"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

The Message of the East

VOLUME V.
1916

Issued by
THE VEDANTA CENTRE
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"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. V. JANUARY, 1916. No. 1

SELF-CONQUEST.

By Swami Paramananda.

Once a General approached Lord Buddha and addressed Him thus: "There is one doubt which still lingers in my mind, O Blessed One, and that is concerning duty. I am a soldier. I am appointed by the king to enforce his laws and wage his wars. The Blessed One who teaches kindness and compassion to all living beings, does He permit the punishment of the criminal? Does He declare that it is wrong to go to war for the protection of our homes, our wives, children and property? Does He teach the doctrine of complete self-surrender, so that I should suffer the evil-doer to do what he pleases and yield submissively to him who would take away violently what is my own? Does the Blessed One maintain that warfare waged for a righteous cause should be abandoned?" To this Buddha replied: "He who deserves punishment must be punished, and he who is worthy of reward must be rewarded; yet at the same time the Teaching is that non-injury, love and kindness to all living beings must be observed. These injunctions are not contradictory. One should be loving and kind; yet one should recognize that the criminal must be punished for the crimes he has committed. His suffering comes not through the ill-will of the judge, but on account of his evil

doing. His own acts have brought misfortune upon him. Therefore let him not harbor thoughts of hatred in his heart; let him consider that this is the fruit of his own action; as soon as he will understand that, the punishment will purify his soul and he will no longer lament his fate, but will rejoice in it."

The Blessed One then continued: "Warfare in which man tries to slay his brother is lamentable, but those who go to war in a righteous cause, after exhausting all means to preserve the peace, are not blameworthy. He should be blamed who is the cause of the war. Struggle there must be in this life, for all life is a struggle of some kind. He who struggles in the interest of self — that he may be great or powerful or rich or famous — will have no reward; but he who struggles for righteousness and for Truth will have great reward, for even his defeat will be a victory." Then Lord Buddha, addressing the General, said: "O General, he who goes to battle, even though it be in a righteous cause, must be prepared to be slain by his enemies, for that is the destiny of warriors; and should this fate overtake him, he has no reason for complaint. But he who is victorious should remember that all earthly things are fleeting and transitory. Whatever his success, however great it may be, the wheel of life may turn again and bring him down to the dust. If, however, he is moderate; if, extinguishing all hatred from his heart, he lifts his down-trodden enemy up and says: 'Come now, let us have peace and be brothers;' he will gain not mere transitory success, but a true victory, the fruit of which will remain forever. Great is success, O General; but he who has conquered self is a greater victor. The doctrine of the conquest of self is not taught to destroy the souls of men, but to preserve them. He who has conquered self is more fit to live and to gain

victories than he who is the slave of self. He whose mind is free from all delusion regarding the self, he will stand and not fall in the battle of life."

Christ says: "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his own soul?" The conquest which any human being seeks in the external world is insignificant in comparison with that which lies within his own self; and until he has conquered his inner kingdom, all outer conquests must be fleeting and uncertain, for his own unwise actions may at any moment cause his ruin. Even though the world may regard him as a conqueror, even though he may consider himself invincible, he is not a conqueror in the spiritual sense so long as he is willing to give his soul life in exchange for any material advantage. He may gain the whole world, but it will profit him nothing. In all the lofty spiritual messages of the great teachers one ideal stands out above all others, — that each one must rouse himself and bring out what is best in him. He must learn to stand up and hold himself above nature, for a man who constantly obeys nature like a bond slave gradually loses the power of independent action, and life sooner or later must prove joyless and burdensome to him.

The tendency of the average mind is out-going. All its ambitions and interests are directed towards external things; but however much it may gain materially, there is always something lacking to make its happiness complete. Take, for example, the life of Alexander the Great. The world has rarely seen such a conqueror, yet within him there remained something unconquered and this often tormented him when there was no outward cause for unhappiness. Such is the universal experience. Should we not try therefore to acquire something more satisfying? Should we be content

to lead a life of slavery, obeying the impulses of our physical nature? This question must eventually arise within every heart; no one can evade it. Each one must face and answer it. It is the starting-point of all religion.

As we are now, we have very little control over ourselves; even this body which we call ours refuses to obey us and we are constantly driven hither and thither by the undisciplined forces of our nature. But one who has perfect control over the body is not made restless by his physical energies; instead of distracting him, they serve to bring him serenity and freedom, for they become constructive, not destructive elements in his evolution. The Lord Krishna declares in the Gita: "He indeed is a truly happy man who can withstand the impulse of greed, lust or anger even before he is separated from this body." And this represents a greater manifestation of power than when we make another person obey us. The man who desires to rule must begin by ruling his own self. He must prove that he is the master in his own dwelling-house. Instead of allowing his physical organism to dictate his course of action, he must make every part of his body subordinate to his will.

We all have a certain amount of power within us; but when this power is dissipated or ungoverned, it brings an unhealthy condition of mind and body. Disease more often comes from misdirection of the life-force than from lack of it. We allow ourselves to fall into a negative state and gradually hypnotize ourselves into the belief that we are without power or will. But the Great Ones constantly remind us that if man is to attain his freedom, he must awaken and raise himself by his own self; for his own self is his true friend and his own self can be as much his enemy as an external foe. Therefore they tell us: Let no one lose hold of himself, but let each one lift himself, for who else

can save him? Even a Divine Incarnation cannot save one who is without the will to be saved and devoid of the energy necessary to follow His example and precepts. A certain degree of self-reliance or faith in our higher Self is essential for our spiritual regeneration. Each soul is inherently divine, for it has within it that which is part of the Infinite. Why should we not exert ourselves and seek to find That? Why should we let our mind remain in a negative state and believe only in the forces which are working on the surface? No one can ever attain the supreme goal until he has become conscious of his higher Self. Man seems like a double being. There is one man, — the eating, drinking, sleeping man, the man of physical limitations: this man has only a little power and little capacity. And there is another man dwelling within, who has greater capacity, greater power, who is all-wise, all-loving. It is this man whom we want to awaken. The surface being, who constantly identifies himself with physical conditions and makes himself believe that he has no power to conquer, to know, to overcome obstacles — that man must be dropped. Nor does this mean self-torture or self-annihilation, it means rising above limitations. It is not that the physical man must be destroyed; not so; but the causes of those lower impulses in us, which lead us to hate or strike in anger or do any unworthy act, must be rooted out. This is not achieved by destroying our eyes, ears or any organ by which we may perform evil deeds. We must go behind the sense organs to find the real cause of evil in us. The senses are merely instruments and when properly controlled, they become powerful aids towards our spiritual advancement. "Through the practice of austerity, man may deaden the feeling of the senses, but longing still lingers in the heart; all longings drop off, when one has attained the Highest."

The little man, the man who sorrows, who grieves, who feels constantly that he is a helpless mortal, that man must expand and gain another vision by which he can realize his freedom. The Upanishads give a very beautiful illustration showing the relation between the lower man and the Higher Self. They are like unto two birds sitting on the same tree of life. One hops from branch to branch trying to gratify his desire by tasting the different fruits of the tree; the other sits calm, majestic and free from desire. As the first bird moves about tasting the sweet and bitter fruits and experiencing pleasure or disappointment, joy or sorrow, he suddenly beholds that other bird of like plumage sitting serene and ever-conscious of his true nature. As he gazes at it, his delusions fall away from him and he realizes his oneness with that higher being. Until man becomes master of his lower nature, he can never gain that lofty vision which sets him free; therefore he must rise step by step until he attains it. He must deal first with what is nearest and most definite, his physical body. He must see how far he can make this body obey him, — his hands, feet and all his senses. Let him next try to make his mind obedient to him. Let him subdue both body and mind and make them instruments in his hand to work out his freedom.

This is how we must begin in our conquest of self. We must watch over our bodily activities and strive to avoid all unnecessary expenditure of energy. With every one there are certain automatic movements of the hands, feet, or other members of the physical organism which continue even when we think that we are lying or sitting still. These should be checked, as they represent a waste of life-force. The Yogis overcome this habit by the systematic practice of *Asanam* or posture, learning to relax every muscle and then training the body to remain motionless in some fixed position.

This enables them to conserve their energies and also prepares them for higher spiritual pursuits. Another cause of waste lies in the unwise use we make of our vital energies. Needless talking is one of the most usual forms of this waste and often results in nervous exhaustion. Uneven and impulsive use of our forces, leading to extremes of activity and inactivity, is another. This must be overcome by steadfast practice of moderation or balance in all our bodily habits, even the most insignificant ones. We must exercise conscious control in our eating, drinking, talking, walking, sleeping, in our work and recreation. This will enable us eventually to gather up our bodily forces which are now being dissipated through lack of proper control and direction and unite them into one strong whole.

Next our mental forces, which at present run hither and thither unrestrained, must be brought into subjection. As the first step in this task we must try to cultivate the faculty of discrimination. We must not follow blindly every impulse that rises in our mind, but we must learn to reflect and to distinguish between what is fleeting and what is lasting, what is essential and what is non-essential, between what is pleasing to our bodily appetites and what is wholesome for our soul. The next step is to keep our mind fixed on the path chosen by our discriminative faculty. Thus firmly holding our thought develops in us the power of concentration, without which we can never hope to gain victory over our lower nature. This may seem a difficult task, but it is possible to every human being who strives with determined will and perseverance. From the very outset of our spiritual life we must root out the negative thought that we cannot do anything. Once for all we must shake off this notion and learn to believe that we can do even what seems impossible — not in any spirit of arrogance,

however, thinking that we can do because we possess individual power, but because we are part of God, because God dwells within us and all things are possible unto Him. This should be our constant thought, until we gain a hold over our little self and put down our lower propensities which veil the true vision of our higher nature.

Christ, Buddha and other Illumined Souls are often called Masters. Why? Because they conquered in themselves that which must be overcome, that which is the source of all fear, jealousy, hatred and ignorance. It is because they thus conquered that they are Masters. And being masters of themselves they alone can be masters of men. If we wish to attain this state of mastery we must make our own self obedient to our will. It is not an arrogant man or a man with strong muscles who can expect to gain freedom, but a man who reflects, a man who governs his appetites, a man who lives in moderation, a man who has power to forgive, to love even his enemies, for he is the stronger man. The power of resistance is good, but the power of non-resistance is higher. As long as we have the feeling that someone is attacking us, that a man is our enemy, we must protect our interests. But there may come a time when, through the expansion of our nature, such feelings will disappear and we shall know that nothing can touch us. One may strike us or speak angry words, but our understanding will place us so far above the blow or the insult that no impulse to retaliate will rise in us. And this is called non-resistance. When our lower nature no longer asserts itself in us, whatever may be the provocation, then self-conquest is complete.

This is indeed the loftiest thing man can accomplish; for then his kingdom is not confined to a little plot of land, but he carries his kingdom wherever he goes. Always is

he the master. No external condition can disturb him, therefore he lives in eternal peace and happiness. So long as our own thoughts, ambitions and unsatisfied desires haunt us and make us restless, we know that we cannot find either freedom or peace, even by going into the jungle. Self-conquest alone will give us that for which all men are seeking. Let us then lay hold on the sword of wisdom and the shield of perseverance, that we may fight with undaunted courage and gain victory over our only enemy, the self.

SELECTION FROM THE MAHABHARATA.

Translated from the Sanskrit.

[NOTE.—The Mahabharata is one of the two great Sacred Epics of India and is supposed to have been composed about 1400 B. C. It contains two hundred and twenty thousand lines, the English translation of which fills twenty-six volumes. The title means "Great India," and it deals chiefly with the prolonged conflict between the royal families of the Kurus and the Panchalas. Pandu was the king of the Kurus and on his death a brother, Dhritarashtra, with his queen Gandhari, ascended the throne. Dissension at once arose between the five sons of Pandu and the hundred sons of Dhritarashtra. Yudishthira, the eldest of Pandu's sons, was noted for his righteousness and purity; the second son, Bhima, was so mighty of stature that he could uproot a tree and use it as a staff; Arjuna, the third brother, was the foremost archer of India. Among Dhritarashtra's sons, Duryodhana was the leader and because of his father's blindness had been made ruler. Jealous of his cousins' greater merit and glory, he made various malicious attempts to destroy them and at last succeeded in exiling them to the forest for thirteen years. When the term of banishment was

over, the five Pandava brothers returned and asked for a small portion of their kingdom. Duryodhana refused. Sri Krishna and all the wise men of the court did their utmost to dissuade him from his mad course; and the king, as we see in the following passage, at last appealed to his heroic wife, Gandhari, to try to save their son from ruin.]

Hearing the words of Krishna, King Dhritarashtra lost no time in addressing Vidura, who was conversant with all the dictates of virtue. And the king said: "Go, O child, unto Gandhari, possessed of great wisdom and foresight, and bring her hither! With her I will entreat our wicked-hearted son! If she can pacify his evil mind, we may yet be able to act according to the words of our friend Krishna! It may be that in speaking words of peace, she may still succeed in pointing out the right path to this foolish one, afflicted by avarice and having wicked allies. If she can avert this great and dreadful calamity about to be occasioned by Duryodhana, it will then conduce to the attainment and preservation of happiness and peace for ever and ever." Hearing these words of the king, Vidura, at Dhritarashtra's command, brought thither Gandhari possessed of great foresight. And Dhritarashtra then addressed Gandhari and said: "Behold, O Gandhari, this thy son of wicked soul, transgressing all my commands, is about to sacrifice both kingdom and life in consequence of his lust of sovereignty! Of wicked soul and little understanding, he hath like one of uncultivated mind left the court with his sinful counsellors, disregarding his superiors and setting at naught the words of his well-wishers."

Hearing these words of her husband, that princess of great fame, Gandhari, desirous of what was highly beneficial, spoke these words: "Bring hither, without loss of time, that kingdom-coveting and sick son of mine. He that

is of uncultivated heart and sacrificeth both virtue and profit, doth not deserve to govern a kingdom. . . Kshattri then, at Dhritarashtra's command, and his mother's also, once more caused the vindictive Duryodhana to enter the court. Expectant of his mother's words, the prince re-entered the court with eyes red as copper from wrath and glistening like those of a snake. Beholding her son, who was treading in a wrong path, Gandhari rebuked him severely and spoke these words to bring about peace:

"O Duryodhana, dear son, attend to these words of mine that are beneficial to thee as also to all thy followers, words that thou art competent to obey and that will conduce to thy happiness! Duryodhana, obey thou the words of thy well-wishers, those words which that best of the Bharatas — thy father — and Bhishma and Drona and Kripa and Kshattri have spoken! If thou makest peace, thou wilt by that render homage to Bhishma, to thy father, to me and to all thy well-wishers, with Drona at their head! Nobody, O best of the Bharatas, succeedeth by his own desire alone in acquiring and keeping or enjoying a kingdom! One that hath not his senses under control cannot enjoy sovereignty for any length of time! He that hath his soul under control and is endued with great intelligence, he only can rule a kingdom! Lust and wrath wean away a man from his possessions and enjoyments. Conquering these foes first, a king bringeth the earth under his subjection! Sovereignty over men is a great thing. Those that are of wicked souls may easily desire to win a kingdom, but they are not competent to retain a kingdom when won. . . . He that desireth to obtain extensive empire must bind his senses to both profit and virtue; for if the senses are restrained, the intelligence increaseth as fire increaseth when fed with fuel. If not controlled, these can even slay their possessor

like unbroken and furious horses capable of killing an unskillful driver.

"One that seeketh to conquer his counsellors without conquering his own self, and to conquer his foes without conquering his counsellors, is soon vanquished himself and ruined. He who conquereth his own self first, taking it for a foe, will not seek in vain to conquer his counsellors and enemies afterwards. Prosperity favoreth greatly that person who hath conquered his senses and his counsellors, who inflicteth punishment on transgressors, who acteth after deliberation and who is possessed of wisdom. Lust and wrath that dwell in the body are deprived of their strength by wisdom, like fishes ensnared in a net with close holes. That king who knoweth well how to conquer lust and wrath and avarice and boastfulness and pride, can possess the sovereignty of the whole earth. That king who is desirous of gaining wealth and virtue and vanquishing his enemies, should always be engaged in controlling his passions. Impelled by lust or by wrath, he that behaveth deceitfully toward his own kinsmen or others can never win many allies. Uniting thyself with those heroic sons of Pandu, who are well endued with great wisdom, thou canst, O son, enjoy the earth in happiness! . . . That man who is not obedient to the wishes of wise and learned friends, always seeking his prosperity, only gladdeneth his enemies.

"O son, there is no good in battle, no virtue, no profit! How can it bring happiness then? Even victory is not always certain. Do not set thy heart, therefore, on battle! . . . Give unto the sons of Pandu what is their due, O chastiser of thy foes! If thou wishest to enjoy with thy counsellors even half the empire, let their share then be given unto them! Half the empire is sufficient to yield the means of support unto thee and thy counsellors! By acting ac-

cording to the words of thy well-wishers, O Bharata, thou wilt win great fame! A quarrel with the sons of Pandu, who are all endued with virtue, who have their souls under complete control, who are possessed of great intelligence and have conquered their passions, will only deprive thee of thy great prosperity! Dispelling the wrath of all thy well-wishers, rule thou thy kingdom as becometh thee. O mighty of Bharata's race, give unto the sons of Pandu the share that belongeth to them! Persecution of the sons of Pandu for full thirteen years hath been enough. Quench now that fire within thee which hath been fanned by lust and wrath. Thou that covetest the wealth of the Pandavas art not a match for them. It is never seen in this world that men acquire wealth by avarice, O son. Give up thy avarice then and desist."

AWAKE, ARISE!

Fragment of Poem by Swami Vivekananda.

Then speak, O Love!
Before thy gentle voice serene, behold how
Visions melt, and fold on fold of dreams
Departs to void, till Truth and Truth alone
In all its glory shines.

And tell the world:
Awake, arise, and dream no more!
This is the land of dreams, where Karma
Weaves unthreaded garlands with our thoughts,
Of flowers sweet or noxious, and none
Has root or stem, being born in naught, which
The softest breath of Truth drives back to
Primal nothingness. Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let Visions cease.
Or if you cannot, dream then truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.

RAJA-YOGA.

By S. E. Waldo.

Raja-Yoga is divided into eight principal steps and for that reason is often called the "Eight-fold" Yoga. It requires to be closely followed and regularly practised, and it promises those who are faithful and persevering that the goal will surely be reached. When the power of complete concentration has been gained, and when this is joined to the highest form of meditation, the result is what is called *Samadhi* or superconsciousness. This philosophy teaches that there are three stages, one above another, in what we ordinarily know as consciousness — the sub-conscious, usually called instinct; the conscious; and the super-conscious. The range of consciousness is very limited even on the physical plane. Mr. Edison once called attention to this fact in a published interview. Speaking of the small range of vibrations that the human being can perceive as sound and color, he said that between the highest number of vibrations that can be heard and the lowest number that can be seen, is an immense range of several hundred thousand about which we know absolutely nothing. In the same way, all those vibrations which number less per second than in the lowest sound audible to human ears, and all those greater in number per second than the highest number visible to human eyes as color, are entirely beyond our knowledge. Hence there is a whole undiscovered universe right in our very midst and possibly far more wonderful and beautiful than the one we know. This is no metaphysical dream, but a sober, scientific deduction from known facts.

The psychology upon which Raja-Yoga rests, claims that all that today is called instinct, as well as all subconscious action in our bodies, comes from what was originally the effect of conscious action. This action, having

been repeated and repeated until it ceased to require conscious direction, became as it were automatic. Indian psychology even goes farther and declares that by proper means and persistent effort all these sub-conscious actions may again be made conscious actions. Then this psychology posits a third stage beyond and above consciousness proper. These three stages, it says, differ from one another only in degree and grow naturally out of one another. They are like the three degrees in the vibrations we call light. When light waves are too slow, we cannot see them and we say it is darkness; when they are too swift, the light becomes too intense to be visible and again we say it is darkness; yet the one unseen stage of vibration is not like the other, save in its effect on us. These vibrations which are too rapid to affect our vision, cannot occupy the same place in the scale as those which are too slow for us to see; in like manner, the super-conscious state is not like the sub-conscious, it is not the state of the stone and the mineral, but something above the highest conceivable stage of what we call consciousness.

Naturally there can be in language no words to describe this state in any way; nor can we imagine it, because imagination, or the faculty of imagining, is itself confined to experience. We may combine the forms of our experience in the wildest and the most impossible ways, but the resulting images will still consist merely of variations of what we have seen and known. There have been, in all ages and in all lands, men who have claimed to have reached this super-conscious plane; and their testimony about it agrees in a remarkable manner, considering the wide differences of race and creed and intellectual development which separated them. On one point all agree, and that is that there is something to be reached by the human mind higher than

any material perception and higher than even mind itself. What that something shall be called is not a matter of perfect agreement, but that it is bliss and life supreme all admit. The Hindu Rishis and sages of the dimmest antiquity tell of this state. Buddha reached it and called it "Enlightenment," "Nirvana," "the sum of all delights." The Mohammedan Sufis attained it; the Christian mystics, ancient and modern, also reached it; and from one and all the testimony concerning it unanimously claims that it is a state of transcendent happiness.

If then we believe that there is such a state, the next question is, do we wish to gain it? If we do, are we sufficiently desirous of reaching it to pay the price of attainment? All things desirable have to be paid for and the most desirable of all has perhaps the highest price. No one can give that transcendent happiness to us. Each must win it for himself and must pay for it with the concentrated effort of earnest purpose and devoted endeavor. For some the task may be shorter than for others, but for none is it easy and by none is it lightly to be entered upon.

The practice of Raja-Yoga begins with certain physical trainings, from which it rises to mental control. A rigid system of morality of the highest order has to be strictly adhered to. All the Christian virtues in their loftiest form are requisite, while added to even these are some that are not usually inculcated by any system of Western ethics. There is no royal road to success. We are put, as it were, at the foot of a tremendous staircase and we must climb it step by step to reach the top. There are no elevators in Raja-Yoga. If it be objected that the task is too difficult, it can be said that there are other ways for divine realization less arduous and equally sure. Only those who find this method preferable need choose it. There are some

natures to whom difficulties are but added incentives, and to such Raja-Yoga offers a field worthy of their efforts. To strong, brave spirits who are willing to subject the body to the mind, to forego mere physical gratification for the pleasures of mental investigation and conquest, who are capable of perseverance in the face of any discouragement, and who see in the goal before them that which more than all else is to be desired: to such Raja-Yoga appeals in the most forcible manner, offering as it does an explicit method of procedure, a method which has been verified many times by its followers and which tells those who undertake it: "All that has been done can be done again; what any man ever accomplished, that another man can also do."

There is no miracle and no mystery. The road is clearly marked out, and even though perhaps steep and difficult, it leads surely to the mountain top, to that grand realization which is the goal of Raja-Yoga. It is a great mistake to suppose that Raja-Yoga is in any way a "Secret Doctrine." It most emphatically is not and was never intended to be such. In India, where it seems to have been known and taught for over 4000 years, it did in the process of time fall into the hands of those who, to serve their own selfish ends, strove to make a mystery of it. In doing this they injured the system itself, by incorporating into it many new ideas that lessened its dignity and simplicity, thus bringing discredit on the whole system. It is now being freed from these accretions and is being presented again in its original purity. The teachings of Patanjali are studied instead of the later commentaries, which in many instances confuse and mislead more than explain. The Aphorisms of Patanjali have been several times translated into English and are well known to all students of Oriental Philosophy. Though it might appear that some of the re-

sults claimed in these aphorisms are super-natural, it must be clearly understood from the outset that the Yogi denies all possibility of such a thing. He maintains that there is no super-natural. There are gross manifestations with which we are all familiar; then there are finer manifestations known only to special students; and beyond even these are still finer, subtler manifestations, to perceive which it is necessary to acquire suitably subtle powers of perception.

Raja-Yoga is designed to cultivate these subtle powers of perception, and to enable us to use them in the study of things beyond the reach of our senses as ordinarily developed. All this, however, is perfectly natural and in no way occult or mysterious. It has become a fashion to decry certain studies as being "occult"; as if, on that account, they were dangerous or wicked. Occult simply means hidden or concealed, so that really everything we do not know is occult for us; but if we never sought to penetrate into any of the hidden subjects and in that way to learn to understand them, all progress would soon be at a standstill. It is one of the curious sides of human nature that it resents new ideas as a positive insult and injury. History is full of instances of the sad fate that often awaits the man who dares to bring forward a new theory which contradicts generally-received opinions. Galileo suffered for presuming to assert that the earth moved, and it is only because the days of the Inquisition are over that the prophets of the evolution theory have escaped persecution. Even in this twentieth century of the Christian era it is still possible to find people who do not believe in evolution.

Raja-Yoga has especially to do with the meditative side of religion. It strengthens the will by continuous and persevering drill. It cultivates the imagination, which is really a very important faculty and one which ought to be made

useful to man. All prophets, poets, inventors and discoverers have been men of great imagination. It spurs men to put forth tremendous efforts to realize the pictures presented by the imagination. The thing that is necessary is to train this faculty, instead of letting it run wild, as is often the case with most people. Only the mind can serve as the instrument with which to analyze itself. The mental powers, when properly guided and directed inward upon the mind itself, will illumine its workings and enable us to comprehend them. The next step is to control these powers so that we can direct them as we will. The mind will then become like a mighty searchlight in our hands, the rays from which we may throw where we desire and so bring all things internal under minute observation. All the knowledge in the world has been gained by mental concentration. It is the only key which unlocks nature's secrets.

Raja-Yoga is designed to teach us how to attain the basis of belief, how to reach the only real religion. Every human being has the right and the ability to seek and to realize true religion; and if he perseveres in the search, he must succeed. The best help we can have here is strength. We must exercise our reason and judgment and have unbounded faith and hope. Then with energy and steady practice and calm composure we shall surely reach the goal; we shall surely realize our oneness with the Divine, which is our real Self. What is there in religion higher or truer than this Divine Realization?

The soiled mirror never reflects the rays of the sun, and the impure and unclean in heart who are subject to *Maya* (selfishness and ignorance) never perceive the glory of the Lord. But the pure in heart see the Lord as the clear mirror reflects the sun. Be holy, then. —*Sri Ramakrishna.*

THE STORY OF DHRUWA.

From the Sacred Writings of India.

Suniti was the wife of an ancient Indian king, but being childless she persuaded the king to take another queen, who bore him a son to whom the throne was promised; while Suniti, through the urgent insistence of the younger queen, was exiled to a hermitage in the forest. One day the king, hunting in this same forest, came unexpectedly upon her retreat; and beholding again her pure illumined face, full still of love for him, he took her once more into his heart and of this passionate reunion was born the child Dhruwa. Hot jealousy now burned in the mind of the younger queen and so menaced the safety of the new-born and lawful heir to the throne, that the king, grown anxious, sent both mother and child far away to live in a secluded cottage on the edge of a dense forest. Here the little boy grew, knowing naught of the outside world save the faint echo brought perchance by a wandering holy man on his way through the forest to some sacred shrine. Peace hung over the cottage like a cooling shadow and God seemed very near.

The folding and unfolding of the great white blossoms on the lotus pond at sunrise and at sunset, the rustling of the night wind through the overhanging palm trees, the singing of the thrush, or the roar of the lion in the far depths of the jungle: these were the sights and sounds of Dhruwa's little world. And so he lived for seven quiet years close to the heart of his mother, whose whole life had woven itself in and out around the life of her beloved son. Then one day, coming suddenly to her, he asked: "Where is my father, Mataji (revered Mother)?" And she told him of the distant court where the king lived and ruled.

"Could I not go to him, Mother?" he asked again.

"Yes, my child," the queen answered, but a tremor of

undefined apprehension shot through her. "Yes, dearest little one, you may go. But not today. Tomorrow."

And on the morrow Dhruwa set out with a solitary guard to make his way to the distant capital. Through villages and forest lands he went, along hot stretches of open road, past temples and lotus-covered temple tanks, but scarcely his eye rested on all these new pictures, for his thought was bounding ahead to join the unknown father at the journey's end. At last he arrived at the palace gates and, running past guards and courtiers, he flew to the audience chamber and threw himself into his father's arms. The king was overjoyed. During all the seven years he had never ceased to yearn for his exiled son and now the child had come of his own accord to lay his love and devotion at his feet. Fondly he caressed and questioned him. But as he did so, that younger queen, mother of the falsely chosen heir, entered the hall. With angry disdain she glanced at the little boy and then, reminding the king of his early promise, she spoke such bitter threats that the king, affrighted, put down the child as if he feared the curse might blight him. Dhruwa looked full at his father, then stooping he touched the king's feet, kissed the steps of the throne, beckoned to his guard and silently went out.

The journey home seemed long and weary. Often he asked the guard to carry him; a great sorrow weighted his little limbs and bore down upon his aching heart. At last he reached the cottage and lifting the lath-strung curtain, stood before his mother. Hour after hour she had watched, praying for the safety of her son. He was here and her heart leaped. Yet what had happened? A shadow had fallen on the happy laughing face. The child was gone and a grave thoughtful boy had come back to her. Joyfully she fed him the fruits and cakes made ready for him.

When he had eaten, she asked him of his journey and he told her all that had taken place. A moment of sad silence followed; then lifting sorrowful eyes to her face, he asked:

"Mother, is there anyone stronger than my father?"

"Yes, my son," she answered tenderly, "the Lotus-eyed One."

"Where does He dwell?" the child asked eagerly.

"Far, far away," she answered vaguely, as the vision of the great Divine Shepherd, Krishna, rose before her. "There in the forest where the wild creatures live, there dwells the Lotus-Eyed One."

Dhruwa heard in silence. A sense of awe welled up in his child heart. Then out of the depths of his being sounded a voice, calling "Come to Me!" "Come to Me!" Was it the voice of the Lotus-Eyed? In the stillness of the night the call grew louder, louder, until the boy could bear it no longer. Rising from his bed, he crept to the side of his sleeping mother. "Unto Thee, O Lotus-Eyed, I give her," he murmured with clasped hands and prayerful lips. Then out into the darkness he passed and on into the denser darkness of the jungle.

Suddenly there stood before him a great creature with hungry eyes and panting breath. "Are you the Lotus-Eyed?" asked Dhruwa without fear and the lion slunk away ashamed. Then came a dark furry thing with heavy tread. "Are you the Lotus-Eyed One?" again asked the child, and the bear crept back into the bush. Still the voice sounded: "Come to Me! Come to Me!" And Dhruwa hurried on. Then out from the tangle of the jungle appeared a holy man, Narada himself, who, gently laying his hand on the eager little head, said: "Thou seekest the Lotus-Eyed, my child? I will show thee where and how to find Him. Come, little one, sit here beneath this tree, clasp thy hands thus

and close thine eyes. Repeat now the Lord's Name. If thou canst fix thy whole mind and call with thy whole heart on Him, surely wilt thou find the Lotus-Eyed!"

In humble obedience Dhruwa took his seat as he was told and began to repeat the sacred Name. No muscle moved, the senses were at rest, only the holy sound echoed through his being. Like rising waves it swept over his awakening consciousness, carrying him further and further inward, to that secret place where in every heart dwells the Lord, the pure Source of Bliss Eternal and Eternal Strength. There he found the Lotus-Eyed.

REPORTS.

The Christmastide was marked by various gatherings and services at the Vedanta Centre of Boston. On Christmas Eve the house was brightly illuminated, with rows of candles in all the lower windows and in the chief window on the corner of the Parkway an altar to the Christ Child and the Virgin, which was decorated with flowers and plants and many burning candles. The Chapel and Library were also hung in green garlands and filled with blooming plants. At eight o'clock a special service was held consisting of music, meditation and an address by Swami Paramananda on the true lesson of Christmas. At its close, all those present gathered in the Library, where each was given a flower and some sweetmeats. On the following afternoon there was a Christmas tree in the Vedanta Community House, to which a number of children and members of the Centre were invited. Presents were distributed and a spirit of true joy and cheer pervaded the atmosphere.

At the regular Service on Sunday morning the Swami delivered a lecture on "Christ the Redeemer," which closed his course on the Great Saviours. As in all previous lectures

he brought out in clear relief the fundamental unity in the teachings of all the Divine Incarnations.

* * *

At the invitation of the Rev. E. M. Cosgrove, Swami Paramananda delivered a lecture before the Second Unitarian Church of Somerville on Sunday evening, December 19th. His subject was "The Message of India to the West" and all present showed the keenest appreciation of what the Swami had to tell them regarding the great religious teaching of the Indo-Aryans. Many questions showing both interest and sympathy were asked at the close of the lecture. On the following Sunday evening Sister Devamata spoke in the same church on "Woman in India."

* * *

The Vedanta Centre of Boston will celebrate its seventh Anniversary on Wednesday evening, January 5th, at 8 o'clock. All friends of the work are cordially invited to be present.

* * *

Swami Prakashananda has taken charge of The Vedanta Society of San Francisco and has begun to hold regular Sunday meetings and the usual week-day classes. It is expected that the work will grow rapidly under his direction.

* * * *

A Relief Fund for the sufferers in India from flood and famine has been started by the Boston Vedanta Centre. Reports published in previous numbers of the Message have told of the noble and tireless work which the Ramakrishna Mission has been conducting for many months past in their effort to relieve the terrible distress prevailing in certain districts of Bengal. All those desiring to help in this work of love may send their offerings to the Centre. Even a small amount may save the life of a starving child or mother. We beg to thank those who have already contributed.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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" *13th*	*Symbolism and Devotion.*
" *20th*	*Self-Knowledge.*
" *27th*	*Unity of Religions.*

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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ROBERT BROWNING AND THE VEDANTA.

By Sister Devamata.

(Extract of Address delivered before the Boston Browning Society.)

In considering how far Browning voices in his poems the spirit of the East, we must first of all remind ourselves that Spirit knows no boundary lines. Truth is neither of the East nor of the West. And he who sees the Truth is neither of the East nor of the West. He is of God. That Vision lifts him above time and place. It leads him even to transcend himself. But although this supreme Vision is open to all men, few there are in any age who attain it in fullness. When, however, there comes a rift in the cloud and a few gleams of the Light shine through, flooding the heart and soul of some man, then we have a genius such as Robert Browning. Yet it is only a rift. The illumination is not complete. Shadows still linger; hence the strong contrasts which nearly always mark the character of geniuses, contrasts which are difficult for the ordinary mind to reconcile.

When that rift grows wider, allowing a broader beam to pass, then there rises a prophet like Isaiah or Jeremiah, a towering figure, who at one moment stands on the heights lost in the wonder of God's glory and at the next descends into the valley to lament the wickedness of men; a great soul tossed on the ocean of dualism, seeing always two, light

and darkness, good and evil, and warning men to strive for the one and flee from the other. When, however, the cloud is rent and the whole Vision comes, then the world gains a Messiah or a Seer, mighty ones like those illumined Rishis, who from the silent heights of the Himalayas gave to mankind the lofty revelations set down in what we know as the Vedas. Their light never wavers. For them there is but One, there are never two. They have looked upon That which lies behind both good and evil and their whole consciousness is filled with That. They sit calm, "Serene amid the half-formed creatures round," as Browning declares in "Paracelsus"; or again in "Cleon":

> ". . . . Those divine men of old time
> Have reached, thou sayest well, each at one point
> The outside verge that rounds our faculty,
> And where they reached, who can do more than reach."

The power and need of such Teachers is a familiar theme in Browning's poetry, for he claims that only the man who has touched God is fitted to refresh and regenerate mankind. It is through such, as he says in "Pompilia," that "God stooping shows sufficient of His light for those in the dark to rise by." The Vedic Seers dwell with especial emphasis on the necessity in the world at all times of great souls who can say as John said in "Death in the Desert," "I saw"; for they alone keep men's faith alive. What made the scribes stop and harken to Christ's words? Because He spoke with authority; He had seen. What made it possible for Buddha to go out and conquer Asia? Because He had seen. Always must there come God-men of supreme Vision to break through human crystallization and show man once more his Divine nature. Therefore is it said in that great Eastern Scripture, the Bhagavad-Gita: "Whenever religion declines and irreligion prevails, whenever there is a predominance of vice and a decline of virtue, then I (the Lord) manifest

Myself, for the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil and for the preservation of religion."

It was because the Indo-Aryan Sages recognized so clearly the power of the personal vision, the strength of an apostolic succession of living teachers, that in ancient India higher knowledge was always transmitted by word of mouth. Man reads into the written teaching his own limitations, they said, and interprets it according to his own partial understanding; but when he listens to an Illumined Soul speaking even the humblest word, the force of the teacher's spiritual insight so quickens his perception that he is able to discern a new and deeper meaning in the truths spoken. Hence the ultimate revelations of the Vedas are called *Sruti* (that which is heard), while the minor Scriptures are known as *Smriti* (that which is written down). I remember, during the first weeks of my stay in India, being awakened every morning at half past four by the deep-toned notes of a man's voice and the light soprano of a little child's answering voice, and I learned that it was the teacher who came each day at that hour to rouse his young pupil and help him learn line by line the rolling majestic verses of the Vedas, which through all his life would be fixed indelibly in his memory.

Those great Wise Men of the East knew well, as Abt Vogler says, how "to build, broad on the roots of things." That is their salient characteristic. In the Rig-Veda it is recorded that the disciple came to the Master and questioned: "What is that by knowing which all else becomes known?" He did not ask for facts or information. He asked to be taught the basic principle of life and knowledge. And all the Vedas following this earliest Scripture were composed as answers to that fundamental question, to know That which lies behind all knowledge. But such knowledge

is not the ordinary knowledge which we gain from books. It is not the knowledge of the university campus or the library. Browning himself has described it in "An Epistle":

> "So here—we call the treasure knowledge, say,
> Increased beyond the fleshly faculty—
> Heaven opened to a soul while yet on earth,
> Earth forced on a soul's use while seeing heaven."

But for this revelation higher perceptive powers are necessary, the Vedanta declares. Man has within him three states of consciousness,—the sub-conscious, the conscious and the super-conscious; or as Browning expresses it in his "Death in the Desert":

> "Three souls which make up one soul: first, to wit,
> A soul of each and all the bodily parts,
> Seated therein, which works, and is what Does,
> And has the use of earth, and ends the man
> Downward: but, tending upward for advice,
> Grows into, and again is grown into
> By the next soul, which, seated in the brain,
> Useth the first with its collected use,
> And feeleth, thinketh, willeth,—is what Knows:
> Which, duly tending upward in its turn,
> Grows into, and again is grown into
> By the last soul, that uses both the first,
> Subsisting whether they assist or no,
> And, constituting man's self, is what Is—
> And leans upon the former, makes it play,
> As that played off the first; and, tending upward,
> Holds, is upheld by, God, and ends the man
> Upward in that dread point of intercourse,
> Nor needs a place, for it returns to Him
> What Does, what Knows, what Is; three souls, one man."

According to the Vedic teaching, the sub-conscious mind is the mind of the body, the mind that does. It is the mind which makes the heart beat and the lungs breathe, which draws us back automatically from pain and pushes us toward pleasure. Above this is the intellect, the mind that knows, by which man perceives, classifies and associates ideas, thus gaining what we ordinarily call knowledge. Still beyond is the super-conscious or the spiritual mind, by which man apprehends being directly. In this state of consciousness he no longer reasons or infers. He sees face to face

what is. The hidden laws of God become apparent to him and he learns to identify himself with the Universal. As Browning describes it in "Sordello": "Divest mind of e'en thought and lo God's unexpressed Will dawns upon us."

To attain this state of spiritual illumination is the goal held out by the Vedic Sages to every living being; for through it alone will a light be kindled in the heart by which man will perceive his true nature and the true nature of all things. Every man is "a god though in the germ," we read in "Rabbi Ben Ezra"; and in "Sordello," man "must fit to the finite his infinity." The soul, in Browning's conception of life, cannot stop short of the Infinite, the *Sat-Chit-Anandam* or "Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute and Bliss Absolute" of the Vedas. Therefore, he tells us in "Sordello" again, "Let essence, whatsoe'er it be, extend, never contract." With him, as with the ancient Indo-Aryan Seers, all salvation or ultimate attainment can be reached only through the full revelation of the soul to itself. When that supreme moment arrives and the veil drops from Spirit, then, the Svetasvatara-Upanishad declares: "As a mirror clouded by dust shines bright again after it has been polished, so is the embodied one satisfied and free from grief after he has beheld the real nature of his Self. And when by means of the real nature of his Self, he sees, as by a lamp, the real nature of the Supreme, then having known the Eternal God, who is beyond manifested nature, he is freed from all fetters."

With the realization of the soul comes necessarily a realization of the mutability of all finite things, and throughout Browning's poetry this is perhaps one of the strongest notes sounded. In "Fifine at the Fair" he writes:

> "Truth inside, and outside, truth also: and between
> Each, falsehood that is change, as truth is permanence.
> The individual soul works through the shows of sense,
> (Which, ever proving false, still promise to be true)

Up to an outer soul as individual too,
And, through the fleeting, lives to die into the fixed. . . .
Truth sets aside speech, act, time, place, indeed, but brings
Nakedly forward now the principle of things
Highest and least.'
Wherewith change ends."

And again:

"Each has a false outside, whereby a truth is forced
To issue from within. . . . Life means, learning to abhor
The false, and love the true, truth treasured snatch by snatch."

This is a clear presentation of the Vedic doctrine of *Maya*, so often misinterpreted as delusion, but which actually means change. Nothing can be real or permanent except the Changeless Cause, because It alone is Self-existent. All other existence is relative, hence ever-shifting. "All things suffer change save God the Truth" are John's words in "Death in the Desert." Our sense-perceptions are based wholly on contrast. We know cold only in relation to heat and what may feel hot at one moment seems cool in relation to something hotter. Light becomes darkness and darkness light, blue may seem purple and purple red according to what is placed beside it. Absolute color or sound or feeling is nowhere to be found in this kaleidoscope of phenomenal manifestation. We are unable even to define them save by relating each to something else. There can be nothing fixed in matter, because for material things fixity means death. Life on this plane depends on change and motion, on continuous circulation, perpetual ebb and flow. Yet behind this ceaseless play of *Maya* is a light that never flickers, an Absolute which holds the relative, a Real which lends to the changing form through which It shines that alluring show of reality which so easily deceives the unseeing eye. Thus speaks Browning in "Rabbi Ben Ezra":

"Fool, all that is, at all,
Lasts ever past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure:
What enters into thee,

That was, is, and shall be:
Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter and clay endure.

He fixed thee 'mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,
This present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain arrest:
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed."

With the force of a still mightier vision the Vedic Sages of old proclaimed again and yet again that Ultimate, Unchanging Reality, "from whence all beings are born; by which, when born, they live; unto which they go"; and this ancient Sanskrit prayer was ever on their lips: "O Thou Supreme Light of the Universe, Lead us from the unreal to the Real, from darkness to light, from death to immortality." "The unreal hath no existence and the Real doth never cease to exist," Sri Krishna declares. "The Seers of Truth know the nature and final ends of both."

A recognition of the eternity of the soul and the mutability of all material things, however, does not call for a morbid under-valuation of the things of this world, nor does it demand a foolish torturing of the flesh. Browning felt that. The joy he took in living was a wholesome sign of his real vision. He exclaims:

"Every day my sense of joy
Grows more acute, my soul (intensified
By power and insight) more enlarged, more keen."

And David sings to Saul:

"How good is man's life, the mere living! how fit to employ
All the heart and the senses forever in joy."

Although he was not deceived by the fleeting nature of the created universe, he saw none the less its value in that it served to teach men to seek for the enduring and everlasting. We only know a fixed point by that which moves, and it is by studying day by day these things which crumble in our hands that we come to know that which is permanent. One

of the signs of a lofty soul is to see greatness in little things, to see purity even in the impure, to perceive beauty behind that which appears ugly. There can be no doubt that Browning possessed that deeper sight. He saw the beautiful in all things, "the spiritual life around the earthly life." There was no fact of existence that did not hold a message of inspiration for him. Why? Because he had learned to relate each thing that he beheld to the One behind. Every great poet or artist refers all to the Ultimate Beauty, as every Seer refers all to the Ultimate Truth. And no man can be a monist without being an optimist. He who sees the One in the many, unity in diversity, who beholds God everywhere, must find all things beautiful and may seem at times to revel in what to the ordinary mind appears base and unlovely. May that not explain why some of Browning's lines fall with a shock on uncomprehending ears?

None but a great soul could respond to the Higher Vision as Browning's soul responded; and no other could maintain so remarkable a balance between the Divine and the human, between flesh and spirit, between earth and heaven. Everywhere one finds a natural intermingling of the two; sometimes the scale may seem to tip a little to the fleshly side, then suddenly something swings it back to the spiritual. This is one of the greatest proofs of his genius, for higher vision never leads to the elimination or destruction of any element of life; it enables us to rate each at its proper value and maintain a balance among all. This is also the basis of the Vedic science of Yoga or spiritual development. The very word, from the same root as the English "Yoke," makes this plain; for man invented a yoke that he might balance his burdens and thus carry them more easily. Yoga, we are told in the Gita, only brings illumination to that man who observes moderation or balance in all his activities.

This does not mean that at every moment he must stand at a neutral central point; but that when he swings to this side or that, he will have such control over all his forces that in an instant he will be able to correct his deflection and regain the middle point, that point where all things are perceived at their true value.

If soul persists and material things perish, there rises the question: "What is death?" Browning gives answer, "New life comes in the old life's stead"; and "My foot is on the threshold of boundless life." Again in "At the Mermaid":

> "Must in death your daylight finish?
> My sun sets to rise again."

Did be believe in reincarnation? He does not voice it with the same definiteness as Tennyson or Wordsworth, but lines such as these seem to indicate it; and Paracelsus at the moment of his passing exclaims:

> "If I stoop
> Into a dark tremendous sea of cloud,
> It is but for a time; I press God's lamp
> Close to my breast; its splendor, soon or late,
> Will pierce the gloom. I shall emerge one day."

More distinctly does the idea come in "Evelyn Hope":

> "Delayed it may be for more lives yet.
> Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few,
> Much is to learn, much to forget
> Ere the time be come for taking you."

No thoughtful mind can look deep into this ever-moving panorama of manifested life and explain its variations and inequalities on any other logical ground than that of Karma and Reincarnation. Each germ of life is working out its own salvation according to the natural law of cause and effect. It was not enough that nature should evolve the best machine. Man must go on evolving something higher within that machine; and if eons were allowed to evolve the body, how cruel would it be to grant him a paltry seventy years to save his soul.

"I search but cannot see
What purpose serves the soul that strives, or world it tries
Conclusions with, unless the fruit of victories
Stay, one and all, stored up and guaranteed its own
Forever, by some mode whereby shall be made known
The gain of every life."

Browning writes in "Fifine at the Fair."

Vedanta teaches that each human being is the arbiter of his own destiny. He can choose his own course to attain ultimate perfection. There is no mother whose indulgence is so untiring as the great Divine Mother of the Universe. She gives to every child as much time as he wishes to go to school. She never suspends or expels him. She lets him work or play, loiter or hasten on his way; but he must inevitably suffer if he breaks the law, just as a child cannot escape the smart and sting if he burns his fingers. She knows full well that, as Browning puts it, "Life's inadequate to joy as the soul sees joy"; and because "the soul craves all," every living creature must push on and on, climbing by his mistakes until he attains the farthest height; for "incentives come from the soul's self, the rest avail not."

But what is the purpose of it all? Browning answers in "Death and the Desert":

"God's gift was just that man conceive of Truth
And yearn to gain it."

For "The Absolute Truth is bliss itself; on attaining It the soul feels happy," the Taittirya-Upanishad declares. And where is the Truth to be found? Again the answer comes in "Paracelsus":

"Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise
From outward things, whate'er you may believe.
There is an inmost centre in us all,
Where truth abides in fulness; and around,
Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,
This perfect, clear conception which is truth.
A baffling and perverting carnal mesh
Binds it, and makes all error; and to know
Rather consists in opening out a way

Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape,
Than in effecting entry for a light
Supposed to be without. . . .
Therefore set free the soul alike in all,
Discovering the true laws by which the flesh
Accloys the spirit!"

The only reason for geniuses to come, for prophets and Saviours to come, is to remind man that he has the same power within himself; that he too can go to the origin of things; that within his own heart lies dormant the song of the poet, the vision of the prophet, the glory of the Saviour. To awaken each living thing to this mighty fact sounds the cry out of the Vedic past: "Arise! Awake! Seek out the Illumined Ones and gain understanding. Having known That (the Divine Spirit) man escapes from the mouth of death." And taking up the note, the inspired voice of the poet Browning calls to the world of today:

"Hold on, hope hard in the subtle thing
That's spirit."

LEARNING AND WISDOM.

A learned Brahmin once went to a wise king and said: "Hear, O king! I am well versed in the Holy Scriptures. I intend to teach thee the Sacred Book of Bhagavatam." The king, who was the wiser of the two, well knew that a man who had really studied the Bhagavatam would seek more to know his true Self than to gain honor and wealth in a king's court. He replied: "I see, O Brahmin, that you yourself have not mastered that book thoroughly. I promise to make you my teacher, but go first and learn the Scripture well." The Brahmin went his way thinking within himself: "How foolish the king is to say that I have not mastered the Bhagavatam when I have been reading it over and over for all these years." However, he read through the book carefully once again and appeared before the king.

The king made him the same answer and sent him away. The Brahmin was sore vexed but thought that there must be some meaning for this behaviour of the king. He went home, shut himself in his closet and applied himself more than ever to the study of the Scriptures. Little by little their hidden meaning began to unfold before his mind, and the vanity of running after riches and honor, kings and courts, power and fame, grew plain to his unclouded vision. From that day forward he gave himself up entirely to the worship of God and never returned to the king. A few years after, the king thought of the Brahmin and went to his house to see why he had not come back. Beholding him all radiant with Divine light and love, he fell upon his knees and said: "I see that thou hast now arrived at the true meaning of the Scriptures. I am ready to be thy disciple if thou wilt condescend to accept me." *Parable by Sri Ramakrishna*

ADDRESS AT SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY

By John Spencer Clark.

In responding to Swami Paramananda's request to say something pertinent to this occasion, the seventh anniversary of the establishment of the Vedanta Centre in Boston, I am led to ask myself the question "Why am I here?" And perhaps I can best respond to the request by telling you as briefly as possible, not only why I am here, but also why I am happy to be here and bear testimony to the high, ennobling spiritual and ethical influence that is radiated in generous measure from this profoundly religious mission.

I came here, as I shall presently tell you, in pursuit of truth in the higher departments of human thinking, and from a sincere desire to know the nature of the Message from the East to the occidental mind. Let me say in passing, that I was brought up under the influence of the strict-

est of orthodox teaching, and that on reaching my majority in the fifties of the last century, I rejoiced to see dogmatic Christianity at the height of its power and influence. As an organized system of religious thought it had maintained itself against the attacks of science and it dominated the religious thought of the occidental mind. Indeed, I could heartily join, without the slightest tinge of religious self-sufficiency, in the fervent missionary hymn "From Greenland's icy mountains," believing in all sincerity that we Christians were the only people who had been "enlightened with wisdom from on high"; and that we only had the true "lamp of life" which other peoples and races were calling upon us to share with them.

The main affirmations of this system of religious thought were these: an infinite eternal God, a personal Being, the Creator of the Heavens and Earth and all that in them is; that 4004 years before Christ this God had created the universe and man out of hand, and that this was the beginning of all things; that man disobeyed his creator, and as a punishment he and his posterity were condemned as degenerates to a life of want, sin and suffering here on earth, and to an eternal life of pain and suffering in the life beyond; that residing somewhere in the created universe was an evil spirit, a personal devil or Satan, animated with intense hostility to God, and the inspirer of much of the sin and wickedness that inflict mankind; that God in his mercy had taken pity on the fallen human race, and had sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, to be a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of mankind, to be in fact a Redeemer to those who would accept Him as their Saviour and follow His teachings; that somewhere in the created Universe was a veritable Heaven where sin and sorrow were unknown, and where the redeemed of Earth would enjoy an eternity of bliss in the presence of

God, Christ and the holy angels; that somewhere in the created Universe there was a veritable Hell where the unredeemed of Earth would endure an eternity of pain and suffering in the company of Satan and kindred spirits; that as a means of making known to man God's purposes and man's duties God had revealed them fully in the Holy Scriptures, every word of which was divinely inspired and must be accepted as ultimate truth, transcending in certitude all the results of man's experiential knowledge.

These dogmas had had an eventful history, and as the fundamentals of religious belief they underlaid the religion of Christianity no matter into what sects or churches its believers were divided over matters of detail. At the middle period of the last century Christian theologians and teachers of all sects, rejecting the ever-increasing significance of the revelations of science, were insisting upon the absolute truth of these dogmas with more earnestness than ever. Believing that by virtue of these dogmas they held the keys to all truth, they assumed a supremacy of knowledge, and they attempted to ignore, to deny, to condemn the revelations of science whenever these revelations ran counter to their dogmatic affirmations.

But the three decades between 1840 and 1870 witnessed the establishment of a group of scientific truths regarding the Cosmic Universe and man's place in it, which, united to the truths of gravitation and the indestructibility of matter already established, presented a challenge to the fundamental dogmas of Christianity such as had never before been presented, and opened an entirely new era in the development of religious and philosophic thinking in the Christian world. Let me state briefly the nature of these discoveries and the order of philosophic and religious thought to which they gave rise.

First: Geological researches clearly showed that the Earth was in no sense created out of hand and set going a few thousand years ago; the evidence was indisputable that it was part of the solar system and had existed for countless ages and was ever in a process of development into more complex forms of phenomenal manifestation in conformity to the action of cosmic forces invariable in their mode of operation. In short, it was shown that the Earth was but a part of a much greater whole and that it was the outcome of a process of evolution.

Second: Physical researches had established the truth that permeating the Cosmic Universe was a universal power or energy which was never increased or diminished; and that the various forces known as light, heat, electricity, magnetism, chemical affinity, etc., were but forms of this universal energy and were convertible into one another without any loss whatsoever. Thus was established the great cosmic truth, the Persistence of Energy, a truth which is the foundation of all physical science. In a philosophic sense this is a manifestation of the Infinite Power which holds the Universe in order. Without it there would be chaos. Like matter, its ultimate source or origin is unknown.

Third: Geological and Paleontological researches had revealed the truth that man had been an inhabitant of the Earth for hundreds of thousands of years; and that instead of his having been specially created 4004 years before Christ and having become a degenerate, the evidence from paleontologic remains and comparative physiology was conclusive, that he had ascended through the action of natural forces through vast periods of time from an animal ancestry to the stage of human barbarism. From this stage all the humanistic sciences join in the tale of his further progress until there was presented in historic time barbarous man,

impelled by egoistic feelings on the one hand, and by environing conditions, which brought forth altruistic feelings and a sense of dependence on the other hand developed into a stage of semi-civilization. From this point we have a historic record of his gradually moving upward, sloughing off his animal nature as his altruistic feelings and his sense of dependence increased, until we have as the present outcome, modern civilized man in his various stages of philosophic, religious and social culture. Man with his rational mind was also seen to be a product of evolution.

Fourth: A century of research into the credibility of the dogmatic claim that the Christian Scriptures were a specially inspired message from God to man and therefore transcended man's experiential or scientific knowledge in every particular, had brought forth conclusions from some of the ripest scholars and most reverent of biblical critics, adverse to the claims of dogmatic Christianity. In fact it was shown by some of the ablest scholars and thinkers, that while the Bible was of inestimable value as a collection of religious literature, it could not be accepted as an authoritative revelation from the Source and Sustainer of the Cosmic Universe and man, because of its internal inconsistencies, as well as its marked inconsistencies with the revelations of Divine Power given in the phenomena of the Cosmic Universe and in the life of man. In other words, it was shown by impartial criticism of the Biblical text and by the positive revelations of Science, that the God of Christian theology was too limited, too anthropomorphic in character, to answer for the Infinite Eternal Power which the scientific thinker must posit as the source and sustainer of all things.

A crisis, perhaps the most profound that has ever occurred in the history of Christian thought now existed. All phases of Christian thought were shaken to their founda-

tions. The problems of the Cosmic Universe, man's place in it and his destiny and what lies back of all as Source and Sustaining Power—the ultimate problems of philosophy—were brought to the rational mind for revaluation in the light of man's recently acquired experiential knowledge. Great confusion of thought existed. Scientists and Biblical critics who had ventured to disturb the settled philosophico-religious order of things, came under the fiercest vituperation. Nevertheless, a few fair-minded thinkers sought to organize the truths of Science revealed in the Cosmic Universe and in the life of conscious man, in conformity to some adequate underlying cause, in the hope of being able to present a rational harmony as existing in the ultimate problems of philosophy, instead of a disharmony as presented by dogmatic theology. Among the efforts in this direction the most comprehensive and rational was that of Herbert Spencer, who, in 1860, brought forth the outlines of a new philosophic system based on the positive revelations of Science.

Mr. Spencer seeing that all cosmic phenomena, whether of matter, energy, or conscious mind ran back to some unknown source or ground, assumed as the basis of all rational thinking the existence of some adequate Cause, an Infinite Eternal Power from which all things proceed; a conscious Power the ultimate of all existences, and one which in the nature of its own existence transcended the comprehension of the human mind. He then affirmed that this Infinite Power had revealed Himself in the phenomena of the Cosmic Universe and in the conscious mind of man, and that these phenomena were ever in a process of development from a simpler to a more complex form of manifestation, ever in a process of evolution from a lower to a higher stage of existence all in conformity to immutable law, and

all without waste of matter or energy, and all indicating some ultimate plan or purpose. In view of these ultimate Cosmic truths he further affirmed that it was the highest duty of conscious man to acquaint himself with the conditions of his Cosmic existence, and to conform his life to the laws governing his Cosmic evolution.

In short, here was put forth a philosophic system which posited an Infinite Eternal Power transcending the comprehension of the human mind as the Source and Sustainer of all things, which presented the Cosmic Universe with man's rational mind as its crowning feature, the whole a positive revelation of the Infinite Eternal Power; and which affirmed that this Cosmic revelation of this Infinite Eternal Power was ultimate, and its reverent study the highest duty of man.

Thus was an attempt made to bring into harmony the three ultimate problems of philosophy, at the same time preparing the way for the development of a purer religious faith than the world has yet known. But this attempt at philosophic unity regarding the great problems of existence was indignantly spurned by Christian theologians as the highest form of scientific infidelity. One has only to turn to the philosophico-religious discussions of 1860 to 1880 to see with what ignorance, prejudice and virulence this doctrine of evolution was attacked by the champions of orthodox Christianity. The doctrine, however, had a generous welcome from all branches of Science. In the biological group particularly, investigators had long been checked in their researches by the dominance of the idea of special creations imposed by theology. The doctrine of evolution swept away utterly the idea of special creations, and opened as it were new doors into the phenomena of the Cosmic Universe which yielded fresh and important revelations of

Divine Truth. In the organic, the living world, the phenomena of life were given a new origin and meaning and man, its crowning product, was found to be endowed with innate moral and spiritual consciousness and an aspiring soul. Accordingly he was philosophically rescued from the awful doom of theology and given his rightful place and heritage in the vast eternity of things. Then too, with the passing of the dogma of the special creation of man and his Fall, one of the highest and most inclusive of sciences, that of sociology was born, a science which sets forth the ethical principles which underlie man's social well-being here on earth.

Notwithstanding the opposition of theology, the doctrine of Evolution has had, and is now having, a mighty influence upon the development of the religious thought of the Christian world; and we rarely see an annual meeting of any of the great religious denominations that is not marked by a trial for heresy of some earnest sincere soul who has found it impossible to smother the evidences of Divine Truth writ in the phenomena of the Cosmic Universe and in the rational mind of man, by the bandages of an outgrown dogmatic theology.

But why am I dwelling on these things here, on your seventh anniversary? It is for the purpose of making clear to you why I am with you this evening. About a year ago, I bethought me to visit the leading denominational churches, as well as other places of religious instruction in Boston, for the purpose of noting what change, if any, had been made in the character of religious instruction from that of half a century ago, as a result of the great development of knowledge regarding the Cosmic Universe and man which had come through Science. Let me say that while I found a quite general advance away from over insistence upon

points of doctrine, to emphasis upon ethical conduct and greater tolerance in religious thought, this advance was not accompanied in the churches by any surrender of dogma—that the fundamental Christian dogmas were still maintained as matters of faith, and as the necessary structure for a religious belief. One could not but notice, however, the very perceptible difference in the treatment of the dogmas of the inspiration of the Scriptures, Special Creation, Miracles, the Fall of Man and his eternal punishment from that of half a century ago.

In the course of my peregrinations I came upon your modest mission of the Vedanta; and I confess I was profoundly impressed by the vastness, the rationality, the inspiring character of the philosophic and religious thought here presented. The three great problems of philosophy: God, the Cosmic Universe, Man with his rational mind, were presented as a harmonious unity with infinite possibilities to the ever developing human soul. My mind was taken entirely away from the consideration of the limited personal God of Christian theology, and led to the contemplation of a Divine Being, the Source and Sustainer of all things, transcending in the nature of His existence the comprehension of the human mind. I found the Cosmic Universe presented, not as a fiatistically created Heavens and Earth of recent date, the outcome of will and caprice; rather as an infinite Cosmos of order and law, existing from all eternity, ever in process of evolution to some predestined purpose, the whole a true revelation of the Divine Being, its Source and Sustainer.

Again, I found Humanity presented not as a world of degenerates struggling and suffering under a fearful doom at the hands of their Creator; but as human beings having their origin in the profound mysteries of the Cosmic Uni-

verse; human beings endowed with egoistic and altruistic feelings and with rational consciousness, ever struggling upward; and, through increasing knowledge of the conditions of human life and of the Infinite Power that lies behind, reaching higher and truer conceptions of human life, its duties and its meaning. Then, too, I found here the results of evolutionary science cordially welcomed as truths of the highest order, as positive revelations of the Infinite Power back of all that is; and as ever tending to generate higher conceptions of this Infinite Power as well as firmer convictions of the truth that in human conduct ethics form the basis of all social well-being.

And then I found religion presented not as wholly embodied in the dogmas, creeds, or teachings of any particular religious faith, but as knowledge of the highest import to the human mind, making its way through the various forms of religious faith which recognize, no matter how imperfectly, the existence of a Divine Being, the Source and Sustainer of all things, the necessity of ethical conduct among men and the continuance of life beyond the present. And with all, I found here presented to the Christian mind with great learning and in a fine tolerant spirit, the great similarity, the harmony that exists in the teachings of the great Sages of India and the fundamental teachings of the founder of Christianity. Indeed, it might be said that Krishna, Buddha and Jesus were presented as the great religious teachers of mankind, the Memnon Colossi of the human race; no matter among what people or in what century their feet may be placed, around their brows the music of morning and of evening is forever playing.

To sum up briefly: I am with you this evening because I recognize in the teachings of this place religious instruction based upon man's religious intuitions combined with his

experiential knowledge of the Cosmic Universe and his place in it: the whole a revelation of the Infinite Being, the Source and Sustainer of all things: a Divine Power:

"Boundless inward toward the atom.
Boundless outward toward the stars."

SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY.

The Vedanta Centre of Boston celebrated its Seventh Anniversary on Wednesday evening, January 5th. Despite the inclement weather, there was a large attendance, and the spirit of the gathering was one of warm sympathy and keen interest. The exercises began with a violin solo. Then, after a brief meditation, Swami Paramananda delivered an address, in the course of which he said: As the Centre is setting its foot on the threshold of a new year of activity, we ask all to pray to the Supreme that it may continue its work of helpfulness. The spirit of the present day is to bring the ancient and the modern together. A few years ago it would not have been possible for us, perhaps, to thus gather in the name of a system of thought so foreign to the Western mind; but the time has come when such exclusive ideas can no longer hold people. No longer can we shun or condemn anything on the ground that it is alien and foreign. The revelations of science are helping us to destroy all the barriers bred of narrowness, exclusiveness and prejudice.

The Swami at the close of his Address read a telegram from one of the chief speakers of the evening, the minister of the Second Unitarian Church of Somerville, which ran: "Rev. E. M. Cosgrove has not sufficiently recovered from the grippe to be able to be present tonight. He sends you his most earnest felicitations. He is deeply interested in the noble work of your Mission, and desires to co-operate with you in every possible way, so that the great message

of the Vedanta may strike its root deep into the heart of the West."

Mr. John S. Clark, a profound student of science and philosophy, just now engaged in writing a life of John Fiske, was then called upon and delivered an Address (given in full elsewhere in this number) which made the deepest impression upon his listeners. Mrs. Heisten, the next speaker, told of seeing Emerson's copy of the Bhagavad-Gita, fingered and worn and full of notes, showing how frequently it must have been in his hand, how constant must have been his study of it. Mr. John Orth, the well known pianist and pupil of Franz Liszt, then rose and said:

"I am glad to be here this evening and I feel it an honor to be invited to say a few words on this anniversary occasion. You may ask: 'What do you learn at the Vedanta meetings?' In reply I will try and tell you a little of what these meetings mean to me. First of all, I would say that we hear the fundamentals of life, the foundations of all real attainment explained and set forth in a simple yet masterful manner. It has always seemed to me the greater the Master, the simpler his language. Our leader here is only another exemplification of this fact. We also learn breadth of view. There is no greater obstacle to the progress of the race than prejudice. Where there is prejudice, there is a lack of sympathy, charity and love. Prejudice, it appears to me, is the opposite of broad-mindedness, which means a sympathetic and charitable attitude towards one's fellow-beings. In the summer-time I have sometimes wondered what might be the attitude of a grasshopper towards a caterpillar. The caterpillar might naturally say to him: 'What a frivolous, aimless, empty life you lead. Why can't you be sedate and reposeful, a well-poised, sensible person like me?' The grasshopper retorts: 'But you're such a slow-poke. You'll

never get anywhere at the gait you're going.' How little does he realize what a beautiful creature the caterpillar is destined to evolve into! Being broad-minded, however, they shake hands and part company, each willing the other should lead his own life in his own way.

"Just so the turtle might say to the eagle: 'Here I am delving into the depths of things, while you just fly about in the sky. What a hollow, superficial, useless life!' The eagle answers with disgust: 'Who are you, anyway? You are nothing but a hard-shelled Baptist, an earth-bound materialist at best. What do you know about life—the higher life? Away with you and your dogmas and traditions!' After talking the matter over exhaustively, however, they both come to the conclusion that each one is right as far as he has gone. The turtle begins to see quite clearly that the eagle would never be happy with him in the pond; while it is equally evident to the eagle that even if he put wings on the turtle, as a bird he would not be much of a success. Now if they only could have realized from the start that to Him who made all there is no great and no small, nor high nor low, all would have been well, would it not?

"There is a great difference between knowledge and wisdom. Knowledge is like the green stalk and wisdom is like the flower. I know lots of people who have knowledge but they don't know anything. They don't know how to use their knowledge so they are always making trouble; but people who have wisdom never make trouble. Our friend here has wisdom. I have nothing against knowledge any more than against stalks and leaves; but I want something more—I want flowers."

The Swami closed the programme with a benediction.

Another violin solo followed, during which refreshments were passed, and the evening closed in informal intercourse.

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The Message of the East

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EIGHTH SEASON—1916

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. V MARCH, 1916 No. 8

When we have subdued our passions and freed ourselves from all doubt and prejudice, the light of Truth will burst on our hearts in all its divine effulgence and purity. And "He who knows the Ultimate Reality, after having become quiet, subdued, satisfied, patient and collected, sees himself in God, sees all in God. Evil does not overcome him, he overcomes all evil. Free from evil, free from stain, free from doubt, he becomes a true God-knower." He then penetrates into the illimitable realm of Truth and realizes the supreme fact that to know God is not only possible for the spirit of man, but is its consummation and eternal life. The sphere of religion then becomes, to quote the lofty words of Hegel: "A region in which the spirit rids itself of its finiteness and relates itself to that which is unlimited and infinite; where its attitude is no longer that of dependence but of freedom; and where the individual has no longer to do with himself, his interests, his vanity, but only with absolute truth. All anxiety and doubt, all petty cares and troubles, all narrow and selfish interests, are left behind on the sandbank of time. In this pure region we penetrate beyond the outward deceitful shows and semblances of the world and behold all things revealed to us, transfigured in the pure light of truth and softened in its halo of eternal rest and peace."

ZOROASTER.

Lecture by Swami Paramananda.

The life of Zoroaster and his teaching take us back to a period of history which is dim to the human mind, because we have to depend more on tradition than on actual historical facts. If, however, we reject everything that is not proved absolutely true by history, there are many noble and lofty ideals which we shall be forced to leave out. How little is historically recorded about the life of Jesus the Christ! In our studies therefore we should follow the example of the Indian swan, who, when a cup of milk mixed with water is placed before it, knows how to separate the milk from the water and drink only the milk. In the same manner we must learn to take the essence and concern ourselves less with material evidence. If we would benefit by the study of the Great Ones we must open ourselves to the inspiring influences shed forth by their lives and words, and seek to apply these in our own life. Sri Ramakrishna tells of two men who went into a mango orchard: one of them busied himself with the statistics of the orchard, counting the trees, the branches, the leaves and the fruit; while the other man went straight to the gardener, made friends with him and gained permission to eat the mangoes. Similarly there are two different types of truth-seekers. One type is always busily engaged in dry intellectual details; the other troubles himself little about historic accuracy but seeks realization of the spirit. Intellectual investigation has its place and can be of great assistance and profit; but when it creates prejudice and limits our scope of vision it becomes a serious obstacle to our higher progress.

From this broader view-point let us now try to study the life of the great prophet of Persia. The Persia of Zoroaster however was a very different Persia from that

of modern times, for the people who lived there at that period were not Semitics but were one of the original groups of the Aryan family. When the ancient Aryans migrated from Central Asia, the earliest settlements about which we know were in India and Persia and these two branches were closely akin in their language, thoughts and ideals. John Fiske writes in his "Excursions of an Evolutionist": "From a minute survey of the languages and legends of this whole region, it has been well-established that the dominant race in ancient Persia and in ancient India was one and the same; that it approached India from the North-west; and that a great religious schism was accompanied by the westward migration of a large part of the community, while the other part proceeded onward, and established itself in Hindustan." There can be no doubt that the Zend spoken by the Aryans who settled in Persia resembles wonderfully the Sanskrit of the Indo-Aryans; and Max Müller declares: "In a wider sense India, or at all events the Aryan conquerors of India, may even claim some share in the ancient religion in Media and Persia, known to us by the Zend-Avesta, the sacred book of the Zoroastrians. The most ancient portion of the Avesta, the Gathas, and the hymns of the Rig-Veda are certainly the products of the same intellectual soil."

The conception of God as One Supreme Deity found in the Avesta is identical with the One Absolute Existence, Knowledge and Bliss of the Rig-Veda. The Iranians (the name given to those ancient Persians) worshipped one God, the Loving Ruler of the Universe, known as Ahura-Mazda; and they possessed the same lofty social and religious ideals as their brothers in India. But after a full tide of culture there nearly always follows a low tide of what we call degradation. Not that the moral and spiritual ideals are

lost, but the people fall into superstition. They lose the spirit of religion and deal with only the letter, the outer forms. This was what happened in Persia prior to the advent of Zoroaster. The wonderful ideals of meditation, prayer, renunciation of worldly ambitions degenerated into laziness and love of material gain. Contemplation became the occupation of indolent beggars who resorted to it as the easiest means of livelihood. The conception of Ahura-Mazda as the One Omniscient, Omnipotent Being was gradually obscured; and evil-worship, devil-worship, black magic, sorcery, and other religious abuses became prevalent.

It was in such a period of eclipse that Zoroaster was born. Great divergence exists in the dates given for his birth, but it is now generally accepted that it occurred in the seventh century before Christ — not long previous to the time when the Jews were carried into captivity, while their return to Jerusalem took place less than a generation after his death. He is also spoken of as a contemporary of Thales and Solon, and we find various Greek and Roman authors alluding to him as the leader of the Magi as well as a very great sage. His family, it is said, belonged to the royal house of Minocheher, one of the most powerful rulers of Persia. Different stories are told of the miraculous character of his birth. One of them recounts that the glory, emanating from Ahura-Mazda, passed down from heaven to earth and abode in the house of Zoroaster's mother, Dughdu, until she was born. It then entered into her and dwelt there until she had attained the age of fifteen, when she gave birth to her first-born, the Saviour of Iran. But prior to his coming, it is related, she shone with such splendor because of the Divine Glory within her that her father believed her bewitched and sent her away into the land of the Spitamas, where in due course she married the

son of the lord of the village in which she was sojourning. This explains the surname "Spitama" which the prophet bore and which signifies "holy" or "sacred".

Many supernatural happenings accompanied Zoroaster's advent, the Avesta and other records tell us. Trees, plants, the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, all showed unusual signs of rejoicing; a divine light shone in the house, while Ahriman and his evil demons fled and hid themselves in the nethermost regions. There is also a tradition, as old at least as the time of Pliny, that the child instead of crying as he came into the world laughed aloud. Various cruel attempts were made on his life, we are told. Wicked sorcerers sought to burn him in a great fire but he was miraculously rescued. Then they tried to have him trampled to death by a herd of oxen, but the leading ox stood over the helpless little form and protected it from the feet of the herd. At another time he was thrown into a den of wolves but instead of being harmed he was guarded and suckled. All these narratives show a striking similarity to those told in India of the miraculous escapes of the Baby Krishna from the cruel persecutions of the wicked King Kamsa several centuries earlier.

From his infancy Zoroaster gave evidence of remarkable gifts. At the age of seven he began his education under a wise teacher; and later, we read in certain of the Pahlavi writings, those very sorcerers who had so long plotted against him are openly rebuked and confounded by the young boy in much the same way as Christ put to confusion the learned Rabbis in the Temple at Jerusalem. At fifteen years of age he was given the Kushti or holy thread, which must have been a very ancient Aryan rite marking the second or spiritual birth. The custom still exists in India today, and by the sacred thread every Brahmin boy

at an early age is initiated into the spiritual life, thereby becoming a *Dwija* or "twice-born." From this period Zoroaster manifested an ever-deepening spiritual yearning and distaste for worldly pleasure as well as a growing compassion for suffering humanity, until at the age of twenty "abandoning worldly desires and laying hold of righteousness", to quote the text of the Zat-sparam, he left his father's house and wandered forth to seek new light. "There are no other specific details in Pahlavi literature," Prof. Jackson writes, "to fill up the period from this moment to the coming of the revelation when he was thirty years old. They were undoubtedly the years of meditation, reflection, and religious preparation that correspond to similar periods of divine communings and philosophic introspection in other religious teachers. Parallels might easily be cited. It is to this period of Zoroaster's life that the scholiast of the Platonic Alcibiades apparently alludes when he relates that Zoroaster kept silent for seven years; and it is referred to by Pliny in the statement that for twenty years Zoroaster lived in desert places upon cheese. According to Porphyrius and Dio Chrysostom, he passed his time upon a mountain in a natural cave. The mountain is illuminated by a super-natural fire and splendor. Lightnings and thunders were about the summit of Sinai also, and clouds and thick smoke shrouded its sides, while the base of the mountain quaked violently, when the voice of the Lord spoke unto Moses. The Avesta mentions the 'Forest and the mountain of the two Holy Communing Ones'—Ahura Mazda and Zarathustra—where intercourse was held between the godhead and his prophetic representative upon earth." These years of seclusion in the wilderness disprove conclusively the claims of many who suppose that Zoroaster was against the life of contemplation and renunciation.

It was in his thirtieth year that the first revelation came to him. While standing at dawn on the bank of the river Daiti, he beholds a resplendent figure of the archangel Vohuman (Good Thought) approaching him, bearing in his hand a shining staff. The archangel, after bidding him cast off his mortal garment, leads him before the Lord, Ahura Mazda, and Zoroaster offers his worship to the Deity, after which he goes "forward and sits down in the seat of the enquirers." The prophet then receives the command of the Lord to carry the new Message to the people of Iran. Three times in the same day does the vision come to him. Thus inspired and strengthened the great teacher sets out to accomplish his God-appointed mission. For ten years however he meets only struggle and opposition and then at last succeeds in gaining just one convert, his own cousin. Throughout this time, we learn from the Avesta, the prophet is constantly tempted and assailed by Ahriman, the Evil One or devil of the Zoroastrian Bible; but through his unswerving faith and unfaltering devotion to Ahura-Mazda he overcomes the Tempter, as Christ did in the Wilderness and Buddha under the Bodhi tree.

With the conversion of King Vishtasp Zoroaster entered on a new and more triumphant period of his mission. Like Constantine in Christianity the king became the staunchest upholder of the new Faith. But this was achieved not without toil and persecutions. For two years the prophet strove against bitter priestly enemies at the court, who dominated both king and courtiers; and he was forced to bear imprisonment, denunciation and ceaseless dispute. When however the king became convinced of his supernatural power, he made Zoroastrianism the state religion and even waged holy wars to establish it. The thirty-five years which elapse after King Vishtasp embraces the new religion up

to the time of the prophet's death in the seventy-seventh year of his age mark a period of tireless activity. Records of far missionary journeys are preserved and stories are told of conversions in Greece, India and even in Babylon. But few of these can be authenticated and it is generally believed that most of them were added later by enthusiastic adherents of the faith. There can be no doubt however that the new Message spread in time throughout Iran and probably passed the border into some of the neighboring countries.

What was the Message? Dualism is the characteristic feature of Zoroastrian teaching. Ahura-Mazda, the all-knowing Deity, the Lord of Light, stands on the one hand, while on the other stands Ahriman, Lord of darkness, waging unceasing war against Him. Corresponding with these spirits of Good and Evil, we find an eternal heaven and an eternal hell similar to those of Christian theology. The weapons given to man by Zoroaster with which to conquer the Evil One and attain heaven are Good Thoughts (*Humata*), Good Words (*Hukta*), Good Deeds (*Hvarshta*). Every good thought deals a blow at Ahriman, who is perpetually trying to overthrow us and turn us away from the kingdom of heaven by enshrouding our mind in darkness. When man performs a good deed he strikes another blow at the Tempter, so likewise when he speaks good words. "Turn yourself not away from three best things—Good Thought, Good Word, and Good Deed," is Zoroaster's admonition. "I praise the well-thought sentiment, the well-spoken speech, the well-performed action." All his social, moral and religious ideals are based on this triad of virtues. By "Good Thought" man is able to meditate and commune with his Creator. By "Good Words" and "Good Deeds" he fulfills his duty towards his fellow creatures. "Good

Words" include integrity and truthfulness in all dealings with others. A man who practises this virtue must never break a contract or bear false witness or fail to repay his debts; he must also refrain from hurting the feelings of others and he must foster brotherly love for all his fellows. By "Good Deeds" he is directed to relieve suffering and distress; to help the poor, whether worthy or unworthy; to irrigate and cultivate the soil, to drain the marshy places, to provide food and fresh water wherever needed, and to devote the surplus of his riches to charity.

It is evident from these injunctions that the prophet's chief aim was to bring the spirit of religion into everyday life. The people, who were growing visionary in spiritual matters, were given something tangible to do. The long forgotten ideals of their ancient faith once again blossomed into beautiful realities. It was not a new message that was brought, for the spiritual necessity of purity in thought, word and deed permeates all Ancient Aryan teaching; but Zoroaster gave it with new force and insistance.

"Purity is for man, next to life, the greatest good—that purity is procured by the law of Mazda to him who cleanses his own self with Good Thoughts, Words and Deeds."

"Make thyself pure, O righteous man! Anyone in the world here below can win purity for himself, namely, when he cleanses himself with Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds.

"Commit no slander, so that infamy and wickedness may not happen unto thee. For it is said that slander is more grievous than witch-craft.

"Form no covetous desire, so that the demons of greediness may not deceive thee, and the treasure of the world may not be tasteless to thee.

"Indulge in no wrathfulness, for a man when he indulges in wrath becomes then forgetful of his duty and good works and sin and crime of every kind occur unto his mind, and until the subsiding of the wrath he is said to be just like unto Ahriman (the devil.)

"Commit no lustfulness, so that harm and regret may not reach thee from thine own actions.

"Bear no improper envy, so that thy life may not become tasteless.

"Indulge not in slothfulness that the duty and good work which thou shouldst do may not remain undone.

"With enemies fight with equity, with a friend proceed with the approval of friends. With a malicious man carry on no conflict and do not molest him in any way whatever. With a greedy man thou shouldst not be a partner and do not trust him with the leadership. With an ill-famed man form no connection. With an ignorant man thou shouldst not become a confederate and associate. With a foolish man make no dispute. With a drunken man do not walk on the road. From an ill-natured man take no loan."

"Thou shouldst not become presumptuous through any happiness of the world, for the happiness of the world is like as a cloud that comes on a rainy day, which one does not ward off by any hill."

"Thou shouldst not become presumptuous through much treasure and wealth, for in the end it is necessary for thee to leave all.

"Thou shouldst not become presumptuous through great connections and race, for in the end thy trust is on thine own deeds.

"Thou shouldst not become presumptuous through life, for death comes upon thee at last and the perishable part falls to the ground."

Such are some of the fundamental commandments of the Zoroastrian faith, which show us how high was their standard of moralty and how erroneous is the prevailing idea in the West that Parsis are mere fire or sun-worshippers. One can as well call the Christians cross-worshippers. A Parsi scholar in referring to this writes: "It is popularly believed that the Parsis are sun-worshippers or fire-worshippers, and thus once more do we stumble up against the old fallacy of confusing the symbol with the idea it represents—the shadow with the substance. In brief, fire is always fire to the Parsis, but it is sacred in so far as it symbolizes the great truth of purification, the divine law. And the fire temples, where fire is kept constantly alight by burning sandalwood and incense, are symbolical and intended to remind them of the wise maxim, 'Try and live a pure life by Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds.' This maxim may indeed be said to contain the whole essence and substance of the Zoroastrian teaching." In the Vedic Scriptures also fire is regarded as one of the most perfect symbols of the Infinite because it swallows up all impurities, remaining itself pure and uncontaminated.

Zoroaster's influence did not die with his bodily death but it continued to inspire and glorify his race, lifting Persia to such great eminence among the civilized nations of ancient times that Max Muller even claims that had Darius conquered Alexander the Great at the battle of Marathon, a pure form of Zoroastrianism would have driven out the whole Greek pantheon. From century to century the new faith continued to flourish and gain ground until the Arabs struck it a death blow at the battle of Nehavand in 642 A. D. From that time Persia became a Mohammedan country while a mere remnant of faithful followers of the prophet of Iran, unwilling to adopt the new creed, took refuge on

the western shores of India. Thus driven out from their own soil, they once more found shelter with their Aryan brothers from whom they had parted long before. Here they have lived ever since, freely and independently, building their own temples and continuing to worship their Supreme Deity according to their own ancient customs. The Hindus have not accepted the religion of the Parsis, nor have they tried to influence the Parsis by their own religion, for India has always been the land of tolerance. The very basis of Indo-Aryan civilization indeed is universal sympathy. The Vedic philosophy and religion give a wide platform on which all the different races, creeds, denominations and faiths of the world can stand and recognize the One Divine Spirit as the common Father of all.

Zoroaster is not the name of an individual, just as Christ or Buddha is not the name of an individual; it means a state. Zoroaster signifies "Righteous." Some also give to it the meaning "Holy Singer," one who came and dedicated his life to singing the glory of Ahura, the Lord of Light. The truths which this great prophet brought still live and inspire men; so although we may not know positively from an historical standpoint who he was, what he was, how long he lived, we know that his message of Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds not only uplifted his own community or race, but it sounds a note which reaches all races, all peoples. And if we take the essence of that which he gave, we may uplift ourselves and realize that Supreme Spirit, Whom he called Ahura-Mazda and Whose Symbol he proclaimed as Fire. Let us too light an altar fire in our hearts, the Fire of Love and Wisdom, and cherish it with pure thought, good words and right action, that we may be cleansed of all impurity and attain that Highest Goal to which all true religion leads.

THE BATTLE.

Song by Kabir.

(Translated from the Hindi by Rabindranath Tagore.)

Where is the night, when the sun is shining? If it is night, then the sun withdraws its light.

Where knowledge is, can ignorance endure? If there be ignorance, then knowledge must die.

If there be lust, how can love be there?

Where there is love, there is no lust.

Lay hold on your sword, and join in the fight! Fight, O my brother, as long as life lasts.

Strike off your enemy's head, and there make an end of him quickly; then come, and bow your head at your King's Durbar.

He who is brave, never forsakes the battle: he who flies from it is no true fighter.

In the field of this body a great war goes forward, against passion, anger, pride, and greed:

It is in the kingdom of truth, contentment and purity, that this battle is raging; and the sword that rings forth most loudly is the sword of His Name.

Kabir says: "When a brave knight takes the field, a host of cowards is put to flight.

It is a hard fight and a weary one, this fight of the truth-seeker: for the vow of the truth-seeker is more hard than that of the warrior, or of the widowed wife who would follow her husband.

For the warrior fights for a few hours, and the widow's struggle with death is soon ended:

But the truth-seeker's battle goes on day and night, as long as life lasts it never ceases."

CONTENTMENT.

Extract by Swami Vivekananda.

We all find ourselves in the position for which we are fit, each ball finds its own hole; and if one has some capacity above another, the world will discover that too in the universal adjusting that goes on. So it is useless to grumble. If there is a rich man who is wicked, there must be in that man certain qualities that made him rich; and if any other man has the same qualities he will also become rich. What is the use of rebelling and complaining? That will not help us to better things. He who grumbles at the little thing that has fallen to his lot to do will grumble at everything. Always grumbling he will lead a miserable life and every thing will be a failure. But that man who does his duty as he goes, putting his shoulder to the wheel, will see the light, and higher and higher duties will fall to his share.

Duty of any kind is not to be slighted. A man who does the lower work is not for that reason only a lower man than he who does the higher work. A man should not be judged by the nature of his duties but by the manner in which he does them. His manner of doing them and his power to do them are indeed the test of the man. A shoemaker who can turn out a strong, good pair of shoes in the shortest possible time is a better man according to his profession and his work than a professor who talks nonsense every day of his life. Every duty is holy and devotion to duty is the highest form of worship of God. It is certainly a source of great help in enlightening and emancipating the deluded and ignorance-encumbered soul of those who are bound. By doing well the duty which is nearest to us, the duty which is in our hands now, we make ourselves stronger; and increasing our strength in this manner step by step, we may even reach a state in which it shall be our privilege to do the most coveted

and honored duties in life and in society.

Every successful man must have behind him somewhere tremendous integrity, tremendous sincerity, and that is the cause of his signal success in life. He may not have been perfectly unselfish; yet he was tending towards it. If he had been perfectly unselfish, his would have been as great a success as that of the Buddha or of the Christ. The degree of unselfishness marks the degree of true success everywhere.

THE ULTIMATE AIM OF LIFE.

