is as if the garden, the trees, fruits, leaves are all made of wax. The path that runs through the garden, the gardener, the residents there, and the building in the center of the garden are all made of wax. Everything here is made of bliss.

Manomohan, Mahimacharan, and M were present. Later Ishan, Hriday, and Hazra came. Besides these, there were many devotees. During this time, Balaram and Rakhal were in Vrindaban. During this period there were visits from new devotees such as

Narayan, Palṭu, Younger Naren, Tejachandra, Binode, and Haripada. Baburam used to come occasionally and stay. Ram, Suresh, Kedar and Devendra and other devotees came often, some every week and some every other week. Latu stayed [at Dakshineswar]. Yogin's home was near, he would visit almost every day. Narendra would visit now and then, and every time he came, there was much celebration. In a voice that was the envy of the gods, Narendra would sing devotional songs and Thakur would experience different bhāvas and enter into samādhi. It was as if a celebration was going on. Thakur greatly wished that some among these boys would remain with him, since they were pure souls who had not become bound to the world through marriage or worldly activity. He would ask Baburam to stay. Baburam would stay occasionally. Adhar Sen would come often.

[The above material is condensed in a single para: "It was afternoon ... frequent visitor.] *Gospel*, 643

#### *Kathāmṛta*, 804–5

His teachings were like the jewels of various colors. Everyone picked as many as possible, but their receptacles were filled to the brim and so heavy that it felt as if they couldn't lift it. These people had limited capacities and couldn't hold any more. Various problems which arose in the human heart since beginning of creation found their solution. Scholars proficient in scriptures, such as Padmalochan, Narayan Shastri, Gauri Pundit, and Dayananda Sarasvati, became speechless [after meeting Thakur]. When Dayananda met Thakur Sri Ramakrishna and saw his state of samādhi, Dayananda said with regret, "We have only read a lot of Veda and Vedanta, but in this great soul we see their fulfillment. Seeing him, it is proved that scholars churn the scriptural texts and drink only the buttermilk, whereas great souls like him eat butter." Again, English-educated scholars like Keshab Sen became speechless after seeing Thakur. They thought, "How strange! How can an unlettered person speak such words?" He spoke like Jesus Christ, in a rural dialect, teaching through stories in a way that all—men, women and children—could understand without difficulty. Jesus had become mad calling after "Father, Father," and Sri Ramakrishna became mad calling after "Mother, Mother." He was not just an imperishable store of knowledge; his love for God "poured forth from jar after jar but never ended." Like Jesus, he was also a renunciate, and like Jesus, he also had burning faith. That is why his words were so powerful. When worldly people speak, their words do not have such power. They have no renunciation and no burning faith. Scholars like Keshab Sen also think: How did this unlettered person develop such a liberal vision? How amazing that in him there is no

hatred of any kind! He respects the followers of all faiths. He has no quarrel with anyone.

Hearing Thakur's conversation today with Mahimacharan, one devotee thought, Thakur did not say that the world should be renounced. What's more, he said that the world is like a fort. It is possible to stay in this fort and fight desire, anger, and so on. He also said, "If you don't stay in the world, where will you go?" When a clerk is released from prison, he resumes his clerical job. This is another way of saying that the living-free (*jīvanmukta*) can stay in the world as well. Was Keshab Sen the ideal? To him, Thakur had said, "Only you have lost your tail, no one else." But there is one thing: Thakur said that now and then one must stay in a solitary place. The growing plant must be fenced, or else it will be eaten by goats or cows. Once it grows into a tree, you may or may not remove the fence. Even if you tie an elephant to the tree, no harm will be done. There is no fear if one returns to the world after staying in solitude and acquiring knowledge and devotion to God. That is why he spoke about the need for staying in solitude.

Devotees were thinking thus. After speaking about Keshab, Sri Ramakrishna then began speaking about two other householder devotees.

MASTER: "Once I visited ... *Gospel*, 649–50

#### *Kathāmṛta*, 807

One day I lost consciousness in the toilet in his house. He [Viswanath Upadhyay, who was known as "Captain"] has such orthodox habits, yet he came inside the toilet and helped me squat down. He is so orthodox, but he did not become annoyed.

["Once at his house I went into samādhi in the toilet, and he took care of me there though he is so particular about his orthodox habits.] *Gospel*, 651

#### *Kathāmṛta*, 811

Hazra used to sit in the eastern porch of Thakur's room and do japa. He must have been forty-six or forty-seven years old. He was a native of the same region as Thakur's. He acquired dispassion a long while ago, and kept wandering outside and visiting his home only now and then. He had some landed property back home and that helped maintain his wife, sons and daughters. But he also had a loan of about a thousand rupees and that kept him constantly worried as he tried to repay it. He often visited Kolkata and there Ishanchandra Mukhopadhyay, a resident of Thanthania, was very hospitable to him and served him as he would a holy man. Thakur Sri Ramakrishna had treated Hazra with affection, arranging for new clothes when his became torn, always

inquiring about his welfare, and always speaking with him about God. Hazra was very argumentative. While speaking, he nearly always got carried away to an extreme position by the force of reasoning. He would always sit on his seat in the porch and count the beads of his rosary.

