

21 Immortals

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EMESCO

in collaboration with
Veda Vyasa Vidya Vignana Varadhi

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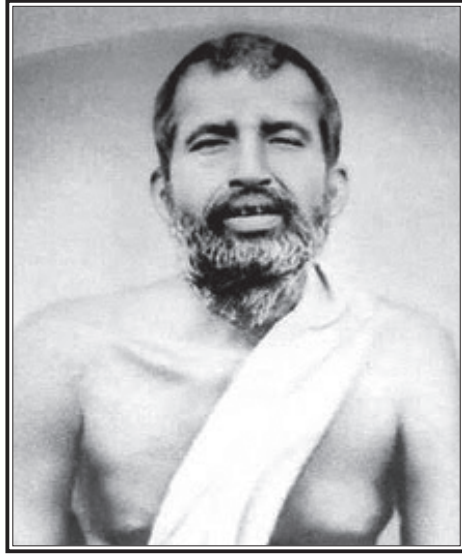
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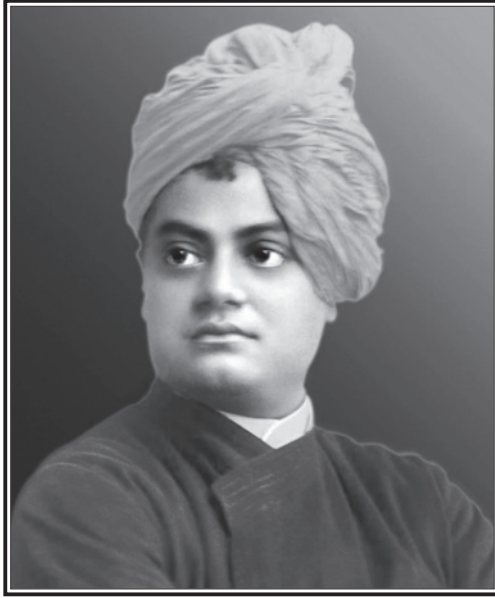
GAUTAM BUDDHA

Gautam Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, was born at Lumbinivana in Nepal about 563 B.C. His father, Shuddhodana, was the ruler of the Sakya dynasty of the Kshatriya clan and Maya Devi was his mother. The Buddha's real name was Siddhartha. When Maya Devi died a few days after his birth, Siddhartha was brought up by his stepmother Prajapati Gautami. Hence, he came to be known as Gautam. At the age of 19, he was married to Yashodara, by whom he had a son, Rahul. Since his childhood, Gautam showed concern and compassion for all living beings. The wealth and pleasures of life had no positive effect on him.



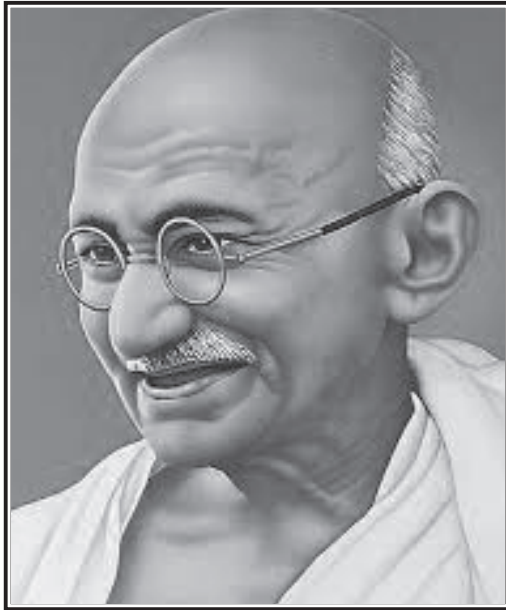
SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA

Ramakrishna Paramahansa was born in the village of Kamarpukur, in Hooghly district of Bengal state, on 20 February, 1833. His first name was Gadadhara. His father died when he was 7 years old. The next few years were difficult ones for the family, for they had no resources. His eldest brother went to Calcutta and opened a school there. He sent for Gadadhara, then an adolescent, but the latter, filled with the urge of his inner life and quite undisciplined, refused to learn. At that time there was a rich woman named Rani Rasmani, who belonged to an inferior caste. At Dakshineswar, on the eastern bank of the Ganges, she founded a temple to the Divine Mother, Kali, near Calcutta.