According to the Vedic Scriptures there are four objects for which men strive and struggle during their life on earth. These are discharge of duty, acquisition of wealth, gratification of desire, and *moksha* or the attainment of final liberation from the bondage of matter. This is a fairly good classification of the common aims of human life, but it is evident that all four cannot be held in the same esteem. The fourth one—final liberation—is very properly considered to be the highest and most important, for by it alone can the soul come to know and realize its own divine origin and divine destiny. The other aims of life have all to be held in subordination to this supreme one; but they are not to be ignored or suppressed altogether. There is nothing which is absolutely and in itself wrong either in the love of pleasure or in the love of wealth. To the man who has understanding and who does his duty neither pleasure nor wealth can prove a stumbling block. If he loves wealth, he does so because he knows that when properly used it is one of the most potent instruments for good placed in the hands of man. If he loves pleasure, he also does so because he knows that when it is derived from worthy objects and directed to worthy ends, it is capable of transforming the whole inner nature of

man. Neither will endanger his spiritual well-being so long as he guards unclouded his higher sense of duty, for duty or *Dharma* is the pole-star which guides the soul of man safely and truly across the troubled waters of wealth and desire to the final haven of eternal peace and bliss.

Duty is variously defined in Indian sacred literature. A man's place in life determines what his duty is. The Vedanta recognizes the value of renunciation or asceticism and gives to the order of ascetics an honored place, but it does not claim that the soul's final deliverance and bliss can be achieved by that path alone. It holds that salvation is as possible for the ideal householder as for the ideal *Sannyasin* (one who has renounced); and that while only a few are fit to lead the ascetic life of renunciation, the majority of mankind are intended to live as householders. It also recognizes more than one method of realizing the ultimate aim of life. The path of work (*Karma-Yoga*), of wisdom (*Jnana-Yoga*), of devotion (*Bhakti-Yoga*), and of self-surrender (*Prapatti*) are the chief among those which the Vedanta declares make men blessed and lead them to the final goal of freedom.

Karma-Yoga is the realization of God through works. It consists in the performance of righteous works without wishing to obtain the fruits thereof and with the conviction that such performance of work is itself an act of worship. Every person is born to some definite station and condition in life and is endowed with certain natural capacities and qualities. According as these vary the nature of the work that he has to do in life also varies. But whatever may be the work that a man has to do, he is expected to do it well and without the least attachment to the fruits thereof. It is not held that the work will not produce its fruits and that the worker ought not to live upon them. It is the

selfish love of the fruits of work that is condemned; and who is there that does not know that morality rises only on the ruins of selfishness?

"Every action is right which, in presence of a lower principle, follows a higher; every action is wrong, which, in presence of a higher principle, follows a lower." Such is Dr. Martineau's beautiful, simple statement of the canon of right and wrong; and the practice of Karma-Yoga is intended to train men always to follow the higher principle even in the compelling presence of a lower. The world of work is the world of temptations. It is also the gymnasium in which the human soul is drilled and disciplined that it may gain strength to work out its destiny. The allurements of sin and the pangs of sorrow are powerful factors in determining the shape and use of human life. Unless a man passes through the fiery furnace of active work in the world, the encrusted impurities of his mind and heart cannot be burned away. That sinful or ignorant actions obstruct the knowledge of the real nature of the Soul and God and thereby lead man on through successive births and deaths, is clearly stated in almost every page of the Upanishads. "Every wrong act destroys wisdom"; "When one's nature is purified by works, then wisdom begins"; "Whoever understands the nature of wisdom and work, overcomes death by work and obtains immortality through wisdom." These passages plainly declare that true wisdom comes only after the evil propensities of the heart are all destroyed by the steady practice of unselfish work.

Jnana-Yoga or the realization of God through wisdom is possible to those only who are pure in heart. "We desire, and desire most passionately when we are most ourselves, to give our service to that which is universal and to that which is abiding," says Mr. Balfour in his "Foundations of

Belief." That which enables one to distinguish between what is universal and abiding and what is limited and transient is the wisdom which leads the soul to God. In the "Mahabharata" Sanjaya declares to the king: "He that hath no wisdom and whose mind is shrouded in the darkness of ignorance knoweth not the Lord. . . . Having obtained purity of heart through faith, I have come to know God with the help of the Scriptures." Here wisdom, it is evident, is understood to consist in knowledge of the Supreme resulting from faith and purity of heart. In the same way in which work fortifies the struggling heart against temptations and disciplines human life into proper shape, wisdom enables the aspiring man to perceive the divine purpose of life on earth and points out to him the way to God. To know the nature of God, the nature of soul, and the relation between God and soul is really to know how and for what purpose to live. Not to know how to work well in life means not to be well-equipped for the holy pilgrimage of the soul to the abode of God; and not to possess wisdom means not to know where God's abode is and how one may approach it. As man is now situated his knowledge of the glory and greatness of God must be faint and imperfect; but even such faint and imperfect knowledge is quite enough to make him realize his own littleness and the folly and futility of selfishness. When through wisdom man learns that in God's glorious universe all is law and yet all is love and that the purpose of creation is the abiding salvation of the soul, he at once awakens to the grandeur and the beauty of God's love to man. This realization naturally fills his heart with love to God and thus wisdom leads to love.

Bhakti-Yoga or the realization of God through love and devotion is a theme on which Indian saints and sages have sung the sweetest songs and composed the most soul-enrap-

turing hymns of praise and supplication. Bhakti is regarded by many as the ultimate path. "Two sciences have to be known, the higher and the lower," it is said in the Mundaka-Upanishad; and if, as we have just seen, wisdom leads to the love of God, the higher science may well be the science of this supreme love. In the Bhagavad-Gita, we read: "Only by love and unswerving devotion to Me can I be known in My true nature and entered into. He who works for Me, who regards Me as the Supreme Goal, who is free from selfish attachment and who hateth no living being, that devotee comes unto Me." God must seem the Highest Goal to the devotee; otherwise how can he love Him and Him alone with unfaltering devotion? When the heart of the devotee is fully immersed in the ocean of God's love, he naturally sees his Beloved everywhere and in all things; and all that he does, he does for Him and Him alone. Such a man can have no selfish attachment of any kind, nor can he hate any being. It is not the fear of punishment in hell or in any other place that makes the devotee do his duty. His morality depends on what has been called a "higher religious sanction," which appeals to the motives of love and reverence rather than of hope and fear. "In this higher frame of mind we keep God's commandments because we love Him, not because we hope for His rewards or fear His punishments." We love and revere God and therefore we strive to be like Him, to be perfect even as He is perfect.

Prapatti-Yoga is the method of realizing God by complete surrender to Him. "Thy will be done" is the only prayer which this Yoga knows. "Take thou refuge in Me alone. I will free thee from all imperfections; grieve not": these are the final words or the "supreme secret" of the teachings of the Gita, words which fully embody the spirit

of this path of absolute surrender. According to one of the Indian Sacred writings, this Yoga of "refuge-taking" is six-fold in nature. It consists in "the practice of that which is good, and the avoidance of all that is harmful, in strong faith that God alone is the deliverer, in earnest prayer to Him for protection, in a complete entrusting of the soul to Him for His use, and in the sense of our own littleness." When one throws one's self entirely at the feet of God, one cannot do wrong. The man who has thus taken refuge in God need not be afraid of sin; God works through him and he is free and blessed.

Work, worship, love and surrender all lead to the supreme goal of liberation, in attaining which the soul knows God as a blissful Reality; and knowing Him, "forthwith enters into Him." This does not mean however complete annihilation or submergence as so often supposed by western scholars. On the contrary, when in the state of *Moksha* or freedom the soul becomes united with God, it acquires a fuller and nobler personality, in relation to which all human limitations are abolished and evil is non-existent. Is it possible that knowledge of our oneness with God, the Source of all consciousness and life, could destroy our conscious existence? God does not cease to be God when He is known as the All and the All-in-all. Man does not lose anything of value if he rises above his finite condition to know that he is one with the Infinite. In this world of Divine realization there is no place for evil or imperfection. The realm of ego and moral struggle has been transcended and the Ultimate Goal of Eternal Peace and Blessedness is attained. "He whose passions are quieted and mind perfectly tranquil, who has become one with God, being freed from all impurities, to such a Yogi comes Bliss Supreme."

DUTY OR RENUNCIATION?

Taken from the Buddhistic Scriptures.

Anathapindika, a man of countless wealth, known to all as "the supporter of orphans and the friend of the poor," was sojourning in Rajagriha when the Blessed One in His wanderings came to a bamboo grove near that city. Anathapindika learning of His presence set forth eagerly to find Him. The Blessed One received him with great kindness and spoke to him many words of loving counsel. Then Anathapindika, having listened reverently, said:

"I see that thou art truly Buddha, the Blessed One, and so will I open to Thee my whole heart. My life is full of work and because of my great wealth I bear a heavy weight of care. But I love my work and devote myself to it with all diligence. Many people find employment with me and depend on me for their livelihood. Now I have heard certain of your disciples praise the life of renunciation and denounce the restless activity of the world. My heart yearns to do what is right and to be a blessing unto my fellow beings. Should I therefore give up my fortune, my home, all my undertakings and like unto Thee go into homelessness in order to attain the bliss of a religious life?"

The Blessed One replied: "The bliss of a religious life is attainable by every one who walks in the noble eight-fold path. He who clings to riches should rather cast them off than allow his heart to be corrupted by them; but he who though possessing riches does not cling to them and uses them aright will be a blessing to his fellowmen. I say unto thee, continue in thy present station and apply thyself diligently to thy many enterprises. It is not life and wealth and power that enslave men, but the clinging to life and wealth and power. The monk who retires from the world that he may lead a life of leisure will gain naught; for a life of

indolence is an abomination and lack of energy is to be despised.

"The law of the Holy One does not require a man to renounce and go into homelessness unless he feels impelled so to do; but the law of the Holy One requires every man to free himself from the illusion of self, to cleanse his heart, to give up thirst for pleasure and to follow the path of righteousness.

"And whatever men do, whether they remain in the world or retire from the world, let them put their whole heart into their task, let them be diligent and active, let them struggle in life without cherishing envy or hatred. If they thus live in the world, not a life of self but a life of truth, then surely will joy and peace and blessedness abide in their hearts."

On another occasion, a great general approached Lord Buddha and said: "I have heard that the Blessed One teaches the doctrine of non-action and annihilation. Pray tell me, Lord, is this true?"

The Blessed One replied: "I teach, Simha, the not-doing of such actions as are unrighteous, either by deed or word or thought; but I teach the doing of such actions as are righteous, by deed, by word and by thought. I teach that all the conditions of heart which are evil and not good, all unrighteous actions by deed or word or thought must be burned away. He who has freed himself from all those conditions of heart which are evil and not good, he who has destroyed them as a palm-tree which is uprooted so that it can never grow again, such a man has accomplished the eradication of self.

"I preach the annihilation of egotism, of lust, of hatred, anger, malice, and delusion; but I do not preach the annihilation of forbearance, love, compassion, charity and

truth. I hold that unrighteous actions are to be condemned whether they are performed by deed or by word or thought, but I hold that virtue and righteousness are praiseworthy and to be sought after."

REPORTS.

The birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated at The Vedanta Centre of Boston on January 27th. The public service took place in the evening and was attended by many friends. Besides music and meditation, Swami Paramananda delivered an address in which he paid glowing tribute to his Master. "Swami Vivekananda possessed a sympathy that was universal," he declared. "His great aim was to break down the barriers of ignorance and superstition that all men might join hands in sympathy and understanding. We feel ourselves impoverished when we stand alone; we grow more and more narrow when we do not seek to unite with others. Swami Vivekananda's ideal of unity included the whole world. He believed that union between East and West would make a new chapter in the history of civilization. He often declared that there would come a day when there could no longer exist a barrier between the two hemispheres. All true lovers of humanity have striven for this; nor have their efforts been wasted. All that they have done has helped to bring men closer together; and each one of us too can give his share in the great task of union. We can all give love and love given with wisdom is a source of great power. Unity was the message which Swami Vivekananda brought to the West and unity was the message he carried back to India. We have not yet reached perfect unity between East and West, but it has started. A current of growing understanding has been set in motion which must bring greater and greater union, and this cannot fail to do much for the betterment of humanity as a whole.

"In religion Swami Vivekananda wanted something tangible. He always said: 'Do something. Do not criticize others, but do something yourself; then perhaps you will find nothing to condemn.' He wanted a religion that was man making, a religion which would produce men of strong character, men who would talk little and do much. He believed that service to humanity was not a charity but a blessed privilege; that anyone should be proud to be allowed to do the least thing for the most miserable of God's creatures; that it was the giver who should feel grateful far more than the one who receives. And so full of fire were his words that young men all over India were inspired to consecrate their lives to the service of humanity; and the large hospitals and other institutions that have grown up in Benares, Kankhal, Vrindavan and elsewhere in India under the direction of the Ramakrishna Mission are all the fruit of his selfless, God-inspired life and teaching."

* * * * *

On the first Sunday evening in February the Swami Paramanda was asked to speak at a very large Congregational Church in East Boston known as the Maverick Church. Fully six hundred people gathered to hear him and listened with remarkable intentness for more than a hour to his broad exposition of the ideal of Universality in Religion as taught by Vedanta. The number of intelligent questions asked at the close of the address showed how closely the Swami's words had been followed and what sympathetic interest they had aroused. This was all the more remarkable in view of the fact that the great majority were hearing for the first time about India from an Indian teacher, having been trained in the orthodox belief that India was one of the dark and unredeemed places of the world. After the meeting a large number personally expressed not only their appreciation but an earnest desire to know more of a teaching which seemed to be so far-reaching and all-inclusive.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—*Rig-Veda*

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"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. V APRIL, 1916 No. 4

REINCARNATION.

By S. E. Waldo.

Before entering upon the subject of reincarnation itself, there are a few points which should be made clear. To begin with, reincarnation is a theory or a working hypothesis and is in no way essential to the study of the more important side of the Vedanta philosophy. It is not a dogma that must be believed in order to obtain salvation. The various Yogas or methods of reaching liberation can be pursued successfully by any earnest and sincere follower without his ever having even heard of reincarnation. The *Advaita* or purely philosophical side of Vedanta throws this doctrine entirely out of the question as being at best only an explanation of the apparent, and as having no place at all in the real, which is one and not many. But most people, seeing the variety, find it difficult to grasp completely the idea that all this apparent diversity is not real and that only ignorance makes it seem so. By ignorance is meant what the Vedantists call *avidya* or lack of knowledge. Therefore, while we recognize all this variety, we naturally seek an explanation of it. Before the world today are three main hypotheses by which men endeavor to explain this universe. I take these in the sequence in which they have been held in the West. The Hindus never had a "special

creation" theory, or if they had, it was so long ago that all memory of it has been lost in the mists of antiquity. The acute Hindu intellect could not be persuaded that something ever came out of nothing. But in the West the idea of "special creation" held undisputed sway for centuries and I doubt if even yet it has been wholly abandoned. When the theory of evolution first came before the Western world, it met with violent opposition, because it threatened to destroy all religion by overthrowing the Bible account of creation. It was fought energetically by the Church as blasphemous and had it made its first appearance in the days of the Inquisition, it is easy to guess the fate that would have befallen its upholders. This theory endeavors to account for human development by heredity, and more recently by heredity plus environment. To many this explanation has seemed sufficient and some of the greatest minds of the West have accepted it as satisfactory. To many others, and some of them equally great, the evolution theory as given in Occidental science has not appeared to solve all the problems. In all the hypotheses that one is retained which will explain the greatest number of facts, so a third hypothesis from the East is beginning to gain ground in the Western world, because, while explaining all the facts that the evolution theory does, it appears to cover some ground not accounted for by that theory.

In saying this I am not claiming that the idea of reincarnation is a demonstrable fact; all I wish to show is that it is a satisfactory hypothesis or at least as satisfactory as any other, if really not more so. As may be inferred, I consider that it explains known facts more fully and in a better way than either "special creation" or heredity plus environment. In the latter theory there is no persisting entity of any kind, the deed does not return to the doer.

We are reaping, not what we ourselves sowed, but what our ancestors sowed; and we shall leave the harvest of our actions to our posterity. Now it seems to me that this is the weak spot in the Western evolutionary system as a basis for morality. We have no proof that our predecessors cared in the least about us and why should we care for our successors whom we shall never know? The utilitarian basis for ethics can only make its appeal to altruism, and while this may and does affect some of the noblest natures, it is not very influential with the masses. They demand an ethical sanction which they can understand. Why should men do good that others may reap the benefit? If my existence began when I appeared upon this planet and will end when I disappear from it, manifestly I am chiefly concerned with what happens during the span of this particular existence. Out of it I must get all I can ever know of happiness. Therefore on my idea of what constitutes happiness will my conduct depend. To so act as to extract the greatest amount of pleasure out of my life will naturally become my aim, and how can it be shown to me that if I sacrifice myself for others I shall be made happy thereby?

The theory of evolution is very ancient in the Orient and is the idea universally accepted by the Hindus; only they include in it the theory of Karma and reincarnation. These two ideas are inseparable and really complete each other. For those who believe themselves eternal beings, not born today to die tomorrow, the idea of an eternal past and an eternal future separated by an ever-changing present is the only natural one. We cannot deny either past or future if we would maintain the present; for what is the present but a ceaselessly shifting imaginary line that we draw between the past and the future? With every beginning the human mind demands a "before," and with every ending it

enquires for an "after." Those who really believe that this brief span of life on this earth comprises the whole existence of the human being have no interest in a before or an after, and to them reincarnation is a matter of no moment. Yet those very minds must see that the world does not end when they end; and I should think they would at least wonder what could be that unknown ocean into which the river of life absolutely disappears, and what the source of this endless stream of lives is that we see all around us.

The Eastern mind felt the entire inadequacy of this brief earthly sojourn to make man perfect. The sages of the Vedas arrived ages ago at the conclusion that the whole object of manifestation was to enable man to attain perfection, and they also perceived that a brief span of seventy or eighty years would not suffice to bring man to full perfection. They had accepted as an indubitable fact that man was an eternal being. The very oldest of the Vedas teach that man is immortal and must therefore eternally exist. In this they saw many wonderful differences in the conditions of existence, and not being satisfied to lay the blame of human misery on God, or even on the devil, they felt convinced that man himself must be responsible for the inequalities of earthly life. To say the least, these old sages were brave and honest in assuming the responsibility instead of putting it off on some one else. The old testament Adam begins with putting the blame first on the woman (who in turn passed it on to the serpent), thus leaving himself at the mercy of a power outside of himself and so requiring the intervention of another power to save him from the results of obeying the voice of evil. It seems to me that the system of philosophy that boldly says, "Man himself made these mistakes and man himself can correct them and free himself from their effects" is a higher one and

one that teaches self-reliant strength rather than dependent weakness.

To begin with Karma. The idea of Karma is really the idea of cause and effect carried to its fullest extent. Karma is a word that includes a great deal. It is all we do and say and feel and think; and further, it stands for that invisible something which manifests itself in what we call character. Karma also means that resulting, balanced effect of all our action which determines future existence for us. As all action must produce an effect and as effects are often too far reaching to be immediately felt, the Hindu theory of Karma supposes an endless chain of cause and effect, which produces endless births and re-births to work out the effects. Escape from this eternal sequence is only possible through transcending it by such completely unselfish action as will leave no result to return to the particular actor, who thereby becomes free from all such results and is no more bound by the law of Karma. The idea of reincarnation supplements this idea of Karma by furnishing the necessary time or means for working out the Karmic effects. If we concede that we are immortal beings, we have also to admit that we do not begin when we are born upon this earth or end when we die out of it. Next, when we look around us and see all the varying phases of life, our minds naturally ask, "Why do all these differences exist"? We are forced, in any case, to admit that there must be some cause for existing facts, for no thinking mind can be satisfied to accept a theory of blind chance. In a universe so manifestly governed by law even the grossest materialist scouts any such explanation as blind chance. Law undoubtedly governs everything we know, and the human mind is so constituted that it cannot conceive of an effect without a cause. We may differ as widely as possible as to what

that cause is, but of the fact that behind every effect stands a cause of some kind we are unable to feel any real doubt. All metaphysics is the outcome of the effort made by man to find these causes. Even in the world of physics when we push investigation to its ultimate, the metaphysical is invariably reached. Atoms are as purely metaphysical as souls, possibly more so. The physical taken alone can never explain itself but must of necessity find itself confronted by the unknowable.

Having considered Karma in its aspects of work and the results of work, we come to the idea of reincarnation. It seems to me that this idea of reincarnation would naturally grow out of a recognition of man's eternal nature. The most obvious place to search for the reason of man's being what he is here and now, would seem to be in what he was before. He is, as it were, the harvest of a previous sowing, the growth from a previous seed. This applies not only to the physical body, but to that subtle something which makes each man differ from every other man, that which we call personal identity. The vast differences we find among men cannot be entirely accounted for on the theory of heredity plus environment, nor does that theory even attempt to give any explanation of the vast differences in the condition of men that would satisfy the sense of justice inherent in human nature.

It is no more satisfying to be told that I suffer because of what my parents were than to be assured that my misery is the decree of an all-wise Creator and must therefore be right. The question in the former case then changes to: "Why was I born of those particular parents, instead of any others"? Karma provides a reasonable answer. It tells me: "You were born of those particular parents because you deserved to be; what you made yourself in a former

period exactly fitted you to be the child of such parents; you yourself made your own heredity and now you reap the fruits of your own sowing." This answer satisfies my sense of justice and leads me naturally to resolve to deserve better things another time. At first many object even to entertaining the idea that they themselves are responsible for what they are. We see this in every day life. How much easier do most of us find it to throw the blame of any particular unpleasant experience on anybody or anything rather than on our own conduct? But in the reverse case we are quite willing to claim all the credit of producing agreeable conditions. We are ready to concede that we create our own happiness and rarely think of looking round to find some one to thank for it; but when misery comes, the first thing we do is to put the blame for it on circumstances or fate or anything except our own actions. The law of Karma is the law of perfect justice; and when one has really accepted it, he ceases to blame anyone but himself. But this is not a law of blind fate, because we can change our conduct and so modify conditions. Time is in us; so if we fail to perceive the change in a day or a week or even in a life-time, it by no means follows that the law does not work.

Christianity has recognized in a limited way the idea of present action conditioning future existence, but it takes no cognizance of any past action as the explanation for the present condition. In accepting the decrees of an all-wise Creator as the reason of all existing differences, it did not need to ask for another cause; and to objections that the existing state of things showed partiality on the part of the Creator the reply was that we only thought so because we could not understand His wisdom. In making our conduct here the gauge of our future state, Christianity cuts

off one link in the chain and seeks to make that all. It has posited an endless future but it leaves out of the question a past that must by analogy be equally endless. It has somewhat illogically, it seems to me, given us an eternal existence which has a beginning, or as one might say, a stick with only one end. The circle alone is endless. It may be said to begin for the individual where he begins to recognize it, but in and of itself it must be without beginning or it could not be without end. I do not attempt to cite any authorities in the matter of Karma and reincarnation, because it is not a question of authority but one of reason. That the greater portion of humanity accept this doctrine is not to the purpose. It can only be true for me, if I accept it. If it be true, this law will govern me whether I believe in it or not. If it be not true, no matter how entirely I accept it, I shall not be under its sway. The fact of its truth or falsehood is beyond our belief about it, as that will only influence our own action. If it seems, as it does to me, the most reasonable hypothesis to explain the working of the phenomenal world, we can accept it; but as I stated before, it is not of vital importance one way or the other. The highest philosophy of the Vedanta rises entirely beyond it. When man can realize his true nature, that he is that One Existence which can have no second, he has risen beyond all variety and sees only the unity. He knows that he neither is born nor dies, that he neither comes nor goes, that he is that Eternal, Perfect, Unchangeable Reality and that all beside was but a dream. In the dream certain methods appeared to obtain, but with the vanishing of the dream all the methods and laws that apparently governed it went too and with Knowledge-Absolute all need of question or explanation has vanished for ever.

The whole object of the Vedanta philosophy is to teach

us how to transcend law and be free, so it naturally attaches but little importance to the working of law. All that we can gain from understanding it is a knowledge of the way to pass through it and beyond it. If we are strong enough to rise to this without the preliminary explanation, well and good. Most of us are so constituted that we have to learn to stand before we can run, and in learning to stand we may find these various theories useful as working hypotheses. When we are ready and able to rise beyond them, they will all slip away from us with the rest of the dream. When we can realize that we are and have always been that Freedom Absolute which is our real nature, we have no more need of theories or of work; we have reached the goal. But it behooves us ever to keep in mind the wise words of the Greek sage: "The crown of perfection belongs not to the imperfect." While we can even think of claiming anything, we have not yet realized what we are, that we are the All. Until then, we can be helped by the wider outlook given us by reincarnation. In the words of one writer upon this subject: "The great, the all-important lesson reincarnation teaches is that our powers are infinite, our opportunities eternal, and our goal god-like. Our progress is illimitable, and death but a brief rest in a wayside inn, as we journey along."

Reincarnation and Karma are inseparably connected and these two great laws, rightly and completely understood, show man that he alone is the arbiter of his destiny, that he can no longer attribute his sorrows and sufferings to a mysterious Providence, that he can no longer trust to forms and creeds, but must arouse himself and set himself to correct past errors and learn to know his true nature. Thus by his own acts he can rise on "stepping stones of his dead self to higher things," he can set his face steadfastly in the

right direction and by patient determined effort can realize that he is more than divine, that he is Divinity itself.

THE DIVINE SELF IN MAN.

Selection from the Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad.

"Yagnavalkya," the king said, "what is the light of man?"

Yagnavalkya replied: "The sun, O King, for having the sun alone for his light, man sits, moves about, does his work, and returns."

Janaka Vaideha said: "So indeed is it, O Yagnavalkya. But when the sun has set, what is the light of man?"

Yagnavalkya replied: "The moon indeed is his light; for having the moon alone for his light, man sits, moves about, does his work and returns."

Janaka Vaideha said: "So indeed is it, O Yagnavalkya. But when the sun has set and the moon has set, what is the light of man?"

Yagnavalkya replied: "Fire indeed is his light; for having fire alone for his light, man sits, moves about, does his work and returns."

Janaka Vaideha said: "So indeed is it, O Yagnavalkya. But when the sun has set and the moon has set and the fire has gone out, what is then the light of man?"

Yagnavalkya replied: "Sound indeed is his light, for having sound alone for his light, man sits, moves about, does his work, and returns. Therefore, O King, when one cannot see even one's own hand, yet when a sound is heard, one goes towards it."

Janaka Vaideha said: "So indeed is it, O Yagnavalkya. But when the sun has set and the moon has set and the fire has gone out and the sound is hushed, what is the light of man?"

Yagnavalkya said: "The Divine Self indeed is his light; for having the Self alone as his light, man sits, moves about, does his work and returns. . . .

"He who dwells within all beings, whom all beings do not know, whose body all beings are, and who rules all beings within, he is thy Self, the ruler within, the immortal.

"He who dwells within the eye, whom the eye does not know, whose body the eye is and who rules the eye within, he is thy Self, the ruler within, the immortal.

"He who dwells within the mind, whom the mind does not know, whose body the mind is, and who rules the mind within, he is thy Self, the ruler within, the immortal.

"He who dwells within the seed, whom the seed does not know, whose body the seed is, and who rules the seed within, he is thy Self, the ruler within, the immortal; unseen but seeing, unheard but hearing, unperceived but perceiving, unknown but knowing. There is no other seer but he, there is no other hearer but he, there is no other perceiver but he. This is thy Divine Self, the ruler within, the immortal."

You see many stars at night in the sky but find them not when the sun rises; can you say that there are no stars in the heaven of day? So, O man! because you behold not God in the days of your ignorance, say not that there is no God.

As the water and its bubble are one: the bubble has its birth in the water, floats on the water, and ultimately is resolved into water; so the individual ego (Jivatman) and the Supreme Spirit (Paramatman) are one and the same. The difference is in degree, the one is finite and small, the other is infinite; the one is dependent, the other independent.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

MORTALITY AND IMMORTALITY.

By Sister Devamata

By a strange distorted logic the world associates mortality with life and immortality with death. So long as man is living here he is called a mortal, when he dies then he becomes immortal. Can we prove that beyond the death of this body there is something which lives and speaks to us, we seize upon that as a proof of immortality. But if the departed speaks, if he thinks, if he makes known conditions and states, he must have a body, more subtle perhaps, but still a material garment. No man speaks without a tongue, no man thinks without a mind, no man can describe states that are not connected with matter, for only matter is subject to states. To demonstrate conclusively that there is something which exists beyond our sight and hearing, beyond the dissolution of this body, is to prove, not immortality, but an extension of mortality. That which is hidden to the senses is not necessarily off the sense plane. There are ultra-violet rays which we do not see. Does that prove the spectrum immortal? Why then should man be immortal when he drops his gross body and becomes invisible to us? What assurance have we that another death may not some day destroy that subtler form and make a final end of all things? If matter is perishable here, if its states are changeable, then matter there must be perishable and its states changeable. All the messages which come to us from the other side indicate conditions similar to those we know here; therefore we are forced to admit that on this side or the other side of the veil we call death the state is a mortal one.

Yet to know that mortality persists beyond the body is an important step towards further knowledge. It is also the only one that science can hope to take so long as it

confines itself to the investigation of phenomena. In the far Vedic past, however, there were great scientists who did not limit their researches to the sweep of a telescope across the heavens or to the revelations of a test tube in the laboratory. The truths they sought lay beyond the domain of the microscope, beyond the phenomenal realm; even the finer vision of the psychic senses did not suffice them. Deeper and deeper they delved until they pierced the last crust of matter and looked upon the soul of things. Beholding that Changeless Effulgent Essence, they realized that immortality was not a question of human life or human death. It was not dependent on time, place or condition. It was the inherent nature of man, the underlying rock of his being, while mortality was only a temporary state created by his subjection to material desires. Just as a man may be enslaved by his dress, believing it to make or unmake him although actually it is not in any way a real part of his life, so is mortality a garment to which man himself lends whatever reality it may seem to possess. Immortality, however, is not another garment, as sometimes supposed. The mortal cannot "put on immortality" any more than he puts on his body when he takes off his clothing. The moment he has divested himself of his mortal dress his immortality stands revealed.

Actually the whole universe in the final analysis is deathless. All that we see is not death but change—the breaking up of a form, the falling apart of a compound. The science of Physics long ago discovered that the sum-total of matter and force in the universe remains eternally the same. Should one atom die or drop out of existence, the equilibrium would be destroyed and the entire universe would crumble. Life and death in creation mean the melting of one form into another, the gross into a subtle, the

subtle into a grosser or more visible form; but "the existent can never become non-existent" as the Gita declares, for where would it go since all that is must be existent? So is it with the human being. The soul of man cannot die because it is an integral part of the Ultimate. At some point man must touch pure being, otherwise he would not exist at all; and that point of union constitutes his soul or real Self, while this rush and whirl of matter about him is what we call life and death. He is like an eddy in a river: the water flows on and on, but the force which creates the eddy remains fixed and unchanged. So long as he walks among us wrapped in a visible form we say that he is living, when he casts off the gross body we say that he is dead. In reality, however, the subtler the material form he wears, the more living he becomes, until he frees himself from the last thin covering of matter and enters into Life Itself.

Individual evolution falls apparently into two distinct stages: the first is an evolution out of unconscious immortality into self-conscious mortality, the second is out of conscious mortality into conscious immortality. The soul or life-germ through the first period seems wholly absorbed in developing a perfect instrument for mortal expression; having achieved that, it turns round and bends all its energies towards extricating itself from its own creation. It is like a dancer who starts with a long floating scarf and by skillful pirouetting gradually winds herself in it until she can scarcely move hand or foot; then reversing her revolutions she little by little frees herself from the entrammeling folds until they drop from her hand. But why should we thus entangle ourselves? This question is only asked where it cannot be answered and it can only be answered where it is never asked, because it is a matter not of words but of unfoldment. The answer which Vedanta gives us is: Man

never has entangled himself, he merely thinks he has. In reality he is immortal at this moment, but he imagines himself a mortal because he is identifying himself with that which is not a real part of him. He believes himself to be the perishable body which houses him, whereas he is actually the imperishable dweller within.

Picture a bubble on a wave in the ocean. If it holds obstinately to the thought "I am a bubble," "I am a bubble," then inevitably it will measure its life by the duration of the bubble. Let it, on the contrary, expand to the point of thinking itself one with the wave on which it rides and its life will stretch to the length of the wave's life. But let it suddenly realize "I am one with the ocean," and a thousand times it may rise and fall but never does it become less living; there is no ebb or flow in its consciousness of existence. The same is true of man. So long as he clings to the belief "I am the body," like the bubble his life must seem fleeting. When he grows to identify himself with his thought or soul life, the measure of his existence must lengthen; but when he awakens to the supreme fact that he is one with the Infinite Ocean of Being, then he knows that his life is eternal. Yet always was he one with the Eternal; the change has been in his consciousness, not in the condition of his existence.

But what becomes of this mortal self when we realize our immortality? Where does it go? The story is told of a king's son who was stolen from the court and brought up among shepherds. He tended the flocks with his comrades and regarded himself as one of them. Then one day the king died and the ministers by diligent searching found the lad and placed him on the throne. What became of the shepherd boy when he learned that he was a king? Or where did the sheep go when a certain lion, who was born

among sheep and had acquired all the habits of a sheep, discovered by his reflection in a clear lake that he was a lion? He simply never was the sheep, he always was a lion, only he did not know it.

It is this delusive character of our present state of consciousness that has led the Vedic sages to liken human existence to a dream. Man on this plane, they say, is neither wholly awake nor sound asleep. He wanders in a twilight world between, a dream world in which reality and unreality mingle. He seems perpetually at the meeting point between the pairs of opposites—pleasure and pain, knowledge and ignorance, life and death, mortality and immortality; and the swift-flowing current of human activity buffets him back and forth between the two, unfolding within him by the very prod of circumstance the higher faculties of discrimination and choice, and an ever-growing hunger for the Real. Those indeed whose vision has broken over the boundary lines between visible and invisible and who see far behind and far ahead in the soul's Godward course, declare that this human state is the best for Divine realization. In the brute state the consciousness is too deeply buried in matter; in the heaven state it is too engrossed in enjoyment; only in this intermediate human state has the living being the most favorable conditions for spiritual attainment,—enough of joy to give him courage to go on, enough of sorrow to remind him that the heaven he seeks is not here; enough of light to allow him to push forward on his journey, enough of darkness to grant him periods of rest.

Did we utilize to the utmost our present opportunity, this one incarnation would suffice to gain liberation. But we are not eager enough. We are not yet weary enough of our mortality. We are tired of the pain, but not of the pleasure; we shrink from the dishonor, but we covet the

honor; we flee from death, but we cling to the transitory life with which it alternates; so we go on through birth after birth learning slowly and arduously the lesson of immortality. As long as there lingers in our hearts the least desire for gratification in the world of matter, we are allowed to return to satisfy it. This is all that reincarnation means,—the freedom to be a mortal through as many lives as we choose and an equal freedom to attain immortality here and now. Nor does this apply merely to this plane. The law extends on through all those planes we call heavens, which are only subtler forms of physical life; for the Lord tells us in the Bhagavad-Gita: "All states of existence from the world of the creator (the highest heaven) to this world are subject to return, but those who attain to Me, the Supreme, they have no need to be reborn." They have discovered their indestructible nature and the true Source of their happiness, hence their journey is ended.

So long as we live mortal lives, we shall continue to be mortal and we shall have to come again and again. Every new ambition or attachment for mortal things ties us more tightly to the earth plane. Every fear of punishment, every desire for reward creates for us a new heaven or a new hell. Every effort spent in mortal advancement at the cost of our soul's welfare makes us a little more human and prolongs our human state. But how can we change our course without putting ourselves at odds with our environment and relations? This is invariably the question asked. Yet past experience does not justify it. When we ceased to be a brute and became a human being did we prove less useful to society? Why then should we fear a cataclysm when we pass from the human to the Divine? Is the child of man wiser, sweeter, mightier than the child of God? Can the limited do more than the unlimited? Can the finite outstrip

the infinite, the mortal the immortal? On the contrary, do we not classify as "Immortals" those who do most in the world? Why? Because consciously or unconsciously an element of immortality enters into all they do; they work from the depths of their being instead of from the surface; they draw from their eternal undying nature, hence what they achieve has an enduring fundamental quality which makes it live. Also whatever we do that shines has a glint of the immortal upon it. At some point our mortal nature has given way and out of our real Self a Divine ray has shot forth and glorified our work. Let even the humblest task be done with the radiance of that Light upon it and it stands a model for mankind. Or let the smallest service be rendered with that God-warmth in it and some soul has been given a fresh start on the way.

We cannot hope, however, to transform our consciousness in a day. We must acquire the habits of immortality. We must readjust our scale of values, change our standard of measurement in life. We must extend our vision by keeping our gaze fixed on the bigger things; by reminding ourselves that to our soul a thousand years are as a day and that beyond that thousand lie other countless thousands on and on in an endless Eternity of life. How quickly will the passing joys and sorrows of this small earth-existence dwindle and fade away! And if still the mortal hems us in and will not let us go, then let us gather up this little life of ours and in one complete act of self-surrender plunge with it into the great Ocean of Immortal Being, crying out: "O Thou Supreme Lord, I lay myself at Thy Feet. Behold I come clothed in such close-bound garments of mortality that I cannot free myself. Thou alone canst cut them loose. Take my body, put it in what place or state Thou wilt, but make it an instrument in Thy hand. Take this mind all

sick with mortality, heal it, purify it, and pour through it a flood of Thy Divine Wisdom. Take this heart, tear or soothe it, gratify or bereave it, do with it what Thou wilt, but only cleanse it and make it a clear channel for Thy Love Divine. Empty my whole consciousness of mortality and fill it full of radiant immortality. Grant, O Thou Tender and most Merciful Lord, that henceforth each hour of living may be a death unto myself and a resurrection unto Life Eternal hid in Thee."

ADORATION.

By Zina Barton Partridge.

Eternal Witness, I can sense
  Thine essence through each breeze;
Borne from Thy presence comes it hence,
  The soul of me it frees.

Eternal Witness, I can hear
  Thy sweet song all about,
Until away from me has fear
  Forever flown with doubt.

Eternal Witness, I can see
  Thee everywhere I gaze,
Transcendant joy! forever free
  From life's bewildering maze.

Eternal Witness, now I feel
  Thee, deep within my heart;
Whate'er I touch I long to kneel;
  There nothing is from Thee apart.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

Extract of Address by Swami Paramananda

(Delivered at the Celebration of Sri Ramakrishna's Birthday.)

We have gathered here this evening to do honor to one of India's greatest Spiritual lights; but his eminence is not due to any great learning or intellectual attainment. Sri Ramakrishna was the child of very humble parents. He was born in a remote village of Bengal and his early education, far from our idea of education, did not extend even through the Grammar School. We often think that a man cannot have breadth or largeness of vision unless he is acquainted with other minds, unless he has read much; but we find quite the opposite with Sri Ramakrishna. He did not care for learning, he gave little time to study; his passion was to know God. How to realize Him, how to help others realize Him, this was the one all-absorbing thought of his mind. In this age such a passion seems almost an insanity. Even in India it made him a conspicuous figure. His parents, however, naturally believed that he should receive proper education and sent him to the village primary school. For a time he tried to apply himself to his studies and had some lessons in reading, writing and arithmetic. But this did not last very long, for the boy Gadadhar (the childhood name of Sri Ramakrishna) began to reflect in his mind: "Will this give me the knowledge of the Ultimate?" "Shall I reach God through study?"

One day he chanced to see a Brahmin boy returning from a religious ceremony in some house, carrying as his earnings some rice, vegetables and a little money. "Is this the aim of education," he asked, "to earn a little food and money like that?" Thus he concluded that the ordinary education was only for material advancement and did not lead to the realization of Truth. "If there is anything worth

while to learn, I will learn that; but I must learn it directly from the Spirit of the Universe," he declared. This was certainly an unusual idea for a boy; but as a small child he had already had a remarkable experience. To others it had seemed like a fainting fit, but in reality, so he explained to his disciples afterwards, he had gone into the superconscious state and had realized that all was God. Later Sri Ramakrishna came to Calcutta to live with one of his brothers who was a learned scholar as well as a priest in a temple near Calcutta. This temple was consecrated to the Divine Mother and after a time Sri Ramakrishna was called to carry on the daily service before the Mother's image. But as he worshipped day after day the thought rose in his heart, "Is it true that Mother is real? Does the Mother accept the offerings? Or is it all a matter of imagination?" He felt great yearning in his heart to know the living Mother and poured out his soul in supplication: "Come, O Mother. Another day is gone and I have not realized Thee."

It is said that sometimes in the agony of his heart he would rub his face against the ground and shed bitter tears saying: "O Mother, I can no longer live. My life will not remain in this body unless Thou manifest Thyself to me." This soul-stirring and whole-hearted devotion to God was the secret of Sri Ramakrishna's unique spiritual realization and his message of infinite tolerance. Sri Ramakrishna began with ordinary symbol worship, but very soon his vision transcended the symbol; for he saw his Deity everywhere in everything and realized that the worshipper and God the worshipped were one. Although he first realized God through his chosen Ideal,—as Divine Mother, he did not stop there. He tried many other forms of worship,—the Christian and Mohammedan as well as that of various Hindu

sects, and he found that all alike led to God. In a wonderfully short time he realized Godhood by each path. His concentration was so perfect and his fervor so intense that he went straight to the goal, and always he found it to be the same. Thus tolerance became the keynote of his teaching. We often talk of tolerance and try to show sympathy for others, but in our heart of hearts we feel that our faith is the best. Not so with Sri Ramakrishna. His attitude of toleration was not that of morbid forbearance. Through direct contact with God he had learned that all forms of faith come from the same source, and that gave him unbounded charity and sympathy towards all. His whole life was devoted to one thought,—to bring the consciousness of God to every soul.

His teaching is given in such simple parables that a child can understand and this shows how clear and direct his vision was. His message is full of hopefulness. Those who are broken and discouraged cannot fail to find new hope in him. He would say to the down-hearted who came to him: "Why fear? Why give up? You are a child of Divine Mother." He himself talked to his Divine Mother as a little child and he never spoke a word that was not given him by Her. Thus we find his life wholly imbued with the Spirit of God and he tried to make others fill their lives with Him; for to him the God-life was so clear and simple that not to realize God seemed unnatural. He illustrates with vividness the teaching given by Jesus the Christ: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven," for from his earliest childhood his supreme soul-passion was to see God and to help others see Him. His gift to the world was not something which he had earned with his hands and feet; he gave something of infinitely greater value,—the knowledge of Godhood; and the sincerity of his life was so impressive that no one, even

the most critical and unbelieving, could come into his presence without feeling his power.

Sri Ramakrishna's mission was not to preach in the ordinary sense of the word. He never preached, yet he never stopped giving spiritual blessings to others. His mission was to live with God; to bring His light to all. He struggled for that, he gave up all for that. His idea was not to disturb or transplant the flower of religion as it was growing in each heart, but to foster it and hasten its growth. His desire was to help all men to know God by their own natural path, to know God as One and as the Mother of all living beings, and not merely to say it but to feel it. His love for mankind is so extensive, so all-inclusive that it makes us feel like members of one family and to me that is the greatest message,—to make men realize that there is no difference, no barrier, but that all living beings are children of the same Divine Father and therefore brothers.

REPORTS

The public celebration of the Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna took place at the Vedanta Centre of Boston on the evening of March 7th. A number of students and friends came to do honor to the great Teacher. The chief feature of the commemorative exercises was the Address by Swami Paramananda, given in part above. Music and meditation preceded and followed it. At the close the guests gathered in the Library, where refreshments were served and a pleasant hour of informal social intercourse was spent.

* * * *

At the Vedanta Society of San Francisco, the Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated on March 12th. The services continued through the whole day and

besides readings from the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna and other Holy Scriptures, Swami Prakashananda delivered three special lectures on: "Sri Ramakrishna—His unique life and Mission," "Sri Ramakrishna—The Universality of His Message," and "Sri Ramakrishna as a Great World Teacher." Those who attended the services felt the impressiveness of the occasion and declared that the whole day had been a veritable feast.

* * * *

On the invitation of the College Women's Club, Swami Paramananda recently lectured in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. His subject was "India and Her Achievements," and so much interest in Eastern thought and teaching was aroused by his words that he was urgently requested to return for a longer period to hold classes as well as to deliver other lectures.

* * * *

Through the generous contributions of friends to the Indian Famine Relief Fund started by the Centre, the Swami has been able to send a second remittance to the Relief Work of the Ramakrishna Mission. This was further augmented by a special contribution from the Indo-American Association, which after deciding to disband in order to give their entire support to the Hindusthan Association, voted to turn all funds in the treasury over to the Mission for the Famine Sufferers.

* * * *

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the death of Mr. Nelson Smith, who passed away at his home in New York on February 28th. When Swami Vivekananda began his teaching in New York, he became one of his earliest and most faithful followers. He has ever since remained a devoted supporter of Vedanta and the work has lost a loyal friend in him.

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CONCENTRATION AND ILLUMINATION.

By Swami Paramananda.

We all possess a certain amount of concentration, but with the majority it is instinctive and automatic, not conscious. Even among the animals we see how a lion or tiger will collect his forces by a moment of absolute stillness before he springs upon his prey; that automatic, instinctive power of concentration is embedded in every living creature. But until we can gain conscious command of our mental and spiritual faculties, we can never have unerring vision. When the scattered mind is gathered together it is like a bright inner light, and by it man is able to investigate the latent powers which he possesses but of which he is not now wholly aware. As he grows more and more conscious of these hidden forces and learns to use them, he becomes more and more powerful. We never wish to be defeated and yet how often our strength of mind or our physical capacities prove inadequate. It is because we have not the full and conscious possession of our entire organism. Man cannot achieve much unless he has free use of his hands and feet, free use of his eyes and ears, free use of his muscles and above all free use of his mind and intelligence. But how many of us have the free use of all these? There is no doubt that we possess them, they are our birthright, but

when we would make use of them, we find them rebellious to our will and we feel helpless. The cause of this however does not lie in any inherent lack of power, but in our failure to control and concentrate what we have.

Concentration means wholeness, unity, equilibrium. The hands, feet, mind, all our members and faculties must be unified. They must all work in harmony, in tranquillity, in balance. Balance is needed everywhere in life. A man may be over-active or he may be idle: both indicate absence of self-control. Sri Krishna declares in the Gita: "O Arjuna, the practice of Yoga is not for him who eats too much or who does not eat at all, nor for him who sleeps too much or keeps awake in excess. He who is moderate in eating and recreation, moderate in his efforts in work, moderate in sleep and wakefulness, his practice of Yoga destroys all misery." What does this signify? That he who goes to extremes is a slave of impulse, he is not the master. He lacks balance and lack of balance means lack of strength and without strength no great work can be accomplished. If on the contrary we practise moderation or equilibrium even in our most ordinary daily tasks, we shall see how steady will be our gain in concentration.

The practice of moderation necessitates a certain amount of self-discipline. The Hindus call this *Tapas*, which literally means "fire" or "heat"; and they believe that unless this fire of self-discipline is lighted in order to burn to ashes all the impurities and limitations of our system, spiritual illumination will be impossible. But here too extremes must be avoided. Often people through misunderstanding or over-enthusiasm torture and strain themselves in the hope of advancing more rapidly, but they defeat their own end. Excessive penance or mortification is as harmful as self-indulgence. The purpose of all discipline is to make our

constitution more enduring, more adaptable, more responsive. Body and mind must be made wholly obedient to the will and independent of external circumstances. The person who is a slave to physical comforts should gradually eliminate all that is superfluous and train himself to be content with the bare necessities. Anyone who finds it difficult to overcome physical lethargy and rise early in the morning should drag himself out of bed by sheer force of will. One who is inclined to over-eating should by degrees reduce the quantity of his food. A person who has the habit of talking unnecessarily should practice silence; and the body should be trained to perfect stillness by persistent control of all useless motions. Such practices not only increase our power of concentration and meditation, but do much to improve our bodily health and make us happier in every way.

The mind falls naturally into three general states:—the dull state; the over-active or scattered state; and the calm, centred state. These correspond to the three *gunas* or qualities of matter, called in Sanskrit *Tamas*, *Rajas* and *Sattwa*. They are innate in every living being and manifest in the human mind as the subconscious, the conscious and the superconscious. The first quality is that of darkness, inertia, heaviness, the brute state. When the mind is overcome by this quality, it lacks in power to differentiate between right and wrong and is easily carried away by lower animal passions. When the second quality is in ascendancy, the mental tendency is towards excessive ambition, egotism, arrogance and discontent. In this state a man is consumed by feverish unrest and an irresistible desire to multiply possessions and to entangle himself more and more in external undertakings. His energies are scattered and often wasted; and no matter how much he achieves he is never satisfied, for the flame of his desire mounts with each new gratification

as a fire fed by fresh fuel. With the quality of *Sattwa* the mind grows collected, serene and illumined. This is the fitting state of mind for spiritual attainment. In order to reach it the condition of dullness or inertia must be conquered by stimulating all the physical and mental activities. Then these activities must be regulated and restrained until they are focused. The subconscious must be brought into complete subjection to the conscious and the conscious must be expanded into the superconscious. This is the natural process in acquiring the power of concentration and meditation.

Meditation is inseparable from concentration. When the mind has gained its full strength through singleness it naturally becomes meditative. Often the mind is compared to a lake. If the surface is absolutely smooth—not a ripple—then we can see clearly what lies beneath. Similarly when this mind becomes calm, when the wind of uncontrolled desire does not constantly create ripples over the surface of it, then the image of our true nature is not broken and we get a perfect reflection of what we are and what our relation with God is. As long however as the mind is agitated, so long our vision can never be perfect. We are constantly hoping that some one else may give us knowledge and happiness, but that is not possible. They can only come from within. Each human being has latent within him the qualities which will produce true happiness, true health, true power through illumination, but he must unfold these qualities for himself. Outside influences can only stimulate a desire to gain them or awaken him to the fact that he possesses them.

What we need is to be active spiritually. As we go on living our outer life we must devote some time each day to making our mind introspective that we may develop our

subtler powers of perception. In all investigations certain instruments are necessary, as we see scientists inventing finer and finer instruments for their researches. Also for spiritual observation we need a form of mind which can discern the subtler things imperceptible to our ordinary sense faculties. The concentrated mind is such an instrument and the only one fitted for higher research. It is like a focused light. We know that when light is dissipated we can not see well, but when the scattered rays are brought together by the help of a shade or reflector, then everything grows distinct. So will the hidden things of the universe be revealed to us when through determined and steadfast practice we gather up the present forces of our mind, which is now weak only because it is disorganized and divided.

We must not remain content however with the lower forms of concentration. These may bring us physical health, prosperity or success, because concentration always gives efficiency; but even though we acquire more wealth, greater honor or increased bodily strength, we shall find that one part of our being still remains incomplete and unsatisfied in spite of all our worldly acquisitions. Never will it be content until we awaken and begin to work for our higher self-development. Nor should such work be regarded as selfish, because all human beings are knitted together and as we unfold our own spiritual nature we cannot fail to benefit others. The same life runs through and through everywhere; and only he who can seize hold of that subtle spiritual being hidden in every heart, will know how to solve the riddle of this human existence for himself and be able to render lasting help to his fellowmen. That one alone lives happily and fearlessly. Now we are fearful because so many things are hidden from us: we fear the future because we do not know what the future may bring, we fear

death because we are not sure what may come after. For this reason we must learn to focus the mind and turn it within, then by its brilliant light we shall understand all things and attain the vision of Truth.

The purpose of meditation is to gain that vision. Nor must we stop until we have seen by direct perception our True Self and our relation with the Supreme. That must be the purpose of all our spiritual practice. When the mind becomes fixed on the Supreme Being, when through meditation we are united with that Power, then we have fulness of vision. This is called the superconscious state or *Samadhi*. As we meditate on That which is All-Light, the darkness of mind and body will vanish; for what we constantly think upon, that we become. There is only one Power, one Intelligence, one Mind, which is God, and our mind is nothing but a reflection of that Universal Mind. As it works separate from that Mind, it remains unintelligent, ignorant, powerless; but when it becomes united with It, it attains a state of complete illumination. "After having attained which no other gain seems greater; being established wherein man is not overwhelmed even by great sorrow."

The infallible index of true progress is found in the tone the man takes. Neither his age, nor his breeding, nor company, nor books, nor all together, can hinder him from being deferential to a higher spirit than his own. If he have not found his home in God, his manners, his forms of speech, the turn of his sentences, the build, shall I say, of all his opinions, will involuntarily confess it, let him brave it out how he will. If he have found his centre, the Deity will shine through him, through all the disguises of ignorance, of uncongenial temperament, of unfavorable circumstance.

—*Emerson.*

AMITABHA, THE INFINITE LIGHT.

From the Teachings of Buddha.

One of the disciples approached Lord Buddha with troubled heart and doubting mind, saying: "Blessed Master, why should we renounce the pleasures of the world, if you forbid us to work miracles or to seek power over the supernatural? Is not Amitabha, the infinite light of revelation, the source of countless miracles?"

The Blessed One replied: "How long will it take thee to comprehend the Truth? The mendicant who renounces the fleeting pleasures of the world for the eternal bliss of holiness performs the only miracle that can truly be called a miracle. The desire to perform miracles springs either from covetousness or from vanity. Amitabha, the unbounded light, is the source of wisdom, of virtue, of Buddhahood."

"But, Master, is the promise of a happy region called the Pure Land a mere myth or vain talk?"

The Blessed One replied: "There is such a blissful paradise, but the country is spiritual and it is accessible only to those who are spiritual. He alone can reach that happy land whose soul is filled with the infinite light of Truth. Only that one who has attained enlightenment can live and breathe in the holy atmosphere of that paradise."

The disciple said: "Teach me, O Master, the meditations to which I must devote myself that my mind may enter into the paradise of the Pure Land."

Lord Buddha answered: "There are five meditations. The first meditation is the meditation of love, in which you must so adjust your heart that you long for the welfare of all living beings, including the happiness of your enemies. The second meditation is the meditation of pity, in which you think of all who may be in distress, vividly picturing

to your mind their sorrows and anxieties so as to arouse a deep compassion for them in your heart. The third meditation is the meditation of joy, in which you dwell in thought on the prosperity of others and rejoice in their rejoicings. The fourth meditation is the meditation on impurity, in which you consider the evil consequences of sinful action and corruption. The fifth meditation is the meditation on serenity, in which you rise above love and hate, tyranny and oppression, wealth and want, and look upon your own destiny with impartial calmness and perfect tranquillity. A true follower of the Tathagata (Blessed One) does not found his trust upon austerities or rituals, but giving up the idea of self relies with his whole heart upon Amitabha, which is the immeasurable light of Truth."

Then the disciple said: "Show me, O Lord, the path to the highest wisdom. Reveal to me the meditations which are the means of acquiring *Samadhi*, that fixity of mind which enraptures the soul."

The Blessed One questioned: "Which are the practices through which one attains illumination?"

The disciple replied: "There are four practices. The first is seclusion in which one must free the mind of sensuality; the second is tranquillity of mind and joyousness; the third is taking delight in spiritual things; the fourth is a state of perfect purity and peace in which the mind rises above all grief and gladness."

The Blessed One said: "Good, my son. Be sober and abandon wrong practices which only serve to stultify the mind."

The disciple begged again: "Teach me, O Lord, the path of the highest wisdom."

The Blessed One replied: "There are four means by which wisdom is acquired. Prevent bad qualities from aris-

ing. Put away bad qualities which have arisen. Produce goodness that does not yet exist. Search with sincerity and persevere in your search. In the end you will find the Truth."

ON MEDITATION.

Familiar Talk by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

Meditation means complete self-abandonment. To meditate successfully one must get rid of this ego. You know, before a great glory all little glories disappear, so before the effulgent glory of God this little ego will completely vanish, as the stars vanish when the sun rises. The moment you have given up everything and understood your own helplessness, at that moment God-vision will come. If you can reach this state and hold it even for a few moments, you will see how quickly God will begin to rise up in your mind; and when you will be able to remain in that state, God will always be present there.

But, you say, I cannot see Him with these eyes of mine, I cannot hear Him with these ears, I cannot touch Him with these hands, how then am I to perceive Him? You can never perceive Him in this way. These senses are made for the creation, not for the Creator. To go to the Creator, you must throw aside these instruments which take you directly to the creation. You must no longer seek the help of the senses or the mind. You must divest yourself completely of the offices of both. So long as you demand the aid of these, your ego is in full force and meditation will not come. When, however, you have been able to put down the ego and go beyond the mind and senses, meditation will come of itself. This is the easiest way to get it,—by the practice of "Not I, not I, but Thou."

God dwells in the heart of every man. He is the nearest

thing to each one of us, but the mind has been dragged out so long by the things of this world that it is difficult for it to come home. Therefore with the sword of wisdom one must cut asunder all these worldly attachments. People often say to me: "I find it so difficult to concentrate my mind. It goes to my business, to my household affairs and it seems impossible to hold it on God. Why is this?" The answer is: "Because your mind does not belong to you. You have sold it to your business, to your worldly affairs, how can you expect to command what is not yours?" With a divided mind you can never hope to gain the power of concentration and meditation and without these the vision of Truth is unattainable. Christ said that only the pure in heart shall see God. Pure means unmixed, homogeneous, one. The mind is pure therefore when it is perfectly single, devoted to one object. The mind as we know it is merely a collection of desires, it is made up of desires. Get rid of selfish desires and nothing remains but the *Paramatman* or the Divine Self. There is no difference between the purified mind and the Self of man. So if you wish to see God, the only way is to get rid of all selfish desires, to make your mind single, for as Christ has said: "When the eye is single, the body is full of light."

There are of course many different practices which will help you to gain control over your mind and senses, but all these practices, even the best, are in some measure mechanical. Endue your heart with devotion and your mind will naturally turn towards God; for what you love you like to think about. As a matter of fact every man is loving God, for every man loves eternal life, all-knowledge, all-blissfulness and these are God. But few men know that they are loving Him, just as a man who has been hearing all his life of a mango but has never seen one, may actually be eating

a mango yet he will not know it until someone comes and tells him; so all men are loving God but unless some one comes and tells them, they do not know it. When, however, you realize that God is that which you are seeking everywhere in the universe, then it will not be difficult for you to love Him; all your thoughts will spontaneously flow towards Him and meditation will become easy.

SELECTION FROM THE MAHABHARATA.

Anugita-Parva.

The son of Pritha (Arjuna), having recovered his own kingdom, joyously spent his time in the company of Sri Krishna, his heart filled with delight. One day he addressed his companion saying: "O Mighty-armed One, Thy greatness became known to me upon the approach of the battle (of Kurukshetra). O son of Devaki, Thy form also as the Lord of the Universe then became known to me. What Thou, O Holy One, said unto me at that time out of love has all been forgotten by me in consequence of the fickleness of my mind. Often, however, have I been desirous to know something regarding the truths then spoken."

Vasudeva (Sri Krishna) said: "I imparted to thee truths that are eternal. Verily I discoursed to thee on Religion in its true form and on all the eternal laws. It is exceedingly displeasing to me to learn that through carelessness thou didst not retain what I then imparted. The recollection of all that I told thee on that occasion will not come to me now. O son of Pandu, thou art without doubt destitute of faith and of right understanding. It is impossible for me to repeat in detail all that I said to thee then. I discoursed to thee on the Supreme Brahman, having concentrated myself in Yoga. I shall recite to thee, however,

an ancient narrative dealing with the same subjects. Listen now to everything I say, so that with an understanding adapted to my teaching thou mayest succeed in attaining the highest end. O Arjuna, once a Brahmana came to us from the regions of Heaven. . . The Brahmana said:—

'That man who is the friend of all, who endures all, who is attached to tranquillity, who has conquered all his senses, who is freed from fear and anger and who is self-subjugated, succeeds in emancipating himself.

'He who behaves towards all creatures as towards himself, who is restrained, pure, free from vanity and divested of egoism, is regarded as emancipated from everything.

'He also is emancipated who looks with equal eye upon life and death, pleasure and pain, gain and loss, the agreeable and disagreeable.

'He is in every way emancipated who does not covet what belongs to others, who never disregards any living being, who rises above all pairs of opposites and whose soul is free from attachment.

'He becomes emancipated who acquires neither merit nor demerit, who casts off the merits and demerits accumulated in previous births, who spends the energies of his body to attain a tranquillized soul, and who rises above all duality.

'He who sees his soul void of smell, of taste, of touch, of sound, devoid of belongings, of sight, unknowable (through the senses) . . . devoid of attributes though enjoying them, that one becomes emancipated.

'Having been freed from all impressions (of good and evil), one then attains Brahman (the Absolute) who is eternal and supreme, tranquil, stable, enduring and indestructible.

'After this I shall declare the science of Yoga, than which there is nothing superior, and how Yogins by con-

centration behold the perfect Soul. Do thou learn from me those doors by which, directing the Soul within the body, one beholds that which is without beginning and end.

'Withdrawing the senses from their objects, one should fix the mind upon the Soul; having previously undergone the strictest self-discipline, one should practise that concentration of mind which leads to emancipation.

'If the good man succeeds in concentrating the mind on the Soul, habituated to deep meditation, he then beholds the Supreme Soul in his own soul.

'Self-subjugated, always concentrated and with all his senses completely conquered, the man of cleansed soul, as the result of complete concentration of mind, succeeds in beholding the Soul by the soul.

'As a person, beholding some unknown individual in a dream, recognizes him when he sees him on waking, saying "This is he"; in the same manner the good man, having seen the Supreme Soul in the deep contemplation of *Samadhi* (superconsciousness), recognizes it upon waking from *Samadhi*.

'When the bearer of a body adequately beholds the Soul in Yoga, he then has no one who is master over him, for he then becomes the lord of the three worlds. He succeeds in assuming divers bodies according as he wishes. Turning aside decrepitude and death, he neither grieves nor exults. The self-restrained man, concentrated in Yoga, can create even the godship of the gods. Casting off his transient body, he attains the Immutable Brahman.

'Devoid of desire and possessed of a tranquil mind, the person established in Yoga is never shaken by pain, sorrow or fear. Weapons never pierce him, death does not exist for him. Nowhere in the world can be seen anyone who is happier than he.

'Hear now how a man, habituating himself to deep meditation, succeeds in attaining Yoga (union with God). Thinking of that point of the compass which has the sun behind it, the mind should be fixed, not outside, but in the interior of that mansion (the body) in which one may happen to live. Residing within that mansion, the mind should then, with all its outward and inward operations, fix the gaze in that particular room (the heart) in which one abides. At that time when, having deeply meditated, one beholds that All, there is then nothing outside God (Brahman) where the mind may dwell.

'As a man placing some precious object in his store room should keep his mind on it, so, placing the mind within one's own body and restraining all the senses, one should seek after the Soul, avoiding all heedlessness. . . . It is only with the lamp of the mind that the great Soul can be seen.'

"Has this discourse been heard by thee, O son of Pritha, with mind directed solely towards it? It is my opinion, O Arjuna, that this is difficult of being comprehended by one whose understanding is confused, or who has acquired no wisdom by study, or who eats food unsuited to the body, or whose soul is not purified. . . . But that mortal, O son of Pandu, who endued with intelligence and faith and valor, renounces as unreal what is regarded by the world as real, succeeds within a short time in obtaining the Supreme by these means. This is all that is to be said—there is nothing else that is higher than this."

Put on armor that will harm no one, let thy coat of mail be that of understanding, and convert thine enemies to friends. Fight with valor, but with no weapon except the word of God. —*Guru Nanak.*

AIDS TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

Adapted from The Brahmavadin.

There are certain means recognized in the religion of Vedanta whereby men may fit themselves for the acquisition of spiritual knowledge, although their value is more or less of a negative character and lies chiefly in removing the intellectual and moral impediments which obstruct the upward march of the soul. The first of these is the strict regulation of the food which nourishes the physical system. The materials that build up our body exercise a profound influence on our mental constitution and require to be carefully regulated as regards their nature and quality. It is taught in the Bhagavad-Gita that Yoga or higher attainment is not possible to the man who eats too much or who eats too little; while one of the aphorisms of Bodhayana reads: "Impure food is inimical to the acquisition of wisdom."

At the present time every one recognizes that body and mind act and react on each other, and that what we eat has the power of affecting wholesomely or otherwise not only our body but the mind also. When the gross body is so fed and purified as to be made a willing servant of the discriminative faculty, a great step is taken towards the purification and control of the mind itself and this facilitates concentration. It is not possible to prescribe any fixed rule of diet, for always must this be determined by the individual constitution and occupation. There are certain foods which increase the density and heaviness of the system, causing depression, lethargy or mental dullness; there are others which stimulate the sense nature and create the restlessness which so often expresses itself in anger, irritability, discontent and impulsiveness. Both of these should be avoided by those who are eager to advance spiritually. They should choose such foods as bring calmness and lightness, while

giving sufficient vigor. A simple non-meat diet is naturally best adapted to this end; but if this represents too radical a change, then every effort should be made to gradually modify the diet until the system becomes accustomed to lighter foods. If the change is made with proper caution and intelligence no ill effects can possibly result.

The next question which should engage the attention of the aspirant after *Moksha* or freedom is the company he keeps. The companionship of the holy and wise is one of the main elements of spiritual progress. The *Srimat Bhagavata* declares: "Association with great Souls is the gate to Salvation;" and Sankaracharya teaches: "The company of the good gives rise to the virtue of non-attachment, non-attachment gives rise to the absence of delusion, absence of delusion gives rise to firmness of mind and firmness of mind leads to liberation even in this life." The choice of friends is therefore one of the most important questions for anyone who has entered on the higher path. He should also not consider it selfish to withdraw so far as possible from association with those who bring confusion to his mind or who weaken his loyalty to his Ideal. When a man is firmly established in his spiritual life it matters not where he goes or with whom he associates, for he will carry with him his own atmosphere as the rose its fragrance and no evil can touch him; but so long as we are little children in the spirit we must guard ourselves from all baneful or retarding influences. "A young sapling should always be protected by a fence from cows and goats and other animals," Sri Ramakrishna says, "but when it becomes a big tree, then a flock of goats or a herd of cows may take shelter under its spreading branches. Similarly when your faith is weak, you should protect it from the destructive effects of evil company and worldliness; but when you grow strong

in faith and knowledge no worldliness or evil will be able to harm you, rather will many who are wicked become godly through association with you."

A further step towards the acquisition of wisdom is faithful devotion to a teacher. The impulse that quickens knowledge and vivifies devotion cannot proceed from study and thought alone, but must emanate from the soul which has realized the truth and bears witness to it. Even in matters of secular education the value of the contact of soul with soul is recognized to be very great, while the personal influence of a worthy spiritual teacher finds ample testimony in the history of all the world's great prophets and founders of religion. Nothing indeed so quickly strengthens conviction and steadfastness as to serve humbly and lovingly one who embodies in his life the highest wisdom and truest practice of holiness.

Such service also proves a powerful factor in accomplishing the next step in spiritual discipline, the conquest of ego. Egoism is the supreme obstacle to higher advancement. It is the principle which creates in man the sense of separateness and makes him forget his unity with his fellow-beings. It is the root of all evil and misery, and unless it is overcome the human soul can never realize its true nature and escape from the trammels of material existence. It is for this reason that service and the practice of obedience play so large a part in all systems of religious discipline. Voluntary and loving subordination to the guidance of one who has purified and brought into subjection his own ego gradually leads the disciple away from self-assertion to self-surrender, and prepares him to set out on the higher practice of bringing his individual will into complete harmony with the great Universal Will, which is the end of all wisdom.

Besides the regulation of diet, association with the holy,

faithful devotion to a teacher and the conquest of ego, there are still other requirements generally demanded from the seeker after wisdom. These are the power of discriminating the real from the unreal, the eternal from the non-eternal; freedom from all calculation regarding the results of action, that is all desire for reward or fear of punishment in this world or the next; peace of mind, taming of the passions, resignation and non-attachment, patience under suffering, and even-mindedness in the alternations of heat and cold, pleasure and pain, honor and dishonor; concentration of thought; faith in the efficacy of the teaching as well as the competency of the teacher; and above all an earnest and deep-rooted desire for liberation. By the help of these *Sadhanas* or spiritual practices the internal organs are both purified and strengthened and knowledge of the Soul is made possible.

Work and contemplation are also valuable aids to spiritual development. It is a fundamental principle in the training given by Vedanta that good works, including regular daily practice, are necessary for the rise of spirituality in man. They tend to purify and fortify the heart and sustain the spirit of devotion; and "He who has not turned away from his wickedness, who is not tranquil and subdued or whose mind is not at rest, he can never attain the Supreme even by knowledge", the Katha-Upanishad declares. All such good works and practices, however, will prove hindrances rather than aids if done with any ulterior motive of self-glorification or personal desire. The binding force of action lies in desire; and unless all action is performed without attachment and wholly in the service of God, we cannot hope to enjoy any true spiritual benefit. Therefore the aspirant should constantly train himself to perform all his work and duties in life as a sacrifice on the altar of God,

asking for nothing, looking for no fruits and demanding no reward. He must completely efface himself and place himself and the result of his work entirely in the hands of God. When all actions are performed in this spirit of devotion and renunciation, they lose their entrammeling force upon the soul and become the most effective aids to spiritual illumination.

PEACE.

By Swami Vivekananda.

Behold, it comes in might,
The power that is not power,
The light that is in darkness,
The shade in dazzling light.

It is joy that never spoke,
And grief unfelt, profound,
Immortal life unlived,
Eternal death unmourned.

It is not joy nor sorrow,
But that which is between;
It is not night nor morrow,
But that which joins them in.

It is sweet rest in music,
And pause in sacred art;
The silence between speaking;
Between two fits of passion,
It is the calm of heart.

It is beauty never loved,
And love that stands alone;
It is song that lives unsung,
And knowledge never known.

It is death between two lives,
And lull between two storms,
The void whence rose creation,
And that where it returns.

To it the tear-drop goes,
To spread the smiling form.
It is the Goal of Life,
And Peace—its only home!

THE PROBLEM OF SLEEP.

A new aspect of the problem of sleep is coming before the world. For the last decade an English writer, the Rev. J. P. Bullock, fellow of Trinity College, member of the Royal Scientific Society and an authority in Buddhistic Art, has been publishing a series of original studies on the subject. Their titles disclose his attitude towards it; "Sleep, Its Cause and Cure", "Why Should We Waste a Third of Life?" "Sleep, Twin-Brother of Death", "Wake and Work". His investigations began when still quite young in an effort to overcome a hampering tendency to slothfulness within himself. Learning that the great Duke of Wellington was accustomed to sleep on a plank so narrow that if he turned he fell off, because he believed that unless sleep was so deep as to cause absolute bodily stillness it was imperfect and a conclusive proof that the sleeper had had sufficient, Dr. Bullock determined to adopt the same method of conquering his laziness. He had a plank made eleven inches wide and into it fastened a few dull spikes (such as mountain climbers use on their boots) in order that when he awoke, he might not be tempted to linger on his bed. He soon accustomed himself to his new resting place and found that gradually the quality of his slumber was completely altered. It grew light and restful. He was also able to wake and sleep at

will; while the amount of sleep required steadily lessened, until he has now brought his daily allowance down to three hours.

He has also evolved various chemical and hygienic methods to aid others in their effort to outgrow the need of so much sleep. Mr. Henry Algernon Blackwood, commenting in "Vanity Fair" on Dr. Bullock's devices, writes as follows:

"There are other ways of solving the problem. The Hindus have had their eye on it for a good many centuries. They divide mental states into three types: Sattwa, calm wakefulness, contemplation; Rajas, mental activity, excitement; Tamas, dullness, sleep. The first only is considered proper to the healthy man; in their view Rajas is a kind of fever, and Tamas a kind of death. One of their reasons for diminishing diet to a minimum is that food always encourages one of the lower 'Gunas', as they call these states. However, since one must eat, they have selected certain foods as proper to Sattwa.

"This is not altogether a digression, for it was on these lines that Dr. Bullock first attacked the problem in 'The Nineteenth Century'. There is a rotation of these Gunas; they follow each other at more or less regular intervals, and if the Tamo-guna is in course and the man is not asleep it is due to some interference. It subsequently occured to Dr. Bullock that he might break up the power of the Tamo-guna altogether. To him, as to Edison, sleep appeared an altogether deplorable waste of time, and, more than this, decidedly harmful. It was a drag on Sattwa; a break in the continuity of pure consciousness; an interference with the will and the highest aspirations of man.

"He wished to meditate ceaselessly and tirelessly upon the weakness of man, to find a remedy for all evil, and behold!

he was himself a slave to the most degrading weakness. Even a few minutes of such intense thought as he, by long assiduity and courage, had developed, were sufficient to dull the keen razor edge of his mind. He was capable of ordinary work of the hardest kind in a measure which few men have ever equalled; but the super-work of meditation requires quite a superhuman power. He recognized the Tamo-guna as the enemy, and proceeded to destroy it."

Believing that sleep was the generator of Tamas, he began his attack on the enemy there, using the narrow hard bed and gradually reducing his hours of rest. Few however could adopt such drastic measures. Yet there is little doubt that the great majority of people in the Occident sleep too much. More time spent in out-door exercise and in meditation would bring a healthier state of mind and body and make so many hours of rest unnecessary. But any change in the division of hours devoted to sleep and waking should be made so gradually that no upheaval in the organism will result. Our lower nature should always be led, not antagonized.

REPORTS.

The usual season of classes and lectures at the Vedanta Centre of Washington extended this year from March 9th to April 19th and the general feeling was that it was even more successful than those of previous years. The average attendance was higher and the interest more extended. A public hall was secured for the Sunday lectures and was always well filled. Besides these there were bi-weekly classes and Sister Devamata spoke twice at the National New Thought Centre. She also gave a lecture in Baltimore, on the invitation of the Theosophical Lodge of that city, and was strongly urged to remain there for a further course of classes and lectures. As this was not possible, it was ar-

ranged that the next season should be lengthened and divided between Washington and Baltimore.

* * *

At the Vedanta Centre of Boston the meetings during April were well attended and among those who came were to be seen an unusual number of strangers. The schedule of work will remain unchanged for the present, except the Monday afternoon class which has been discontinued for the summer months.

* * *

The Famine Relief work of the Ramakrishna Mission has been suffering recently because of insufficient funds; yet unable to resist the call of distress, the workers have opened still another Centre. The latest report for the Balasore District alone showed that in one week 985 starving men, women and children were provided with food; and in order to meet further the heart-rending need, at least one more Centre must be opened.

A NEW HINDU UNIVERSITY.

Recent reports from India tell us of the laying of the cornerstone of a new Hindu University in Benares. It is believed that the founding of such a distinctly national seat of learning means a new era in Indian education. So far the Sanskrit Colleges have jealously nurtured the ancient ideals and methods, while the Government Universities have imposed an alien and more modern system. The hope in the new institution is to join the two,—to provide every advantage of Western culture and modern scientific method, while keeping as the basis and animating influence of all study the lofty precepts of the Vedic teaching. The retiring Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, in performing the ceremony referred in stirring language to this fact, saying: "This foun-

dation stone will mark a definite step in the advance towards an ideal that has stirred to its very depths the imagination of India." He called attention to the new feature in its constitution which makes it a teaching and residential university as in the West, instead of merely an affiliating and examining body as Indian Universities have always been under English rule; a feature which, he declared, reflects under new conditions the ancient Indian mode of teaching in the forest-universities of Vashishta and Gautama. He spoke of the strongly Hindu character of the new institution as "the very essence of its creation" and he added: "I am not terrified by the bogey of religious intolerance, for one's own religion ought to foster a spirit of respect for the religious convictions of others, and signs are not wanting that the day is dawning when tolerance and good will take the place of fanaticism and hatred.

"Here you hope," he continued, "in the not distant future, to see preserved all that is best in Hindu ideals of life and thought, all that is noblest of Hindu religion and tradition, culture and civilization; and grafted upon that tree, healthy and strong in its own natural soil, you hope to see growing, in it and of it, all that is good and great of Western science, industry and art, so that your young men may go forth, not only inspired with pure and noble ideals, but also equipped for the development of their mother country along the more material lines of progress and prosperity. . . . And where could a Hindu University be more happily placed than here in Benares, the ancient seat of learning, clustered about with a thousand sacred associations? Here, if anywhere, should be found that religious atmosphere which seems to me so essential to the formation of character; and here, if anywhere, the genius of modern progress will be purified by the spirit of ancient culture".

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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WHAT IS TRUE WORSHIP?

By Sister Devamata.

Worship may be defined as the process by which man seeks to unite himself with the Divine. It is peculiar to no people, to no form of religion, to no state of development. The most elaborate rite of the Egyptian or the Brahmin, of the Buddhist or the Catholic Christian may have no larger element of worship in it than perchance fills the heart of a grave Apache Indian, who on waking stands at the door of his hut and calls on the Great Spirit to bless his family, his tribe, all the works of the day and to keep him ever mindful of the Great Mystery. Even the wildest Kaffir in Africa as he threads his way through the vast forests and beholds the might of the jungle beasts, the fury of the storm, the wonder of sun, moon and stars, senses a nameless Something to be invoked and propitiated.

Every living being feels the All and when he feels It instinctively bows before It. The only question is where and when and how. Men of a certain temperament believe that the more form is heaped on form, sound on sound, beauty on beauty, litany on litany, the greater the worship; while others of differing nature claim that the barer the walls, the emptier the altar, the simpler the music, the more extemporaneous the prayer, the surer is man's approach to

God. We have only to turn from the Gothic splendor of the Cathedral at Rheims or Chartres to the grey barrenness of a Dutch Meeting-House to see how far apart men have gone in their ideals of religious worship. To one images are a superstition, to another they are sacred symbols. For the dissenter adoration of the Virgin is idolatery, to the Catholic it means the glorification of Divine Motherhood. To this man the Bible is all-in-all, to that the Church. Nor are these differences to be deplored. Individual bias in religious practice is as natural as in bodily habit and that man is wise who, conserving his energy by moving along the path of least resistance, chooses that form which makes strongest appeal to his peculiar temperament. The wrong consists in denouncing all other forms, not seeing their equal value for men of different constitution. As well proclaim the supremacy of one radius of a circle and try to suppress all other lines leading from the circumference to the centre.

The Indo-Aryan teaching, from the earliest Vedic times, has acknowledged this need of endless variety in expression, while proclaiming absolute unity in essence. For that reason its activities have never been directed towards conversion. Believing that each man's religious consciousness is evolved from within, its effort has not been to superimpose some alien form of faith, but to infuse new life into the existing Ideal; in other words, "not to destroy, but to fulfill" (or infill) as Christ and every other Saviour has said. Even Buddhism with all its glow of enthusiasm for propaganda stayed its hands from the least act of destruction and when its missionaries were sent out to every known part of the East they received this admonition: "The basis of all religions is the same wherever they are. Try to help them all you can, teach them all you can, but do not injure them." So it was that Confucianism and Shintoism became

the base, as it were, on which the followers of the Awakened One built their loftier ideals of life. And may not that be the truer way? If we enter a house and find the hearth cold, is it kinder to say to the owner: "I have a bright fire in my chimney, come and live with me," or to give the man fuel and light and help him rekindle his family hearth? In the one case he will remain forever an alien, in the other he regains his own.

No one need be taught to worship. It is a spontaneous act of the human mind. Every being is pouring out his thought and energy in oblation at the feet of something. What that object is determines his character even more than his creed, for "whatever a man constantly thinks upon, that he becomes" and worship means the unbroken flow of mind and will towards a fixed end. If it is money or fame or power, then he is as truly an idolater as if he melted up all the coin in his strong box and recast it into a graven image. The same may be said of him who serves God for some return, who expects as the wage of his adoration immunity from misfortune and affliction on this earth or an eternity of enjoyment in heaven. "Four kinds of virtuous men worship Me," the Lord tells us in the Bhagavad-Gita, "the distressed, the seeker after knowledge, the seeker after material prosperity and the wise. Among them the wise, ever steadfast, devoted to the One, excels; for I am supremely dear to the wise man and he is dear to Me. Noble indeed are all these, but I regard the wise as My very Self; for with soul ever steadfast he is established in Me alone as his supreme goal."

To worship God for any material, personal benefit is regarded in India as "worship of the gods" or the minor aspects of Deity. He who directs all his thought towards prosperity is said to worship the god of success, another

whose whole desire moves towards intellectual attainment is a worshipper of the goddess of learning, and so through all the Vedic Pantheon. Yet not even the most ignorant Hindu worshipper bowing before the crudest image ever believes that what he invokes is other than some personified aspect of the Eternal and Supreme Lord. To the precise and clear-seeing Indo-Aryan mind all men remain polytheists so long as they are swayed and governed by worldly cravings, for each new ambition is a god they worship until it grants them their desire. Only that one becomes a worshipper of the One God who desires God alone.

Yet these lower forms of worship are not condemned as wrong. They merely represent the childhood of religion, the baby stage of stretching out the hand towards whatever amuses or attracts. Man must grow up to realize that it is more blessed to give than to receive, just as it is more blessed to have something to give than to be in want. There is nothing we cannot gain from the Supreme if we only importune long and fervently enough. He even bestows on us the faith and perseverance necessary to attain our end; but He sorrows that we ask so little of Him, for "limited and perishable is the fruit acquired by these men of small understanding," it is said in the Gita. Do we not all know some parent grieving over a wayward son, who through short-sightedness has cast aside a rich opportunity and wasted his life on petty things? In the same way the great Mother of the Universe grieves over us, as day after day we beg Her for the little baubles of this world which after a few hours' play will bring us only weariness.

God yearns with all His heart to give us the true and the eternal, but we continue to implore of Him the false and fleeting. And He gives it because in the infinitude of His love He cannot resist our cry. But through each new

disappointment He strives to teach us that no gift of the world can be equal to Himself; that not the greatest thing which we may ask of Him can be so wonderful as that which He will freely bestow on us when we come to Him in love, asking nothing. Only when we have learned to fold our hands in humble surrender instead of lifting them in eager supplication will the spirit of true worship stir within us. We must worship for the joy of worship, for the sweetness of turning our thought to the Beloved and uniting our soul with His. Can it matter how that is done? When the child runs to the mother, or the loving wife to the husband, is there need of any fixed form to express the outpourings of the heart? Rites and ceremonies have their value as amalgamating influences in collective worship or as focal points to centre the attention; they count little as means of winning Divine favor. They are for us, not for God. Their purpose is to fan the dulling fire of devotion in our hearts, to rouse our lagging thought; but as the faith grows deeper, the knowledge of spirit broader, the love stronger, simpler and simpler will become the method taken to reach the Lord.

Nowhere do we read of the great Teachers training their disciples in intricate rituals. One child-like prayer was all that Jesus left; while Sri Krishna tells us: He who offers to the Lord a leaf or flower, a fruit or water with devotion and a single heart, that is to God a welcome oblation. "Fill thy mind with God alone, work for Him, be to Him devoted, worship Him and adore Him, steadfastly uniting thy heart with Him alone and regarding Him as the Supreme Goal, thus shalt thou come unto Him"—such is the rule of life He gives. And if we will but listen in the stillness of the hour of prayer to the Divine voice in our own heart, we shall hear it whisper: "It matters not what Sacred Book

you read or by what name you call Me; it matters not whether you bow down in a cathedral close or under the arching branches of a lonely forest; it matters not whether you are clothed in gorgeous vestments or in a beggar's rags; all I want is that your heart be pure, that nothing fill it save hunger and thirst for Me; more than that I ask not. Call but once My Name with your whole soul and I will come."

Sri Ramakrishna tells the story of a saint who one day was absent from his hermitage when a devotee in distress of mind sought counsel of him. The son anxious that he should not have come in vain sought to help him. "If you will but repeat God's Name three times, you will find peace," he said. When the saint heard of it, he turned reprovingly on his son, saying: "My child, how little is your faith! Do you not know that if you utter the Lord's Name only once with all your heart, you will gain peace throughout eternity?" The secret lies in gathering up the whole of our being and laying it with unquestioning devotion at the feet of the Supreme: not trying to reach Him through calls for health and prosperity or through bigotted insistence on dogma and doctrine; not feeling that we are nearer to Him because we recite a special creed, worship a special Saviour, follow a special form.

God knows not higher or lower, greater or less. He who has ever stood face to face with the Lord or truly perceived His Divine Presence in a Christ or Buddha, realizes that Deity, incarnate or dis-incarnate, is beyond weight and measurement. Whatever the form He wears, always within shines the same resplendent glory; and time, place and country have no power to limit Him. Is it imaginable that the Supreme could calculate that in a special moment among a special people He would come to earth once and

once only to bless His children? Only the finite human mind could conceive such a plan. The Divine Mind is universal. It is alike to all beings, never a "respecter of persons." It knows no chosen people. It recognizes no chosen time. Every living creature from the beginning of creation, every soul in all the turn of cycles has been and will be equally dear to the heart of God. Is any true mother ever a partial mother? His Eternal Message, the Word that was in the beginning, has been sounding down the ages in unfaltering cadence, echoing from the Himalayas to Mt. Sinai, from the shores of the Daiti in Iran to the banks of the river Jordan. When it is spoken in your language, it seems highest to you; when in mine, it seems highest to me; because each can then best comprehend its spirit. But always is it the same Message uttered in endless forms and tongues to countless peoples. Truth must always be one, whatever the name we give it.

Should it, however, at this moment fall upon our ears in its full might, it would daze and deafen us. We must grow into the Universal, and along the way we fashion anew each day the God before Whom we bow. Every expansion of our consciousness brings a fresh conception of Deity and a readjustment of our ideals. As much of the Absolute as our understanding can cover, so much becomes our God, personal or impersonal according as we have transcended our own small personality. But only when we have layed aside the last remnant of "I" and "Mine" will our consciousness overflow the final barrier and cover the whole. Then for the first time shall we worship the One God, Who bears all Names, Who hears all prayers, Who receives all sacrifices, and Who loves with unmeasuring tenderness all living beings.

HYMN TO THE SUPREME.

Metrical Translation from the Rig-Veda.

As golden germ he rose in the beginning
To be the only Lord of all existence.
For earth and heaven firm supports He fashioned;
Who is the Lord, with sacrifice we serve Him.

Who rules supremely over all that breathes,
To Whom is subject all that wakes or slumbers,
Of all, both man and beast, the only king He;
Who is the Lord, with sacrifice we serve Him.

Whose might and power yonder snow-capped mountains,
The ocean and the rushing stream exhibit;
Whose arms extended are the poles of heaven;
Who is the Lord, with sacrifice we serve Him.

Who gives us breath and strength, and Whose commandment
All creatures must obey, the great gods even;
Whose shade is death, Whose image life immortal;
Who is the Lord, with sacrifice we serve Him.

May he not harm us, the earth's Creator,
Who lifted up the spreading heavenly regions,
By Whom the brilliant waters were created;
Who is the Lord, with sacrifice we serve Him.

Through Whom the heaven's and the earth's foundation,
The sun's effulgence and the firmament sustained are;
By Whom the middle realm of air is measured;
Who is the Lord, with sacrifice we serve Him.

To Whom with trembling hearts the two great armies
Look up for succor, on His will relying;
By Whom the sun goes forth and sheds its radiance;
Who is the Lord, with sacrifice we serve Him.

When in the time of yore the mighty waters
Came pregnant with all germs, the fire evolving,
As life-breath of the gods He thence proceeded,
Who is the Lord, with sacrifice we serve Him.

The powerful Himself surveyed these waters
With forces teeming, sacrifice producing;
He Who of all the gods the only God was;
Who is the Lord, with sacrifice we serve Him.

SANKARA, THE GREAT MONISTIC TEACHER.

Lecture by Swami Paramananda.