News had arrived about the illness of Hazra's mother. When Ramlal was about to return from his native place, she had held his hand and begged of him, "Tell your uncle [Sri Ramakrishna] my earnest request that he may persuade Pratap [Hazra] to return home, so I can see him once [before dying]." So Thakur had told Hazra, "Go home and meet your mother." He had repeatedly told Hazra, "Is it possible to call on God while you cause pain to your mother? It will be better if you come back after meeting her."

After the devotees had left ... *Gospel*, 654

### *Kathāmr̥ta*, 813

At dusk, incense was burnt in Sri Ramakrishna's room. He bowed before the pictures of gods and goddesses, did japa of the bīja-mantra, and sang. The sight outside the room was uniquely beautiful. It was the *saptami tithi* of the *śukla*-fortnight of the month of Kārtik. The temple smiled in the spotless light of the moon, and on the other side, the waters of the Ganges heaved gently like the chest of a sleeping baby. The high tide was at its peak. The sound of the āratī, mingled with the murmuring of the cool and shining flow of the Ganges, reached far and wide, and then subsided. In the temple, there were simultaneous āratīs in the three temples—the temple of Kālī, the temple of Viṣṇu, and the temples of Śiva. In the twelve Śiva temples, each of the twelve Śivaliṅgas received āratī. The priest moved from one Śiva temple to the next, with the bell in his left hand, the five-wicked lamp in his right hand, an attendant following him with the gong. While the āratī was in progress, one could hear the melodious music coming from the southwest corner of the temple, from the nahabat, which played the music appropriate for the evening. It is an eternal celebration of the Blissful Mother, reminding every being, "Don't be sad. Joy and sorrow are inevitable in this life." So be it. Remember that the Mother of the Universe exists. Our Mother is present. Celebrate! The child of a maid servant may not get good food to eat, good clothes to wear, or a good place to stay, but he still feels strong, because he has a mother. In the lap of the mother, the child is free from worries. She is not an adopted mother, she is the real mother. Mother knows who I am, where I came from, what lies ahead for me, and where I will go. Why should I worry? My Mother knows—my Mother who gave me my body, mind, energy and soul. I don't even want to know anything more. If I need to know anything, she will tell me. Why should I worry? Mother's children should all celebrate!

The world outside, flooded with moonlight, was smiling. Filled with the love of God, Sri Ramakrishna was sitting in his room. Ishan had come from Kolkata and they were talking about God. Ishan had great faith. He used to say, “Whoever leaves home for a journey after repeating the name of Durgā is accompanied by Śiva with trident in his hand. Why should there be fear of facing difficulty? It is Śiva himself who will protect.”

[The text above is condensed in *Gospel*.] Master (to Ishan): “You have .... *Gospel*, 655

### *Kathāmṛta*, 814

Before dusk M was walking, thinking to himself: that was a wonderful teaching about “Rāma’s will.” This sets at rest all the debate regarding predestination and free will, liberty and necessity. The robbers caught me “through Rāma’s will,” I ate tobacco “through Rāma’s will,” I stole “through Rāma’s will,” the police arrested me “through Rāma’s will,” I became a monk “through Rāma’s will,” and it is “through Rāma’s will” again that I prayed, “Oh Lord, do not give me bad thoughts. Do not make me be a robber.” He gives both good thoughts and bad thoughts. But here is a question: Why would he give me bad thoughts? Why would he give me the desire to rob? In reply Thakur says: Just as he has created tigers, lions and snakes in the animal kingdom and poisonous trees among the plant kingdom, he has also created robbers and dacoits in the human kingdom. Why did God do it? Who can say why he did it? Who can understand God?

But if God has created everyone, the sense of responsibility should vanish. Why would that vanish? Without knowing God, without having the vision of God, no one will realize completely that everything happens through “Rāma’s will.” Without God-realization, one may become aware of this once in a while but, just as quickly, one forgets it. Until one develops total faith, the awareness of responsibility and the distinction between good and evil will definitely remain. Thakur explained the real meaning of “Rāma’s will.” It will not do to merely parrot: “Rāma’s will.” As long as there is no experience of God, as long as God’s will and my will do not become one, as long as I do not realize fully that I am God’s instrument, he will keep in my awareness the distinction between good and evil, joy and sorrow, purity and impurity. He will keep in me the sense of responsibility. If he didn’t do that, how would this creation produced by māyā continue?

