

## Preface

In the following pages I have ventured upon a hard endeavour to write a dissertation on Ramakrishna Paramahansa realising the need of a philosophical interpretation of his teachings which are the great reservoir of Truth. This work is an attempt not only for the Doctorate Degree in Philosophy but also to prove that how far the hidden treasures lying in the religious philosophy of Ramakrishna are extremely needed to this age of spiritual crisis for his universal approach to Truth.

In spite of wonderful achievements of Science and Technology we are restless and live in a world of agonising strain, of grave anxiety and of manifold disillusionment. At no other period of human history as we find today that so many people are bearing such impossible burden of suffering from agonising persecution and an anguish of heart. Many thinkers shudder to watch in present society an erosion of values, a dissipation of human purpose and deterioration of personal, social and political morality. Ideals which till recently were considered as inseparable from social decency and justice and thus guided and disciplined our conduct for centuries seems to have been swept away from modern mind. There is a blind impulse to destroy everything. Humanity today stands at the cross roads facing two alternatives — war or peace. Either there will

be a total war leading to the extinction of man, or there will be building up of a new civilization in which all men would live together happily and peacefully without resorting to force. Here we find a difference of opinion among modern thinkers. Some of them are pessimistic and hold that decadence is inherent in human nature and that there will be a further deterioration of man and a consequent reversion to subhuman level of conduct. An era of intellectual retardation and moral degeneration is on the offing and man's noblest accomplishments of the past would be laid waste. Man's greatest enemy as some thinkers have pointed out, is man himself.

In this situation the whole world is passionately hungry for a remedy to reconstruct civilization on love and charity, of truth and compassion. Here a need for the revival of religion is realised, because religion is nothing but man's awareness of his essential divinity inherent in him and it is a way through which man can develop his spiritual qualities to be distinctively human. This modern conception of religion is different from traditional point of view in which the essence of religion lies in its dogmas, creeds and rituals. Religion if be realised in its true sense that which awakens in a man his sense of dignity, inspires him towards the Great, the Noble, the Good and to transcend his lower finite self to be united with the supreme will be essentially universal

and Ramakrishna Paramahansa is a messenger of this great truth.

For this work on 'A Critical Study of Universal Religion of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa' I must express my profound gratitude and reverence to my Supervisors Dr. P. K. Roy and Dr. R. Ghosh of the North Bengal University, who came to my aid whenever I was in difficulty. They inspired me too by their constant encouragement in this difficult task I undertook to finish. I shall be failing in my duty if I do not mention the authorities of National Library, Ramakrishna Mission Institute of culture, Calcutta, Ramakrishna Mission, Jamshedpur and the North Bengal University Library for my collection of materials. I remember with gratitude Dr. Uma Gupta, Patna University, who encouraged me to begin a work on Ramakrishna. I thank the Principal S. C. Sarkar, Kaliyaganj College and my colleagues for their co-operation regarding leave and other facilities. I also thank Mr. Biplob Sinha who has taken a keen interest in typing the manuscript.