Sankara was born on the Southwestern coast of India at the close of the 8th century, probably about 788 A.D. His mother, having long remained childless, prayed to God to bestow on her the joy of motherhood; and it is said that in a dream an Illumined Being came to her and asked whether she would rather have many ordinary children or only one son who would be very wise but short-lived, and she chose the one wise child. Soon after she bore Sankara. He was sent early to school and was still at a very tender age when he finished his studies, for from his boyhood he had manifested phenomenal intelligence. At that time the system of education was very different from what it is at present. Boys went to live with their teachers, who were men of spiritual vision as well as learned scholars, and Sankara returned from his teacher's house filled with the determination not to marry but to devote himself wholly to the search after Truth. The ancient system of life in India was divided into four stages. First childhood, spent in the home under the loving protection and guidance of the parents. Then the student's life, passed altogether

with the teacher. During this the character was formed and the necessary training given to fit the boy for the third stage,—the householder's life, in which he was expected to marry and do his duty towards his family, his neighbors and the community at large. But Sankara wanted to take the step beyond that. He wished to enter at once into retirement, to take up the fourth stage or the forest life, in which one is free from household and social cares and can consecrate one's whole thought to God. His neighbors and elders tried to persuade him to abandon his radical views and lead a householder's life before renouncing the world. His mother also out of intense love declared that she could not part with him; and without her permission he would do nothing, for he had the deepest love and reverence for her. Thus he remained at home, but within him was always the overwhelming desire to give up all for the sake of Truth.

One day there was a great flood in that part of the country and when he went with his mother to bathe in the river, a crocodile seized him. "Mother, Mother," he cried, "I am lost! I am going to die! Now give me thy permission that I may at least die as a Sannyasin (one who has renounced)." The mother, overcome with grief, called: "Yes, yes, my son, I give my permission freely." It is said that as soon as she had spoken, the crocodile released his hold and Sankara was saved. But the mother now felt that she had no claim on him and soon after Sankara set out in search of a teacher who would initiate him into the religious life. He found Govinda, a celebrated Sannyasin, and asked to be taught by him. When the teacher inquired who he was, it is said that he burst into a beautiful song, in purest Sanskrit, which ran: "I am neither fire, nor air, nor earth, nor water, I am none of these. I am that Unchangeable Reality, Who is never born and never dies, Who is Unde-

caying, Ever-existent. I am That, I am That." Then he added simply: "I am the son of Sivaguru, a Brahmin of Kerala. My father died when I was a child and I was brought up by my mother. I have had a fair course of instruction in the *Sastras* (Scriptures)." Pleased with the boy and struck with his remarkable power, Govinda accepted him as a disciple and after proper preparation he invested him with the orange robe of the Sannyasin. He then began to teach him philosophy as he had himself learned it from his master Guadapada. It is not definitely known how long this period of training lasted, but it must have covered some years and at its close Sankara was sent to Benares, then as now the chief seat of learning in India. Here, although probably still in his teens, he began his great task of writing exhaustive commentaries on the Bhagavad-Gita, the Upanishads and the Brahma-sutras, which remain to this day the most authoritative works on Monistic Vedanta known. He also composed a number of profound and beautiful original writings both in verse and prose. Yet all this was accomplished in so short a time that when only a little over twenty-five years of age he began his life of a peripatetic Teacher.

The period at Benares is full of interesting incidents. One day the Master and some of his disciples were going for their accustomed bath in the Ganges, when a Pariah with his dog was seen approaching them. "Go away, make the road clear!" a disciple shouted, but the man walked steadily on until he reached Sankara. "How is it," he asked, "that you who teach that there is no distinction between soul and soul shrink from me as a Pariah?" Sankara, realizing the mistake of his disciple, replied in a series of five wonderful verses, each of which ends thus: "He who has learned to look on the phenomenal world in this monistic

light is my true teacher, be he a Pariah or a twice-born Brahmana. Such is my conviction." On another occasion, as he saw a student absorbed in the study of the Sanskrit Grammar, he is said to have reminded him of the futility of mere learning in another famous song, the refrain of which runs: "Worship the Lord, Worship the Lord, Worship the Lord, fool that thou art. When thou art face to face with Death, the repetition of rules of grammar will not save thee."

Having set forth on his wanderings, Sankara travelled over the whole of India followed by a large number of disciples. He first stopped at Allahabad to bathe in the confluence of the Jamuna and the Ganges. He then went to Mahishmati, where the great Pandit Mandana was living. Mandana was a man of large wealth, noted for his learning and for his avowed contempt for monastic life. Sankara invited him to a controversy and the agreement was that if Sankara won, Mandana was to relinquish his householder's estate and become a monk; while if Mandana was victorious, Sankara should cease to be a Sannyasin and consent to marry. Mandana's wife, Bharati, whose learning and gifts were very vast, was chosen as umpire. At that period in India there were many women of great erudition who went about freely teaching, for Hindu women did not lose their freedom until after the Mohammedan invasion. The controversy lasted four days and at its close Mandana was declared vanquished. Bharati then rose, however, and insisted that Sankara had defeated only one half of Mandana, that she was the other half and must be defeated in her turn. After gaining a second victory over the wife, both Bharati and Mandana renounced their home and later Mandana was placed at the head of the Sringeri Mutt, one of the four great monasteries which Sankara established in

the four quarters of India, while Bharati through her noble life of abnegation and devotion as well as by her rare gifts contributed a large share toward the Monistic revival founded by Sankara.

The great teacher is said to have finished his mission within thirty-two years and of these the last six or seven were spent in constant wandering and preaching. At the time of his coming India was in a state of great degradation, due to the multifarious ritualistic abuses which had gradually debased Buddhism and created a state of both social and monastic corruption. Having sprung out of the Vedic teaching as a powerful reform movement, it was now gradually absorbed back into that teaching, purified and exalted by the touch of Sankara's gigantic intellect and spiritual vision. When Hinduism needed someone to reestablish its real spirit, Buddha came. His mission was not, as many believe, to destroy the ideas of the Vedic religion, but to revive them, to free them from the many elaborate ceremonials and outward observances which had obscured them. When in time the teaching of Buddha lost its purity and became degraded in the hands of his followers, then appeared a new spiritual genius in the form of Sankara. Before him, however, early in the 8th century, there arose another great reformer called Kumarilla Bhatta, who reminds us strongly of Luther in his character and mission. He had lived in a Buddhistic monastery and been an earnest devout follower of the Buddhistic teaching. But one day in the lesson his teacher bitterly denounced the Vedic and all other Scriptures. This hurt Bhatta very much. It seemed little in accord with the spirit of the founder of the faith, so he withdrew from the class and went into seclusion. Some of his brother monks observed this and reported it to the teacher, saying: "This man is no longer

one of us; he has doubts about the teaching." As time went on his lack of sympathy became more apparent. He began to find fault with existing conditions in the Order; and his brothers, fearful that if he escaped he might reveal the secrets of the monastery, determined to make way with him. It is said that one night they dropped him from a tower, but as he fell he cried out: "If the Vedic Scriptures are true, that will save me," and he reached the ground unhurt. From that time he declared himself an open enemy of Buddhism and he went from place to place trying to revive the grandeur of the ancient Vedic teaching and bring enlightenment. His heart was full of desire to waken once more the real spirit of Truth and his learning, his earnestness, his devout life enabled him to gain many friends among kings and rulers.

Reacting against his own early monastic experience, however, he layed undue stress upon a life of worldly activity and became as sectarian and one-sided in this direction as the Buddhist Bhikshus were extreme in their advocacy of indiscriminate renunciation. It was given to Sankara to destroy these various sectarian quarrels by showing that all forms of religious thought had a common basis in the One and that all sects and creeds could meet on the lofty platform of pure monism. He furthermore tried to impress upon the people that liberation was not gained through elaborate ceremonies and ritualistic observances, but through the attainment of *Jnana* or Wisdom; that of all sacrifices *Atma-Yajna* or the sacrifice of the self was the highest, while the highest knowledge was the *Atma-Jnana* or knowledge of the Divine Self. Sankara's philosophy is strictly monistic. He does not admit the many. Although in this universe we see many, he called this variety or diversity in creation *Maya*, apparent but not real. *Maya*

does not mean exactly non-existent, nor does it mean delusion; it may be understood in the same sense as a dream, which so long as we are dreaming seems a reality, but which as soon as the dream is gone we know to be unreal. So Sankara explains this doctrine of *Maya* as false perception, the seeing of more than one, while the Real is only One. To perceive Unity underlying the apparent diversity is according to him the highest wisdom. That which obscures this clear vision of the One is *Maya* or nescience.

His philosophy rests on the three *Mahavakyas* or Great Sayings of the Upanishads— *Soham* (I am He), *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahmin) and *Tat twam asi* (That thou art). These three vital utterances form the foundation of his doctrine of monism. He did not admit that there was any difference between God and the individual being. They were identically the same. What we call name and form or duality had in his conception no real existence. Thus he tried to bring out the monistic spirit of the Vedanta by proclaiming wisdom as the supreme end. The Vedic teaching is divided into two parts: one deals with ceremonials, rituals, the various means by which men may acquire the things of this world,—health, wealth, prosperity; and the other deals entirely with God-knowledge. It was on the second part that Sankara layed greatest emphasis. Yet it is a mistake to suppose that his doctrine of wisdom was opposed to work and worship. On the contrary he taught that when work is performed without selfish desire or egotism, it serves as a great purifier; while of worship he says: "Of all the means which help the attainment of freedom, Bhakti or devotion is the greatest."

He sets down certain rules of spiritual practice, which he calls the four-fold disciplines. The first is *Nityanitya-vastu-viveka*, the discrimination between the permanent and

the transitory, the real and the unreal. The second is *Ihamutra-phalabhoga-viraga*, detachment from all hope of reward in this life or in heaven. The third is *Sama-damadi*, the control of body, mind and senses; and the fourth, *Mumukshutwam*, desire for liberation. Under the third discipline are classed six different practices: *Sama*, withdrawing the mind from earthly things; *Dama*, restraining the senses; *Uparati*, turning from the external for the sake of gaining higher knowledge; *Titiksha*, fortitude in heat and cold, pleasure and pain, praise and blame; *Samadhana*, concentrating the mind on higher things; and *Sraddha*, faith in the Scriptures and the words of the teacher. These are the means by which the individual consciousness may be lifted above the dominion of *Maya* and attain realization of its true identity which is Brahman the Absolute.

Monism had existed in India from time immemorial, but Sankara came as a new and powerful interpreter of it. The Vedic philosophy, however, includes both schools, the dualistic as well as the non-dualistic. It has a universal platform. It gives a place to every phase of thought and growth, because it recognizes that men can only follow that path to the Infinite which accords with their capacities. The Infinite can never be limited by name, form, ritual or ceremonies, although these may prove valuable aids when performed in the right spirit. But the true aim of life is to gain knowledge of the Supreme and that is what Sankara proclaimed through the length and breadth of India, with such dynamic force that he awakened the people from their spiritual lethargy and kindled within them a new faith and hope. All the prevailing superstitions and sectarian beliefs faded away before the clear light of his pure teaching and there followed a mighty revival of the lofty ideals of Vedanta.

NOTES ON THE VEDANTA.

By Swami Vivekananda.

The cardinal features of the Hindu religion are founded on the meditative and speculative philosophy and on the ethical teachings contained in the various books of the Vedas, which assert that the Universe is infinite in space and eternal in duration. It never had a beginning and it never will have an end. Innumerable have been the manifestations of the power of the Spirit in the realm of matter, of the force of the Infinite in the domain of the finite, but the Infinite Itself is self-existent, eternal and unchangeable. The passage of time makes no mark whatever on the dial of eternity. In Its super-sensuous region, which cannot be comprehended at all by the human understanding, there is no past and there is no future.

The Vedas teach that the soul of man is immortal. The body is subject to the law of growth and decay; what grows must of necessity decay. But the indwelling spirit is related to the infinite and eternal life; it never had a beginning and it will never have an end. One of the chief distinctions between the Vedic and the Christian religion is that the Christian religion teaches that each human soul had its beginning at its birth into this world; whereas the Vedic religion asserts that the spirit of man is an emanation of the Eternal Being and had no more a beginning than God Himself. Innumerable have been and will be its manifestations in its passage from one personality to another, subject to the great law of spiritual evolution, until it reaches perfection when there is no more change.

The Monistic Vedanta says that a man neither is born nor dies, nor goes to heaven, and that reincarnation is really a myth with regard to the soul. The example is given of the leaves of a book being turned. It is the book that

evolves, not the man. Every soul is omnipresent, so where can it come or go? These births and deaths are changes in Nature which we are mistaking for changes in us. Reincarnation is the evolution of Nature and the manifestation of the God within.

We would describe the soul in these words: The soul sword cannot cut nor spear pierce; it fire cannot burn nor water melt; indestructible, omnipresent is the soul. Therefore weep not for it. If it has been very bad, we believe that it will become good in time to come. The fundamental principle is that there is eternal freedom for every one. Everyone must come to it. We have to struggle, impelled by our desires, to be free. Every other desire but that to be free is illusive. Every good action, the Vedantist says, is a manifestation of that freedom. Now and then we know a moment of supreme bliss. Then it passes and we again see the panorama of the universe moving before us, and we know that it is but a mosaic work set upon God, Who is the background of all things.

The Vedanta teaches that Nirvana can be attained here and now, that we do not have to wait for death to reach it. Nirvana is the realization of the Self; and after having once known that, if only for an instant, never again can one be deluded by the mirage of personality. Having eyes we must see the apparent, but all the time we know what it is, we have found out its true nature. It is the screen that hides the Self, which is unchanging. The screen opens and we find the Self behind it. All change is in the screen. In the saint the screen is thin and the reality can almost shine through. In the sinner the screen is thick and we are apt to lose sight of the fact that the *Atman* (soul) is there as well as behind the saint's screen. When the screen is wholly removed, we find it really never existed, that we were the

Atman and nothing else; even the screen is forgotten.

The Vedanta system begins with tremendous pessimism and ends with real optimism. We deny the sense optimism, but assert the optimism of the super-sensuous; that real happiness is not in the senses, but above the senses; and it is in every man. The sort of optimism which we see in the world is what will lead to ruin through the senses. Abnegation has the greatest importance in our philosophy. Negation implies affirmation of the Real Self. The Vedanta is pessimistic so far as it negatives the world of the senses, but it is optimistic in its assertion of the real world.

The Vedic teaching is an expansive ocean on the surface of which a man-of-war can be near a catamaran. So in this ocean of Vedanta a real Yogi can be by the side of an idolater or even an atheist. What is more, in the Vedanta ocean, the Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian or Parsi are all one, all children of Almighty God.

All religions are at bottom alike. God has not left Himself without a witness in every heart and man should be willing to admit this. It is not the man who believes a certain something, but the man who does the will of the Father in heaven who is right. On this basis—being right and doing right—the whole world can unite.

As one can ascend to the roof by means of a ladder or a bamboo pole, a staircase or a rope, so divers are the ways and means to approach God; and every religion in the world shows one of these ways.

People partition off their lands, but no one can partition off the all-embracing sky overhead. So common man in ignorance says: "My religion is the only one, my religion is the best." But when his heart is illumined by true knowledge, he knows that above all the wars of sects and sectarians presides the one Indivisible, Eternal, All-knowing Bliss.

Sri Ramakrishna.

THE STORY OF SAVITRI.

From the Indian Puranas.

There was a king named Aswapati, generous, virtuous and full of valor. But he had no child. Hoping to win the favor of the gods, he retired to the forest and for eighteen years gave himself up to severest austerity, daily worshipping with sacrificial fire and sacred texts. It happened that once in the morning hour as he chanted with intensest fervor the hymn to Savitri, radiant spirit of devotion, the figure of a woman rose in the hollow centre of the glowing flame and blessed him, promising that his wife should bear him a daughter whose glory would be as her own. In the appointed time, as the fruit of their long pious vigils, a child was born unto the royal couple, so full of light and beauty that all said a goddess had come to dwell among them.

They called her Savitri after the holy prayer whose tireless repetition had drawn her down to earth. A lofty grace marked all her motions, her eyes shone with unwonted splendor, and though her heart seemed all gentleness and compassion, so ardent and undaunted was the spirit that abode within her that no prince dared approach to woo her. It grieved her father to see her thus unwed; and so when after her habitual worship in the Shrine she came to lay an offering of flowers before him, he said to her:

"Beloved daughter, the time is here when thou shouldst become a wife; choose whom thou wilt for husband and I will give thee unto him, for disgrace falls on that father who giveth not his daughter."

Savitri listened with bent head and reverently folded hands. Then speaking she craved of her father this one favor,—that before there was further question of her marriage, she be allowed to make a holy pilgrimage. Her

father and his councillors willingly consented.

A richly-gilded car was made ready and Savitri, followed by a long train of guards and servants with elephants carrying tents and furniture and food, began her pious journey from one Sacred Shrine to another. Despite her royal retinue, she led the life of a simple pilgrim,—bathing each morning in some running stream or lake, performing worship, cooking her own simple meal, then going in a palanquin to a nearby hermitage, where for hours, closely veiled, she would sit at the feet of some holy sage listening to his words of wisdom, or lapsing into prayer and meditation did he remain silent.

Thus months sped by. Then one day, while travelling through a densely shaded forest, she beheld from behind the silken curtains of her palanquin a youth moving towards them. He was tall and lithe and strong of limb, with so kingly a bearing that one wondered at the axe across his shoulder and the faggot bundle in his hand. Gently he stooped to aid a member of her train and then stood with courteous demeanor to let her pass. Her breath quickened, her heart throbbed, as she watched him; and having dispatched one of her servants to learn his name and dwelling-place, she gave orders to retrace their steps. Her soul had met its own, she must at once apprize her father. To this one only could she give herself.

Aswapati was in his audience chamber with the great sage Narada when Savitri entered and bowed down to touch her father's feet. Joyously he greeted her and asked: "Has my daughter found one worthy of her?"

A faint blush rose to Savitri's cheek and she spoke in low eager tones: "As we were passing through a certain wooded stretch, a young forester crossed our path. I sent one of my men to inquire and learned that he was the son

of a king, blind, dethroned and poor, who has withdrawn to the forest to end his days. The youth's name is Satyavan. He is strong yet gentle, humble yet a king in bearing. To no other can I belong."

The sage Narada spoke quickly: "Oh no, not he! Choose some other."

"Why?" asked Aswapati. "His poverty matters not. Savitri's dower will suffice for all."

"It is not that," the sage replied, "but a curse rests upon him and in a year he is doomed to die."

A deadly palor swept away the blush from Savitri's cheek. "Choose some other," the king pled with her. But she replied with unfaltering determination: "No, no; my heart is given, never can it be taken back. My soul has plighted troth and Satyavan alone can be my husband."

Thus Savitri became the wife of Satyavan and, casting aside her jewels and silken robes, went to live in the simple forest hermitage and serve his aged parents. But though the hours passed in sweetest communion, always was the dark shadow of the curse overhanging every joy. As the months went by, more ardent grew her devotion, more intense her worship, until three days before the time set by Narada she took the vow of the "three vigils," which meant that through three days and nights she would watch and pray and fast. Thus purified and strengthened, on the fateful morning she begged to go with her husband to the woods. He placed her in the cool shade of a quiet grove and through the weary hours she watched, listening with anxious intentness to the steady axe-blows deeper in the forest. Suddenly they ceased and Satyavan came staggering towards her murmuring: "My head! My head! Such pain!" Tenderly she layed him down and took his head upon her lap. But another seemed to shadow him. Raising

her eyes she beheld a majestic figure clad in densest black coming towards her from the jungle. She knew at once that it was Yama, Lord of Death. Seizing the soul of Satyavan, he started back calling to the quivering Savitri: "Farewell, my child. Be not grief-stricken. Death must come to every creature."

His words roused her spirit. Trembling no more, she rose and began to follow. Yama grew restless. The woman's presence troubled him.

"Savitri," he called, "ask any boon save your husband's life and I will give it you." "Grant to my father-in-law his sight," she asked, bending low in salutation. "Be it so," called Yama. "Now go home." But still the following footsteps struck on the Death-Lord's ears. "Another boon, if you wish," he called again, "but no further can you come." "Restore to my father-in-law his wealth and kingdom," Savitri asked once more. "So be it," was Yama's willing reply. "But go."

Deeper and deeper had grown the gloom, yet still the silent faithful figure followed. Another and still other boons were granted, yet on and on it came. At last Yama in impatience turned and said: "One more favor I will bestow, aught except your husband's life. Then I forbid you to come further."

With clasped hands and bending head she proffered this last request: "Bestow on me, Lord, a hundred sons and life long enough to see their sons." "They shall be yours," joyfully consented Yama. Still Savitri stood before him. "Why do you wait?" he asked. "You have your wish." Savitri raised her eyes and gazed full upon him. "But, Lord," she said, "a widow cannot marry." Yama was defeated. His word was given. With a loud laugh that echoed through the forest, he stooped and released the soul

of Satyavan.

Savitri sped on swiftest feet back to the body of her husband and again took his head upon her lap. "I have slept over-long. It is almost as if I had been dead," he murmured, opening at last his heavy eyes. "It was no dream, beloved one," she answered. "Come, let us go. The night is falling."

REPORTS

It is gratifying to read the Twelfth Annual Report of the Mayavati Dispensary, a Charitable organization established by the Ramakrishna Mission to relieve the distress along the lonely stretches of Himalayan hillsides, in a district where medical care is practically unattainable by the poor. The Dispensary now has its own building erected especially for its use and a qualified doctor who is also a member of the Mission. The year's summary of work shows that 1,173 patients were treated, among them being Mohammedans and Christians. This is a large number considering the long distances the sick have to travel to receive aid. As yet there is no provision for indoor patients, but in extreme cases a place is made in the Dispensary. It is hoped in time to extend this side of the work.

* * * *

The last Report of the Famine Relief Work carried on by the Ramakrishna Mission tells of new and alarming conditions in the Bankura District of Bengal. Here not only is there a pitiable scarcity of food, but the wells are drying up and people, driven by thirst, are drinking impure water and falling victims to disease. The Mission is working tirelessly to collect funds in order to dig new wells as well as to continue their distribution of food to the starving. All contributions for this noble work may be sent to The Vedanta Centre, where a Famine Fund has been started.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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WORK AND RENUNCIATION.

Extract of Class Talk by Swami Paramananda.

When we have reached God-knowledge, bondage drops from us just as ripe fruit drops from the tree. But if we tear the fruit from the tree, it does not ripen. In the same way when our desires are unfulfilled within us, if we merely tear them out of our heart, the heart bleeds. Renunciation is never possible in that way. As our understanding unfolds, however, and we outgrow the little things of this world, just as children outgrow their toys, then our desires drop off of their own accord; it requires no tearing, no pain, no pang. Spiritual unfoldment must always take place gradually. We cannot force it. The first step in the practice of renunciation is to learn to work without selfish attachment. "Renunciation and performance of action both lead to liberation," Sri Krishna says in the Gita. "Children (the ignorant) alone say, not wise men, that the path of wisdom and the path of work are different. He who is truly established in one obtains the fruits of both."

One who is a true worker attains that Highest Ideal which is reached by a man of renunciation. Work is not a hindrance to spiritual growth, as some imagine; we are all working constantly. There is a pent-up energy within each one of us which must find expression; if we do not know how to direct it properly, we create more and more bondage for ourselves; but if we understand how to use

it, then every act liberates us and creates more wisdom, more strength and illumination. We must follow the path of action so long as we have to struggle to subdue ourselves; when everything within has become tranquil, then we can take up the life of contemplation. First is the battle, then the calm. We must all fight against the various forces which are trying to overthrow us. Again and again desire rises like a storm and shakes our whole being; only when it is conquered can we gain the state of meditation necessary to attain wisdom.

Our ignorance lasts so long as we confine ourselves to our lower nature and identify ourselves wholly with it. But when we acquire knowledge of That which is Unbounded, Unlimited, Perfect, then we naturally overcome all imperfections and the petty little tendencies which create bondage fall away from us. It is the little man who becomes jealous of another, envious of another, who tries to further his own interest by hurting another. As he grows bigger in spiritual wisdom his nature unfolds, his consciousness expands, until the whole universe becomes his abode and all mankind his family. This is what is meant by renunciation. It does not mean giving up external things; it means giving up limitation and allowing the soul to expand its circle. We do not drop anything, we merely live and act in a greater circle. We breathe more freely, enjoy more freely, give more freely.

He who has conquered his lower self by his Higher Self is always self-controlled and serene-minded, for the Higher Self is never affected by the dualities; it is the same in pleasure or pain, in honor or dishonor; it remains ever tranquil and unmoved. Such a soul has attained freedom. Nothing can overthrow him. Freedom is not license. We are free when nothing can strike us down; when our whole

nature is under our control; when we are the master of body, senses, mind and will; when we know that we are the Changeless Self. He whose heart is filled with this knowledge of Spirit has equal regard for friends and foes, for well-wishers and ill-wishers, for the righteous and the unrighteous. How then can he hate any creature, how can he shrink from any one, when to him all is One Supreme Reality? This is the basis of the brotherhood of man which Christ teaches; by this realization alone can we connect ourselves with all men.

No matter what our line of activity is, we must hold to this thread and follow it; for if we miss That, then we have nothing to support us. The path of wisdom, of work, of devotion, of meditation, the ultimate goal of all these is but One and that One is the Supreme Lord Who exists everywhere. He is in our work and He is also in our rest. He dwells in every heart. He is outside as well as within. When we realize Him, then this world can deceive us no more, for we feel ourselves connected with Him in Whom everything exists and finding Whom we can lose nothing.

Freedom is the motive of the universe. Freedom is its goal. This freedom is attained by the threefold means of work, worship and knowledge. Work means constant unceasing effort to help others and love others. Worship consists in prayer, praise and meditation. Knowledge is that which follows meditation. . . This world is a great gymnasium where we come to make ourselves strong. Strength is in goodness, in purity. Have charity towards all beings. Pity those who are in distress. Love all creatures. Do not be jealous of anyone. Look not to the faults of others. Remember that everything can be sacrificed for Truth, but Truth cannot be sacrificed for anything.

—*Swami Vivekananda.*

SONGS BY KABIR.

Translated by Rabindranath Tagore.

Wake, Oh Wake!

O my heart! the Supreme Spirit, the great Master, is near you: wake, Oh wake!

Run to the feet of your Beloved: for your Lord stands near to your head.

You have slept for unnumbered ages: this morning will you not wake?

The Moon Shines in My Body.

The moon shines in my body, but my blind eyes cannot see it:
The moon is within me, and so is the sun.

The unstruck drum of Eternity is sounded within me; but my deaf ears cannot hear it.

So long as man clamours for the *I* and the *Mine*, his works are as naught:
When all love of the *I* and the *Mine* is dead, then the work of the Lord is done.

For work has no other aim than the getting of knowledge:
When that comes, then work is put away.

The flower blooms for the fruit: when the fruit comes, the flower withers.

The musk is in the deer, but it seeks it not within itself: it wanders in quest of grass.

The Fish in the Water is Thirsty.

I laugh when I hear that the fish in the water is thirsty:
You do not see that the Real is in your home, and you wander from forest to forest listlessly!

Here is the truth! Go where you will, to Benares or to Mathura; if you do not find your soul, the world is unreal to you.

JNANA-YOGA.

By S. E. Waldo.

Jnana-Yoga is for the strong; for he who would follow it must be prepared to throw away all old idols, all old beliefs and superstitions, all desires for this world or another, and be determined only to seek and find Freedom. Without Jnana or true knowledge liberation cannot be ours. Our bondage is the result of ignorance and only wisdom can free us. The highest good is the realization of the Divine. It is beyond sense, beyond thinking, beyond even what we call consciousness. The Eternal Subject can never become the object of knowledge because such knowledge is only of the related, not of the Absolute. All sense-knowledge is limitation, it is an endless chain of cause and effect. This whole universe is one of relativity, ruled by the law of causation. It is only because that changless one Existence, which alone is real, shimmers through these veils of ignorance that we are able to rise above the relative, if only for an instant. It is these glimpses of our true nature, which is freedom, that help us in the struggle to transcend all limitation and realize Freedom Absolute. The real Self, the same in all beings, is never bound, never conditioned, is ever outside the Karmic wheel; and it is this real Self that makes every human being feel himself free, though his reason tells him that he cannot be so, being submerged in the ocean of law-bound phenomena.

On the plane of reason it is true that man is conditioned and limited. As a related being, man is not and cannot be free; and if the relative world alone were true, man would be merely the mechanical arrangement that some modern psychologists try to make him out to be. Psychology is called a science; but it cannot be a science of the soul, as its name implies, because there can be no science of the

undemonstrable. What this psychology demonstrates is all in relation to the fine nervous processes connected with thought. It measures the time and the amount of the mental reaction in response to external stimulation, but it has yet to find out the nervous processes answering to acts of memory or to abstract thinking. Certain nervous changes in the brain accompany all psychological processes, but the concomitant, or even the result of a thing, is not the thing itself. The thinking self, which relates itself to all sensations, which is the independent yet inseparable cause of all actions, is the something which binds together all the experiences of an individual, is the substratum which is a necessity in connection with all acts of the mind. This idea of "self" as the real subject of all experience, involving intelligence, emotion, feeling and will, is what Jnana seeks to expand and enlarge from *a* self to *the* Self, the One Unit Existence. That God and man are one is the constant teaching of the Upanishads and the Gita; but few only are able to penetrate behind the veil and reach the realization of this Truth.

The first thing to be got rid of by one who would become a Jnanin is fear. Fear is one of our worst enemies and the fruitful source of weakness. Next, we must throw away all beliefs. The true rationalist must believe nothing until he knows it to be true. He must go on fearlessly and follow his reason to its farthest limits. He must not stop anywhere on the road. When he begins to deny, all must go, until that which cannot be denied or thrown away is reached; and that is the real Self which was hidden from his eyes by layer after layer of ignorance. It is ever the same, that infinite, eternal, unchangeable Witness of the Universe, the Self of every being. When man perseveres in his attempt to reach the highest ideal he can conceive,

he will eventually find indeed that all the time he has himself been the one perfect Self and that all else is but a dream. While the dream lasts, it is real for us; but when it once has broken, we shall ever more know it for what it is, even though we may still have to dream again. To separate ourselves utterly from matter and all faith in its reality is true Jnana.

Abstract unity is the foundation of Jnana-Yoga. The idea of "One without a second" is called *Advaita* (non-dualism) and is the corner stone of the Vedanta Philosophy. The Advaita is a philosophy of the Absolute. It may be asked if it is possible to have anything like a philosophy of the Absolute in face of the all-embracing power of relativity which meets us at every step? The Advaita claims that it is such a philosophy; that, although relativity governs everything in the realm of experience, there is always a something which transcends experience and makes it possible. That whereby experience derives its being is the Absolute. It is certainly not given to us by or from experience. The latter may give us the antecedents and consequences of certain phenomena, but the nexus which invariably connects the two cannot be given by any experience whatever. Thought, the faculty or essence which synthesizes experience, is no result of material organization. This nexus of reason, this transcendental faculty of synthetic thought, the very essence of being, is the point from which the Advaita starts its theory of absolute idealism.

"Advaita maintains that thought implies being, as the absolute implies relative. Unity is inexpressible, but the very word implies duality and posits a something as against itself, till self-realization demolishes the illusion. Thought is being; both, in fact, are aspects, so to speak, of a something unique and one. This transcendental essence of being

is present in every existence, for existence itself implies it. It is that which is active in the consciousness of every sentient being, for it is the essence of thought. It is that which is implied in the very subsistence, position, or being of so-called lifeless things and substances. The whole of experience with its endless variety is but the mere functioning of the Absolute on its way to itself. Thought returns to thought and creates a universe of subject and object in the process." This world is our interpretation of the Brahman or the Absolute seen through the veil of Maya or appearance. This world is not zero; it has certain reality; for it *appears* because the Absolute *is*. Everything reveals the Absolute. Everything is the Absolute, yet apart from It. The Absolute is ever indescribable, beyond the reach of intellect or speech. The Advaitist uses for It the expression "Sat-chit-ananda," Existence-Knowledge-Bliss; but even that is a limitation, and the only thing we can really say of It is "not this, not this." It is like the pure white ray which is the synthesis of all the colors. The prism breaks the whole ray into the separate colors; and ignorance makes the Absolute, the One, appear as the infinite variety we see around us. To get rid of this ignorance and thus realize the Unity is the effort of Jnana-Yoga, as of the other Yogas; but this is the method which operates through reason and through philosophy joined to a tremendous will.

The Jnanin must be as intense as the narrowest sectarian in regard to his convictions, yet as broad as the heavens. He must absolutely control his mind. He must be able to be a Christian, a Buddhist or a Hindu; he must have the power to consciously distribute himself into all these different ideas and yet hold fast to the eternal harmony of all. Constant drill and discipline alone can enable

us to get this kind of control of ourselves. We have to learn not to identify ourselves with what we do, to hear nothing, see nothing, think nothing but the highest; we must day and night tell ourselves that we are not these seeming personalities, but that we are one undivided Existence. The greatest among the great teachers of this monistic Vedanta was Sankara. By solid reasoning he extracted from the vast mass of the Vedas the truths of the Vedanta, and on them built up the wonderful system of Jnana that is taught in his commentaries. He unified all the conflicting descriptions of Brahman and showed that these were but different aspects of the One Infinite Reality.

We are not drops to fall into the ocean and be lost; each one of us is the whole infinite ocean and we shall know it when released from the fetters of illusion. Infinity cannot be divided; there is but one Being, and every soul is that Being in full, not a part of it. The whole of the sun is reflected in each dewdrop. Appearing in time, space and causation, this Being Absolute seems as this universe; but behind all appearance is the one Reality. The denial of this lower or apparent self is unselfishness, and it will help us to free ourselves from the idea that we are mere bodies. We have to realize the truth that we are Existence Absolute. When we can do that we shall be in a position to give the best help to mankind, because knowing ourselves to be the All, desire will have been transcended and we shall want nothing for ourselves, but we shall seek only to give to others the truth that can make them free. The mind brings before us all our delusions, so we have to tell the truth to the mind incessantly, until it is made to realize it. Our real nature is All-Bliss, and all the pleasure we know is but a reflection of that. The Self is beyond either pleasure or pain, the unchanging and steady Reader, before

whom turn the leaves of the book of life.

"I and mine" is a superstition that we have lived in so long that it is well-nigh impossible to shake it off. Still, if we would rise to the highest, it must be got rid of, for this idea of separateness is the very root of all our misery, it is the "original sin" so to speak. Jnana is "creedlessness"; but that does not mean that it despises creeds. It only means that a stage beyond and above creeds has been gained. As all rivers roll their waters into the sea and become one, so all creeds should lead to Jnana or wisdom and there lose themselves, because even creeds are signs of that separateness that gives rise to sorrow. We have to attain "sameness," that is to look with equal eyes upon all. Jnana teaches that the world must be given up, but that does not mean abandoned. To live in the world but not to be of it is the true test of wisdom. Jnana demands that praise and blame, good and evil, pain and pleasure should be alike to him who would be a Jnana-Yogin. He must come out of all forms, get beyond all rules and all books, yet he must never condemn those who cannot rise above forms and creeds. Even in his heart of hearts he must not think himself superior to any other, he must see only sameness everywhere. All to him must be that One Existence.

These are the marks of the true Jnana-Yogin: He desires nothing save knowledge. All his senses are under perfect restraint; he suffers everything without murmuring, equally content if his bed be the bare ground, or if he be lodged in a king's palace. He is elated by no praise and he shuns no blame; he has given up all but the Self. He knows that all is unreal but the One. He has an intense desire for freedom. With a strong will he fixes his mind on higher things and so attains to peace. Seeing himself

as one with all existence, he works incessantly for others, giving up all personal results of his labors, whether their fruition be here or hereafter. Knowing himself to be one with the All, what can the Jnanin seek? Or where can he look for anything?

The Atman, the Divine Self, is the One Undivided Existence. It is beyond mind, memory, thought, or even consciousness as we know it. It is That because of which everything exists. The goal of the whole universe is to realize oneness with the One Existence. The Jnanin tells himself day and night that there are no beliefs, no sacred words, no heaven, no hell, no creed, no church, there is only the Atman. He analyzes everything by pure reason until he reaches Nirvana, which is the extinction of relativity. No conception of this is possible, because even the thought of it would be limitation. Jnana is not at all to be judged by any earthly result. We must not be like the vulture which soars almost beyond sight, but which has ever its eyes fixed on earth and is always ready to swoop downwards at the sight of a bit of carrion. The Jnanin asks not for health, nor for longevity, nor for prosperity, nor for heaven; he asks only for freedom. We are "Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute." Existence is the last generalization in the universe, so we exist, we know it; and bliss is the nature of existence absolute.

The more one has been purified and prepared by meditation, the more clearly do these flashes of realization come to him; therefore the Jnanin meditates constantly on that One Existence. Comfort is no test of truth, on the contrary truth is often very far from comfortable. If one really wishes to find truth, he must not cling to comfort. It is hard indeed to let go, but he who would become a Jnanin must do so. He must be pure, he must kill out all

desire and cease to identify himself with the body. Sacrifice is necessary, and it is this underlying truth, this immolation of the lower self, that has made sacrifice a part of all religions. All the propitiatory offerings to the gods were but dimly understood types of the only sacrifice that is of any real value; through the surrender of the apparent self alone can we realize the one Self, the Atman. Man is always perfect, or he can never become so; only he has to realize it.

If man were bound to external causes, he could only be mortal. Immortality can only be true of the unconditioned. Nothing can act on the Atman, the Unchangeable; but man must identify himself with That, and not with body or mind. Let him know he is the witness of the Universe and then he can enjoy the beauty of the wonderful panorama passing before him. As a Hindu sage said, "From a balloon no minor distinctions are visible, so when a man rises high enough he will not see good and evil people;" and again, "Once the pot is burned, no more can it be shaped; so with the mind that has once touched the Lord and has had a baptism of fire, it can no more be changed." Only the highest philosophy can rise to pure abstraction. To worship is inherent in man's nature, so he will ever personify his God in order to worship Him. This is very good, as long as the symbol, be it what it may, is worshipped only as a symbol of the Divinity behind and not as anything of value in and of itself. Above all we need to free ourselves from the superstition of believing a thing because "it is in the books." Book worship is a most frequent form of idolatry. To try to make everything,—science, religion, philosophy, all conform to what any book whatever says is simply tyranny.

There was once a stag, proud and free, and he talked

in lordly fashion to his son. "Look at me, see my powerful horns! With one blow I can kill a man, it is a fine thing to be a stag." Just then the sound of the huntsman's bugle was heard in the distance and the stag precipitately fled, followed by his wondering child. When they had reached a place of safety, the young stag enquired: "Why do you fly before man, O my father, you who are so strong and brave?" And the older stag answered, "My child, I know I am strong and powerful, but when I hear that sound, something seizes me and makes me flee, whether I will or no." How often is this the case with us! We hear the "bugle sound" of the laws laid down in the books, at once habit and old superstitions lay hold of us, and before we know it we have forgotten our real nature and are fast bound once more in the old fears and delusions.

Knowledge exists eternally and revelation too is eternal; it is not to be crystallized as final and then blindly followed. Revelation may and does come to any man who has fitted himself to receive it. Perfect purity is the essential thing; all religions teach that only "the pure in heart shall see God." Every attribute we give to God belongs to man also, only in lesser degree. When we rise to the Absolute we have to leave body and mind, imagination and the world out of sight. They no longer exist for us, because we have transcended them. Those who have attained "sameness" or perfection are said to be "living in God." All hatred is "killing the self by the self," therefore love is the law of life. This love is impersonal in the sense that it is given to all alike, to every being, human and below humanity. He who has realized the Self has forgotten all "separateness"; he has lost himself in the life principle of the Universe. He breathes with the breath of nature, sees with the eye of the All, and thinks with the thoughts of

every being. He is the All, he is "Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute," he is the true Jnanin or Knower. Such a one the Vedanta calls *Jivanmukta* or "Living Free." He has realized the Divinity within and to him this world appears in its true character. He sees only perfection, because he has penetrated through the veils of ignorance. No more can they conceal truth from his eyes. He has reached through philosophy the same goal that is the aim of the worker, the devotee, or the follower of Raja Yoga, for the end cannot be different; only the means of reaching it vary. All must come at last to that Infinite Ocean of Existence Absolute, which is of its very nature Absolute Bliss.

SELECTION FROM THE SAMHITA.

A Dialogue between the Sage Astavakra and King Janaka.

King Janaka asked:

How can Truth be perceived? How can Liberation be attained? How is Renunciation possible?

The Sage Astavakra replied:

If your aim in life, my child, is liberation, renounce the objects of the senses as poison, and drink in as nectar, Truth, contentment, kindness, straightforwardness and forgiveness.

Reflect well within your soul on the distinction between your real Self and your individualized existence. Rest in your true Self. The moment that you know your Self, you are liberated. The fruit of liberation is blessed peace.

You are present everywhere. The ups and downs of life affect you not. . . Bitten by the deadly serpent of Egoism, you consider yourself the doer. Drink the deathless draft of the faith "I am not the doer" and be happy.

This Self is the spectator. It is all-pervading, perfect,

one, free and actionless, without a companion, without desire and quiet.

Serene and knowing that One Immortal Spirit (Atma) as the real Self, why should you feel attached to the pursuit of wealth?

Knowing that Supreme Spirit, from which rises the universe like waves on the ocean, as your Self, why should you wander about like a beggar?

He is peerless among men whose noble soul is satisfied with the knowledge of Spirit and whose heart is purged of desire. He only is never hopeless.

The Yogi prays not for gain and grieves not for loss. His soul is full to overflowing with the nectar of immortality.

The quiet one seeks not his own interest, nor has he any feeling of antagonism towards the world. He passes his days unintoxicated by the wine of life and unaffrighted by the frown of death.

To him gold is not more precious than stone. Devoid of the sense of possession and released from the clutch of ignorance and passion, the knot of his heart is cut asunder forever.

The splendors of paradise or the squalor of poverty, the rise of fortune or the shadow of misfortune, the society of men or the loneliness of the wilderness, does not shake the serenity of the Yogi who has risen above the duality of pain and pleasure.

A high-souled disciple gleans a lesson from everywhere, feels thankful and learns it. Others, questioning all their lives, become bewildered. . . Men having earth-hunger ignore the knowledge of the Truth.

Knowing that cares and anxieties are the cause of the miseries of human life, the wise man lives untroubled by

care and anxiety, without thirst, peaceful and content.

No one knows how much of his misery is due to strain and stress. Blessed are they who understand this and live in quietness.

Only those who work dispassionately and selflessly are happy. Duty must be done for duty's sake.

You are not body nor have you any body. You are neither actor nor enjoyer. You are the ever-conscious Self, the eternal witness. Be independent and walk happily.

Knowing that you are in all things and that all things are in you, banish the feeling of mine-ness. Cast away egoism and be blissful.

DESIRE.

Familiar Teachings by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

This heart of ours is like a mirror which gives a perfect reflection but which has been so thickly covered over with dust that nothing can be seen in it. The more you can rub off the dirt, the more will you be able to see yourself in it; when you have been able to remove the last speck of dust, you will get a perfect image of yourself. What is that dust which hides the image? Desire.

There was once a great *Tyagi* (one who is practising strict renunciation). He cared for nothing in the world, only he had a little love for his *Kopinam* (loin cloth). He kept it hanging on a tree and sometimes the rats used to come and gnaw it. This made him very angry. "What!" he said, "I have nothing in the world but this *Kopinam* and the rats want to take that from me?" So he got a cat to keep off the rats. But a cat requires milk, so he asked one of his disciples to bring him a cow. A cow, however, needs fodder, so he begged for a pair of bullocks to till the ground. Thus he added one possession to another until

finally, unable to care for them all, he married a wife and became once more a householder.

Our Master, Sri Ramakrishna, used to say that just as when you catch hold of one end of the creeper which grows over the surface of still water, the whole tank will come; so if you have one worldly desire, that connects you with the entire universe. When I remember out of what I have come, that naked I came into the world, not possessing anything, then I see that all these accumulations are foreign; they can never really belong to me, nor can I take them with me when I go. Yes, naked I came and alone I shall have to go. This aloneness or singleness is what is called purity.

Selfish desire is always dangerous. Sometimes we think that we have wholly killed it out, but somewhere in our mind there lingers a small remnant and as from a spark left in the corner of the hearth may come a big fire, so out of that small remnant may spring a huge fire of desires. The only way to eradicate selfish desire is to love God with your whole soul, then all other desires will drop off.

Pleasure is a positive thing and pain is a positive thing. God did not give you these eyes and these ears and this body merely to be annihilated. He gave them to you that you might enjoy. When he gave you hunger, He also put the food there to satisfy it. When He gave the senses, He also put the Universe there to be enjoyed by them. But when a man finds out that these little pleasures of the flesh are nothing compared to the infinite pleasures of the spirit, then he wants to renounce; not, however, merely for the sake of renunciation, but because he has found something better.

Why should a man give up? Why should he be unselfish? Rather if he wishes to be selfish, let him be truly so.

Let him not be satisfied with anything short of infinity. Let him not be content with the little finite things of this world. Let his ambition be infinite. Let him only give up because he knows he will get a great deal more. Let him give up this world, which can only bring perishable happiness, in order to gain God, Who can give him everlasting bliss.

God is the only Reality among all these unrealities. This world is vague, I am vague, you are vague, but God is absolutely real. This body will break and melt away, but God will never break or melt away. Everything else may change, but He never changes. He is always the same. That God is inside your own heart. Seek Him and all your desires will be eternally satisfied.

THE GOOD AND THE PLEASANT.

The present-day utilitarian tendency in all thought and action has naturally led men to make happiness the end of life and to believe that it consists in a maximum of pleasure with a minimum of pain. Pleasure in its turn is identified with physical comfort, leisure, amusement, the sense of ownership. This point of view more than anything else is responsible for the artificial standards of life, the social unrest and discontent existing everywhere. "I asked myself what is that, ever since earliest years, thou hast been fretting and fuming, and lamenting and self-tormenting on account of?" Carlyle writes in "Sartor Resartus." "Say in a word: is it not because thou art not Happy? Because the Thou (sweet gentleman) is not sufficiently honored, nourished, soft-bedded, and lovingly cared-for? Foolish Soul! . . . . . There is in man a Higher than Love of Happiness: he can do without Happiness, and instead thereof find Blessedness! Was it not to preach forth this

same Higher that sages and martyrs, the Poet and the Priest, in all times, have spoken and suffered; bearing testimony, through life and through death, of the Godlike that is in man, and how in the Godlike only has he Strength and Freedom? . . . . Love not Pleasure; love God. This is the Everlasting Yea, wherein all contradiction is solved: wherein whoso walks and works, it is well with him."

A clear distinction between the good and the pleasant, between happiness and blessedness, has ever been a fundamental characteristic of Eastern Thought, preëminently that of India. "The good is one thing, the pleasant another," we read in the Katha-Upanishad. "These two, having different objects chain a man. It is well with him who clings to the good; he who chooses the pleasant misses his end. The good and the pleasant approach man: the wise goes round about them and distinguishes them. Yea, the wise man prefers the good to the pleasant, but the fool chooses the pleasant through greed and avarice." To make pursuit of happiness the aim of life, Vedanta claims, tends at once to commercialize religion, to reduce it to a question of profit and loss. Reward and punishment, Heaven and Hell in some form, inevitably assume a large part in it and furnish the ultimate motive for action. Observance of duty and the practice of virtue soon grow to be regarded as the measure of highest attainment, while morality becomes an accepted substitute for spirituality.

No religion, it is true, can without injury to itself discard the restrictions and regulations of morality; but in no sense can these injunctions of the moral code be considered to constitute religion. They are only stepping-stones leading to it. The function of morality is to deal with human duties, the function of religion is to expand the ideal of duty and furnish a higher and higher motive

for its performance. The practice of ethics cultivates man's discriminative faculty; the practice of religion unfolds his spiritual nature. The one purifies his ego; the other lifts him above it. Morality rests upon duality, spirituality upon unity. Morality teaches man to choose wisely between two, spirituality teaches him to seek the One. And by what path does it lead him? The path of renunciation. He must turn from the pleasant and seek the good. Such is the uncompromising answer of every great spiritual Teacher. Having "kept the moral law from his youth up," he must now "sell all he has" and follow the Christ-Ideal. This does not mean any sudden revolution in his outer mode of living. All the changes called for in the spiritual life are primarily subjective. Man changes himself, and his outer world gradually reshapes itself in his new image; for our environment is merely the shadow of our own thought and character.

How is this inner change brought about? By the practice of non-attachment. Man cannot rise above a plane if he holds to anything on it, whether good or evil. That is the reason why *Vairagyam* or dispassion is so earnestly preached by the Vedic Sages. Casting aside the unpleasant does not free man so long as he clings to the pleasant. He must "regard alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat," if he would fight a winning battle; he must not exult in good fortune or grieve over ill-fortune; but, as Plato puts it, he must seek to reach that "point midway between the two at which the mind reposes from both." From that serene height of the witness he is able to view dispassionately the shifting panorama of his experience. Very quickly he perceives that there are no fixed dividing lines between pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow; that one fades and melts into the other so imperceptibly

that what at one moment seemed a pleasure has become a pain, while that which sprang into life as sorrow has proved itself a joy and blessing. Having realized this fundamental truth, he is able to accept with a quiet mind the ebb and flow of outer conditions. But this does not represent a state of numbness. He has not ceased to feel. He has merely mastered the great lesson taught in the Bhagavad-Gita that "The pleasures that are born of the senses are ever the sources of misery, they come and go. The wise man delighteth not in them"; but "He whose joy is within, whose pleasure is within and whose light is within, that one, being well-established in God, attains to absolute freedom."

All our suffering in life grows out of a false sense of values. Our ideas of important and unimportant, of lasting and fleeting, of real and unreal are vague and confused. The experience of the passing moment looms so large that it shuts out the whole universe and even God. When, however, we have learned through countless tears and bitter failures to readjust our scale of values and put all things in their proper place, to keep God always as the high light in our life-picture, at once our false perspective is corrected, the good becomes the pleasant, and the weary inner conflict which has so long consumed our strength is at an end. Then for the first time are we able to direct our whole energy towards accomplishing our task of helpfulness in the world and we begin to know that state of blessedness which is above all happiness.

With what pain the poor tormented souls of today seem to seek for truth, which is there, quite simple, within their reach! Yet is not that very pain in the search after truth a prayer? When we feel the need of God, it is because He is quite close to us. —*Paul Bourget.*

REPORTS.

In response to repeated and urgent invitations from students in Los Angeles Swami Paramananda left Boston on the 7th of June and made a direct journey to the Pacific Coast, stopping only for a day at the Grand Canyon. He arrived in Los Angeles on Monday the 12th and held a first meeting on the 15th. The following Sunday evening he began a course of public lectures at Symphony Hall, his subject being "Spiritual Awakening the Saving Grace for this Age." There were over 200 people present. On Tuesday afternoon, the 20th, the Swami was invited to speak in one of the churches on "India's Contribution to the Thought World"; and in the evening he gave the first of a regular series of Class Lectures at Assembly Hall on "Discrimination between the Real and the Unreal." The attendance at this meeting proved so much larger and the interest so much greater than was anticipated that it has been decided to secure Music Hall for this Course. The Swami will also hold a Meditation Class every Thursday evening. Such constant demands are being made upon him both in Los Angeles and the suburbs that it is probable that he will remain there during the greater part of the summer.

* * *

On the Thursday evening preceeding his departure for the West Swami Paramananda entertained at dinner over 60 friends and students, himself preparing all the dishes served. Tables were arranged for everyone in the Library and hall of the Centre. At the close of the dinner, there were many impromptu speakers. Mr. Orth sent a ripple of laughter over the company by a number of amusing anecdotes; Mrs. Spaulding touched the hearts of all by her earnest words of appreciation; while Mr. Clark repeated

the humorous stories told by Emerson, James Russell Lowell, Dr. Holmes and others at a luncheon given by him in honor of Bret Harte. After a further half hour of gayety, the Swami brought back the quieter, more earnest atmosphere of the Centre by a few closing words, in which he said that such moments of loving happy intercourse were as much a part of the work of Vedanta as the teaching and preaching, since the great aim of the Centre was to establish a feeling of unity and brotherhood among all men and to show how religion may be made a part of every act of life.

* * *

For the present all the Services and Classes will continue as usual at the Vedanta Centre of Boston. The attendance was excellent throughout the month of June and there was little to indicate a closing of the season.

* * *

A letter from Geneva just received tells us that the group of earnest students who banded themselves into a Centre for the study of Vedanta during the two seasons that Swami Paramananda lectured and taught there, still continue their weekly meetings. Last year they suspended them at the end of May, but this year everyone was so reluctant to give them up that it was decided to carry them through the month of June. They are holding faithfully together always in the hope that the Swami will be able to come to them again in the near future.

* * *

The tireless unselfish work of the members of the Ramakrishna Mission is becoming an ever larger factor in relieving the suffering, educating the ignorant and uplifting the poor of India. Everywhere their institutions are increasing in size and multiplying in number. The Home

of Service at Benares, which recently completed its 15th year, has for example within the last twelve months erected five more wards for infectious diseases on the newly acquired land donated by several of its many friends; while the Rani of Searsole has contributed a generous sum towards the construction of a new General Ward for the Home of Service at Kankhal in the Himalayas. In connection with this will be a larger Dispensary, while the old Dispensary will be turned over to the use of the School for the very poor which was started by the Home some time ago, but which so far has been forced to hold its classes in an open verandah of the hospital exposed to wind and weather. At the Vrindavan Home of Service they have also been doing excellent work. In one month alone, so their last report tells us, they took care of 2780 patients.

Besides these and many other regular institutions for the help of the poor and unfortunate, we hear on all sides of smaller organizations laboring under the direct inspiration and guidance of the Mission. A Ramakrishna Society at Cuddapah in the Madras Presidency, which began by establishing a free Reading-Room, has now opened a Free Night School for girls and boys; and by the same mail we learn that an energetic body of workers banded together under the name of the Entally Ramakrishna Archanalaya and devoted to distributing food to the poor and caring for the sick and infirm in their homes, has just celebrated its 16th Anniversary. Many of the Swamis of the Order, with the President, Swami Brahmananda, came from the Monastery on the Ganges to take part in the Celebration. There was a religious Service with addresses by Swami Sharvananda and others, besides which a large number of poor people were fed. The Society is now trying to collect funds to build a special house for its work.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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The individual's life is in the life of the whole, the individual's happiness is in the happiness of the whole; apart from the whole, the individual's existence is inconceivable: this is an eternal truth and is the bed-rock on which the universe is built. To move slowly towards the infinite whole, bearing a constant feeling of intense sympathy and sameness with it, being happy in its happiness and being distressed in its affliction, is the individual's sole duty. Not only is it his duty, but in its transgression is his death, while compliance with this great truth leads to life immortal. This is the law of Nature; and who can throw dust into Her ever-watchful eyes? None can hoodwink society and deceive it for any length of time. However much there may have accumulated heaps of refuse and mud on its surface, still, at the bottom of those heaps, the life-breath of society is ever to be found pulsating with the vibrations of universal love and self-denying compassion for all. We ignore this sublime truth and though we suffer a thousand times for our folly, yet in our absurd foolishness, impelled by the brute in us, we do not believe it. We try to deceive, but a thousand times we find that we are deceived ourselves, and yet we do not desist! Mad that we are, we imagine we can impose on Nature! With our short-sighted vision we think that ministering to the self at any cost is

the be-all and end-all of life. Wisdom, knowledge, wealth, strength, prowess, and what else Nature gathers and stores for us, are all only for diffusion, when the moment of need is at hand; we often forget this fact, put the stamp of "*mine only*" upon what is thus entrusted to us and sow the seed of our own ruin! To work alone we have the right, the result of our work lies in the hands of the Lord. We can only pray: "O Thou Eternal Spirit, make us spiritual; O Thou Eternal Strength, make us strong; O Thou Mighty One, make us mighty."—*Extract by Swami Vivekananda. Translated from the Bengalee.*

CAN DESTINY BE OVERCOME?

Lecture by Swami Paramananda.

Physical science explains the laws of nature, but it fails to explain the law of human life. It shows us how in the outer world certain causes produce certain effects, but it does not tell us why among men one is born to misery and misfortune while another enjoys every blessing and privilege. If it is the law that without a cause there can never be an effect, what then can be the cause of this difference? The usual answer of religion is that it is the Divine will, that God rewards and punishes according to His will. But why should He make such distinctions? There must be some reason, for an arbitrary Ruler who rewards or punishes His children according to His whim could not be an Ideal God. There must be some more satisfactory explanation. The Indo-Aryan Sages and Philosophers found it in the law of Karma, the law of cause and effect applied to human life. They did not blame the Supreme Deity for the inequalities existing everywhere, but they placed the cause in man himself. Man, they said, is responsible for his own destiny. His present life is nothing but the result of

what he has done in the past; for whatever we sow, that we reap. We cannot gather a harvest contrary to the seed we have sown. We cannot bribe the Almighty. If we wish to reap a better harvest, we must enrich our own life. We must live in accordance with our highest instincts of right and wrong. If we do not, then we must expect to suffer, for evil actions inevitably produce suffering, however we may try to escape from it.

We cannot break the law and there is no one in the higher realms of consciousness who will help us break it. God has not put us under it; our own hand has bound on the fetters which drag us down and tie us to certain conditions. Sri Krishna says in the Bhagavad-Gita: "The Almighty Lord does not partake of the good or evil deed of any being. Wisdom is covered by ignorance, thus mortals are deluded"; and they imagine that God is blessing or punishing them. It is ignorance alone that causes their bondage and suffering. So long as we are under the sway of ignorance and imperfection, we carry within ourselves the seed of unhappiness, and all our efforts to avoid it will be vain. The only escape from suffering is not in trying to run away from outer conditions, but in striving to understand the law which governs them. Often, when people are in great suffering and have not proper understanding, they think that the best way to end their misery is by committing suicide. But is the law so weak, so limited that man can escape from it by simply ending his life here? Impossible. What he has created will accompany him. The Soul is not an object which we can destroy by any act of ours. Neither can we destroy the cause of misery in that way. It will last as long as we remain in ignorance of the law.

Man must begin to study his own life; he must look

into his own character; he must analyze his own thoughts and actions; and very soon he will find that the effects in this life are caused by what he himself thinks and does. As Buddha says: "All that we are is the result of what we have thought; it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him." And the law which is working in this life also governs other realms of existence; therefore if a man observes the law carefully, he can easily avoid all complications and difficulties and make his destiny what he will. He must, however, set to work with earnestness. It is not the one who merely talks or quotes from the Scriptures, but the one who lives, who learns and applies the law, he alone overcomes all adverse conditions and reshapes the course of his life.

We cannot expect to get something we have not earned; and the thing we do not deserve we cannot retain, even when it is given to us. A story is told in the Indian Scriptures that once the Great God Siva, one of the Hindu Trinity, was asked by Parvati to help a man in great misery. "It is impossible," was Siva's answer. "Impossible?" Parvati exclaimed. "Nothing is impossible to You." "I will prove it to you," Siva replied. The man was at the time walking through a forest full of anxiety as to how he could get something for his bodily maintenance and the God Siva placed a bag of gold directly in his path; but as he was passing the spot, the man chanced to close his eyes and missed the gold. This is what is happening all the time. We must have the right to everything that we desire. We must earn it.

All our thoughts and actions, even the smallest, combined together make up our destiny and determine our happiness or unhappiness. This is a fact, whether we recognize it or not. Through what he says and does each one is working out his own salvation or misery. Therefore he must guard his every thought and action, for sometimes even a little thought may be the seed from which will spring a great tree of activity bearing good or evil fruit. But this does not mean that when suffering comes as the result of wrong doing, man is helpless. No. What he has himself created, he has also the power to counteract. He may not be able to wholly undo the results of a past mistake; but understanding what it is, he does not waste his energy in useless rebellion or repentance. He meets it cheerfully and tries to learn a lesson from it; for every experience, whatever its nature, comes as a blessing when one understands the law. This is especially marked in the lives of people in the East, even among the most ignorant. When they are suffering, they do not give way to despair, because they know that suffering is not a lasting thing; that misfortune is a cloud which rises and must have its setting; that it is nothing but an effect of their own actions and thoughts; and as the cause is finite, no infinite result can be produced from it.

When we understand the law, we become patient and strong-hearted and we are able to meet all the conditions of life bravely. Why should we grow impatient or downhearted when we know that nothing can happen contrary to the law and that therefore if something has come to us, it must have a deep meaning and purpose? Often we hear the complaint that good people always suffer while evil-minded people seem to triumph here. What is meant by this? Because the selfish and worldly-minded have more

sense pleasures and luxuries, are they for that reason more fortunate? Are these what we want to get out of life? They should not be the ideal of human existence. It should be to rise above bodily suffering and pleasure; to bear with equal-mindedness whatever comes, knowing that all kinds of experience are necessary to unfold our higher nature and increase our spiritual strength. When we realize that this life is neither for pain nor for pleasure, that its value is not according to a man's bodily conditions, but that it is for the manifestation of the Soul, for the attainment of freedom, our ideas of good and evil fortune change. And when we awaken to the fact that the fetters which hold us down are not from the outside but are within, that we have bound ourselves by our own desires and imperfections, then we cease to complain or blame others. Who can ever cause you suffering or disturbance if you have that serenity of heart which comes from knowledge that you are not the body, you are not a puny mortal, but that you are a mighty Soul, a child of God? That knowledge will at once place you on a rock which nothing can move or shake.

An understanding of the law of Karma helps us to avoid mistakes and follow the path which leads to the right goal. The effect of mistakes is inevitable. If a man out of mistake puts his hand into the fire, it burns. Whether he does it consciously or not, it must burn him. Similarly our actions produce their effects. And what are we to learn from these effects? That we should not repeat the same ignorant actions. Everything that we do—our talking, working, walking, thinking, every action indeed brings a reaction and we must meet this whether we have acted consciously or unconsciously. But how are we to avoid the results of unconscious actions? Sri Krishna tells Arjuna in the Gita: "Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest,

whatever thou offerest in oblation, whatever thou givest and the austerities thou performest, do that as an offering to the Lord. Thus thou shalt be freed from the bonds of action that bears good and evil fruit." In other words, if we can surrender ourselves wholly to God, then we shall become free from all the binding effects of life. We may live in the world but we shall not be touched by it, just as the lotus leaf floats on the water but is never wet by it. When we begin to realize what life is and what is its relation to God, to nature, and to all human beings, we begin to see everything in a different light. We do not have the attitude of condemning anything. If we find good people suffering, we do not feel that there is no reason for it; we do not rise in opposition declaring that there is no justice in the universe. This impulsive rebellious spirit comes only through ignorance.

The Law of Karma must not be confounded with the morbid idea of Fate—that what is must be. It does not throw that weight on one's heart. On the contrary it declares that no condition is permanent, but that if man wishes to escape from the present fruits of his actions, he has only to direct his energies steadily in another channel and he will counteract the results of past errors. It tells him: "Let the past go, let it not hang over you. Even if your life has been full of mistakes, it will not do any good to dwell on them. Take some Ideal which you can look up to and follow that with your whole heart and soul. Constantly hold your mind fixed on that and direct all your actions towards that. Very soon you will become free from your imperfections."

If we have formed a bad habit, or if a feeling of hatred or jealousy is burning in our heart, the surest and quickest way to conquer it is to keep our thought fixed on some

higher object, for often by fighting our imperfections we make them stronger. Whenever we are full of despair because our life and strength and understanding seem so limited, it is best to forget as much as we can those little ideas and look at things which are bigger and nobler. No matter where we may be, on a high plane or a low plane, we are all going through the process of evolution and sooner or later we must all come to perfection. We should always try to give people hope and encouragement when they are depressed. Sometimes when a man's heart is sinking into a state of hopelessness, just a word of hope and sympathy will bring him up. Everybody can find fault with us and remind us of our weaknesses, but he is a true friend who can come and plant the seed of faith in our heart and show us that we have the same possibilities of perfection in us as a Christ or a Buddha.

Our destiny lies in our own hands and we can mould it as we will. Let us therefore diligently set to work and strive with patience, perseverance and determination to uproot all the imperfections which now seem to be a part of our nature and which cause all our suffering. By right thought and right action we can remove every fetter that binds us and make our lives a constant blessing both to ourselves and to our fellowmen.

Lift up your head at last, as free from slavery. Dare to look up to God and say, "Make use of me in the future as Thou wilt. I refuse nothing that seems good to Thee. Lead me whither Thou wilt. Clothe me in whatever dress Thou wilt. Is it Thy will that I should be in a public or private condition, dwell here or be banished, be poor or rich? Under all these circumstances I will make Thy defence to men."—*Epictetus.*

THE FRUITS OF ACTION.

From the Mahabharata. Anugita-Parva.

The Brahmana said: The acts, good and bad, which the *Jiva* or individual Soul does are not subject to destruction. Upon attainment of body after body, those acts produce fruits corresponding to their nature. As a fruit-bearing tree in its season yields a large quantity of fruit; so merit, achieved with a pure heart, yields a plenteous harvest of happiness. In similar manner wrong action, done with a sinful heart, produces a plenteous harvest of misery.

Because of its subtlety and its unmanifested nature, the Soul does not become attached to anything even after attaining a body. Therefore it is called the Eternal Brahman. That is the seed of all creatures. It is because of it that all living creatures live.

Whatever acts, good or bad, the Soul has done in a former body, the results of these have surely to be enjoyed or endured by him. By such enjoyment or endurance former acts are exhausted; but other acts again accumulate, until the Soul succeeds in acquiring a knowledge of those duties (spiritual practices) which lead to Emancipation.

Regarding this, I shall tell thee, O best of men, those acts by which the Soul, while travelling through the round of rebirths, becomes happy.

Gifts, self-discipline, the practice of continence, self-restraint, tranquillity, compassion for all creatures, restraint of the passions, abstention from cruelty as also from appropriating what belongs to others, refraining from doing even mentally all acts that are false or injurious to any living creature on the earth, reverently serving mother and father, honoring Deity and guests, devotion to teachers, piety, purity, constant control of all organs and faithful performance of all good actions: these are said to constitute

the conduct of the good.

From observance of such conduct arises Righteousness, which protects all creatures eternally. He who takes refuge in that Righteousness will never attain a miserable end. It is by the conduct of the good that the world is restrained in the paths of Righteousness when it falls away. Deliverance from the world takes place for that one who acts righteously and well on every occasion.

THE IDEA OF SIN.

Adapted from the Brahmavadin.

What sin is, it is not quite easy to define; nevertheless all are agreed that it results from the violation of the moral law, so that the conception of sin and the conception of morality have developed side by side. The slow and steady evolution of ethics in association with religion is one of the most interesting phenomena in the religious history of man. It is needless to say that the determination of right conduct of individuals in society is dependent upon the nature of their social constitution. Tribal morality is different from national morality, and this again is different from universal morality. It is not at all proper to say that primitive tribal religions have no power of controlling and guiding human conduct because our modern ideas of right and wrong are not to be found embodied in their codes. To expect to find higher forms of morality in association with lower forms of religion is as unintelligent as to expect the monkey to give birth to man. But because lower forms of religion are not associated with comparatively higher forms of morality, are we at liberty to hold that lower forms of religion have all been non-moral, if indeed not immoral, or that tribal life is always degraded?

"I have lived," says A. R. Wallace, "with communities

in South America and the East who have no laws or courts but the public opinion of the village freely expressed. Each man scrupulously respects the rights of his fellows, and an infraction of those rights rarely or never takes place. In such a community all are nearly equal. There are none of those wide distinctions of education and ignorance, wealth and poverty, master and servant, which are the product of our civilization; there is none of that widespread division of labour, which, while it increases wealth, produces also conflicting interests. . . . Now, although we have progressed vastly beyond the savage stage in intellectual achievement, we have not advanced equally in morals. . . . It is not too much to say that the mass of our populations have not at all advanced beyond the savage code of morals, and have in many cases sunk below it."

Yet it cannot be denied that the ideal of ethical life has grown higher; and with the progress of ethical evolution the conception of sin has also passed through various modifications. At first sin is conceived of as a violation of the commands of the gods; then it is looked upon as a violation of Divine laws; and lastly it is regarded as a contradiction of the spiritual nature of man. Some modern thinkers mix up all these three ideas together in their vague conception of what sin is. This confusion, however, is due to the fact that in the progress of human civilization the successive stages of growth overlap one another. In tribal organization disobeying the commands of persons in authority is not considered a sin; but disobeying the commands of the gods is ever of the nature of sin. In all tribal communities kinship being the basis of love, the benevolent gods and goddesses are all looked upon as kindly relations and sin is that which brings a feeling of alienation between the tribal gods and their worshippers. To re-establish this feeling of

kinship becomes one of the chief purposes of sacrifice. Thus the idea of sin with sacrifice as its remedy seems to have existed from very early times in the history of religion.

It is also this association of sin and sacrifice that is chiefly responsible for the development of the religion of Law, with which rises a new conception of sin. Both Mosaism and Brahminism came into existence in this way; and in the *Smritis* or law-books of the Brahmins ceremonial pollution and sin have frequently the same name given to them, while the commands of Moses are largely concerned with external "sanctifying unto cleanness of the flesh." The Law of these nomothetic forms of religion is full of regulations bearing on the conduct of man towards the Higher Power or Powers as well as towards his fellowman, and any disregard of these regulations is classed as a sinful act. Morality based on ritualistic purity, however, is very unstable and society gradually learns that if selfishness and sensuality are to be subdued, it must be through the influence of spirituality by learning that yielding to the temptations of the flesh is inevitably productive of misery. Thus we reach the third stage in the development of the idea of sin.

The highest conception of the nature of sin is dependent on the recognition of the great principle that the promptings of the flesh are generally opposed to the interests of the spirit. Civilized man brands all our ape and tiger tendencies with the name of sin. Both the ethics of Vedanta and Christian ethics are built upon this opposition between the flesh and the spirit; only Christianity does not rationally explain the cause and the nature of the opposition. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the spirit is spirit," says the Gospel of St. John; and St. Paul declares: "To be carnally minded is death,

but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Why should this be? The Vedanta holds that it is because the pure and divine soul of man becomes exiled from its home of eternal freedom and bliss when it drops into the state of embodied phenomenal existence. Creation implies limitation and thereby separation from God; and the doctrine of *Karma* clearly points out that there will be no end to this separation until all egoism is killed in the heart of the man seeking re-union with the Infinite. Egoism or the affirmation of the self tends to prolong the imprisonment of the soul in matter, while self-denial and the transcending of all worldly desires tends to free it from the fetters of embodied existence. Therefore has Jesus said: "He that will come after Me, let him deny himself."

Christianity and the *Bhakti* or devotional aspect of Vedanta understand this denial of egoism to consist in the complete subordination of the human will to the will of the all-loving God. Says a Christian writer in *Lux Mundi:* "Sin is felt to be alienation from God, who is the source of life and strength and peace; and in consequence of that alienation the whole nature is weakened and corrupted. In this aspect, sin is a state in which the will is separated from the Divine Will, the life is cut off from the life of God which He designed us to share. When men come to realize what is meant by union with God, and to feel the awful consequences of separation, there arises at once the longing for a return, a reconciliation." It is plain at a glance that this is a clear statement of the idea of sin or imperfection as we find it in the Vedic teaching. To be born in the phenomenal world of time, space, and causation is to be alienated from God, Vedanta declares, and reunion is possible only when the human soul is enabled to transcend the limitations of time, space and causation, to which it is subjected

on account of its association with the flesh and the world of phenomena.

Vedanta does not believe in the doctrine of original sin. It claims that all souls are by nature sinless and pure. To make the soul sinful would seem equivalent to making God, the source of all souls, sinful also. Yet the Biblical story of Adam and Eve is not without a meaning to the follower of Vedanta, but he interprets it in this way. Before Adam ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he was one with God; that is, he was not conscious of duality, of the distinction between subject and object, the ego and the non-ego, on which all phenomenal knowledge depends. His expulsion from paradise symbolizes the passage of the soul from the free noumenal condition of existence to the phenomenal condition. Driven out into the world of matter, every soul becomes subject to the promptings of the flesh and soon accumulates a heavy burden of Karma. It is thus that sin arises and the soul is forced to seek its justification by faith rather than by the law; or, to use the language of Vedanta, sin is born of ignorance, the ignorance which confounds the phenomenal with the noumenal; and this ignorance can be cured only by knowledge of the law.

Ignorance is bondage; knowledge is freedom, freedom from sin or ignorance. "Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free." But this freedom is not a further step beyond knowledge, reached through it; it is the instantaneous result of it. The Christian's misapprehension of the exact philosophic meaning of the fall of Adam makes him question and wonder, when Vedanta says that the true knower of *Brahman* or the Absolute is incapable of being tainted by sin. To know God and to yield to the promptings of the flesh are utterly incompatible with

each other; therefore the truly spiritual man cannot sin. The glory of the soul is in its sinlessness, and the glory of human life is in the opportunities that it gives to man to realize this sinless glory of the soul and thus be re-united with God.

THE JOY OF THE LORD.

Bengalee Hymn.

Be filled with Joy and Gladness and say on the Sweet Name of the Lord!

At His Name shall rise a flood out of the sea of Nectar (Immortality); of this you may drink without ceasing.

The Thunder of His name shall snap the fetters of sin by which you are bound.

Come, let us be drunk with the joy of the Lord and thus quench forever the thirst of our hearts.

THE PROPHET OF ALLAH.

By Ananda.

Every prophet is the product of his age. He comes to meet the need of a special time and people and can only be rightly judged in relation to these. Preëminently is this the case with Mohammed. He was an Arab among Arabs. The Arabs were a people of strong, passionate nature, with the innate tribal feeling common to all Semitics, which despite their monotheistic belief has always made it impossible for them to conceive of a God who could love all men equally. Internal feuds, drunkenness, polygamy, idolatry had so weakened and degraded them at that period that already the thoughtful among them were seeking earnestly for some regenerating force to rouse once more the noble traits of the race, when in 570 A. D., at Mecca, Mohammed was born. He belonged to the family of Hashem, a collateral branch of the powerful Koreish tribe. His father, a poor merchant,

died before his birth; and his mother, a woman of rare merit, six years later. His grandfather then took him and bestowed on him most tender care, but he was already an old man, in his hundredth year, and before long he too passed away leaving the orphan to the charge of an uncle, Abu Thaleb, now head of the family.

Abu Thaleb was a merchant and more than once the boy as he grew older accompanied his uncle on trading journeys into Syria. We even read of him in his eighteenth year following his uncle into battle. It is probable that Abu Thaleb gave to Mohammed what education he could, but there was little schooling in it. It was rather the training of the desert, of cosmopolitan Syrian market-places, of contact with men and things, to which was added the mellowing influence of grief. Suffering is a great builder of character, and there can be little doubt that Mohammed lived through many hours of sadness. The loss of those dearest to him sank deep into his heart and the depravity which he saw every where about him drove him back more and more upon himself. Nourished and developed by his own thoughts, left alone with nature, especially during the long days when he tended flocks on the pasture slopes about Mecca, he began early to ponder on the deeper problems of life. It was the Arab custom to spend the month of Ramadhan in silence and solitude, and we can imagine how eagerly the young Mohammed layed aside his worldly tasks at the holy season and retired to the stillness of some mountain cave. All great men are made in the cave. Only out of the silent depths of contemplation rise the mighty thoughts and deeds of the world; and Mohammed, born the deliverer of the Arabs, could not prepare himself for the higher call without an occasional escape at least from the daily round of toil for bread.

At the age of twenty-six there came a sudden change in his fortunes. He was engaged to travel once more into Syria, this time as the steward of a rich widow, Khadija, of the same tribe as his own family. The prudence and intelligence with which he discharged his duties awakened first her gratitude, then a stronger feeling, and although fifteen years his senior she offered him her hand and became his wife. Of this union were born two sons and four daughters, but both the sons died early. Although Mohammed still continued his merchant's trade, more and more did he spend his time in lonely contemplation. Solitude now became a passion with him. Days and nights he passed along the streets of Mecca utterly unconscious of the scenes around him; yet never did a cry for help go unheard or the calls of little children to whom he was a special friend. A great storm seemed to be gathering in his soul. His hold on the outer world was slackening, and within was growing louder a voice, as yet vague, yet sounding somewhere down in the abyss of his inner consciousness and seeming to say: "Thou art the man. Thou art the chosen prophet of the Lord."

It was in his fortieth year during the month of Ramadhan that the first revelation came. He had retired to a cave on Mount Hira near Mecca for the usual season of prayer and meditation. While he sat alone, despondent almost to the point of self-destruction because he found nothing to slake the thirst for God-knowledge which burned within him, at the very moment when he thought to rend the outer flesh, the soul within began to shine and a mighty Voice called to him "Preach." He heard it twice in quietness, then an answer was wrung out of his heart. "What shall I preach?" "Preach in the name of the Lord," spoke the Voice. Frightened by the Angelic presence, he fell into unconsciousness and while lying in this state, the rec-

ords say, he read the mystery of the universe from the Book. It is a Mohammedan belief that the Book (Koran) lives in essence eternally with God and is now and then opened to a truth-seeking soul. Mohammed woke from his trance a Prophet, a Seer. From this moment he lived a pure and selfless life, a life of complete non-attachment. His whole character changed and had a Divine touch upon it. He began preaching and working, but he remained free from every taint of worldliness. The fruit of his works he left to God. So simple was he indeed in all his habits that even when moving at the head of big battalions, with rulers obeying him, he was often seen mending his own worn shoes and garments, while his only nourishment was dates, water and milk. Charity to all beings in word, thought and deed was his constant teaching. "Do a kindness, if it be only to a dog," is one of his sayings. Animals were as dear to him as men. Once a man brought to him two young birds robbed from a nest. The Prophet ordered him to put them down and at once the mother bird flew to her young. "Verily God is more loving to his servants than the mother to these young birds," he said. "Return them to the place from which you took them. Fear God with regard to animals. Verily there are rewards for doing good to dumb animals. There is no beast on earth, nor bird which flieth, but the same is like unto you. Unto the Lord shall they return."

The man of Vision is at the same time a breaker and a builder. While he deals heavy blows at old forms and systems, he is all along proclaiming, "I come not to destroy but to fulfill." How can this be? Because he knows that the old is the parent of the new; that when the hardened crust of superstition and corruption is struck off, the same Unchanging Eternal Truth will stand once more revealed.

Mohammed was a relentless iconoclast and reformer. His denunciation of the idolatry and depravity of his age was scathing, and it fell on the ears of his people like a thunderbolt. The Arabs were a fierce race and fiercely did Mohammed deliver his message. Nature in her most terrible aspects had revealed herself to him. He had seen behind the veil of *Maya* and discovered the illusive, fleeting character of the world. The deadly fruits of a life in the senses were to this Seer a reality. "This solid-seeming world is but a shadow, a non-reality to him who lives always in the presence of the One Great Existence." "Mountains, those great rocky mountains, they shall melt as do clouds in the sky. Know ye that the world's life is a cheat!" Such was the tenor of his preaching.

Mohammed's message savors rather of the terrors of death and eternal punishment than of the serene joys of the spiritual life; but the history of religions teaches us that a religion of fear seems better adapted to a sensual race than the religion of love. Yet the Koran emphatically admonishes: "Love those that hate, give to those that steal"; while Mohammed himself taught by example that faith and mercy can sometimes conquer there where the sword may fail. Once while he was sleeping alone at the foot of a tree, he was awakened by a sound and beheld Durthur, a hostile warrior, standing over him with drawn sword. "Mohammed, who is there now to save thee?" he cried. "God," replied the Prophet with unwavering trust. The wild Bedouin, suddenly awed, dropped his sword, which Mohammed seized. Raising the weapon he asked: "Who is there now to save thee, O Durthur?" "Alas, no one," answered the soldier. "Then learn of me to be merciful," said Mohammed, giving back the sword.

For three years the Prophet labored silently to redeem

his people, but he gained scarcely a convert. At last he determined to appeal publicly to his own Koreish tribe. Calling a meeting on the hillside of Sofa, he proclaimed his mission and asked who would join him. Only one arose, a lad of sixteen, Ali, the young son of Abu Thaleb. None other responded and there in that laughing, scoffing assembly stood this half-grown boy and the man of forty, alone, with the task of conquering Arabia in their hands. From this moment Mohammed was persecuted, abused, villified, yet always some friends he had even among the unbelievers. One Yathrebite chief advised the Koreish to give a hearing to the new preacher. "An honorable man has adopted a new religion," he said, "why persecute him? It is the Lord of the heavens who can read man's heart." For a time his uncle's power and influence protected him, but soon he and the faithful Khadija were gone and the organized persecution then set on foot drove him out of Mecca. He escaped to Medina in 622 A. D. and from this date begins the Moslem era of Hegira. But this apparent defeat only served to hasten his success. Opposition is the best promoter of a good cause. It popularizes the movement, stimulates thought about it, creates a struggle which makes for progress. It filters the dross from the message and purifies and strengthens the giver of it. Thus the flight from Mecca marked the beginning of triumphs for the discarded Prophet.

Mohammed, however, was not merely a preacher, he was also a great social organizer. One of his first attempts after reaching Medina was to establish a commonwealth on broad lines, in which Jew, Christian and Sabian should have a part, with perfect liberty of faith for each. "Surely those who believe, whether Jews, Christians or Sabians, who believe in God and the last day and do that which is right, they shall have their reward with the Lord, no

fear shall come upon them, neither shall they be grieved," were his words. The Jews, however, by their treacherous dealings, became a stumbling-block in the way, so he drove them out and created a strong homogeneous body of his own disciples, not forgetting a little later to grant a charter to the Christians which secured to them many privileges and immunities. That Mohammed carried his propaganda by the sword—this alone and most unjustly characterizes his mission for the non-Moslem world, while the great moral and intellectual uplift he brought to Arabia is forgotten. Carlyle's comment is: "The sword indeed; but where will you get your sword? Every new opinion, at its starting, is precisely a *minority of one*. One man alone of the whole world believes it; there is one man against all men. That he take a sword, and try to propagate with that, will do little for him. You must first get your sword! On the whole, a thing will propagate itself as it can. We do not find of the Christian Religion either, that it always disdained the sword, when once it had got one. Charlemagne's conversion of the Saxons was not by preaching. I care little about the sword: I will allow a thing to struggle for itself in this world with any sword or tongue or implement it has, or can lay hold of . . . very sure that it will, in the long run, conquer nothing which does not deserve to be conquered. What is better than itself it cannot put away, but only what is worse. In this great Duel, Nature herself is umpire, and can do no wrong; the thing which is deepest rooted in Nature, what we call *truest*, that thing and not the other will be found growing at last."

While some passages of the Koran undoubtedly recommend religious warfare against infidels, yet others as plainly enjoin gentleness and tolerance. "Let there be no forcing in religion," one reads. "If the Lord had pleased, all who

are on the earth would have believed together. And wilt thou force men to be believers?" And again: "Let there be no compulsion in religion. What will you force a man to when all religion comes from God? He heareth, He knoweth. Aim at self-rectification and do not go on judging others, for they will all return to God who judges all." When he sent forth missionaries, he admonished them thus: "Deal gently with the people, cheer them and be not harsh and condemn them. If people question thee what is the key to heaven, say, to testify to the truth of God and to do good works." One who could speak such words could never have given the answer of the Kaliph Omar to the learned men who came pleading for the vast library at Alexandria. "If those books," he replied, "contain anything which is contrary to the Koran they deserve to be destroyed. If they contain what is written in the Koran, they are unneccessary." And he ordered them to be distributed among the baths of the city to serve as fuel for their furnaces. Whatever may be one's feeling about the methods employed by Mohammed, no one can doubt their efficacy in spreading the new faith; for under its reanimating, liberating influence the Arabs built in eighty years an empire which it took more nearly eight hundred for the Romans to build. Science, philosophy, literature, mathematics, architecture, all attained a remarkable development; and the Arab through the gateway of Moorish Spain as well as by other channels became the bearer of rich gifts from the East to the civilization of the West.

The faith of the Koran is called *Islam*, which means complete submission to the will of God. "The thing that He sends, were it even worse than death, shall be the best. Whoso setteth his face towards God with a perfect self-surrender is a doer of that which is good and hath indeed

laid hold on the surest handle." That this idea of absolute resignation to the Divine Will has often led to an attitude of fatalism among the followers of the Prophet cannot be denied; but the broadest interpreters of the Koran claim that it plainly teaches that man himself is the maker of his own destiny and will be judged by his own works. To feed the poor and orphaned even though we ourselves go hungry, asking neither for recompense nor thanks; to worship God with humility and tenderness and in a spirit devoid of all calculation; neither to covet nor to judge nor to make a vain show of piety—such are the ethical admonitions of the Koran, which is unmistakably Judaic in its spirit. The teachings of Mohammed indeed may best be defined as a commingling of Judaism and Christianity, with a something else added by the Prophet's own powerful personality and Vision which especially adapted it to the people of Arabia. Mohammed himself practically proclaims this when, in naming the great prophets of God, he declares Moses, Jesus and himself to be the greatest. Islam came as a mighty social force, liberating the low and the weak, purging society of its many corruptions, calling men away from idolatry to a purer form of worship; but its work was more that of a moral judge than of a spiritual renewer. Only in the later form of Sufiism, which sprang up in Persia early in the ninth century and which is generally admitted to be the result of the influence of Indian thought, do we find it reaching a subtler spiritual expression.

Every great Teacher who comes to earth as a mighty transformer of men, be he Saviour or Prophet, brings a lesson for all mankind. His Message may be spoken in an alien tongue and for a special people, but he himself is a Divine Revelation through which flashes anew the Truth of God. The "inspiration of the Almighty giveth him under-

standing," and those who hear him with open heart and unprejudiced mind cannot fail to gain new understanding from him.

REPORT.

Swami Paramananda is still in the West. The six weeks which he has spent so far in Los Angeles have proved full of tireless activity for him. Besides his own regular meetings he has given a Course of morning Talks at the Metaphysical Library on Self-Control, Concentration and Meditation, delivered addresses at the Buddhist Monastery and at a Benefit Concert for the Japanese sick and given a special lecture in the drawing-room of a judge in Los Angeles, to which a number of thoughtful people were invited. This was a particularly gratifying occasion because of the deep appreciation manifested for the teaching. Besides these calls upon his time, the Swami has been forced to devote a number of hours each day to interviews. The attendance at his regular Sunday evening lectures has been most encouraging, never falling below 200 and sometimes exceeding 300, while the average attendance at the Tuesday Class Lecture has been over 80. For the regular students the Swami has also held a Meditation Class on Thursday at which 30 or more have always been present. We give these figures as the most direct way of showing how wide-spread is the interest in Vedanta there. It is not known when the Swami will return, as every effort is being made to keep him in Los Angeles and he has received an urgent invitation to give a Course of Lectures and Class Talks in San Diego; he has also been asked to lecture in Seattle.

At the Vedanta Centre of Boston the work throughout July continued as usual, Sister Devamata conducting the services and classes. The two Sunday Services and the Tuesday Evening Class will still continue, but the Thursday Class will now be suspended until the autumn.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. V. SEPTEMBER, 1916. No. 9.

THE NEED OF DISCRIMINATION.

By Swami Paramananda.