The more I think of Thakur’s devotion, the more speechless I become. Because Keshab Sen chants the name of God and meditates on God, Thakur hurries to meet him and sees Keshab as his own. Thakur did not give heed to Captain’s words. All the talk of Keshab’s going abroad, his eating food with Westerners, and giving his daughter

in marriage to a boy from another caste—all of this did not matter. I will eat the berry, of what use is the thorn to me? From the point of view of devotion, the followers of a personal God and the followers of the Impersonal are one; Hindu, Muslim and Christian are one; the four castes are one. It is devotion that reigns supreme. Blessed Sri Ramakrishna! It is all your glory. You again brought to life the universal spirit of the eternal religion (*sanātana dharma*). That is why, I feel, so many are attracted to you. You are like a close relative to people of all religions and you embrace them all without any discrimination. You are the touchstone of devotion. You only see whether a person has inner devotion and love for God. If they have, they immediately become your close relatives: if a Hindu has that devotion, he or she becomes your relative; if a Muslim has devotion to Allah, even he or she become your own; if a Christian has devotion to Jesus, even he or she becomes your close relative. You have said that all rivers, coming from different directions, empty themselves into one ocean. All have the ocean as the destination.

“Thakur does not say that this world is like a dream. According to him, then the weight won't tally. His view is not that of the philosophy of *māyā* but of *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, because he does not say that the world and the living beings are unreal or delusions of the mind. God is real but human beings and the world are real too. The living beings and the world are the attributes of Brahman. If you eliminate the seeds and the skin, you cannot account for the whole bilva fruit.

I heard that this vast universe arises in the great space of consciousness and in time merges in it; a wave arises in the huge ocean and in time merges back into it. In the waters of ocean of bliss, there are infinite waves of the divine sport (*līlā*). Where does this *līlā* begin? Where does it end? None can express it in words, none can think about it. How small is a human being and how small is the human intellect! I have heard that great souls have seen the eternally supreme Being in the state of *samādhi*. They have directly realized the eternally playful divine Being. They surely saw this, because Sri Ramakrishna also says so, but not through these material eyes. They perhaps saw it through what are called divine eyes, the same divine eyes through which Arjuna had seen the Cosmic Form (*viśvarūpa darśan*), the same divine eyes through which the sages had realized the *Ātman*, the same divine eyes through which Jesus daily saw his heavenly Father. How does one acquire those divine eyes? I heard from Thakur that we get them through intense longing (*vyākulatā*). Now, how does that longing come? Is it necessary to give up the world for that? Well, he did not say so today.

November 9, 1884. *Gospel*, 655

*Kathāmṛta, 823*

After some time, Thakur said to Ram Chakrabarty, “Ram, where is the mat that was here?”

Sri Ramakrishna had had no rest ... *Gospel, 661*

*Kathāmṛta, 828*

Intoxicated with bhāva, was he teaching M through this song that Kālī is none other than Brahman; she is without attributes (*nirguṇā*) and also with attributes (*saguṇā*); she is without form (*arūpā*) and also with infinite forms (*anantarūpiṇī*)?

Who is there that can ... *Gospel, 664*

*Kathāmṛta, 859*

Was Thakur referring to his own state? Was Thakur an avatar like Caitanya? He came down to teach devotion to people.

GIRISH: “Everything ... *Gospel, 698*

*Kathāmṛta, 866*

Crying profusely, Padmāvati cooked the flesh. The old brahmin guest joyfully told Karṇa, come, let us now sit and eat the cooked food. Karṇa told him, no, I cannot do that, I cannot eat the flesh of my son.

During the scene ... *Gospel, 704*

*Kathāmṛta, 879*

Some of them slept with their sisters-in-law and some slept with others. Who would feed them?

[Translated as] They led an immoral life. Who would feed them? *Gospel, 717*

*Kathāmṛta, 888*

M did not know how to serve, so Thakur was teaching him how to do it. M frantically started doing the things one by one. He massaged Thakur’s feet. Thakur gave him many teachings in the course of the conversation.

M felt very happy ... *Gospel*, 724

*Kathāmṛta*, 893

Gradually it became dusk. The blue reflection of the infinite spread over the ocean and in the deep woods, on the mountaintops that seemed to touch the sky, on the bank of a river whose water was filled with ripples due to wind, and in open spaces that seemed to touch the horizon—and the change was felt in the tiny human heart. Where did the sun, who was shedding light on the planet that is filled with the living and the nonliving, go away? The child was thinking. The great soul who had the nature of a child was also thinking. It was dusk. How amazing! Who did all this? Sitting on the branches of trees, the birds were chirping. Those who had awakened to the need for spiritual practice were repeating the name of the supreme Being, the primal Poet, the Cause of all causes.

Very soon it became dusk. The devotees continued to sit on the seats upon which they were seated. Sri Ramakrishna was chanting the sweet name of the Divine and all listened to him eagerly and anxiously and attentively. They had never heard such sweet chanting before; it was as if it was raining nectar. They had never before heard and never before seen such a loving call of a child to its mother. What need was there to see the sky, the hills, the ocean, the vast open spaces, and the forest? What was the need to see the cow's horns, legs and other limbs? The compassionate teacher had spoken about the cow's udder; am I seeing that here in this room? How did the restless minds of all attain peace? How did the sad earth begin floating on the waves of bliss? Why do I see all the devotees filled with peace and joy? Is this loving monk the infinite Lord who has taken a beautiful form? Is it from him that the thirst of one craving for milk will be quenched? He may be an avatar or he may not be, but my mind is sold at his feet and it will not move from there. I have made him the pole star of my life. I want to see how the primal Being is reflected in the lake of his heart.