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

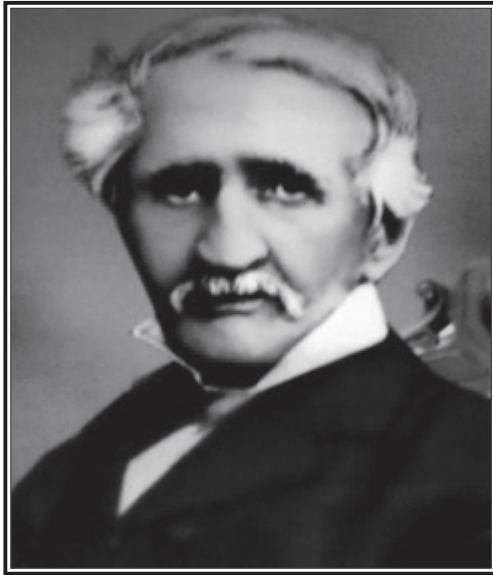
Swami Vivekananda was born in Calcutta on 12 January, 1863. His mother taught him the tales of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The first seed of spiritual life was sown in this period. In college, he attracted the attention of both Indian and English professors who recognized his ambitious mind and the latent powers of his personality. Principal W.W. Hastie said, “Vivekananda is really a genius. I have travelled far and wide, but I have never yet come across a lad of his talents and possibilities, even in German universities, amongst philosophical students. He is bound to make his mark in life.”



MAHATMA GANDHI

John Gunther, the American-Journalist (30 August 1901- 29 May 1970) described Gandhiji as the greatest Indian since the Buddha. His greatest contribution to India was the theory and practice of non-violence.

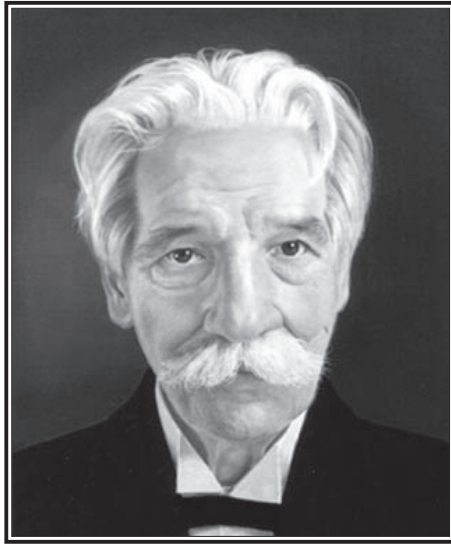
Gandhiji says, “When I was passing through a severe crisis of skepticism and doubt I came across Tolstoy’s book “The Kingdom of God is within you”, and was deeply impressed by it. I was at that time a believer in violence. Its reading cured me of my skepticism and made me a firm believer in non-violence.



SIR ARTHUR COTTON

General Sir Arthur Cotton was born on 15 May 1803. He was the tenth son of Mr. Henry Cotton, who was himself the tenth son of Sir Lynch Cotton. Arthur Cotton was a boy of only 16 when he left the Military Seminary at, Addiscombe, after a career marked by much diligence in study and uniform good conduct.

At the end of 1819 he was commissioned Second Lieutenant in the Madras Engineers. In 1820 he was posted to the ordnance survey in Wales. His duties took him on foot from place to place. After a successful surveying tour he presented an admirable report covering all the phases of the work entrusted to him, and earned encomiums for what he had done.



DR. ALBERT SCHWEITZER

Albert Schweitzer was born in a German village, Kayersberg, on 14 January 1875. One day his mother made a nice new overcoat for him, but he refused to wear it, saying none of the village boys wore any overcoat. Albert loved theology, philosophy and music. At bedtime he used to say a little prayer he himself had composed. "O heavenly father, protect and bless all things that have breath, guard them from all evil and let them sleep in peace."

In 1893, at the age of 18, he entered the University of Strasburg and made an intensive study of theology and philosophy. In 1896 he wrote his first thesis on theology. The thesis won him the "Goll" scholarship. In 1897 he was appointed as a preacher at the church of St Nicholas, Strasburg. In 1903 he