Wisdom is the final goal of mankind. There is scarcely a living being who has not a desire to know. Whenever anything is hidden from us, our curiosity is aroused and we try to penetrate the veil that hides it. We never like to be left in the dark. This desire to know is an inherent tendency in every human mind. Impelled by it we are all striving, but we do not understand how to strive wisely. Often we work very hard to gain some end; then after we have gained it, we find that our aim was not properly directed. What we have attained does not satisfy the desire of our heart and we suffer from disappointment or regret. We need a pathfinder, some light to guide us, to show us the way, to help us to distinguish Truth from untruth, Real from unreal. Discrimination is that light. It is the means and wisdom is the end. Any one who tries to gain wisdom without using this means, never succeeds; for unless his energy is properly placed, it will be wasted. Every soul then must awaken within him the faculty of discrimination. The ordinary tendency of man is to go to the external for help and guidance. Very rarely do we find one who tries to go within and see if there is not something placed there by the hands of the Almighty to help him. Yet until

a man ceases to reach outward and looks within himself, he does not begin to grow in wisdom; for the discriminative faculty, though inherent in every living being, does not become awakened until we turn our eyes within.

The Sages declare that each man has Divinity within him. He is potentially perfect. All the wisdom he is seeking is within himself; he has simply to discover or uncover it. What we call gaining knowledge is nothing but tearing off a veil from our mind. But we cannot do this accidentally. We must take some systematic method and for this we need strength. Instead of dwelling on our weakness, we must try to find within us something stable, something reliable, something more powerful than this ordinary nature of ours. An intelligent man begins to question: Can I depend on my hands? Can I depend on my muscles? Can I depend on my mind? Can I depend on my external surroundings for my happiness? As he thus analyzes, he finds that all these things are fleeting. Today they smile upon him, tomorrow they vanish without warning; so gradually he learns to put aside the things which are non-essential because he knows that they merely veil his true Vision.

This is called the process of discrimination. Just as we enter a dark room, perhaps carrying in our hand a little lamp, and we go from one corner to another saying, "Not this, not this," until we find that for which we are looking; so with the light of discrimination we move through the world leaving behind one thing after another until we find the object of our search. No one of us can live here satisfactorily and fulfill his mission as a human being without developing his discriminative faculty. It serves as a lantern in our hand helping us to find our way. When discouragement or depression overtakes us, it comes to our aid by telling us that the conditions of this ephemeral world cannot

last forever; that the feelings of heat and cold, pleasure and pain, happiness and misery, come and go; so recognizing their transitory nature, we stand firm and work on steadily, with our mind fixed on the ultimate goal of wisdom.

And what is wisdom? It is for finite man to realize his Infinite nature, for every individual soul to realize his oneness with the Supreme. It means to tear down the barrier which separates us from the Source of our being and makes us feel helpless, powerless, fearful of death. All such feelings vanish when we come face to face with the Divine. It is absurd for an ordinary man to say "I am God" or "I am one with God"; for as a man of form his consciousness is limited and he knows himself only as a separate being. He must first find out what is God and what is not God, what is apparent and what is real. He must begin by studying his external nature. He must reason: Is my body lasting? No. My mind also is not stable. Therefore that Divine Self which is Eternal, Immortal, part of God, cannot be limited to the body or mind. I still exist if the body goes to pieces, so I must be something different; why then should I limit myself to it and suffer with it? I am not the body, I am not the senses. These things only exist relatively, but I am that which is unchanging, undying; that which fire cannot burn, air cannot dry, water cannot wet, sword cannot pierce. I am that Immortal Self.

So taking the process of "Not this, not this," he seeks deeper and deeper within himself. Dropping the limited ego, which identifies itself with the body and all perishable conditions, he begins to unfold his higher, more universal nature. Instead of remaining centered in his physical being, having love merely for his own little body, clinging to his own little self, seeking to gratify his own little desires, he begins to cover a larger circle. As he discriminates and

reasons, the little man expands and expands until he breaks through all the barriers of the flesh. He severs himself from the limiting ties of self-consciousness and gradually merges himself in the Cosmic Ego—not losing himself, but finding himself in greater things. Thus does his circle widen and widen until finally he realizes his oneness—not with the body, not with this mind, not with the little things of this world, but with God. Then he is able to declare truthfully: "There is but One without a Second. All is God."

This is what is called true wisdom. As long as we do not strive for that wisdom, we live in a narrow circle and remain bound to perishable things. We talk of universality, of universal ideals, universal brotherhood, but how are these things possible for man until he has broken down all barriers and has come in contact with that Mighty Power which sustains the universe? As we take up the practice of discrimination, however, and find out the unreality of this phenomenal world, we must have the courage to detach ourselves from it. When we discover the nature of our Soul, we must learn to love the Soul more than the body. As we come to know the God within us, we must be willing to follow the bidding of that Divine Self rather than the voice of the little ego. This requires great determination. A man of wavering will cannot go far on this path. We must be strong—not in mere physical strength, but in true strength, the strength that comes from knowledge of our Divine nature.

The path of wisdom teaches us to loosen our hold on that which is unreal, non-essential, and to cling to that which is vital. Then as we learn to follow the vital part of our being without paying heed to our lower nature, we begin to grow in spiritual power and in understanding. The

Bhagavad-Gita tells us that however ignorant or sinful we may be, by the bark of wisdom we shall cross over the whole ocean of sin. As fire reduces fuel to ashes, similarly does the fire of wisdom reduce all imperfections to ashes. Nothing indeed purifies like wisdom and this wisdom we must seek with reverence and devotion, rendering humble service that we may make ourselves worthy to receive it. Having gained it, we shall be freed from error or false perception and shall not again fall into delusion regarding the Real and apparent, the Self and the not-Self. But he alone attains it who is full of faith, who has subdued his lower nature and who is possessed with sincere longing for it. One who is devoid of faith or of doubting mind cannot hope to gain it. It comes only to him who has cut asunder all his doubts by the sharp sword of discrimination and is wholly governed by his Higher Self. That one alone attains wisdom and enjoys Eternal Peace.

These (earthly plans and desires) are realities to us so long as we do not see God. But once placed face to face with the Vision Divine, we see them as they are,—transitory things, no better than dreams; and then we pray for more Light, more Knowledge in the highest sense, more Divine Love, the Love that lifts us from manhood to Godhood, a Love which makes us realize that we are really sons of the Supreme Being, of Whom all that can be said is that He exists, that He is Knowledge itself, and that He is the eternal Fountain of Love and Bliss. Therefore never lose sight of this Goal of life. Never lose sight of the Ideal. He alone is a real man who is illumined by the light of true knowledge; others are men but in name.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

THE INFINITE IS BLISS.

Selection from the Chandogya-Upanishad.

He is a real *Ativadin* who declares the Highest Being to be the True. But we must desire to know the True.

Sir, I desire to know the True.

When one understands the True, then one declares the True. One who does not understand it, does not declare the True. Only he who understands it, declares the True. This understanding, however, we must desire to understand.

Sir, I desire to understand it.

When one perceives, then one understands. One who does not perceive, does not understand. Only he who perceives, understands. This perception, however, we must desire to understand.

Sir, I desire to understand it.

When one has faith, then one perceives. One who has not faith, does not perceive. Only he who has faith perceives. This faith, however, we must desire to understand.

Sir, I desire to understand it.

When one attends on a spiritual teacher (Guru), then one has faith. One who does not attend on a teacher, has not faith. Only he who attends, has faith. This attendance on the teacher, however, we must desire to understand.

Sir, I desire to understand it.

When one performs all one's religious duties (restraint of the senses, concentration, meditation, etc.), one attends on a teacher. One who does not perform his duties, does not really attend on a teacher. This performance of duties, however, we must desire to understand.

Sir, I desire to understand it.

When one obtains bliss (in himself) he performs his duties. One who does not obtain bliss, does not perform duties. Only he who obtains bliss performs duties. This

bliss, however, we must desire to understand.

Sir, I desire to understand it.

The Infinite is bliss. There is no bliss in anything finite. Infinity alone is bliss. This Infinity, however, we must desire to understand.

Sir, I desire to understand it.

Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else, that is the Infinite. Where one sees something else, hears something else, understands something else, that is the finite. The Infinite is immortal, the finite is mortal.

Sir, in what does the Infinite rest?

In its own greatness—or not even in greatness. In the world they call cows and horses, elephants and gold, slaves, wives, fields and houses greatness. I do not mean this, for in that case one thing rests upon another (but the Infinite cannot rest in something different from Itself). The Infinite alone is below, above, behind, before, to the right and to the left. It is indeed all this. . . . He who sees, perceives, and understands this loves the Self (Supreme Spirit), delights in the Self, revels in the Self, rejoices in the Self. He becomes a self-ruler, he is lord and master in all the worlds. But those who think otherwise live in perishable worlds and are ruled by others.

That Self is a boundary, so that these worlds may not be confounded. Day and night do not pass that, nor old age, death and grief; neither good nor evil deeds. All evil-doers turn back from it, for the world of Brahman (Absolute Truth) is free from all evil. Therefore he who has crossed that boundary, if blind, ceases to be blind; if wounded, ceases to be wounded; if afflicted, ceases to be afflicted. When that boundary has been crossed, night becomes day indeed, for the world of Brahman is lighted up once for all.

PSYCHIC POWER AND SPIRITUAL VISION.

Lecture by Sister Devamata.

Man is not a homogeneous entity. He is a composite of many layers of being. In the final analysis, however, his constitution may be reduced to a duality consisting of matter and spirit. But this does not imply a corresponding division into visible and invisible. We must not commit the error of inferring that whatever lies beyond the reach of the senses falls in the realm of spirit. There are many strata in the finer part of man's organism which although entirely invisible are yet absolutely material, as material in fact as the ultra-violet rays which are imperceptible to the human eye. The first and most obvious in these coverings of matter is the gross body, a self-renewing dress which man wears, not for a season merely, but for a lifetime. Beyond that are his five external senses, made up of the outer instruments (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, tactile nerves) and the inner registering organs. Next to these comes the sixth sense, the mind or *Manas*, from the same root as the English word "man." Beyond mind is the intellect or *Buddhi*, comprising the discriminative faculty and reason; and still further behind lies the *Ahamkara* or sense of "I."

When a vibration strikes on one of the sense instruments, it passes back to the corresponding organ and is registered as a sensation; the mind whose function is that of messenger only, carries it to the discriminative faculty; this, after analyzing and determining its character, whether hostile or beneficent, presents it to the ego; the ego in turn lays it before the real self, that central power who is the final judge of all experience. Conjoined with the ego is the moral sense, the last and subtlest form of material manifestation, for even the loftiest height of ethics lies within the confines of matter. The whole of human manifestation indeed is only

an ascending scale of material vibration, steadily increasing in rapidity and intensity until it transcends all ordinary idea of motion.

As inconceivable as this may be, a little thought will make it evident. Morality implies diversity, otherwise there could be no choice and on choice it rests; diversity presupposes form; and form however subtle necessitates matter. But, you may say, the objects on which the moral sense acts may be material, yet the ethical faculty itself is surely immaterial. That is impossible and contrary to the law of nature as we see it. The faculty always belongs to the plane on which it functions and is of similar constitution; otherwise there could be no point of contact between the object and the perceptive organ. The gross objects of the external universe are perceived by the gross senses; intellect is of the same fine substance as the thought forms with which it deals; while ego and the moral sense represent the same substance and energy in a still higher state of vibration, the reactions of which manifest themselves as emotions and ethical impulses. The quicker the vibration, the subtler the perception and the higher the nature of the activity; the grosser the vibration, the more dense and physical the experience or act. Thought vibration is incalculably swifter than light vibrations, and there is no instrument to measure the swiftness of the vibration manifested in a noble moral impulse.

Thus have we reached the boundary line of man's nature as we know it, yet we have not even touched the real man—that formless Spirit out of which rise all these forms called body, mind and ego; that Unchanging Self over which these changes of thought and sensations play like shadows; that Invisible by the light of which all human activities become visible; the hidden Life-Force which animates and propels

the living man. Now in this ascending scale of human manifestation where lies the so-called psychic area, that curious region which so easily entices and entangles man? It begins just above the gross senses and passes into the *Manas* or lower mind. From this we can see at once how material are the psychic powers and how inadequate and untrustworthy therefore as instruments for higher research.

There are three states of consciousness recognized by all,—the waking state, the dream state and the sound sleep state. The ordinary man calls himself awake when he consciously directs his activities and identifies himself with a definite environment. Then he falls asleep. At once his body and bodily association vanish and he enters into a finer state of consciousness, a purely mental state known as dream. Here his thought, freed from the restraining limitations of dense matter, moves with a startling ease and swiftness, performing feats abnormal to the waking man. Then all dream activity drops below the horizon and sound sleep comes. The psychic state, to use the term in its common application, corresponds to this dream state. It lies in that middle region where the strata of consciousness ordinarily manifesting as waking and sound sleep meet and mingle, creating a third condition which may best be defined as a twilight consciousness. This remains true even when, as we advance in understanding, we reverse our ideas of what sound sleep and waking are. To the spiritually enlightened, indeed, the state of alert physical consciousness which the sense-bound man calls waking, appears a sleep; while that state where man draws inward to touch his Source, thereby gaining new life and refreshment, is more really a waking, even though, until he learns to do it consciously through meditation, it may seem a sleep.

As every one has power to dream, so has he access to the

psychic realm. It becomes evident then that these powers, which are so greedily coveted by many, do not represent any exceptional gift or superior attainment. Nor have they any more value than man's external senses. The world of psychic phenomena is in reality only a subtilized sense world. If we know some one who can tell the hour by the town clock ten blocks away while it is still invisible to us, do we regard him as a more highly developed being? We merely recognize that he has a longer range of vision. So is it with one who can see something happening in another town or country or on another plane. The same may be said of clairaudience and all psychic manifestations. Hearing, seeing, tasting, smelling, remain the same however wide the area they cover. They never cease to be sense activities and in the sum-total of experience can count merely as human incidents along the way.

The possession of powers does not increase a man's value, it is the use he makes of them which determines that. But we have not yet learned to use our ordinary senses wisely, constantly do they entrap and betray us. That is why every Spiritual Teacher and Scripture so earnestly warns mankind to guard against the snare of the senses. In themselves they are not wrong. God did not give us a single power which was not meant to serve us. Their danger lies in our ignorance regarding their place and function. The intelligent man therefore is less concerned to acquire powers than to gain wisdom. He does not wish to multiply his difficulties by extending his sense territory. Already the struggle is great enough in conquering his gross physical senses, why double it by rousing a new set, which being finer are even more dangerous, just as a finely pointed blade is more dangerous in a child's hand than a stick. Psychic power is one of the readiest weapons at the command of the

ego, because it fosters vanity, satisfies idle curiosity about the unseen, and produces phenomena which so cleverly counterfeit the spiritual as to delude even the thoughtful. Yet, when properly understood, it is not necessarily harmful, for the visions which sometimes come to the sincere-hearted along the way may serve to strengthen their faith and stimulate their desire to seek still higher things.

Ability to communicate with the departed, that most seductive form of psychic manifestation, also has its use in so far as it helps to demonstrate continuance of life after bodily death; but for the individual it can be no more wholesome or beneficial than promiscuous association with souls in the body. To be rushing here and there asking advice is always a sign of weakness. The strong man stays at home and seeks counsel of his soul. Why should it be any more justifiable to run to the disembodied for help? A man is no wiser for having dropped his body. His character and mind remain unchanged. He has merely put off an outer covering and is in the same mental state as when here in this life, through intense concentration on a task or a book, he loses consciousness for a time of his body. If he was not an infallible guide then, he will not be now. It is also great selfishness to be constantly calling upon those on the other side, treating them like errand boys or girls with no independent life of their own. They are busy; they have as much to do as we; why should we interrupt them at our pleasure? The very fact of their leaving the earthly environment and associations in which we knew them, shows that they had finished with it and that their further development required some other condition. Should we hold them here for our consolation or satisfaction? In rare cases such communication may be carried on with benefit to both embodied and disembodied; but it is too rare to count

upon, and it is a better rule to attach less value to intercourse with human beings, in or out of the flesh, and to learn the joy and strength of intercourse with God.

The same may be said of all psychic practices on this plane. They are in most cases a form of indiscretion and meddling. Would we read the letters of other people? What more right have we to read their minds? Would we eaves-drop at their doors? Then why be proud that we have heard their conversation from a distant point? Let us not be content with such trifling manifestations of power. Let us no longer idle away our time in this realm of the near-invisible, dreaming dreams. Rather let us push on, saying: "If these little visions can so charm us, what must be the Ultimate Vision?" So long as we remain under the spell of these subtler sense powers we cannot go forward. We are like jugglers performing tricks on the market-place for the bewonderment of the crowd. Have we no larger ambition, no wider stretch of aspiration? We are children of the Infinite, what can this petty play of finite forces mean to us? It is true that these physic experiences often seem to come of themselves without any apparent effort or desire on our part. If they come, it is because we give them access. Far down beneath the surface we are clinging to them. The moment we belittle them, instead of inflating their importance, they will begin to fade and vanish. This does not mean that we shall lose the subtle faculties which make them possible. They will merely sink into a dormant state like any unused organ, ready to wake when the whole man springs into new life under the quickening touch of Spirit.

In the night every object of a landscape is present, but forms and perspective are confused and out of scale. When the sun rises, each takes its proper place and discloses its own nature. So will it be with us when that first flash of

spiritual illumination lights up our present obscurity. At once we shall perceive the purpose and value of every part of this human mechanism, and shall be able to use the whole freely without danger to ourselves or to others. Not one of us is wanting in any element necessary to ultimate attainment. Every being is equally equipped for the spiritual life. What is lacking is sufficient light to work by. Just as a fully equipped factory is useless without proper illumination, so is man. The feebler lights of mind and reason do not penetrate to the farthest recesses of his consciousness; and seeing only a portion of himself, necessarily he falsifies his values and is deluded.

All departments of knowledge suffer because of this partial vision. Things seen through a glass darkly can never prove permanent contributions to science. That is the reason why all our modern sciences are so shifting and hypothetical. Yet in every individual there is an unerring perception, a Divine Vision, which is whole and complete. Can we doubt for a moment then what our first duty is? Must it not be to unfold that innermost faculty by which we may apprehend Truth directly? The scientific investigator who is satisfied with lesser instruments cannot hope to reach any sure conclusion. Although he may collect many well-authenticated facts, he will be unable to classify them on any ultimate basis; and science does not consist in merely accumulating facts, but in being able to so group and relate them as to gain a profounder insight into cosmic law. No accurate generalization, however, can be made apart from knowledge of the Final Cause and that can be attained through Spiritual Vision alone.

The great question then becomes: How can we acquire this higher power of sight? The first condition is intense desire. All our outer senses were evolved through a per-

sisting desire to pierce channels of communication with this objective world. The same steadfast longing to penetrate to the subjective or causal realm will develop the inner vision—the "third eye" spoken of in Vedic Sacred Literature. As those primitive forms of life grew aware of a universe of matter all about them and struggled to perceive it, so we must begin to realize that at this moment we are living in a mighty universe of Spirit to which we are blind and deaf. We sense it dimly, as did the jelly-fish its world, we must strive with unwavering will to know it. That which obscures our sight is matter; we must remove it layer by layer. Not, however, by any objective process. The work is wholly subjective. It consists in gradually altering our point of view. We begin by ceasing to identify ourselves with the body, no longer believing that our happiness depends on its comfort or convenience. All this intricate system of living, with its multiplicity of attachments, occupations and possessions, rests on the belief that we are one with the body. Rid ourselves of that and at once our life will grow free and simple. So long as we devote the larger part of our energy to caring and providing for it, we cannot hope to transcend its limitations. Yet we must not neglect it. As we keep our clothes clean and well-mended, so must we treat this closer garment; but having done that we should wear it unconsciously.

Next we must break the tyranny of the senses. We must free ourselves from the superstition that they are the surest channels of either happiness or knowledge. If it were not for the watchful censorship of the discriminative faculty, they would constantly deceive and man would never know. All they do is to admit raw material for observation; but only when their gateways are closed does the real process of knowing begin. The secrets of nature are hidden far down

below the surface where ears and eyes and fingers cannot reach. It requires the keen penetration of the superconscious faculties to discover them. Our eyes may tell us by a simple chemical analysis that salt is made up of Chlorine and Sodium, but only that deeper-seeing inner eye can disclose why two things which are poisons in themselves, when combined, should produce a stable element of food. "Carried to whatever extent," Herbert Spencer truly says, "the inquiries of the psychologist do not reveal the ultimate nature of mind, any more than do the inquiries of the chemist reveal the ultimate nature of matter, or those of the physicist the ultimate nature of motion."

The mind and intellect, too, must loose their hold upon us. We must no longer cling to the delusion that lasting satisfaction can be gained from book knowledge. Goethe draws a true picture of the emptiness of powers and learning, when he shows Faust on that Easter Eve turning from his books and magic to the cup of poison as the only remedy for life's bitterness. Our minds were meant to think with, not to serve as storage warehouses for other people's thoughts. So long as we crowd them full of miscellaneous information, we have no space left for our own use and we cannot gain the habit of independent thinking. Why should we take all our knowledge second hand? Why should we not learn to go to the source and gather it for ourselves? Study is good, but only as it brings us in contact with greater minds and stimulates us to reflection and original research.

Most of all the ego must be put off. Nothing so obscures or refracts our vision, nothing so neutralizes all our moral effort as egoism. Even the most exalted service is abortive if accompanied by the sense of "I." Mankind is not enriched by taking money or dress or food from one

place and putting it in another, that is, by giving of our superfluity to the needy. That which enriches it is a free gift of spirituality through an illumined selfless life. The relief work which we call charity is made necessary by the fierce war of "I and mine" perpetually raging in the world. Such charity is never corrective, it is only a fair amend for the evils created by ourselves. We talk loudly of educating the masses, while we ourselves remain ignorant of the fundamental verities of life. We have not the wisdom to solve our own problems, yet we rush in hotly to solve the problems of society. We recognize that there is a Higher Vision, but we are content to grope our way along in half-blindness, misleading ourselves and others. We believe that an Ultimate Truth exists, but the labor of attaining It is too great, so we spend our energies on lesser things. In what are we better than the man who, too lazy to earn money, wilfully circulates false coin?

The world needs light, the light of Spiritual Vision, to dispel the oppressive darkness of materialism which envelops it. Having failed with all our getting to get understanding, we find ourselves today surrounded by wealth, but in the direst poverty; overstocked with knowledge, yet profoundly ignorant. And if now we would soothe and help mankind in its travail, we have but one course to follow—to turn from things of the flesh to things of the Spirit, and by prayer and meditation, by earnest searching within and loving service without, to so purify our minds and hearts that we shall be able to perceive that Final Truth, which alone will provide a stable foundation for both life and knowledge.

To be able to discern that what is true is true, and that what is false is false, this is the mark and character of intelligence.—*Swedenborg.*

GOD-KNOWLEDGE.

From the Teachings of Chuang-Tzu.

I Liao of Shih-nan paid a visit to the prince of Lu. Finding the latter sad, he inquired the cause. The Prince replied: "I study the doctrines of the ancient Sages. I respect religion. I honor the Good. Never do I fail in all my duties; yet I cannot avoid misfortune, therefore am I sad."

"Your Highness' method of avoiding misfortune is but a shallow one," rejoined the Sage. "A handsome fox or a striped leopard seeks shelter in a mountain forest behind some rocky cliff; they creep out cautiously at night and hide away by day, but still they do not escape the net or trap. Yet what crime have they committed? It is their skin that causes all their trouble. The state of Lu is your Highness' skin. I would have your Highness put away body and skin alike, and cleansing your heart and purging it of passion, betake yourself to the land where mortality is not.

"There is in Nan-Yueh a district called Established-Virtue. Its people are honest, simple, unselfish, and free from passions. They make, but do not keep. They give, but look for no return. They work with diligence, but not impelled by any sense of obligation. They move with perfect independence, unconscious of the binding slavery of custom. Their actions are wholly unrestrained, yet they walk in the way of wisdom. Thither, Prince, would I have your Highness proceed, leaving behind you world and power, and trusting wholly in Tao (the Divine)."

"The road is long and full of danger," replied the Prince. "There are rivers and hills to cross and I am without boat or chariot."

"Unhindered by body and unfettered by mind," spoke the philosopher, "your Highness will be a chariot to yourself."

"But the road stretches in endless distance, dreary and uninhabited," protested the Prince. "There will be none to help me, none to give me food. How can I make the journey?"

"Decrease expenditure of energy and lessen desires," answered the philosopher. "Even though without provisions there will be enough. Across rivers and over seas Your Highness will travel into shoreless space. From the borderland those who act as escort will return; but onward and onward Your Highness will journey afar. It is the human in ourselves which is our hindrance, and the human in others which causes our sorrow. I would have Your Highness put off this hindrance and rid yourself of this sorrow and roam with Tao alone through the realms of Infinity.

"Suppose a boat is crossing a river and another empty boat floats against it. Even an irascible boatman would not grow angry. But let there be an occupant in the second boat and at once he will shout to him to keep clear. If he fails to heed him, loud words of abuse will surely follow. In the first case there was no anger, in the second there was. Why? Because in the first case the boat was empty, and in the second it was occupied. So with man. If he could only roam through life empty (of his ego), who would be able to disturb or injure him?"

Confucius said to Lao Tzu: "Today you are at leisure. Pray tell me of perfect Tao."

Lao Tzu answered: "Purge your heart by fasting and discipline. Wash your soul as white as snow. Cast aside your (partial) knowledge and I will try to tell you then of Tao. Those who enter into Tao become strong of limb, subtle of thought, clear of sight and hearing. They suffer no fatigue of mind, they meet with no bodily resistance.

But it is not from extensive study that this may be known, nor by dialectic skill that this may be made clear. Attainment implies non-discussion; discussion implies non-attainment. Hence silence is better than argument. Tao cannot be translated into speech, better then say nothing. This is called the great attainment."

And Chuang Tzu adds: Man's intellect, however keen, face to face with the countless evolutions of things, their birth and death, their squareness and roundness, can never reach the root. Always the secret of life is withheld. Even the autumn spikelet, in all its minuteness, must carry Tao within itself. Nothing perishes altogether. Apparently destroyed, yet really existing; the material gone, the immaterial left—such is the law of creation which passes all our understanding. This is called the root, whence a glimpse may be obtained of God.

Tao cannot be heard. Heard, it is not Tao. It cannot be seen. Seen, it is not Tao. It cannot be spoken. Spoken, it is not Tao. That which imparts form to forms is itself formless, therefore Tao cannot have a name. Unfathomable as the sea, wondrously ending only to begin again, informing all creation without being exhausted, such is Tao.

Is there not an absolute justice? And an absolute beauty and absolute good? But did you ever behold any of them with your eyes? Has the reality of them ever been perceived by you through the bodily organs? He attains to the knowledge of them in their highest purity who goes to each one of them with the mind alone, not allowing when in the act of thought the intrusion or introduction of sight or any other sense in the company of reason, but with the very light of mind in her clearness penetrates into the very light of truth in each; he has got rid, as far as he can, of

eyes and ears and of the whole body, which he conceives as a disturbing element, hindering the soul from the acquisition of knowledge when in company with her—is not this the sort of man who, if ever man did, is likely to attain the knowledge of being?—*Plato.*

FAITH, BELIEF AND REASON.

Faith and belief, although closely allied phenomena of the human mind, are not identical; nor is either opposed to reason. On the contrary, the three stand as consecutive steps in the same act of cognition. The first step is belief; the second, reason; the third, faith. Without belief reason cannot work, and reason and belief lead inevitably to faith. Belief underlies reason, faith rises out of it. No intelligent man admits as material for his reasoning faculty anything that has not an element of likelihood or an appearance of truth. He must believe in the possibility of his premises, just as a mathematician must believe in the correctness of his data before he will begin to solve a problem. It is upon such a foundation of belief that all scientific research rests. Close observation of nature led Charles Darwin to believe in the probable existence of a law of natural selection. Years of experimental study and generalization based on this hypothesis gradually led him to a firm faith in the law. But further he could not go, because although faith gives us "the evidence of things not seen," it does not enable us to see them. In order to apprehend the hidden truths of the universe we must have subtler powers of perception. Because the scientists of today do not recognize the existence of those latent powers and the possibilities of direct vision to be gained through them, they are forced to classify that entire sphere of Absolute Truth as unknowable, at the same time proving their faith in it by making it the basis of all

their processes of generalization.

The followers of Vedanta, while also recognizing the unknowableness of this hidden Reality for the ordinary intellect, will not give up their quest for It. The ultimate aim of all human effort indeed, in their view, is this Unknowable Reality. It is to be described as "No, No," and yet is to be sought after. The solemn declaration of the wise father to the enquiring son in the Upanishad: "That which is the subtle essence in all that exists has its self. It is the True, it is the Self and Thou, O Swetaketu, art That," has a ring of strong and deep conviction about it which shows that such questions regarding the Inscrutable were not for those ancient Indo-Aryans a vain fancy. Though in the flesh and bound down by it, though compelled to perceive and know things generally through the dim and small channels of the sense organs, they were yet able to obtain hold of a positive Reality on which to rest their faith.

Their soul's senses were possessed with "another sound, another vision"; and they were able to travel in spirit to the region of that Real and Unchangeable Being which is beyond time, space and causation and which has ever to be known as *Sat-Chit-Anandam* (Existence Absolute-Knowledge Absolute-Bliss Absolute). Knowledge of this Being they promise to all those who have *Shraddha* or faith—a faith which is not merely firm conviction regarding the existence of a Supreme Reality, but which contains that other essential element of unwavering confidence that It can be known. Reason, which deals only with the phenomenal elements of human experience, has no place or power here; the Reality behind all phenomena is not accessible to ordinary observation and inference. But that there is a sphere which transcends reason, even the worshippers of reason

are forced to admit. To the ancient Sages of India, this higher sphere of being is the vital subject "which we must desire to understand."

Shraddha or Faith is the name they give to the frame of mind of the true inquirer who is earnest in his search after the Unknown. It is that which carries man from the knowledge of phenomena to knowledge of that which supports them; or as it has been said, from nature to nature's God. And this faith rises in man in response to the deeper needs felt by him in those supreme moments of his life when he grows dimly conscious of kinship with a Power and Presence higher than himself and than all that he sees or knows on earth. Impelled and fortified by this faith, he dives deep into his heart to obtain a knowledge of this Reality which transcends all his experience; for "faith abides in the heart" and "by the heart faith knows," as the *Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad* puts it. "I have found the organ," Fichte writes in his *Bestimmung des Menschen*, "by which to apprehend all reality. It is not the understanding; for all knowledge supposes some higher knowledge on which it rests, and of this ascent there is no end. It is Faith, voluntarily reposing on views naturally presenting themselves to us, *because* through these views alone we can fulfill our destiny; which sees our knowledge, and pronounces that it 'is good,' and raises it to certainty and conviction. It is not knowledge but a resolution of the will to admit this knowledge."

The reasoning of faith is not in all respects like the reasoning of science; nevertheless, it also leads to certitudes the value and truthfulness of which it is impossible to question, unless the mind and heart of the questioner have been wrongly educated. That none are so blind as those who will not see, is true in matters of both faith and reason.

Atheism and irreligion do not really flow so much from honest and enlightened reason as from an acquired and specially disciplined unwillingness of certain minds to yield freely to the natural promptings of that luminous and life-giving faith, which is in consonance with all the needs and aspirations of the higher life of man and which takes him step by step into the Illumining Presence of the Most High.

REPORTS.

Although Swami Paramananda had closed his course of lectures and classes in Los Angeles and was planning to leave for the North, such strong pressure was brought to bear upon him to remain and establish a Centre, that he finally yielded. A house remarkably well adapted for the work was found at 1071 South Hoover St., one of the pleasantest sections of the city, and the first Service was held there on Sunday morning, August 27th. The Classes have also been reopened and will meet on Wednesday and Friday evenings at 8. It is the Swami's intention to remain in Los Angeles at the new Centre until the end of October. He will then resume his work at the Boston Centre, placing some one else in charge in Los Angeles during his absence.

* * *

The Ramakrishna Mission is carrying on its Famine Relief Work with unabated energy. To check the ravages caused by thirst as well as hunger, it has excavated eight fair-sized ponds and constructed a canal one mile in length and 25 feet broad. It has also opened a new Centre at Khatra. This brings the area covered by its work in Bankura District alone to 125 square miles; while the number of villages receiving regular or intermittent help amounted to 866 in three weeks. Fierce fires caused by the intense heat added much to their labors, as members of the Mission worked with the people in rebuilding their homes.

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"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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THE DEVOTEE OF GOD.

Familiar Teachings by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

Why should we worship God? Why should we be devoted to Him? Because only by one-pointed love for Him can we realize all that we desire to realize; and if we worship Him with steadfast devotion, we shall gradually come to love Him. Our Master, Sri Ramakrishna, used to tell us the story of some fisherwomen who, being overtaken by a storm on their way home from market, took refuge with a florist. He put them in a room where he kept flowers for his customers and the air was full of fragrance. The fisherwomen tried vainly to sleep, but the sweet odor prevented them. At last one of them suggested wetting their fish baskets and keeping them near their noses; after that they slept soundly. Because they had been associating so long with the strong smell of fish, the fragrance of flowers had grown unbearable to them. So it is with us. If we remain always in the world, the company of God becomes unpleasant to us. If we want to make God our own, we must cultivate a taste for Him. Now God has been supplanted by worldly desire and greed. To cultivate a taste for Him, we must read the Sacred Scriptures and associate with such people as will increase our love for Him.

God is everywhere. He is in the heart and He sees

when one is eager to realize Him, for He knows everything. So Sri Krishna says that "when a man wishes to know something of Me (the Lord) and seeks Me sincerely, then I come at once and dispel all the miseries which beset his mind." God is always kindly disposed towards all, but He can only bestow His Divine blessings on those the cup of whose soul is turned towards Him, not on those the cup of whose soul is turned towards the world.

Sri Ramakrishna used to teach us that the wind of the Lord's Grace is perpetually blowing on all men, but some people have unfurled their sails to catch it and others still have their sails furled. The first make rapid growth, the others complain that God is unkind. "Here we are in mid-ocean and we make no progress," they say. They do not see that it is because of their own foolishness; that the same wind is blowing for all; that God is never partial, but His wind will only strike on sails that are spread to catch it.

Sankara uses the illustration of fire. One may be very close to the flame and thoroughly warm, while another a hundred yards distant complains of the chill. But that is not the fault of the fire. It is because the man stays far from the hearth. In the same way God is always kind, always good. He can never be a God with thunder in His hand; that can not be a true God, it is a tyrant's God. Man is a tyrant and he wishes to intimidate men so he makes such a God. On the contrary, the moment God knows that someone wants to make friends with Him, at once He runs to him. He is running everywhere to His devotees; but most people say to Him: "I have other friends, I do not want your friendship." For that one, however, who wants His friendship He quickly dispels all darkness and misery. That man becomes illumined and

perceives his own beauty, his own glory.

Having attained illumination, he sees God everywhere and for this reason he never wants for anything. Suppose you have a millionaire for your best friend, will he let you have any want? If he sees you with a torn cloth, will he not at once give you a new one? If he finds that you have not eaten, will he not at once order food to be brought? In the same way, when a man has made friends with God, his want of wisdom, his want of bliss, his want of life, he will get rid of at once. How can he want for life, when all life comes out of God? How can he want for bliss, when God is made up of pure bliss? How can he want for wisdom, when God is the Source of all wisdom? Therefore since God is his Friend, He will not let him want for anything. This is why God says: "Between Me and my devotee there is no difference. My wisdom is his wisdom, My life is his life, My happiness is his happiness."

Thus infilled with the Grace of God, the devotee's mind never cares to think about anything else except God. Formerly he plucked flowers for himself, now he plucks them only for God. He does everything that he used to do, but now he does it all for God. His service becomes not for others, not for himself, but wholly for God. If he makes a charity, he does it because God's children are there in need and he must serve them. Whatever he does, he does out of love for God. This is called true *Bhakti* or devotion. The whole tendency of the man is in the direction of God. He cannot do anything for himself, because his entire mind moves towards God and nothing else can attract him.

While the thought of the Beloved fills our hearts, all our work is to do Him service and spend life for Him.—*Jalalu'd Din.*

PRAYER.

O Lord, let me give my whole heart to Thee.
Let me always find my deepest joy and satisfaction in Thy Holy Presence.
May my thoughts rise above all the fleeting objects of this world and be fixed on Thee alone.
May my heart ever remain fixed in joy through contact with Thy Divine Being.
May it never waver nor turn away from Thee.
Lord, make me worthy of Thy blessing.
Help me to acquire wisdom for Thy service.
Give unto me such purity and holiness that I may be worthy to take Thy Name;
For Thy Sacred Name removes all sin and sorrows and imperfections;
Through Thy Name one attains Eternal Bliss.
O Infinite and Merciful One, Thou art the Goal of my existence.
Thou art the Delight of my inner being.
Thou art the Source of all my strength.
Grant unto me Thy Peace.

Swami Paramananda.

Those who worship and meditate on Me without any other thought, to these ever steadfast devotees I secure safety and I supply all their needs. Even if the most wicked worship Me with undivided devotion, he should be regarded as good, for he is rightly resolved. Very soon he becomes a righteous soul and attains to eternal peace. Know thou that My devotee never perishes. Fill thy heart with Me, be thou devoted to Me, do thou worship Me and bow down to Me. Thus thou shalt attain unto Me. Truly I promise thee, for thou art dear to Me.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

BHAKTI-YOGA.

By S. E. Waldo.

With the vast majority of mankind in every age and every land a need to worship and to reverence some Being higher than man himself forms a constituent part of their inner nature, and this inherent tendency in man's very organization has brought into existence all the varying forms of what is known as religion. In the Vedas where all grades of thought have been carefully recorded, the gradual growth and evolution of this sentiment of worship can be clearly traced, until in the Bhakti-Yoga of the Vedanta is found its highest expression, an expression which I think may be justly said to have therein reached its ultimate, in that it rises to a final unit Existence beyond which human thought has never been able to soar. It gives us an added respect for the keenness of Hindu thought when we remember that this ultimate was reached at a period in the world's history when our ancestors had not yet emerged from the savage state of existence. It was already ancient in the days of Buddha, 600 B. C.

First, in studying the subject of Bhakti-Yoga, comes naturally the necessity of getting a clear and definite conception of what is exactly meant by the words themselves. They are foreign to our ears and their meaning is foreign to our thought, although the last twenty years have somewhat familiarized the Western world with their sound. Yoga, we all know, means joining or union and is the method through which we seek to realize the Divine in our own nature. Bhakti means intense love for God, by getting which, as Narada says in his Aphorisms, "Man loves all and hates none; he becomes satisfied forever." The Hindu idea of this intense love for God excludes all desire for any advantage to be gained by loving Him. "This love

cannot be reduced to any earthly benefit," to quote again from Narada.

Bhakti is undoubtedly the easiest and the most natural way to realization, and the way likely to meet the wants of a great majority of mankind. We find that even in the history of Buddhism, a religion that teaches neither God nor soul, the strong inherent tendency to worship has led its followers to deify its Founder and worship Him. In fact the natural reaction against the loss of a really worthy object of worship has brought into modern Buddhism a larger number of idols and other symbols to be worshipped by the masses than are known in any other great religion. Even Buddha, with all His wisdom and His enlightenment, failed to appreciate the innate tendency to worship that exists in all mankind, or to recognize in this tendency an insurmountable barrier to maintaining in their purity the teachings of a religion that gives no scope and no satisfaction for this need of human nature. Every religious symbol in the world today testifies to the reality of this need; and even the most advanced among our modern thinkers, if only he will be honest with himself, will possibly discover this tendency in himself finding expression in some form or other. There is sure to be some particular book or custom or authority that he venerates above all others, often letting it influence him unduly. Man must and will worship something, even if it be only money, or social prestige, or political success.

Hindu philosophers ages ago recognized the importance of training this natural tendency of man in such a manner as to lift it above the material and temporal, and make it a means to raise man to the highest plane of spirituality. The formulated result of this effort to systematize and regulate man's inborn instinct to worship is what is known as

Bhakti-Yoga. It is complete in itself, yet it has many points in common with some of the other Yogas. In its earlier steps it may seem to contradict them, but this is because at the circumference the radii are more widely separated; although at the center they all converge and find a common goal. So it is with these different Yogas; the farther we advance in them, the nearer we draw to the attainment of their one goal, the more we find the agreement between them and learn that the contradictions were only apparent, never real. Each branch of Yoga naturally claims its special adherents and each will lead man ultimately to that One Existence; yet the ideal human character is that in which all these methods are fused and blended into one harmonious whole. Three things help the bird to fly well: two wings and the tail as the rudder. Bhakti (devotion) is one wing, Jnana (wisdom) the other, while Raja-Yoga (concentration and meditation) is the rudder that keeps the balance. The highest love must bring the highest knowledge, and that perfect knowledge is inseparable from true love.

Those who cannot follow all these three methods and who choose Bhakti alone as their way, must remember that in Bhakti-Yoga the first essential is to want God honestly and earnestly, for only love for the Supreme Lord is true Bhakti. Love for any other being, however great, is not Bhakti. Now we want everything except God, because our ordinary interests are supplied by the external world. It is only when our necessities have gone beyond the external world that we seek a supply from the internal one, from God. So long as our needs are confined within the narrow limits of the physical universe, we cannot have any need for God; it is only when we have become satiated or disappointed with every thing here and feel the need of some-

thing higher than it all that we look beyond for a supply. And with the demand the supply will surely come. Bhakti is not destructive; it teaches that no one of our faculties has been given us in vain, but that through them all is the natural way to reach salvation. Bhakti tells us to give these faculties a higher and more powerful direction, to give only to God that love which is usually wasted on the fleeting objects of sense, and yet which with most of us is sufficiently intense to blind us to higher things.

Bhakti-Yoga begins with certain rules to be observed by those who wish to follow this method of realization. The first is called *Viveka*, which here means discrimination regarding food. As our bodies are manufactured out of food, from the finer particles of which we have to manufacture our brain and our thoughts, it naturally follows that both body and mind must feel the effects of the food we take. It is obvious that certain kinds of food produce certain changes in the mind. This is quickly apparent in all alcoholic beverages and only less rapidly felt in the case of many other things we eat. Therefore, to keep the mind calm and easily under control, Bhakti-Yoga prescribes food of a simple, unexciting character, to be partaken of in moderate quantities and at regular hours. It strongly recommends vegetable diet, at any rate at first, as all meat is a stimulant. The next thing is to get rid of extreme desires (*Vimoksha*) and to want only God. The third thing is *Abhyasa* (practice). This means that by patient effort the mind must be controlled and allowed to think only such thoughts as are pure and high and will lead it towards God. As a help to this it is advised that we read only books which tell of God and speak only words about God. Here it is that music comes in as a great help. It has a tremendous power over the human mind to tranquillize and spiritualize it.

The fourth thing is *Kriya* (work); that is, to do good, unselfish deeds and strive to help others. Bhakti-Yoga recognizes five special kinds of work as aids to devotion: (1) study: every day to study something good and holy; (2) worship of God or of saints; (3) duty to our family; (4) duty to human beings: to be charitable and to consider the welfare of others before that of oneself; and (5) duty to the lower animals: to be gentle and considerate towards them, never abusing them or killing them unnecessarily. After *Kriya* comes *Satyam* (truthfulness): to be perfectly true in thought, word and deed. Next *Arjavam* (straightforwardness), to have no double dealing. Next *Daya* (pity, compassion); next *Dana* (charity): giving liberally to those in need. Next comes *Ahimsa*, non-injuring in thought, word or deed. Next is *Anavasada* (cheerfulness). Love makes us happy, not miserable, and he who truly loves God is the happiest of men. Then lastly we are warned against *Uddharsha* (excessive merriment). The mind should be ever cheerful but calm at the same time. It is the steady flame of serene happiness that is wanted, not the flash of sudden gaiety which is apt to be followed by depression. These are the preparations for Bhakti.

Bhakti is divided into two portions: first the preparatory stage, second the supreme. The former is the part that treats of the form or ceremonial which is necessary at the beginning of a life of devotion and worship. Every one has to take the particular road suited to his own nature and its needs; and these roads, though various, are all true and helpful because they all lead to the same goal. This choice of a particular method is called the *Ishta*, meaning the "chosen way". This *Ishta* or chosen way is a matter to be kept to oneself, not because it is secret, but

because it is sacred to oneself alone and to talk about it to others would only lead to useless discussion and waste of temper and time. Next come words and symbols as helps to the aspiring Bhakti or devotee. Bhakti-Yoga teaches that certain words have great power to help us toward spirituality; these sacred words are called *mantras*, and are given by the Guru or teacher to the disciple for the latter to repeat when at his devotions.

There is also another idea in this giving of the holy word,—that with it is transmitted a certain spiritual force which has been handed down in this manner through the ages, and that this spiritual force will give great help to the disciple and enable him to hold fast to the upward way. No doubt this idea is at the bottom of the custom of the "laying on of hands" in ordaining priests and ministers and in other religious ceremonies. The Bhakta believes that the quickening impulse necessary to awaken spiritual life can never be derived from books, but can only come to one soul from another soul, as one lamp is lighted from another. In spiritual development, as in all other development, two things are imperative:—first, a properly prepared receptacle; and second, a living seed to be placed therein. Only thus can growth take place.

The chief difference between Bhakti and what is usually called religion here in the West lies in the fact that two things which are very prominent in the one find no place whatever in the other. Bhakti knows no idea of fear, no Being to be appeased or propitiated. The Bhaktas even worship God as their own child, so that any such idea as awe or reverence may be entirely eliminated. True love can never know fear and while fear lasts Bhakti cannot even begin. Still less has Bhakti any place for begging and bargaining. To the Bhakta the idea of asking God for

anything would be sacrilege. Even to pray to go to Heaven is considered unworthy and beneath true Bhakti.

In the forcible words of Swami Vivekananda: "One who wants to love God, to be a Bhakta, must make a bundle of all these and throw them all out of the door and enter. He who wants to enter the realms of light must make a bundle of all 'shopkeeping' religion and cast it away before he can enter the gates. It is not that you do not get what you pray for; you get everything, but it is low, vulgar, a beggar's religion. 'Fool indeed is he who, living on the banks of the Ganges, digs a little well for water. Fool indeed is the man who, coming to a mine of diamonds, begins to search for glass beads.' These prayers for health and wealth and material prosperity are not Bhakti. They are the lowest form of Karma. Bhakti is a higher thing. We are striving to come into the presence of the King of kings. We cannot get there in a beggar's dress. If we wanted to enter the presence of an emperor would we be admitted in a beggar's rags? Certainly not. The lackey would drive us out of the gates. This is the Emperor of emperors and never can we come before Him in beggar's garb. Shopkeepers never have admission there, buying and selling will not do there at all. As you read in the Bible, 'He drove the buyers and sellers out of the temple.' So it goes without saying that the first task in becoming a Bhakta is to give up all those desires of heaven and so on. Such a heaven would be like these places, only a little better. All this desire to go to heaven is a desire after enjoyment. This has to be given up."

This quotation will clearly show how widely the idea of the Bhakta differs from that ordinarily taught as religion. He has no notion of being a "sinner" and of escaping the consequences of his sins by accepting certain beliefs.

All such ideas appear to the Bhakta as unworthy of any religion, as beneath real devotion to God. Just at first he may pray to God to return his love; but as he rises on the path even that idea vanishes and he cares only to lavish his love on God, asking nothing in return. Bhakti-Yoga is above all the Yoga of pure, unadulterated love; of that love which includes the whole universe, which cannot even know hate and therefore cannot feel it. This love must be pure and unselfish, seeking nothing for itself, either here or hereafter. This kind of love, once started on its divine path of glorious consummation, goes on increasing until all distinction of lover and beloved is lost, and the lover becomes, as it were, resolved into Infinite Love—that one inexpressible ocean of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss.

THE LOTUS FLOWER.

By Fanneal Harrison.

My love, thou art the lovely lotus flower
A thousand petalled blossom in my heart,
Each petal glowing in its consummate art,
Unfolding perfect through the darkest hour,
Uppushing through the ooze thy beauteous dower,
Awaiting breathless, rapt, thy lover's part
As thy Lord, the Sun, greets thee with virile dart,
Embracing thee in infinite love and power.
In a thousand ways, my Lord, I would love Thee,
Untainted each as the Hindu's sacred bloom,
And if to strive through darkness is my doom,
Let me be too of lotus purity,
Growing through slime, unspotted by the mire,
To blossom perfectly my sole desire.

THE GOAL OF LIFE.

Extract by Swami Vivekananda.

To think that this world is the end and aim of life is brutal and degenerating. Any man who starts in life with that idea degenerates himself. He will never rise higher, he will never catch a glimpse of what is behind, he will always be a slave to the senses. Better die than live that life. Slaves of this world, slaves of the senses, let us rouse ourselves; there is something higher than this sense-life. Do you think that man, the Infinite Spirit, was born to be a slave to his eyes, his nose and his ears? There is an Infinite, Omniscient Spirit behind that can do everything, break every bond; that Spirit we are, and we get that power through Love. We cannot of course get it in a day. We must take man where he stands and help him upward. Man stands in materialism; you and I are materialists. So we have to take ourselves where we are as materialists, and accepting the help of matter go on slowly until we feel ourselves Spirit, understand the Spirit and find that this world which we call infinite is but a gross external form of that world which is behind.

But something besides that is necessary. We read in the Sermon on the Mount: "Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." The difficulty is, who seeks, who wants? Let us ask ourselves this question every day : Do we want God? We may read all the books in the universe, but this love is not to be had by the power of speech, not by the highest intellect, not by the study of the various sciences. He who desires God will get Love, unto him God gives Himself.

If you want to love, love God. Who cares for these things of the world? God is the Goal of our life. This world and this body have their own value, a secondary

value, as a means to an end. Unfortunately too often we make the world the end and God the means. We find people going to church and saying: "God give me so and so, God heal my disease." They want nice healthy bodies and because they hear that someone will do this work for them, they go and pray to Him. Bhakti has a higher ideal.

We have slowly to work through the world and the senses to reach God. As oil poured from one vessel to another falls in an unbroken line, as chimes coming from a distance fall upon the ear as one continuous sound, so should the mind flow towards God in one continuous stream. We should not only impose this practice on the mind, but our senses too should be employed. Instead of hearing foolish things, we must hear about God. Instead of talking foolish words, we must talk of God. Instead of reading foolish books, we must read good ones which tell of God. The mind too must be cheerful. Despondency is not religion, whatever else it may be. Being pleasant always and smiling takes you to God, nearer than any prayer. How can minds that are gloomy and dull love? Every man has his own burden to bear. If you are miserable, try to be happy, try to conquer it.

Never be weak. You must be strong; you have Infinite strength within you. How else will you conquer anything? How else will you come to God? Be strong, stand up and seek the God of love. This is the highest strength. This love of God cannot be reached by the weak; therefore be not weak, either physically, mentally, morally or spiritually. The Lord alone is true, everything else is untrue; everything else should be rejected for the sake of the Lord. Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. Serve the Lord and Him alone.

KAN-APPAN, THE EYE-SAINT.

From Indian Sacred Writings.

There once lived a forest chieftain who spent all his days in hunting, and he had a son surnamed the Sturdy. This boy went with his father on the chase and when the elder prince had grown too feeble to follow through the jungle, the youth continued to go forth each morning with a retinue of servants to hunt. So it happened that one day when he had slain a wild boar and would have roasted it, there was no water; so he took the boar on his shoulder and with his servants pushed further into the forest in search of a stream or lake. Before long they came to the sacred hill of Kalaharti, on the summit of which stood an image of the Great God. Perceiving it, Sturdy called: "Come let us go there and worship." But as he mounted the slope the dead beast on his shoulder grew lighter and lighter, and his heart was filled with wonder. Throwing down the boar, he ran swiftly on to seek the cause and found himself before a stone lingam the top of which was shaped into the head of Shiva, the third person of the Vedic Trinity. Something in the roughly-hewn image spoke to the soul of the simple hunter, rousing it from its slumber, and with a cry of joy, as of a son who has found his mother, he ran to embrace it. His servants believing he had gone mad, sought to recall him to himself, but he refused to heed their words and pushed them vehemently aside.

Seeing that some one had recently worshipped the image with flowers and water, the thought came to Sturdy that he too might serve it; so he hurried back to the camp, chose some tender parts of the boar, tasting them himself to assure himself that they were good, took water in his mouth from the river, and running to the image, he sprinkled

it with the water from his mouth, offered it the roasted flesh, and crowned it with the garland of wild flowers from his own head, praying fervently to the God to receive his gifts. Then the sun set and all the night he kept vigil with strung bow to guard his Deity. When the dawn broke he went forth again to hunt that he might have fresh offerings to lay before the Lord.

While he was absent a devout Brahman, having bathed and chanted many prayers, came for his accustomed worship bearing with him pure water in a holy vessel, fresh flowers and carefully washed leaves. Seeing that his sacred image had been defiled with flesh and unclean water, he was overcome with horror and beat his head against the earth in an agony of grief. Then he cleansed the image, performed his worship and went back to his hermitage in the jungle.

Thus from day to day the Brahman worshipped in the morning and the rough hunter at the evening hour, until the Brahman devotee could bear the desecration of his shrine no longer and with passionate invocation he implored the Great God to protect His image. In the night Shiva appeared before him and said: "That which seems desecration to you is to me purest adoration. This ignorant hunter of the forest is unschooled in sacred rites. He knows nothing of the rules of worship. But regard not his crude mode of serving, look beneath and see the motive that impels him. His heart burns with intensest love, which makes his offering holy and acceptable unto me. Wait until tomorrow and you shall understand."

The next evening Shiva hid the Brahman near the shrine, then to test to the utmost the hunter's devotion, he caused a semblance of blood to flow from the right eye of His image. As Sturdy approached with his customary offer-

ing, he beheld the blood and cried out in pain: "O Lord, who hath wounded Thee? Who hath been guilty of this wicked act when I was not near to guard Thee?" And he sought in and out through the forest but could find no one. Then he tried to soothe the hurt with herbs, still in vain. At last remembering what a doctor had once told him,—that like cures like, he cut out his own right eye with a pointed arrow and laid it on the bleeding wound; at once the blood was staunched. But alas! the left eye now began to bleed. For a moment he was despairing, then marking its place, that he might not fail when he could no longer see, he took the arrow to plunge beneath his other eye, but at that moment an arm was extended from the lingam to stay his hand and a voice was heard saying: "Enough! Henceforth thou shalt ever have a place by my side in Kailas." Then the Brahman saw that whole-hearted devotion alone measures the merit of all service to the Lord. And to this day Sturdy, the simple hunter, is honored as Kan-Appan, the Eye-Saint.

Blessed are the clean of heart for they shall see God. O sight to be wished, desired, and longed for; because once to have seen Thee is to have learnt all things. Nothing can bring us to this sight but love. But what love must it be? Not a sensible love only, a childish love, a love which seeketh itself more than the beloved. No, no, but it must be an ardent love, a pure love, a courageous love, a love of charity, an humble love, and a constant love, not worn out with labors, not daunted with any difficulties. For that soul that hath set her whole love and desire on Thee can never find any true satisfaction, but only in Thee.—*Saint Theresa.*

THE VALUE OF SYMBOLS.

By Sister Devamata.

When out of the great void of undifferentiated substance there sprang the first form, at that moment was created the symbol. The heavens and the earth, the waters and all the elements came forth as signs and symbols of the Eternal. Each form rising out of the formless was a new God-symbol through which man might learn to worship. On and on through a multiplication of symbols creation moved, until every word even became a symbol. Thus man lives in symbols, plays with symbols, works with symbols, strives for symbols. The question then in religion can never be, Shall we have symbols? but, How can we utilize them to enrich our spiritual life?

Secular education has advanced steadily towards an increased use of them. The systems of both Froebel and Mme. Montessori are a frank admission of the fundamental value of symbols in training the mind. Their method of object-lessons has completely undermined the old method of learning by rote. Yet strangely enough, whereas the vast majority of people are ready to admit the advantages of this more concrete method in secular education, when it comes to religion the very mention of a symbol seems to them a sign of ignorance and superstition. They acknowledge that we cannot successfully educate without them in the school, but they are unbending in their conviction that we must not educate with them in the church.

Yet it is only along the line of nature that man can grow on any plane of being. The reason why religious practice in the West has moved in recent times with such limping, faltering step is because men have tried to defeat nature, to fight against her, to adopt the unnatural way. Struggle has been mistaken for religion and made the

measure of fervor. The idea has not been to take all our powers and tendencies as they stand and use them for God; but rather to petrify them, to mutilate them, instead of worshipping God through them. Vedanta on the contrary says: Take yourself just as you are, study the principles of your nature, see how analagous growth is on all planes; then follow out the same natural method in spiritual training as you pursue in secular branches; that is, move with childlike simplicity from symbol to symbol until you are led spontaneously to That behind which is symbolized.

In religion even more than in the classroom we cannot afford to do away with symbols. It is foolish to talk about abstract Truth to a man who is wholly concrete in all his mind life. He knows nothing of abstraction and cannot be taught through it. The Roman church recognized this fact and that is why the average Catholic finds such satisfaction in his religion. That which we may condemn in the Church does not rise from the use of symbols, but from their misuse. The use of any earthly thing to a Godly end is never evil. It is the use of the Divine to human ends that brings corruption and degeneration. Vedanta realizes that every little child in the spirit must have its toys; and whatever our age, when we enter on the spiritual life we are again children and should treat ourselves as such. Every object in the well-equipped nursery, even the paper on the wall, is made a means of awakening the baby mind; so holy pictures, sacred images, an altar or house chapel, all such objects serve more than we can realize in rousing our spiritual nature and in cultivating that reverence which is so painfully lacking in the present day.

"But God is everywhere. To give Him a definite place or form is to limit Him," is a frequent objection made. Knowledge is everywhere. When you bring it into your

mind in some definite shape, do you limit it? Rather have you not made it more wholly yours? In reality, the more real and definite becomes your idea of any truth in the universe, the more you possess it. As long as we hold to these prejudices and try to treat ourselves as grown-ups in religion, we shall remain dry and stunted in our devotional nature. Many of the Protestant Churches, which were fanatically iconoclastic a generation ago, are beginning to recognize this and are trying to move away from the vague and abstract and introduce a more definite devotional element into their worship.

The principles of the kindergarten are invaluable in the earlier stages of the spiritual life. All around us are tangible objects. We are smothered under the concrete and only a loftier concrete can extricate us. As Sri Ramakrishna says: "When we have a thorn in our foot, we take another thorn to pluck it out, then we can throw both away." So we must offset the glaring definiteness of our outer life by making our daily religious life more definite, more real. We must crowd out the lower symbol by a higher. As we have photographs of our relations and friends all about us, let us in one quiet corner put some sacred picture that will remind us now and then of God. Near it let us keep a fragrant flower. Why should that be a greater superstition than to place them on our dining table or in our livingroom? Let us put there a few books which in the hour of solitude will rest our minds from the weariness of all the purposeless reading of our other hours. As in the olden time the fleeing offender sought sanctuary in the Cathedral Close, so let us learn to seek refuge in this quiet corner when the world pursues us too hotly. We shall be surprised what peace and renewal of strength it will bring us.

We need not be afraid that our toys will check our development or make us narrow and superstitious. As we acquire the lessons they are meant to teach, we shall drop them unconsciously and pass on to other larger toys. Human beings are by their very nature idol-worshippers. Carlyle writes in his *Heroes and Hero-Worship*: "Idol is *Eidolon*, a thing seen, a symbol. It is not God, but a symbol of God, and perhaps one may question whether the most benighted mortal ever took it for more than a symbol. I fancy, he did not think that the poor image that his own hands had made *was God;* but that God was emblemed by it, that God was in it some way or other. And even in this sense, one may ask, is not all worship whatsoever a worship by symbols, by *eidola*, or things seen? Whether *seen*, rendered visible as an image or a picture to the bodily eye; or visible to the inward eye, to the imagination to the intellect: this makes a superficial, but no substantial difference. It is still a Thing Seen, significant of Godhead; an Idol. The most rigorous Puritan has his Confession of Faith, and intellectual Representation of Divine things, and worships thereby; thereby is worship first made possible for him. All creeds, liturgies, religious forms, conceptions, that fitly invest religious feelings, are in this sense *eidola*, things seen."

The man who throws away all religious idols inevitably turns to other and often baser idols. He is wise who takes the *Eidolon* or symbol which appeals to him and gradually transforms it from a symbol of matter into a symbol of God. Often because something within us revolts against these outer form and symbols, we imagine that it is because we have gone beyond them; it is more often because our nature is undeveloped on that side and hence we cannot perceive their use and value. The scales of traditional

prejudice cover our eyes and prevent us from seeing anything beyond the material form. Yet the most rigid Protestant, who is loudest in his denunciation of idolatry or symbology in any guise, will look with placid gaze upon a lamb or dove, a cross or star on the walls of his own church or in its windows. Whenever we find ourselves hard and stiff, whether in mind or body, it means that exercise is needed; and nothing more quickly softens our inner nature than some simple devotional practices carried on faithfully from day to day. There is no greater poverty in religion than lack of devotion. And whatever tends to awaken this spirit within us should be accepted with eagerness. The loving heart unconsciously gathers around it any object that reminds it of the beloved, and so the earnest devotee is quick to seize the smallest symbol or practice that makes God more real to him. Through this he cultivates the habit of seeing the Divine in all things, until at last he reaches the point where, as Emerson said of Thoreau, "the whole universe is a symbol"—a glowing symbol of the Infinite and Eternal Lord.

REPORTS.

The regular Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service at Vrindavan has just reached us. This Hospital was established 9 years ago to care for the multitudes of pilgrims who come each year to this, one of the most Sacred Shrines of India. Like all Centres of the Ramakrishna Mission, it began very modestly in some outhouses of a Temple. A plot of land of over 8 acres has now been secured and those in charge of the Home are making strenuous efforts to raise sufficient funds to erect a proper hospital, as the extraordinary increase in the number of patients makes it imperative to provide larger and

better quarters. During the year under review, the Report tells us, 86,717 cases were treated and a small number were cared for in their homes, being supplied with food and medicines.

* * *

The monthly report from the Swami Saradananda, Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission, regarding the Famine Relief Work reads: "Since our last report the prospect in the Bankura District has grown a bit brighter. It is now raining there so cultivation has begun and the great water scarcity has been partially relieved. But the famine continues, and the people are destitute. They require money and seeds besides food. We have distributed 16,600 pounds of seeds besides giving the pecuniary help necessary for other purposes. We have finished the excavation of 9 tanks (artificial ponds) and 6 wells. The Ladua Canal is completed and we are running two branches from it into the interior. These with the main canal will irrigate nearly 1,000 acres of land. About 400 cases of sickness have received care and medicines; and we have helped to rebuild a large number of huts destroyed by storm or fire. The situation in the Tipperah District remains grave and we hope for more aid from the public to meet the suffering here. In the last month we have distributed to 17,278 people in 1205 villages, 68,794 pounds of rice. Clothes were also distributed from all our Centres.

* * *

The following news comes to us in a letter from a member of the study group formed in Geneva under the inspiration of Swami Paramananda's two seasons of teaching there: "We hope to begin our meetings again on the first Monday in October at 4.30. We shall read alternately the Karma Yoga and the different articles in the Message.

Miss K. is translating the Karma Yoga (into French) and Mrs. v. N. translates the articles or Mrs. V. and myself, when we take the turn to read. How glad we shall be when things are normal again and the Swami can be among us once more. It is just two years since he left us, but his presence is felt among us as if it were but yesterday and I do not think it can fade."

* * *

It is expected that the Swami Paramananda will return to Boston at the close of the present month and resume charge of the Vedanta Centre here. His season of nearly five months in Los Angeles has been full of encouragement. The members of the Centre formed there have enjoyed fully their new home in South Hoover St. and have found it in every way well adapted to their needs. Besides the meetings held at the Centre, the Swami began on the evening of September 17th at Symphony Hall a second course of public lectures to be carried through five consecutive Sundays, his subjects being: "Occultism and Mysticism," "Faith and Reason," "Spiritual Idealism of the Vedas," "The Science of Self-Mastery" and "The Law of Compensation." On the 12th of September he also gave a dinner to a number of the members. The interest in the new Centre is steadily increasing and the work will continue after the Swami leaves, but it is not yet announced who will take charge of it while he is in the East.

At the Vedanta Centre of Boston, the summer season was on the whole a satisfactory one. A number of strangers came to the meetings and some among them have become regular attendants. The Thursday Class was resumed on September 21st and the full schedule of meetings will continue henceforth.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

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Tyndall.

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UNIVERSAL IDEAL OF RELIGION.

Lecture by Swami Paramananda.

"There are neither two Gods, nor three, nor four, nor ten. He is One and only One and pervades the whole universe. All other things live, move and have their being in Him." Such is the definition of the Supreme given in the Atharva-Veda. "There is one eternal God, the Cause of all things. He is the Divine Mind, the Infinite Wisdom, who brought matter out of chaos into order and produced the world we see," are the words of the Greek Anaxagoras; and the Koran declares: "There is One God and God is the One, the Ever-living. He knoweth the past and the future, but no one comprehendeth anything of His knowledge except that which He revealeth. His sway extends over heavens and earth, and it is no burden to Him to sustain them both. He is the High, the Mighty One." In the Jewish Scriptures the Lord, speaking through Isaiah, says: "I am God, there is none else"; and in St. Mark we read: "There is one God and there is none other but He," to which St. Paul adds: "In Him we live and move and have our being."

Thus we see that wherever we find a true definition of Godhead, it strikes a chord which is similar and universal. Why is it then that we cannot have one ideal or one form of religion? If there is a fundamental unity, why must we have such diversity in creeds and Scriptures? We may also ask: Why are human beings not all alike? Why do we not

look alike? Why do we not use the same language, or act in the same way? May it not be because we are so different in our nature and development, in our power of comprehension and expression, that there is such variety in religious ideals? If this be true, then we must not try to destroy any of the various forms of religion, from the crudest ritualism to the highest monism, but we must strive to understand them all and see their usefulness in this world of diversity.

We can never attain a universal ideal through exclusiveness, by rejecting everything. It can only be reached by allowing a place for every phase of belief. This point is carefully set forth by the Aryan Sages. God is One, they say, but His children are many and comprehend Him in many different ways. There are some who are content to know Him as they hear of Him from others; there are some who try to grasp Him wholly by the aid of reason; and there are others who are never satisfied until they perceive the direct Vision. So religion falls into three general classes: ritualistic and dogmatic religion,—that is religion bound by creeds; philosophic or rationalistic religion; and realistic religion, religion which is no longer a matter of mere discussion and theorizing, but which has become a reality through direct perception. These represent the three different steps in religious development; and as we travel along the path from the lower to the higher forms, we gradually discover a basis of harmony. When religion becomes real, we do not see so many differences.

In all dogmatic religions, each one claims that his religion is the only religion, his God the only God, and his prophet the only true prophet. The religious ideal is confined to a narrow circle and whatever falls outside that circle must be denounced. Thus the scope of ritualistic or

dogmatic religion is very small. A rational man, on the other hand, one who has a philosophical mind, can more easily make allowances for others' point of view; but remaining as he does on the plane of speculative reason, he cannot so fully realize the ideal of harmony as can the follower of realistic religion, who actually feels God's love, perceives His Presence and hears His voice speak within him. Only when we reach this state are we able to see clearly that we are all children of God and that just as a garland is strung on one thread, similarly are we all strung on the same thread of Universal Spirit.

All diversities vanish as we realize the fundamental principles of religion. So long as we remain satisfied with books, ceremonies and creeds, we cannot help but look down on those who do not agree with us. Only the man who has transcended the limitations of form and has embraced the essential part of religion, which is to feel the presence of God within, can find a common basis for the many varying phases of religious teaching. But that very man, following faithfully his path, will realize the Goal. Therefore we must not disturb his faith along the way.

This was one of the great ideals of the Indian Sages,—never to destroy anything, because they knew that even the crudest, most creed-bound believer is gradually evolving God-consciousness and will in time gain the same perception as the highest monistic philosopher. They realized that only by finding unity in variety would it be possible to establish a true basis for a universal ideal. No religion can claim to be a universal religion so long as it says that anyone who does not accept its faith must be condemned or annihilated. At once that irritates other minds and awakens intolerance and fanaticism. The Vedic Teaching conceives another method of establishing a universal plat-

form,—not by destroying, but by recognizing that all paths lead to the same Goal. It says: God is One. There cannot be many Infinite Beings. Therefore all men are seeking that one God. Yet although there is only One Infinite Being, He can express Himself in many finite forms. He has no limitation, hence infinite may be the roads that lead to Him. When we have this well understood in our hearts, then we do not condemn anyone, we do not attack anyone's faith. We remain firm in our own faith, but we grant the same freedom to others. We must be free and we must give others freedom, for through freedom alone can we realize that Infinite Spirit Who is free. Creeds and rituals were not meant to bind us. Their purpose was to help us decrease the bondage of our lives. The world is a source of bondage, the bondage of matter, and we counteract that by adopting certain forms to advance our spiritual culture. When through the aid of these our spiritual consciousness has been cultivated, then we shall see that all forms are but different means to the same end.

Only by bringing the spirit of religion into our daily life can we reach true brotherhood and harmony. It is those alone who live the life, who become universal. But we must live the life according to our nature. There are some who are naturally active, who can best express their religious ideal through activity, and there is no reason why they should not do so. By following a systematic method of unselfish cheerful work, work which elevates and purifies, they will attain. Then there is the path of philosophy, reason, discrimination, which is for people born with a strong intellectual tendency; and there are still other paths for those of meditative or devotional nature. But we must always remember that the end of the spiritual life, however we may live it, is to make religion a real thing; and

when people do this and attain the ideal there is little difference. A Saint in India and a Saint in Christendom or a Saint anywhere who has gained the Vision of God is the same. He does not quarrel or dispute, for his path is the path of love and non-resistance.

When we have reached the same point, we shall become a centre of universal consciousness. Do not think that the universal ideal can be reached by forming a group of people into a society, with an established creed or faith. It has never been reached in that way and it never will be reached in that way. Do not all religions point to the same goal? Does not God form the centre of them all? Then by going to the centre, shall we not all meet? If there is a God, we must know Him. If He is our Father, we must feel His loving protection. If He is our Friend, we must consult Him. He must not be a Being apart from us. And herein lies the whole secret. As long as a religious ideal remains a distant, abstract, impossible ideal, it can never lead to the realization of the universal ideal. It is more often the cause of quarrels and wars. Such theoretical religion tends to divide us and make us feel diversity, while realization of God destroys the sense of diversity and binds us together.

We must therefore first of all comprehend the meaning of religion. Is religion a matter of tradition or is it a matter of individual perception? Can we be content merely to have faith in what other people have said and believed? No; we must see for ourselves, for that is the only safe basis of faith. But there will always be many who follow blindly, clinging to some special creed and form, and we should not destroy their ideal, whatever it may be. Different people need different forms of religion, because their minds vary in understanding. We are all children of God,

but we do not all know it. Most of us feel conscious only that we are children of mortals. The ordinary man, who has no power to understand the principles of religion, has to accept what others give him. That is the only way he can have a religion. There is no use in blaming him. He has not evolved the faculties to see for himself. People who ask you to come and join them because they are universal are really inconsistent, for the two ideas cannot co-exist. The idea of joining a fixed organization and the idea of universality cannot go together. Universality comes when we have grown so broad that everyone seems to belong to our fold and there is no thought of differentiation or denunciation left. This was manifested in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. He did not find any difference between a true Christian or a true Mohammedan or a true Hindu. Whoever approached Him with yearning for God was equally dear, no matter whether he belonged to another creed or nation or to His own. When that spirit shines in us, all the fictitious barriers of name, form, creed, nationality, which we create ourselves, will vanish. We must therefore strive to realize the fundamental principles of religion and no longer be content merely to believe something which some one has said in a book. We must know by practical demonstration that certain things are true; and practical demonstration is possible only when religion becomes a vital thing. When we live it, when we are actuated by a spiritual motive in all we do, then we expand and the universal ideal is realized in our hearts.

It is character which is the final testimony in every faith. If you are a Christian, live the life and manifest the qualities of Christ,—non-resistance, love and universal tolerance. If you are a Buddhist, manifest the teaching of Buddha, who did not hesitate to sacrifice his life even for

animals. When you do this, then you enjoy the reality of religion. The Vedic Scriptures tell us that the purpose of religion is not to stimulate our intellect or to fill our brain with words, it is to give us the beatific vision, by perceiving which we shall transcend all limitations of body and mind and become the mouthpiece of God. We are all destined to do this and it is better that we feel conscious of it. We must not think that religion exists merely for our personal salvation. It is the keynote of everything. There would not be war, intolerance and all the hideous conditions existing in the world, if we would strive for the realization of the true spirit of religion.

It is lack of comprehension which brings condemnation, hatred and the sense of difference; for we do not find these as a part of any religious teaching. There is not one single religion, whether in the East or the West, which advocates the spirit of hatred or intolerance; yet through the ages men have been falling under the sway of these instead of manifesting the Spirit of God. Why is this? Because religion is merely a word with us, a matter of belonging to a church, of feeling sympathy for some little group of people and condemning all others. But God does not condemn anyone. His sun shines on all and He is in all. When we realize His all-pervading Spirit, when we feel actual relationship with Him through our life, then we feel related to the universe. Now that relation is broken into pieces, but until we can reunite these broken pieces into one whole through our regained consciousness, we shall never find a basis for universal tolerance. It will always remain mere words, a mockery. We talk of universal religion and then denounce one who does not agree with us. The reason is that we are one-sided. A man is born with a devotional nature and he laughs at one who tries to fathom the mys-

teries of God through reasoning; while a man who is intellectual thinks that the man who is trying to reach God by worship and prayer is weak and superstitious. This should not be. We should realize that infinite are the roads which lead to Infinite Being; that devotion, philosophy, reasoning, work, all play a part in our spiritual elevation.

When God is known, the spirit of intolerance and condemnation will cease and we shall find true unity in the midst of diversity. So no matter what may be our conviction or our conception of God, let us above all try to find Him. Having found Him, all these other questions which seem so complicated and perplexing will no longer appear difficult. Let us stop laying so much stress on difference. Let us strive with heart and soul to find the fundamental unity within. We do not need to abandon our faith or religion in order to be universal, but let us seek through it the Universal Spirit and we shall soon see that It is not confined in any one form. What we have is good for our progress and what other people have may be the best thing for them. When by following our special path with wholehearted devotion we have all realized our Ideal, we shall find that all differences have vanished and we have reached the Centre, which is God.

It must be that when God speaketh, he should communicate not one thing, but all things; should fill the world with His voice; should scatter forth light, nature, time, souls, from the centre of the present thought; and new date and new create the whole. Whenever a mind is simple, and receives a divine wisdom, then old things pass away—means, teachers, texts, temples fall; it lives now, and absorbs past and present into the present hour. *Emerson.*

SELECTION FROM THE SVETASVATARA-UPANISHAD.

Let us know that highest great Lord of lords, the highest Deity of deities, the Master of masters, the highest above, as God, the Lord of the world, the Adorable.

There is no effect and no cause of Him, no one is seen like unto Him or better; His high power is revealed as manifold, as inherent, acting as force and as knowledge.

There is no master of His in the world, no ruler of His, not even a sign of Him. He is the Cause, the Lord of the lords of the organs, and there is of Him neither parent nor lord.

He is the one God, hidden in all beings, all-pervading, the Self within all beings, watching over all works, dwelling in all beings, the Witness, the Perceiver, the only One, free from attributes.

He is the one Ruler of many who (seem to act, but really do) not act; He makes the one seed manifold. The wise who perceive Him within their self, to them belongs eternal happiness, not to others.

He is the Eternal among eternals, the Thinker among thinkers, who though one fulfils the desires of many. He who has known that Cause to be apprehended by Sankhya (philosophy) and Yoga (religious discipline), he is freed from all fetters.

The sun does not shine there, nor the moon and stars, nor these lightnings and much less this fire. When He shines, everything shines after Him; by His light all this is lighted.

He is the one bird (Hamsa or Highest Self) in the midst of the world; He is also (like) the fire (of the sun) that has set in the ocean. A man who knows Him truly, passes over death; there is no other path to go.

He makes all, He knows all, the self-caused, the Knower, the Time of time; who assumes qualities and knows everything; the Master of nature and of man; the Lord of the three Gunas (states of matter); the Cause of the bondage, the existence and the liberation of the world.

Seeking for freedom I go for refuge to that God Who is the light of His own thoughts . . . Who is without parts, without taint, the highest bridge to immortality—like a fire that has consumed its fuel.

Only when men shall roll up the sky like a hide will there be an end of misery, unless God has first been known.

THE PERSONAL GOD AND THE ABSOLUTE.

From the Bengalee Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna.

"So far and no further" can never be said of God; He is without form and with form as well. Those that are Jnanis (followers of the path of wisdom), to whom this world appears as a shadowy dream, to them He is formless and impersonal. But the devotee who feels himself one entity and the world quite another, to him God appears in His personal aspect with form. The Jnani constantly discriminates regarding the Truth, negating all phenomena, saying "Not this," "Not this." As a result of such discrimination, there awakens in him the consciousness that "all,—ego, the world,—all is false, like an evanescent dream." Then he realizes Brahman (the Absolute) in his own consciousness, but cannot describe by word of mouth what His nature is. Do you know what it is like? It is like a vast ocean, an ocean of *Satchidanandam* (Absolute Existence-Knowledge-Bliss), an infinite expanse, no shores to bound it anywhere; but here and there its waters get congealed through the cold of Bhakti and take the solid form of ice, that is, He manifests Himself before His devotees asuming

some personal form. With the rising of the sun of Jnani (wisdom), however, the ice melts away; then no more is He felt to have a personal aspect and hence one can no longer see His personal forms. What He is then, no one can tell. Who is there to say? The one who would say has vanished, no trace of his "I" is to be found.

When one proceeds with the analysis of the self, the ego or the "I" vanishes away in the process. Just like the onion: peel off first the red outer skin, then the next thick white one, then again the next and next and next, until ultimately the whole thing disappears, you find no kernel within. When one finds no more his "I" existing—and who is left to seek it then?—there, at that stage, who can express how one realizes Brahman in Consciousness? It is the sign of knowledge that when it dawns fully in man, he becomes silent. When a farmer cuts a channel to bring water into his field from the neighboring tank, the water flows out with great noise; as soon as the water of the field comes up to the level of the tank, the noise is no more heard. All difficulties disappear when the "I" dies.

But however you may argue, analyze, and reason, the ego never disappears completely. Hence for men like you and me it is good to have the ego of a devotee, "I am a devotee of God." For the devotee God is the *Saguna-Brahman*, God of infinite attributes. He manifests as a person with forms. He also hears prayers. Whatever prayers you utter are made to Him only. It does not matter much whether you accept the forms of God or not. It is enough to have the feeling that God is a Person—the One who hears our prayers, who creates, preserves and destroys the universe, a Person of infinite power.

Can God be seen?

Yes, surely He can be seen. One can see His forms as

well as His formless expressions. But how can I make you comprehend it?

By what means can He be seen?

Can you weep for Him with intense longing of the heart? Men weep jugfuls of tears for children, for wife, for money. But who weeps for God? So long as a child remains engrossed with its doll, the mother busies herself about the cooking or other household duties. But when it finds no more satisfaction in dolls and throwing them aside weeps and cries aloud for the mother, she can no longer remain in the kitchen. She sets her rice-pot down on the hearth, runs in hot haste to the child and takes it up in her lap.

How is it that there is so much difference about the real nature of God? Some say that He has form and some that He is formless, and again we hear of various forms from those who maintain that He is with form.

As is a devotee's realization, so is his idea of God; but in reality there is no confusion. First you should attain God somehow, then He Himself will make everything clear to you. Only he who thinks of God always, can know His real nature. He knows that He manifests in various forms, in various ways; that He is with attributes and also He is the attributeless Absolute. Kabir used to say: "The formless Absolute is my Father and the God with form is my Mother."

He appears in just the form in which His devotee desires to see Him. Is He not infinitely gracious towards His devotees! But form and all things disappear before the reasoning of Vedanta. The final conclusion of that reasoning is that Brahman (the Absolute) alone is true and the World of name and form is false. So long as you have the feeling that "I am a devotee," it is possible to comprehend

God as a person and see His manifestation in various forms. But Brahman or the Absolute is without any attribute according to Vedanta. What His real nature is cannot be expressed by words. Yet so long as you feel your personality real, the world also is real and real are the different forms of the Divine manifestation—real also is the perception of God's personality.

GOD AS DIVINE MOTHER.

By Sister Devamata.

Whenever we take away any aspect of God,—Father or Mother, Friend, Child or Beloved, we impoverish religion and lessen for mankind the universality of Godhead. Each aspect meets the need of some soul striving to gain a closer relation with the Divine and to eliminate any one means to deprive that soul of its natural approach to the Supreme. There can never be a uniform conception of God. Try as men may to establish it by church canon or presbytery, every worshipper will restate the accepted definition to himself and out of it form his own Deity. We must never confound God with our idea of God. Your God and my God are not God. God is Unchangeable, our God is constantly changing; God is Infinite, our God, pictured by our finite consciousness, is of necessity finite; God never increases or diminishes in glory, but our God grows in majesty and power as we grow. He is the reflection of our own highest point of vision, as much of the Infinite as we grasp at any moment by our partial but evolving perception. As, however, we enter into a deeper union with this God of our conceiving, we make it possible for the Supreme Lord to reveal Himself to us. It becomes, therefore, a vital problem of the spiritual life to establish the closest possible communion with the God we perceive, and

this is most quickly and easily done by creating a definite relation with Him—that relation which meets the strongest need of our nature.

There is no relation so universal and natural to mankind as that of mother and child. God as Mother would seem therefore to be the most spontaneous conception of Deity for the human race at large; yet in all cosmologies we find it preceded by the idea of Father. That which beat upon man's awakening consciousness was evidently the vastness and force of creation—the endless stretches of ocean and plain and desert, the fierce play of the elements, the ravages of storm and fire and flood, all the manifestations of power which awe and frighten. The Vedic Scriptures tell first of an Absolute Being which was neither darkness nor light, neither great nor small, neither aught nor naught, an undefinable mysterious Mightiness, designated by the neuter term *Brahman*. From this rose the first Lord of creation, *Brahma*, a more defined embodiment of power. But something else was needed to satisfy the human consciousness, something more definitely creative, and so there grew the mother idea. This is the natural story of creation, —the formless taking form as power or the Father and becoming creative under the form of the Mother. The account of Genesis gives the same order,—first God Almighty, then Adam, then Eve. These three,—Fatherhood, Motherhood, and the Absolute in which both inhere, may be said to constitute the Trinity of creation.

In Christian theology the feminine element was never given a place; but throughout the Vedic teaching it has always been carefully preserved and at times even emphasized. The female figure beside the Deity in all temple images in India bears witness to this fact. Even in the earliest Aryan Scripture, the Rig-Veda, the Supreme is

spoken of as Mother as well as Father; in the Bhagavad-Gita the Lord declares: "I am the Father of the Universe, the Mother"; while an ancient Sanskrit prayer runs: "Thou art our Mother, Thou art our Father, Thou art our Friend and Companion." The Divine Mother of the Indo-Aryans, however, is a cosmic Mother; She does not always come with sweetmeats in her hands. She is the great Creative Force of the universe,—now preserving, now destroying; now caressing, now punishing; manifesting through every phenomenon of creation, terrible or benign. No phase of Indian teaching has been so grossly misunderstood by the West as this universal character of the Divine Mother, represented most often by the figure of Kali—to the Occidental a hideous idol, to the more subtle Oriental a graphic metaphysical symbol of the creating Mother.

Kali is depicted a dark blue, because blue seems everywhere the color of vastness in nature. She stands on the body of her husband to indicate that all manifestation must rest on the Absolute, as waves on the ocean; and because the Absolute is unchanging, immovable, unaffected by creation, He lies apparently lifeless and unconscious of Her presence. Not only does She stand there, but She dances. Why? The Vedas tell us that "Out of bliss the universe has come." Creation is a joy to the Mother, as the painting of a masterpiece is a joy to the artist. The leap of the flame, the rush of the storm, the swirl of leaves in the autumn wind, the bursting of buds on the hillsides, these are the play of the Mother. Do we not all know the delight of the strong muscle, of the keen intellect, of every free expression of power or intelligence or beauty? Four arms too She must have, because fewer would not suffice to do all that She would do for Her children. Yet She is not always a tender Mother, for while with one hand She protects, with

the other She slays. She is a Mother who makes strong by discipline, who purges by pain, who takes away that She may give more abundantly. And through it all She laughs and laughs loudly, because She knows that Her glistening floating veil of creation but thinly masks the Eternal Fact of Being; that as out of the rotting tree trunk springs a new and richer vegetation, so out of a thousand deaths rises life untouched, out of countless sorrows emerges the Soul triumphant. If in the darkness of a crushing grief or failure this image of the Mother could take form before us and we could see the hand that blesses beside the hand that strikes, at once we would grow quiet and wait in patient confidence for the Supreme Maternal Love and Wisdom to accomplish in us the work of purifying and perfecting.

There is also a profound natural reason for laying stress on the Motherhood of God,—the mother relation is the one sure and clearly defined relation in nature. We may not know the father of any being born into the world, but the mother is always known. It is she who carries close to her heart the new life through the months of its pre-natal unfolding and an unseen cord binds the child to her through all the years of its earthly existence. To her seems primarily entrusted the care of this treasure of manifested being and to her in peculiar measure is given the wisdom to preserve it. In the home too the father is often absent, but the mother is always there, to share in the play and soothe the pain, to clothe and feed and put to rest. It is the mother who answers the cry at night, for her heart never sleeps; and it is the mother who forgives when all others condemn, who believes when all others doubt. Buried deep down in the subconscious mind of every being is the recognition of this fundamental fact of human experience; if it can be drawn out and turned to account in the religious

life, it will become a powerful factor in helping men gain a more real sense of their relation to God.

Take the mother out of any home and what a sad denuded place it seems! So a universe without a Mother is always a sad universe. There is not the same sense of the fireside, of real homelikeness. For that reason wherever the mother idea has not existed, we find a little emptiness in religion. No doubt it was the recognition of this fact that led the Roman Church to raise an altar to the Virgin Mary. And what joy and solace has She brought to numberless lonely paining souls down the centuries! The bounty of that Supreme Mother none can doubt. Nature stands as Her visible symbol. As much air as we would breathe, there is always ample store. When we would eat, from the ground springs food. If we would sleep, some unseen gentle hand passes over us and we fall away from all our troubles into quietness and rest that only the mother can give. If She makes us labor for what She bestows, it is only because She knows that labor is a blessing, that it is the idle aimless child who soonest wearies of the game of life. Do Her children anywhere lack for plenty, it is because they have turned away from Her and created an artificial world of their own.