A few devotees were thinking thus and felt fulfillment when they heard the name of the Lord and of Mother chanted by Sri Ramakrishna. After chanting and singing, Sri Ramakrishna began to pray. It was as if God had taken a form filled with love and was teaching people how to pray:

[The above material is condensed in Nikhilananda's *Gospel*. Then--] "O Mother ... *Gospel*, 730

*Kathāmṛta*, 895

Why was he walking so fast? The devotees were left behind. It looked as if he was filled with a divine fervor. Was Thakur thinking of the Being who is described in the Vedas as “beyond speech and mind,” which made him walk like one mad? Just a little while earlier he had said in Balaram’s home that the supreme Being was not beyond speech and mind, but could be grasped through a pure mind, a pure intellect, a pure ego. It seems like he is perceiving that Being. Perhaps he is seeing “whatever exists is nothing but Thou”?

Narendra was seen ... *Gospel*, 731

*Kathāmṛta*, 895

People say that this is called “bhāva.” Is this the state that Caitanya used to experience? Who can understand these states?

As the Master and the devotees ... *Gospel*, 731

*Kathāmṛta*, 895

Looking at Narendra he said: “I want to say something: “this” (the Indweller?) is one, and “that” (the world?) is another.” The embodied soul (*jīva*) and the world (*jagat*)! Was he seeing all this in his ecstasy? Only he knows what he saw that made him speechless. He uttered only a few words, but they were like the Vedas, or the words of God. Or it was as if I were standing speechless on the shore of the infinite ocean and one or two vibrations of the unstruck sound (*anāhata śabda*) had risen from the string of countless waves and had entered into my ears.

Girish stood at the door ... *Gospel*, 732

*Kathāmṛta*, 899

Why was he doing that and saying that? Was Sri Ramakrishna seeing Nārāyaṇa in Narendra? Is this what is called seeing God in human beings? How wonderful! He was fast becoming unconscious. Soon he lost consciousness of the external world. This, I believe, is what is called half-conscious state (*ardha-bāhya daśā*), which Caitanya had experienced. His hand was still on Narendra’s foot, as if he was massaging the feet of Nārāyaṇa. Then he gently stroked Narendra’s body. What was the reason for all this stroking of the feet and the body? Was he serving Nārāyaṇa or was he infusing śakti (*śakti sañcār*)?

[The above material is condensed. Then--] Slowly a change ... *Gospel*, 735

*Kathāmṛta*, 900

As M left, his mind was filled with thoughts: “Is it true that God really comes down and takes a human body? Is it possible for the infinite to become finite? I have reasoned enough. What did I learn through reasoning? Absolutely nothing.

“Thakur Sri Ramakrishna put it very nicely, ‘As long as you reason, you have not attained the truth. Until then you have not attained God.’ That is true. With this limited intellect, how can I grasp the truth of God? Can a one-ounce container hold four ounces of milk? How can one believe in the avatar? Thakur said that if God reveals the truth, then one understands it in a flash. Goethe had said on his deathbed, ‘Light! More light!’ If God kindles the light and reveals the truth, then ‘all doubts will be removed.’

“Like the ignorant fishermen of Palestine who saw Jesus—or like Śrīvāsa and other devotees who saw Caitanya—as the full manifestation of the divine.

“If He does not reveal the truth in a flash, what are we to do? Since Thakur Sri Ramakrishna has said so, I shall believe in the avatar. He himself has taught about the power of faith—faith in the words of the guru. And—

I have made you the pole star of my life  
I won't again lose my way in this ocean.

“Through the grace of God, I have faith in his words. Let others do what they will, but I will have faith. Why should I give up this rare gift of faith? Let reasoning rest. Do I want to be another Faust through intellectual gymnastics? In the dead of night as moonlight streamed in through the window, it seems that Faust sat in his room alone with a bottle of poison to commit suicide, and thought, ‘Alas, I could not know anything. My study of science and philosophy was futile. This life is a disaster.’ Or should I, unable to bear the burden of ignorance, place my head on a rock and wait for my death as Alastor did? No, I don't need to try, like these great scholars, to solve the great mystery with my puny intellect. Have faith in the words of the guru—this is wonderful advice. God, give me that faith and don't make me wander here and there. Don't make me go in search of futile pursuits. Please bless me and, as Thakur taught, ‘May I have pure devotion to your lotus feet—pure, unconditional love, and may I not be deluded by your world-bewitching māyā.’”