When She thus supplies all our outer wants, how much more will She provide our inner needs, for She is above all the Mother of our souls. As when a little one is born into the world, there is born also in some woman's heart the love and patience and understanding to watch over it; so when we are reborn little children in the Spirit, it is the Great Divine Mother's heart which enfolds us, it is Her strong arms which carry us into the kingdom of the Highest. And only as we become Her little children can we enter there. Never for one moment does She leave us. If we

will but look up with childlike trust, always shall we see Her smiling face bending over us, always shall we hear Her tender voice, feel Her soothing touch and be conscious of Her guiding wisdom. She is never weary of correcting us, nor does She ever grow impatient with our blunders or tire of our childish importunities. The more we run to Her with our little joys and troubles, the more we seek Her companionship in our loneliness and share each hour's experience with Her, the nearer will She draw to us. And if we can give ourselves up wholly to Her as loving humble children should, then will She unveil Her face and reveal to us Her Eternal Universal Being as "the Sustainer, the Way, the Witness, the Abode, the Refuge, the Friend, the Origin, the Dissolution, the Resting-Place, the Storehouse and the Seed Eternal." Thus beholding Her in Her transcendent glory, the last remnant of our ego will be wiped out and through Her Supreme Grace and Blessing we shall know the Absolute.

MOTHER KALI.

By Zina Barton Partridge.

Mother Kali, Mother Kali,
Sweetest of Thy many names,
Hear me calling, hear me calling,
I'm weary of life's earthly games.

Mother Kali, Mother Kali,
Blind Man's Buff has lost its charm,
From mine eyes the veil has fallen,
Death for me has no alarm.

Mother Kali, Mother Kali,
I can see Thee, everywhere,
Watching o'er Thy wayward children,
Giving each Thy loving care.

Mother Kali, Mother Kali,
I am coming home to Thee,
Steep the path, the pitfalls many,
But the light Thou gavest me,
Softly on the shadows falling,
Points the way, eternally.

Mother Kali, Mother Kali,
In that haven I shall rest
Every longing, every yearning—
Understood my earthly quest;
Satisfied, serenely tranquil,
At one with Thee, forever blest.

THE UNIVERSE AND ITS CAUSE.

By P. S. Rao.

That there is no effect without a cause is an axiom scarcely applicable to the theory of the creation of the universe, if by creation is understood that the universe was brought into existence out of nothing. It is, however, impossible for us to conceive a transition from non-existence into existence. Every effect must be co-existent, nay co-eternal with its cause. In fact no cause can be really creative; everything contains within itself its effect, which is equally eternal with it and which needs only issue from the cause in order to come into existence. In the same manner the transition from existence into non-existence is equally impossible. A complete annihilation of any substance can never be effected, as there is no process by which a substance can be reduced to nothing. The utmost that can be done is to change the form or the bulk of the substance and reduce it to the smallest possible particles, but nothing beyond that. Then as particles the substance remains amid

all changes of chemical composition or decomposition until by some natural or artificial process these minute particles are reformed into some shape or other.

We thus see that the words Creation and Dissolution can have no value except when they are applied to phenomena, for such natural substances as are simple primary atoms, as well as natural forces, are eternal and uncaused and therefore imperishable. When, however, they are compounded, this aggregation is an event having a beginning in point of time and will consequently be variable and perishable. Hence we are in this sense perfectly justified in seeking for the cause of the phenomena of the universe, or for the cause of the fashioning of the universe in its present form out of pre-existing materials. Now the question is, what were the materials and causes which led to the production of this universe? The first thing that strikes us in nature is Force. Through its action all forms seem to have come into existence. Hence it is clear that Force, or Energy as modern science would have it, must have been pre-existing. Secondly, we find that Force can effect nothing except when it is connected with external and material objects. Consequently Matter must have been pre-existing also. And thirdly, though Force and Matter may be the substantial causes of the universe, yet it is evident that they are incapable of producing phenomena if they remain apart from each other. It is only when they act in concert that they can give rise to any phenomenon. There must therefore be something else to effect this union between Matter and Force, and this something is called the efficient cause of creation. Further, this cause, to be able to control and govern Force and Matter and to accomplish this great work of the universe, must be an Almighty, All-knowing, Conscious Being.

Such seems to be the natural and logical train of reasoning regarding cosmic manifestation. As to what preceded it, the Rig-Veda, the most ancient sacred writing we have on this subject, describes thus the state at the moment prior to creation: "Then was there neither entity nor nonentity; nor world, nor sky, nor aught above it; nothing, anywhere, involving or involved; nor water, deep and dangerous. Death was not; nor was there immortality; nor distinction between day and night. But *Tat* (That) breathed without affiation, single with *Swadha*, who is sustained within Him. Other than Him nothing existed which since has been. Darkness there was; this universe was enveloped with darkness, and was undistinguishable, like fluids mixed in water; but that mass, which was covered by the husk, was produced by the power of contemplation. First desire was formed in His mind and that became the original productive seed, which the wise, recognizing it by the perceptive power in their hearts, distinguish in the nonentity as the bond of entity."

The term nonentity used here must not be confounded with "nothingness," for the Vedic Seers never accepted the idea of creation out of nothing. In the Chandogya-Upanishad it is plainly stated: "In the beginning there was that only which is—one only, without a second. Others say, in the beginning there was that only which is not, one only, without a second; and from that which is not, that which is, was born. But how could it be thus? How could that which is, be born of that which is not? No, only that which is was in the beginning, one without a second." The Bhagavad-Gita tells us that "everything which is produced in nature, is produced from the union of matter and spirit"; and the Vishnu-Purana further explains: "He that produces this union is God, who is other than matter and

spirit." This unifying Supreme is defined in the Yajurveda Aranyaka as "the inner-Soul of all existences, seated in the heart of all embodied beings; He is the Director of all creation; and all creatures become one in Him." Such is a brief view of the Vedic teaching regarding cosmic creation. Now let us consider for a moment some other systems.

The metaphyiscal side of Buddhism is shrouded in so much mystery that it is no easy matter to say what its followers hold. It is certain, however, that they look upon matter and soul as eternal and they also recognize a Supreme Force, but not a Supreme Being, a Personal God. Christianity admits the distinct existence of matter and soul, separate from the Supreme Soul. To use the words of Professor Monier Monier Williams, it admits "a Personal God ever living to supply the free grace and regenerating spirit by which human nature is re-created and again made God-like, and through which man becoming once again pure in heart and still preserving his own will, self-consciousness and personality, is fitted to have access to God." Considering certain passages in the Bible, the question arises whether creation was effected out of nothing, or out of pre-existing materials. The second conception has been held by a number of well-known theologians and commentators, but even these do not deny that the Bible in some places seems to teach creation out of nothing. They contend, however, that the word translated "to create" in the first verse of Genesis signifies merely "a remodelling of the Universe from matter already in existence." Even those, such as Justin Martyr and others, who believe that matter also was created by God, hold that there must have been an indefinite interval between the creation of matter (chaos) and the subsequent arrangement of all things. Therefore when the universe was given its present shape, matter was in existence; so it may

be said that even according to Christianity the universe was made out of existing materials. As for Judaism and Mohammedanism, their cosmogony is founded on the same Mosaic account as that on which the Christian idea of creation rests.

All these various explanations of the universe, while differing with regard to the external nature of Matter and Force, agree in recognizing the necessity of a creative power. Science too in the final analysis is driven to the same point, for even if it is conceded that the Energy or Force inherent in Matter is capable of generating something, this does not account for the direction which it may take. The explosion of gun powder is a sufficient cause for the movement of the bullet, but certainly not for the bullet travelling eastward rather than westward, or hitting a tiger instead of a man. Some further element is needed to explain the facts of nature. Indeed, that nothing happens without an efficient cause is the law for philosophers and scientific men alike. The man of science readily admits that there is no such thing as the annihilation of Matter or Force. If then Matter is eternal and Force constant, why may we not likewise believe in the eternal existence of a Creator who combines the two to form the universe? Herbert Spencer says that "evolution is the manifestation of a power absolutely inscrutable to the intellect of man"; and Haeckel in his *History of Creation* writes that "most materialists even at the present day are inclined to give up the attempt at natural explanation and take refuge in the miracle of inconceivable creation." Darwin himself declares that "there is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or one form." It must be admitted that there are numerous and apparently conflicting forces at work in the universe,

and yet there is order and harmony in nature. How can this harmonious condition be accounted for but by the recognition of one great Master Force which controls and harmonizes all?

REPORTS.

Swami Paramananda has returned from the Pacific coast. After completing his second course of public lectures in Los Angeles, given in connection with the Vedanta Centre organized by him there, and also a supplementary course in Santa Barbara, he was still persuaded by the members to remain for another week in order to hold a few more meetings. He left on the 24th of October and reached Boston in time to conduct the Sunday Service on the 29th. The subject of his first address was "Spiritual Ideals of the Vedas." He will now resume charge of all the Classes and Services at the Boston Centre.

* * *

The Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Home of Service at Benares has just reached us. The hospital has added five new wards, yet the public demand for further accommodations is so incessant that the Home is sending out an urgent appeal for funds to erect still other buildings. During the twelve months under review 13,845 persons were cared for by the Home, which represents an increase of 12 per cent as compared with last year. A number of old people also received help either in their own homes or at the Branch Refuge at Dasaswamedh.

* * *

We regret to learn that while the famine has so far abated in certain districts that the Ramakrishna Mission has been able to close certain of its Relief Centres, it has broken out in other places and the workers are eager to go to the aid of the starving poor. During the six weeks covered by the last report the Relief Stations had given food to 5066 persons, the work having been carried on in 411 villages.

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NOTICE

THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST with this number completes its fifth volume. The marked increase of interest and appreciation expressed during the past year gives us new encouragement to continue, despite the added difficulties which confront all publishers at the present moment. There will be no change except that two numbers will be omitted during the summer months. Nearly all periodicals derive their chief revenue from advertisment, but in order to maintain the distinctively spiritual character of THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST we have been unwilling to introduce that element and must in consequence look wholly to subscribers for the needed support. We therefore appeal urgently to all those who value this publication to lend us their active cooperation for the coming year by securing new subscriptions among their friends.

Present subscribers are requested to renew their subscriptions without delay.

THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. V. DECEMBER, 1916. No. 12.

WHAT IS A SAVIOUR?

By Swami Paramananda.

Although this world is God's world, permeated by God's love, yet we often lose sight of that side which represents Godhood and are conscious only of the side which represents matter. When our life thus becomes overwhelmed with materialistic thought and we lose the balance between the spiritual and the material, then a mighty character comes to readjust it, and He comes in human form because as long as we are human we can only understand a human being. What is a Saviour? He is one who manifests the attributes of God more than of man. It is that which makes Him stand out from among all and which leads men to take Him as their Ideal. There are various conceptions in the world regarding a Saviour. Christians call Jesus of Nazareth the Saviour of mankind. The Hindus also have a similar conception of incarnations, Great Ones who bring light from heaven and make heard the voice of God, but they do not limit it to one personality. There are many on the other hand who protest against the idea of looking upon any human being as God. They say: Why should we worship Divinity second hand? It is true that Infinity can never be represented by any one finite human being; but, to use the words of Hegel, "it is not the individuality

of the subject that is revered but that which is universal in him, and which among the Thibetans, Hindus and Asiatics generally, is regarded as the essence pervading all things."

As a matter of fact these Saviours of mankind do not come to be worshipped. They come lowly, humbly, as servants of men. They never raise their own voice or seek their personal glory. They love to glorify God's name only and to give His Message. But there is a profound reason why devout souls reach out to such mediators and offer them their worship, because they find in them something definite and tangible to follow. When we speak of an all-wise, all-loving One, what is our conception? When we hear of purity, charity, humility, can we have as clear an image of them in the abstract, as when we see them exemplified in a living character?

Before we denounce the idea of God Incarnate we must weigh our own power. Can any one of us stand up and say he is self-sufficient, that his judgment is unerring, his strength unfailing? No; therefore we need someone who typifies in the highest degree all the spiritual qualities, which without the help of such tangible examples would seem unattainable to suffering, struggling man. Why can we not make our own image of God? Because it is impossible for us with our finite mind to conceive of Infinite Spirit. Whatever we might imagine would fall far short of the Ideal as shown in the life of a Christ or Buddha or Krishna. So it is not a weakness to accept these great Teachers and try to follow their lives. There are lesser saviours, great men who have brought freedom to their own country or their own people; but the Divine Saviour is a Saviour of mankind. He comes to save human beings from their ignorance. Yet even such a Saviour cannot bring salvation to one who is not open to spiritual influences.

The number of such Saviours cannot be limited. The universe is infinite, so whatever is needed for the universe must be without limit. Whenever and wherever there is a need of spiritual readjustment, the Infinite takes finite form. Nothing, it is true, exists without God; whatever we see or do not see is part of the All-pervading Spirit; but sometimes in order to reach mankind more directly He manifests Himself as a personal being. Yet He is always the Unmanifest, the Universal, the Impersonal and Absolute. This conception of God frees us from all sectarian bias and we are able to bow our head before any Divine Manifestation, because we can see that they are all rays of the one Supreme Effulgent Sun. Nor does this lessen the value of any one Saviour. The Spirit of God can never be any the less mighty however often It may descend to lift men out of the mire of delusion. God is an All-loving Father. He cannot bear to see His children struggling in the dark, so whenever they are in distress He sends His Son to lead them back into the path of holiness and purity.

We must not foster the narrow idea that the world was in darkness before Jesus of Nazareth came, or that the lofty teachings given by Him were uttered for the first time. Those very words had been spoken many times. He Himself indicated this when He said, "I came not to destroy but to fulfill." This is the mission of all Saviours of mankind. They come to unveil Divinity, to destroy all distance between God and man. Through them we learn that God exists, that He is close to us, that we can talk and walk with Him; that the prayers we offer Him are not thrown into an infinite void, but that they are heard and answered by a real and infinitely loving Being.

A Divine Incarnation may be defined as the focussed light of God. God's light shines everywhere, but in the

Saviour it shines with concentrated power and seeing it we gain new trust in ourselves, in God and in life. What such an embodiment does during His earthly mission is only a small portion of His work. The mark of His holy life is felt and its effect grows in magnitude as time passes. It is after He is gone that people begin to think and understand His message. As the human side melts away, the Divine becomes more and more apparent and the world gradually realizes that He is only a personal manifestation of the Impersonal Absolute. A Saviour represents the highest aspect of the Cosmic Soul so far as it is possible in human form. All forms are limited and though God is infinite, when He enters form He must take on limitations; but the form that He assumes is such as will contain the largest part of the Supreme. He takes flesh that He may manifest the glories of the Atman or the Highest Self. He is full of all the blessed qualities that can be revealed through human embodiment, and as our thoughts dwell upon Him we gradually absorb these qualities and become daily more imbued with His unbounded spirit of love and unity. Thus through His influence we are drawn closer and closer to the great Cosmic Soul. When at last Its light fully illumines our heart, all limitations fall away and we realize our oneness with the Omnipotent Father.

Choose ye to be good and not base. Between the opposing spirits let the wisely-acting choose aright; choose ye not as evil-doers. Splendid things are garnered up for residence in the good mind. Wisdom is the shelter from lies, the destroyer of evil spirits. The prudent man wishes to be only where wisdom dwells. . . . Wherefore, O ye men, learn the blessings that are in store for the righteous.

Zoroaster.

WORDS OF GREAT TEACHERS.

Those who are full of desires for self-gratification, whose discrimination is stolen away by the love of power and pleasure and who are deeply attached thereto, (for such people) it is impossible to obtain either firm conviction or God-consciousness.

That man attains bliss who, abandoning all desires, moves about without attachment and longing, without the sense of "I" and "mine." This is the state of dwelling in Brahman (Absolute Truth); having attained this, no one is ever deluded. Being established in this knowledge, even at the end of life, one attains union with the Supreme.

Sayings of Krishna.

The world is full of sin and sorrow because it is full of error. Men go astray because they think that delusion is better than Truth. The worldling will not understand the doctrine, for to him there is happiness in selfhood only, and the bliss that lies in a complete surrender to Truth is incomprehensible to him.

Happy is he who has overcome all selfishness; happy is he who has found the Truth. Those who fail to aspire for the Truth have missed the purpose of life. Blessed is he who rests in the Truth, for all things will pass away, but Truth abideth forever. Have faith in the Truth and live it.

Sayings of Buddha.

I stood in the midst of the world, and in the flesh was I seen of them, and I found all men drunken, and none found I athirst among them, and my soul grieveth over the sons of men, because they are blind in heart.

Let not him who seeks cease until he finds, and when he finds he shall be astonished; astonished he shall reach the kingdom, and having reached the kingdom he shall rest.

New Sayings of Jesus.

The man immersed in worldliness cannot attain the knowledge Divine. He cannot see God. Does muddy water ever reflect the sun or any surrounding object?

Cry unto the Lord with a yearning heart and then thou shalt see Him. The rosy light of the dawn cometh before the rising sun; likewise is a longing and yearning heart the sign of the God-vision that cometh after. The one thing needful in order to see God is to love Him heart and soul. *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna.*

CHRISTIANITY AND VEDANTA.

By S. E. Waldo.

In endeavoring to enter briefly upon a comparative study of Vedanta and Christianity, I wish first to thoroughly make clear that such study in no way enters into a question of merits, but simply deals with the available facts in each case, setting them side by side and endeavoring to gain from an unbiased comparison such lessons of toleration and sympathy as they may be able to teach us. People are every day growing to understand the value of such study and nothing connected with the World's Fair at Chicago is likely to have a greater or more lasting effect upon mankind than the impetus given in this direction by the Parliament of Religions then held. Long, long ago, however, nearly three hundred years before the birth of Jesus, the famous Buddhist King Asoka, who then ruled India and was perhaps one of the greatest and noblest of her many great and noble rulers, called together a religious convention, where all the religious sects of those days could meet in harmony and love to set forth their respective views and learn from one another.

After that, King Asoka sent missionaries into all the then known world and the records show that these Buddhist monks reached as far West as Antioch and Alexandria. But the most beautiful thing about the sending of these missionaries was the advice given to them by the great king who sent them. The very words have been preserved to us all these centuries, having been cut into rocks in a language so old that only of late years have the inscriptions been deciphered. And they are models for every nation and every religion to copy, though we of the West have been accustomed to regard those good old Buddhists as "heathens," and have only in a few instances and very recently come to perceive that in many respects they were far our superiors. In all ages and under all circumstances the Hindus have stood for perfect tolerance in religion. Save by their various conquerors, there has never been any such thing as religious persecution in India. When, then, the noble King Asoka sent out his missionaries, he charged them to disturb no man's religion; but if they found any whom they could help, to do so; and to teach them with love and sympathy, but never with harshness. How different the methods of conversion often employed by the followers of Jesus!

When we study Christianity from the historical standpoint, what do we find? We find a book that teaches that over one thousand nine hundred years ago was born in Judea a child who grew up to be a great Teacher of His people, and whose name today is known all over the civilized world. Upon the sanction of His words as recorded in this book is founded the authority for all the doctrines and teachings of the Christian religion. This is the reason why the church has always so vigorously opposed anything that could weaken the historical nature of the religion it teaches. Too much

is made to rest on the question of the actual historical existence of Jesus, that is, upon a personality instead of upon a principle. And this is true of all the great religions that are built up around a particular person or founder. If the historical account of the life of such a person can be seriously shaken, the whole system of doctrines built on the personality is shaken too. This is one great advantage possessed by Vedanta. It rests on eternal principles, not on persons. All the great religious teachers that have come in India, even all those recognized there as Divine Incarnations, have been merely illustrations of these eternal principles, which exist quite independent of these living illustrations and which would continue to exist if these embodiments of their everlasting truths had never come before mankind. The Swami Vivekananda says:

"Every one of the great religions in the world excepting our own is built upon such historical characters, but ours rests upon principles. There is no man or woman who can claim to have created the Vedas. These are the embodiment of eternal principles; sages discovered them, and now and then the names of these sages are mentioned, just their names; we do not know who or what they were. But what cared they, these sages, for their names? They were the preachers of principles; and they themselves, as far as they went, tried to become illustrations of the principles they preached. At the same time, just as our God is an impersonal and yet a personal God, so is our religion a most intensely impersonal one, a religion based upon principles, and yet it has an infinite scope for the play of persons; for what religion gives you more Incarnations, more Prophets and Seers, and still waits for infinitely more? The Bhagavad-Gita says that Incarnations are infinite, leaving ample scope for as many as you like to come. It

is vain to try to gather together all the peoples of the world around a single personality. It is difficult even to bring them together around eternal and universal principles. If it ever becomes possible to bring the largest portion of humanity to one way of thinking in regard to religion, mark you, it must always be through principles and not through persons."

The Hindus are, most of them, willing to accept Jesus as an Incarnation among other Incarnations, but not to regard Him as the only one the world has ever known. This is where Vedanta shows its marvellous breadth, in its full recognition of the actual unity of all religions. In fact, what Vedanta recognizes is religion itself, not any particular expression of it. It grasps the principle of religion, and leaves each special religion to work this principle out in the way best adapted to the needs of the people and the period that have produced that special religion. This universal toleration and acceptance in Vedanta is what makes Hinduism appear diverse, even polytheistic, to superficial observers. To the Vedantin this diversity simply indicates that variations in external forms are necessary and inevitable among different grades of development. To assert that there is only one way of seeking the Infinite God seems to him an unwarrantable and somewhat arrogant assumption of wisdom.

Among the Hindus dates and names and other historical facts receive but little attention. The thing said is of so much vaster importance to them than the name and date of the speaker or even the place where it was said, that these details are frequently overlooked altogether. An utterance is valued for its intrinsic worth and gains but little additional weight or force from the name of him who uttered it. In the West, it is apt to be exactly the opposite

way and an utterance is of importance just in proportion to the position of the person making it. We have already seen that Vedanta is not dependent upon the historical existence of any person or upon the teaching of any founder for its spiritual and ethical sanction. Neither is it bound to any book, nor to any special revelation. "With it revelation is a perpetual stream that never ceases to flow." Revealed knowledge does not crystallize into something final, but is expected to be eternally obtained by man and to be suited to his growing needs. Vedanta places the basis of religion in the nature of man himself. It recognizes that in reaching the ultimate goal of all thought and reason, a final unity must be found; that the Self, the Absolute, can be but One, and that therefore God and man are essentially one. Not only so, but this unity of existence must include all being. "That which exists is One, Sages call it variously" is a basic truth in Vedanta.

Surely here is to be found a common basis for all religions, and it is not unreasonable to hope that the time may come when harmony in religion may prevail all over the world—not harmony in modes of worship, but harmony in the great essentials that will lead to wise and loving toleration of the differences in external forms of expression. When once we have grasped this idea of the absolute oneness underlying all the variety to be found in the world, no more can there be hard feelings that another does not see life through just the same spectacles as ourselves. Then the name of the particlar religion we profess will be of trifling importance. All the religions can then work in harmony for the spiritual uplifting of mankind, sure that each has the same end in view, and that creeds and doctrines and ceremonials and names are but the "outer crust," covering yet not hiding the Reality behind them all.

Because Vedanta is founded on principles and not on personality, it is the one religious philosophy of the world which has nothing to fear from science. It includes three stages as natural evolutionary steps. It has a copious mythology and a most extensive and varied ritual, but behind all these and supporting them is a wonderful philosophy, the real foundation of the whole structure. No "higher criticism" will ever shake that to its foundations. There have been in our time grave discussions as to the validity in the Christian religion of the Eden myth and of Jonah and the whale. From the tenor of some of the views advanced by clergymen all over the country, one would suppose that the latter was one of the bulwarks of Christianity! Those more advanced thinkers in our pulpits who dare proclaim that Christianity rests upon a basis more substantial than the literal fact that a great fish swallowed a man and after three days was glad to part from him, are even looked upon with doubt and distrust by their brother preachers. The weakness of a merely historical religion could not be more forcibly shown. The grand truths contained in the teachings of Jesus would be none the less great even were the whole of the Old Testament swept away. They can afford to rest on their intrinsic worth without being bolstered up by any "authority" whatsoever; and it is owing to the fact that appeal to authority has been supposed to add to their weight and value, that the feeling is now so prevalent that whatever undermines the authority must of necessity undermine Christianity itself. God forbid that it should have to rest upon such a foundation as that!

We have to learn that "things are in the Bible because they are true, and not true because they are in the

Bible." We must recognize that in our Scriptures too we have the three stages,—ceremonial, mythology, and a little philosophy. That there is any of the latter at all is due to the influence of Greek thought. All the Aryan races are given to philosophical speculation, but not the Semitic; and Christianity includes the Old Testament as well as the New. The former is really a record of how the Hebrews arrived at the concept of Monotheism; how Yahveh or Jehovah developed from the God of a desert tribe into the One God of all the worlds, the Lord of Lords, the King of Kings. The very titles prove the fact that from being one among many Yahveh gradually grew to be the One and Only God. One by one, theology has had to let the old traditions slip! It was hard to let the story of creation in six days out of nothing pass into the realm of mythology, and even yet many still cling to it as direct revelation. Slowly, slowly the theologians are learning that instead of weakening the tree of spiritual life, it grows stronger through having the dead branches lopped off; that with the removal of bonds and fetters it makes a larger, freer growth; and that really religion has nothing to fear from any source, if it will only be its own authority through the inherent truth of its essential facts, instead of trying to support itself on any extraneous authority whatsoever.

For some the Christ-ideal is the highest; and especially is this the case in the West, because it has been evolved here and it fits in with our aspirations and modes of thought. But surely we can love Jesus and strive to live a life in accordance with His teachings without any quarrel with our brother of the East, who finds his aspirations realized in Buddha or Mohammed or some other great Teacher. If all those "who profess and call themselves Christians," would only devote themselves as faithfully and earnestly to the practice of their belief as do the Mohammedans and

Hindus and Buddhists, they would undoubtedly develop a spirituality far in advance of anything that has ever been known in Christian lands and which would go far to make real the song of the angels, "Peace on earth, and good will to men." If we loved God more we should assuredly love our fellow creatures more, and that love would bring the recognition that all mankind are brothers, children of one God; and carried to the highest point, such love would lead to the realization that God and man are one.

THE DOCTRINE OF INCARNATION.

Adapted from The Brahmavadin.

"The doctrine of the Divine Word is Platonic; the doctrine of the Incarnation is Indian; of a divine kingdom is Judaic; of angels and demons is Magian." This remark about the eclectic nature of Christian doctrine is quoted from no less a personage than the great Cardinal Newman. The distinctly Judaic contributions to the doctrines of Christianity are indeed of the least metaphysical value; and the doctrines here attributed to the Platonic and Magian sources are also Indian doctrines, as every careful student of the Veda and the Vedanta knows. The doctrine of Incarnation is wholly against the genius of the religion of the Semites. The Jews could understand that their prophets were divinely inspired, but it has been to them from the first a stumbling block to realize the divinity of Christ. To their minds it has always appeared to be equal to blasphemy to think of any man, however great and however good and however full of divine inspiration, as being an incarnation of the Divinity. The Jehovah of the "chosen people" dealt with them and even now is supposed to deal with them in the way in which the shepherd deals with the sheep of his flock. Can the shepherd ever become the sheep?

Even if he can, will he? The God who is far far away from and altogether other than man cannot and will not become man. Even when the shepherd's love for the sheep is infinite and perfect, the most favored among them cannot be said to have become the same as the shepherd.

While Christianity considers Jesus to be an Incarnation of God, the religion of Islam thinks of him only as a prophet; and even Mohammed is only a messenger of God to the Musselmans. The narrowly anthropomorphic and tribal conception of God which the Jews and the Arabians retained, even after their religions ceased to be local and tribal, is responsible for their incapacity to comprehend the truth and beauty of the idea of Incarnation. The Christian Church also, still under the influence of Judaism in this, recognizes only one instance of Divine Incarnation. But to understand properly the rational metaphysical foundation of the doctrine of Incarnation even in regard to one case of actual Incarnation is to see its possibility in many others.

We have no doubt that almost every student of Christian theology knows that there is a close connection between the doctrine of the Divine Word and the doctrine of Incarnation. The indebtedness of the Christian Church to the Platonic philosophy of the Alexandrian Jew Philo is a well known matter of history. "His *Logos* is the Divine in the Universe—it is an exteriorized God; it is the legislator, the revealer, the organ of God as regards spiritual man. . . . Philo has no idea of the Messiah, and establishes no connection between his *Logos* and the divine being which was dreamed of by his compatriots in Palestine. . . . The end of man is to know the *Logos*, to contemplate reason; that is to say, God and the Universe. By that knowledge man finds life, the true manna that nourishes." Such is

the statement given by Renan of the doctrine of the Divine Word as found in Philo; and clearly it is the establishment of a close connection between the Platonic *Logos* and the Jewish Messiah that has led to the narrowing of the vision of the Christian Church in regard to the doctrine of Incarnation. The Christian Clement of Alexandria is said to have borrowed largely from Philo, and Professor Max Muller says: "To him (Clement) the whole history of the world was a divine drama, a long preparation for the revelation of God in man. From the very beginning man had been a manifestation of the Divine Logos, and therefore divine in his nature. Why should not man have risen at last to his full perfection, to be what he had been meant to be from the first in the counsel of the Father?" It is easy enough to see that both the Jewish Philo and the Christian Clement must have believed in the oneness of the human and the divine natures, for they both give a highly rational and universal meaning to the Logos and come very near indeed to the Vedic conception of God and creation. If these essential doctrines of the Divine Word and of Incarnation are foreign to the genius of Judaism, it certainly cannot be said to be the true mother of Christianity. To us it seems to have very effectively played the part of the stepmother.

Of the two well-known living religions in the world which believe in Incarnation, namely, Christianity and Hinduism, it is conceded on all hands that the former has borrowed this vitally important doctrine from outside. It must be borne in mind that the Platonic doctrine of the Logos did not give rise to the doctrine of Incarnation in Greece itself. It was the focussing of all elevated Asiatic religious influences, particularly those of India, in the schools of thought of Alexandria that made it possible to associate the idea

of Incarnation with the idea of the Divine Word, so as to lead people to suppose that the one is a necessary corollary of the other. Historically, however, the Christian Church does not seem to have derived the idea of the Incarnation from the idea of the Logos, although such a derivation is philosophically both possible and reasonable. St. Clement's idea that God becomes man in order that man may become God is as old as the Indian Vedas. The Vedic idea of creation itself is that it is an act of Divine manifestation.

The Vedanta indeed is most explicit in its conception of the whole universe as embodied Divinity. Thus it leaves no impassable gulf between man and God as the religions of the Semitic peoples do. To the Vedantin there is nothing strange in God becoming man or in man becoming God; for, according to him, they are both of like nature. The one duty that the Vedanta imposes on every man is that he should try to attain to Godhood. And it believes that when the despotic distance between man and God is reasonably abolished, then all worthy men will realize the strength and responsibility of the divine dignity of their nature, and will show to the world by the unmistakable example of their lives that the fact that God becomes man is not more certain than that man may become God.

Hebrew religion, fervent and spiritual as it was, emphasized *separation* between God and the world, especially the world of man. It was the shrinking of the soul before its own ideal; and these seeds of fear and alienation in the religious sentiment grew into debasing theologies which no imperfect bridgework of mediation or atonement can permanently redeem. Hindu belief emphasized *oneness* of God with the world; even in the play of illusions seeking fearlessly for the reality they disguised. It lacked the awe

the Semite felt in presence of his own conception of the Infinite. . . . Its ground was faith, not fear; and now when the Semitic religion, mature enough to dispense with schemes for "reconciling God and man," affirms, as its starting point, the immanence of deity, it is simply resuming in a higher plane, and with practical insight, the truth which early Aryan philosophy instinctively divined.

Samuel Johnson.

THE NATIVITY.

By Sister Devamata.

The striking similarity in the stories of the nativity as given in the lives of the various Saviours, and prophets even, has led to a belief among many that one account is borrowed from the other, the followers of each Teacher claiming that their narrative is the original source from which the incidents of all others are drawn. But there is no reason to infer such poverty in the cosmic scheme. The great facts of nature, infinitely varied though they may be in detail, all move along similar broad simple lines in their fundamental plan. We do not look upon one storm as the copy of another, nor do we regard the panorama of one spring or autumn as borrowed from the previous one. Like phenomena naturally reproduce themselves in ways that are closely akin, while remaining independent manifestations of power.

The same truth holds good with regard to the coming of the Great Teachers. It would be impossible for them to enter our sphere without creating a profound impression upon every part of it. We have all felt the disturbance in air or earth or water caused by the passing of a large locomotive engine or an ocean steamer; we have even seen

the atmospheric conditions wholly transformed by a loud explosion, yet how much mightier must be the effect produced by the coming of a God-infilled Soul. No one can hope to measure the vast displacement it represents in nature, or how far-reaching must be the influence it exerts on all animate and inanimate creation. What wonder then that new sights and sounds are perceived in earth and sky, or that into the hearts of men is breathed a new sweetness of love and pity? The psychological effect may seem to us less legendary than the outer signs recorded, but the cosmos is so closely bound together, its planes so interlaced, that the song sung in the heart can as easily be sung in the heavens and the blossoming of holier thoughts in the mind can find its counterpart in the humble flowers along the roadside. Dante tells in his *Purgatorio* how when a soul passes over into Paradise the mountain of purification quivers and a shout of joy is heard from all those toiling up its steep slopes. Why then should not a thrill of gladness shoot through the world and men and angels sing when One takes birth who will lead countless souls to final liberation?

That both inner and outer nature rejoice whenever a Redeemer descends to earth is the universal testimony of all those who bear witness to their coming. On the night in which Sri Krishna was born, we are told, the forests blossomed, dry pools were filled, flowers fell in fragrant showers and from the upper air sounded celestial music. It was in a prison that he came. The tyrant Kamsa ruled in Dwaraka and his subjects grievously oppressed were watching anxiously for a deliverer. It had been prophesied that the eighth child of his sister's marriage would destroy the ruling sovereign. Terrified the king had slain one by one all the children born to her and now the hour ap-

proached for the birth of the eighth child. To prevent any possibility of escape the anxious parents were thrown into a dungeon and a strong guard set to watch them.

At last in the stillness of the night Sri Krishna was born. As he came forth from his mother's womb a bright light shone in the dense darkness of the dungeon and the wondering parents for an instant beheld him transfigured in his divine form. Then seeing him once more a little baby in their arms, they bethought them of the impending danger. "Carry him," said Devaki, "to Gokula and give him to our good friends Nanda and Yasoda. They will care for him." With unquestioning faith the father, Vasudeva, lifted the child from her arms, and as he did so the iron chains dropped from his feet, the gates swung back and he walked unhindered past the sleeping guards. That same night a child was born to Yasoda and Nanda; but while all in the house slept soundly, Vasudeva exchanged the children and returned to the prison. Kamsa informed of the child's birth came and seized it, but as he did so it slipped from his grasp and vanished. Realizing that he had been outwitted, the king sent forth an order to slay all new-born children in his kingdom. Sri Krishna however escaped; and to protect his precious life, Nanda and Yasoda gathered together their herds and subjects and led them to Vrindavan, where the young child grew in strength and beauty, beloved of all who knew him.

Like Sri Krishna, Buddha came of royal lineage. In the sixth century before Christ there ruled in Kapilavastu a Shakya king called Shuddhodana. His wife Mayadevi had lived until her forty-fifth year childless and given to a holy life. Then finding that motherhood was approaching, she besought the king to send her to her father's house; but as she journeyed through the garden of Lumbini the

hour of deliverance overtook her. Her couch was placed beneath a lofty satin-tree and there in the shadow of its branches she gave birth to a royal son. As he came forth, it is recorded, the three worlds were flooded with a radiant light, the blind received their sight, the deaf heard, the dumb spake, the lame walked, chains fell from the imprisened, the beasts in the jungle grew still and from out a cloudless sky there sounded the glad singing of angelic voices. Even the evil-minded felt love in their hearts and only Mara, the Tempter, rejoiced not. The Naga kings, hastening to pay him homage, scattered mandara flowers before him; an aged woman beside the mother's couch invoked the blessings of heaven upon him; while a hermit, who dwelt in a grove nearby, as he looked upon him wept.

When the king saw this, he was perplexed and inquired the cause. The Brahman replied: "Banish all anxiety and doubt. The strange omens observed indicate that the child now born will bring deliverance to the whole world. Remembering that I am old, I could not restrain my tears; for my end is drawing near. But this son of thine will rule the world. He is born for the sake of all that lives. The heavy gates of sorrow he will open, and he will bring deliverance to all creatures ensnared in the self-twined meshes of ignorance and folly." Hearing these words the royal parents rejoiced and they named their new-born son Siddartha, which means "he who has accomplished his purpose."

It was in a different age and to another people that Jesus of Nazareth came; and so, although of the royal house of David, we find him seeking birth not among kings but in the lowly cottage of a carpenter. Herod was king in Judea at the time and an edict had gone forth that a new census should be taken. Thus it was that every one

went to his own town to be registered; and Joseph went up from Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem in Judea, taking with him his newly-espoused wife who was with child. While they were sojourning there, the hour of her deliverance arrived and she gave birth to a son. Because no room could be had in the inn, she swathed the young child and laid him in a manger. On that same night some shepherds were watching their flocks in the neighboring country-side, and as they watched an angel appeared before them surrounded by a great light. Seeing their fear the angel said: "Have no fear, for I bear to you good news of a great joy. This day there has been born to you in the town of David a Saviour who is Christ the Lord." And about the angel there suddenly appeared a heavenly host singing "Glory to God on high and on earth peace among men in whom He finds pleasure."

Also certain wise men arrived in Jerusalem, asking: "Where is the new King of the Jews? We have seen his star in the East and have come to pay him homage." Herod on hearing this was sore troubled and enjoined the travellers to come and tell him when they had found the child. But the wise men, after they had laid their gifts before the new-born babe, because of a strange dream returned another way. Then Herod grew angry and sent out an order to put to death all male children under two years of age in Bethlehem. But Mary and Joseph had been warned in a dream and carried their son into Egypt. Such is the account of St. Matthew, but St. Luke records that when the moment of purification of mother and child was at hand they went up to the Temple in Jerusalem. There was at that time a devout man named Simeon in the Temple Courts, who when he saw the child Jesus, took him in his arms and said: "Now, Lord, Thou wilt let Thy servant

go in peace according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen the salvation, which Thou hast prepared in the sight of all nations—a Light to bring light to the Gentiles, and to be the glory of Thy people Israel." And there was also a holy woman named Hannah who, when she beheld Jesus, began publicly to thank God and foretell about him. Then the parents with their son returned to the town of Nazareth. And the child grew in strength and wisdom and the blessing of God was upon him.

As by the Holy Spirit Mary conceived Jesus, so it is told of the mother of Iran's great Prophet that from Ahuramazda Himself there descended a Divine Glory which, entering the house where she was about to be born, united Itself with her. So radiant did It make her as the time for her pregnancy approached that people thought her bewitched. Of Sri Krishna's mother also it is recounted that "No person could bear to gaze upon Devaki, from the light that invested her." This Divine Glory dwelt with Dughdu until her fifteenth year when she gave birth to Zoroaster. A star heralded his coming, a divine light shone through the house, the very trees and rivers shared in the universal thrill of gladness that pervaded the world, and the child himself as he came forth instead of crying laughed aloud. All the powers of darkness strove to destroy him and especially violent were the attempts of the wicked ruler Durasrobo; but through Divine intervention the baby escaped unharmed.

Similar extraordinary events mark the coming of the two great Chinese Teachers, Laotze and Confucius. Of Laotze it is said that his mother conceived him at the sight of a falling star. He belonged to the Chow dynasty and Confucius also was of royal descent. At the birth of Confucius a prodigious quadruped appeared and prophesied

that the new-born infant "would be a king without throne or territory." Two dragons hovered about his mother's couch and five celestial sages entered as the child came forth; heavenly music was heard and the air was full of sweet sounds. Chinese tradition makes supernatural claims for still earlier Teachers. Fohi, said to have been born 3468 years B.C., came of a virgin mother and when she conceived him a rainbow was seen to surround her. Yu was another ancient virgin-born Chinese Sage and there were still others, all of them being designated *Tientse* or "Sons of Heaven." The Siamese also had their virgin-born Saviour called Codom, his mother having been impregnated by sunbeams while leading a life of holy retirement in the forest. Horus, regarded as a Saviour by the Egyptians, was born of the virgin Isis, and all the mighty figures of Greek tradition are represented as having come from a human mother impregnated by Divine power.

The idea of virgin birth, it would appear therefore, is peculiar to no one faith or Saviour, but has existed from most ancient times in all the different religions of the world. Whether myth or fact, this shows that it must rest on some fundamental truth. It seems indeed to spring from an intuitive recognition of the law that only one who is absolutely immaculate of heart and life can give birth to the Divine. There can be no doubt that in that one only who has transcended every passion and desire and who stands at the last boundary line of the human, can the Highest take form. Equally true is it that in every soul which reaches that state of perfect selfless purity the Christ Spirit must be born. And when this birth takes place, for that soul all nature will blossom and heaven and earth will perpetually sing a glad song of praise and thanksgiving.

REPORTS

Through November Swami Paramananda conducted all the services and Classes at The Vedanta Centre of Boston and he will continue to do so until the eleventh of December, when he will return to the Centre in Los Angeles established by him last summer. The Swami will probably remain in the West through the mid-winter months and during his absence Sister Devamata will be left in charge of the Boston work. In view of the Swami's early departure, a reception was given at the Centre in Boston on the evening of November 28th, at which a large number of friends were present. A delightful programme of harp music was rendered by one of the devoted members, besides which there were various impromptu speeches. The evening closed with refreshments and pleasant social intercourse. All the meetings will continue as usual at the Boston Centre throughout December.

* * *

The Fifteenth Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service at Kankhal, Hardwar, has just reached us. It shows a large increase in the number of patients treated, the number this year reaching 18,213. As the hospital is chiefly designed to bring relief to the multitudes of pilgrims who come every year to Kankhal, people from every part of India have found shelter and care in the Home. During the great religious festival known as the Kumbha Mela the resources of the hospital were so overtaxed that trained workers were called from similar institutions belonging to the Mission at Vrindavan, Allahabad and Benares to assist the local body; also volunteers from Calcutta. The work was carried on with great devotion and many pilgrims owe their lives to it. In connection with the Home of Service is a Night School for the very poor where 40 boys are now receiving instruction.

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Feb. 3rd *Emerson and Vedanta.*
" *10th* *Higher Self and Over-Soul (Emerson)*
" *17th* *Karma and Compensation (Emerson)*
" *24th* *Saving Power of Faith.*

VESPER SERVICE SUNDAY 5 P. M.

(Meditation, Music, and Short Address.)

Public cordially invited to both Services.

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CLASS LECTURES

Tuesday 8 P. M. Lessons from the Bhagavad-Gita.
Open to all.

Thursday 8 P. M. Practical Spiritual Instruction.
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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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THE VALUE OF NON-ATTACHMENT.

By Swami Paramananda.

Serenity of heart is attained when all the blemishes are wiped out of our nature through the subjugation of self. Only when we have succeeded in eliminating all worldly impressions and no longer allow our mind to cling to the non-essential, can we attain perfect tranquillity; and we do this through the practice of non-attachment. For this reason non-attachment forms one of the most vital factors in our spiritual path. In order to gain it people subject themselves to rigid austerities and sacrifices. But these do not always lead to detachment. Often we find as much attachment in a beggar as in a prince. It is not a question of many possessions or few. Non-attachment is a quality of mind and has very little to do with external conditions. Through a momentary impulse due to unhappy circumstances we may tear ourselves away from our association and environment; but even by doing this, we are not able to break the tie which binds us to them. The outer renunciation of earthly things does not liberate us from the hold they have upon our mind.

We usually imagine that we feel attachment only for what is pleasing to us, but in reality aversion binds us as much as desire. It is sometimes even more difficult to

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free ourselves from unpleasant impressions than from pleasant ones. There are certain blunders, hasty words, unworthy acts, which leave a bad taste in our memory and we would like to forget them; but we seem powerless to do so, because our mind stubbornly clings to them. Often, too, we recognize something plainly detrimental to our progress, yet we are unable to drive it out of our thought. Another mistake we frequently make is to suppose that there cannot be any true love without strong attachment. In reality, however, they are totally different in nature and produce contrary results on our character. Attachment contracts, love expands. Attachment calls out all the baser selfish instincts. We are attached because of the gratification it brings us, with only a secondary thought for the happiness and well-being of the one to whom we are attached. Love, on the other hand, makes us absolutely forgetful of our own self-interest or satisfaction and thinks only of the loved one. It gives perfect freedom, while attachment creates slavery both for us and for the one to whom we bear attachment. Love gives for the joy of giving, attachment gives for the return that may come.

Those who have a perfect understanding of the spiritual life declare that attachment in any form is a great drawback; and if we wish to advance in the spiritual path, we must practise non-attachment towards all these worldly impressions, associations and possessions, to which at present we cling through sheer force of habit. By this, however, is meant an inner practice rather than an outer act of renunciation. It is a question of creating new impressions in the mind. If our present impressions have proved unsatisfactory and hostile to our progress, then we must take a stand against them. We do this and no more. We must not fight them, but we must go to work and create a totally new set of impressions.

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The ego is our greatest enemy in accomplishing this. It constantly produces delusion in our mind. Yet if it is helpful to us, we do not want to destroy it. What we want is to reshape it. We want a better form of ego. This is the idea of all discipline. The only way we can conquer this subtle force is to hold ourselves as the witness. If we can imagine standing on the bank of a river, seeing the water flow by, so we should watch all impressions pass without being disturbed by them. The ordinary tendency is when someone strikes, to strike back; but this is not the case with a masterful mind. It is not that he lacks in sensibility, but these things do not move him; he has, as it were, put on an armor of fortitude and calmness.

The practice of detachment includes two distinct processes, — withdrawing and indrawing. We must withdraw ourselves from whatever retards our unfoldment; then create a strong new spiritual impression by turning our thought within. At present we are all slaves to certain habits; in order to overcome these we must cultivate another habit, which in time will become so dominant that it will efface the old ones. All our out-going tendencies, which now hold us back, must be detached from the non-essential and then drawn inward. But this is only possible through superior knowledge. If we try to do violence to our mind by a sudden uprooting of the old impressions, it suffers; but if we first acquire a correct knowledge of the relative value of things, the mind itself lets go without any pang. First we analyze, discriminate and try to see everything in its true light; then as the mind gradually detaches itself from the old impression, we turn it inward and fix it on some spiritual object. As we do this, our heart becomes more and more liberated from mundane things and finds its sole delight in God.

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HYMN OF PRAISE.

From the Srimad-Bhagavatam.

Salutation to that Adorable One Who endows all beings with consciousness; Who is the Soul of the Universe; Who constitutes the germ of all creation and Who is the Supreme Lord. Let us meditate upon Him.

I take refuge with that self-created One, in Whom is established this (universe); from Whom it has sprung; by Whom it was created; and Who is the basis of it, yet Who is not bound by cause and effect.

Salutation unto the Highest Lord; unto Brahman, the Supreme; unto Him of infinite power; Who is without form, yet Who wears countless forms; and unto Him of wondrous works.

Salutation unto Him, Who is the Light and Guide of the Soul, the Witness, the Supreme Spirit.

Salutation unto Him, Who is the ever-peaceful one; Whose acts are law, Who is without any shadow of difference, Who is ever the same, Who is Supreme Intelligence.

Salutation unto Thee, Who art the Soul of all, the Sovereign Ruler of all, the Witness, the Great Self, the Origin of Souls, and the Source of Nature herself.

Salutation unto Thee, who art the Cause of all, yet Thyself causeless; Who art the Source of the Vedas (Scriptures), the Mighty Ocean, the Bestower of emancipation, and the Great Refuge of all creatures.

Salutation unto Thee, Who severest the yoke of ignorance of such humble devotees as myself; from Whom cometh liberation; the Fountain of unlimited mercy, Who art never idle; Who art the inner-Soul within the hearts of all, directing their thoughts and actions in accordance with their Karma.

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Salutation unto Thee, the might of Whose threefold Divine force is irresistible; Who dost manifest Thyself as the form of sense objects; the Protector of all who take refuge in Thee; of transcendental power and glory; Whose way is unattainable by those who are bent upon the enjoyment of worldly pleasures.

WHAT IS THIS WORLD?

By Ali Ghazzali.

(Persian moralist and philosopher, 11th century.)

This world is a stage or market-place passed by pilgrims on their way to the next. It is here that they are to provide themselves with provisions for the way; or, to put it plainly, man acquires here by the use of his bodily senses some knowledge of the works of God and through them of God Himself, the sight of Whom will constitute his future beatitude. It is for the acquirement of this knowledge that the spirit of man has descended into this world of water and clay.

While man is in this world, two things are necessary for him:—First, the protection and nurture of his Soul; secondly, the care and nurture of his body. The proper nourishment of the Soul, as above shown, is the knowledge and love of God; and to be absorbed in the love of anything but God is the ruin of the Soul. The body, so to speak, is simply the riding animal of the Soul and perishes, while the Soul endures. The Soul should take care of the body, just as a pilgrim on his way to Mecca takes care of his camel; but if the pilgrim spends his whole time in feeding and adorning his camel, the caravan will leave him behind and he will perish in the desert.

Man's bodily needs are simple, being comprised under three heads,—food, clothing and a dwelling-place; but the bodily desires, which are implanted in him with a view to

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procuring these, are apt to rebel against reason, which is of later growth than they. Accordingly, as we saw above, they require to be curbed and restrained by the Divine laws promulgated by the prophets.

The occupations and businesses of the world have become more and more complicated and troublesome chiefly owing to the fact that men have forgotten that their real necessities are only three — clothing, food and shelter; and that these exist only with the object of making the body a fit vehicle for the Soul in its journey towards the next world. They have fallen into the same mistake as the pilgrim to Mecca, mentioned above, who, forgetting the object of his pilgrimage and himself, should spend his whole time in feeding and adorning his camel. The deceitful character of the world comes out in the following ways. In the first place it pretends that it will always remain with you, while as a matter of fact it is slipping away from you moment by moment and bidding you farewell, like a shadow which seems stationary but is actually always moving.

Another dangerous property of worldly things is that they at first appear as mere trifles, but each of these so-called "trifles" branches out into countless ramifications, until they swallow up the whole of a man's time and energy. Jesus (on whom be peace!) said: "The lover of the world is like a man drinking sea-water; the more he drinks the more thirsty he gets, till at last he perishes with thirst unquenched." The Prophet said: "You can no more mix with the world without being contaminated by it, than you can go into water without getting wet."

The world is like a table spread for successive relays of guests who come and go. There are gold and silver dishes, abundance of food and perfumes. The wise guest eats as much as is sufficient for him, smells the perfumes, thanks

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his host, and departs. The foolish guest, on the other hand, tries to carry off some of the gold and silver dishes, only to find them wrenched out of his hands and himself thrust forth, disappointed and disgraced.

Although we have said so much against the world, it must be remembered that there are some things in the world which are not *of* it, such as knowledge and good deeds. A man carries what knowledge he possesses with him into the next world; and though his good deeds have passed, yet the effect of them remains in his character. Especially is this the case with acts of devotion, which result in the perpetual remembrance and love of God. These are among "those good things" which, as the Koran says, "pass not away."

THE SECRET OF RIGHT ACTIVITY.

Lecture by Sister Devamata.

As we watch the endless multiplication of machines and all the intricate apparatus of modern life, we see that in nearly every case the aim is to save labor. Man's ambition apparently is to invent a machine that will live for him, work for him, earn for him, while he sits by and merely turns a lever or pushes a button. Curiously enough, however, while he is thus intent on saving labor, he never thinks of saving life itself. For every hour spared in physical effort, he is increasing his needs, whetting his desires, accelerating the momentum of his daily living, over-reaching himself in countless ways, and as the harvest of it all reaping disappointment and exhaustion. If he could apply the same ingenuity and power of invention to the bigger problem of life, instead of to bodily activity only, he would save labor not only for a few hours in the day, but for eternity. It was to teach man this secret that those Seers of old, seated in seeming inaction on the heights of the Hima-

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layas, evolved the practical system of Karma-Yoga or the science of right activity. How can man make each action bring its full equivalent? How can he perform each task with a minimum loss of energy? These were the questions for which they sought and found answers.

There can be no such thing as inactivity on the plane of manifestation, they taught. Activity may become gross or fine, it may be outer or inner; but living itself means action. The heart never stops, or the lungs; all the subconscious forces of our body are ceaselessly active. It is evident then that as human beings we have no choice between action and inaction; we may only determine the nature of our activity. Proper direction and conservation of energy become therefore the two primary lessons of life. Man should economize his inner forces as carefully as he seeks to save steam or electricity. Wise living is at bottom a problem in mechanics,— how to prevent waste and to reduce friction. Are we trying to make our life move with less and less friction? Are we utilizing every ounce of energy to some vital end? By such questionings should we challenge each rising impulse towards action.

At present we live in the comparative degree:—Is this better or wiser or higher? We should go a step further and live in the superlative:—Is this best, wisest, highest? There is a "best" at every moment:—a best way to wake up and to fall asleep, a best way to work, a best way to play, a best way to expend each hour of living. If we wake heavy, drowsy, longing for more sleep, we begin the day with the sub-conscious or lower brute self uppermost. We should train ourselves, by holding the proper thought as we fall asleep at night, to waken with the feeling of the privilege of life, the privilege of work, the wealth of the hours before us. As soon as we form the habit of waking in this attitude of

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mind, we shall rise alert, strong, rested. So with each act of life; it must seem a privilege, rich in opportunity for higher attainment and service. Then there will be no division in our thought, hence no fricton or waste.

In our present scattered, nervous way of living, we expend at least fifty per cent more energy in every act than we need. The course of our day is not unlike that of a dog along a country road. In one mile he covers three, because he has no direct purpose in his zigzag search. We must learn to make straight across our day by having a single purpose in our mind. Perfect single-mindedness implies a dominant aim in life; but it also means that we should try to hold our entire thought on the task in hand, never letting it wander to what has gone before or to what is coming after. This is the secret of all efficiency — one thing at a time. Watch any great man at work and you will see how absolutely his energy is centred on what he is doing; it is almost impossible to divert his attention. The average thought is seldom fixed; it runs back and forth across the main line of activity. Is the task pleasant or unpleasant? Will it succeed or fail? Is it worth while? So it calculates and measures and questions and wastes energy; for every useless thought means leakage and decrease of power. The wise man cares little about the nature of his work; for him there is no difference between task and task, one is not irksome and another agreeable; he is wholly concerned with the force which works — that it may be used to the greatest possible advantage and to the largest end.

The quickest way to arrive at this point of view, Vedanta says, is to detach our mind from all anxiety regarding the results of our action. In nothing do we spend so much futile energy as in calculating, while we work, the outcome of

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our effort. By that divided line of thought we inevitably reduce the result; and the more we waste energy in calculating, the smaller must it be. If a man stops every little while to measure the amount of ground he has covered, it will take him long to make his journey. We should put the whole of ourself into our work and let the result take care of itself. There is no surer method of gaining the largest result. It is not possible for any effort to be fruitless, for there can be no action without a reaction of equal strength and similar nature. The more centred the act, therefore, the stronger and more productive must be the reaction. Even should it fall short of our hopes, we shall spare ourselves needless suffering and regret if we keep our attention fixed on what we put into each act rather than on what we get out of it. Every disappointment borne cheerfully means so much energy saved for a future and more effective action. Life is like any other game; if a man plays, not to play well, but to win, he nearly always grows irritable and loses both his temper and the game. The good player maintains his poise under all circumstances and is intent only on the perfection of each stroke. The Gita teaches us this when it tells us that the first lesson in Yoga or spiritual practice is even-mindedness; and the second is skillfulness in action.

Not one of us is really weak, not one is incapable of great results in life. We do not know ourselves—what dynamos of power we are; what mighty things we might achieve, if we would only gather up all our energies and make the wisest use of them. We can do this only as we readjust our scale of values and put them on a sounder basis. Now we squander our vital forces because we lend importance to trivial things, which fail us as soon as we gain them, and then we must begin again. Also we imagine that our hap-

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piness and greatness rest on outer circumstances and we strain every nerve to alter them. But what matters it if we are here or there? As soon as we enlarge our standard of measurement, it will not count at all. One spot or another, it is all on the same earth, revolving about the same sun, part of the same universe, governed by the same laws.

What differentiates man from man then? His own will. And what makes the difference between will and will? The Ideal and the faith with which it is served. That is all. Get a high Ideal and relate yourself to it, at once your will will grow stronger. If we try to run our little machine as an isolated mechanism, it will run down every few moments; but if we keep it connected with the power centre, it becomes inexhaustible; and it is by our thought that we connect ourselves. It is not the size of a machine that is of first importance; it is the perfection of its adjustment and the skill with which it is directed. People used to think that a big tree needed a big saw; now they have discovered that a fine saw moved at high speed cuts better. It is not a question of whether we have great gifts or small, whether we are in a place of importance or an obscure corner; it is a question of moving steadily, calmly, with fixed determination towards a lofty goal. When we can do this, our life must be fruitful for ourself and for the world.

Let us realize our possibilities and begin to develop them. It requires no special equipment, no peculiar set of circumstances. Every man must act. We cannot help it. We cannot stop it. "Not even for a moment does anyone remain inactive," the Bhagavad-Gita declares. Such being the case, how can we make this activity count? Now we are the slaves of action, let us learn to be masters. Wherever and whatever we may be, let us set out from this day to be the finest sort of person we can be and lead the highest

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kind of life. Nobility of character needs no external name or condition to ennoble it. Let the humblest man serve a lofty Ideal with steadfast devotion and he glorifies himself and his condition. The secret is less in what we do or what we are, than in what we serve. Is God the pivot of every action? Then we are safe. We cannot work to small ends. That Power which keeps the earth moving round the sun and that again round a bigger sun, will keep us too swinging in our proper orbit in harmony with the universal plan.

We only live and breathe and act because we are connected with the Ultimate Source of life and action. Apart from it we are as helpless as are the great wheels in a power-house when the engine stops. But as every bolt and belt and piston is necessary to that engine; so have we a vital part in the universal scheme; and we shall fulfill that part only when we remain in constant union with the Central Power. Now we refer all things to our little self; we must learn to refer all things to Him. Every thought of petty personal gain or loss, pleasure or pain, honor or dishonor, must be swallowed up in the consuming thought of God. Whatever leads us towards Him will be accounted gain, even though it rob us of every worldly advantage; whatever takes us from Him will be a loss, though it set us in the highest place. Nor will our life grow less joyous when we adopt this new standard of action. When we walk towards the sun, all is radiance; it is only when we turn away that we see our shadow. The man who faces towards God as he works, as he plays, as he rests, is always glad-hearted, whatever the day's labor may bring him; and only the happy-hearted man does his work well.

Discontent, envy, doubt, selfish ambition, these are the causes of all friction and waste; and they can be eradicated

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only by broadening our vision. We must regard ourselves not as isolated entities living a little life of our own, but as parts of a great whole with a universal mission. No ambition we can hold for ourselves can be so far-reaching as that which God holds for us. We merely limit our possibilities for achievement whenever we set a definite end for our action. When we shall learn on the contrary to yield ourselves up to His larger plan, then the beauty that is the sunset or the sunrise, the strength that is in the wind, the love that is in a Christ's heart, the wisdom that keeps all created things moving in perfect order and harmony, each according to its nature and purpose: these will manifest through us and we shall become mighty channels through which the Infinite will accomplish His perfect work.

THE SUPERIOR MAN.

Texts of Confucianism.

The superior man, acting in accordance with the state of equilibrium and harmony, may be all unknown and unregarded by the world, but he feels no regret.

The way of the superior man reaches far and wide, and yet is secret.

That wherein the superior man cannot be equalled is simply this,—his (work) which other men do not see. Therefore the superior man, even when he is not acting, has the feeling of reverence; and when he does not speak, he has the feeling of truthfulness.

A superior man keeps his speech under control, while the small man is forward to speak.

The superior man exalts others and abases himself; he gives the first place to others and takes the last himself.

The superior man will decline a position of high honor, but not one that is lowly; and riches, but not poverty.

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Hence the superior man, rather than have his emoluments superior to his worth, will have his worth superior to his emoluments.

The superior man does what is proper to the position in which he is, he does not want to go beyond it. In a position of wealth and honor, he does what is proper to a position of wealth and honor. In a position of poverty and lowliness, he does what is proper to a position of poverty and lowliness. The superior man can find himself in no position in which he is not himself.

In a high situation he does not insult or oppress those who are below him; in a low position he does not cling to or depend on those who are above him. He rectifies himself and seeks for nothing from others; and thus none feel dissatisfied with him. Above, he does not murmur against Heaven; below, he does not find fault with men. When occupying a high position he is not proud, and in a low position he is not insubordinate.

Therefore the superior man lives quietly and calmly, waiting for the appointments of Heaven; while the ordinary man does what is full of risk, looking out for the turns of luck.

The Master said: "In archery we have something like the way of the superior man. When the archer misses the centre of the target, he turns round and seeks for the cause of the failure in himself."

The superior man internally examines his heart, that there may be nothing wrong there and no occasion for dissatisfaction with himself.

The course of the superior man is rooted in his own character and conduct.

The superior man considers perfection as the noblest of all attainments. He who is perfect not only completes

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himself, his perfection enables him to complete all other beings also. The completion of himself shows the complete virtue of his nature, the completion of other beings shows his wisdom.

LAWS AND CUSTOMS OF WAR IN ANCIENT INDIA.

By Prof. Bal Krishna, M. A., F. S. S.

What about the morality of war in the civilized nations of the ancient world? Civilized China, Egypt, Carthage, Persia, Greece, Rome and Assyria show no more humanity and morality in their palmy days than uncivilized Europe in the dark Mediaeval Ages. From the Homeric age down to the Roman conquest of Greece there is one horrible story to be told in this respect. Guile, treachery, cunning, falsehood, relentless cruelty, unrestrained ferocity, extreme brutality, inhuman barbarity; indiscriminate pillage, slaughter and conflagation; in short, savagery and vandalism were the morality of the day. Then the whole Roman Empire was actually watered with the blood of the martyrs and captives of war. Slavery was the foundation of both civilizations. Without this institution, so eloquently defended by that great philosopher, Aristotle, the Greek and Roman civilizations could never have seen the light of day. But is there anything of the kind to be found in ancient India?

It can be said on the unimpeachable authority of the Greek historians themselves that we made no captives in war, nor had any slaves, native or foreign, in our midst. Magasthenes, Arrian and Strabo have all testified to the truth of this assertion. Then in India belligerents had no license to ruthlessly butcher one another and win victories by every means, fair and foul; but they had to observe

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many restrictions which did not allow them to transgress the bounds of morality, sympathy or humanity. War was looked upon as a contest of arms for securing peace, justice or redress of grievances; although a necessary evil, it was humanized. Cunning, treachery, unnecessary pain were against the rules of a fair warfare. Hence the fighting armies were prohibited by the great primeval law-giver and the first patriarch, Manu, to employ (a) weapons concealed in wood for treacherously killing the foe; (b) barbed arms; (c) poisoned arms; (d) weapons whose points were blazing with fire.

But it can be said that the present redaction of the Manava-Dharma-Shastra is not very old. It does not carry us far enough into the realms of antiquity. Justly so; let us go to the Sutra period. There, curiously enough, we find the same thing recorded in the Baudhayana Sutras. Thus this passage is not only a valuable historic proof of the prohibition, but also of the previous existence of poisoned arms and of fire-arms among the Indians of the 5th century B. C. Stranger still that an outright condemnation of poisoned arms is to be seen in the Ramayana. Meghnad is charged with the violation of the rules of fair fighting when he threw his poisoned javelin at Laksmana. It should be noted, however, that the use of guns, cannons and other machines was not against the rules of just warfare. Sukra has given instructions for their employment. "One should commence fighting," he says, "by placing fire-arms, both light and heavy, in the front; but the war with mechanical instruments leads to great destruction in which balls are flung by the application of gunpowder in cylindrical fire-arms."

"Persons equally circumstanced must encounter each other, fighting fairly. A car warrior should have a car-

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warrior for his antagonist; he on the neck of an elephant should have a similar combatant for a foe; a horse should be met by a horse; and a foot soldier, O Bharata, should be met by a foot soldier. Guided by considerations of fitness, willingness, daring and might, one should strike another, giving notice. No one should strike another that is unprepared, or panic-stricken. One engaged with another, one seeking quarter, one retreating, one whose weapon is rendered unfit, one uncased in mail should never be struck. Car-drivers, animals (yoked to cars or carrying weapons), men engaged in the transport of weapons, players on drums and blowers of conchs should never be struck." Such are the highly interesting covenants made by the Kurus and Pandavas (at least 1400 B. C.). They reveal a very high degree of civilization, a deep regard for humanity and a laudable spirit of fair fighting. The Hague Conferences have not yet agreed to embody such humane regulations in their military codes. But here an important question crops up — whether the above rules were ever observed in actual practice? Certain rules were occasionally violated in the great Kurukshetra war, but every such occasion provokes an indignant condemnation from all the leaders.

Pillage and capricious demolishment of buildings were altogether prohibited. The whole unfighting population was to be religiously spared and promises of safety were to be proclaimed by various means. The victor was to inspire confidence among the conquered, declaring that he would protect them like his children, that they were like his own subjects. The conqueror was to find out the best means of gratifying his subjects. He was to win over the educated classes by honoring the righteous Brahmins; by worshipping the gods and lightening the taxes of the peo-

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ple; by making authoritative their customs, laws and family practices; and finally by honoring the new king and his councillors with precious gifts. According to the *Agni-Purana:* "A king should treat a prisoner of war, ransomed and liberated, as his own begotten son. A defeated enemy should not be fought again, and the victor should maintain and honor the customs and usages of the country newly added to his kingdom."

The rules for the pacification of a conquered territory have been most brilliantly formulated in Kautilya's *Artha-Shastra:* "Having acquired a new territory, he (the conqueror) should cover the enemies' vices with his own virtues, and the enemies' virtues by doubling his own virtues, by strict obesrvance of his own duties, by attending to his works, by bestowing rewards, by remitting taxes, by giving gifts and by bestowing honors. He should follow the friends and leaders of the people. He should adopt the same mode of life, the same dress, language and customs of the people. He should follow the people in their faith, with which they celebrate their national religious and congregational festivals or amusements."

(Extract from contribution to Calcutta University Magazine.)

In connection with Professor Bal Krishna's article, it is interesting to note certain ancient passages bearing on the same subject. The *Agni- Purana* declares: "The king should protect his own army and worship the guardian deities of the places occupied by it in the enemy's domain, and should take special care in order that they may not be in the least insulted by an infuriated soldiery; or that their temples or the properties dedicated to their enjoyment be in the least molested in any way." Manu and the ancient authorities clearly forbid the confiscation or wilful destruc-

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tion of the property of hostile subjects; and a study of the Law Codes of ancient India makes plain that the chief object of war was not to extend the territory of the conquerors by annexation, or to enrich the conquering army, but to re-establish certain lawful rights. In the Ramayana, when Rama overpowers Ravana, not a single member of the victorious army was allowed to enter the capitol of Lanka; and when even Rama himself sends a messenger, he charges him to gain the permission of Bibishana, Ravana's brother, before proceeding on his way. In the *Shanti-Parva* we read: "Brihaspati has said that a king possessed of intelligence should always avoid war for the acquisition of territory." And this is corroborated by Arrian: "A sense of justice, they say, prevented any Indian king from attempting conquest beyond the limits of India."

Megasthenes, Greek ambassador to the court of the Hindu ruler, Chandra-Gupta (319 B. C.), thus testifies to the high standard of morality prevailing among the Indo-Aryans: "There are usages observed by the Indians which contribute to prevent the recurrence of famine among them; for wherever among other nations it is usual in the contests of war to ravage the soil and thus to reduce it to an uncultivated waste; among the Indians, on the contrary, by whom husbandmen are regarded as a class that is sacred and inviolable, the tillers of the soil, even when a battle is raging in their neighborhood, are undisturbed by any sense of danger; for the combatants on either side in waging the conflict make carnage of each other, but allow those engaged in husbandry to remain quite unmolested. Besides, they neither ravage an enemy's land with fire, nor cut down its trees. Nor would an enemy, coming upon a husbandman at work on his land, do him harm; for the men of his class being regarded as public benefactors, are protected from all injury."

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NINTH ANNIVERSARY

of the Vedanta Centre of Boston.

The Vedanta Centre of Boston celebrated the Ninth Anniversary of its establishment on the evening of January 1st. Despite the bitterly cold weather nearly one hundred friends were present. The exercises began with a song, delightfully rendered, by Senor Blanchart. Swami Paramananda then rose and delivered an opening address, in which he said:

"We have gathered here this evening to celebrate the Ninth Anniversary of this work. The birth of an individual is always sacred; but the birth of an institution, which exists for the sake of many and for the upliftment of many, is doubly sacred. There is no doubt that the whole world is passing through a bitter crisis, and more than ever does it stand in need of a spiritualizing influence. Never has there been a greater necessity for understanding and unity, and these are the fundamental ideals of the Centre. Its object is not only to create unity between East and West, but between nation and nation, race and race, man and man, even where there is no apparent basis of sympathy or harmony. It recognizes before all else the common heritage of all living beings as related to the One Supreme Cosmic Being. This work has been established, not to introduce a new creed or to enter into rivalry with existing creeds, but to provide a place of non-sectarian worship where the followers of all creeds may find peace and spiritual blessing. When I first came to Boston I did not dream of establishing a permanent work here; I came because I had something in my heart, the same thing which had brought me all the way from India,—an earnest desire to share with others the message of love, unity and tolerance which lies at the root of all Vedanta teaching; for what

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I voice is not personal, it is what India has voiced from time immemorial.

"We are now beginning the tenth season of our work, so we have come together to ask anew the Grace of God and the good will of people. If the work has gained strength, it is because of the desire and sincerity of you, the friends and students of the Centre, who come here so faithfully — not because you find a new religion, but rather because you gain a more comprehensive and unifying presentation of already familiar truths. The Centre does not lay claim to any monopoly of Truth; what it is trying to do is to give its share to humanity at large. Our work may be humble, but what we stand for is of God. We try to represent the Universal Spirit, which recognizes no race or creed. What we stand for is absence of sectarian hatred, absence of creed-bound prejudice. The inscription on this altar—"Truth is one, men call It by various names" —this is the spirit we hold close to our hearts, and this is the spirit we would give to others. We have no thought to make people embrace an alien faith; our sole effort is to make them feel the value and joy of true spiritual living. No one can ever hope to accomplish anything great without spiritual strength and spontaneity of heart. We celebrate this Anniversary every year to remind ourselves of our duty. Are we lacking in any way in the work we have undertaken? Have we ever failed to sound the note of tolerance and love? If so, you must tell us."

At the close of his address, the Swami called upon Sister Devamata to give a review of the year's work. "In the Indian Sacred Writings," she began, "we are given a picture of the great Sankara as a youth of sixteen, seated beneath a tree by the roadside; a white-haired disciple approaches and asks certain questions. The teacher re-

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mains silent, yet after a time the aged man rises and goes on his way with all his questions answered. So must it be in a measure when one is asked to review a spiritual work. In the silence alone can the record be found. For who knows where the Spirit goes? Who knows what the Spirit does? We stand here as a Centre, but we can tell nothing of the ever-widening circles that are being drawn around it. One earnest seeker may come; and the thought impinging on his or her heart may give a new impetus to another, and so on and on. The surface activity represents the smallest part of the work; yet of that only can we take definite account. During the past year the Boston Centre has gone steadily on despite the difficult conditions which prevail everywhere. The Services and Classes have continued without interruption and the average attendance has been maintained — being somewhat higher than usual through the summer. Swami Paramananda has divided his time equally between Los Angeles and Boston, having spent six months at each Centre. The Los Angeles work, as you know, was definitely established in 1916. The Swami had given a previous course of lectures there in August, 1915, during his first journey to the Pacific Coast; this had led under urgent pressure to a second visit the following summer, which culminated in the formation of a Centre. The Swami spent the early part of 1917 in Los Angeles; and after his return to Boston in March our secretary, Miss Sherwood, was left in charge until I was sent at the end of April. A course of nine public lectures with bi-weekly classes held me there until the close of June.

"Swami returned to the West in July and began a series of public lectures, besides the usual bi-weekly classes, which carried him through October. He had gone with the thought of discontinuing the work for a time at

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least, but at all the meetings the attendance was so large and the enthusiasm so great that he was obliged to abandon the idea. 'It does not seem right to throw all this earnest interest away,' he wrote. Besides the regular teaching, he was invited to speak before various organizations and to deliver a course of three lectures in San Diego. Also here in Boston and elsewhere there have been calls for outside lectures.

"The usual season in Washington last spring was reduced to nine days because of my long journey to Los Angeles; but during that time three public lectures and three classes were given and the days were filled with private interviews. The growth in interest surprised everyone; for the seating capacity of the hall was not only taxed to the utmost at the public meetings, but a number were content to stand throughout the lectures. Another branch of the Boston Centre, in Geneva, established by the Swami prior to the outbreak of the war, also continues its regular weekly meetings under the direction of the students.

"Existing abnormal conditions have seriously affected publishers and book-dealers everywhere, so it could not be expected that our publication department should not feel it. People are too deeply absorbed in the book of life to have much interest in the printed page. If they turn to it, it is only to find a key to the larger book. That Vedanta has offered a satisfactory commentary on it for some at least is proved by the fact that 2000 copies of our publications have gone into circulation through the year. We have likewise brought out three new booklets and two new editions of previously published books, making a total production of 4500 copies. Besides this, our monthly publication, "The Message of the East," which is now beginning its seventh volume, has carried the teaching to

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many distant points in Europe and in India, as well as in this country."

After the Report, Senorita Blanchart sang with great artistic charm. Then the Swami spoke again, telling something more of his work in Europe and in the West. In conclusion he called upon all those present to join him in a prayer for the welfare, not only of the Centre, but of all mankind. A duet by Senor and Senorita Blanchart followed, after which the exercises were closed by a benediction. A new booklet containing a brief history of the work and an explanation of Vedanta was then presented to each of the guests. Refreshments were served and the rest of the evening was passed in social intercourse interspersed with music and informal speeches. Dr. Coomaraswamy, who has been appointed curator of the Indian department at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, told something of the valuable collections under his care; while Mrs. Adams paid a hearty tribute to the teaching of the Centre by telling how it had broadened and ripened her understanding in all branches of thought.

The Boston Centre has published another valuable booklet, entitled "Self-Mastery." It contains three lectures by Swami Paramananda on "Self-Conquest," "How to Conserve our Energies," and "Self-Help and Self-Surrender." This is the fourth in a series of small volumes which the Swami is bringing out to give in clear and concise form the salient points of the principles and practice of the Vedanta teaching. The previous booklets were: "Universal Ideal of Religion," "Problem of Life and Death," "Concentration and Illumination." The present one will prove of especially practical help because it deals with the problems which confront those who are thrown out into active life in the world. *(Self-Mastery. Paper, 25 cents. Post. 2cts.)*

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OCT 14 1918

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—*Rig-Veda*

VEDANTA MONTHLY

The Message of the East

OCTOBER 1918

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NOTICE

With the present number THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST completes its eighth volume. We earnestly request all subscribers to renew their subscriptions promptly. That the Message each month carries new strength and inspiration to many hearts is proved by the frequent expressions of appreciation and gratitude which reach us. We hope therefore that all who have learned to value the magazine will do their utmost to lend it their loyal support, not only for their own sake, but for the sake of all who may gain new light and courage through it.

During the coming year the subscription will be $1.25.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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THE EXALTED LIFE

By Swami Paramananda

There are many Sacred Writings and Sayings in many different languages, but the same note sounds through all, whether of ancient time or of recent date; for the human heart beats everywhere in the same rhythm. Men may differ and do differ in their human interests and views; but when we are fortunate to catch the deeper note of life, little difference remains; for there in the depths we all live in Him, move in Him and have our being in Him, as St. Paul says.

Spiritual ideals vary and must vary. According to our mental development each of us evolves his own Ideal. Also our conception of God grows as we grow. We make our picture of Divinity according to the degree of our mental penetration. Religion is not in dogmatic beliefs or in philosophic systems. It comes from the Soul. We may begin with very small ideas. Perhaps it is only fear that prompts us to seek God, fear without any element of love or devotion in it. We may have no thought higher than self-preservation. But as we come nearer to God, we transcend this; because we find there is no need to fear. Thus gradually we pass from the more primitive ideals to the loftiest conceptions of God and the spiritual life.

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At the outset we may be inclined to dispute and try to uphold our own Ideal by denouncing others; but this exclusive attitude cannot continue when we experience directly the immensity of God. As the bee ceases to buzz when it enters the flower to suck the honey, so we grow silent when we draw close to the Divine realm. The noise of discussion goes on only before we have crossed the threshold. When the heart is transformed by contact with God, it makes little difference whether it is a Christian heart or a Hindu heart; the same universal love and sympathy fill it full. As soon as we give up theory and begin to practise, there comes a broader understanding and we see everything in a new light; but this requires strength—the strength of earnest and sincere devotion.

A simple, prayerful attitude and steadfast devotion help us more in our practical spiritual life than any amount of argument or intellectual study. We can never fathom the Fathomless Being unless He reveals Himself to us; and this revelation comes to us not through any external means, but as the result of our own state of heart and mind. It is not enough to follow some religious form outwardly. This will not bring devotion; our innermost feelings must be offered to God. No loud prayer is necessary; one thing alone is essential—that our prayer come from the depth of our heart. It must be deep and it must be spontaneous.

Also our mind must be free from doubt and despondency. Trustfulness in our attitude towards the Supreme is the saving grace. Without it we may try to fortify ourselves at every point and even imagine ourselves to be invulnerable, yet at some point of weakness we may be struck and overthrown. The safest thing we can do is to cultivate, with all humility and love, a sense of the presence of the Divine. In no other way can we become strong; and we are

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always cowards when we lack in spiritual strength. Those who can go through the hardest trials and come out without scepticism, they are the true devotees. We see this manifested in the lives of the great saints; but we too can cultivate the same spirit. We are all children of the one Supreme Being, why should we not all have equal access to Him? We have; but we ourselves block the channel. There are moments when we feel that we can really approach Him and worship Him worthily, then that sense of nearness goes. The aim of the spiritual life is to make those moments constant.

We must never go anywhere without carrying the light of the Ideal in our hand. We must make ourselves so in accord with the Cosmic Being that we can be led absolutely by Him. When we have the sense of actual relationship, we cease to be anxious and fearful. Our greatest security is when we feel that we are with God, and our greatest duty is to keep close to Him. Without a definite spiritual Ideal our life is like a boat tossed by strong winds, often losing its course and unable to hold against the current. Many unexpected things come upon us; and unless we have a firm spiritual conviction, we shall always feel adrift. But when beneath our ordinary consciousness there flows an unbroken consciousness of God, then we are able to meet all conditions bravely.

No life can be complete without happiness, and there can never be any real joy on the outside unless the spirit within is rejoicing. This is the lesson of every religious feast and especially of the birthdays of the Great Saviours. We cannot have the Christmas spirit unless we have joy. The Soul must feel the presence of the Christ within and delight in that presence. It is easy to exchange material gifts; but what is the true gift? Love, forgiveness, toler-

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ance, all-embracing sympathy. Christ is born of love, and only as our life becomes filled with the elements of love and light can we be called His followers. These two go together; because love always makes the path clear and throws the light of understanding across it. The Christ spirit is ever living. It rises again and again in our Soul. It never dies except through our ignorance. When we begin to doubt or deny what is most sacred in our life, the reality of God and of our relation to Him, we shut ourselves off from the source of light and cheat ourselves of the greatest blessing.

Every being is a living altar of God; and if we do not feel His presence, we lead a life of blindness and do things which are unworthy of our higher nature. To unite this ordinary external life with the inner spiritual life is the chief aim of all the Great Teachers. Actually God is the nearest of all things, yet we feel a vast difference between Him and ourselves. This is because we make life so complex and attach too much importance to every little experience. But some day our eyes will be opened and we shall see how small is human attainment, even the greatest, compared with the larger realities. Then we shall be ashamed to have dreamed such vacant egotistic dreams and we shall realize the true significance of life.

Religion is the highest activity of man; not formal religion, but true devotional aspiration and actual experiencing. Nothing can stand between us and Godhead except our own self. Often we think there is no light to reveal Him, but in reality we stand in our own light. The shadow is cast by our own ego and selfishness. Worldly wisdom bars our progress. What we need is to put in its place spiritual wisdom; and our spiritual wisdom depends largely on the atmosphere we are able to create by our acts and

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thoughts. This is why sometimes we feel the presence of the Deity and sometimes the access is wholly blocked. Our heart must be tranquil and free from unworthy feelings, such as hatred, enmity, anything that creates disturbance. There is no doubt that the external environment helps also—a holy atmosphere or association with lofty souls; but these cannot really help unless the mind is right. The outer condition we can transcend; but the inner condition is very difficult to transcend, because it deals with our own mind. How hard we have to struggle often to forget something which has disturbed us! For that reason the spiritual life is an inner thing. It is not a matter of books or of study. It is a matter of purifying our thoughts. We must fill our hearts so full of trust and spiritual yearning, that we can go to God as we would go to an earthly mother or father. Those who can thus create a real relation with Him, become like living shrines. Then there is not so much need to go to church, because we carry our own altar and our own holy atmosphere with us. This is the way we make our spiritual Ideal a tangible reality.

The world is changeable; that is the reason why we should establish our life in God, Who never changes or fails. He loves us, not because we love Him, but because His nature is love. And when we can offer our thoughts and prayers and acts to Him, not because we want something of Him, but because we find our joy in Him and long to lose ourselves in Him, then our life will overflow in blessing. To forget ourself wholly in an ecstasy of love, this is the way to learn to love even our enemies. A saint does not love this one because he is pleasing or good, and hate that one because he is unsympathetic or bad. He loves everyone alike. His whole being radiates love. Love alone is the motive power in all his thoughts, words and actions;

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feelings of hatred or jealousy or envy are wholly alien to his nature and can find no place in his heart.

The only way to reach this exalted state is by giving all. When we become united with the Storehouse of all blessing, we have no fear of lack and we give freely, asking nothing. We must realize that we are direct descendants of the All-loving One. When our life and thought are in perfect harmony with His higher spiritual laws, then will it be natural to us to depend upon Him and be unceasingly conscious of Him. But this will come only when our whole heart is dedicated with child-like simplicity, humility and devotion to that All-Compassionate Deity.

May He awaken in our hearts such true yearning and earnestness that we may know how to seek and find His Presence within us! May He fill us with His Divine Wisdom, and destroy all our ignorance and selfishness! He alone can give us strength and understanding. He alone can reveal Himself unto us, for by no other light can we perceive Him. He is the one Lord, the one Resting-place of the universe, the one unchanging Reality, the Bestower of all blessings. Let us turn our whole being to Him. Let us lift our thought to Him in constant supplication. Let our prayer be:

O Thou All-effulgent, All-pervading Spirit! Manifest Thy Infinite Glory in our hearts! We seek our rest and refuge in Thee. We seek our strength and inspiration from Thee. Forgive us all our weakness and lead us by the right path. O Thou Infinite Being, embodiment of all love and compassion, fill our hearts with love that knows no hate and a compassion that forgives all things. So mould our life that we may live with Thee and be instruments in Thy hands. Make us worthy by giving us Thy support. Grant unto us Thy loving blessings and keep us ever in peace.

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ANCIENT INVOCATIONS AND PRAYERS

BUDDHIST PRAYER

Let all things that breathe—without enemies, without obstacles, overcoming sorrow, and attaining cheerfulness—move forward freely, each in his own path!

Let all creatures everywhere, all spirits, and all who have taken birth—without enemies, without obstacles, overcoming sorrow, and attaining cheerfulness—move forward freely, each in his own path!

Let all women and all men, all Aryans and non-Aryans, all gods and all men, and they that have fallen into lower spheres of life—without enemies, without obstacles, overcoming sorrow, and attaining cheerfulness—move forward freely, each in his own path!

In the East and in the West, in the North and in the South, let all beings that are—without enemies, without obstacles, overcoming sorrow, and attaining cheerfulness—move forward freely, each in his own path!

ZOROASTRIAN PRAYER

I believe Thee to be the best Being of all, the Source of light for the world. Everybody shall choose Thee as the source of light; Thee, Thee, holiest Spirit Mazda! Mayest Thou grant me the Truth and tell me the best to be done.

That I will ask Thee, tell me it right, Thou living God! Who was in the beginning the father and creator of Truth? Who made the sun and stars the way? Who causes the moon to increase and wane, if not Thou?

Tell me good things to perform, the duties which are enjoined by Thyself, Thou Wise One! Those things which are communicated for the welfare of all beings by the Good Mind. What good, intended for the increase of life, is to be had, that may come to me? Instruct me aright in the faith which, being the best of all, may produce every

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good thing, by means of words and actions. My heart wishes that I may know Thee, Thou Wise One.

FROM THE CHALDEAN LITURGY

Merciful One, begotten of the universe, Who founds His illustrious seat among living creatures.

Long-suffering Father, full of forgiveness, Whose hands uphold the lives of mankind.

Lord, Thy Divinity is as wide as the heavens and fills the sea with fear. . . .

In heaven who is supreme? Thou alone art supreme.

On earth who is supreme? Thou alone art supreme.

ASSYRIAN INVOCATION

Thou art the Powerful One. Thou art the Life-giver. Thou also art the Prosperer. Merciful One among the gods; eldest Son of Him who made heaven and earth. Lord of heaven and earth, no equal hast Thou. Merciful One, Who the dead to life raiseth.

HINDU PRAYER

O merciful God! I have always been and ever shall be Thy servant, and Thou hast been and ever will be my Lord. Whether Thou art pleased with me or not, I have none to look to except Thee.

There is none who is so patient as Thou in bearing with my shortcomings; and there is none here, O Lord, so unworthy as I of Thy mercy. O Lord of the worlds! I am, as Thou knowest, Thine eternal servant; I belong wholly unto Thee. Of whom then, O Upholder of the universe, shall I be afraid? To whom else shall I look for blessings?

What is impossible to Thee, O Eternal Father, Who art the Lord of all and possessor of all things? What I may ask of Thee counts as nothing compared with what Thou canst grant. O Master of all worlds, Most Merciful One, if Thou art not gracious and kind to me, where can I find a refuge?

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Thou art the only Protector of the worlds. Thou art the great Bestower of good. Thou art the All-knowing and the All-kind. Who beside Thee can gratify our desires? Countless are Thy gifts; and equally just art Thou to all. Therefore, O Lord, Ruler of the universe, Possessor of all riches, have mercy upon me.

Knowing that Thou art the Friend of the poor and the distressed, I surrender myself wholly unto Thee. Protect me, O Lord; and bestow on me what Thou deemest fit. Thy will be done, O Lord of the universe. Thou art the Helper of the needy, Thou art the Fountain of all mercy. Thou art the Guide and Friend to all, and the real Support of those in affliction. Therefore, O Lord, I crave Thy Divine mercy; save me that I may not perish in the ocean of this world of birth and death.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Sermon by John Tauler

(A Mystic of Strassburg, 14th Century)

Our Lord says here that the kingdom of God is nigh to us. Yea, the kingdom of God is in us; and St. Paul says, that now is our salvation nearer to us than we believe. Now ye ought to know, first, *how* the kingdom of God is nigh at hand; secondly, *when* the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

We must give earnest heed to take note of all that is contained in these words, "The kingdom of God is nigh at hand." For if I were king and did not know it, I should be no king; but if I were fully convinced that I was a king and if all men deemed me so likewise; and further, if I knew that all men deemed me such, I should be a king, and all the riches of the king would be mine. But if any of these three things were wanting, I could be no king. In

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like manner does our blessedness depend upon our perceiving and knowing the Highest Good, which is God Himself.

I have a power in my Soul which enables me to perceive God. I am as certain as that I live that nothing is so near to me as God. He is nearer to me than I am to myself. It is a part of His very essence that He should be nigh and present to me. He is also nigh to a stone or a tree, but they do not know it. If a tree could know God and perceive His presence as the highest of the angels perceives it, the tree would be as blessed as the highest angel. And it is because man is capable of perceiving God and knowing how nigh God is to him, that he is better off than a tree. And he is more blessed or less blessed in the same measure as he is aware of the presence of God. It is not because God is in him and so close to him, and that he hath God, that he is blessed; but because he perceives God's presence and knows and loves Him; and such an one will feel that God's kingdom is nigh at hand.

Often, when I meditate on the kingdom of God, I cannot speak for the greatness thereof. For the kingdom of God, what is it but God Himself with all His riches? The kingdom of God is no small thing. If we think of all the worlds that God could create, that is not the kingdom of God. When the kingdom of God is manifested in a Soul, and she knows it, you need not to preach or to teach; for that Soul is taught of God, and assured of eternal life. He who knows and perceives how nigh God's kingdom is, may say with Jacob: "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not."

A Master has said: "He knoweth God aright who knoweth Him in all things alike." He who serveth God with fear, it is good; he who serveth Him with love, it is better;

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but he who in fear can love, that is the best of all. That a man should have a life of quiet or rest in God is good; that a man should lead a painful life in patience is better; but that a man should have rest in a painful life is best of all. Whether a man walk out in the fields and say his prayers, and feel God's presence, or whether he be in the church and feel God's presence, does he perceive him any the better because he is in a place of rest? If he do, it comes from his own infirmity; the difference is not on God's side; for God is in all things and places alike, and is ever alike ready to give Himself to us, in so far as we are able to receive Him; and he knows God alike who sees Him in all things.

St. Bernard says: "Why does my eye perceive the heavens, and not my feet? Because my eye is more like the heavens than my feet." Thus, if my Soul is to perceive God, it must be heavenly. Now what will bring the Soul to see God in herself and know how nigh God is to her? Consider! The heavens cannot take any imprint from other things; neither can they, by any violence or force, be turned from their order. In like manner, the Soul that would know God must be so grounded and built up in Him, that neither hope, nor fear, nor joy, nor sorrow, nor weal or woe, nor anything else, can so move it as to force it from its place in Him.

Nothing hinders the Soul so much in its knowledge of God as time and place. Time and place are parts, and God is one; therefore, if our Soul is to know God, it must know Him above time and place; for God is neither this nor that, like these complex things around us, for God is one. If the Soul is to see, she must not look at the things that exist in time; for so long as she is looking at time and place, or at the phenomena dependent thereon, she can never

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perceive God Himself; just as, if mine eye is to perceive color, it must first be cleared of all tint in itself. I say more: if the Soul is to know God, she must forget herself and lose herself, for while she is looking at and thinking about herself, she is not looking at and thinking about God; but when she loses herself in God and lets go of all things, then she finds herself again in God.

When she comes to know God, then does she know to perfection in Him, both herself and all the things from which she has separated herself. If I am truly to know the Highest Good, or the Eternal Goodness, I must know it in that wherein it is good, namely, in itself,—not in these things in which it is only in part. If I am to know real Being, I must know it in that where it is self-existent, that is, in God. In God alone is the Divine Substance. In one man you have not all humanity, for one man is not all men; but in God the Soul knows all humanity and all things in their ideal, for she knows them in their substance. So I am as certain as that I live and God lives, that if the Soul is to know God, she must know Him above time and space; and such a Soul knows God, and knows how nigh God's kingdom is; that is, God with all His riches.

The masters have set forth many questions in the schools as to how it be possible for the Soul to know God. It is not of God's severity that he requires much from man; it is of His great kindness that he will have the Soul to open herself wider, to be able to receive much, that He may bestow much upon her. Let no one think that is is hard to attain thereunto. Although it sounds hard and is hard at first, as touching the forsaking and dying to all things; yet, when one has reached this state, no life can be easier or sweeter, or fuller of pleasures; for God is right diligent to be with us at all seasons and to teach us, that He may

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bring us to Himself when we are like to go astray. None of us ever desired anything more ardently than God desires to bring men to the knowledge of Himself.

God is ever ready, but we are very unready; God is nigh to us, but we are far from Him; God is within, we are without; God is at home, we are strangers. The Prophet says: "God leadeth the righteous by a narrow path into a broad highway, till they come into a wide and open place;" that is unto the true freedom of that spirit which hath become one spirit with God. God help us all to follow Him, that He may bring us unto Himself! Amen.

LOVING JESUS, CANST THOU BE—

By E. C. Adams

Loving Jesus canst Thou be
Human friend to one like me?
Heart's companion have I none
So must go my way alone
Unless, Jesus, Thou canst bend
Thy dear Head to be my friend.

Nearly all my hours must go
Into toilsome work, and so
I'll not need to trouble Thee
Through the day to comfort me.
But when evening follows day
And the tired mind longs for play,

When the weary heart craves rest
Near the one that loves it best,
Yearning sore for cheer that lies
Warm in answering human eyes,
Then, dear Jesus, canst Thou be
Just a play-time friend to me?

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THE NEED OF A MEDIATOR

By Sister Devamata

In all religious aspiration and struggle two clearly-defined aims are apparent:—one, to lift the human into the Divine; the other, to draw the Divine down into the human. The first is the mark of spiritual manhood; the second, of spiritual youth and childhood. Any sense of aloofness chills the child heart and engenders fear and distrust. It longs with an instinctive longing to come into unveiled contact with the hidden Power dimly sensed in the dark beyond; and feeling impotent to travel out into the darkness, it strives age after age to draw that Unseen One down within its reach. Thus it is that invariably we find the awakening of the religious consciousness expressing itself by some attempt to invest Deity with familiar and tangible form.

This, I believe, is the origin of all Nature-worship. It is the effort of man to touch God through the common elements of daily life. Modern thought interprets it as benighted superstition, not considering how keen must be the consciousness of Divinity to be ever mindful of Its presence. How often do we with our boasted enlightenment have any real sense of God as we watch the leaping flame or the growing grain or the bubbling mountain stream? "The world which is now divine only to the gifted, was then divine to whosoever would turn his eye upon it," Carlyle writes in his *Hero-Worship*. "The young generations of the world, who had in them the freshness of children, and yet the depth of earnest men, who did not think they had finished off all things in Heaven and Earth by merely giving them scientific names, but had to gaze direct at them there with awe and wonder; they felt better what of divinity is in man and Nature."

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No one ever worshipped Fire or Wind or Water for itself. It was the Nameless Power within them which called forth the invocation or sacrifice:—to propitiate when that Power raged over the earth in flood or storm or conflagration; to adore in childlike wonder when It came in the gentler aspects of the hearth-fire, the sacred river or the fertile furrow. To those early seekers there was nothing strange in the fact that Satyakama should hear the voice in the fire teaching him, as is told in the Chandogya-Upanishad; or that tree and mountain should answer the Sage pursuing his fleeing son, Sukadeva. On every side that Hidden One was calling to them; and wherever the dividing veil seemed thinnest, there they sought to break through and touch the unseen Presence.

As time went on, however, the lonely hearts of men were not content to leave that Power nameless and formless. A name and form seemed to bring It nearer; so the mighty family of gods sprang into existence—sons and daughters of the Great Mother, Nature. Agni, Vayu, Indra, Surya (gods of fire, wind, storm and sun) of the Vedic Aryans: Loke, Aegir, Thor, of the Norsemen: Helios, Hera, Poseidon, Zeus, of the Greeks: Gibil, Ea, Samas (fire, sea and sun gods), of the ancient Chaldeans: all point to a common parentage. But these deities are never more than messengers or intermediaries of a Being beyond. Even in that oldest Scripture, the Rig-Veda, we find an unmistakable recognition of the One, Whose emissaries these Bright Spirits are, dispensing wealth or learning, success or long life, according to the special prayer of the deserving worshipper. They are invariably looked upon as minor aspects of Deity, near enough to the mortal plane to be willing to satisfy mortal desires. "Those who long for success in the world worship the gods," the Bhagavad-Gita

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tells us; and Homer says: "All folk yearn after the gods." The Gita adds, however, that whatever the form of Deity man may worship to gain his end, from the Supreme alone comes the satisfaction of his desire.

So long as fear or material gratification—sons, cattle, victory in arms or abundant harvests—furnished the chief impetus to religious effort, Nature and the gods remained the mediators between Divinity and man. But as fear softened into love, and desire for earthly benefactions changed into hunger for spiritual blessing, even these seemed too far removed from the human need. Man's soul cried out for a closer companion—a personal mediator or intercessor. So in every religion there appears the Saviour, who is known as "Redeemer," "Slain One," "Sin-Bearer," "Only-begotten Son," "Anointed One"; by all the names, in fact, which are usually regarded in the Occident as peculiarly Christian. Prometheus was called a "crucified Saviour" and a "Divine Sufferer." Hermes was invoked as the "good Saviour," also Apollo and Aesculapius. On an ancient statue of Bacchus, who is frequently spoken of as Saviour and Redeemer, we read the inscription: "It is I who guides you; it is I who protects you and who saves you; I who am Alpha and Omega." The Persians looked upon Mithras as a "Divine Mediator"; Horus, the Son of Isis, was worshipped as the Divine Saviour of the Egyptians, as was also his father Osiris; while Fo-hi was declared to be a Saviour by the Chinese.

The idea of the *Logos* is equally universal. The Indo-Aryan had it under the form of the *Sabda-Brahman* or "Sound-God." The Chaldeans claimed their *Memra* or "Word of God;" and to the Assyrian the Saviour Marduk was the "Word." An ancient Egyptian record relates how Thulis, a great monarch of Egypt, one day asked the

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oracle of Serapis: "Tell me if there was before one greater than I, or will ever be one greater?" To which the oracle made answer: "First God, afterward the Word, and with them the Holy Spirit: all these are of the same nature and make one whole, of which the power is eternal. Go away quickly, mortal, thou who hast but an uncertain life." In early church history again we find the Christian Father, Justin Martyr, asking the Roman Emperor Antoninus Pius why the followers of Jesus should be so persecuted, "considering," he adds, "that you have your Mercury in worship under the title of the Word and Messenger of God." The *Logos* also figures prominently in the philosophical teaching at Alexandria during the last years of the pre-Christian era. Philo, the most eminent of this School, addresses it as a distinct being, calling it "Interpreter of God," "Eternal Bread of Heaven," "Ambassador of God," "Mediator," "Intercessor," "First-Begotten Son of God."

With the Saviour or *Logos* in these more deific forms, however, the line of intercession does not close. Nearer still stand the incarnate Ones, the "Word made flesh"—Krishna, Zoroaster, Buddha, Christ; true God-men, radiant with Divinity on the one side, humbly human on the other. It would seem that the effort to humanize the Divine must culminate with these embodied representatives of Godhead; yet in every form of religion the intimacy of relationship is pushed one step further. The Son intercedes with the Father, but the Mother is invoked to intercede with the Son. Thus wherever we find a Saviour proclaimed, with it springs up the adoration of the Virgin Mother. In Egypt the worship of Isis with the child Horus in her arms dates back at least six thousand years; and like the Greek "Virgin Queen of Heaven," Juno, and the Virgin Mary, she was depicted as standing on the crescent moon.

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The ancient Scandinavians had their Madonna; and the ancient Germans worshipped a virgin goddess Hertha, who conceived of the "active spirit" and gave birth to a son. In Mexico is to be seen a hieroglyphic showing the annunciation of the Virgin Chimalman, who was told by the ambassador of God that she should become the mother of the Saviour Quetzalcoatl. In Gaul the Druids invoked the *Virgo-Paritura* as the "Mother of God"; while the ancient Muscovites bowed before a sacred family consisting of mother and child with another child standing beside her, as we see John the Baptist beside the Christian Madonna. India, Persia, China, all had their Blessed Virgin Mothers; and everywhere names and customs and dates associated with this worship of Divine Motherhood are strangely identical.

These multiple proofs, however, of the unanimity of human minds, whatever the race or creed, should not weaken our belief in the reality and Divine sanctity of any Saviour or any special form of religious worship. Rather should they make our faith the stronger. In science isolated phenomena contribute little toward the establishment of Truth; it is the continually repeated fact which confirms the law. Why should it be otherwise in religion? If God had come only once and to a portion only of the human race, if the religious consciousness had expressed itself once only in certain forms and symbols, we might doubt the authenticity of the records or the correctness of our interpretation of them. But when the higher needs of man are met again and again and still again in the same way, then we may safely believe that the Mediator is a fundamental fact of life; and that the symbols and prayers and rituals, which reproduce themselves in East and West, North and South, are the natural and spontaneous expres-

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sions of religious aspiration among all peoples; just as men everywhere have given expression to their physical needs in closely-related material forms.

The recognition of this fact also may help to stay the iconoclastic spirit of the scientific reformer and image-breaker, who would make religion only for mature minds. The wise spiritual leader is he who recognizes that in the primary grade of the church, as of the school-room, the object lesson is necessary; and the child in spiritual evolution will remain Godless, if he cannot have a God nearly related to his human consciousness. As long as the Supreme Being seems far away, the distance must be filled with mediating manifestations of Divinity; and the greater the distance seems, the longer will grow the line of intercession. Semitic peoples filled it with their angels, archangels and heavenly hosts; the Indo-Aryans with their *devas, ghandarvas,* and *pitris;* Greeks and Romans with their gods, demi-gods and deified heroes.

It is useless to try to clear the space. Sweep away these intervening entities in one form and the human heart will bring them back clothed in new names and forms. Buddha, as we know, preached an impersonal and isolated Deity. His adherents fashioned a concrete God of Him, and to provide a sense of duration, propounded the idea that Boddhisattwas are perpetually taking form. Mohammed turned the eyes of the Sabeans away from their sacred stars and cast out the gods of the Arabs; but his own revelation, he claimed, was received from the angel Gabriel.

Never by creating an empty void between God and man, can we bring the human nearer to the Divine. Theology may decide that no mediatory entities shall stand between, but the human heart will reach its own decision by an inner intuition bred of a far-stretching evolutionary memory. It

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sees unbroken continuity throughout Nature; every grade of life manifesting itself in some form; no break anywhere from amoeba up to man. Why should the chain be broken at this midway point, it asks, and the Soul be called upon to take a sudden leap across the wide chasm dividing humanity from Divinity? Let it rather bridge the chasm with any higher mediating influence that may awaken its faith and reverence. Communion with the saints, loyal devotion to an Incarnate Saviour, companionship with the holy of heaven or earth, these are all divinely appointed means by which the yearning heart of man may find the God without and learn to pass to the God within.

THE SIGHT OF THE BLIND

Mediaeval Legend of the Blessed Virgin

In the city of Roc Amadour there was an abbey-church dedicated to Our Lady, which had become a chosen place of pilgrimage because of the miracles wrought therein. At a day's journey thence there lived a gentlewoman, who through a life of vanity and the misuse of her eyes in gazing ever at worldly glitter rather than at God's glory, had been deprived of her sight. Finding herself in darkness, repentance seized upon her heart, and she vowed herself wholly to the Blessed Mary, if only that loving Mother in Her infinite pity would give her back the light.

Counselled by the priest of her township, she determined to make a pilgrimage on foot to the abbey-church at Roc Amadour and at the shrine of the Virgin repeat her vow. With her went a large concourse of her neighbors, grieving that she should be thus afflicted and eager that she might find redress. So together they journeyed, at times right wearily, for the way seemed long, until they reached the hilltop of Mont Joye, where the church of miracles

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could first be seen. There they fell upon their knees and all together repeated the *Salve Regina* and *Ave Maria*. When the lady who was blind heard that they were near the end of their pilgrimage, she began to weep bitterly and, throwing herself upon the ground, prayed thus to the All-forgiving Mother:

"Sweet and most piteous Lady! I implore you by your holy name and that of your dear Son, that did show compassion to the blind and healed them, look with mercy on this poor sinner, sad and sore afflicted. I know full well, Most Gracious Mother, that if you will but hear my prayer, I may once more see the light. I entreat you, Blessed Lady, give me back my sight, and I do promise you that from this day I shall vow myself to a holy life and do all things according to your good pleasure."

Scarcely had she spoken these humble words of penitence, when the veil of darkness lifted and she saw more clearly than ever in her life before. Then she began to cry in a joyous voice: "Dear Mother, Queen of Heaven, I see! I see! All glory and thanks be unto you, for I know that by no grace of mine have you thus shown me favor." And with eyes fixed in devout fervor on the distant church of Roc Amadour, she sang: "Levavi oculos meos in montes, unde veniet auxilium" ("I will lift mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help").

All the neighbors, seeing the miracle, began to weep for very joy and ran along the way to tell of it to other pilgrims. So did they go, all praising with one accord the Holy Mother of God, who had thus restored sight to the blind. When, however, they reached the door of the church and the gentlewoman thought to enter, she could not cross the threshold; nor could any other, even the strongest, draw her over. So they called the priests, who said that,

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though penitent, yet had she not been shriven; and for this reason was she kept without the House of God. So one, wise and zealous, came in his surplice to hear her confession; and she told in deep humility, word for word, all that she had done to gratify the vanity of her heart and accomplish her own pleasure in the world. Then the priest, looking upon her and seeing how comely was she and how great might be her temptation once again to mislead by giving before His altar."

"My dear sister, I fear me that by these fair tresses you have done much hurt to other souls, and they may yet be to you a snare of the enemy. It is meet now that you be rather adorned with modesty and humility. I admonish you, therefore, if you would be absolved of your sins, that you let yourself be shorn of these fair locks and make them an offering at the Blessed Virgin's shrine. Then will you be delivered of all chance to vanity and you will see not only with these eyes of the body, but also with the eyes of the Soul. If you consent to this, then shall you be able to enter God's House and make your act of thanksgiving before His altar.

Fearing lest the blindness might once more come upon her, the gentlewoman submitted, though right unwillingly, to the penance laid upon her. She knew full well that these golden waving tresses were her chief beauty; and as she carried them in her hand to the Holy Virgin's shrine, a secret displeasure rose within her, so that with her prayer was mingled a sense of bitterness that Saint Mary should have sold her favor at the cost of so dear a sacrifice.

Having finished their devotions, the pilgrims set out on their homeward way, singing and giving thanks for the great mercy of the Blessed Mary; but the gentlewoman

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joined but coldly in their rejoicings. At Mont Joye again they paused, facing Roc Amadour, and knelt to repeat a last *Ave Maria*, as a loving farewell to Our Lady. But this gentlewoman instead cried in a loud voice:

"Alas, Holy Saint Mary, what have you done to me? I came to you adorned with great beauty, and you have robbed me of what was my dearest treasure. My heart grieves for those tresses that you have taken from me and I return home disconsolate and sorrowful."

As she prayed, behold! there came upon her head the golden curling tresses which had been shorn and laid before the Virgin; but her eyes were blind so that she could not see them. Her neighbors led her home, amazed and wondering. But from that hour prayers and pilgrimages profited her nothing. To the end she remained in darkness; and all who heard her story learned that it availeth little to restore the sight of the eyes when there is blindness in the Soul.

REPORT

During the past month all Services and classes continued as usual at the Centre, except on Tuesday, November 12th, when a thanksgiving Service was substituted for the usual class. After music and meditation the Swami spoke with deep feeling of the reestablishment of peace in the world: "The conflict has ceased," he said, "and what is the lesson we have learned from it? That no one individual or nation can work for its own happiness; that there cannot be such a thing as selfish happiness. We must feel for one another. Only when we do this can we grasp the real import of such moments as the present one. We pay a very great price when we lose the universal point of view, for it alone gives a death blow to all self-seeking. When both in the small

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and the large facts of life we are able to forget ourselves completely, then whatever we do must prove constructive and fruitful. The soldiers have taught us how to transcend the little things of life. But these transcendent experiences do not come in one way only, and they never come so long as we cherish selfish desires.

"Rejoicing is good, but we must remember that there is no true joy unless our heart is free from hatred. We must never lose our spiritual point of view. In days of sorrow it is natural for us to turn to God, but we must turn to Him with great fervor in days of rejoicing. Indeed, we must pray even more in the hour of joy, that we may keep our balance and hold fast to our Ideal. A time of many changes lies before us. Small groups of people and nations are to be broken apart in order that the world may have a larger feeling and all men work together in a common cause. We must prepare ourselves, then when the hour strikes we shall not fail to do our part. When we have bigger ideals and live in a bigger way, we must also be ready to make bigger sacrifices. We must not be satisfied to live in the same narrow circle. The world is growing and if we do not grow with it, we must suffer. As it outgrows certain things, we too must expand our vision and adapt ourselves to the new conditions. Let us merge our little selfish happiness in a bigger happiness; and when we pray, let our prayer be, not for ourselves, but for all living beings."

There was another special Service on Thanksgiving evening at which the Swami in his address once again expressed deep gratitude for the blessing of returning peace; a peace which, he prayed, might prove lasting and mark the beginning of an era of greater unity and brotherhood among all the peoples of the earth.

The Swami will remain in Boston through December.

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Tyndall.

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PRAYER

O Thou Eternal, Inexhaustible Source of all blessedness!
Make our hearts serene and glad.
Fill our minds with noble thoughts and selfless aspirations
That we may learn to surrender ourselves wholly unto Thee.
Reveal Thy true nature unto us that we may know Thee as our protecting Father and loving Mother.
Thou art the Support of this universe, the Resting-place of all weary souls.
Do Thou consecrate and sanctify our lives and actions.
Help us to lift our thoughts above the fleeting distractions of the world and rest them on the stable and undying.
Awaken in us unfaltering faith and a yearning desire to know the Truth.
Forgive us all our shortcomings and imperfections.
Kindle in us a burning devotion through which we shall realize that we are wholly Thine.
Grant unto us this blessing—that we may learn to live ever in Thy presence
And find our true happiness in Thee alone.
O Thou Infinite, All-compassionate Being, purify our minds and make our hearts a fitting altar unto Thee.
Bestow upon us Thy Sacred Blessing and fill us with Thy Holy Peace.

THE LAW OF OUR DESTINY

By Swami Paramananda

It is declared in the Bhagavad-Gita that the Omnipresent Lord partakes neither of the merit nor demerit of any creature. Wisdom is covered over by ignorance, thus mortals are deluded. Again in the Laws of Manu we read: Thou canst not gather what thou dost not sow. As thou plantest the tree, so will it grow. That is, according to a man's own thoughts and deeds must his compensation be. Or as it is said in the Bible: As a man soweth, so must be reap. If this be true, then the question arises: How far are we to take the responsibility of our life in our own hands, or to what extent are we to leave it in God's hands? If it is our doing, then we must be watching constantly over our own destiny; if it is of God's making, then we must find some explanation by which we can accept it from our heart—firmly believing that since everything happens by God's will, we must unquestioningly abide by whatever befalls us. As Epictetus says: "Dare to look up to God and say, Make use of me in the future as Thou wilt. I refuse nothing which seems good to Thee. Lead me whither Thou wilt. Clothe me in whatever dress Thou wilt. Is it Thy will that I should be in a public or a private condition, dwell here or be banished, be poor or rich? Under all these circumstances I will make Thy defence to men." If we can gain this sublime attitude of mind, it will make our life, in good fortune or ill fortune seem like a heavenly benediction.

We may have an intellectual conception of this and repeat that everything happens by God's Will, but are we able to feel it when the greatest difficulties confront us? If we reach that point, then there is no doubt that our destiny is solely governed by God's hand. If, however, we

have any egotistic sense or any feeling of separateness from that Divine Power, then we must assume the burden of our own life consciously, diligently and with all watchfulness. The orthodox idea of accepting everything that comes as God's will is not to be looked upon with contempt, but something must be added to it. It is true that everything which happens is God's will; and if it is God's will, we must accept it with an undoubting mind. The question naturally arises, however, that if all is the will of God, who is all-merciful, all-wise, all-loving, why are there such tremendous variations in the fortunes of men? They do not seem just and therefore cannot be ordained by a just God.

We forget that if God moulds our destiny, He must mould it according to the material we give; and that probably makes this great variety in His creation. This will explain why one man is happy, another unhappy; one refined and another coarse; one spiritual and another worldly. It is due to the material we ourselves give through our own thoughts and deeds, our own conscious or unconscious feelings. If we do not take account of this fact, it is almost impossible for us to reach a satisfactory explanation of life. We may feel despair, distrust, skepticism; but that will not solve the problem or quench our turbulent unrest. We must view everything with calmness of spirit and openness of heart; and if we are able to do this, the book of life will not seem so confusing to us.

There is no doubt that we have something to do with our destiny; but we do not mould it alone. If we start with that aggressive idea—that we are going to make our life most exalted and most beautiful without any help from man or God, we are bound to stumble and fall. But if we start forward in a prayerful attitude, with earnest feeling

and all the devotion of our soul, then with God's aid we are able to succeed. We can truly lift our head then, not in an aggressive spirit, but in the consciousness that there is an all-abiding God within us and it is His voice which speaks through us, His mind which works through us, His power which constantly uses us. Thus all self-exertion for the betterment of our destiny must be combined with faith and unwavering devotion to God.

Buddha tells us that all that we are is the result of our thoughts. If we have good thoughts, then happiness and blessing will follow us, just as the wheel of a chariot follows the horse which draws it. In the same way pain will follow us, if we do anything or think anything with an evil mind. This is the law. It is not that some invisible Providence is keeping record of what we think and do, but our own conscience will make us happy or unhappy, will give us or deprive us of peace. The Vedic philosophy, instead of making us feel helpless and desperate, that there is no way of escape, holds out this hope, that even if we are born with an apparently evil destiny, it is not something which we cannot overcome. What is done can be undone. What we have done through our own thoughts and deeds we have the power to undo by other thoughts and deeds. Instead of weeping and wailing over our mistakes, therefore, we must learn to stand up and be courageous. It is not a misfortune when suffering comes upon us. It becomes a misfortune if it drags us down. When it destroys our faith and courage, then it becomes a great curse; otherwise it purifies us.

We must not always look for comfort. If we do, we shall not have the kind of character we wish to have. Gold cannot be fashioned until it is burned. It is the same with our life. It must be burned many times, and that part

which is not consumed by the fire is the real part in us. Truth can never be burned up. Why then should we be afraid? You may say, how can we help it? We can help it. Our physical nature is full of fear and so long as we identify ourselves with the life which is dependent on perishable things, we shall continue to be fearful; but as soon as we focus our mind on something which is permanent, fear will gradually drop away from us. It is this permanent side which we must bring closer into our life and there is no one who can do it for us. Churches, Scriptures, Temples, forms and rituals may aid us, if we open our hearts and know how to draw inspiration from them. If however we have not openness of heart, no outside help will awaken that higher instinct within, which is the most needful thing for our spiritual life. All other things are of secondary importance.

Even in misery a wise man sees the smile of heaven; he receives it as a blessing; while the short-sighted, pleasure-seeking man imagines he is going to be deprived of all happiness and wants to run away from it. But it runs after him. We can never run away from things. Whenever misfortune comes, if we try to turn our back on it, we shall find that it will follow us. There is no escape from it in that way. If, however, we face it, it will disappear; especially if we face it with understanding. We need a certain amount of courage and firmness to meet the problems of life. The weakling can do nothing. But real strength comes to us, not when we depend on our own brain and muscles or on anything material, but when we depend on God and feel that He is standing by us. That is the vital thing. We may call this Supreme Power God, Truth, or by any name which pleases us, but we must start with that as the foundation of all our effort.

There is no one who is absolutely unbelieving. We may not believe in one special doctrine or form of faith, or in one special expression of Divinity; but we all have inherent faith in our spiritual being. Whatever form it may take, we must have it. We must dig out our religion from within. It is latent and inherent. We may not have given it a name or any outward expression, yet it is there. It is because of Him that we live; and as soon as we become convinced of that Presence, we have very little occasion to fear anything. One who knows the Truth, the Truth makes him fearless. "Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free"—free from all fear. At present we are haunted by fear. In one form or another it is always pursuing us. We try to run away, but we find no escape.

Let us try not to run away from anything. God will give us strength. He never fails us, if we can only remember to call upon Him. The trouble is that when difficulties arise, we forget our spiritual nature, our faith is shaken, our mind becomes clouded and we grow fearful. Therefore we must make it the habit of our life to keep close to the Ideal. That is religion. We must do it not only in the hour of devotion and prayer, but also in the hour of activity. We must follow the law, knowing that even the thoughts we hold in the darkness and which no one else may perceive, each contributes its share towards the moulding of our destiny. If we have harmful thoughts, although they may not express themselves in action, yet they will create a poison in our system and affect us more than the person towards whom they are turned. We call it a natural tendency. A man thinks it is natural for him to be angry when some one provokes him; but it is quite unnatural for one who understands the real law and has

learned to control himself. He does not need to control himself even, for his understanding will dispel all darkness and feelings of anger will not rise.

Everyone, however, must go through preliminary stages of struggle and discipline; and if we are not willing to do this, the road will be a long and difficult one. It is through our own effort that we shorten the road. We can be lethargic in regard to spiritual things and settle down, accepting our present condition as our fate; but that is not the way to mould the best kind of destiny. Each one of us is given certain problems to work out in order to show what we are capable of doing. If we are able to produce something which is satisfying to our higher aspirations, then we can lay it before the altar of God and He will find it acceptable. But if we think that we shall please Him through empty words of praise, we shall never please Him. Only that one whose life is productive will be pleasing to Him.

It is useless to expect to have a life of perfect happiness and attain the highest heavenly region, after we pass out of this life, unless we have something to show that we deserve these things. If we do not deserve Heaven and are given a place there, we shall not be able to keep it. This is something which often we do not remember. If to-day our life is moulded by our ordinary vision, if our association is vulgar and unclean, then certainly we shall not be able to appreciate anything heavenly, pure and full of the fragrance of holiness. If our mind, our heart, our conduct and associations are of a lower nature and we are forced to go up, we shall find ourselves out of place and unhappy. Heaven is Heaven only when our heart feels in tune with it; otherwise it becomes unbearable. We can never keep or enjoy anything which we do not deserve.

DEO OPTIMO MAXIMO

By Louise Imogen Guiney

All else for use, One only for desire;
Thanksgiving for the good, but thirst for Thee:
Up from the best, whereof no man need tire,
Impel Thou me.

Delight is menace if Thou brood not by,
Power a quicksand, Fame a gathering jeer.
Oft as the morn (though none of earth deny
These three are dear)

Wash me of them, that I may be renewed,
And wander free amid my freeborn joys:
Oh, close my hand upon Beatitude!
Not on her toys.

LIVING WITH GOD

Spiritual Maxims of Brother Lawrence

The Presence of God is an applying of our spirit to God, or a realization of God as present, which is borne home to us either by the imagination or by the understanding.

I have a friend who these forty years past has been practising through the understanding a realization of the Presence of God. To it he gives many other names; sometimes he calls it a simple act, or a clear and distinct knowledge of God; at other times, a view as through a glass, a loving gaze, an inward sense of God; yet again he terms it a waiting on God, a silent converse with Him, a repose in Him, the life and peace of the soul. Still, my friend tells me that all these ways, in which he has expressed his sense of the Presence of God, come to the same thing; and that the Presence fills his soul quite naturally, that it has come so to pass in this way.

He says that by unwearying efforts, by constantly recalling his mind to the Presence of God, a habit has been formed within him of such a nature that, so soon as he is freed from his ordinary labor, and not seldom even when he is engaged thereon, his soul lifts itself up above all earthly matters, without care or forethought on his part, and dwells as it were firmly stayed on God as in its centre and place of rest, faith almost always being his companion at such times. Then his soul's joy is full,—it is what he calls the actual Presence, and includes all other kinds and greatly more besides. Then it is he feels that only God and he are in the world; with Him he holds unbroken converse, asking from Him the supply of all his needs, and finding in His Presence fullness of joy.

Let us mark well, however, that this intercourse with God he holds in the depth of his being; there it is that the soul speaks to God, heart to heart, and over the soul thus holding converse there steals a great and profound peace. All that passes without concerns the soul no more than a fire of straw, which the more it flares, the sooner burns itself out; and rarely indeed do the cares of this world ever intrude to trouble the peace that is within.

But to come back to our consideration of the Presence of God, you must know that the tender and loving light of God's countenance kindles insensibly within the soul, which ardently embraces it, so great and so divine a fire of love to God, that one is perforce compelled to moderate the outward expression of the feelings.

Great would be our surprise, if we but knew what converse the soul holds at these times with God, who seems to so delight in this communion, that to the soul, which would fain abide ever with Him, He bestows favours past numbering; and as if He dreaded lest the soul should turn

again to things of earth, He provides for it abundantly, so that the soul finds in faith a nourishment divine, a joy that has no measure, beyond its utmost thought and desire; and this without a single effort on its part but simple consent.

The Presence of God is thus the life and nourishment of the soul, and with the aid of His grace, it can attain thereunto by diligent use of the means which I will now set out.

The first is a great purity of life; in guarding ourselves with care lest we should do or say or think on anything which might be displeasing to God; and, when any such thing happens, in taking heed to repent thereof, humbly begging His forgiveness.

The second is a great faithfulness in the practice of His Presence, and in keeping the soul's gaze fixed on God in faith, calmly, humbly, lovingly, without allowing an entrance to anxious cares and disquietude.

Those who set out upon this practice let me counsel to offer up in secret a few words, such as "My God, I am wholly Thine. O God of Love, I love Thee with all my heart. Lord, make my heart even as Thine"; or such other words as love prompts on the instant. But take heed that your mind wanders not back to the world again; keep it fixed on God alone, so that, thus subdued by the will, it may be constrained to abide with God.

The practice of the Presence of God is somewhat hard at the outset, yet, pursued faithfully it works imperceptibly within the soul most marvellous effects; it draws down God's grace abundantly, and leads the soul insensibly to the ever-present vision of God, loving and beloved, which is the most spiritual and most real, the most free and most life-giving manner of prayer. The grace of God is the more needful for each moment, as without it the soul can do nothing.

Whilst wandering through the Rain God's glade with the Master, Fan Ch'ih said to him: May I ask how to raise the mind and amend evil?

The Master said: A good question! Rate the task above the prize; will not the mind be raised? Fight thine own faults, not the faults of others; will not evil be mended?

Make faithfulness and truth thy masters, have no friends unlike thyself, be not ashamed to amend thy faults.

Listen much, keep silent when in doubt, and always take heed of the tongue: thou wilt make few mistakes.

The Master said: One thread, Shen, runs through all my teaching.

Yes, said Tseng-tzu.

After the Master had left, the disciples asked what was meant. Tseng-tzu said: The Master's teaching all hangs on faithfulness and fellow-feeling.

ELEVENTH ANNIVERSARY

Of the Vedanta Centre of Boston

The Vedanta Centre of Boston celebrated the Eleventh Anniversary of its establishment on the evening of January 6th. Every seat in the Chapel was filled, and it was necessary to place chairs for late-comers in the entrance hall. The spirit of the evening was one of special unity and fellowship, and all those present felt that it was the most successful celebration ever held at the Centre. In the windows of the main floor hung a number of red lamps, casting a ruddy glow into the shadows of the Parkway outside; while flowers, evergreen branches and blooming plants lent an air of festivity to the interior. A religious Service occupied the first part of the evening. This was followed by an hour of informal social intercourse, during which refreshments were served and various musical selections were given. The Exercises opened with an organ

that, O Bhagavan (revered Master), which being known, all else becomes known?

It was customary in ancient India for a pupil, when he sought instruction of a holy sage, to approach him bearing in his arms a bundle of wood for the altar fire. This armful of sacrificial wood, called in Sanskrit *Samit-pani*, became the symbol of discipleship, representing a desire to serve even in the humblest capacity. Those ancient teachers did not give out their knowledge for a certain fee as it is done in the modern educational institution. They were wholly independent. They did not seek pupils. On the contrary, they were very careful whom they taught. The pupil was obliged to prove his worthiness by humility, earnestness and patient service.

IV

The Sage said to him: There are two kinds of knowledge to be known, so are we told by the knowers of Brahman,—higher knowledge and lower knowledge.

V

Lower knowledge consists of the Rig-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sama-Veda, Atharva-Veda, phonetics, ceremonial, grammar, etymology, metre, astronomy. Higher knowledge is that by which the Imperishable is known.

The Upanishads make a clear distinction between secular knowledge (*Apara*) and knowledge born of direct vision (*Para*). Secular or lower knowledge not only includes astronomy, ceremonial, rhetoric and all branches of intellectual study, but even study of the Sacred Scriptures. Any knowledge which is acquired through study is classed as lower knowledge, because merely reading or hearing about Truth is not knowing Truth. The Aryan sages did not discredit the study of books, but they recognized that theoretical knowledge must always be inferior to knowledge based on direct experience.

VI

That which cannot be seen, which cannot be seized, which has no origin and no attributes, no eyes nor ears, no hands nor feet; That which is eternal, diversely manifesting, all-pervading, extremely subtle; that Imperishable One the wise regard as the Source of all created things.

Para-vidya or higher knowledge is that which cannot be perceived by the senses or by our ordinary faculties. It dawns in the soul only when senses, mind and intellect have become pacified and full of serenity. We do not gain ultimate realization until we have subdued the turbulence and unrest of our mind. At present the greater part of our effort at knowledge is physical. We wish to see with our eyes, grasp with our hands; but through these channels we can gain only objective knowledge; while knowledge of God is subjective. This is evident from the definition of the Supreme given here. He is unconditioned and beyond the reach of our physical senses, our mind and intellect. To perceive Him we must cultivate another state of consciousness, which is done through the practice of meditation.

VII

As the spider brings forth and draws in (its thread), as herbs spring from the earth, as hair grows on the living body, likewise does the universe come forth from the Imperishable.

VIII

Through Tapas Brahman expands; from this, food is produced; from food come Prana (energy), mind, the elements, the worlds, good works and their immortal fruit.

IX

From that One who is all-perceiving and all-knowing, whose Tapas consists of wisdom, are born Brahma (the Creator), name, form and food.

Tapas signifies spiritual discipline, known variously as penance, austerity, etc. The word *Tapa* means literally heat, and is employed in this case because spiritual practice is supposed to act on the system like fire, consuming all impurities. This interpretation, however, cannot be applied to the present text, as it is evident that Brahman, the Supreme Lord, has no need of purification. It is used here to signify the fire of wisdom, which like all fire expands. Out of this wisdom fire, burning in the mind of Brahman, come forth, first the creative power, and thence all forms of material manifestation.

(*To be continued*)

REPORTS

At the invitation of the minister, Rev. F. B. Crandall, Swami Paramananda delivered the Christmas sermon at the First Unitarian Church of Ayer, Mass., on Sunday evening, December 21st. A special Service had been arranged, with an elaborate musical programme and the church was artistically decorated. The Christmas carols with which the Service opened, were heard first at a distance, and as the singers approached, the lights spread from the dim glow of the candles on the altar to a cross above the altar and thence through the church. After the Rev. Mr. Crandall had read the Office of Prayer the Swami held a brief meditation. "The beauty of the scene and of the music and the discourse of the Swami made an exquisite harmony," Mr. Crandall himself writes. "He dwelt upon the mystical significance of the Holy Child in religion. In gentle and gracious words he appealed to his hearers to forsake their sinful prejudices and to rise to the plane of purity and spiritual understanding in their religious thinking. By his presence and by his preaching

Swami Paramananda bore a powerful witness for the spiritual ideals that are comprehended in the well-beloved symbol of the Christ Child."

* * * * * *

The Vedanta Centre of Boston marked the Christmastide by a Service on Christmas Eve at 8 o'clock. From every window of the main floor there shone into the darkness outside the light of many candles, while the corner window overlooking the Parkway was ablaze with lights burning on an altar to the Christ Child and the Virgin. The Service began with a Christmas carol. Then, after a meditation, the Swami gave a most impressive Talk on the true Christ Spirit in which, as in all he says, there sounded the two strong notes of universal religious harmony and the vital need, not of theoretical loyalty to creed, but of practical spiritual living. Two more Christmas carols, a second meditation and the benediction closed the Service, which was pronounced by every one to be one of exceptional beauty and exalted feeling.

* * * * * *

Sister Devamata returned from her Western journey on December 11th. Her three weeks in Louisville proved fruitful for the work, many having gained a new interest in the teaching and a fresh impetus in their spiritual practice. In all she delivered eight public lectures and held as many classes. Besides these, she gave several Talks in private drawing-rooms and held a special Thanksgiving Service. Among the public lectures, two were given in the hall of the Public Library and called out a large attendance. On her return to Boston she stopped over in Cincinnati for three days, during which she spoke on Sunday evening at the New Thought Temple and on Monday in the Assembly Room of the Hotel Gibson.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

FEB 13 1920
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The Message of the East

FEBRUARY, 1920

Issued by

THE VEDANTA CENTRE

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towards fostering these great ideals. We believe firmly that the revelations of the saints and sages and seers everywhere are one. God is one, Spirit is one. We are all children of that One; and we cannot serve that One and love that One unless our love makes us include all His children — east, west, north, south, everywhere. To uphold this universal unity is the chief aim of this work.

Now as we start on another year's labor, we want God's blessing upon it, because we realize more and more that human efforts fail many times and must fail unless we have the blessing of the Supreme. But when we have that, then we can achieve something which will be worth while, lasting and far reaching. Also we wish the good will of the people. I would not be here today if it were not for some of you who kept me through your love, through your earnestness and your sincere desire to have a Centre. I came here as a wandering Sannyasin. I did not expect to settle down and have an established work, but it was your earnest spirit which laid the foundations of this Centre.

We do not want anybody to be identified with this work and be denunciatory towards any other form of faith. We never give out such teaching from this platform. Our work will have its best expression when we shall be able to go out and carry the great Cosmic Principle in our hearts and make people realize that to hate any one is to impede their own progress. When we succeed in understanding these lofty principles and in applying them in our lives, this world will become a very different place. That this world may become so and that we may play our humble part in it, for that purpose this work exists. My friends, it is not always the exterior that counts; it is not the outside glamour that always brings the light to us. A dew drop is so gentle—the bud hardly realizes that anything has

fallen upon it, yet it gives birth to a beautiful blossom. So must it be with our spiritual striving. We must do it through our life, silently and devoutly; then we shall realize the great ideals the world teachers have given us.

Let us unite our hearts and prayers. Let us offer our thanks for all that we have been privileged to do, and let us pray that He may give us inspiration for more effective and far-reaching service to His children. May the Supreme Spirit of the Universe, Whom we invoke by different names and worship in different manners: may that universal, cosmic, loving Father and Mother of all living beings grant unto us His protection, and may He inspire us to perceive His light and His love everywhere in the universe. May that all-abiding Spirit unfold our vision and enable us to see that it is the same One who is worshipped by different religions; that all names and forms strive to represent that One Who is boundless and formless. May that Unbounded Infinite One awaken in us such love and sincere devotion for our Ideal, and such a spirit of service to humanity, that we may realize that we are all children of that Cosmic Being. Then shall we have in our hearts only love and brotherly feeling towards all living beings.

REPORT

The Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was observed at the Vedanta Centre of Boston on Sunday, January 18th, the same day on which the public celebration was held at all the Centres of the Ramakrishna Mission in India. There was an impressive religious Service, with special musical selections and an address by Swami Paramananda, who spoke with deep feeling of the beauty and power of Swami Vivekananda's selfless devotion to Truth and to his fellowmen. Because of lack of space we are

unable to give the address in the present Message, but we hope to do so in the March number.

* * * *

The Birthday was commemorated also at the Vedanta Society of San Francisco. Swami Prakashananda, who is in charge of the work there, held two Services. At 11 A. M. he spoke on "Swami Vivekananda's Contribution to the World Thought" and at 8 P. M. his subject was "Swami Vivekananda as a Forerunner of a Universal Religion." Both Services were attended by many appreciative friends.

* * * *

Swami Paramananda was invited to speak before the Art Alliance of Philadelphia on January 21st. The Philadelphia Record speaks of the lecture thus: "Swami Paramananda gave an interesting lecture on 'The Spirit of the Indian Drama' at the Art Alliance yesterday afternoon. The dramatists of India, he said, strive continually for the spiritual, even in comedy. The genius of Indo-Aryan culture, both secular and sacred, is pre-eminently spiritual. India's best epics, art and drama all alike tend toward idealism, in which the soul life plays the most vital part. The dramatists realize that unless they touch the deeper side of life, even in providing amusement for the people, they will not hold them. The great plays of India nearly all deal with the life and character of spiritual heroes. This has necessarily an important educational value. The Indian youth not only learn their history, but gain a solid formation for their character, in absorbing the mighty ideals thus portrayed on the stage. The speaker described the ancient and modern theatre of India, and discussed the great dramatist of India, G. C. Ghose, known as the Shakespeare of Bengal and the Garrick of the Bengalee stage."

* * * *

On Sunday afternoon, January 25th, the Swami was invited to speak at St. Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie New York, on "The Unseen as the Creative Force in Hindu Life." The keynote of the afternoon was the realization of the universality of essential religion. The rector, Dr. Wm. Norman Guthrie, laid emphasis on it in his short Address on the "Mysticism of the Scottish Celt" at the Vesper Service, and it was again strongly accented by the Swami at the later gathering in the Parish Hall. Preceding the Swami's Address, Mr. Robert de Bruce gave a brief explanation of Zen Mysticism as exemplified in certain Chinese paintings on exhibition at the Parish Hall; while following the Address, Mr. Dwight Goddard, translator of the "Tao Teh King," spoke for a few minutes on Laotze. Dr. Guthrie himself writes of the occasion:

"Swami Paramananda then opened with silent prayer and a Peace Chant, after which he gave a beautiful Address on our great spiritual problem in the Occident — how to reconcile the hunger of the Spirit for quiet and repose and divine realization with scrupulous and courageous performance of duty. He showed how efficiency would be greatly increased by the right use of the art of meditation. When he closed with a benediction, after silent prayer, the audience was too spell-bound to applaud. They expressed their thankfulness for the experience, which the Swami had secured for them so largely, by the contagion of his strong spirit of devotion. It was an afternoon that will not soon be forgotten by the participants; and it raises the hope that after the Swami's return from California he may be able to hold some regular week-night meetings at Old St. Mark's, where he has already so many friends."

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All meetings at The Vedanta Centre of Boston will continue as usual during February.

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MAR 10 1920
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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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Chapel of the Vedanta Centre

1 Queensberry Street, Fenway
(Ipswich Street Car)

Swami Paramananda

of India in charge
TWELFTH SEASON—1920

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SUNDAY, 11 A. M.
SERVICE WITH ADDRESS
SUBJECTS

March 7th Psychic Powers and Superconscious Vision
March 14th How to Conquer Selfishness
March 21st The Productive Force of Desire
March 28th The Three Worlds

VESPER SERVICE SUNDAY 5 P. M.
(Meditation, Music, and Short Address.)
Public cordially invited to both Services.

✠

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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PLATO AND VEDIC IDEALISM

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

"As the different streams, having their sources in different places, all mingle their waters in the sea; so, O Lord, the different paths which men take because of their different tendencies, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee!" This ancient Indo-Aryan prayer gives a picture of the ultimate goal of unity, towards which all philosophies and religions tend. When we reach the heights of spiritual vision, the little barriers and differences melt away and we realize the underlying unity and universality of cosmic life. But even before we attain this final oneness, if we are open, fair and genuine, we cannot fail to realize a certain kinship among all the great ideals of the world. For instance, when I study the writings of the Greek philosophers, it is almost like reading the teachings of the early Vedic seers. The eminent English Orientalist, Sir Wm. Jones, recognizes this when he says: "It is impossible to read the Vedanta, or the many fine compositions in illustration of it, without believing that Pythagoras and Plato derived their sublime theories from the same fountain with the sages of India."

This does not mean that the Greeks borrowed from the Indo-Aryans, or the Indo-Aryans from the Greeks, al-

though there is no question that there was intercourse and free exchange of thoughts between them from very early days; but spiritual ideals are the common property of all peoples. The cosmic universe is rich enough in knowledge to supply all abundantly. There is no need of borrowing. Besides, borrowed knowledge never stands the test. One may try to repeat the ideas of another, but the words have no vital force and can produce no lasting impression. All vital contributions to world thought must rise from one source only — direct vision.

It was because the Greek philosophers and the ancient Indo-Aryan seers in their spiritual research reached the same lofty heights that they perceived the same fundamental ideals and often defined them in almost identical terms. Thus we find Plato's conception of a world of abstract self-existent ideas or "patterns fixed in Nature," of which all individual ideas and forms are copies, corresponds to the Vedic conception of the Absolute out of which springs all relative manifestation. Both alike declare this Source of being to be one and eternal. In the Chandogya-Upanishad a father says to his son: "That which exists is One and all things have sprung from that One. It is not, my child, that in the beginning there was nothing and this universe came out of that nothing. No, something cannot come out of nothing. In the beginning there was the One, the Infinite and Absolute" — that which Plato defines as the ultimate Idea of Good or the Permanent Reality: "One which is something over and above the many." A like distinction is made in the Mundaka-Upanishad, when a sage says to a disciple: "There are two kinds of knowledge to be known — higher knowledge and lower knowledge." Lower knowledge is gained through sense-perception and intellectual study, while

"higher knowledge is that by which the Imperishable is known"; and "knowledge of Brahman the Supreme is the foundation of all knowledge."

In Book V of the *Republic* again Plato discriminates carefully between "opinion" and "science" or real knowledge. "Science has for its province to know the nature of the existent"; "it is correlative to the existent and the negation of knowledge (ignorance) necessarily to the non-existent," while opinion is "something more dusky than knowledge, more luminous than ignorance." This is illustrated by the allegory of the cave given in Book VII. He describes a cave running down a steep incline into the earth. Some way down, where daylight is no longer visible, a bright fire is burning and beyond it there is a low wall built across the cave. Over the top of this wall little figures of animals and men are moved back and forth by showmen. The shadows of these figures are thrown upon the rocky end of the cave, facing which are prisoners, so chained that they cannot turn around. Seeing thus from day to day only the shadows of the manufactured images, would they not come to regard them as the only realities? So is it with those who have merely second-hand or hear-say knowledge of disjointed facts.

Suppose, however, that one of the prisoners is released and compelled to walk with open eyes towards the light, the dazzling splendor of which renders him incapable of discerning the objects which had cast the shadows on the end-rock. If some one tells him these are only phantoms and that he is somewhat nearer to reality, will he not be puzzled? So is one who begins to acquire first-hand knowledge of the facts of the universe. But suppose that he is dragged up the steep ascent of the cavern out into the light of the sun, will he not be vexed and indignant at the

treatment; and, blinded by the glare, will he not find it impossible to make out so much as one of the objects all around him? At first he will be better able to gaze at their reflections in water. By degrees, however, his eyes will grow accustomed to the daylight and he will be able to discern clearly each thing as it is; so is it with a man who has reached the stage of direct apprehension of Principles—above all, the Principle of Ultimate Good. This type of man in Vedic classification is called the *Rishi* or seer, the man of vision; while the prisoner is the lettered scholar, the man of opinion or intellectual grasp only.

This higher knowledge, Socrates explains further, cannot be sought "in perception at all, but in that other process, however called, in which the mind is alone and engaged with being." The Katha-Upanishad also tells us: "No one can see Him with the eye . . . but when the five organs or sense perception become still, together with the mind — that is called the highest state." These words of both Socrates and the Upanishad give a true definition of transcendental or superconscious vision which is the aim of the Indian system of Yoga — a system evolved to teach man how, by withdrawing his mind from all the distractions of the sense plane and making it perfectly one-pointed or single, he may gain access to his inner resources. Patanjali, the father of the Yoga philosophy, says: "At the time of concentration, the seer rests in his own unmodified state (the state of perfect serenity)." Only in this state of introvision or "aloneness," which presupposes complete detachment from external perception, can true knowledge be apprehended. Undoubtedly Plato held the same conception when he declared that education was "a turning round of the eye of the soul." And "this is the rule

for achieving it," it is said in one of the Upanishads: "restraint of the breath, restraint of the senses, meditation, fixed attention, investigation, complete union with the object of meditation."

In the process of turning inward the soul's eye the need of a teacher is universally recognized, as is the need of a guide when one travels into an unknown region. The teacher in India is called *Guru* or "sight-giver" or "one who dispels the darkness." He is also regarded as the parent in the second birth of the awakening soul. In *Theaetetus* Socrates even calls himself a midwife. "My art of midwifery is in most respects like theirs," he says; "but the difference lies in this, I practise on their souls when they are in labor, and not on their bodies; and the triumph of my art is in examining whether the thought which the mind of the young man is bringing to birth is a false idol or a noble and true creation. Therefore, I am not myself wise, nor have I anything which is the invention or offspring of my own soul, but the way is this: Some of those who converse with me at first appear to be absolutely dull; yet afterwards, as our acquaintance ripens, if the god is gracious to them, they all of them make astonishing progress. There is clear proof that they have never learned anything of me, but they have acquired and discovered many noble things of themselves, although the god and I helped to deliver them."

Here Socrates expresses with remarkable definiteness the Vedic idea that the Guru is merely an instrumental help in drawing out the inherent powers of the soul. A real teacher must always be full of humility and deeply conscious that he is only a channel through which the Divine works. For that reason he must be free from all ulterior selfish motives and unwavering in his devotion to

Truth. "I have actually known some who were ready to bite me when I deprived them of a darling folly," Socrates says; "they did not perceive that I acted from good will, that no god is the enemy of man; neither am I their enemy in all this, but religion will never allow me to admit falsehood, or to stifle the truth."

The injunction of the Vedas that "Truth cannot be attained by mere study of the Scriptures, nor by intellectual reasoning, nor by frequent hearing of it. . . He who has not turned away from evil conduct, whose senses are uncontrolled, who is not tranquil, whose mind is not at rest, he can never attain Truth even by much study," finds a frequent echo in Plato's teaching. He was uncompromising in his claim that the highest type of conduct is inseparably bound up with the highest type of knowledge; and that this knowledge can only be gained by one who is willing to seek the aid of something beyond physical perception or mere intellectual theory. The man merged in the flux of sensuality, he declares with reiterated insistence, can never reach the knowledge of God.

According to Plato, this knowledge should not be the aim merely of the recluse or scholar; it should be sought with equal earnestness by men in every department of active life, especially by those who govern public affairs. The highest political power must be vested in philosophers only; and he defines a philosopher as one who is "able to apprehend the eternal and immutable"; who is possessed of "truthfulness, that is, a determination never to admit a falsehood in any shape, if it can be helped, but to abhor it and love the truth"; he must be "temperate and thoroughly incovetous, for he is the last person in the world to value those objects which make men anxious for money at any cost"; he must be "quick at learning, lofty-

minded and graceful, the friend and brother of truth, justice, fortitude and temperance"; for "a mean and cowardly character can have no part in true philosophy." He concludes by asking: "Can you hesitate to entrust such characters with the sole management of state affairs, when time and education have made them ripe for the task?" And a long discussion follows to prove that "the miseries of our cities will find no relief until philosophers become rulers."

This Platonic idea of a philosopher-ruler we find realized in Indian history more than once, in such wise and virtuous kings as Janaka, Yudishthira, Asoka and various others. They were not only able statesmen, but profound spiritual teachers as well, to whom even holy men and ascetics came for religious instruction. Wisdom they had in excess and they applied it wholly for the betterment of mankind. They looked upon their rulership as a sacred vocation, entrusted to them by God; and they consecrated all their activities to selfless service of their fellow-beings. They never used their power for personal gain or self-aggrandizement. They treated their subjects as their children. Love of justice and truth was the burning passion of their hearts. Their devotion to philosophy, however, did not make them visionary or lead them to give themselves wholly to contemplation and metaphysical speculation. On the contrary, they were of a noble, heroic type, full of practical ability and keenly alert in the performance of their duties.

The Indo-Aryan teaching that there can be no true unity so long as the feeling of "I" and "mine" dominates, finds a strong parallel in Plato's development of the Ideal State. "There is unity where there is community of pleasures and pains, where all the citizens are glad or sorry on

the same occasion," are Socrates' words in the *Republic*. "And where there is no common, but only private feeling, that disorganizes a State — when you have one-half of the world triumphing and the other sorrowing at the same events happening to the city and the citizens. Such differences commonly originate in a disagreement between the term 'mine' and 'thine'." The Bhagavad-Gita gives the same thought as applied to the individual. "He whose heart is steadfastly engaged in the practice of Yoga, looks everywhere with the eyes of equality, seeing the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self. . . He who looks upon pleasure and pain everywhere with the same regard as when it is applied to himself, that one is highly esteemed."

(Concluded in April. Second part will deal with Reincarnation and Immortality.)

Ignorance is the knowledge of many things—the knowledge of diversity without the knowledge of unity or of the One God. The conviction that God is in all objects—that there is unity in variety—is called knowledge. Knowing Him intimately is realization. Suppose you get a thorn in your foot. You take a second thorn to pick it out. Then you throw both away. So to get rid of the thorn of ignorance, you use the thorn of (relative) knowledge. Then you throw away both ignorance and knowledge in order to attain complete realization. —*Sri Ramakrishna.*

THE SIGHT OF GOD

By St. Cadoc, 6th Century

Without light nothing is good
Without light there is no piety
Without light there is no religion
Without light there is no faith
There is no light without the sight of God.

THE ETERNAL WORD

Sermon by John Tauler

(Dominican Monk of Strassbourg, 14th Century)

Children, it behooves us greatly to mark what it is that makes men deaf, like the man in the Gospel. From the time that the first man opened his ears to the voice of the Enemy, he became deaf thereby, and all we after him, so that we cannot hear or understand the sweet voice of the Eternal Word. Yet we know that the Eternal Word is still so unutterably nigh to us inwardly, in the very principle of our being, that not even man himself, his own nature, his own thoughts, nor aught that can be named or said or understood, is so nigh or planted so deep within him as the Eternal Word is in man. And it is ever speaking in man; but he hears it not by reason of the sore deafness that has come upon him.

Whose fault is this? I say that something has covered man's ears and stopped them up that he may not hear this Word; and his sense is so benumbed that he has become dumb, not knowing his own self. If he desired to speak of what is within him, he could not; for he does not know how it stands with him, nor discern his own ways and works. The cause whereof is that the Enemy has whispered in his ear and he has listened to the voice, and hence has he grown deaf and dumb. What is this most hurtful whispering of the Enemy? It is every disorderly image or suggestion that starts up in thy mind, whether belonging to thy creature likings and wishes, or the world and the things thereof; whether it be thy wealth, reputation, friends or relations, or thy own flesh, or whatever it be that lays hold of thy fancy, making thee to like or do somewhat.

Through all these he has his access to thy soul; for he

is ever at hand; and as he marks to what a man is inclined inwardly or outwardly, what he likes and dislikes, straightway he lays hold of it and attacks him with that weapon, and suggests what agrees with that man's inclination, and pours into the ears of his soul all manner of imaginations concerning that thing, that the man may not be able to hear the Eternal Word. If the man instantly turned his ears and mind away from the enemy, the assault would be easily repulsed; but as soon as he opens his ears so far as to dwell upon and dally with temptation, he is already well-nigh conquered, and the strife is at the hardest. But as soon as thou hast bravely turned thy ear away, thou hast well-nigh prevailed; for this enables thee to hear the inward voice of the Word, and takes away thy deafness. Not only worldly men but also religious men are liable to this deafness, if they make the creature their idol and aim and their hearts are possessed therewith. With some their ears are stopped up with their own inventions and with the daily routine of habit with which they go through certain outward acts, learnt by means of their senses from the creatures. All this dulls a man's hearing so that he cannot apprehend the Eternal Word speaking within him, nor in any wise understand what it says.

It is true, however, that we ought to maintain the habit and practice of works of piety, though without a spirit of self-exaltation on account of them, such as prayer, or meditation, or the like, in order that our sluggish nature may be aroused into vigor, our minds raised on high and our hearts allured and kindled. But there must be no claiming to ourselves thereof, but rather our ears must be left open to listen to the whispers of the Eternal Word. Let us not be as some obstinate men who never go for-

ward, but to the day of their death remain standing on their outward customs, seeking for nothing further; and when God would say aught unto them, there is always something that gets into their ears, so that His Word cannot be heard. . .

Now when our Lord comes and puts his finger into a man's ear and touches his tongue, how eloquent will he become! O children, of this wondrous things might be said! But we will now consider the seven gifts of the Spirit, given to man through this touch whereby the ears of his mind are opened. First is given unto him the spirit of fear, which has power to rid him of all self-will, and teaches him to flee from temptation and at all times to shun unruly appetites and license. Next is given to him the spirit of charity, which makes him sweet-tempered, kind-hearted, merciful, nor ready to pass a harsh judgment on any one's conduct, but full of tolerance. Thirdly, he receives the gift of knowledge, so that he understands the meaning of his inward experience and thus learns to guide himself according to the blessed will of God. The fourth gift is Divine strength; through this gift such Divine might is imparted unto him, that, with Paul, it becomes a small and easy matter to him to do or bear all things through God who strengtheneth him. The fifth is the gift of good counsel, which all those who follow become gentle and loving. Lastly come two great gifts, understanding and the wisdom of insight, which are so sublime and glorious, that it is better to seek to experience them than to speak thereof. That our ears may thus be opened of a truth, that the Eternal Word may be heard in us, may God grant us! Amen.

SONGS OF KABIR

Translated by Rabindranath Tagore

I.

Between the poles of the conscious and the unconscious,
there has the mind made a swing;
Thereon hang all beings and all worlds, and that swing
never ceases its sway.
Millions of beings are there; the sun and the moon in their
courses are there;
Millions of ages pass, and the swing goes on.
All swing! the sky and the earth and the air and the water;
and the Lord Himself taking form;
And the sight of this has made Kabir a servant.

II.

O servant, where dost thou seek Me?
Lo! I am beside thee.
I am neither in temple nor in mosque;
I am neither in Kaaba nor in Kailash;
Neither am I in rites and ceremonies,
nor in Yoga and renunciation.
If thou art a true seeker, thou shalt at once see Me;
Thou shalt meet Me in a moment of time.
Kabir says, "O Sadhu! God is the breath of all breath."

III.

How could the love between Thee and me sever?
As the leaf of the lotus abides on the water; so Thou art
my Lord, and I am Thy servant.
As the night-bird Chakor gazes all night at the moon; so
Thou art my Lord and I am Thy servant.
From the beginning until the ending of time, there is love
between Thee and me; and how shall such love be
extinguished?
Kabir says: "As the river enters into the ocean, so my
heart touches Thee."

WISDOM THROUGH SERVICE OF THE IDEAL

By Sister Devamata

"Those men of wisdom who have realized the Truth, will teach thee supreme wisdom. Learn it by reverence, by enquiry and by humble service." The service referred to in these words of the Bhagavad-Gita is very different from what is understood as service in the world. In the world we think of service as *doing* something for another. But the service which leads to wisdom is *being* something for the sake of the Ideal. The doing is wholly secondary and follows spontaneously. It is what we are from moment to moment which determines whether we are serving God or not. The merit of spiritual service is measured by the interior state, not by the outer activity. One man may be constantly busy in performing acts of righteousness and another may appear to be inactive; but if the first man's good works are interwoven with the thought of self, and the mind of the second is completely surrendered to the Divine, the apparently inactive man is the truer servant. He is "waiting on the Lord," listening for the word of command. His concern is to keep in perfect rhythm with the cosmic motion and to work or wait as it impels him. He unites himself with God and lets God unite him with the world. His contact with outer things may be intermittent, but his touch with God is never broken. As Sri Ramakrishna tells us: "Do your work in the world with one hand and hold the Feet of the Lord with the other. When your work in the world is done, fold the Feet of the Lord to your heart with both your hands."

However sincere may be our desire to serve God, we have too little penetration to discern where or when or how. What do we know of His plan or of our part in it? What assurance have we when to speak or when to remain silent,

when to act or when to stand with folded hands? Yet there is no need of uncertainty or discouragement because of this. If we will but join ourselves with the great cosmic power, it will carry us with unerring precision to the right task at the right moment. That power is constantly in motion, ordering and fulfilling all things according to a divinely appointed plan. When we move with it, we fall naturally into our proper place and find our special work. One thing only is asked of us, — that we keep our mind single and fixed on God; for when the eye is single, we are told, then is the whole organism full of light, the light of wisdom. In every household there must be one who plans and allots the work, otherwise the different members labor at cross purposes and waste and disorder creep in everywhere. So is it in God's household. Unless all things move according to His wiser way, confusion and distress inevitably overtake both the individual life and the social order.

In the spiritual path every act of service must be preceded by an act of purification. This was the meaning of Christ's injunction that before we lay our offering on the altar, we must go and make peace with our brother. If there is anything in our heart which agitates it or chills its fervor, if there is in our mind anything which clouds or distracts it, if there is any element of selfishness in our motive, then our service will not be acceptable, however great may be our outer effort or offering. Unless we serve with a tranquil heart, a single mind, a joyous spirit, and wholly without calculation or self-mindfulness, it cannot bring us wisdom or draw us closer to the Ideal.

Another vital requisite in this higher form of service is—it must be done with the whole of ourself. In ordinary life, when we are serving any one, we do not

feel bound to empty our mind of every other thought. A mother may be sewing for her child and all the time she may be thinking of quite other matters. But this does not pass as service in the spiritual life. There can be no division of thought or energy or love. They must all go into each act of service. We must serve "with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our strength and with all our mind." That is the lesson of the widow's mites. The two small coins she gave were paltry, but because they were all she had, they became a royal offering. If we give the whole of ourself, it is a large gift, no matter how small it may seem to be. If on the other hand we have a great deal to offer, but keep something for ourselves, then our offering in God's eyes appears miserly and insignificant. It is by this that spiritual service is measured — not how much we give or how much we have to give, but whether we give the whole.

God covets the whole of our heart, because He knows that with less than that we cannot receive His gifts. They are so abundant that He wishes us to come with the very largest vessel we possess, in order that He may fill it to the brim. It hurts Him when we make it possible for Him to give us only very little. A wise teacher in India used to say that the Great Mother is so indulgent, she never molests her children or forces Herself upon them. She waits patiently until of their own free will they turn to Her. Then in rejoicing she pours out Her blessings upon them without stint. If from day to day we are not gaining in wisdom, if the results of our service to the Ideal seem small, it is because our effort is partial. We are keeping some of ourself in reserve for our own use.

There is still another essential element which must enter into all service of the Ideal. We must not serve for the

joy it brings to us, but for the joy it gives to Him. This is especially true when we serve the Ideal through some living teacher. His desire must govern us, not our own. The least thought of self-gratification destroys at once the value of our service. We must seek through it, not increase of happiness, but increase in power of denial. We may covet the privilege of serving Him directly, but He may wish us rather to serve Him indirectly by rendering service to others. We may wish to do what keeps us near; he may set for us a task which takes us far away. Thus it is told of Nityananda, the beloved disciple of the Great Teacher, Lord Gouranga, that one day the Master called him and said: "You must go to Bengal." Nityananda replied in sorrow: "How can I leave you? The body cannot live without the soul and you are my soul." Lord Gouranga rebuked him, saying: "Because you love me, you do not wish to go away; but we are not in this world to please ourselves." "Yet it breaks my heart to leave you," Nityananda protested weeping. The Lord embraced him with ineffable tenderness and said: "When you suffer in my absence, remember that I too am suffering for you."

To be willing to be "the servant of the servant of the Lord" is regarded in India as the final test of the spirit of service. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto Me" were Christ's words. When we seek to make terms with our Ideal, we lose the power to serve truly and also we deprive ourselves of the blessing which otherwise would inevitably follow. Vedic Sacred Writings are full of instances of illumination gained through unquestioning and uncalculating service. When Satyakama Gabala, it is related, came to the sage Gautama Haridrumata and asked to be taught by him, the lad was given "four hundred weak,

lean cows" and told to lead them forth to pasture. He sought out the high mountain slopes where the grazing was richest and in patient solitude he kept the drove until it numbered a thousand. When he returned, the Upanishad tells us, his face shone as one who had seen God. Again we read of a youth, Upakosala by name, who had tended his master's fires for twelve long years with such unrequited patience that even the sage's wife protested, saying to her husband: "Let not the fires themselves blame you. Teach him." But the teacher went away without having taught him. Still the boy continued to feed the fires, though sadness filled his heart. At last, it is said, the flickering tongues of flame began to instruct him, so that when the master returned he exclaimed: "Friend, your face shines as one who knows Brahman."

Service of an Ideal is a holy and sacred calling, which requires earnest and single-hearted consecration. There is no higher duty. It glorifies even the lowliest life. It makes easy the roughest path. He who undertakes it must feel as one set apart, as no longer belonging to himself. He has become the servant of the Most High. Ever mindful of this, he moves prayerfully through the activities of the day, asking: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Never will the answer fail to come if we ask in sincerity of spirit. It may not take shape in words, but we may be sure that the duty which presents itself is the one for us; and the Gita says: "Better one's own duty, though devoid of merit, than the duty of another, well performed. Better is death in following one's own duty; the duty of another is full of danger."

Let us go forth then to our daily tasks with new courage, new resolution, new love and joyous gratitude that we have a place in the Great Mother's household and may

prove a little useful to Her children. Let us never in our waywardness try to check the working of Her perfect plan, but let us strive to make ourselves eager channels through which She may act and speak and help. If we can learn to serve Her in patience and complete surrender, within our hearts will come from day to day a deeper peace, a larger joy and a growing light of wisdom.

MUNDAKA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by Swami Paramananda

SECOND MUNDAKA

PART I

I

This is the truth. As from the blazing fire burst forth thousands of sparks like unto fire, so also, gentle youth, do the various beings spring forth from the Imperishable and return thither again.

All things have their origin in the Supreme, and the ultimate aim of all life and effort is to be reunited with the Source. The play of manifestation may seem to block the consciousness of the underlying link between the human and the Divine, but sooner or later all souls must regain that consciousness.

II

That effulgent Being is without form; He exists both without and within; He is unborn; without breath and without mind; pure, higher than the High Imperishable.

Here is given the definition of the Absolute, the Unconditioned, known in the Vedic terminology as *Nirguna-Brahman*. The Absolute cannot be created, therefore He must be without form; because He is infinite, all-pervad-

ing, therefore He must be within and without all things. For the same reason He does not breathe, nor has He need of the instrument of mind for thought. The High Imperishable here refers to the Creative Energy, what is known as *Saguna-Brahman*, that is, Brahman with attributes, or the personal God; while *Nirguna-Brahman* means Brahman without attributes.

III

From Him are born the Prana (life-force), mind, all the sense organs, ether, air, fire, water, and the earth, support of all.

IV

Fire is His head, sun and moon are His eyes, the four quarters are His ears, the revealed Vedas are His words, His breath is the air, His heart is the universe, and from His feet came forth the earth. He is the inner Self of all living beings.

V

From Him comes the fire, whose fuel is the sun; from the moon come the clouds (rain); from the earth come all herbs; the male places the seed in the female, thus many beings are born from the Purusha (the Great Being).

VI

From Him come the Rik, Saman and Yajur (Vedas), the rites of initiation, all forms of sacrifice, special ceremonials, sacrificial gifts (to the priests), the appointed season (for sacrifice), the sacrificer, and all the worlds which the moon sanctifies and the sun illumines.

VII

From Him are the various Devas born, the Sadhyas (Genii), men, beasts, birds, the up-breath and the down-breath, corn and barley, austerity, faith, truth, continence, and (Scriptural) injunction.

VIII

From Him are born the seven Pranas (senses), the seven lights (of sense-perception), the seven fuels (objects of perception), the seven oblations (acts of sense-perception), and the seven lokas (seats) where the senses move; seven in each living being, residing in the heart.

IX

From Him are born all oceans, mountains and divers rivers. From Him come all herbs and juices, by which the inner self subsists, together with the gross elements.

X

That Being alone is all this—sacrifice and austerity. All is Brahman, the Highest Immortal. He who knows this (Being) dwelling in the cave of the heart, O gentle youth, cuts asunder even here the knot of ignorance.

In these verses we are given a picture of cosmic creation rising out of Brahman, the Supreme. The first manifestation is Fire (Agni), the giver of light and heat. Heat brings forth life; rain falling upon the earth causes vegetation to spring up, thus food is produced; from food comes the procreative energy. All aspects of being—gods, genii, men and beasts — are directly connected with Him. The Scriptures and all rites and ceremonies have sprung from Him. Every form has its origin in Him.

The seven senses referred to in Verse VIII are the two eyes, two ears, two nostrils and mouth. The seven *lokas* or seats represent the avenues of sense perception. The inner self in Verse IX signifies the subtle body made up of the mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*) and ego (*ahamkara*). He who realizes the all-pervading and eternal Cause of Creation as abiding in his own heart, the Life of his life, attains illumination even here in this body.

(To be continued)

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Extract of Address by Swami Paramananda

(Delivered at Commemorative Birthday Service)

The best thing a man can do is to live as much as he can like the great men who have lived for an Ideal. I have never known a truer exponent of this than Swami Vivekananda. He was a believer in doing. His great passion was to know the Truth. His motto was to know and after having known, to share it with others. There are many people who renounce the world and give themselves with tremendous zeal to spiritual things; but Swami Vivekananda used to say that there was another renunciation, that after a man has renounced worldly things, he must be willing to renounce the desire to enjoy the spiritual life just for himself. It was that which made him great in his work. He really felt for humanity, so much so that he was sometimes found weeping for the suffering of the poor and afflicted. He was not a mere believer in theories and dogmas. He was an ardent lover — a lover of Truth and a lover of mankind.

He eliminated the term charity absolutely. "Who has need of your charity?" he would ask. "You have need to be grateful that you have the opportunity to render service to your fellow-beings." In one of his poems he cries out: "O lover, give, give. You are the possessor of Infinity, do not say that you cannot give. Give, give, and ask nothing in return. He who asks anything in return, his gift dwindles into nothingness. Why think always of what you can get? Give, give as much as you can."

Unless our life coincides with what we say, our words carry very little weight; but he was that thing which he expressed in his teaching. When people attain the goal, they become one with it. As the Vedic saying is: One who knows the Supreme becomes like unto Him; and it is from

the lives of those knowers of God that we draw our inspiration. It is not the talker, the man of theory who helps us; but the one who knows.

From his boyhood Swami Vivekananda was full of deep longing for the Truth, so he went about asking this one or that one where it could be found. His heart yearned to understand the ultimate purpose of life. Finally in his restless search he was brought to Sri Ramakrishna. Like others he went expecting to find one who was learned. Sri Ramakrishna, however, was unlettered. How could he be great without learning? was his first idea; but as he came closer and closer to Him, he realized that real knowledge is not born from the study of books; it comes from entering into the inner being. In his zeal to realize the Truth, like Buddha, he took up the path of rigid austerity and self-denial; but he concluded that this also did not help one. He found that the end was reached by dropping the self; that as soon as clinging to the little self was gone, the real Truth shone forth by its own light.

A great man lives and passes out; but his thoughts and influence do not pass with him. Those who came in personal contact with Swami Vivekananda were inspired by the great ideals which he had conceived, and the practical results are to be seen in the many Homes of Service and other institutions which have grown up in connection with our work in India. Yet he sought to impress upon all his followers that no one was dependent on him, that each was himself a centre of spiritual power. He was utterly free from egotism and his perfect child-like simplicity showed his real greatness. Often he said to his disciples that he was not a master of any one, he was just one of them. Great men are always very simple. Not much can really be said of them. It is more the subtle feeling we have

about them; and that is the reason why I repeat again and again that we do not honor a great soul by speaking words of praise of him, but by making our lives like his.

The truly great ones do not come like beggars. They do not seek recognition. They do not care at all for human praise. And this is the spirit which must inspire us. Let us draw our inspiration from such examples of unselfish consecration, that we may mould our lives after theirs and serve the Truth and spread the Truth. Let us try to fill our mind with lofty aspirations, that even in our weak moments we may not forget the Ideal, but that we may rise and go on with fresh courage and new resolution however often we may fail. Let us offer our thanks to the Supreme Being for giving us such living examples to teach us how we may truly love and serve Him.

REPORT

The Vedanta Centre of Boston observed the Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna on Sunday, Feb. 22nd, by a special Service at which Swami Paramananda delivered a deeply impressive address. In the course of this he said: "Sri Ramakrishna made no claim for Himself. He went on silently, never pretending anything, never asking anything, merely living to express God, and refusing to recognize any but the voice of the Great Divine Being, Whom He called Mother—the Mother of the universe, yet also His own tender, loving, protecting Mother, upon Whom He was as dependent as a little child. He became a priest in a Temple on the Ganges and His duty was to perform the daily worship before an image of the Divine Mother. As He worshipped, that symbol became a living Presence with whom He communed constantly. Wherever He walked, whatever He did, always was Divinity present with Him. He was wholly without learning, yet even the most learned

men came to Him seeking for wisdom and guidance. Why? Because He had gained His knowledge, not through the study of books, but by touching the Fountain-head. Realization of God was a passion with Him, and He wept and struggled and sought until the light burst forth from within. His acceptance of spiritual ideals was universal and His tolerance towards all people, whatever their creed, was without bounds. Mahommedans, Christians and followers of the various Hindu sects found the vital essence of their special form of faith embodied in Him. Keshab Chunder Sen, the leader of the Brahmo-Samaj, said more than once that all that he adored in the life of Jesus or the life of Buddha he found fulfilled in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. And what was the secret of this? His absolute selflessness, His great love for mankind and His perfect simplicity. There are no intricate philosophical discussions in His teaching. His message makes direct appeal to the soul and is so simple that a child can grasp it.

We find in Him the blending of many different ideals. He realized fully the vision of unity. We may theorize about universality, but we shall not know what it means until we gain this vision. Sri Ramakrishna did not try to convert anyone. He merely came and showed what it means to live constantly with God; and by the influence which He radiated, He united the hearts of men. To-day we have need of examples of such catholicity and such vast all-embracing love, which never shrinks from any fellow-man because he feels or thinks differently. It is a benediction when we find such mighty souls living in the flesh, bringing the message of God near to us, making us feel the touch of Divinity. It is these great ones—in themselves so humble, so consecrated, so full of devotion—who destroy the distance between God and man; and because they do this, their service to humanity is incalculable."

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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The Message of the East

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Chapel of the Vedanta Centre

1 Queensberry Street, Fenway
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Swami Paramananda

of India in charge
TWELFTH SEASON—1920

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SUNDAY, 11 A. M.
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April 11th *The Joy of Spiritual Living*
April 18th *What is Character?*
April 25th *The Revealing Power of Meditation*

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"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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REINCARNATION AND IMMORTALITY

By Swami Paramananda

(Part II of Lecture on "Plato and Vedic Idealism." Continued from March Number.)

Plato reaches the greatest heights of his sublime philosophy when he considers the theme of the soul. In the *Republic* he states that the soul of man consists of three parts: the wisdom-loving, the honor-loving and the gain-loving. Of course the soul to which Plato refers here is what the Indo-Aryans call the *Jivatman* or individual soul. It is not the permanent principle in man, but only the reflex of the *Paramatan* or Real Self. The three parts in the Platonic classification correspond to the mind *(manas)*, intellect (*buddhi*) and ego (*ahamkara*) which in Vedic philosophy constitute the subtle body of man. This subtle body contains the character and determines the course of the soul after bodily death. It is not, however, the indestructible essence of man's being, although it is much less perishable than the gross physical body. Like the Indo-Aryan sages, Plato lays great emphasis on the distinction between the spiritual and the physical. "The soul is like the divine and the body is like the mortal," he declares; or to quote the words of the Bhagavad-Gita: "These bodies are perishable, but the dwellers in these bodies are eternal, indestructible and impenetrable."

Again Socrates says in *Phaedo*: "The body is a source of endless trouble to us by reason of the mere requirement of food, and also is liable to diseases which overtake and impede us in the search after truth; and by filling us full of loves and lusts and fears and fancies and idols and every sort of folly, prevents our ever having, as people say, so much as a thought. For, whence come wars and fightings and factions? Whence but from the body and the lusts of the body? For wars are occasioned by the love of money, and money has to be acquired for the sake and in the service of the body; and in consequence of all these things the time which ought to be given to philosophy is lost. Moreover, if there is time and inclination towards philosophy, yet the body introduces a turmoil and confusion and fear into the course of speculation and hinders us from seeing the truth; and all experience shows that if we would have pure knowledge of anything, we must be quit of the body, and the soul in herself must behold all things in themselves. In this present life I reckon that we make the nearest approach to knowledge when we have the least possible concern or interest in the body, and are not saturated with the bodily nature, but remain pure until the hour when God Himself is pleased to release us."

As long as we are absolutely identified with the body, we have no access to the domain of the soul. We do not gain soul vision, however, by destroying the body, but by learning to discriminate between the spiritual and the physical, the eternal and the perishable; and by transcending the shifting conditions of bodily life. "The feelings of heat, cold, pleasure, pain are born from the contact of the senses with sense objects; they are with beginning and end, transitory. Therefore endure them. He who is serene and not afflicted by these sensations, but is the same in pleasure and

pain, is fit to attain immortality." Such are the words of Sri Krishna; while Plato expresses it thus: "And thought is best when the mind is gathered into herself and none of the things trouble her—neither sounds nor sights nor pain nor any pleasure,—when she has as little as possible to do with the body and has no bodily sense or feeling, but is aspiring after being."

The Indo-Aryans do not condemn the body or regard it as an evil in itself. It becomes so, they say, when we fail to look upon it merely as an instrument and take it to be all in all. So long as we remain wholly engrossed in the physical, the soul must be like a prisoner, since it can have no freedom for true self-expression. In this Indian philosophy is in accord with Plato when he says: "What is purification but the separation of the soul from the body"; "accustoming her to collect and rally herself from the body on every side, and to dwell alone by herself as much as she can both now and hereafter, released from the bondage of the body?"

This release, however, is not accomplished by bodily death. On the contrary, mere dying will not bring it to us. If we have not realized a life apart from body while we are still in the body, death will not reveal it. Nor is this liberation from physical bondage to be gained through self-torture or practice of severe austerity. Through clear knowledge alone of our soul nature shall we attain it. Free souls, even when they are thrown into the midst of the world, are never overcome by its confusion, because they know how to separate the essential from that which is non-essential. Therefore, they are called in India *Paramahamsas* or great *(parama)* swans *(hamsas)*, because like the swan, which can take the milk out of the water when mixed with it, they intuitively discriminate between the real and the apparent, between spirit and matter.

If the soul's life is independent of the body, what is the nature of that life? The Vedic Scriptures answer: "The soul is never born, nor does it die. This Ancient One is unborn, eternal, everlasting. It is not slain even though the body is slain." And Plato's answer is: "When death attacks a man, his mortal part dies, but his immortal part retreats before death and goes away safe and indestructible. Beyond all question the soul is immortal and imperishable." When Simmias and Cebes refuse to be convinced of life after death, Socrates thus rebukes them playfully: "Like children you are afraid that the wind will really blow the soul away and disperse her when she leaves the body; especially if a man happens to die in a storm and not in a calm"; at which Cebes laughs and says: "Try and convince us as if we were afraid, Socrates, or rather, do not think that we are afraid ourselves. Perhaps there is a child within us who has these fears. Let us try and persuade him not to be afraid, as if it were a bugbear." In another passage from *Phaedo* we read: "Your favorite doctrine, Socrates, that knowledge is simply recollection, if true, also implies a previous time in which we learned that which we now recollect. But this would not be possible unless our soul was in some place before existing in the human form; here then is another argument for the soul's immortality."

There can be no doubt that Plato possessed as firm and definite a belief in pre-existence and reincarnation as the sages of India. "Our souls existed formerly apart from our bodies," he says. And again: "The souls of the dead must exist somewhere, whence they come into being again, for the soul is strong enough by nature to endure coming into being many times." "They say that the soul of man is immortal, and at one time has an end which is termed dying, and at another time is born again, but is never des-

troyed. . . The soul then being immortal, and having been born many times, and having seen all things that exist, whether in this world or the world below, has knowledge of them all; and it is no wonder that she would be able to call to remembrance all that she ever knew about virtue and about everything; for as all nature is akin and the soul has learned all things, there is no difficulty in her eliciting, or as men say, learning out of a single recollection all the rest, if a man is strenuous and does not faint; for all inquiry and all learning is but recollection." "We must have received our knowledge of all realities before we were born."

Being a true philosopher Plato realized that immortality could not extend in the direction of a future life only; it must extend back into pre-existence also. Eternity must stretch equally backward and forward, because what has no ending cannot have a beginning. This is one of the most salient points in Vedic teaching. Sri Krishna says to his disciple Arjuna: "It is not that I have never existed before, nor thou, nor all these kings. Nor is it that all of us shall cease to exist hereafter. As in this body the embodied soul passes through childhood, youth and old age, in the same manner it goes from one body to another."

How can we explain what we see to-day unless we are able to relate it with what existed yesterday? In the same way, how can we explain our present life unless we relate it with some previous existence? In the cosmic universe nothing happens by chance. There can be no effect without a definite cause, yet often we are confronted here with situations for which we can find no cause in our present life. If, however, we could penetrate the veil which hides the past, we should find the direct cause of all these happenings. The understanding of the unbroken continuity of life and of the unfailing working of just law, will remove

from our mind the idea that the destiny of man is controlled by an arbitrary Deity, or that we are the creatures of fate.

Immortality, however, is not a mere dogma or theory, which can be settled by argument or intellectual study. It is the profoundest fact of our being and can be realized only through whole-hearted consecration. One who has not the realization of it, however much he may try to fortify himself by learning and science, will prove inadequate when he faces the vital problems of the Unseen. The conviction that soul is immortal removes all sense of impatience. As soon as a man fully grasps it, he no longer feels the need to fulfill the whole purpose of life in this little span. He does not rush headlong, uneasy lest he may lose opportunities which will never come again. He knows that Eternity lies behind him and before him and all about him, and that he stands as a witness of that Eternity, as a part of that Eternity. At once he is shorn of all fear—fear of disease or death or loss. "Any man whom you see grieving at the approach of death, is after all no lover of wisdom, but a lover of body. He is also most likely a lover either of wealth or of honor or, it may be, of both," Plato declares.

Also in describing the last hours of his Master he writes: "Socrates smiled and said: 'O Simmias, how strange that is; I am not very likely to persuade other men that I do not regard my present situation as a misfortune, if I am unable to persuade you; and you will keep fancying that I am at all more troubled now than at any other time. Will you not allow that I have as much of the spirit of prophecy in me as the swans? For they, when they perceive that they must die, having sung all their life long, do then sing more than ever, rejoicing in the thought that they are about to go away to the God whose ministers they are. But men,

because they are themselves afraid of death, slanderously affirm of the swans that they sing a lament at the last, not considering that no bird sings when cold or hungry or in pain." This is the test. No man who has not the vision, who has not the fact of immortality clearly established in his heart, can remain tranquil and exalted at the hour of death or of calamity.