As M walked along the road on his way home on that night enveloped in darkness, he thought of the unique love of Sri Ramakrishna and said to himself, “How much he loves Girish! Girish had to go to the theater, yet he wanted to visit his home. Not merely

that. He did not even say, ‘Give up everything—or give up your home, family and job for my sake—and take up sannyāsa.’ Now I understand: this means that unless it is the right time, unless there is intense dispassion, it will be painful to renounce. As Thakur himself said, there is bleeding and pain if a wound is opened before it dries; but when the wound is healed, the scab falls off on its own. Ordinary people lacking in introspection ask that the world be renounced right away. Thakur is a true teacher: he is the ocean of unconditional grace, he is the ocean of love; day and night he tries to do whatever is good for everyone.

“How strong is the faith of Girish! Within two days of seeing Thakur, Girish said: ‘Master, you are God incarnated in the human body to save me.’ Girish is right; if God does not take a human form, who will teach us like one of our own? Who will make us realize that only God is real and everything else is unreal? Who will lift the weak child that has fallen down, holding him by the hand? Who will reinstate the original fitness for immortality for the person who has acquired an animal nature addicted to lust and greed? If God does not assume a human body to keep us company, how will the days pass for those whose minds are solely devoted to God and for whom nothing is of interest other than God? That is why the Gītā says: ‘For the protection of the good and the destruction of the wicked, I come down in every age for the establishment of dharma.’

“How loving he is!—he is crazy about Narendra, he cries for Narayan. He says, ‘These and other boys—Rakhal, Bhavanath, Purna, Baburam, and others—are Nārāyaṇa himself, who has taken the human form for my sake.’ This love is not human; I see that this is love for God. These boys are pure souls; they have not touched women with the idea of sex. Greed, egoism, and jealousy have not tainted them through worldly activities. So there is a greater manifestation of God in these boys. But who has this insight? Thakur has this insight. He can see everything—who is attached to the world and who is simple, broad-minded, and devoted. That is why when he meets devotees of this type, he sees them as Nārāyaṇa and serves them. He arranges for their bath, their rest, and weeps to be able to see them. He visits Kolkata often and inspires others to bring them from Kolkata in a carriage. He often tells the householder devotees, ‘Invite them home and feed them, and that will be good for you.’ Is this worldly love, or is this pure love for God? If it is possible to have a sixteen-item elaborate worship and service in a image made of clay, why would it not be possible to have that worship in a pure human body? Moreover, these pure souls have accompanied the Lord in every incarnation. They are his companions life after life.

“He forgets the external world when he sees Narendra. Then he forgets the human Narendra, the ‘apparent person,’ and begins to see the ‘real person.’ His mind merges

in the boundless Saccidānanda, seeing whom he sometimes becomes speechless, motionless and quiet, or sometimes he repeats Om, or sometimes, like a child, he calls out to Mother. He sees a greater light of Saccidānanda in Narendra. He calls out 'Narendra, Narendra' like one who is mad.

“Narendra does not believe in avatars; why should that matter? Thakur has divine eyes: he sees that it could be because Narendra is hurt, thinking that God is one's own, God is our own mother, not an adopted mother, so why doesn't God give us knowledge? Why doesn't God illumine the heart in a flash? That is why, I believe, Thakur said:

Do you feel that your pride is wounded?  
So be it, then; we too have our pride.

“God is our closest relative; with whom else can we get upset with if not with him? Blessed is Narendranath: this great soul loves you so much. Seeing you his mind becomes enkindled with the thought of God so easily.”

With these thoughts in mind and remembering Sri Ramakrishna, the devotees returned home late that night.

April 6, 1885. *Gospel*, 736

### *Kathāmṛta*, 903

Thakur was filled day and night with love for God, continually in samādhi or overwhelmed by bhāva. His mind was not at all in the external world. His only concern was for those in his inner circle that they should get to know their true spiritual identity. He was like parents who are concerned about their weak children and worried about their future. Or he was like birds who are concerned about nurturing their babies.

MASTER (to M): “I gave ... *Gospel*, 736

### *Kathāmṛta*, 905

... at these words that Thakur had done japa of the bīja-mantra for Purna.

MASTER: “It would have been nice ... *Gospel*, 738

### *Kathāmṛta*, 911

M came and saluted Thakur by prostrating before him and sat near him when Thakur asked him to do so.

MASTER: “During my sādhanā, ... *Gospel*, 743

*Kathāmṛta*, 924

Girish, M, Balaram, Trailokya and other devotees were still there.

They wanted to discuss ... *Gospel*, 756

*Kathāmṛta*, 929

M sat in one corner and, seeing the childlike form of Thakur asleep, thought to himself, “How amazing that this great soul also lies overcome by sleep like ordinary people! He also has accepted the nature of an embodied soul.”

M began to fan the Master ... *Gospel*, 761

*Kathāmṛta*, 948

Was Thakur hinting that he had taken the human body and come as the guru in order to cut the bonds of māyā for embodied souls?

[End of chapter.] *Gospel*, 777

*Kathāmṛta*, 949

Thakur said that he would drink a little water.

The Master drank some water ... *Gospel*, 778

*Kathāmṛta*, 950

“A pestle can destroy a dynasty.” The pestle had worn away but what little remained was enough to destroy the Yadu dynasty.