What do we learn from this comparative study? Do we find any fundamental differences? No, on the contrary, we realize more vividly that the deeper feelings and aspirations of the human heart are everywhere the same. If we are willing to set aside all barriers of prejudice and our personal likes and dislikes, we cannot fail to discover the underlying unity in all thought and life. When our spiritual sight is opened, we turn away from all the non-essentials; our eye becomes single; and through this singleness of vision we are able to perceive the Divine, which is the final goal of all philosophy and all the religions of the world.

THE ASCENT OF THE SOUL

Vision of Mechthild of Hackeborn

(A Benedictine Nun and Mystic, 13th Century.)

On *Esto Mihi* (Quinquagesima) Sunday, she heard the Beloved of her soul, Jesus, saying to her in the sweet whisper of love: "Wilt thou abide with Me on the mountain, these forty days and nights?" And the soul: "O how gladly, my Lord; this is what I wish, this is what I desire." Then He showed her a high mountain of wondrous greatness from the east even to the west, having seven steps by which it was ascended, and seven fountains. And, taking her up, He came to the first step, which was called the step of humility; on which was a fountain of water, washing the soul from all the sins that pride committed. After this they

ascended the second, which was called the step of meekness; with the fountain of patience, cleansing the soul from the stains which anger caused.

Then ascending to the third, which was called the step of love, there was the fountain of charity, in which the soul was washed from all the sins which hatred wrought. On this step God stayed with the soul a little while. Then the soul fell at the feet of Jesus; and forthwith that most sweet organ, the honey-sweet voice of Christ, sounded, saying: "Arise, my love; let me see thy countenance." And all the company of angels and saints, who were on the summit of the mountain, re-echoed the sweet marriage-song of love, with God and in God, as though it were one voice, so sweetly, and accompanied it with such sweet harmony, that human speech suffices not to express it.

Next they ascended the fourth, which was called the step of obedience; the fountain was of holiness, cleansing the soul from all things that disobedience did. After this they came to the fifth, which was the step of continence; and the fountain of liberality, purging the soul from all things which avarice committed, for she did not use creatures either for her own utility, or for the praise of God as she should have done.

And soon, ascending the sixth, which was called that of chastity, they came to the fountain of divine purity, purifying the soul from all the desires wherewith the flesh offended. There the soul saw the Lord and herself clothed alike in white raiment. Thence to the seventh step, which was called spiritual joy; the fountain was heavenly joy, washing the soul from all the sins of sloth; but that fountain did not flow freely like the others, but trickled by little and little, drop by drop; for no one, as long as he is in this life, can fully attain to heavenly joy; but it is as a drop, or, at least, nothing in comparison with the truth.

QUESTION

By G. O. W.

O thou that cravest shelter,
My bread and wine to share,
Wilt thou take, at My table,
Unquestioning—My fare?

When My feast lies before thee
And when no other guest
Shall share thy bread of solitude—
Will this to thee seem best?

And though from bitter vineyards
Is drawn My lonely wine,
Man, may I fill thy trembling cup
Full to the brim,—like Mine?

WHAT IS DEATH?

Lecture by Sister Devamata

Death is the counterpart of life. Every moment that we live, we are dying. Life and death are merely two sides of a something which is change, and we know that without change life on this plane cannot continue. Whenever in the created universe motion or change ceases, disintegration begins. We play and work incessantly to prevent stagnation and induce change in our system; why then should we shrink from that culminating change called death and believe it to be an enemy? In reality, unless there were something constantly dying in us, we should cease to live. Life only comes from life. Each breath means that myriads of little creatures are offering themselves up for our life's sake. Our physical organism is a perpetual altar of sacrifice, on which the fire of old life burns that like a leaping flame new life may rise. When we enter into relation with

the deeper facts of Nature, we learn to look upon death as we look upon life; and we do not recoil from the consummation of the process without which we would not live at all.

Birth here must always mean death somewhere else; because it is no more possible for existence to spring from non-existence than for a positive quantity to come from the multiplying of zeros. The first little cry of the new-born baby does not announce a new life for the soul; it merely marks its entrance into a new environment and experience. The basic units of creation are eternal. Something cannot come out of nothing or go into nothing. It follows then that whatever is always must have been and always will be. And this applies to the individual consciousness as truly as to the material elements of the body. Forms change. Chemical elements compose, decompose and recompose elsewhere. Physical forces gather and scatter, making and breaking these created things to which we cling. But as we watch this ceaseless change, there is in us a self-identity which persists.

This sense of I-ness, like all other fundamental forms of being, cannot have come from nothing, nor can it melt into nothingness. It is as indestructible as the ultimate units of force and matter. It may expand until it breaks the bonds of selfishness and becomes as vast as the universe; or it may contract to the narrow limits of this body; but always it is there. It cannot be annihilated, because it is the vital part of us—the very witness of our existence. Let us try to destroy it or to imagine ourselves as dead. We cannot. We can picture our body lying dead, but always we stand beside it looking at it. It is impossible for us to conceive of complete annihilation. It would seem therefore that belief in the indestructibility of life must constitute one of the fundamental facts of our consciousness.

Why then do we hold to life with such feverish anxiety? Because we have not yet convinced ourselves that it cannot be taken from us; and being our greatest treasure, instinctively we tighten our grasp upon it. Nor is this wrong. Nature meant us to cling to it, but not in the narrow personal sense in which we now conceive it. We think of it as something in us, which we possess. We must reverse our conception. Life is not in us. We are in it. We bathe in it. We are immersed in it. It covers us and flows over us in inexhaustible stream. It enfolds us eternally. It is the one thing from which we cannot escape, the one thing we cannot lose. Of what then shall we be afraid? Our fear of death springs from a false idea of what life is and where it is seated. We have identified it too closely with mere bodily existence. The body is only the outer garment of life. We put it on for convenience' sake, as we clothe ourselves when we go into the street. It is of the greatest use to us and we should give it the best of care; but also we should wear it lightly, ready to throw it aside like a worn-out dress when its use is over.

Some people justify their attachment to this body and environment by saying that change of form involves loss of time. But the child could as well claim that it would be an economy of time and effort for him to remain year after year in the same room at school. These various life-fragments are like different school grades. In each we have specific lessons to learn; and when they are learned, whether in few years or many, it is essential for our development that we pass on to other grades. The body we have at any moment is the product of an experience already outgrown. Our vision always stretches far beyond it; and every practice of austerity, every exercise in technique of any kind, is merely an attempt to make it respond to a

larger and larger demand. When the limit of its power of response is reached, we should be glad to exchange it for a new one better adapted to our purpose.

Mr. F. H. Pike makes plain the advantage of this in an article on "The Place of Death in Evolution" printed in the *Journal of Heredity*. "The limitations to possible change during the life-time of any individual," he writes, "preclude changes of sufficient magnitude for purposes of evolution. The death of the unmodifiable organism may be considered as an adaptation from the point of view of the species." Nor is there any waste of time in making the change. The experiences of childhood enrich our consciousness in their way quite as much as those of riper years. They are as helpful to others also. Who serves a higher purpose in a household than a little child? Who brings a deeper joy? Who teaches a truer unselfishness? No one condition or age is more productive of benefit than another, either to ourselves or to others. Each offers unique opportunities for growth and service. Therefore we have no logical ground for wishing to extend our present life or to cut it short. We should leave that to the normal course of law. Neither our unfoldment nor our happiness depends upon the number of our years, but upon the fervor of consecration with which we live them.

If we are eternally existent, then why this age-long journey from form to form? No question rises more insistently in the searching mind than this. Unfortunately where it is asked, it cannot be answered. Could we understand the answer, we would not ask the question; for the question implies an ignorance of what life is. The soul has not plunged into the finite. It is as infinite to-day as before it began this apparent round of material manifestation. Its life is just as unbroken and continuous. These successive

finite lives are like waves breaking on its surface. They cannot alter its nature. Still is it infinite and eternal. That is why our inner being gives such unwilling assent to the idea of death, and why we are so restless in this cage of the finite. All these countless lives through which we pass are solely to teach us that we are deathless, immortal, unchanging. Merely repeating it day after day and year after year, however, would not convince us. We must prove it to ourselves by living and dying many times.

To transcend death we must find, while still in this body, that inner principle of life which death cannot reach. It is useless, we know, to look for it in our body, since science tells us that all its particles are renewed in the short space of a year. That is, once in every twelve months physically we die and are reborn. We are not aware of it, because it occurs gradually and in the same environment. But what reason have we to believe that that seemingly more radical renewal which we call death may not seem as natural and may not produce as little sense of altered condition?

The mind also cannot be taken as the seat of permanent being, for it is kaleidoscopic in its endless changes. A chance meeting, the reading of a book, a single occurrence may transform it completely. The same changefulness is apparent in our moral nature, for do we not see it growing as we grow? That which possesses the quality of persistent continuity must lie beyond—in that vital centre of our being where we touch God or Pure Existence. This being so, shall we hope to cheat death by prolonging the life of this body? Or shall we escape from its haunting presence by giving ourselves to this ever-dying outer world? No; if we do not wish to be death's frequent companion, one course only is open to us—we must ally ourselves with the undying.

It is not logical to suppose that Nature would have led the individual life-unit on through eons of unfoldment to stop short with mere body consciousness or even mind consciousness. Of what use to perfect a machine and then grant neither sufficient time nor occasion to discover its true use and possibilities? The aim of life is not a perfect physical development. It is not the accumulation of learning, nor yet the development of a lofty standard of virtue. The ultimate end of life is to reveal to man the vital fact of his deathlessness. The instant that he realizes this, rivalry, selfishness, all human weakness and struggle, will vanish; because they rest upon the erroneous belief that life and its opportunities are limited.

We need more than one body, however, to teach us this lesson. We must outlive many bodies before we are convinced beyond all doubt that we partake of an imperishable, universal existence. So long as we consider ourselves isolated entities, each with rival interests and a little life of his own, death will press hard upon us, casting its shadow over our brightest joy. But when we realize the solidarity of life and interest throughout the universe, death will lose its power and sting. It is the little self which lives and dies. If we can forget that and lift our thought to a larger sphere, even while here in this body we shall live in the infinite and eternal.

Instead of recoiling from death, let us recognize its utility. Let us be glad that all these material things, which impede our free march onward, are destined to wear out and fall away. We should be too weighted with matter, were this not so. Change and decay create spaces for expansion of life. They make possible a richer fruition. The dead leaves of the autumn blanket and fertilize the ground for the new growth of the spring. So, as one bodily life

falls, it passes on to the next one a store of garnered experience and understanding.

For the wise man death means a resurrection, not a burial. He sees in it the promise of a more efficient bodily instrument to work with, of added attainment, of a wider contact with Reality. Like an eager explorer, he sets out joyfully on each new lap in the journey which is leading him steadily out of the realm of death into the full consciousness of life everlasting.

MAN'S DUAL NATURE

From the Hermes Trismegistus

(Passage in a "Sermon to Asclepius." Egyptian Teaching. Date unknown.)

Ye earth-born folk, why have ye given up yourselves to Death, while yet ye have the power of sharing Deathlessness? Repent, O ye, who walk with Error arm in arm and make of Ignorance the sharer of your board; get ye from out the light of Darkness, and take your part in Deathlessness, forsake Destruction!

* * *

It is for reasons such as these, Asclepius, man is a mighty wonder,—an animal meet for our worship and for our respect.

For he doth pass into God's nature, as though himself were God. He thinketh little of the part of human nature in him, from confidence in the divineness of his other part.

How much more happy is the blend of human nature than all the rest! Joined to the Gods by his cognate divinity, a man looks down upon the part of him by means of which he's common with the Earth.

The rest of things to which he knows he's kin, by reason of the heavenly order in him, he binds unto himself with bonds of love; and thus he turns his gaze to Heaven.

So, then, man hath his place in the more blessed station of the Midst; so that he loves those below himself, and in his turn is loved by those above.

Heaven seems not too high for him; for it is measured by the wisdom of his mind as though it were quite near.

No darkness of the air obstructs the penetration of his mind. No density of earth impedes his work. No depth of water blunts his sight.

Asclepius:—What, then, Thrice-greatest one, has caused it that man should be planted in the world, and should not pass his life in highest happiness in that part (of the universe) where there is God?

Trismegistus:—Rightly thou questionest, O (my) Asclepius! The Lord and Maker of all things, whom we call rightly God, when from Himself He made the second, the Visible and Sensible (the Cosmos),—I call him sensible not that he hath sensation in himself, but that he is the object of the senses of those who see;—when, then, He made him first, but second to Himself, and that he seemed to Him (most) fair, as one filled to the full with goodness of all things, He fell in love with him as being part of His Divinity.

Accordingly that he was so mighty and so fair, He willed that some one else should have the power to contemplate the one He had made from Himself. And thereon He made man,—the imitator of His Reason and His Love.

And so when He perceived that the "essential" (man) could not be lover of all things, unless He clothed him in a cosmic carapace, He shut him in within a house of body; and ordered it that all men should be so; from either nature making him a single blend and fair-proportioned mixture.

Therefore hath He made man of soul and body; that is, of an eternal and a mortal nature; so that an animal thus

blended can content his dual origin—admire and worship things in Heaven, and cultivate and govern things on Earth.

No other thing ensouled, of gods or animals, can do this thing, save man alone. 'Tis in the admiration, adoration, (and) the praise of men, and in their acts of worship, that Heaven and Heaven's hosts find their delight.

Some then, though they be very few, endowed with the Pure Mind, have been entrusted with the sacred charge of contemplating Heaven.

Whereas those men who, from the two-fold blending of their nature, have not yet withdrawn their inner reason from their body's mass, are appointed for the study of the elements and all that is below them.

Thus man's an animal; yet not indeed less potent in that he's partly mortal, but rather doth he seem to be all the more fit and efficacious for reaching Certain Reason, since he has had mortality bestowed on him as well.

For it is plain he could not have sustained the strain of both, unless he had been formed out of both natures, so that he could possess the powers of cultivating earthly things and loving Heaven.

He knows himself; he knows the world as well. So that he recollects indeed what is convenient to his own parts. He calls to mind what he must use, that they may be of service to himself; giving the greatest praise and thanks to God, His image reverencing,—not ignorant that he is too God's image, the second one; for that there are two images of God—Cosmos and man.

So that it comes to pass that, since man's is a single structure,—in that part (of him) which doth consist of Soul, and Sense, of Spirit, and of Reason, he's divine; so that he seems to have the power to mount from as it were the higher elements into the Heaven.

But in his cosmic part, which is composed of fire, and water, and of air, he stayeth mortal on the Earth—lest he should leave all things committed to his care forsaken and bereft.

Thus human kind is made in one part deathless, and in the other part subject to death while in a body.

Now of that dual nature,—that is to say of man,—there is a chief capacity. And that is piety, which goodness follows after. And this capacity then, and then only, seems to be perfected, if it be fortified with the virtue of despising all desires for alien things.

For alien from every part of kinship with the Gods are all things on the Earth, whatever are possessed from bodily desires,—to which we rightly give the name "possessions," in that they are not born with us, but later on begin to be possessed by us; wherefore we call them by the name possessions.

All such things, then, are alien from man,—even his body. So that we can despise not only what we long for, but also that from which the vice of longing comes to us.

For just as far as the increase of reason leads our soul, so far one should be man; in order that by contemplating the Divine, one should look down upon and disregard the mortal part, which hath been joined to him through the necessity of helping the lower world. . .

Man, the being thus created and composed, and to such ministry and service set by Highest God; man, by his keeping suitably the world in proper order, and by his piously adoring God, in both becomingly and suitably obeying God's Good Will; man being such as this, with what reward think'st thou he should be recompensed? . . .

That this may be the pleasure of God's Love, such is our prayer for you, devoted ones.

In other words, may He, when ye have served your time, and have put off the world's restraint, and freed yourselves from deathly bonds, restore you pure and holy to the nature of your Higher Self, that is of the Divine!

MUNDAKA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by Swami Paramananda

SECOND MUNDAKA

PART II

I

Shining, well-seated in the heart, moving in the heart, is the Great Being, the Support of all... In Him all is fixed, whatsoever moves, breathes and winks. Know Him who is both being and non-being, who is beyond the reach of human understanding, the highest and most adorable One.

The Supreme Lord abides in every heart and from Him alone springs all activity. Nothing can exist apart from Him. In Him the whole universe is centred. He is both formful and formless. He is present in all the forms we see, yet we cannot lay our hands on any form and say "This is God." He is both personal and impersonal. He is the manifested and the unmanifested (being and non-being). He is the final goal of all effort.

II

That which is effulgent, subtler than the subtlest, on which all worlds and those who dwell in them rest, that is the imperishable Brahman; that is Prana (breath), that is speech and mind. That is the true, that is the Immortal. That mark is to be hit. Hit it, O gentle youth!

III

Having taken the Upanishad, the great weapon, as the bow; and having fixed in it the arrow, sharpened by stead-

fast devotion; then having drawn it with the mind fixed on the Supreme, hit that mark—the Imperishable, O gentle youth!

IV

The sacred word Om is the bow, the Atman (Self) is the arrow, Brahman (the Supreme) is said to be the mark. That mark should be hit by one who is watchful and self-possessed. Then as the arrow becomes one with the mark, so will he become one with the Supreme.

We have here a poetic and archaic picture of the process of realizing the Supreme. The study of the Upanishads is abstract. They deal with the Infinite. But the sages who give the teaching contained in them try by similes to relate these abstract truths with our life here. The aim of all our striving is the Absolute and Eternal; careful study of the Scriptures, constant practice of meditation, and untiring devotion serve as the means by which we attain it.

In the next verse the teacher makes it still more definite. *Om*, the *Logos* or Word that was in the beginning, is taken as the bow, the soul of man is the arrow and the Infinite is the mark. To hit the mark the mind must be wholly collected. An illustration of this is given in the Mahabharata. Arjuna and his kinsmen, it is told, were called to a contest in archery. The target was the eye of a fish raised on a high pole. Their teacher asked each one in turn, "What do you see?" And they all described the whole fish. But when Arjuna was asked, he replied: "I see only the eye of the fish;" and he alone hit it. If our mind is divided or scattered we cannot meditate; and without the power of meditation we cannot gain direct perception of the Imperishable. When we do gain this perception what happens? We become one with the Supreme. The knower of God partakes of His nature.

V

In Him are fixed the heaven, the earth, the sky and the mind with all the senses. Know Him to be the Self of all, and abandon all vain words. He is the bridge to immortality.

There can be no form of manifested life apart from Him. When we understand this and realize Him as the essence of our being, we lose attachment for mortal things and cease to lay so much stress on lower knowledge. "Vain words" here signifies theoretical speculation, book knowledge, everything in fact which fosters our egotism or pride and does not lead to ultimate Truth. Thus knowledge of God serves as the bridge over which we cross from the mortal to the immortal.

VI

Where the nerves of the body meet together as the spokes in the nave of a wheel, there the Atman dwells, variously manifested. Meditate upon that Atman as Om. May there be no obstacle in thy crossing to the other side of darkness!

The seat of this Divine Principle in us is the heart. This inner Principle or soul is in itself unchanging, but it appears to take the modifications of the mind, such as joy, grief, anger, jealousy, hatred, love, etc. Thus it manifests variously. Since *Om* is the ultimate Name of the Supreme and *Atman* is identical with the Supreme, by meditating on *Om* as the *Atman* we direct our thoughts toward the highest and thus pass beyond the darkness of ignorance.

VII

He who is all-knowing and all-perceiving, to whom belongs all the glory of the universe, that Self dwells in the heavenly city of Brahman (the heart).

VIII

He takes the form of mind and becomes the ruler of the body and the senses. Being in the heart, He sustains the body by food. The wise, who realize this, behold Him shining forth, immortal and all-blissful.

IX

When He is seen, who is both high and low, the fetters of the heart are broken, all doubts are cut asunder, and all Karma (bondage of work) is destroyed.

When the vision of Him, Who is all there is, high or low, subtle or gross, vast or small, dawns within us, the heart is at once freed from the fetters of attachment, egotism and every form of selfishness; all the perplexities and doubts of the mind are cleared away. This does not happen when we gain intellectual knowledge only. The more we read and analyze, the more confused and entangled the mind becomes. But when we behold God directly, at once all the darkness of doubt disappears in the glory of His self-effulgent light, as the night goes when the morning comes. That brightness no one can define. As long as we need someone to prove Truth to us, we have not found it. But when His light shines in our heart, Truth becomes self-evident. Without this light the outside world will always be full of shadows for us; but when that light is found, the whole universe glows with its radiance. Then all the chains of Karma—past, present and future—are shattered, and the soul enjoys perfect freedom.

X

That stainless indivisible Brahman, pure, light of all lights, dwells in the innermost golden sheath (the core of the heart.) Thus do the knowers of Self know Him.

XI

The sun does not shine there, nor the moon, nor the stars,

nor do these lightnings shine there, much less this fire. When He shines, everything shines after Him; by His light all is lighted.

This same verse also appears in the Katha-Upanishad, Part V, v. 15.

XII

That immortal Brahman is before, that Brahman is behind, that Brahman is to the right and to the left; that Brahman extends above and below. The Supreme Brahman alone is the whole universe.

(To be continued)

REPORT

Swami Paramananda left for the West on February 29th. He stopped in Cincinnati for four days, during which he delivered three afternoon and three evening lectures. A gentleman there, who met and heard the Swami for the first time, writes of his visit: "The Swami spoke at the New Thought Temple on Monday afternoon and gave five lectures at the Hotel Gibson. The Assembly Room of the hotel was filled or nearly filled at every meeting. He stood at the extreme end of the room and chairs were placed close up to him. Thursday was a rainy disagreeable day, but people came out both in the afternoon and in the evening just the same. A great many attended all the lectures; and I know many felt as I did, reluctant to let him go. His message of spiritual truth went straight to the hearts of his listeners. I sat in the rear of the room and was in a favorable position to feel the pulse of the audience. I assure you it was a spiritual feast for hungry, starved souls; and the people lost themselves as they sat silently drinking in the truths which he gave them. He aroused the devotional

side of his hearers and lifted them to heights of spiritual insight and understanding that were wholly new to them. He did not seek any oratorical effect; it was what was transmitted through his simplicity, his gentleness, his poise and his spiritualized nature."

Another letter reads: "I cannot tell you what interesting and enlightening addresses the Swami has been giving us. He has had a most faithful and appreciative following, so much so that he feels encouraged to come back to us." From Cincinnati the Swami went to Louisville for three days, holding in all five meetings while there. He then continued his journey to California, reached Los Angeles on March 11th, and began his season there on the 14th.

* * * *

The Reports of the Relief Work carried on by the Ramakrishna Mission in India, which reach us, show over how large an area their loving service now spreads. A recent letter from Swami Dhyanananda tells of active efforts to relieve the famine-stricken inhabitants in a district of Burma. A ravaging flood added to a serious pest of caterpillars had completely destroyed the crops, thus reducing the population to a state of complete starvation. For several months the Mission fed 850 families daily, besides distributing over 8000 pounds of rice and other articles of food to sufferers requiring only momentary aid. More than 1000 sick were cared for, and seeds were distributed to cultivators. Clothes were supplied wherever needed, and in some cases money was given. We are sure that added to this material succor, the workers carried to each heart new courage and energy; for it is characteristic of the Mission's labors everywhere that they bring to those whom they help, a larger outlook on life and a new sense of its opportunities.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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Swami Paramananda

of India in charge
TWELFTH SEASON—1920

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May 16th *Faith, Belief and Vision*
May 23rd *Pre-existence and Life Hereafter*
May 30th *Occultism and Its Dangers*

VESPER SERVICE SUNDAY 5 P. M.
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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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THE ETERNAL PRESENCE

By Swami Paramananda

(Given at the Sunday Vesper Service)

Outer conditions and circumstances have very little influence upon us when we have the grasp of eternal things. When the Eternal Presence becomes a reality to us, we find our strength and inspiration even in the midst of the greatest sorrow. Not only can we meet all difficulties with calmness, but we have even a sense of joyousness as we face them. Instead of being thwarted by them, we come to regard them as blessings. The power of the Spirit always rules over matter. If through the meditative life we gain higher understanding and learn to manifest our spiritual nature, material things will affect us very little. All the small undesirable elements which now disturb us will vanish and this world will become heavenly.

Who makes the world heavenly? Human beings. Through their conduct and superior understanding they can change the whole atmosphere of the world. If, instead of seeing only the material and changeable, we will begin to feel more related to the eternal and unchanging, we shall awaken to a new sphere of consciousness. Yet although it may seem new, it was always there, for it is eternally existent. In the hour of loneliness or perplexity, if we can be con-

scious of that great Presence, we shall never feel lost. Those who cultivate such habits are never disconnected from the Source, and they become invincible. Evil does not overcome them, they overcome evil.

When we reach this state, we possess such superior strength that even the most aggressive person feels powerless before us. We cannot convince a man or turn him from his weakness by merely arguing with him or fighting him, but often we completely transform him by showing him something higher. We see this in the lives of truly great men. They are full of love and brotherly sympathy and compassion, and, above all, of the spirit of the Infinite; the small things naturally have no importance for them, so they are able to meet their fellow-men on a higher plane and they call out what is noblest in them.

When we evolve this consciousness, not only do we deal a death-blow to our own unhappiness, but also we remove a part of the world's unhappiness, because we strike another note. To be able to do this, however, we must go deep into our own nature. It is not a matter of talking and theorizing; it is a matter of finding. And where? Where can we gain access to Divinity except in our own soul? How can we make acquaintance with our inner powers except within ourselves? As soon as we learn to go deep down into our own inner nature, we begin to be imbued with a new understanding. A more expanded consciousness dawns in our heart, and it is through this that we are freed from all petty feelings and limitations. All the ethical lessons we learn through books or Scriptures, about love and charity and service, never seem to us really true and never become an inherent part of our daily life until we gain this larger consciousness. But when we have gained it, we do not fear death even;

because we overcome death through a new consciousness of life, a life which is undying. We have no more fear of anything, because we have found that One Who stands supreme and that One is our own.

This consciousness of the Presence of Divinity or God is not a matter of name and form. It makes no difference by what name we call Him. It is an inner awakening, a spiritual conception. When we attain it, we drop all dispute regarding the nature of God or the nature of the soul. We believe in God because we know Him. We call Him all-loving, because we have proved His all-loving nature in our own soul. We speak of Him as almighty and infinite, because we have found Him to be so. Only when our spiritual ideal has thus become a reality, do we become religious. We do not become religious by merely belonging to a creed or church, however lofty or noble. It is by finding this Reality within us. We can never convince any one else regarding our spiritual faith until we have convinced ourselves. And when we are absolutely convinced, we shall not need to go about preaching our faith; we shall do our preaching by our silent actions. Our conduct, our life, our every thought, our very presence will preach. Example teaches much more than words. The greatest lessons we learn about self-control are not from books, but from some one who has subdued his passions and lower propensities and shows complete mastery of himself. That living example makes an impression and we carry that impression with us.

It is a matter of living and to live Truth we must find it directly for ourselves. That is the purpose of our spiritual study and practice. Devotion, prayer, meditation, philosophic discrimination, all help us towards our spiritual upliftment that we may have direct perception of

our Ideal. If we do not accomplish that, all our efforts are vain. That is, if we lose sight of the fundamental fact that realization must be our aim and goal, we may go on adding one superficial effort to another, but they will bring very small results. The spirit of Reality must be kept alive in us. We must hold fast to the sense of the Eternal Presence. But no one can do this for us. We must do it for ourselves. Let us try in all earnestness. We owe it to ourselves, for the soul's welfare should be the foremost consideration of every mortal. If we fail in this, we are failing in the fundamental principle of life, as well as in the first duty towards ourselves and towards our fellow-men.

Let us strive anew to consecrate all our thoughts and feelings to Him. He is the Eternal among all fleeting things. He is the consciousness in all conscious beings. He is the One in the midst of many. He it is Who fulfillest the desires of every heart. He is the Source and Sustainer of all, the Giver of all good, the Bestower of all blessedness. May He grant us steadfast devotion and kindle in our soul the consciousness of His loving Presence, that we may never forget Him or fail to abide by His Will. May He remove from our hearts all harshness, all egotism, all discordant and alien feelings, that we may live in Him in harmony, love and peace. May His Peace be upon us and upon all living beings.

Let thine all be filled out of Him, albeit His whole cannot be contained by thine. He will fill thee utterly, and superabound in Himself. If the vessel fails not, the oil is enough. As long as thou hast the vessel, He ceases not to pour in the oil; and when thou hast not a vessel more, still has He more oil. —*Hugh of St. Victor, 12th century.*

ECSTASY

By Harindranath Chattopadhyaya

(A new Hindu poet, only 19 years of age, a Bengalee by birth, but writing directly in English.)

O make my burning blood Thy sparkling wine
For Thee to drink at pleasure and rejoice!
Transmute my flesh into a song divine
For Thee at will to voice!

Transform my tears into a silver shower,
To mingle with Thy rivers clear and white.
O! make my laughter an enchanted flower
To blossom in Thy light.

Fashion a banner out of my desire,
And float it on Thy Palace, secret King!
Cleanse Thou my life with rich, relentless fire
Of endless suffering!

O! make each word I speak a crystal prayer,
Each thought I think, a deathless Temple-flame,
Strike on the anvil of my heart's despair
The solace of Thy Name.

The Loved One is not concealed from thee,
O thou obstruction round about thy soul!
Thou thyself hast become thine own veil,
Standing obdurate in scepticism's path.

—Mirza Khan.

Thou that wouldst find the Lost One, lose thyself
For nought but self divides thyself from Him,
Ask ye how I o'erpassed the dreary void?
One little step beyond myself was all.

—Akhlaq-i-Jalali.

HOW GOD MAY BE SEEN

From the Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna

M.—Sir, how may one fix one's mind upon God?

Sri Ramakrishna—To that end one must chant without ceasing the Name of God and His great attributes. One ought always to mix in the company of holy men. One must go among the Lord's devotees or those who have given up the things of this world for the sake of the Lord. It is, no doubt, hard to fix one's mind upon God in the midst of the world's cares and anxieties. Therefore one must go into solitude now and then in order to meditate upon Him. In the first stage of one's life in the Spirit, one cannot do without solitude.

When plants are young they have need of a hedge about them for their protection; else goats and cows will eat them up. The mind, the retired corner and the forest are the three places of meditation. One should also practise discrimination between the Real (God) and the unreal (the phenomenal world). It is thus that one will be able to shake off one's attachment to things of the world, to sensual pleasures, wealth, fame, power.

The tortoise moveth about in water in quest of food; where, thinkest thou, abideth her mind? On the bank of the river, to be sure, where her eggs are laid. In the same way thou mayest go about doing thy work in the world, but take good care that thy mind always resteth upon the Hallowed Feet of the Lord.

Suppose thou enterest into the world without acquiring by spiritual practice a love for the Lord. Then, depend upon it, thou wilt get entangled. Misfortune, grief and the various ills of the flesh will make thee lose the balance of thy mind. The more thou wilt throw thyself into the affairs of the world and trouble thyself with

worldly matters, the more will be thy attachment to the world.

Rub thy hand with oil if thou wishest to break the jack-fruit open; otherwise the milky exudation from the fruit will stick to thy hands. First get the oil of devotion, anoint thy hand and then deal with the affairs of the world. But to this end solitude is the one thing needful. Suppose thou wantest to make butter. Let the curds be set in a place beyond the reach of other people. The curds will not stand if disturbed. The next step for thee is to churn, seated in a quiet place.

The world may be likened to water and the mind to milk. Pure milk once mixed in water cannot be got back into the pure state again. Its purity is kept, if it is first turned into butter and then placed in water. Let then the milk of thy mind be turned into the butter of Divine Love by means of religious practices in solitude. The butter will never get mixed with the water but will come up to the surface. Thy mind likewise will remain unattached to the world. Though in the world it will not be of the world. True knowledge of devotion being attained, the mind will now stand apart from the world — unattached to it. Along with this, practise discrimination; lust and gold are unreal, the one reality is God.

M.—Sir, is it possible to see God?

Sri Ramakrishna—Certainly. These are some of the means by which one can see God: going from time to time into solitude; chanting His names and His attributes; discrimination; earnest prayer, with a yearning for the Lord.

M.—Sir, what state of the mind leadeth up to God-vision?

Sri Ramakrishna—Cry unto the Lord with a yearning

heart and then thou shalt see Him. The rosy light of the dawn cometh before the rising sun. Likewise is a longing and yearning heart the sign of the God-vision that cometh after.

Thou mayst see God if thy love for Him is as strong as these three attachments put together: the attachment of a worldly man to things of the world, the attachment of the mother to her child, and the attachment of a chaste and devoted wife to her husband. The thing is, in order to see God one must love Him, heart and soul.

REALIZATION

By S. E. Waldo

Behind everything that we see or know or think or even imagine is that one infinite ocean of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, that alone makes possible the known universe. A tiny drop of that ocean, as it were, gets caught in the network of time, space and causation and forms this world of experience. We can all see the world around us, the world of endless variety and ceaseless change. No one dreams of denying that this world is a fact in our consciousness. Having then this world clearly before us, the problem arises, how explain the existence of this marvellous universe. In the West, man has set to work with infinite patience to seek the solution of this problem by examining the seen, the tangible; thus endeavouring by careful study to reach an understanding of the origin of creation. Every branch of study has been laboriously pursued. The so-called sciences are a numerous family and the discoveries made in each have been most wonderful. In all these diverse researches and in all the divergent conclusions reached there has yet been a certain harmony. On one thing every student is agreed. Under-

lying all that man can see or know is what is called law. This law is manifested in different ways, and man has not yet begun to grasp its working; he has only come to perceive its existence.

The first great law, under which all the rest may be grouped, is the law of causation, the law that every effect must have a cause. The human brain is utterly unable to form any concept of an effect that had no cause, or of a cause without an effect. This endless and beginingless sequence conditions all man's thinking; and the great German philosopher Kant showed clearly that it was inherent in the very nature of man's thinking capacity. So nearly allied to this inevitable idea of causation as practically to form a trinity with it, come the ideas of space and time. As little as we can conceive an effect without a cause, just as little can we conceive any effect that occurs nowhere and at no time. As soon as the human mind tries to form such a concept, it finds out the impossibility of doing it; and any state of existence beyond this apparently impassible barrier seems to the ordinary thinker an impossible dream.

Yet we have the record of many great souls, in many different lands and of widely diverse creeds, who unhesitatingly claim to have arrived at a state which transcended the hard and fast laws that govern the working of man's mind. Of course objection can be taken and the assertion made that these statements are not true. Once an eminent archaeologist remarked that the fact that one fossil remain had been found by one man in any given locality, outweighed in value the testimony of a million people who might have walked there before him and not seen any such thing. He said that the trained eye and the disciplined mind and the learning of the student of archaeology

gave him such an immense advantage over the ordinary observer, that it was almost like comparing the faculties of a blind man with those of one of unimpaired power of vision.

If this can be so forcibly asserted of the realm of the seen, how much more must it be true of the realm of mind! The testimony from so many sources as to a state above and beyond ordinary sense perception, is at least worthy of consideration. In different countries and in different centuries, men who never even heard of each other bear testimony to having reached that state. It has been called by many names, usually being regarded as union with the Divine or God. The Hindus call it by a higher name, they call it *realisation*. By this they mean, not a vision of a God either without or within who is separate from the soul having that vision, but the awareness of the human soul that it is itself that Divinity; that there is but one Soul or Self and that all that appears as variety is still that one Self seen through name and form, or in other words, through limitation.

This realization is a matter of individual experience. All that any one, however great, can do for us, is to point the way or give such clues to the path as will guide us in the search; but every human being has to tread the road, step by step, just as he has to breathe for himself, eat for himself, live and die for himself. The mightiest power conceivable cannot give us the desired result. The wildest dream of science never imagines that a way can be devised for one human being to breathe for another. Neither can one soul realize for another. But the soul which has reached the goal itself can be of the greatest possible help to another who is still struggling towards it.

To aid man in this struggle, the Vedanta divides human

society into four prominent groups and provides for each a special method or Yoga. The end in view being the same in every case, these Yogas are but different paths to the same goal. The distinction between them is not at all a hard and fast line of demarcation, for they all have many points in common. It is merely that special stress is laid upon one particular side in each Yoga, leaving the other sides subordinate. The word itself means "joining" or union. In Karma-Yoga this union is between the worker and the whole of humanity. In Raja-Yoga it is union between the lower and higher self. In Bhakti-Yoga it is union between the worshipper and the God of love; while in Jnana-Yoga it is the union of all existence.

Every one of these Yogas tells us to hold fast to reason, never to deliver our reason blindfolded into the hands of any authority whatsoever. These Yogas also tell us that our effort must be to enlarge our reason until it goes beyond its ordinary limits and becomes what, for want of a better word, we have to call inspiration. This latter, to be genuine, must be the development of reason and to a certain degree agree with it, not contradict it. We may be sure that what contradicts reason is not true inspiration, no matter what its source.

In offering these various methods, Vedanta is careful never to become dogmatic. It leaves great latitude in the details of practice, believing it best that these be filled out by each one according to his special need. What it seeks to present is a universal basis for realization — a basis so broad that building on it, man may not merely reach "Heaven," but attain to a far greater height and realize his oneness with the Divine or the great underlying Principle of all that exists. With such a goal before him, what effort ought not man be willing to make!

THE LIGHT UNCHANGEABLE

From the Confessions of St. Augustine. 4th Century.

And being thence admonished to return to myself, I entered even into my inward self, Thou being my Guide: and able I was for Thou wert become my Helper. And I entered and beheld with the eye of my soul (such as it was) above the same eye of my soul, above my mind, the Light Unchangeable. Not this ordinary light, which all flesh may look upon; nor as it were a greater of the same kind, as though the brightness of this should be manifold brighter and with its greatness take up all space. Not such was this light, but other, yea, far other from all these. Nor was it above my soul, as oil is above water, nor yet as heaven above earth: but above to my soul, because It made me; and I below It, because I was made by It. He that knows the Truth knows what that Light is; and he that knows It, knows eternity. Love knoweth It. O Truth Who art Eternity! and Love Who art Truth! and Eternity Who art Love! Thou art my God, to Thee do I sigh night and day.

When I first knew Thee, Thou liftedst me up, that I might see there was what I might see, and that I was not yet such as to see. And Thou didst beat back the weakness of my sight, streaming forth Thy beams of light upon me most strongly; and I trembled with love and awe; and I perceived myself to be far off from Thee, in the region of unlikeness, as if I heard this Thy voice from on high: "I am the food of grown men; grow, and thou shalt feed upon Me; nor shalt thou convert Me, like the food of thy flesh, unto thee, but thou shalt be converted unto Me." . . . And I heard, as the heart heareth; nor had I room to doubt; and I should sooner doubt that I live than that Truth is not, which is clearly seen being understood by those things which are made.

And I beheld the other things below Thee; and I perceived that they neither altogether are, nor altogether are not; for they are, since they are from Thee, but are not because they are not what Thou art. For that truly is which remains unchangeably. It is good then for me to hold fast unto God; for if I remain not in Him, I cannot in myself; but He remaining in Himself, reneweth all things. . . .

But after Thou hadst soothed my head, unknown to me, and closed mine eyes that they should not behold vanity, I ceased somewhat of my former self, and my frenzy was lulled to sleep; and I awoke in Thee, and saw Thee infinite, but in another way, and this sight was not derived from the flesh. . . Thus by degrees, I passed from bodies to the soul, which through the bodily senses perceives; and thence to its inward faculty, to which the bodily senses represent things external, whitherto reaches the faculties of beasts; thence again to the reasoning faculty, to which what is received from the senses of the body is referred to be judged. This finding itself also to be in me a thing variable, raised itself up to its own understanding, and drew away my thoughts from the power of habit, withdrawing itself from those troops of contradictory phantasms; that so it might find what that light was, whereby it was bedewed, when, without all doubting, it cried out, "That the unchangeable was to be preferred to the changeable;" whence also it knew that Unchangeable, which, unless it had in some way known, it had had no sure ground to prefer it to the changeable. And thus with the flash of one trembling glance it arrived at THAT WHICH IS. And then I saw Thy invisible things understood by the things which are made. But I could not fix my gaze thereon; and my infirmity being struck back, I

was thrown again on my wonted habits, carrying along with me only a loving memory thereof, and a longing for what I had, as it were, perceived the odor of, but was not yet able to feed on.

MUNDAKA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by Swami Paramananda

(Continued from April Number)

THIRD MUNDAKA

PART I

I

Two inseparable companions of golden plumage perch on the same tree. One of them eats the pleasing fruit (of the tree), the other looks on as a witness without eating.

II

On the same tree (of life) man sits, drowned in grief, overpowered by his own helplessness. But when he beholds the other, the lord, majestic and full of glory, then his grief passes away.

The two birds represent the higher Self and the lower self. The lower self is absorbed in tasting the sweet and bitter fruits of this life, and imagines it cannot escape from the reactions caused by them. When, however, in its struggle it looks up to that other transcendent Self and perceives how alike they are, it realizes its true nature. The *Jiva* or individual soul is merely the reflex of the *Paramatman* or Supreme Soul. The apparent man has its root in the real man. As soon as we realize this, the two become one. It is the sense of ego in us which divides and separates; and whenever we separate ourselves from our Divine part, we feel a lack. When, however, we discover our relation with the inexhaustible Source, all our selfish appetites which now drive us from branch to branch of the

tree of life will vanish and no cause for grief will remain.

III

When the sun perceives that Being of golden radiance, the Creator, the Lord, the Source of Brahma (creative power), then that knower, having cast off all sin and merit, and being stainless, attains the highest oneness (with the Supreme).

In the Indo-Aryan conception, as sin is an iron chain, so merit can be a golden chain, which binds us through self-righteousness and love of name and fame. To gain ultimate union, one must transcend the consciousness of both sin and merit.

IV

He is the Prana (life-force) animating all living beings. He who knows this becomes truly wise and not merely a talker. He delights in the Self (Atman), he finds his highest happiness in the Self, and he is a true performer of duty. Verily he is the foremost of the knowers of Brahman (the Supreme).

When a man beholds God, he gains true wisdom and no longer finds satisfaction in vain discussion and speculation. His joy and recreation are found in the Infinite. Because his mind and will are completely unified with the cosmic mind and will, he fulfills the law spontaneously and hence never fails in his duty.

V

This pure and effulgent Self, which dwells within the body and is realized by sinless Sannyasins (the spiritually consecrated), can be attained by truthfulness, self-subjugation, true knowledge and the steadfast practice of chastity.

VI

Truth alone conquers, not untruth. By Truth the spiritual path is widened, that path by which the Seers, who

are free from all desires, travel to the highest abode of Truth.

VII

That shines forth, immeasurable, divine and inconceivable, subtler than the subtlest, more distant than the distant, yet here (in tha body). Residing in the cave of the heart, so it is seen by true Seers.

VIII

He is not perceived by the eye, nor by speech, nor by the other senses, nor by austerities, nor by Karma (sacrifice and good deeds); when the mind is purified by the serene light of knowledge, then alone does the Seer perceive the indivisible Brahman by means of meditation.

IX

This subtle Self is to be realized by a pure heart as seated there where the Prana (life-force) has entered in five-fold form. The mind of every creature is interwoven with the senses. When it is purified, then the Self shines forth of itself.

The five different forms through which the vital energy manifests in the body are *Prana, Apana, Samana, Vyana* and *Udhana.* These represent in-breathing, out-breathing, equalizing the breath, circulating the breath, and up-breathing. By these various actions of the vital energy different nerve currents are controlled. This has been elaborately worked out in the Indian Yoga system. *Prana* governs respiration; *Apana,* the organs of excretion; *Samana,* digestion; *Vyana,* the general nerve currents of the body, and *Udhana,* speech. The senses also are often spoken of in the Upanishads as *Pranas,* because they are the avenues through which the vital energy connects the outer world with the inner. The sense impressions gained through these channels color all our mental activities; and not until

the mind is freed from these obscuring impressions can the soul manifest its true nature.

X

Whatever worlds the man of purified mind covets, and whatever objects he desires, he obtains those worlds and those objects. Therefore, let the man who longs for his spiritual welfare, worship that one who knows the Self.

When a man's mind is purified, he realizes his oneness with the cosmic life and will desire only what is in harmony with the cosmic will; therefore, his desires fulfill themselves by the natural course of law. Purity of mind is most quickly gained by "worshipping," that is, by revering and serving those who possess the higher knowledge.

(To be concluded in the July number)

THE THEORY OF INDIAN MUSIC

By Swami Sharvananda

The music of India, like all her fine arts, has a lofty philosophy behind it. It is based on the philosophy of creation. Creation or Nature as we perceive it originates, the Vedas declare, from vibrations of the primal energy. "Whatever there is in the universe is evolved from *Prana* and vibrates in *Prana*," it is said in the Katha-Upanishad. This energy in the first manifested form, at the beginning of creation, appears as subtle force *(Prana)* and subtle matter or ether *(Akasa)*. Subsequently the subtle produces the gross by a change in the vibration of matter. So we find that there are three planes of existence, — gross, subtle and causal. Behind this gross world of sense perception there is the subtle world of finer force and matter, of emotions and ideas; and behind the differentiated subtle is the undifferentiated causal world, where all the possibilities of the subtle and gross worlds lie in unitary potential form. . .

Our sound-experience is caused by the vibration of matter. Although modern science holds that sound is experienced only when a certain kind of vibration in the form of wave is carried to the tympanum through some medium like air or water; yet it does not prove that the sound *is* the wave of these mediums. Moreover, experimental psychology shows that sound experience can be produced simply by stimulating the aural centres of the brain, without the activity of aural nerves and tympanum. On the other hand, all the different schools of Indian philosophy concurrently hold that sound is the quality of the vibratory ether; wherever the ether is in vibration, there also is sound. And as creation first proceeds from the vibration of ether, so there is produced the original sound — the Sound of all sounds; but this is a subtle sound, too subtle to be audible to the ordinary human ear. Furthermore when etheric matter evolves grosser and grosser states of existence, along with each state and each object there is produced a sound-counterpart. The sound and the equivalent object are denoted in Sanskrit philology by the words *Sabda* and *Artha*, which again are signified in philosophical language by the words *Nama* and *Rupa* (name and form). For a particular *Sadba* there is a particular natural *Artha* or object and *vice-versa*. So the relation between *Sadba* and *Artha*, or *Nama* and *Rupa*, is inseparable.

The undifferentiated causal sound, coeval with the causal world, is known to the Hindu Philosophy as *Om* or *Pranava*. It is called the *Sabda-Brahman* or the sound symbol of the Impersonal God, owing to its universal, all-inclusive nature. But this causal sound becomes differentiated and manifests in grosser and grosser form in the various stages of evolution. Thus, the philosophy of the Vedas holds that there is not only a sound and a melody for each and every aspect

of Nature, but there is also a grand symphony throughout the whole of Nature. Probably this symphony of Nature was characterized by Pythagoras as the "music of the spheres." This music becomes quite audible in a highly concentrated state of the human mind known to the Yogins as *Dhyana.*

The charm of music is patent to all, but very few know the real secret and explanation of this charm. Nowhere was the rationale of music sought and explained so scientifically as was done in India. The whole theory of Indian music is based upon this attunement of the human mind and voice to the music of Nature. Some Western musicians have been startled to find that "to such an extent is music an accompaniment of existence in India, that every hour of the day and season of the year has its own melody."

Therein lies the whole secret and the whole glory of Indian music. The very seven notes of the gamut were adopted from the seven kinds of sounds found in Nature. These seven notes are *Sharaja, Rishava, Gandhara, Madhyama, Panchama, Dhayvata, Nishada,* and they are usually denoted by their abbreviated forms, Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha and Ni. These notes were first discovered in India and were subsequently introduced into Europe under the names Do, Re, Me, Fa, Sol, La, Si. Sir W. W. Hunter says in his Indian Gazetteer: (p. 223) "A regular system of notation was worked out before the age of Panini (prior to the 6th Century B. C.) and seven notes were designated by their initial letters. The notation passed from the Brahmans through the Persians to Arabia and was thence introduced into European music by Guido d'Arezzo at the beginning of the eleventh century." Professor Weber also corroborates the above statement in his *Indian Literature.*

The origin of these notes, as described by Narada, is as follows: "The peacock crows in *Sharaja*, the cow bellows in *Rishava*, the sheep bleats in *Gandhara*, the swan cries in *Madhyama*, the cuckoo sings in *Panchama* during the spring season, the horse neighs in *Dhayvata* and the elephant squeals in *Nishada*." Some say *Rishava* is in the call of the sky-lark and *Dhayvata* in the croaking of the frog. These notes are found also, sometimes conjointly, sometimes severally, in the thundering of the heavens, the roaring of the sea, the blowing of the wind, the flowing of the river, in the falling cataract, the gushing stream and in other sounds of Nature. These seven principal tones contain again twenty-two subtones and semitones known as *Sruti*. Thus according to Hindu music the whole octave contains thirty tones. These sub-tones mark the grace notes of an air and enrich its chromatic modulations by the process known as *Gamaka* and *Murchana*.

According to the author of the *Sangeetadamodara*, music in India originated with the Sama-Veda; but other writers say that the great God Mahadeva is the originator of Hindu music. But whatever may have been its origin, there is no doubt that it sprang from a deep penetration into the inner nature of things. The modes of music are divided into six main classes called Ragas and thirty-six sub-classes known as Raginees, each Raga having six Raginees. The relation between the Ragas and the Raginees is something like that between a genus and a species. Again by permutation and combination of these thirty-six Raginees there arise innumerable Raginees.

The distinct individuality of each Raga or Raginee is marked not only by the principal key notes that are used, but also by the method of the use; that is, by the duration and accentuation of the notes. The duration and accentua-

tion, with the help of some grace-notes, sometimes change the entire aspect of an air; and the greatness and skill of a musician lie in the right expression of these. Though tones or *swaras* constitute the body of an air, yet time gives it its very soul. In Indian music time is called *Tala*. What is metre to poetry, *Tala* is to music. The time is marked by pulses (*Matra*) or beats, in a set of measures (*Pada*); and generally in Indian music a group of four measures or bars is taken together. . . If one closely observes the movement of the pulses in the different Talas, one is sure to be struck by its similarity with the macrocosmic movements of the stellar worlds or with the microcosmic vibrations of atoms and molecules.

In conclusion it may be pointed out that the whole system of Indian music is developed along the line of *melody*, in contradistinction to Western music, which is based on *harmony*. The primary aim of Indian music is to awaken the nobler emotions of the human soul and attune it to the Cosmic Life. The effect of melody is the negation of the many and the affirmation of the One, whereas harmony accepts the many and enjoys them in the light of the One. Each has its own value. But it must be said that the seekers of the Supreme Unity will enjoy melody more than harmony, though the latter is pleasing to the enjoyers of the many.

Truly has it been said that the music of a nation marks its inherent tendency. Plato observed that no nation can change its music without having its political institutions changed. The spiritual, introspective nature of the Indian mind is marked by its music. When an Indian air is sung, you feel a deep hush stealing into your soul, you forget all your surroundings and your mind is transported to a state of profound ecstasy. While Western music is like the gushing of a mountain stream, leaping from rock to rock,

from gorge to gorge, filling the firmament with sonal exuberance; the Indian music is like the great Indian rivers, flowing like broad seas, noiseless, serene and potent to sweep all before them. Its charm is irresistible and all-absorbing.

The different Ragas and Raginees prescribed to be sung in different parts of the day and in different seasons, have such a wonderful effect upon the mind that a good musician with their help can really understand the music of Nature. For instance, if an expert musician, whose ears have been trained to *swaras*, concentrates his mind on the sound of a flowing river, or on the rustling of the wind, he will be able to detect the tunes in which Nature sings through these phenomena. He may or may not read "the book in the running brook," but he is sure to hear the song in it.

When the rosy shafts of the dawn bring out a new freshness in Nature and the delight of her soul is poured forth by all the winged creatures of the wood, that is the time for the Ragas *Bhairava* and *Hindol*, or for Raginees like *Vibhasha*, *Bhairavi*, etc. As these melodies are heard, the mood of early morning is re-echoed in the listener's heart. Again when the scorching summer sun has reached the noontide meridian and all Nature seems on fire, that is the time for the Raga *Deepaka*. Its effect is so terrible that, it is generally believed, if it is properly sung, it will produce flames from the body of the singer and even ignite anything at hand which is combustible.

In the rainy season, when the thundering monsoon clouds burst with their torrential floods and the parched earth speaks her gratitude by an answering fragrance, that is the time for the *Megha Mallar*. *Sri Raga* is to be sung in the evening and it produces the sense of joyous relaxation

which one marks in Nature at the sunset hour. Hearing it, a sweet feeling of serenity spreads over the soul. Introspection always deepens under the influence of this Raga. Again in the midnight stillness, when Nature is wrapped in meditation, the Raga *Malkosh* or the Raginees *Vibhash, Hambira,* should be sung.

Each of these Ragas and Raginees is specially adapted to evoke a particular kind of passion or feeling. According to Sanskrit rhetoric there are nine kinds of passions or feelings *(Rasas).* These are *Sringar* (love), *Hasya* (laughter), *Karuna* (pity), *Roudra* (ferocity), *Veera* (heroism), *Bhayanaka* (terror), *Vibhatsa* (disgust), *Adbhuta* (wonder) and *Shanta* (tranquillity). Each Raga or Raginee awakens one of these *Rasas* or feelings in the mind. Thus we see that Hindu music not only takes account of the fundamental feelings of the human mind, but strives to attune them with their macrocosmic counterparts in the Universal Mind. This, it declares, should be the goal of all real music.

(Extract taken from a lecture delivered in Colombo, Ceylon, and published in the "Vedanta Kesari," Madras.)

REPORT

Swami Paramananda closed his season in Los Angeles on April 25th. During the seven weeks he spent there he delivered a lecture in a public hall every Sunday morning at 11, and held a devotional Service in the rooms of The Vedanta Centre every Sunday evening at 8. Besides these there were classes on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. On Wednesday of each week he delivered a lecture at Long Beach. The attendance was excellent and every effort was made to keep the Swami longer. He has now begun his return journey, but as he will stop at various places along the way, it is not yet certain just when he will reach Boston.

A recent letter from one of the faithful group of students in Geneva, Switzerland, tells us that they have been holding their regular weekly meetings and doing their utmost to foster interest in the teaching. Geneva has become a world centre in these post-war days and it is believed that much could be done there. They are urging the Swami therefore to resume his former custom of a summer season of lectures in Europe. Letters from friends in other places abroad are making the same appeal.

* * * * * *

The record of work at The Vedanta Centre of Boston during the month of April showed a substantial increase in attendance at the Services and classes; also every Sunday brought an unusual number of strangers to the Centre. During Holy Week devotional Services were held on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons at 5, as well as on Good Friday. The Good Friday Service was felt to be especially impressive. Following a short instruction there was a series of meditations on the deeper lessons of the Crucifixion, the intervals between being filled with music. Despite a severe storm the Chapel was well filled. On Easter Sunday also there was an excellent attendance and the Service seemed to call forth a deep response from the hearts of all present. Special music had been written for the occasion and contributed much to the spirit of exalted joy which pervaded the Service.

The schedule of meetings will remain unchanged for the month of May and Sister Devamata will continue to conduct all Services and classes until the Swami's return.

A new booklet by Swami Paramananda entitled "The Secret of Right Activity" has just come from press. It is an especially valuable pocket companion for those who are forced to live their spiritual life in the midst of exacting worldly occupations. (35 cents. Postage 2 cents).

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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TWELFTH SEASON—1920

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SUNDAY, 11 A. M.
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June 13th *Secret of Happiness*
June 20th *Mastery of the Mind*
June 27th *Power of Silence*

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Public cordially invited to both Services.

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"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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CONTROL OF BODY AND MIND

Class Talk by Swami Paramananda

For all observation we need to have a fitting instrument. Just as to observe the stars and planets one needs a good telescope; similarly, when we are to observe the spiritual aspect of our being, the instrument which we use must be the best possible one. The idea of *Tapas* or mortification, that is, giving discipline to the body and mind, is to prepare them for this end. Instead of allowing the body to rebel when we try to use it, we must make it obey us, just as a well-trained horse obeys the driver. We must bring it to a state of such perfect harmony with our spiritual aspiration that it will never rebel, but will work in accordance with our highest purpose in life. At present our body, mind and senses are very like untrained horses. We must learn to control them, therefore, and prove that we have the power to guide them instead of being dragged hither and thither by them. We have been made to believe that if we do not give certain comforts to the body, it will go to pieces. Such thoughts have led us to indulge the body until it has become like a spoiled child. Whatever it demands, we give without discrimination. So also with our mind and senses. It is for us to decide whether we shall yield to every impulse of our physical organism or hold it in check. This is the first step in giving discipline.

Discipline does not mean that we are to mortify or torture our flesh indiscriminately; it means that we must begin to act thoughtfully and teach our body and mind to be reasonable. We make ourselves slaves so long as we depend on certain fixed conditions; and our first lesson in the spiritual life consists in learning to be physically independent. When we have a comfortable bed to lie on and good food to eat, we enjoy them; but if we are not comfortable or well fed, we are not distressed. So through certain practices we teach our body to obey and to endure. Endurance, both mental and physical, is one of the greatest things to cultivate, and this can be done only by practice. In India these practices are carried almost to an extreme. A person who is sensitive to cold gradually trains his body so that no amount of cold can affect him. In the Himalayas Yogis are to be found sitting in the snow with scarcely any covering on their body. Sensitiveness increases according to our lack of control and also it can be decreased. What we want to do is to bring our body into a balanced state — neither dull, nor over-sensitive, but able to rise above conditions.

The purpose of austerity or self-discipline is not to gain merit or occult powers, but to acquire mastery over all our forces. As we do this, however, powers will come. When a man has learned to control his speech, for instance, whatever he says is bound to come true. This power is gained through silence, by controlling the energy which now is being wasted by unnecessary speech. The truly wise ones do not speak unless by their words they can accomplish something. If a person is indrawn and speaks seldom, every one pays attention to him; but the person who is constantly talking, no one heeds his words. What a blessing it is when we have the power to govern our

speech; for so much harm is done by unnecessary words. How often things are better left unsaid! Therefore if we can practise silence even a little, we shall have greater power. When a man learns to regulate his speech and thus avoid waste of energy, his intuition grows keener, his voice becomes stronger, and his language gains a new beauty.

The practice of posture also aids us in mastering our forces. When we can hold ourselves steadily in one position for any length of time even at the cost of a little discomfort, it will help us to overcome nervous tension and our body will grow more pliable. Even the long-standing habits of stooping shoulders, hollow chest, crooked spine, and all rigidity or abnormal muscular contraction can be straightened out through the right use of postures. As we learn these, we gradually rise above the body and realize that our comfort or discomfort is not dependent on place or surroundings. Regulating the body also increases physical health and strength. *Tapas* or mortification means the practice of balance. Excess in any direction is detrimental to our progress; both greediness and slothfulness in mind and body must be checked.

Indulgence means weakness. Why should we indulge the body, if by so doing we do not benefit ourselves? The purpose of denial or discipline is to make the physical instrument a perfect one. Whatever we do requires some discipline, otherwise our actions cannot be effective. Sitting in silence, controlling all involuntary motions, trying to bring our body and mind into a state of harmony and equilibrium, and holding our mind on one special thought: this is called practice. We must carry on this practice regularly. No matter how much heaviness we may feel, we must devote a fixed time every day to it; and our deter-

mination should be to increase rather than decrease the amount of time. In this way very soon we shall gain a hold on our physical and mental nature.

Daily study of the Sacred Books also has great value. We may not fully grasp their meaning at first; but if we make it a habit to study them faithfully and keep it up as a regular duty, in time we shall begin to understand them. As there are certain duties which are necessary for the up-keep of our physical body, similarly there are certain duties which are necessary for the sustenance of our spiritual nature. Now we may not find spiritual things interesting, because we have become buried in our physical consciousness; but regular study, together with the practice of self-control and concentration, will keep our mind turned in the right direction and revive our spiritual nature. The mind, as long as it is uncontrolled, is like a mad elephant. We may bathe it, but at once it rolls in the dust and makes itself unclean again. Therefore we must use many means to hold the mind, and study is one of these.

Study also brings a new association. If we study the lives of great souls with concentration, it enables us to enjoy their company. It seems to bring us into actual contact with them, as if we lived with them and heard their voices. Such is the value of spiritual study, when we keep it up persistently. We must not do it fancifully, reading a few verses to-day if we feel like it and perhaps tomorrow giving it up because we do not feel like it. We need firm determination and this is where the value of discipline comes in. We do not listen to the promptings of our body and mind, but we follow the impulses of our higher nature — choosing the path which our discrimination points out and following it with whole-hearted devotion.

The mind may not enjoy this, because it has formed the habit of lighter interests. The ordinary mind finds more pleasure in reading a novel than in sitting and studying the Bible or the Bhagavad-Gita. Yet one who wishes to sustain his spiritual nature has no other course than to cultivate such a habit until it becomes second nature and he begins to love it. In India no one will eat until he has gone through his spiritual practices, because there they believe that these practices are the most vital thing in life. Through them man attains liberation. He learns how he should live; how he may abide by the law and subdue his lower nature; how he may make his body a fitting instrument; and how he may increase the power of the mind to reflect, for the mind has reflecting power and it reflects according to our tendencies and desires.

When a person has gathered up his forces and proved himself the master, no one can stand in his way. No one can prevent his free action. Let us therefore cast off whatever binds us or leads us to show weakness, and let us strive to cultivate that which will uplift us and awaken our spiritual consciousness, so that in time this body and mind may work in perfect harmony with the Supreme Will. But this cannot be accomplished by calculation or by mere intellectual effort. It is to be attained through the silent practice of meditation. We must lose the sense that outward things are of primary importance and recognize that that is truly important which we gain by living close to the heart of God; and we must learn to be indrawn and to cultivate a deeper mode of thinking. The subjective is so full of vivid interest, it can never create dullness. When we imagine that the meditative life will disturb our outer life, it shows that we have not as yet experienced it; for when we gain access to it, our whole being is filled with new power and spiritual energy.

THE LIFE OF TRUTH

From the Letters of Isaac Penington
(A Quaker Mystic of England. 17th Century)

The Lord God preserve you, and give you to watch against and to feel victory and dominion over all that is contrary to Him in any of you; and which stands in the way of your fellowship with Him, and of your joy and peace in Him. . .

They that seek the kingdom of heaven and the righteousness thereof in the first place, have other things also added: but they that neglect the kingdom and are unfaithful to Truth, seeking the world before it, the hand of the Lord goes forth against them and they many times miss of that also of the world which they seek and labor for.

If there be not a great care and watchfulness, there may be a neglecting to hear the voice of the Shepherd and to walk with Him; and then such miss of the pastures of life and of the pure rest, joy, peace, which He administers to others. . . .

Oh! feel the redeeming arm in thine own heart, and know the love which stretcheth it forth, and take heed of being prejudiced against its inward visitations to thee; for there is that near thee, which would darken thee and keep the seed of life in bondage. I know there is that in thee which pants and is not satisfied, somewhat that thirsts after the living waters. The Spirit of the Lord saith, Come, come to the fountain of eternal life; drink and live.

The path of life is living; and thy feet must be guided into it and walk faithfully in it to the end, if thou wilt sit down in God's eternal rest and peace.

I have had of late some deep and serious thoughts concerning thee, and a sense of thee, as between the Lord and my own soul; yet I have not had anything to signify

or express to thee till this morning. But somewhat this morning sprang up in my heart, sweetly and freshly, which I had pure drawings to impart to thee.

There was a quick sense of thee upon my heart, and in that sense this cry was in me;— Oh! that thou wert acquainted with the pure, eternal power of the Lord, and mightest feel His outstretched arm revealed in thee, and witness the faith which stands in that power; and in that faith believe and wait for what God is doing, and willing to do, in and for His children.

The Lord so enlighten and guide thee, that thou mayest obtain the desires of thy heart; for I really believe thy desire is after holiness and after communion with the Father and the Son and with the saints in light. Oh! that thou mayest be led into the true, pure light of life, that there thou mayest enjoy what in this kind thou desirest.

Ah! little dost thou know the loving-kindness of the Lord in visiting thee with His Truth, in giving thee a sense beyond others, in so tenderly drawing and inviting thy heart; or what this will come to, if thou faithfully give up to, hearken to and follow Him.

Oh! wait on the Lord, fear before Him, pray for His fear in the upright breathings (which are not of thy spirit's forming, but of His pure begetting;) that thou mayest be led by Him out of that wisdom which entangles into that innocency, simplicity and precious childishness, in which the Father appears to the soul, to break the bonds and snares of iniquity.

Then shall ye live the life of Truth, and no life but the life of Truth, and dwell and walk in the Truth, than which, there is no greater joy, delight, or peace to be desired or enjoyed.

HEALTH AND HEALING

Lecture by Sister Devamata

Health means wholeness, and it resides permanently at that point of our nature where we are in unveiled contact with the Whole. It is not something which we gain or lose. It is an inherent quality of our being. Therefore somewhere within us we must be whole to-day. The schools of teaching which recognize this and tell their followers to affirm "I am perfect," "I am divine," are defective in their results because they do not make plain what is divine and perfect. They fail to define the "I," for which this may be claimed. Such statements to be effective cannot be mere theoretical affirmations. They must be based on a clear conviction rooted in our own experience.

When we set out to discover the seat of sickness or ill-health, soon we find ourselves baffled and bewildered. In our physical organism there is not one fixed point on which we can fasten. We see matter rushing round and out as in a whirlpool. Three minutes suffice for the blood to make the circuit of the system, depositing new material and carrying away the old; each breath takes in and casts out; food is consumed, assimilated and thrown off. The change of material particles is incessant. Granted then that some deleterious substance enter the system, how can it create any lasting effect? It seems impossible. Yet we cannot deny that conditions which we call chronic or acute disease exist. There must be elsewhere then a matrix which continues to mould the new material into the pattern of the old; but it cannot be in the body, since the whole of body is nothing but a continuously flowing stream of matter. It must lie deeper. When we realize this, anxiety regarding our physical condition lessens.

The idea that "mind governs matter" carries us little

further; for what is mind? A finer form of matter, and more mobile because it is finer; just as gas is more evasive and volatile than earth or water. The incalculably subtle material of thought moves and changes with a velocity which we cannot measure. Our states of mind are far more difficult to maintain than our bodily states. They vary from moment to moment. Of itself, also, mind has no operative force; it is only an instrument. Behind it stands the thinking agent. And here we lay our hand upon the real seat of our various ailments.

The sense of I-ness is the matrix which gives form to all the in-flowing matter. "I am weak," "I am ill," "I am miserable" — these are the thought-moulds which perpetuate our discomforts and sufferings. If we can break our identification with these bodily conditions, Nature will be left free to work; and by her wisely elaborated system of continuous cosmic circulation, she will wear down and efface the most hardened condition. All her methods are constructive and curative. She cannot be suppressed. She converts even decay and death into new forms of life. It is we who defeat her efforts by this habit of false identification. When our sense of I-ness is vigorously diverted to a new association, we lose all consciousness of illness; and if the impression is strong enough, the physical disability is permanently wiped out. How many cases are on record of men and women who were believed to be hopeless cripples, yet who in a panic ran long distances without cane or crutch and perhaps never again needed either.

Herein lies the secret of all so-called miraculous cures. Intense faith by one violent blow snaps the thought connection with the physical affliction and establishes a new association, through which the system is opened to a surging current of restorative energy. All cures would be instantan-

eous, if the vital energy applied were sufficient in quantity and pure and subtle enough in quality, and also if the one seeking help were open enough to receive the full force of the spiritual current. A Christ charged with an inexhaustible store of vital energy and able to sweep away lethargy or doubt by the power of His God-filled personality has no need to heal by installments. One touch, one word, one moment's contact suffices.

The efficacy of certain affirmations finds its explanation in this same principle of shifting the thought association. So long as the attention is fixed on the constructive idea embodied in the affirmation, the patient co-operates with Nature and the suffering or discomfort is relieved; but the result is in exact proportion to the knowledge and conviction of the patient. If these are superficial, the cure will not go far below the surface and the disturbance will reassert itself. Denial is a still more ineffective means. To deny anything in reality affirms its existence and strengthens our association with it. In order to deny it we must turn our attention towards it, and attention is the connecting link between our consciousness and the objective universe. Also denial acts artificially, like a narcotic or a stimulant; and whenever we try to force Nature, sooner or later she springs back into her proper course and we have to begin again. We may declare over and over that dynamite will not explode, but strike it and the explosion takes place just the same.

The wise method is to understand that there are different planes of being, and that we do not escape from the conditions of a lower plane by remaining there and denying them; or by trying to apply the principle belonging to a higher plane. We escape from them only by lifting our self-identity to the plane where that higher principle acts

spontaneously without any coercion on our part. Thus, to assert "I am divine and perfect" in order to make our human nature and imperfections more comfortable cannot bring a lasting result, because our method has no foundation in Truth. If, on the contrary, by our daily living we strive to manifest the latent Divinity within us, the Divine power, as it acquires full expression, will accomplish its own ends. In reality, health, wholeness and holiness are merely different forms of one root word and are intended to convey the same root idea. The "w" in wholeness was added later to emphasize a peculiarity in pronunciation.

We cannot attain real health or wholeness until we reach a final unit of existence. So long as we are conscious of a "not-I," which threatens our health or happiness or comfort, we are not secure. We may lift ourselves for a time above bodily conditions; but when some unexpected blow strikes on our consciousness, disturbing our balance, the sense of unity or wholeness within us will be lost again. Complete immunity from these disintegrating attacks can be found in our spiritual nature only. As the ego is the seat of disease; so is the soul the seat of health. In that are stored all the curative forces of man's being, and until they are roused to action no true healing can take place. It is indeed the essential wholeness in us which makes healing possible.

Health cannot be applied from the outside. Even an ordinary thought cannot be given to another. The other person may try to take our thought, but without meaning to do so he will completely transform it by his interpretation. Still less can we transmit wholeness. All we can do is to divert the attention long enough to let the soul power within act without hindrance. Health, like salvation, must be worked out by the man himself — and from

within. The nearer he draws to his soul life, the more truly healthy will he be. But we cannot connect ourselves with that fountainhead of strength and wholeness so long as we believe our happiness or usefulness or well-being depends on any material condition! Our vital concern must not be to have a strong body, but to be in touch with Spirit. That inner spiritual power can convert even a feeble body into a pulsing centre of force, whereas without it the strongest body is only a useless mass of flesh.

The men who have done the mightiest work in the world have not been physically the strongest. How many have had to push against serious bodily disabilities, yet they have rendered heroic service to mankind. Also in times of crisis we know how a fragile little woman will rise to a point of endurance which will put to shame the trained athlete. Have we not all watched beside sick beds and borne strains which seemed far beyond our strength to bear? All the power, the health and the strength we have come from the soul; and they will flow through a frail body with as great a force as through the strongest, if we will but open ourselves with unwavering faith. And as they flow they will heal. We block the channel by the ready attention we pay to every little ache and pain. This destroys our sense of proportion and lends reality to conditions which, if left to themselves, would disappear. The best way to deal with them is to think about something else; if they will not be forgotten, then they must be handled in the way which appeals most strongly to our reason and individual conviction.

There are certain forms of bodily disturbance which are more difficult to reach because they are Karmic — that is, they are brought over from previous lives and their root lies in our character. They stubbornly resist all forms of

treatment and the only way by which we can remove them is to work upon certain defects in our inner nature. These are truly our "original sins," because they have originated with us. God did not give them to us; we have picked them up along the way, as a boy picks up shining pebbles and weights his pockets until they tear out. We all have certain deep-lying tendencies which neutralize our best endeavour, and we cannot be at peace until these are eliminated. But dwelling upon them or even "treating" them will not efface them. We must choose an object of meditation which will cultivate a counteracting habit of mind; and by keeping our thought diligently turned towards that, we shall gradually remove the weakness. This is what the healer tries to do for us; but he can only offer the suggestion. The real work must be done by ourselves.

Uneven distribution of *Prana* or vital energy is a frequent cause of our physical disorders. If too much *Prana* is centred at one point we have inflammation or congestion. If there is too little, the depleted part ceases to function or functions haltingly. Again, constant restless activity of mind or body draws an over-supply of energy into the grey matter of the organism and the fine wires of the nervous system, becoming overheated, give way, causing a distressing break-down. A corresponding excess of passivity is then prescribed, and finally Nature by a laborious effort restores the equilibrium. Through habitual overeating an undue supply of life-force is concentrated in the alimentary system, and digestive troubles are sure to follow. An excess of brain work draws too much *Prana* to the head and serious disturbances begin there.

There are special breathing exercises coupled with concentration which are designed to stimulate and regulate the circulation of the life-force; but they must be practised

only under the direction of a teacher. Each one of us, however, by the evenness of his thought, the regularity of his life and by steadfastness of devotion in his spiritual practices can keep the vital forces flowing in a strong, even, revivifying current. If a healer is abundantly supplied with *Prana*, he may transmit a portion of it and quicken the vitality of the patient; but unless the patient can continue to keep it circulating, the treatment will prove of momentary benefit only.

Nature meant us to live a balanced life. Every part of the organism should be brought into daily activity. A properly regulated routine for each day should include a certain amount of manual labor, a certain amount of intellectual work and an equal amount of spiritual work. Upon this last we should lay special stress, because our soul-life has had the least place in our past habit and has greatest need of being fostered. It is because it has been allowed to starve that we are not in a healthy condition. Yet whenever any disorder appears in the system, at once we swing our whole attention back on the body and begin to pamper it. We lie in bed, abandon our usual routine and cut ourselves off from the association which would keep alive our soul consciousness. By degrees we induce a spiritual aenemia, which undermines both our health and our morale. If, on the contrary, we were more fervent and regular in our religious practices, more eager to remain in contact with those who sustain our spiritual rather than our bodily consciousness, very soon we should discover that there is no limit to the supply of strength and power and life at our command, granted that we make ourselves receptive to it.

We should give all necessary care to our body, but only that it may be a more efficient vehicle to carry us to our

goal. Our primary aim must be to reach God — whether we go in a whole body or a crippled body is secondary. When we behold His face and feel the benediction of His Presence, the body and the things of the body will be forgotten. And this is the main purpose of health. If we long for a strong body in order to enjoy more fully bodily pleasures and pursuits, health will not be a blessing. Rather will it sow the seeds of future disorders by creating a new sense slavery. If on the contrary we court health in order that we may turn all our thought towards higher things, then have we the benefits of health at every hour of whole-hearted prayer or meditation.

Sturdy muscles, well-functioning organs, quiet nerves are not the full measure of our strength. Only when our entire being is gathered up and brought into union with Godhead shall we be made truly whole; and only as that unity persists, shall we continue whole. Christ offered the basic cure for all ills, whether of flesh or thought, when He told us that we must love the Lord our God with all our heart and all our mind and all our strength and all our soul; because love alone will bind us close to the Source of life. More than a thousand years before, Sri Krishna prescribed a like remedy in these words: "He who worketh for Me (the Lord) has Me for his highest goal; is devoted to Me, is free from selfish attachment and beareth enmity towards no creature, he entereth into Me"; that is, he attains the full realization of wholeness and perfection.

Pain is in some wise the artist of the world, which creates us, fashions us, sculptures us, and with the fine edge of a pitiless chisel. It limits the overflowing life; and that which remains, stronger and more exquisite, enriched by its very loss, draws thence the gift of a higher being.

—Michelet.

THE SPIRIT WITHIN

Selection from the Samhita

(A dialogue between the Sage Astavakra and King Janaka.)

King Janaka said:—

I dwell in my inner Self. Silence reigns on the empty throne of speech. The mist of anxieties and cares has melted away from the firmament of my thought. The glow of health and the depression of disease do not affect me. I breathe the serene atmosphere of peace, which permeates my whole being.

My heart throbs in unison with the Infinite! No longer can the magic wonders of color, the melodious notes of music, the fragrance of flowers absorb all my affection. The beauties of the world of sight and sound have lost their hold on my mind. He who is still struggling on the path, looks forward to the moment when he will reach the goal; but he who has seen the Spirit within and has realized his absolute unity with that Spirit, can no longer look upon himself as apart from that Spirit. Longing and desire vanish when this goal is reached. Then man enjoys the calm satisfaction of attainment.

My Spirit lives in freedom, unstained by the desire to dominate or possess. The Spirit within stands not in need of purification. Never is it impatient, perturbed, or in anguish.

I dwell in the serenity of my inner Spirit. The beautiful does not call forth my praise, nor the unbeautiful my disdain. Loss of person or property does not cast me down. My understanding has transcended the sphere of utility and inutility. To my mind, harm is no longer harmful. I am a stranger to the transports of elation.

The consciousness of dual existence is the source of the ills of all beings. One and one remedy only is there for

these ills — realization of the Spirit as joy and purity and serene intelligence. All else is vain show.

Rare indeed is the enjoyment of spiritual health, born of a sense of the fleeting value of this phenomenal world.

Uncertain is the duration of human life. Uncertain is the duration of heaven and earth. Certain only is the pure conscious Spirit within.

I am pure consciousness. . . . Neither am I this body nor is this body mine. I desired to live in a body, hence my bondage.

In the shoreless ocean of Spirit the bubbles of (bodily) life rise, sparkle for a time and break.

In the boundless ocean of Spirit the universe forms and dissolves, but I am formless. I live in peace.

The limitless, formless Spirit is subject to no state or condition. Thus without thirst and without attachment I live in peace.

I am one with Absolute Truth. The world is but a magic show. It cannot bind me by the loveliness or unloveliness of its objects.

O Spirit all-wonderful! Adoration to that imperishable Spirit within (Atman), which survives the destruction of all things, from the Builder of the universe to the blade of grass.

O Spirit all-wonderful! Adoration to that Spirit within, which is uncreate though with a body. It comes from nowhere, it goes nowhere, yet it exists everywhere.

O Spirit all-wonderful! Adoration to that Spirit within. None can surpass the Spirit in its power to bear the weight of the universe untouched by bodily existence.

O Spirit all-wonderful. Naught has it, yet has it all that can be imagined or described. Adoration to that Spirit within!

THE TRUE SAGE

From the Teachings of Chuang-Tzu, 4th Century B.C.

Yeh Ch'ueh asked Wang I, saying, "Do you know for certain that all things are subjectively the same?"

"How can I know?" answered Wang I. "Do you know what you do not know?"

"How can I know?" replied Yeh Ch'ueh. "But can then nothing be known?"

"How can I know?" said Wang I. "Nevertheless, I will try to tell you. How can it be known that what I call knowing is not really not knowing, and that what I call not knowing is not really knowing? Now I would ask you this. If a man sleeps in a damp place, he gets lumbago and dies. But how about an eel? And living up in a tree is precarious and trying to the nerves; — but how about monkeys? Of the man, the eel, and the monkey, whose habitat is the right one, absolutely? Human beings feed on flesh, deer on grass, centipedes on snakes, owls and crows on mice. Of these four, whose is the right taste, absolutely? In my opinion the standard of human virtue, and of positive and negative, is so obscured that it is impossible to actually know it as such."

"If you then," asked Yeh Ch'ueh, "do not know what is bad for you, is the Perfect Man equally without this knowledge?"

"The Perfect Man," answered Wang I, "is a spiritual being. Were the ocean itself scorched up, he would not feel hot. Were the milky way frozen hard, he would not feel cold. Were the mountains to be riven with thunder, and the great deep to be thrown up by storm, he would not tremble. In such case, he would mount upon the clouds of heaven, and driving the sun and the moon before him, would pass beyond the limits of this external world,

where death and life have no more victory over man;— how will he regard anything as bad for him?"

Chu Ch'iao addressed Chang Wu Tzu as follows:— "I heard Confucius say, 'The true sage pays no heed to mundane affairs. He neither seeks gain nor avoids injuries. He asks nothing at the hands of man. He adheres, without questioning, to Tao (the Divine). Without speaking, he can speak; and he can speak and yet say nothing. And so he roams beyond the limits of this dusty world. These,' added Confucius, 'are wild words.' Now to me they are the skilful embodiment of Tao. What, Sir, is your opinion?"

"Points upon which the Yellow Emperor doubted," replied Chang Wu Tzu, "how should Confucius know? You are going too fast. You see your egg, and expect to hear it crow. You look at your cross-bow, and expect to have broiled duck before you. I will say a few words to you at random, and do you listen at random.

"How does the sage seat himself by the sun and moon, and hold the universe in his grasp? He blends everything into one harmonious whole, rejecting the confusion of this and that. Rank and precedence, which the vulgar prize, the sage stolidly ignores. The revolutions of ten thousand years leave his Unity unscathed. The universe itself may pass away, but he will flourish still.

"How do I know that love of life is not a delusion after all? How do I know but that he who dreads to die is not as a child who has lost the way and cannot find his home?

"Those who dream of the banquet, wake to lamentation and sorrow. Those who dream of lamentation and sorrow wake to join the hunt. While they dream they do not know that they dream. Some will even interpret the very dream they are dreaming; and only when they awake

do they know it was a dream. By and by comes the Great Awakening, and then we find out that this life is really a great dream. Fools think they are awake now, and flatter themselves they know if they are really princes or peasants. Confucius and you are both dreams; and I who say you are dreams, I am but a dream myself. This is a paradox. To-morrow a sage may arise to explain it; but that to-morrow will not be until ten thousand generations have gone by.

"Take no heed of time, nor of right and wrong. But passing into the realm of the Infinite, take your final rest therein."

FLESH AND SPIRIT

Adapted from the Brahmavadin

Throughout the universe as we know it both soul and non-soul are real and inter-related; and this is a position which is maintained even by the monistic school of Vedanta. The body presupposes the soul and the soul has the body as its field of activity. In practical life we cannot and ought not to ignore either. The Bhagavad-Gita distinctly condemns self-torture and enjoins the proper regulation of eating, sleeping, amusement and activity. It is not good to gain the whole world and lose the soul; but it is not possible to gain the soul without caring for the body and regulating its activities.

One of the central ideas in the theology of St. Paul is the dualism of spirit and flesh, the common tendencies of the flesh being supposed to be against the true interests of the spirit. This idea is said to have been characteristic of the thought of Paul's time in Palestine and in Egypt. But at all times and in every religion there have been schools of teaching which have advocated the belief that to subject

the body to unnecessary suffering furthered the soul's progress. This point of view, however, is not possible to one who has understood the essential unity of God and man. He sees the body, not as the enemy, but as the ally of the soul; and any asceticism or religious practice which threatens to disturb the balance and destroy the harmony between physical and spiritual is looked upon by him as undesirable and injurious. It is doubtful whether even St. Paul believed in any abnormally harsh treatment of the "warring members," although he admonishes the Romans "to mortify the body" and warns them: "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die."

Common sense calls upon us to recognize that in the union of spirit, mind and matter in each individual, the interests of matter are to be held in subordination to those of mind; and the interests of mind, together with those of matter, are to be subordinated to the supreme end of Divine realization. As body must subserve the purposes of mind, so body and mind must subserve the purposes of God. The relation of body, soul and God is one of successive orderly subordination. "The senses are greater than the gross body," the Gita tells us; "greater than the senses is the mind (*manas*); greater than the mind is the intellect (*buddhi*); and greater than the intellect is He."

Whatever may be the apparent conflict between flesh and spirit, the over-zealous ascetic is wrong when he tries to suppress the body-part of his nature. To suppress or distort either the physical or the mental life is to impoverish the spiritual life. But though his method may be wrong, the motive which prompts him is right. The spirit of self-denial is an essential one in the development of the higher consciousness. Jesus made it the foundation of His teaching; while Sri Krishna admonishes Arjuna again and

again not to yield to the desires of the outer bodily man. No part of our being is to be either indulged or annihilated. What we must strive for is a life of wholesome self-restraint and self-sacrifice, in which every faculty and member through proper care and training will be brought up to the highest state of efficiency.

REPORT

Swami Paramananda has returned to Boston and resumed charge of the Services and Classes at the Vedanta Centre. The attendance throughout the month of May grew steadily and many new-comers were seen at the meetings. The Swami intends to remain in Boston until the late summer, when he will set out on another lecture tour through the North-west, accepting invitations to speak in Helena, Seattle, Portland and other cities.

* * *

Urgent requests for further lectures forced the Swami to extend his stay in Los Angeles. On one evening he spoke at Krotona before a large and enthusiastic audience, his subject being, "The Poetic and the Spiritual Value of The Upanishads." Mr. A. P. Warrington presided and in his introductory and closing remarks expressed warm appreciation of the Swami and his work. Another prominent officer of the Theosophical Society, in referring to the occasion, writes: "The Swami's lecture at Krotona was a pronounced success. He was charming and radiant, a very real blessing poured from him. People were appreciative and I think he felt well repaid by their kind words."

Another lecture out of the Swami's usual routine of public speaking was one delivered at the University of Southern California before "The Palette and Brush Club" on "The Mystic Poetry and Symbolic Art of India." A special

course of four lectures at the Metaphysical Library brought the teaching to a new and earnest group. The weekly series of meetings at Long Beach closed with a reception at the Arlington Hotel. Although the Swami this year made less effort than heretofore to reach the general public, the work in Los Angeles proved especially gratifying. The members still continue to meet twice a week and they are doing their utmost to maintain the fervent spirit of devotion which has always characterized the Los Angeles Centre.

* * *

Among the Reports, which have reached us recently, of the varied philanthropic undertakings of the Ramakrishna Mission in India, the account of the year's work done by the Home of Service at Vrindavan gives a picture of the Mission's rapid growth, through its fast multiplying branches. The Vrindavan Home is only a few years old, yet in the twelve months under review it relieved 25,152 patients, besides providing food and care for 255 persons in their home quarters. A serious flood in the neighborhood also led to the organizing of a vigorous and effective relief work. Besides food and clothing, 800 blankets were distributed in the afflicted area. During the terrible epidemic of influenza the member of the Mission in charge of the Home not only cared for the sick, at times single-handed, but carried the dead on his own shoulders to the burning-ghat and cremated them. No service was too difficult or too humble for him. At all times the work of love in the Home is carried on in a strictly non-sectarian spirit, service being rendered to all in need without any consideration of caste, creed or nationality.

A younger institution of similar character and utility is to be found at Allahabad. From remotest times Alla-

habad has been one of the holiest places of pilgrimage in India and the congested condition of the city, especially at special festival seasons, creates a continuous need for disinterested service to the sick and suffering. During the year covered in the last Report, 12,212 persons—Christians, Mohammedans, Hindus and others—were cared for. Although all branches of the Ramakrishna Mission are constantly extending their fields of usefulness, it seems impossible to meet the demand. Always hundreds of helpless poor and afflicted stand at their doors appealing for aid, and always is there an enlarging need for the co-operation of the public in sustaining, by sympathy and offerings, the tireless efforts of the members of the Mission. It was to provide another avenue of help in the relief of the struggling poor of India that Swami Paramananda opened an Indian Relief Fund and offered to sell autographed copies of his translation of The Upanishads and, if desired, of any other of his works for its benefit. The response has been most encouraging and already many hungry, suffering souls have been fed and succored through the money sent.

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The latest booklet by Swami Paramananda "Secret of Right Activity" is one which should be in the hands of every student of Vedanta. The problem of combining the inward life with the relentless demands of an over-crowded outward life is one which confronts everyone at the present time; and this little book solves it in a peculiarly clear, practical, satisfactory way. The headings of its five chapters give an idea of the trend of thought carried through its pages. They are: "Religion of Work," "Duty and Service," "Value of Non-Attachment," "Work and Renunciation" and "The Spirit of Consecration." (35 cents. Postage 2 cents).