You may reason and argue ... *Gospel*, 779

*Kathāmṛta*, 970

But nowadays I don't feel it so much.

“Ranjit Raya was the landlord ... *Gospel*, 797

*Kathāmṛta, 972*

Thakur told many things about Kartābhajās, their ideas regarding form (*rūp*), nature (*svarūp*), menstrual flow (*rajaḥ*), seed (*bīj*), cooking (*pākapranālī*), etc.

About six o'clock ... *Gospel, 799*

*Kathāmṛta, 972*

Did some among the newcomers think that Thakur had gone mad as a result of meditating too much on God?

Sri Ramakrishna said to the witty brahmin ... *Gospel, 800*

*Kathāmṛta, 977*

... as if he is massaging his [Narendra's] hands and feet in a subtle way.

Gopal Mā entered the room ... *Gospel, 804*

*Kathāmṛta, 979*

It looked as if Nārāyaṇa himself had taken human form and come for the sake of devotees. I believe he came down to teach us how to love God.

After a long time ... *Gospel, 806*

*Kathāmṛta, 979*

Now another singer, named Benoari, started singing, but while singing he would often say "Aha! Aha!," prostrate and salute. At this, some of the listeners smiled and others became irritated.

It was afternoon ... *Gospel, 807*

*Kathāmṛta, 985*

[RAMAKRISHNA:] That is why for some the observance of the śrāddha ceremony ultimately becomes like a worship of the chosen Deity (*iṣṭa*). The same sentiment is held by the Vaiṣṇavas; they have a big ceremony when someone dies.

"As long as you look ... *Gospel, 813*

*Kathāmṛta*, 985

At that time a naked person used to go about with me; I used to touch his penis in fun and laugh a lot. That naked form used to emerge from within me. He looked like a boy and was a paramahansa.

[The above material is condensed. Then--] I can't describe to you all the divine forms ... *Gospel*, 813

*Kathāmṛta*, 997

A seat (*āsan*) was placed on the carpet and Sri Ramakrishna sat on it. The young men of the concert party were asked to sing. They had no good place to sit, so Thakur invited them to sit near him on the carpet.

Thakur said, "Feel free to sit here. I will move this." Saying so, he pulled his seat closer. The young men began to sing:

[The above material is condensed.] O Keśava, bestow thy grace... *Gospel*, 824

*Kathāmṛta*, 1000

Was Thakur Sri Ramakrishna saying, "God has incarnated in human form through me and is enacting his *līlā*"?

[End of the chapter.] *Gospel*, 826

*Kathāmṛta*, 1004

A little before I attained this state, I was shown how, when the kundalini becomes awakened, all the lotuses bloom one after another and *samādhi* is attained. This is a great secret. I saw a twenty-two or twenty-three year old young man, who looked like me, entering inside the *suṣumnā* nerve and having intercourse with the vulva-shaped lotuses with his tongue. First the anus, the penis, the navel—the lotuses with four petals, six petals, ten petals, which had been drooping, became erect.

When he came to the heart—I remember this clearly—after having intercourse with the tongue, the drooping twelve-petaled lotus became erect and bloomed. Then the sixteen-petaled lotus in the throat and the two-petaled lotus in the forehead. In the end the thousand-petaled lotus bloomed. From that time, I have been in this state.

[The above material is condensed. Then—] Sri Ramakrishna came down to the floor and sat ... *Gospel*, 830

*Kathāmṛta*, 1033

It was *śuklā caturdaśī* of the month of Aśvin. The great celebration of the worship of the Divine Mother on *saptamī*, *aṣṭamī* and *navamī* was over. The customary greeting, an affectionate hug on Vijayā, the day of *daśamī*, was also over. Bhagavān Sri Ramakrishna was staying with devotees in the suburb of Shyampukur in Kolkata. He had a difficult disease: throat cancer. When he was at Balaram’s house, Kaviraj Gangaprasad had come to see him. Thakur had asked him whether the disease was curable or incurable. Kaviraj did not answer the question, but remained silent. The English doctors too had indicated that the disease was incurable. Presently he was under the treatment of Dr. Sarkar.

It was Thursday, October 22, 1885 (7th Kārtik 1292, *śukla caturdaśī*). Sri Ramakrishna was living in a two-storied house in Shyampukur. He was sitting on a bed in a room on the second floor. Dr. Sarkar, Ishanchandra Mukhopadhyay and devotees were sitting in front and around him. Ishan was very generous: he used to donate money from his pension, even borrowing to do so; and he was always filled with the thought of God. Hearing about Thakur’s illness, he had come to see him. Dr. Sarkar came to treat him and would stay for six or seven hours. He had great devotion to Thakur and he treated the devotees as if they were close relatives.

It was almost seven at night. There was moonlight outside: the full moon, the “Master of the Night” was, as it were, showering nectar everywhere. The room was lit and filled with many people. Many had come to see the great soul and all were looking at him with one-pointed attention, eager to hear what he would say and eager to see what he would do.

[The above material is condensed. Then—] Addressing Ishan, ... *Gospel*, 856

*Kathāmṛta*, 1042

GIRISH (to Doctor): “Sir, what do you say? Can a wicked person ever attain knowledge?”

DOCTOR: Oh Lord! Is that ever possible?

“How guileless Keshab Sen was! ... *Gospel*, 865

*Kathāmṛta*, 1055

“What more can I say? Janaka is the speaker, and Śukadeva is the audience!”

Dr. Sarkar took his leave... *Gospel*, 878

*Kathāmṛta*, 1067

[M:] “I have heard this from him: a person had a bucket filled with a dye. Whoever wanted to dye their clothes would go to him. He would ask, ‘What color do you want to dye your cloth?’ If the person said the green color, he would dip the cloth in the bucket and return to him, saying, ‘Here is your cloth, dyed green.’ If someone asked for red color, dipping the cloth in the same bucket, he would say, ‘Here is your cloth, dyed red.’ In the same bucket he could dye clothes of different colors such as green, blue, yellow. Seeing this amazing phenomenon, one person said, ‘Sir, what color should I ask for? Give me the color in which you have been dyed.’

“In Sri Ramakrishna one finds ... *Gospel*, 889

*Kathāmṛta*, 1085

[Ramakrishna to Dr. Sarkar:] Because you are coming, they [the devotees] stay awake like a woman who tidies her bedchamber and dresses up to receive her beloved.

[translated as: They await your coming as eagerly as the bridesmaids in the bridal chamber await the coming of the groom.] *Gospel*, 905

*Kathāmṛta*, 1098

DOCTOR: “If we say ‘tyāgī,’ then we need to insert a ‘y’.

M: “Navadvip Goswami had told Thakur that it was not necessary to insert a ‘y.’ When Thakur had gone to Panihati to see the great festival, he had told Navadvip Goswami this thing about the Gītā. That time Goswami had said that the root *tag* plus *ghan* yields *tāg*, and when it is joined to the particle (*pratyaya*) *īn* we get *tāgī*. So *tāgī* and *tyāgī* mean the same thing.”

DOCTOR: “A man once explained ... *Gospel*, 917

*Kathāmṛta*, 1099

Was Thakur hinting that it was because of God’s power which had incarnated that so many people felt attracted to him and devotees kept looking at him speechlessly?

M said to the Master ... *Gospel*, 918

*Kathāmṛta*, 1107

Ask them if they have brought the fan.

M went to the drawing room ... *Gospel*, 926

*Kathāmṛta*, 1122

Tarak and Gopal of Sinthi were staying there all the time. The younger Gopal was also staying there.

That day ... *Gospel*, 941

*Kathāmṛta*, 1123

Is this sleep or a deep form of yoga? Is this the same yogic condition described in the Gītā, “established in which one remains unmoved by even great sorrow”?

M was seated by his side ... *Gospel*, 941

*Kathāmṛta*, 1123

Was Thakur saying that, deeply moved by the sorrow of embodied beings, he was offering his body as a sacrifice for their welfare?

As he describes ... *Gospel*, 942

*Kathāmṛta*, 1125

Was Thakur saying that he liked the food offerings (*naivedya*) of devotees, their invitations, and spending time with them?

Sri Ramakrishna looks at Naren ... *Gospel*, 943

*Kathāmṛta*, 1136

On the eastern boundary of the Cossipore garden were the steps to the pond. The moon had risen. The garden path and the trees in the garden were bathed in moonlight. On the west of the pond was a two-storied house. The room upstairs was lit and it was seen that the light on the steps of the pond was streaming through the Venetian blinds. Sri Ramakrishna was sitting on his bed in the room. One or two devotees were sitting silently nearby or moving from one room to another. Thakur was ill and had come to the

garden house for treatment. The devotees were with him to serve him. From the steps of the pond one could see three lights downstairs: devotees were staying in one room and the light in that room could be seen. That room was toward the south. The light in the center came from the room of the Holy Mother. Mother had come to serve Thakur. The third light came from the kitchen, which was to the north of the house. The two-storied house was in the center of the garden and from its southwest corner there was one path to the steps of the pond. One had to go eastward on the path in order to go to the pond. On both sides of the path, especially on the southern side, there were many trees filled with flowers and fruits.

The moon was shining ... *Gospel*, 954

*Kathāmṛta*, 1156

M: “Either you give the explanation and we go to the palace, or we go to the palace and you give the explanation.” (*All laugh.*)

Narendra: (*smiling*): As he (Paramahansa) heard that story, he laughed.

It was afternoon ... *Gospel*, 972

*Kathāmṛta*, 1199

When Thakur Sri Ramakrishna visited Surendra’s home “one day in the month of āṣāḍh” in the year 1881, Keshab Sen was to come but could not. He was busy with the marriage arrangements of his first son and second daughter.

On the first of Śrāvaṇ, July 15, 1881, Friday, Keshab had gone from Kolkata to Somra along with many Brahma devotees in the steam yacht of his son-in-law, who was the Maharaja of Coochbihar. On the way, the yacht stopped at Dakshineswar to pick up Paramahansa, accompanied by Hriday. On the yacht were Brahma members such as Keshab and Trailokya, and Kumar Gajendranarayan, Nagendra and others.

Speaking about the formless (*nirākāra*) Brahman, Sri Ramakrishna entered samādhi. Trailokya Sanyal began to sing to the accompaniment of the drums and cymbals. After he came down from samādhi, Thakur sang:

Mother Śyāmā, what a machine you have made!  
How many colors you show in this body-machine.

On the way back, Thakur got down at Dakshineswar. Keshab got down at the Ahiritola Ghaṭ, so he could walk along the Masjidbari Street to the home of Kalicharan Banerjee where he was invited.

Saturday, December 3, 1881. *Gospel*, 1013

*Kathāmṛta*, 1206

On that day Sailajacharan Chatterjee, who served at the Śyāmasundar Temple on Bechu Chatterjee Street, was present. A few months ago he passed away.

Sunday, January 1, 1882. *Gospel*, 1019

*Kathāmṛta*, 1207

Gauri Pandit of Indesh came dressed as a brahmacārī in ochre clothes.

GAURI: “Where is the paramahaṁsa bābu?”

After a while Keshab arrived with the Brahma devotees and made a praṇām to Sri Ramakrishna by prostrating before him. All were seated in a room and were in a celebratory mood.

The Master looked at the ... *Gospel*, 1019

*Kathāmṛta*, 1217

After some time, Thakur regained partial consciousness and began to dance in an ecstatic mood; it was as if Śrī Gaurāṅga were dancing with devotees in the house of Śrīvāsa. It was such a wonderful dance! Bankim and his “English-educated” friends looked at him in amazement. How wonderful! Is this what is meant by the bliss of love for God? Is it possible to be so intoxicated by the love for God? Is this what Śrī Gaurāṅga did in Navadvip? Is this how he had established love for God in Navadvip and Sriksheṭra? There cannot be any deception in this. Thakur has renounced everything. He needs neither money nor prestige nor publicity. Is this, then, the goal of life? Is it the goal of life to love God without getting distracted by anything else? Now, what is the way to attain this? He said that to long for Mother with one-pointedness, the longing, the love, is the means, and love is the goal. God is realized only when true love comes.

[The above material is condensed. Then--] The devotees also ... *Gospel*, 673

*Kathāmṛta*, 1220

What was Bankim thinking?

Rakhal arrived. He had gone to Vrindaban along with Balaram and had returned from there some days ago. Thakur had told Sarat and Devendra about him and had

asked them to speak with him. So they had come, eager to speak with Rakhal. They heard that this person was Rakhal.

Of the devotees at ... *Gospel*, 676

### *Kathāmṛta*, 1220

On December 6, 1884, Sri Ramakrishna had visited Adhar's home and met with Bankim. This was described in section one through six.

A few days after this in Dakshineswar, under the Panchavati, on Saturday, December 27, Sri Ramakrishna had heard, along with devotees, some parts of *Debī Caudhurānī* written by Bankim and had taught many things concerning selfless action described in the Gītā.

Sri Ramakrishna had sat under the Panchavati along with many devotees. He asked M to read aloud. Kedar, Ram, Nityagopal, Tarak (Shivananda), Prasanna (Trigunatita), Surendra and many others were present.

[End of chapter.] *Gospel*, 676

### *Kathāmṛta*, 1243

What Thakur used to say was so true: When Narendra sings, the One who dwells in the heart listens with rapt attention like the snake who listens with raised hood to the melodious sound of the flute. Ah, how deep is the devotion that these monks have toward their guru!

Rakhal was seated ... *Gospel*, 996

### *Kathāmṛta*, 1252

In front of the shrine they arranged the triangular *yantra* for the *homa*-worship to be followed by sacrifice. In the Tantric system of worship there is provision for *homa* and animal sacrifice. Narendra was reciting the Gītā.

M was going to ... *Gospel*, 1009

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Whether of interest to the general reader or not, we hope that in due course a full and complete English translation of the *Kathāmṛta* will become available. Even though it may not significantly enhance the value of the text for Ramakrishna's devotees, it will put to rest the rumor floated by *Kālī's Child* that "the most revealing and significant passages" were censored in the *Gospel*. More importantly, a translation with no omissions will make it difficult to consciously or unconsciously misinterpret the contents of the *Kathāmṛta*. Hopefully, the translation that we have provided here will serve the purpose, however inadequately, until a full and complete translation becomes available.

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We have attempted to provide here the translation of the *Kathāmṛta* passages not found in the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, or not translated or discussed in *Interpreting Ramakrishna*. If you find any passages that still remain untranslated, please let us know ([interpreting.ramakrishna@gmail.com](mailto:interpreting.ramakrishna@gmail.com)) and we shall be happy to add them to this document.