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Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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THE UNITING POWER OF DEVOTION

By Swami Paramananda

It is through the power of devotion that we gain the Vision. Devotion always draws the Spirit to us. God is one and unconditioned. That is, He is not bound by mortal laws, yet He is very much bound by the law of love. Whenever we can approach the Unseen Being with a love that is unquestioning and unhesitating, we get our answer at once. Which kind of prayers are answered? Not the written prayers, nor the prayers which are uttered with calculation; but the prayers which spring forth from our being spontaneously through the power of devotion. But devotion to anything that is indefinite is impossible. We can never express our spiritual devotion spontaneously until we have some definite idea of God. We may condemn people who cling to symbols and images and spiritual forms; but behind all these what do we find? Reality. Of course no symbol can ever represent the Infinite, no matter how it is conceived. But all these forms and symbols are like substitutes. Just as when some one whom we love very much is away, we have his portrait to serve as a reminder of him, so all these spirtual symbols and rituals, altars, temples, images and ceremonies are to remind us of something. They become vulgar and superstitious only

if we lose sight of their significance and do not have the feeling which originally inspired them. Without that feeling we can never profit by anything.

The book of life is very complicated and perplexing until we get the power of devotion. Devotion unfolds and reveals all things to us. Devotion to what? That is the question. To whom shall we express our devotion? To whom do we owe our devotion? What is the source of this life? Are we God-made or are we man-made? If we are God-made, then our devotion should unite us with God. If we really believe in a soul existence we should be devoted to that before all else. That should be our foremost consideration. Nor is this so difficult when the soul becomes a reality to us. Our natural craving is for beautiful things, and our heart is full of craving for love; therefore when we find that One who is most loving, our heart naturally flows towards Him.

Devotion destroys all distance, and that which now seems indefinite and intangible becomes definite. The true definition of God is Spirit. Philosophers call Him the Unknowable, but that is because we cannot know Him with our physical senses. We must cultivate another sense of perception and this we do through spiritual devotion. Through this a new sense of seeing and perceiving opens. As this develops, we feel our consciousness expand. At first we are capable of loving only a few people who are connected with us through blood, or at the utmost our special community. We cannot love all, because our capacity for love seems limited. We can be friendly only towards the members of our family or towards our own countrymen. When we enter into the realm of spiritual devotion, however, and our heart goes towards God, that outpouring of devotion enables us to love more and more

and we feel greater joy, greater understanding and greater sympathy. Our whole life becomes saturated with the atmosphere of Divinity.

This spiritual atmosphere can be created just as we create a material atmosphere by our mental attitude. When we focus our thoughts on a spiritual Ideal, we create such a sense of God-union that we never breathe even without a living consciousness that it is God's breath. It is not that a person who devotes himself to spiritual things sits down and thinks of nothing else, or that he becomes peculiar and abnormal in any way. That is not the proper attitude. What is meant is that by finding our relationship with the inner essence of our being, we so adjust our life that material things never overbalance our consciousness or influence our thought and actions. We cannot attain this state accidentally, however. That is impossible. We must cultivate it. This is the aim of the devotional life.

Spiritual devotion naturally varies. I may have one way of expressing it and you may have another; but the fundamental idea is one and the same, and in every case it must come from our own heart. We form our own conception of Deity and we can only worship this conception. If we try to worship another's conception, our feeling will not be genuine. Spirituality is a natural spontaneous evolution of the individual soul. We evolve our conception of Deity and we also evolve the power of devotion. At first you may say: "I do not feel any real devotion. What can I do? It is not natural to me." But you can have a certain craving, a certain restless feeling, a vague longing to know and realize. That is the seed. If you care for that seed, if you water it with sincere yearning, you will find eventually that you are evolving a new consciousness of spiritual reality and a genuine power of devotion.

As our intensity of feeling grows, however, we must try to combine with it the spirit of tolerance and allow to others the same privilege of devotion to their special Ideal, knowing that all paths lead to the same goal. Unless we have warm loving feelings towards all living beings, our devotion is not acceptable to God. The kind of love we must feel is one which knows no hatred. That is the only real devotion. When we really learn to love and worship, we shall find that there is no room for hatred or other unworthy thoughts. Everything is melted away and there is only One permeating and pervading the whole universe, watching over all, protecting all, supporting all. This is the theme of Indo-Aryan philosophy and religion. This is the goal of all spiritual living. He who perceives that all-loving and all-abiding Spirit within himself and without himself, in all things, how can there be any more delusion for him? How can he shrink from anything, when he realizes the Divine Presence and knows that he can never be separated from God?

May that Infinite Spirit make our hearts free from all blemish of selfish thoughts and feelings, that we may have strength to follow the path with unwavering faith and undaunted courage. May He free our minds from all egotism and self-seeking, that we may truly learn to say from our hearts, "Not my will but Thine," and to feel the blessing of doing the will of God. May He free us from the bondage of ignorance and fill our whole being with His Divine Love that we may serve Him and His children and make our lives productive of the highest good. May He awaken in us a more yearning spirit and a deeper sense of consecration. May He give us greater wisdom that we may be able to discern the real and forsake the unreal. May we never fail to trust His guiding hand in all things.

IN THE ESTUARY

By B. E. Baughan

"Take me home! Take me home!" cries the stream to the Sea.
"Out of Thee was I sent, I have done Thy decree,
I have run my due course. Take me back, into Thee!

"I have left my pure snows, and my forested steep,
My fields full of flowers, my paddocks of sheep;

"I have left the bright light of the city lamps falling,
The wealth of the wharves, and the men's voices calling;

"No streams meet me now; I must fare on alone;
I have given up my beauty; my music is gone;

"I have given up my banks—through mud-flats now I flow;
And my clean, pebbly bed; and the mud makes me slow.

"Take, take me home!" cries the stream to the Sea.
"I have riven, I have striven, I have given, towards Thee,
I have come the whole way. Take me home, into Thee!"

(*The tide flows in.*)
"O, what is this meets me, this terrible force?
It arrests—Woe is me! it reverses my course.
Turn me not, turn me not to the trees and the towers!
The mud-flats are nearer the Sea than the flowers.

"I choke— Ah, the saltness! I struggle and shiver,
Foaming and drowning, no longer a river;
Yet turn me not back to my sweet mountain water—
Brackish and blurr'd I am more the Sea's daughter.

"Nay, but what is this singing, the struggle inside?"
Wouldst thou come to the Sea, child, accept the Sea-tide!

"Is it Thou? O sweet saltness! No sting is too much!
Be it torture, Sea-water, it still is Thy touch!

"Wilt Thou inland? Then inland return me, and take
Through my current Thy course. Turn me back for Thy sake!

"Turn me back!" cries the stream. "Have Thy whole way with me;
Drown me and drink me and make me all Thee;
Till the turn of Thy tide carry sea out to Sea!"

THE INWARD LIFE

By Sister Devamata

Man can never attain lasting happiness in the outer spheres of his being. The reason becomes apparent when we study his constitution. At the very base of the human organism there seems to be an insatiable desire for expansion. No matter what we have or what we are, our mind overlaps and craves for more. We move into a larger house and in a short time we have filled it and feel the need of more space. We inherit a fortune and imagine ourselves rich; but soon our wants have outstript our income and we are coveting greater wealth. We spend years acquiring technical efficiency in some trade or profession and in the end we are as dissatisfied with our ability as we were when we began. In whatever direction we move, added knowledge merely intensifies the consciousness of a vague unknown beyond which lures us on.

The limit of expansion varies according to the density or subtlety of the form of manifestation. In our physical organism it is reached quickly. Even though we may have innumerable opportunities for enjoyment, the body can take only so much and then it begins to deteriorate. Our

senses grow numb and the further pursuit of enjoyment, instead of bringing joy, only serves as an irritating reminder that joy is denied. The pleasure-seeker is striving constantly for the sensation which he never fully experiences. Try as he may, he cannot force his bodily organism beyond its normal bounds. The scholar and the philanthropist also sooner or later come to the limit of satisfaction in their intellectual or altruistic life. The amount accomplished invariably seems painfully small in comparison with the energy expended. One part only of the human constitution appears to possess unlimited power of response and that is the spiritual nature. Here alone are we able to expand indefinitely and thus escape from the gnawing hunger for more. Every great teaching has proclaimed this truth and our own experience has confirmed it, yet still we go seeking our happiness on the outside.

Inwardness is the law of creation. Everywhere material manifestation shows a tendency to revert to the finer state. Ice melts into water, water evaporates into vapor; the solid rock crumbles into dust. When we move away from the grosser towards the subtler part of our being, we throw ourselves into line with the cosmic current and reduce the friction and distress of life at once. The effect is immediate. If conflict remains, it is in that part of our nature which is still tied to the external. God is all-power, all-peace, all-beauty. Just one touch exalts and sweetens us. And we touch Him the moment we turn towards Him. He is not far distant from us. We have only to enter that silent inner shrine of our heart and instantly there comes the soothing sense of benediction which His Presence alone can bring. People recognize this and even experience it, yet they advance a thousand arguments in favor of out-

ward living. The inner life, they say, is a selfish life. It takes us away from the strain and stress of human society. Those men are most helpful who lead a useful active outer life. But is it selfish to learn before we begin to teach? Would we have our children stay out of school to do chores at home and grow up illiterate? No man can give joy until he has found joy; and no man finds true joy until he has found God.

The things which we carry round in a basket and distribute to our fellow-beings are very poor substitutes for real succor. Even the loving words we speak or the bits of knowledge we dispense are laden with our limitations. We go to humanity steeped in humanity and accentuate the humanity in others. Among the countless thousands everywhere who have not subdued their brute nature we turn with relief to the man who is really human; but among the smaller number in any community who are sincerely human, what a blessing seems the man or woman who has begun to be even a little divine. Only those who have learned to merge their self-consciousness in God-consciousness have anything of permanent value to give; and they are the least aware of giving. Their mere living is a benefit to mankind. What they do is of minor importance. A natural radiance envelops them, lightening the darkness wherever they chance to be. Their counsel is always the counsel of wisdom and by the uprightness and consecration of their life they raise the standard for humanity at large. Ten such men would have saved Sodom and Gomorrah.

Worldly ambition and even a love of physical comfort ultimately drive us to the inward life; for no one can be at ease or gain success without quiet nerves and a calm mind, and these are the result of an inner state. No outer condition can bestow them. God is the source not only

of all that the unselfish man is striving for, but also of all that the selfish man covets. Therefore from the standpoint both of material and of spiritual advantage, the inward course is the wiser one. Our outer life will always be the projection of our inner. It will be just what we are. If we are peaceful and happy and illumined, it will be peaceful, happy and illumined. What is it now? Full of unrest, indecision, anxiety, uncertainty. But it is the reflection of ourself. No change on the outside therefore can alter it. We must begin deep down within.

We need never be afraid that when we move towards reality, we shall sacrifice anything that is real; and the sooner we sacrifice the unreal, the better. There is no greater danger to society than ignorance; and so long as we remain ignorant of the spiritual realm, we constitute a part of that danger, because our sense of values will be shifting and our proportions false. The immediate and temporal will be our first concern, while the ultimate and eternal will be given a secondary place. Until we have known Truth, how can we know what is true or untrue? Until we have linked our life with the great Life, how can we be sure that the foundations of our daily living are safe? Until we have gained contact with Righteousness, how can we know what is really right or really wrong?

If society could make spiritual education obligatory, as it has secular education, it would be the greatest safeguard for it. Unfortunately the spiritual life is the one life which must be wholly voluntary. Freedom is its goal and it must be lived freely. Unless our thoughts and actions are free offerings to God, they are not offerings at all. But men would turn eagerly to this deeper training, if they could be persuaded that it is to their advantage; and we can persuade them by our own daily lives. We ourselves,

however, must have the conviction first. No one ever tested out the practical value of the inward life and found it wanting. Every mighty achievement has begun on the inside and worked outward. The masterpiece is invariably the fruit of a spontaneous out-pouring of inward power. The great picture paints itself, the great sermon preaches itself, the great book writes itself, out from unsounded depths. The true artist or writer or prophet can never tell how his work was done. He only knows that in some hour of thoughtfulness he struck an underground river of inspiration which surged up to the surface by the force of its own current. Even business efficiency and integrity imply inwardness. They spring from the habit of viewing things from the inside. No man can have a masterful sweep in handling events who has not seen deep enough to grasp the fundamental principles of life and action. It was in the silence of earnest prayer before some village altar that General Foch gained the vision for his victories on the battle-field. The habit of secret appeal and God-communion lies at the base of all true greatness.

Now the inward life serves us poorly because we live it falteringly. We are too ready to compromise between the inner and the outer. When the world serves us well, we trust in it; when it fails us, we turn to God. Sometimes we move inward, sometimes outward; thus we neutralize our own effort and are less successful than the frankly worldly man, who is consistent and undeviating in his course. All success is the result of cumulative striving. Our conviction and resolution must be strong enough to carry us over the barren stretches. The athlete knows that it is his "second wind" which takes him to the goal. No human heart is always brave and fervent; but the momentum of the strong hours will bear us through the weak ones, if we are steadfast and prayerful.

Let us begin to cultivate a yearning for the inner life. This means a yearning for contact with all that is holiest and loveliest and tenderest and highest. It would seem as if the longing for these things would be natural to us; but our life does not indicate it. The outward habit still dominates us. Yet a taste for God can be cultivated. As we cultivate a taste for art by studying the best pictures or hearing the best music, so we must go where we hear constantly about God. We must read and think about Him. We must seek Him wherever we are, whatever we are doing. There must be something in us calling ceaselessly to Him; and we may be sure that this continuous call will open a broad channel of communication with the Divine.

No man ever called to God with a sincere heart that God did not answer and pour out upon him His richest blessings. If we keep on calling, He will bestow that greatest of all gifts — Himself. But no one can receive the whole who does not give the whole. We cannot make terms with God in our inner life. We must give ourselves as fully in hardship as in ease, in failure as in success. When we can do this, we shall find that it is in the dread stillness of some great sorrow that we shall hear His voice; in the solitude of a lonely life that we shall taste His companionship. When the inward life becomes a reality to us, we shall not be afraid of affliction or hard work or pain; for we shall live close to that which never suffers or labors, but which feeds upon that "infinite bliss born of contact with the Supreme."

The wisdom of men grows according to what is before them. —*Empedokles*

THE LIGHT OF THE ONE

From the Writings of Plotinus

(Leader of the Neoplatonists. 3rd Century.)

When a man sees this Light, he moves towards It, and rejoices in the Light which plays over the spiritual world. Even here we love not bodies for themselves but for the beauty which shines in them, bestowing grace upon the object and love upon the subject. As soon as the soul receives into itself the Effluence from above, it is moved, it is filled with holy ecstasy and becomes Love. Before that, it is not moved by the sight of Spirit, for all Its beauty. Its beauty is inactive, till it receives the light of the Good (i. e. of the Absolute) and the soul lies supine before it... cold and stupid even in the presence of Spirit. But when warmth from the Good enters into it, it becomes strong and wide-awake, and though troubled by what lies near at hand, it ascends more lightly to that which a kind of memory tells it to be greater. And as long as there is anything higher than what is present to it, it rises, lifted up naturally by that which implanted the love. If it abides in the region of Spirit, it beholds indeed beautiful and noble things, but is not completely in possession of all that it seeks.

The fullest life is the fullest love; and the love comes from the celestial light which streams forth from the Absolute One, the Absolute Good, that Supreme Principle which made life and made Spirit, the Source and the Beginning. This is the true end and aim of the soul, to apprehend that Light, and to behold It by the Light Itself. How can this come to us? Strip thyself of everything! For it is not possible to see It, or to be in harmony with It, while one is occupied with anything else. The soul must remove from itself good and evil and everything else, that it may

receive the One alone, as the One is alone. When the soul is so blessed and is come to It, or rather when It manifests Its presence; when the soul turns away from visible things and makes itself as beautiful as possible and becomes like the One (the manner of preparation and adornment is known to those who practise it); and seeing the One suddenly appearing in itself, for there is nothing between, nor are they any longer two, but one, for you cannot distinguish between them while the vision lasts: this is the Union of which the union of earthly lovers who wish to blend their being with each other is a copy. The soul is no longer conscious of the body.

When, having sought the One, it finds itself in Its presence, it goes to meet It and contemplates It instead of itself. What itself is when it gazes, it has no leisure to see. Its happiness is no titillation of the bodily senses, it is that the soul has become again what it was formerly. All the things which once pleased it, power, wealth, beauty, science, it declares that it despises; it could not say this, if it had not met with something better than these. It fears no evil while it is with the One, or even while it sees Him. Though all else perish around it, it is content if it can only be with Him, so happy is it. For when the Spirit is inebriated with the nectar, it falls in love.

If you are perplexed because the One is none of the things which you know, apply yourself to them first, and look forth out of them, but so look as not to direct your attention to externals. The soul must forsake all that is external, and turn itself wholly to that which is within. God, as Plato says, is not far from every one of us; He is present with all, though they know Him not. But he who has learnt to know himself will know also whence he is.

We always move round the One, but we do not always

fix our gaze on It. We are like a choir of singers who stand round the Conductor, but do not always sing in time, because their attention is directed to some external object; when they look at the Conductor, they sing well. When we always look toward the One, we attain the end of our existence and our repose, and we no longer sing out of time, but form in very truth a divine chorus round the One.

We are not cut off from our source, nor separated from it, even though the bodily nature intervenes and draws us towards itself. But we are more truly alive when we turn towards It, and in this lies our well-being. In It our soul rests, out of reach of evil; it has ascended to a region which is pure from all evil; there it has spiritual vision and is exempt from passion and suffering; there it truly lives. For our present life without God is a mere shadow and mimicry of the true life. But life Yonder is an activity of the Spirit, and by its peaceful activity it engenders gods also (through its contact with the One) and beauty and righteousness and virtue; for these are the offspring of a soul which is filled with God.

No knowledge which we can have here of Thee can satisfy my soul seeking and longing without ceasing after Thee... Alas, my Lord God, what is all Thou canst give to a loving soul which sigheth and panteth after Thee alone, and esteemeth all things as dung that she may gain Thee? What is all I say whilst Thou givest not Thyself, who art that one thing which is only necessary and which alone can satisfy our souls?.... For that soul that hath set her whole love and desire on Thee can never find any true satisfaction but only in Thee. —*Gertrude More*

MUNDAKA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by Swami Paramananda

(Continued from May Number)

THIRD MUNDAKA

PART II

I

He (the Seer of Truth) knows the highest abode of Brahman, in which all this universe rests and which shines with pure radiance. Discerning men, without desire, by serving reverently such a knower (of Self) go beyond the seed.

The Seer who has realized the Supreme and has united himself with the source of knowledge, becomes a connecting link between God and the worshipper. Whatever homage or reverence is paid to him, he does not take for himself. Being entirely free from egotism and self-importance, he offers it all to God. Those who seek out and serve such an illumined soul gradually partake of his wisdom and pass beyond the need of birth and death. Every desire is a seed from which spring birth, death and all mortal afflictions. Illumination alone will destroy this seed.

II

He who broods on objects of desire and covets them, is born here and there according to his desires; but he whose desires are fulfilled and who has known the Self, his desires vanish even here.

A selfish man, who is identified with the flesh, clings to the small and finite; and however covetous of a larger life he may be, he cannot attain it. A man may wish to go to the other shore; but if he does not pull up the anchor, his boat will not move.

III

This Self cannot be attained by the study of the Scriptures, nor by intellectual perception, nor by frequent hearing of it. He whom the Self chooses, by him alone is It attained. To him the Self reveals Its true nature.

This same verse appears in the Katha-Upanishad (Part II, V. 23) and is explained at length there. Only he whose heart is wholly purified and made ready can receive the revelation; therefore the Self naturally chooses that one and no other. This means that we have to give ourselves wholly before we can get the higher vision.

IV

This Self cannot be attained by one who is devoid of strength, or by one who is unmindful, or by one whose austerity is without renunciation. But if the wise man strives by these means, his Self enters into the abode of Brahman.

The Upanishads lay frequent emphasis on the idea that no weak person can attain Truth; but this does not mean mere physical weakness. The strength required for spiritual vision is an inner vigor. The sages in choosing their disciples were careful to choose those who were full of energy, faithful and willing to do anything. Even arduous practice of austerity, however, will be unfruitful, unless the heart is freed from lower desires.

V

The Rishis (wise Seers), after having attained It, become satisfied through knowledge. Having accomplished their end and being free from all desire, they become tranquil. The self-possessed wise ones, realizing the all-pervading Spirit present in all things, enter into all.

They enter into all because they realize the universal oneness of cosmic life. They "see the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self." (Bhagavad-Gita.)

VI

Sannyasins (spiritually consecrated seekers), having apprehended with certainty the true meaning of the knowledge of Vedanta, having purified their nature by the practice of renunciation, and having realized the highest immortality, after the great end (death) become liberated in the world of Brahman.

VII

Their fifteen parts return to their source; all the senses go back to their corresponding deities; the Self, together with his deeds and acquired knowledge, becomes one with the highest imperishable Brahman.

The fifteen parts referred to are *Prana* (life), faith, ether, air, fire, water, earth, senses, mind, food, vigor, austerity, *mantras* (holy texts), sacrifice and the worlds (of name and form). Faith is mentioned after *Prana* because it is the greatest impelling power in life. When the final realization comes, the various parts of man's physical, intellectual and moral being are blended into one harmonious whole and become united with the Supreme.

VIII

As flowing rivers lose themselves in the ocean, giving up name and form, so also the knower, freed from name and form, attains the highest effulgent Purusha (Being).

As man's consciousness expands into the universal consciousness, the limitations of self-consciousness necessarily melt away; but he does not lose his true entity. As soon as he attains knowledge of his true Self, he transcends

the realm of name and form and enters into conscious union with the universal Source of existence and knowledge. As it is said in the Prasna-Upanishad: "He becomes without parts and immortal."

IX

He who knows that highest Brahman becomes like unto Brahman. In his family no one is born who is ignorant of Brahman. He overcomes grief; he overcomes sin; and being freed from the knots of the heart, he becomes immortal.

X

Thus it is declared in the following text: Let this knowledge of Brahman be taught to those only who have performed sacrifices enjoined in the Scriptures; who are well versed in the Vedas; who are devoted to Brahman, who with faith have performed the fire sacrifice Ekarshi; and who have fulfilled the vow of carrying fire on their head (Shirovrata).

This verse signifies that only those who have purified themselves by performing with proper humility and devotion the various rites and vows given in the Scriptures, will be able to understand or follow the higher knowledge. Therefore to them alone should it be taught. To others it will bring only confusion of mind and impede their progress.

XI

The sage Angiras in ancient times taught this truth (to Saunaka). It should not be studied by one who has not fulfilled the vow of self-sacrifice and service. Adoration to the great Rishis! Adoration to the great Rishis!

Here ends the Mundaka-Upanishad.

THE STORY OF GOPAL-MA

Told by Swami Ramakrishnananda

Gopal-ma was left a widow at the age of eight. She began her life of devotion even then and always thought of herself as the mother of the Baby Krishna. Whatever she did she did for her Gopala (the name of Baby Krishna). If she cleaned her room, she thought that it was Gopal's room which she was cleaning; if she prepared a meal, she did it for Gopala; so she grew up with the idea of Gopala firmly fixed in her mind. One day she was cooking as usual, but the fire would not burn, the wood was heavy with moisture, and there was an adverse wind which blew the smoke into her eyes. Finally when the bit of rice and curry was done and she was about to pour it out on the leaf, the same adverse wind blew away the leaf. Then she began to scold God for making everything so bad for Gopala. As she was talking, a little boy brought back the leaf, held it out flat on the ground until she had put the food on it and then disappeared. She began to feed her Gopala; but suddenly she began to ask herself who that little boy was and she realized that it was Gopala himself. From that moment she became mad. All day and night she kept crying, "Where is my Gopala?" "Where is my Gopala?" She could not sleep or eat. Only at night would she prepare a little food for Gopala, and everyone thought that she had really become mad.

One day some of her friends, thinking to distract her mind, told her that they were going to see a great soul called Sri Ramakrishna at the Temple of Dakshineswar and asked if she would not come with them. As it was contrary to the Scriptures to go to a *Sadhu* empty-handed, she collected the little rice, *dal* (pulses) and curry stuff she had and joined them. But when they reached the Temple, the

others had such rich presents of fruit, flowers, and other things to offer that she was ashamed of her little bundle and, hiding it, she took her place in a far corner of the room. As soon as the other presents were offered, however, Sri Ramakrishna walked back to where she sat and said to her:

"I am feeling very hungry, can you not give me something to eat?"

"Oh Sir," she replied, "What can I do? I am a poor woman. I have no money. What can I get for you?"

"But what is that?" he asked, pointing to her little bundle. With shame she opened it and showed him.

"Oh," he said, "will you not cook it for me? The kitchen is right over there." And he himself took her and showed her where it was.

Shyly she began to prepare the food, thinking all the while: "How can I offer it to him! I have no *ghee* (clarified butter), nothing to make it tasty." But just as it was ready he came eagerly to inquire if it was done and she laid it before him. "You would better feed me," he said to her. She mixed the rice and curry and as she put the first mouthful into his mouth, she again saw her Gopala.

"You are my Gopala," she exclaimed. Sri Ramakrishna then finished the food, declaring that he had never tasted anything so good; and to everyone he kept saying: "I have eaten real nectar today."

From that moment Gopal-mother's grief vanished and she was perfectly happy. Occasionally she would come to Dakshineswar with some rice and *dal* and vegetables and a few pise worth of fire wood, cook for Sri Ramakrishna and go away content. The rest of the time she spent serving her Gopala at home and making *Japam* (repeating the Name of the Lord).

One day after Sri Ramakrishna had passed away, some of his disciples went to see her and found her room full of mosquitoes and other troublesome creatures. Although she did not appear to mind them and kept on repeating the Name of the Lord, it distressed them to see her in such discomfort, so next day one of the disciples carried her a mosquito curtain. That night when she sat down to repeat the Name, she found her mind constantly wandering to the curtain, thinking whether a cockroach or a rat might not be eating off a corner of it. Seeing this, she said: "What! This wretched curtain thus to take my mind away from my Gopala!" and without ado she made it up into a bundle and sat down again to her devotions with the mosquitoes all about her.

The next morning we were just getting up at the Math when Gopal-ma appeared. She had walked all the way (at least five miles) and must have started at three o'clock. She laid the bundle down.

"What is it?" someone asked.

"It is the curtain you gave me yesterday. It takes my mind away from God. I don't want it," was her answer; and nothing could persuade her to take it back.

REPORT

Swami Paramananda spent the first four days of June in Cincinnati. His opening lecture was to be given on Monday evening, May 31st., at the New Thought Temple; but failure in making train connections so delayed his arrival that he could not reach the Temple until 9 o'clock, yet about 300 people waited patiently for over an hour in order to hear him. One of those who followed all the meetings closely, writes:

"I wrote you how successful was Swami's last visit here, how much interest was manifested and how much deep appreciation shown. This time the results surpassed by far any previous visit. Wednesday evening the hall was packed; we had to bring in extra chairs and all space was taken. Thursday evening too there was a full capacity house. The afternoon attendance was excellent also. When the same people come out twice a day, you know that their interest is awakened. Despite all the heat and the noise from the street, Swami held their attention unbroken. 'Spiritual Consecration,' 'Life After Death' and 'Unity and Universality' are three of the best lectures I have heard him give. I wish every minister and university professor in this city could have heard his last lecture on 'Unity and Universality.'

"The instructor in psychology at the University of Cincinnati attended all the lectures. I do not believe he missed one, and I see that his name is on the list to form a class. Swami gave him something which he could not find in his 'leaf-counting' books. Such an open mind is not intellectually bound. Another young man told me that he was a druggist and had long hours; but he was determined to read the Swami's writings and had got up that morning at 5 o'clock so as to spend an hour reading 'Concentration and Illumination.' I note his name is on the class list. The first meeting of the new class will be held on Sunday evening, June 13. The Swami promised to send an outline of procedure. I hope by next October that we shall be able to have rooms of our own, on the plans which the Swami mentioned. This will be our aim."

This was the Swami's fourth visit to Cincinnati. His first lectures were given in the Parish Hall of Christ Church. The steady growth of interest during each visit

has now led to the formation of a study group, which will meet regularly once and perhaps twice a week.

* * * *

We have recently received an interesting account of a Society founded in Germany for the furtherance of interest in Indian spiritual teachings and called "The Friends of Indian Wisdom." Prof. Paul Deussen of Kiel University acted as first president and at his death Prof. Hermann Beck of Berlin was elected to succeed him. Besides organizing study classes in many different parts of Germany, the Society plans to bring out German translations of books and pamphlets on Vedanta. The first of this series of publications has just reached us and contains an able rendering into German of a lecture on "Self-Knowledge" by Swami Paramananda, and of extracts from his book "The Path of Devotion." It also includes the Sanskrit prayers and Salutations given at the close of this work with the Swami's English translation put into German.

This admirable movement is the outcome of a visit to New York 15 or 16 years ago made by a resident of Hagen in Westphalia, a man of exceptional earnestness and understanding. A long and fruitless search for Truth had led him finally to the Vedanta Society in New York, where a copy of "The Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna" was put into his hands. He read it from cover to cover the same night and from that moment his life received a definite bent. He returned to Hagen and began zealous efforts to make known the teaching to others. He was extremely eager to have the Swami Paramananda transfer his activities to Germany and establish a definite work there. He himself offered to bear all the Swami's expenses during the time needed to learn the language and prepare for public teaching. The Swami could not consider this, but he paid two

visits to Germany as the guest of this gentleman and did much to stimulate and strengthen the movement. The war made further visits impossible; now they are eager to have the Swami come to them again. The gentleman was called to the front and fell in battle in 1917; but having devoted some time to the study of Sanskrit at Gottingen, he spent his idle hours in the trenches translating the Bhagavad-Gita. This translation has just appeared in print. His wife and the earnest students of those earlier days are now the prime-movers in the present organization.

* * * *

Swami Paramananda gave his annual dinner to the students and friends of the Vedanta Centre of Boston on the evening of June 24th. All the dishes served were prepared by the Swami himself and the guests thus had the opportunity of making acquaintance with various choice Indian ways of cooking. There were nearly one hundred present, the greater number being seated at two long tables joined at one end by a third cross table where the Swami presided. After the dinner the Swami welcomed his guests by a few loving words and called upon Dr. Frank Granger to tell something of his war experiences. Prof. Baker of Oberlin College next paid a graceful tribute to India, which so charmed his hearers that he was asked to add some further account of his Indian experiences. Mr. Johnson, who had come to Boston especially for the dinner, told something of what was being done by the new Cincinnati group. Mr. Burnham, Mr. Orth and Dr. White were the other speakers, and Miss Shepherd contributed to the evening's pleasure by her impressive recitation of "The Vision Beautiful" by Longfellow. The Swami gave an account of his first efforts at cooking in the Monastery at Madras and in closing he invited all present to next year's dinner.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

The Message of the East

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Chapel of the Vedanta Centre

1 Queensberry Street, Fenway
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Swami Paramananda

of India in charge
TWELFTH SEASON—1920

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November 14th *Practical Value of Meditation*
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"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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RIGHT DISCRIMINATION

By Swami Paramananda

Without proper discrimination our progress is always slow and unsatisfying. In Indian philosophy it is considered one of the strongest factors in spiritual training. By reasoning alone, it is true, we cannot attain to God, but it is a vital aid in reaching the highest. Without it we are constantly hampered and held back in our onward course. Discrimination strengthens our spiritual nature and enables us to overcome our imperfections. It is like a guide, like a light which illumines our path; and there is no living being who can afford to neglect this faculty, for it is as necessary in our active daily life as in our spiritual study. Our life is not meant to be spent merely in following the trend of physical activities—eating, drinking, sleeping, taking a little pleasure through the senses. We are expected to use our higher faculties. These lower tendencies we have in common with animal life; but there is one thing in which we excel and that is in the faculty of reasoning, of right discrimination. It is through this that a man rises from his lower brute instincts to his higher, spiritual instincts. It is by this that he conquers his selfish aims and embraces that which is good for all.

There is no essential difference between man and his

Creator. The real is always in the background and the reality of man is God. At first it is a tremendous thing even to imagine, that there is no difference between us and the Infinite. But it seems less impossible when through discrimination we learn to define our true nature. What part of myself is myself, is the question the wise and discriminating person asks. Is it my hands, or my feet, or my senses, or my mind? As he begins to analyze, he finds that none of these parts of his physical being can be called himself. His real nature is something other than the body. "I am not the body; nor am I any of the conditions of the body—heat and cold, pleasure and pain. These things cannot afflict me, because they only afflict the physical man. The real which abides within is never affected by these conditions." Thus he proceeds by the method of discrimination and elimination.

As an expert mountain climber reduces his luggage to a minimum, because he knows if he carries too much he will not be able to make headway and also he will more quickly tire, so in this journey of life we must throw out all the non-essential. How much time and energy are consumed in doing things which easily might be eliminated! And all that time and strength could be devoted to better ends. Our modern life may have blessings, but also it has its curses in making us dependent and robbing us of all our power of originality. The more a man relies on artificial means, the less he is able to use his own faculties. You will be surprised when you go to the East. You will find there that they care less for outside comforts. They depend less on tools and are more deft with their hands. They use their minds more also because there are not so many machines made for them. Every advantage has its disadvantage. An artificial life, which makes us wholly de-

pendent on material conditions, gradually robs us of the habit of independent thinking. Men are not meant to be machines. A little discrimination will show us at once that we have not begun to use the amount of power that is latent in us; and it is through this power that we are able to accomplish anything worth while.

Discrimination shows us what to avoid and what to accept; then how to eliminate. When we learn to differentiate between the real and the unreal, the essential and the non-essential, and when we are able to abide by the essential, no matter how much past habits may try to overwhelm us, we gain a totally different outlook. After we have been able to accomplish this even once, we have greater confidence, but this confidence is in something within ourselves which before was hidden from us. The largest part of our being remains unexplored, because it is not through outward activities that we know our inner depths. It is through right reasoning, reflection and contemplation. Right reasoning proves to us intellectually that God exists and that everything rests in Him; but we learn to remain steadfast in that consciousness through the practice of meditation. When discrimination is combined with contemplation, we gain fullness of life. Without meditation we never acquire steadfastness. There is not a soul who can afford to be without this deeper consciousness. So long as we have health and strength and life runs smoothly, we may think we can disregard these things; but the vanities of the world do not endure. It is the spiritual essence of our being which we carry with us always. When we realize this, we have a serene quality in our heart.

Discrimination makes our path clear, smooth and stable; because when we have it, we do not base our thoughts

on the vanishing and unreal. At present we live in a sphere where everything is changeable, so we feel separation and grief; but when through discrimination we learn to live in the world without being contaminated by worldly associations, as the lotus leaf floats on the water and is not moistened by it, then we are safe. Within all the varied conditions of life there is One Who never fails and that is God, that is Truth, that is the very Soul of our souls. When once we feel that and grasp that, not with our hands or senses, but through a purified intelligence, we can live in the world and not be touched by worldliness. Then even in the midst of grief we shall enjoy a blissful state of consciousness. Heaven is not a special realm to which we shall go some day. We create our heaven here through knowledge. Whenever we are fortunate enough to find a person who is self-controlled, who has conquered anger, envy, jealousy and every poisonous quality of mind, what a sense of rest he brings. If we are tormented, we grow quiet; if we are unhappy, we are made happy.

We can all become centres of peace and spirituality in this afflicted world, if only we will develop these qualities. Wise men do not wish to horde wealth or possessions which do not last. They do not lay up treasures where thieves can break through and moths corrupt; but they gather treasures of mind, of soul. And we all have an equal right to these treasures. Among these one of the greatest given us by God is the faculty of discrimination—the power to separate the true from the false, the ungodly from that which is godly. But it requires courage. It may require even great self-denial. We only deny ourselves, however, the things which are fleeting and mundane for the sake of things which are spiritual and lasting, and our reward is great. Nor is it something which we gain

for ourselves only; we also bring a world blessing. Whenever a saint or a sage is born anywhere, his birth does not exalt himself alone, but his community, his country, the whole world enjoys the blessing of his coming.

Truth is the property of the soul. It is the property of all living beings. There is no exclusion. It is like the sun. As the sun shines equally on a pure object and an impure object, but is not contaminated even though it shine on an impure object; so is it also with the soul which dwells in this body. The body may try to corrupt it by its bad deeds; we may think even that we have lost our Divinity and all hope of salvation; but the soul cannot be contaminated. Through discrimination we learn this. Then strength comes to us, inspiration comes to us, and we become like that island about which Buddha told His disciples. A wise man can create for himself a spiritual island which no storm may approach. It is not by running away from difficulties that we escape. It is not by being fearful that we prevent dangers. It is through strength; and the greatest strength we have is the knowledge that we are of God and not, as we think, of the world. Within this body there is a mighty soul, which is part of God. Our real nature, our real strength comes from God. When we realize this we have found a safe island of protection, where no weakness or failure can come near us.

We become established in this knowledge through constant discrimination and through devotion. As we grow more and more absorbed in the Spirit of God, naturally we find ourselves detached from the things which now give us pain and sorrow. This is a quality of mind which we cultivate within us. We may not possess it now in full measure, but we can all develop it. Every one has the power of thinking and this thinking faculty can be turned

in the right direction. It depends wholly on ourselves. As we cultivate this faculty, the mind will become so keen that it will cut asunder all false perception. At the present moment we may not be aware of this great gift of discrimination embedded in our deeper nature and it may not seem natural to us to live with the larger vision of the real; but the patient practice of discrimination will gradually so transform us that what may appear unnatural for us to-day, will become perfectly natural for us to-morrow. All foolish vanities and fears will seem unnatural to the soul that has reached the threshold of Truth and God.

THE SLAVERY OF SELFISHNESS

From the Teachings of Gautama Buddha

He who knows the nature of his self and understands how his senses act, finds no room for the ego and thus he attains peace unending. The world holds the thought of ego and from this arises false apprehension.

Ye that are slaves of the ego, that toil in the service of self from morn to night, that live in constant fear of birth, old age, sickness and death, receive the good tidings that your cruel master exists not.

The ego is an error, a dream. Open your eyes and awake. See things as they are and you will be comforted.

He who is awake will no longer be afraid of nightmares. He who has recognized the nature of the rope that seemed to be a serpent ceases to tremble.

He who has found there is no ego will let go the lusts and desires of egotism.

The cleaving to things, covetousness and sensuality, inherited from former existences, are the causes of misery and of vanity in the world.

Surrender the grasping disposition of your selfishness and you will attain to that sinless calm state of mind which brings perfect peace, goodness and wisdom.

As a mother even at the risk of life protects her son, her only son; so let him who has recognized the Truth, cultivate good will without measure among all beings.

If a man by causing pain to others, wishes to obtain pleasure for himself, he, entangled in the bonds of selfishness, will never be free from hatred.

He who lives for pleasure only, his senses uncontrolled, immoderate in his food, idle and weak, him Mara, the tempter, will certainly overthrow, as the wind throws down a weak tree. He who lives without looking for pleasures, his senses well-controlled, moderate in his food, faithful and strong, him Mara will certainly not overthrow, any more than the wind throws down a rocky mountain.

Pleasure destroys the foolish. The foolish man by his thirst for pleasures destroys himself as if he were his own enemy. The fields are damaged by hurricanes and weeds; mankind is damaged by passion, by hatred, by vanity and lust.

Let no man ever take into consideration whether a thing is pleasant or unpleasant. The love of pleasure begets grief, and the dread of pain causes fear; he who is free from the love of pleasure and the dread of pain knows neither grief nor fear.

This is the sign that a man follows the right path: Uprightness is his delight, and he sees danger in the least of those things which he should avoid. He trains himself in the laws of morality, he encompasseth himself with holiness in word and deed; he sustains life by means that are pure; good is his conduct, guarded is the door of his senses; being mindful and self-possessed, he is altogether happy.

WORK AND REALIZATION

By Swami Vivekananda

Direct perception of the universal *Atman* (Spirit) which is more inner than the innermost, is not easily attained. Reading of it in the Scriptures or hearing of it from the mouth of the teacher brings some conception of it. When the hard lashes of worldly sorrow and pain make the heart sore, when in the hour of grief over the loss of near and dear ones the individual soul feels helpless and without support, when impenetrable and insurmountable darkness enshrouds the mind, then even more the *Jiva* (individual soul) turns to the *Atman*. Therefore sorrow is helpful to the knowledge of the *Atman*. But there must be the power to retain the lessons which sorrow and experience bring us. Those who live and die listlessly like cats or dogs, are they men? He is a man who even when agitated by the sharp interaction of pleasure and pain remains thoughtful and discriminating. Remembering that both pleasure and pain are evanescent, he becomes devoted to the *Atman*. That which is nearest is least observed. The *Atman* is the nearest of the near; therefore the listless, unsteady mind of man gets no clue of it. But the calm, controlled and discriminating *Jiva*, transcending the external world, enters the inner world, realizes the glory of the *Atman* and becomes great.

So long as you have the body-consciousness and the ego-consciousness, the sense of the reality of these outer things will persist. When, however, you get rid of the body-consciousness and become devoted to the *Atman* and live in the *Atman*, these will cease to appear permanent realities to you. . . . In the highest truth of the Parabrahman (the Supreme Being) there is no distinction of sex. On the relative plane of "I" and "Thou" we notice this difference

of sex; but the more the mind becomes introspective and inward, the more all ideas of difference vanish; and ultimately when the mind is merged and one with the homogeneous, undifferentiated Brahman, then such ideas as "this is a man," "that is a woman," do not remain at all. Therefore I say that though outwardly there may be difference between men and women, in their real nature there is no difference. This being so, if a man can be a knower of Brahman (God), why cannot a woman attain to the same knowledge? If one among women becomes a knower of Brahman, then by the radiance of her personality thousands of women will be inspired and awakened to Truth.

What helps the manifestation of Brahman is good work. All work can be done so as to be helpful, indirectly if not directly, to the manifestation of the truth of the *Atman*. Following the path laid down by the Rishis (Seers of Truth), knowledge of the *Atman* comes quickly; but doing works declared by Scriptural writers to be wrong brings bondage to the soul and this bondage of delusion sometimes does not vanish for many lives. In all ages and places, however, freedom will be attained by every *Jiva* ultimately. The *Atman* is the real nature of the *Jiva*. Know that the attainment of the knowledge of it is the highest object of life. . .

Sankara after saying that *Jnana* (the path of wisdom) and *Karma* (the path of work) are antagonistic, acknowledges *Karma* as a subsidiary help to the manifestation of *Jnana* and to purification. I do not contradict the conclusion of Sankara that in absolute transcendent knowledge no touch of work or activity remains; but so long as man is within the realm where he is conscious of work, the doer of work and the object of work, he is powerless to sit idle without doing some work. Since therefore work is the

inevitable nature of the *Jiva*, why not do such works as are helpful to the attainment of knowledge of the *Atman*? That all work is tainted with ignorance may be true from the transcendent view-point; but within normal relative consciousness, work has a great fitness and efficacy. . . .

So long as the body endures, one cannot live without doing work of one kind or another; therefore one should do such work as is conducive to the good of others. What is the use of that spiritual practice or realization which does not benefit others; which does not contribute to the well-being of souls sunk in ignorance and delusion; which does not help in rescuing them from the clutches of lust and greed? Do you think that while one soul remains in bondage, you will have liberation? So long as that soul is not liberated, it matters not through how many births, you will have to be born to help him, to make him realize Brahman. Every soul is a part of yourself — that is why you must work for others. As you desire the good of your wife and children, knowing them to be your own, similarly when the same love and concern for every soul will awaken in you, then I shall know that the God in you is awakening — not a moment before. When feeling for the good of all without respect to caste or color begins to rise in your heart, then shall I know that you are advancing towards the Ideal.

There is a class of Vedantins who holds this view—that individual salvation is not the real and perfect form of salvation, but universal and collective salvation is true salvation. By this, however, individual salvation is not barred. But think of the greatness of the heart of him who wishes to take the whole world with him to salvation! . . . When the *Atman* is realized, the performance or non-performance of work will be within your

control; and whatever you do in that state will be meritorious work, conducive to the well-being of all mankind and the world. When Brahman is manifest in you, your every breath will do good to your fellowmen. Then you will not have to do your work on the level of the lower ego, consciously calculating and planning.

Day and night think and meditate on Brahman (the Supreme). Meditate with great one-pointedness of mind. And during the time when you are awake to outward life, repeat mentally: "Let only good come to every soul and to all the world"; "Let the mind flow constantly towards God." By such a continuous current of thought the world is benefited. Nothing good in the world can be fruitless, be it work or thought. By the influence of your thought perhaps some one even far away in America may be helped.

See that you do not swerve from the Ideal an inch. Never manifest low spirits or lack of courage. In eating, drinking, playing, working, in health or disease, manifest the highest moral courage. Then only will you attain the grace of *Mahasakti* (Divine Mother). Think, "Whose child am I?" "Going to Him, shall I have low spirits or a despondent mind?" Putting under your feet all such weakness and lack of courage, stand up and say: "I am possessed of strength, I have intelligence, I am the knower of Brahman." Keep such a noble pride alive in the heart. He who has not such faith, the God in him does not awake. Have you not heard the songs of Ramprasad? He used to sing: "Whom do I fear in the world, whose queen is the Divine Mother of the universe?" Keep such pride awake in the mind. Then depression and discouragement will not be able to approach you. Remember the Lord. All weakness, all cowardice will vanish at once.

(Extract from familiar conversations noted down by a disciple and now appearing in the "Prabuddha Bharata," India.)

THE GRAIL

By G. O. W.

"Fearless of peril, solitude and pain,
To seek Thy Grail I leave the ways of men.
Oh Uttermost and Perfect! Shining Star!
Lead Thou my feet there where Thy mysteries are."

'Twas thus I prayed, on this high errand bent
In pilgrim's garb forth from the city went,
While farther and more faint the voices grew,
Of love and friends and all the joys I knew.

Long are the roads that only pilgrims tread,
Those paths no shelter give, no well, no bread.
Lonely the nights, starved and athirst the days,
While the blest vision evermore delays.

Yet even as birds are by a wind upborne,
So driven by heart's desire, midnight and morn
Found me upon the mountains still, in lands
With hope alone for guide,—on eastern sands

Whose golden waters, soundless wave on wave,
Horizon's swift receding footsteps lave;
Where endless shores vestments of silence wear,
And the lone spirit craves no speech save prayer.

Yet all my offering of weary years,
Of youth and sheltering love, of bitter tears
And steadfast quest, found me unworthy still;
The Grail held from my sight, hid in His Will.

At last I turned me home. With cloak grief-rent,
Unworthy pilgrim, stricken, old, and spent,
Christ's sinful wanderer,—one evening late
As beggars pass, I passed the city gate.

Now darkness deepened; and the city's roar
Ebbed like a tide. The leprous, crowding poor,
Vanished in gloom, and like a sea-swept stone
Left high upon the shore, so I was left, alone.

Then in the silence, up the empty street
I saw a Shadow move; not slow, nor fleet,
But as a cloud drifts up the endless sky,
O Love, O Christ! that Shadow came to me,

And grave unfathomable eyes looked into mine
So long tear-blind. "Give Me that pilgrim cup of thine,"
He said; and stooping o'er the city street
Some dust He gathered, trod by sinners' feet;—

"O man! My Heart bleeds here."—And then a veil
Fell on my sight, but in my hands I held the Grail.

It hath been asked whether it be possible for the soul, while it is yet in the body, to reach so high as to cast a glance into eternity and receive a foretaste of eternal life and eternal blessedness. This is commonly denied; and truly so in a sense. For it indeed cannot be so long as the soul is taking heed to the body and the things which minister and appertain thereto, and to time and the creature, and is disturbed and troubled and distracted thereby. For if the soul shall rise to such a state, she must be quite pure, wholly stripped and bare of all images, and be entirely separate from all creatures and above all from herself.

—*Theologica Germanica.*

SELF-CONTROL AND CHARACTER

By Sister Devamata

Self-control is not a problem concerning our relation to the outer world, as commonly supposed; it is wholly a problem dealing with our relation to ourself. The unthinking man regards himself as an independent unit entering into a purely external relation with the universe. If under stress he falls short of his standard in dealing with it, he believes that he must make an effort to improve his behavior; that is, whatever may be his inward state of mind, he must curb all apparent display of it and learn to meet every condition of life with outward composure and courtesy. If he feels anger surging up, he struggles to keep it down; if someone irritates or disgusts him, he endeavors not to show it. His whole practice in control is directed towards specific events or people and is carried on only at the moment when the test of endurance rises.

Very different is the attitude of the thoughtful man. He recognizes that self-control is not a question of facing a particular situation manfully, through an isolated act of will. It is a question of building up a strong resisting force within, which is constantly strong without regard to outside irritations and temptations. A control which rests on the negative practice of suppression is not control at all. It is merely delayed defeat; for however far we may push our point of resistance, sooner or later something will break it down. Serenity of manner can be counted on only when behind it there is serenity of mind. No behavior is admirable or dependable which does not rest on character; and character is reshaped only by altering our fundamental values.

When we set out to cultivate self-control, therefore, we

must devote all our attention to the basic springs of action within and pay as little heed as possible to the momentary disturbances which sweep over the surface of our being. In other words, we must work on that in us which is disturbed, not on the disturbance or on the external cause of it. Whenever our balance is shaken or destroyed, it means that we have lost our sense of proportion. We are giving too large a place in the universe to some isolated incident or object and identifying ourselves too closely with it. This erroneous self-identity is the pivotal point of the whole difficulty. Theoretically we may believe that we are souls, but in practice we are bodies. The real accent in all our motives of action is laid on the physical. It is the needs of our body or of other bodies which consume our time and effort. The needs of our spiritual life are remembered only at rare intervals, if at all.

Our irritations also are in greater part physical—some one has interfered with our comfort, we have not the ease or leisure we desire, our work is unsympathetic, people do not treat us as they should, we are lacking in health or grace or gifts. These are the grievances which keep our disposition raw and sensitive. Envy, hatred, malice, jealousy, anger, discontent, are all reactions of our physical being. They are the remnant of our subconscious habit when we snarled and snapped at some quadruped neighbor over a disputed bone. That bone seemed the largest thing in the universe to us then, naturally we fought for it. Our present tempers and resentments may be less apparently brutal, but they rise from the same plane of our being; and until we have ceased to identify ourselves with that, we shall not escape from them.

The physical organism will be much healthier and stronger when we pay less heed to it. Its vitality is de-

creased by keeping our attention fixed upon it, just as it weakens a child to be worrying over it constantly. We should learn to treat the body like a useful vehicle or instrument—give it the necessary care, use it wisely and forget it. If it cannot be forgotten, then by steadfast practice we must dis-identify ourselves with its varying conditions and demands. The same method should be adopted in dealing with our subtle body—that inner body consisting of mind, intellect and ego.

Our likes and dislikes must be no longer the standard by which we determine our action. We must find a larger measure to live by. A great deal of our irritability, depression and impatience arises from indecision. But we shall never acquire decisiveness so long as we make our own comfort or discomfort, advantage or disadvantage, pleasure or pain, the basis of our calculation; because these are shifting quantities. What is pleasant to us at one time is extremely unpleasant at another, the comfort of to-day is the discomfort of to-morrow. That which seems an advantage from our present outlook appears a great disadvantage when we view it from another angle. The habit of firm decision comes only when we refer the situation to some fixed point and the one truly fixed point in the universe is the Supreme Will. When all our acts of choice are referred to It, our life moves on in a strong unswerving current and we feel none of the rebellions against circumstance which now so often disturb our balance.

In reality there is no occasion for choice. So perfect and homogeneous is the cosmic plan that at every instant there is just one course to pursue. If we try to move along other avenues, we shall be thrown back again and again, until we are forced into the path which in the universal scheme

of things we are meant to travel. It is these frequent corrective rebuffs, called by us disappointments, failures, catastrophes, which overpower our most resolute efforts at self-control; but the pressure will be wholly removed when we fall in line with the universal law. Then we shall not be overwhelmed even by great sorrow, so the Bhagavad-Gita assures us. A mere calculating attempt to unify ourselves with God's Will in order to enjoy greater joy and peace, however, will not bring the desired result. We must be convinced that His is the wiser way, and we take it by an act of free choice because no other way tempts us.

A mathematician is not tempted to work out his problem contrary to the rules of mathematics; a chemist does not long to perform his experiment in defiance of the laws of chemistry. Why should we prefer a small personal measure of action rather than the vast and universal one? Or why should we imagine ourselves freer when we move against the law than when we go with it? To attain this state of willing conformity to the cosmic plan, however, we must exercise our power of discrimination with ceaseless diligence, until we have fully adjusted our values and spontaneously view everything from the broader stand-point. It is the petty childish personal self in us which is hurt and angered and discouraged and rebellious. It sees all these distresses on the level and necessarily they assume grave proportions; but the most grievous insult, the most crushing disaster cannot reach to the height of the soul. What prevents us from living on that height and building there a strong fortress of character which no misfortune can overpower? Nothing is keeping us back except ourselves. Rather is all the force of evolving nature pushing us upward, as it has pushed us up from the sub-human forms of life.

So long as a thing seems vital to us we cannot help growing angry or despondent or nervous over it. Even the buzzing of a mosquito can make us lose our temper, if a night's sleep for the moment appears to be the most essential thing in life. And no amount of negative reasoning can alter the situation. We must proceed, not by the method of elimination, but by substitution. We cannot persuade ourselves by abstract reasoning that the present vital thing is of no importance. When we finish all our arguments, it is there just the same, pushing hard against the foundations of our self-control. We must bring in something else more vital, which by comparison will make the first thing dwindle into nothingness. In order to do this successfully we must form the habit of holding our thought on the truly vital things of life. This is the purpose of all higher study and meditation and holy association.

We can completely obliterate some weakness in our character by choosing as our object of meditation in our daily practice a strong counteracting picture; and it must be the same picture day after day until the source of the weakness is wholly effaced. In this way our meditation may be made to serve a double end. While on the one hand it is teaching us to gather up our scattered energies and direct them through higher channels, it may also wipe out past habits of thought and create for us a new scale of values — substituting the real for the unreal, the essential for the non-essential. No one can dwell persistently upon any word or act of a Christ, a Buddha, of any holy saint or prophet, without gaining unconsciously a new point of view.

Our thought is the material out of which we build our character. If it is flimsy and unsteady, we shall be like a

house built upon the sands; the first rushing storm will throw us down. But if our mind is firm and one-pointed, the wind and rain of circumstance may beat upon us, but cannot shake us. It is not possible, however, for the mind to be fixed and one-pointed unless it has a definite point on which to fasten. And here we touch the innermost secret of all self-control. We can never be truly the master until we have a clearly defined ideal. Our lack of control is due wholly to the scattered state of our energies. We are like an unmobilized army. When the enemy strikes, he takes us unawares and routs us before we have had time to gather together our defensive forces. Also we invite attack when we are thus off our guard. People feel free to show their ill-tempers and annoyances and the pressure against our power of control is doubled. But when our forces are fully mobilized and on guard, the very sense of calm impregnable strength thus created will silence the petty word or shame away the hostile action, and our occasions for irritation will be reduced immeasurably.

The causes for defeat within our own self also will be less and less. An ideal is necessarily something higher and nobler and bigger than we are at the present moment. It represents our furthermost point of vision, and our heart cannot rest upon it from day to day without being transformed into its likeness. What we think upon, that we become; and as we think on God, in whatever form, we are re-created gradually in His image. Then we perceive instinctively the relative value of the things of the world and the things of Spirit, and the passing trials of the outer life leave us untouched. The whole universe cannot tempt us to sell our soul's peace and serenity.

Nor will this state of exalted detachment cheat us of anything. It will only save us from cheating ourselves.

We shall not lose our power of enjoyment. We shall enjoy the world even more, but our enjoyment will be in proportion to the value of each thing. It will not be out of scale; and if the person or object or event fails us, we shall experience no reaction; because we expected nothing which was beyond the nature of the occasion to give. A true mother does not grow angry when her little child kicks her and screams at her. She is only grieved at its folly and feels a greater eagerness to save it from itself. It was the mother-heart of Jesus which prayed on the cross for those who had hung Him there. And such will be our attitude towards all these outer stings and blows, when we have gained a truer sense of values. There will be calmness on the surface as at the depths; and our whole tender concern will be for the one who, in striving to wound us, has only hurt himself.

SPIRITUAL FRUITION

By Jan Van Ruysbroeck. 13th Century.

If a man would have fruition of God, three things are needful thereto; these are true peace, inward silence, and loving adherence. Whosoever would find true peace within himself and God must love God in such a way that he can with a free heart renounce for the glory of God everything which he does or loves inordinately, or which he possesses or can possess, contrary to the glory of God. This is the first thing which is needful to all men.

The second thing is an inward silence; that is, that a man should be empty and free from images of all things which he ever saw or of which he ever heard. The third thing is a loving adherence to God, and this adherence is itself fruition; for whosoever cleaves to God out of pure love, and not for his own profit, he enjoys God in truth and feels that he loves God and that God loves him.

There are still three other points, which are higher still and which establish a man and make him able to enjoy and to feel God continually, if it be His good will to have it so. The first of these points is to rest in Him Whom one enjoys; that is, where love is overcome by the lover, and love is taken possession of by the lover, in bare Essential Love. There love has fallen in love with the lover, and each is all to the other, in possession and in rest. From this there follows the second: and this is called a falling asleep in God; that is, when the spirit immerses itself and knows not how, nor where, nor in what it is.

And therefrom follows the last point that can be put into words, that is, when the spirit beholds a Darkness into which it cannot enter with the reason. And there it feels itself dead and lost to itself, and one with God without difference and without distinction. And when it feels itself one with God, then God Himself is its peace and its enjoyment and its rest. And this is an unfathomable abyss wherein man must die to himself in blessedness, and must live again in virtues, whenever love and its stirring demand it.

The man who is sent down by God from these heights into the world is full of truth and rich in all virtues. And he seeks not his own but the glory of Him Who sent him. And hence he is just and truthful in all things, and he possesses a rich and a generous ground, which is set in the richness of God, and therefore he must always spend himself on those who have need of him; for the living fount of the Holy Spirit, which is his wealth, can never be spent. And he is a living and willing instrument of God, with which God works whatsoever He wills and howsoever He wills; and these works he reckons not as his own, but gives all the glory to God. And so he remains ready and willing

to do in the virtues all that God commands, strong and courageous in suffering and enduring all that God allows to befall him.

And by this he possesses a universal life, for he is ready alike for contemplation and for action, and is perfect in both of them. And none can have this universal life save the God-seeing man; and none can contemplate and enjoy God save he who has within himself the six points, ordered as I have described heretofore. And therefore all those are deceived who fancy themselves to be contemplative, and yet inordinately love, practise, or possess, some creaturely thing; or who fancy that they enjoy God before they are empty of images, or that they rest before they enjoy. All such are deceived; for we must make ourselves fit for God with an open heart, with a peaceful conscience, with naked contemplation, without hypocrisy, in sincerity and truth. And then we shall mount up from virtue unto virtue, and shall see God and shall enjoy Him, and in Him shall become one with Him, in the way which I have shown to you. That this be done in all of us, so help us God. Amen.

REPORT

Swami Paramananda returned to Boston from his Western tour on October 15th and at once resumed charge of all Services and classes. On Thursday evening, the 21st, he held an informal reception for the students and friends of the Centre. Although it was arranged at the last moment, the rooms of the Centre were full. The first part of the evening was devoted to music and impromptu speeches. Professor Perrin of the Boston University told something of his recent experiences while teaching at the University of Nankin, China. Mrs. Spaulding dwelt with warm appre-

ciation on the pervading influence of the Centre, which brought constant blessing into the lives of many who were deprived of the privilege of attendance at the meetings; and Miss Shepherd recited one of Longfellow's poems with deep feeling. The Swami spoke at intervals as he called upon the various ones who contributed towards the evening's entertainment. In giving an outline of his Western tour and of the many lecture invitations now coming to him, he showed how rapidly the interest in Vedanta is spreading and how many are the new links being formed between the Centre in Boston and the outside world. Later, refreshments were served in the Community Room and the rest of the evening was spent in friendly conversation.

* * * * * *

The Swami's recent visit to Los Angeles, although shorter than usual, proved very fruitful. The numbers at the meetings of the Centre grew so large that they taxed the seating capacity of the Centre to the utmost. The Swami also spoke on one Sunday afternoon at Krotona, the National Theosophical Headquarters, to an overflowing audience. The lecture hall was so crowded that it was necessary to seat people on the platform. His subject was "The Science and Practice of Yoga". A special lecture was arranged at the Hotel Darby by several prominent ladies of Los Angeles and the keen interest awakened led to a second meeting in one of the most beautiful homes of Los Angles. Another outside lecture was at the Metaphysical Library. The Swami was asked to speak also at the Woman's Suffrage Victory celebration, given by the Friday Morning Club, one of the largest Woman's Clubs in the United States. He chose as his subject, "Ideal of Womanhood in India".

FAMINE IN INDIA

When Swami Paramananda published the first volume of his translation of the Upanishads, it will be remembered, an Indian Famine Relief Fund was created by selling special autograph copies. So ready was the response of the friends of the Boston Centre that during the past year it has been possible to send several generous remittances to the Ramakrishna Mission for their relief work. In acknowledging the last draft, Swami Brahmananda, President of the Mission, gives the following heart-rending picture of the misery prevailing in the famine swept areas:

"A little while ago I received your draft. The amount according to your wish will be utilized in Famine Relief Work. In these days, in the district of Puri, the famine is very severe. Night and day men and women, boys and girls, come in flocks to us from the villages crying pitiably 'Give us food, give us rice. O, fathers, give us something to eat or we'll die.' Listening to their pitiful appeals, one can hardly bear it. One is frightened in looking at them. They look as if they might drop dead at any moment. Their bodies are only just skeletons covered with skin and barely anything to wear. They turn specially to us, but the help we are able to give is not adequate, owing to lack of sufficient funds. We give them what we can."

No one, we feel sure, can read this account without longing to do something to alleviate such harrowing distress. Immediately on receiving the President's letter, the Swami decided to set apart all the proceeds of his lecture tours for Indian Famine Relief, and he was able to forward a substantial sum on his recent return from the West. He now hopes many others will be glad to join him in an earnest effort to bring succour to the starving poor of India.

(Contributions may be sent to The Vedanta Centre of Boston.)

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UNIV. OF MICH.

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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The Message of the East

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INVITATION

The Vedanta Centre of Boston closes its twelfth season of work with the present year. It will celebrate the anniversary of its establishment on Thursday evening, January 6th, 1921, at 8 o'clock. All friends of the Centre are cordially invited to attend and bring with them their friends.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST completes its ninth volume with the present number. We urgently request our subscribers to renew their subscriptions for the coming year as promptly as possible. Owing to the excessive cost of production, we are forced once more to make a slight advance in the subscription price. We hope that all those who recognize the unique spiritual value of this monthly will do their utmost to aid it in its earnest effort to bring to all its message of unity, love and tolerance.

Subscription for 1921 will be $2.00.

THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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UNIVERSAL TOLERANCE AND THE CHRIST IDEAL

By Swami Paramananda

The Christ Ideal to me has a universal appeal. In the East there are people who have neither read the Bible nor come in contact with Christians, yet their lives exemplify in a remarkable degree what was taught by Jesus of Nazareth. This must make us realize that like the sky over every head the real spirit of religion is universal; but through our narrow vision we limit it and make a mockery of it. It does not matter what we profess. Name and form have very little to do with the soul of religion. It is all-embracing and we feel it in our heart. According to my conception, the import of the teachings of Christ and of all the great Lights of the spiritual world is one and only one. Their sole aim is to show us how we may bring the living presence of our Ideal into our consciousness and actions. Whoever does this is a follower of the Christ Ideal, whatever may be the nature of his creed. It is living according to our highest concept which makes us a worshipper of God. If we do not do this, praising our special form of faith and exalting it above all others will not avail much. It is only our life which will uphold it. If we do not glorify it in our life and activity, we may talk of universal love and tolerance and of all the beautiful things taught in the

great Bibles of the world and by the great Teachers, but our words will not carry weight. It is our life alone which counts, and a Divine Incarnation comes to show us how through concentrated thought and actions we may unite ourselves with Divinity.

A Divine Incarnation is divine enough to be in touch with Divinity and human enough to be in touch with humanity. He comes to point the way Godward; to help us break down all the fictitious barriers of caste and creed which divide us. When we come in contact with such manifestations we see how quickly the non-essentials vanish and the ice of misunderstanding melts away. It is the sun of wisdom which melts all coldness from the human heart and unites us. And that is the only real worship. It is not in theory, it is not in dogma that religion consists; it is in feeling and realizing. That is the dominant note running through all Vedic philosophy.

It brings a greater blessing when we take a Divine Ideal from the broader point of view than when we confine him to any one form. In India there are many who are regarded as Divine Incarnations. The Vedic Scriptures declare that whenever virtue subsides and vice prevails, when people become immersed in materialism and selfishness, then the Lord embodies Himself and once more manifests the Truth. He comes whenever and wherever there is need. There is no limit set for His coming; and however and whenever He comes, it is always the same Infinite Being. There can be no essential difference between the spirit of Christ and the spirit of Buddha, or the spirit of any manifestation before or since. There is only one Absolute Being and all Divine manifestations are from that Source. In a family a father may appear one day in one garment and on another day in another, and the children

would be foolish indeed if they did not recognize him in the different garments he may wear. We are equally foolish when we fail to recognize the one universal Father under all His various forms, and condemn those who invoke Him by other names.

An interesting story is told in India of a fanatic who worshipped Siva, the third person of the Hindu Trinity. He was so ardent a follower of his Deity that he did not want to hear any other name of God. He wished to exclude every aspect of Divinity except his own. At last the Lord Himself said: "I must teach this man that it is I Who manifest Myself in all forms, that there is no difference between one and another." So He came to him in a form which was half Siva and half Vishnu. The devotee was half pleased and half displeased. He shut one eye and with the other looked at the Siva side only. Even this visible proof did not convince him. The children in the street, seeing that he was a fanatic and that it irritated him to hear any other name than that of Siva, began shouting other sacred names whenever he passed. This made him so desperate that he hung bells on his ears to drown the sound of their voices.

Many among us are sincere and fervent in upholding our Ideal, but in our zeal we overlook that the whole universe is part of that Ideal and that all men, of whatever nation or faith, are just as much children of God as we are. If we are not kind, tender, loving and forgiving towards all, we have no share in the religion we profess. Jesus the Christ taught this through His life, through His self-abnegation and His all-embracing love, a love which was not confined merely to those who followed Him and loved Him and were related to Him. Gautama Buddha, who was called the Compassionate One, preached: "You must so adjust

your heart that you long for the welfare of all beings, including the happiness of your enemies." Universal love and universal tolerance — these are the notes which sound through the teachings of all great Incarnations, who uphold these transcendent ideals not only in their words, but in their actions. They make them real by living them. We struggle and stumble and fail; then we imagine that these lofty ideals are not attainable for us. Through such Divine Manifestations, however, we see that they are attainable, that it is possible for a man to rise to so great a height of spiritual reality that, when he is struck by an enemy, he not only controls himself and does not strike back, but he actually loves that enemy. The story is told in India of a saint who was struck down by an ignorant man in the market-place and made unconscious. His brothers came from the monastery to nurse him. As they saw him recovering consciousness, one of them leaned over him and asked: "Do you know who is caring for you?" The saint replied: "The same verily who struck me." To him all men were alike in God. When we have the vision of Divinity, we can see no difference. A saint gives his benediction without limit to every living being.

We do not prove our greatness by belonging to this religion or to that religion. We prove it by our faithfulness, by our loyalty to our Ideal, and by carrying our Ideal into our life. The man who forgives most, who loves most, is a true Christian. He has reached the Christ Ideal, and also he has reached the universal spirit. He perceives that there is no difference between one child of God and another. There are many paths which lead to the same goal, and only by realizing this do we realize true brotherhood. Not through exclusiveness, not through denunciation, not through fanatical zeal of any kind, can the spirit of broth-

erhood be attained. It is right for us to be devoted to our Ideal; but do not let us attach too much importance to outer form and creed. Let us lay all stress on the inner life, for it is the inner life alone which counts. We must try to unfold that life. So long as we lack it, we may hold all the lofty ideals given in the Sacred Books, but what good will it do?

We cannot accept anything truly until we know it and we know the truths given in the Scriptures and by the Great Ones through our inner life. That alone enables us to read the book of Truth unerringly, and it is the spirit of religion which we need to touch. We shall always find difference in forms. So long as men cling to these forms, one will say: "My creed is the only creed through which you can attain salvation." And another will make the same claim for his creed. Which one shall we believe? They speak with equal fervor and devotion. In this world of diversity necessarily there is a great variety of temperaments. One person likes to worship God by elaborate ceremonials, another feels irritated by ritual. He prefers philosophy and reason. Should he not have a share in God's life also? God has provided for all amply. His storehouse is inexhaustible, and one who has touched that Divine Being knows that he cannot exhaust it or confine it within one special creed.

An ordinary man says, "This is my religion, that is your religion; this is my land, that is your land." The spirit of wisdom, however, teaches us that this "mine" and this "thine" do not exist in the realm of reality. When we merge our life in the universal life and unite our hearts with the inexhaustible Source, we rise above the sense of seperateness. That is why we must seek the kingdom of heaven first. When we have found it, selfishness drops

away from us; all harshness, all discordant feelings disappear; and we live in another sphere altogether. That kingdom is already within us, but we must discover it. We cannot discover it, however, through any book or creed. No one can reveal it to us. An earnest, yearning spirit alone will give us access to it. We must voluntarily, ardently, hungrily seek it; then we shall find it. There is no other way.

There is no one who can eat for us and give us the benefit of the nourishment. How can any one do our thinking about God and give us the vision? It is not possible. All the great Seers tell us to know the Truth and the Truth will make us free. This knowing is accomplished only by going within our own being. It is there we realize that our true heritage is God and that we are children of Divinity. Whenever we try to keep any one out, we strike a discordant note. It takes us away from our Ideal, even though apparently we have devotion for It. Real religion teaches us the fundamental principles of life — love and tolerance for all humanity. When we bind our hearts to these principles, then Divinity shines through us and for us from within and from without; all quarters are pervaded and permeated by that Divine influence and we find that we have risen above the God of tradition.

When that inner Truth begins to shine, then we feel what is true brotherhood. How can we realize the brotherhood of man until we have learned something of the Fatherhood of God? Do we really feel that God is our Infinite Father? If He is, then all are His children and we have no right to raise our voice against the least of His creatures. When we gain this universal feeling, we have reached the threshold of true religion. Before that we merely talk theories. The way to gain it is from within, not by making outside adjustments and changes.

There are many to-day who claim that religion is not proving successful. There are ministers even who believe that we must have more attractions and amusements in the churches to draw the public. People are not drawn in that way to the altar of God. Such things may attract them for the moment, but Truth alone can draw the heart. Truth can reach us, however, only when we have thrown away the blemish of selfishness and all the things which now hide the Truth. That gem of Truth must shine clearly; and when it shines thus in our life, we shall see; and when we see all things in Truth, all our small, harsh, unworthy feelings will be destroyed and our hearts will be filled with love and universal tolerance.

TEACHINGS OF THE GREAT ONES

BUDDHIST

That which is most needed is a loving heart.

All who are wise spurn the pleasures of the body. They loathe lust and seek to promote their spiritual existence.

When a tree is burning with fierce flames, how can the birds congregate therein? Truth cannot dwell where passion lives. Without a knowledge of this the learned man, though he may be praised as a sage, is ignorant.

To him who has this knowledge true wisdom dawns. To acquire this wisdom is the one aim needed. To neglect it implies the failure of life.

There are ways from light into darkness and from darkness into light. There are ways, also, from the gloom into deeper gloom and from the dawn into brighter light. The wise man will use the light he has to receive more light. He will constantly advance towards the knowledge of the Truth.

Exhibit true superiority by virtuous conduct and the ex-

ercise of reason; meditate deeply on the vanity of earthly things and realize the changefulness of life.

Elevate the mind and seek sincere faith with firm purpose; let your happiness depend, not upon external things, but upon your own mind. — *Gautama Buddha.*

CONFUCIAN

The Master said: He who aims to be a man of complete virtue, in his food does not seek to gratify his appetite, nor in his dwelling place does he seek the appliances of ease; he is earnest in what he is doing and careful in his speech; he frequents the company of men of principle that he may be rectified: — such a person may be said to love to learn.

The Master said: I do not open up the Truth to one who is not eager to get knowledge. When I have presented one corner of a subject to any one and he cannot learn from it the other three, I do not repeat my lesson.

The man of virtue makes the difficulty to be overcome his first business and success only a subsequent consideration.

Admirable indeed was the virtue of Hwuy. With a single bamboo dish of rice, a single gourd dish of drink and living in his mean narrow lane, while others could not have endured the distress, he did not allow his joy to be affected by it. — *Confucian Texts.*

INDO-ARYAN

Self-control, tranquillity, compassion for all creatures, restraint of the passions, abstention from cruelty as also from appropriating what belongs to others, refraining even mentally from all acts which are false or injurious to any living creature on the earth . . . these are said to constitute good conduct. From observance of such conduct arises Righteousness, which protects all creatures eternally.

That man who is the friend of all, who endures all, who

has conquered his senses, who is devoid of fear and anger, who behaves towards all creatures as towards himself, who is restrained, pure, free from vanity and without egoism, he is truly liberated.

He who is free from desire, whose understanding is fixed on renunciation and whose eyes are always directed towards his own faults, soon succeeds in breaking the fetters which bind him. Free from longing and possessed of a tranquil mind, he is never shaken by pain or sorrow or fear, which spring from attachment (to material things). Weapons do not wound him; death does not exist for him. Nowhere in the world can be seen any one that is happier than he. — *Sri Krishna. (Mahabharata)*

GREEK

He who loves the goods of the soul will love things more divine; but he who loves the goods of its transient habitation will love things human. The felicity of a man does not consist either in body or in riches, but in upright conduct and justice. — *Democrates.*

Blessed is the man who has gained the riches of divine wisdom; wretched is he who has a dim opinion of the Gods in his heart. — *Empedocles.*

Let thyself be guided and directed by the understanding which comes from above and that ought to hold the reins.

Consult and deliberate before thou dost act, that thou mayest not commit foolish actions. For it is the part of a miserable man to speak and act without reflection.

— *Pythagoras.*

To vice belongs excess and defect and to virtue belongs moderation. The further we remove ourselves from error, the nearer shall we come to the middle course. But most of all must we upon all occasions keep a watchful guard

against that which gives us pleasure and against Pleasure herself. For we cannot pass judgment upon her unmoved by her bribes. —*Aristotle.*

INCA INDIAN

He who envies the wise and good is like the wasp which sucks poison from the finest flowers.

Drunkenness and anger admit of reformation, but folly is incurable.

He who kills another unlawfully, condemns himself to death.

A noble and generous heart is known by the patience with which it supports adversity. —*Pacha Cutic.*

HEBREW

Be thou the cursed, not he who curses. Be of them that are persecuted, not of them that persecute. Look at Scripture: there is not a single bird more persecuted than the dove, yet this is the bird which God has chosen to be offered on His altar. God said, "Bring me a sacrifice, not from them that persecute, but from them that are persecuted."

The aim and end of all wisdom is good works.

The dying benediction of a sage to his disciples was: "I pray for you that the fear of heaven may be as strong upon you as the fear of man. You avoid sin before the face of the latter; avoid it before the face of the All-seeing." —*From the Talmud.*

CHRISTIAN

Come, my soul, depart from outward things and gather thyself together into a true interior silence, that thou mayest set out with all thy courage and bury and lose thyself in the desert of a deep contrition.

—*Little Book of Eternal Wisdom.*

If thou wilt arrive at a perfect knowledge and enjoyment of Me, the Eternal Truth, thou shouldst never go outside the knowledge of thyself; and by humbling thyself in the valley of humility thou wilt know Me and thyself, from which knowledge thou wilt draw all that is necessary. . . . In self-knowledge then thou wilt humble thyself, seeing that in thyself thou dost not even exist.

— *St. Catherine of Siena.*

Happy then will it (the mind of man) be when, no distraction interposing, it shall joy in that only Truth, by Whom all things are true. . . . For there is a joy which is not given to the ungodly, but to those who love Thee for Thine own sake, whose joy Thou Thyself art. And this is the happy life, to rejoice to Thee, of Thee, for Thee; this is it and there is no other. — *St. Augustine.*

SEERS AND INCARNATIONS

By Swami Ramakrishnananda

(Conversation in the Monastery Hall at Madras)

Were those who wrote down the Vedas Incarnations of God?

They had realized God and he who has realized God is the same as God Himself. They were the embodiment of purity and so they were able to perceive all Truth.

Is it because God has given His Message once for all and does not need to repeat it that there are no such *Rishis* (Seers) to-day?

God is always giving His message, but now there is no one to hear it. We are all like walls. Does any man talk to a dead wall? So God does not talk to us because we are all filled with impurity and *Tamas* (heaviness). But let this dead wall become living and at once God will speak to it.

The life the sages lived in those days in their hermitages was very wonderful. These hermitages were in the most hidden nooks of the forest. They were large villages, perhaps a thousand souls, and those who lived in them were all so wonderful that sometimes the little children were *Atma-gnanis* (knowers of the Self). They had no anxiety as regards food, for one-sixth of the king's revenue was always set apart for the maintenance of these people; and it was paid, not in money, but in kind. So they were able to devote all their time to deep meditation.

The wives were as great sages as their husbands. The young people were allowed simple enjoyments, but the life was very strict and each had his or her fixed duties to perform. Their wants, however, were very few. When one of these sages came to a court, the king would at once come down from his throne, take the dust-stained mendicant and place him on it and then sit at his feet to learn. Such was the great reverence they had for their sages.

What is the difference between the *Rishis* who had realized God and an Incarnation of God?

The *Rishis* were incarnations of purity. They were *Sannyasins* (those who had renounced everything for the sake of Truth) and they preached renunciation to every one. But when an Incarnation comes, He recognizes that very few are fit to become *Sannyasins*; so He preaches the householder's life to a householder, and out of a thousand householders He may make perhaps two *Sannyasins*. He has the power to see what kind of life each man is fit to live. These Divine Teachers are living examples of Truth and to attain Truth we must sit at their feet.

If you will study all the personal religions, you will find that they all preach renunciation. Renunciation is their fundamental teaching. Christ says: Give up all and follow

me. Mahommed says: Allah is the one God and you must worship Him alone. Buddha says: Give up all desires; that is the only way to salvation. Zoroaster says: Renounce Ahriman (the principle of evil) for Ahura Mazda (the principle of good). This is the whole theme of the Upanishads. You must renounce to attain freedom. All Vedanta is built on this principle of renunciation.

The Vedas were not mere poetical imaginations. They represented the actual experience of the *Rishis*, who merely wrote down what they themselves had seen. The Upanishads are the most wonderful books. One should learn Sanskrit merely in order to study them. They are a concise statement of all the great truths of the universe. Every line is the expression of a mind that has realized.

In the West they preach to masses of people and that is what is understood as religion there. But in India one man whispers one or two words in the ear of another in a solitary place and this is religion according to the Hindus. Man receives religion through the *Mantram*. The spiritual power is transmitted through the Sacred Word; and this must be made known to none. The wife must not tell it to the husband or the husband to the wife. It is the person's individual property. So religion in India is altogether an individual thing. It is for this reason that Swami Vivekananda says there must be as many religions as there are people. This is literally true. As one coat cannot fit both you and me, so one form of God cannot suit all. In the West they give one God and expect Him to suit every one, but in India every man is given the aspect of God fitted to his peculiar need. That is the meaning of the thirty-three million gods about which you hear; and it is the *Guru* or spiritual teacher who determines what aspect of God is specially suited to the disciple.

THE LIGHT OF DIVINE WISDOM

By Hugh of St. Victor. 12th Century.

(A Franciscan Monk at the Abbey of St. Victor in Paris)

All the world is a place of exile to philosophers. It is a great beginning of virtue for the mind to learn by degrees, by exercise, first to change these visible and transitory things, that afterwards it may be able also to relinquish them. He is yet delicate to whom his native soil is sweet. But he is already strong to whom every soil is his country, and he is perfect to whom the whole world is a place of exile. The first has fixed his love on the world, the second has scattered it, the last has quenched it. I have been an exile from my boyhood, and I know with what grief the mind sometimes deserts the narrow space of a poor cottage, with what liberty it afterwards despises marble dwellings and panelled ceilings. . . .

Philosophy is the love and the study and, in a certain sense, the friendship of wisdom. This love of wisdom is the illumination of the understanding mind by that pure wisdom, and in a way the calling back and summoning of the mind to wisdom's self, in order that its study of the divine wisdom and its friendship with the pure divine mind may be seen. Therefore this wisdom impresses the character of its divinity upon the soul and leads her back to the strength and purity of her true nature. From this is born the truth of thoughts and speculations, and holy and pure morality of actions.

After the darkness of sin entered the soul, the eye of contemplation was quenched, so that it beheld naught; and the eye of reason became bleared, so that it saw doubtfully. Only the eye of the flesh remained in its clearness.

But the whole heart being converted into the fire of love, God is felt verily to be all in all, since He is received with

such intimate delection, that save Him nothing is left to the heart even of itself.

The Bridegroom is God, the bride is the soul. The Bridegroom is at home, when He fills the mind through internal joy; He goeth away, when He withdraws the sweetness of contemplation.

If a man were sufficient to investigate these things he would find in them the wondrous light of God's wisdom. And would I could explore this (the divine wisdom) as subtly, describe it as completely, as I can love it ardently. For it is a delight to me, exceeding sweet and joyous, frequently to treat of these things, wherein at once the sense is instructed by reason, the mind is delighted by sweetness, and the affection stirred by emulation; so that we are amazed with the Psalmist and cry out in admiration: "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works, in wisdom hast Thou made them all."

MARCHING ORDERS

By J. P. Dabney

I know not when the trump will send me forth;—
Whether I am to march or south or north.
I only have mine orders to prepare,
So I make ready to go anywhere.

Light-weight I go. One needs not many things
To carry on such fruitful journeyings;
And he goes farthest who shall go most free,
Armed but with faith and immortality.

I cannot miss the way, for I shall know
The finger-posts along the way I go,
As they are limned in fire to point the quest;—
I need but march;—and God directs the rest.

APOLLONIUS OF TYANA

By Sister Devamata

The coming of every Incarnation is marked by the appearance of towering characters who have each one a part to play in the task of spiritual renewal. Among these some, like St. Paul, become disciples and co-workers of the Bearer of the new message; others cleanse and rehabilitate the old; but both are expressions of the one all-embracing cosmic effort to restore and revivify the religious consciousness. Among the Apostles of the old none stands out in more salient relief than Apollonius of Tyana. So far-reaching and transforming was his influence on the religious life of his time that he was worshipped for four centuries after his death with divine honors, a temple was raised to him at Tyana, his statue was placed among those of the Gods and his name invoked as one who possessed divine powers. Vopiscus, a writer of the third century, speaks of him as "a sage of the most wide-spread renown and authority, an ancient philosopher, a true friend of the Gods and himself worthy to be worshipped as a god. For who among men was more holy, who more worthy of reverence, who more god-like than he? He it was who gave life to the dead. He it was who did and said so many things beyond the power of men."

Hierocles, Governor of Palmyra, Bithynia and Alexandria, as also a philosopher of merit, wrote in 305 "A Truthful Address to the Christians," in which he compared Apollonius to Jesus. This stirred the early Christian Fathers and at once his name suffered an eclipse which has persisted down the centuries. Yet we find Sidonius Apollinaris, Bishop of Claremont, translating his life into Latin for Leon, the councillor of King Euric, and writing to his friend: "Read the life of a man sought out by the rich, yet

who never sought for riches; who loved wisdom and despised gold; a man frugal in the midst of feastings, clad in linen in the midst of those clothed in purple, austere in the midst of luxury. . . . In fine, to speak plainly, perchance no historian will find in ancient times a philosopher whose life is equal to that of Apollonius."

The life which Sidonius translated was the work of an eminent Athenian writer Philostratus, one of the brilliant circle of men of letters gathered round the Empress Julia at the court of Septimius Severus. "I have collected my materials," Philostratus tells us, "partly from the cities which loved him (Apollonius), partly from the temples whose rites and regulations he restored from their former state of neglect; partly from what others have said about him, and partly from his own letters. More detailed information I procured as follows. Damis was a man of some education who formerly lived in the ancient city of Ninus (Nineveh). He became a disciple of Apollonius and recorded his travels. . . A member of Damis' family brought the Empress Julia the note-books containing these memoirs, of which up to that time nothing had been known. As I was one of the circle of this princess, she ordered me to rewrite these sketches and improve their form of expression."

Apollonius was born three or four years prior to the Christian era at Tyana, a Greek city of Cappadocia in Asia Minor, which in 17 A. D. became a Roman province. His family was a rich and ancient one. From his childhood the boy was remarkable both for his beauty and for his exceptional intellectual attainments. At the age of fourteen he was taken to Tarsus to complete his studies, and being of the same age as the young Saul, afterwards St. Paul, it is quite possible that they may have passed and repassed daily

as they frequented the schools, for Tarsus was at that period a notable seat of learning. Evidently, however, the young Apollonius did not find there what he sought, for before long he repaired to the nearby town of Aegae. Here he came into close contact with the priests of the Temple of Aesculapius, where cures still were wrought. He also received instructions from followers of the Platonic, Stoic, Peripatetic and Epicurean philosophy. To each one he listened with grave attention; but it was to the Pythagorean teaching that he turned with greatest eagerness and at the age of sixteen he gave himself over wholly to it.

When his teacher Euxenus asked him how he meant to begin his new mode of life, his answer was: "As physicians purge their patients." He refused to touch any form of animal food, declaring that it made the system dense and impure. He also abstained from wine, because "it rendered turbid the ether in the soul" and "destroyed the composure of the mind." He let his hair grow long, wore only coarse linen, went always barefoot and slept on the hard ground. He took up his residence at the Temple and the fame of his asceticism and piety soon spread abroad. When he was twenty years of age, his father died, leaving him a considerable fortune. One half of his inheritance he made over to his elder brother; the other half he distributed among other relations, reserving for himself a mere pittance, because, he said, he had few needs and he would never marry. He then returned to Aegae and with increased fervor resumed his rigid life of austerity. "The soul which does not take trouble to train the body to be self-sufficing," he writes in a letter to Euphrates, "is not able to make itself content with little." And one of his most frequent prayers, we learn from Damis, was: "Grant me, ye Gods, to have little and need naught."

One day Euxenus asked him why he did not set down in writing the lofty thoughts which came to him, since he had so rare a gift of expression. Apollonius replied: "Because I have not yet practised silence," and at that moment he took a vow of five years' silence. Again and again was he sorely tempted to break it, as he found himself the butt of railing jest or unjust attack; but always he checked the rising rejoinder with the admonition: "Heart be patient; and thou, my tongue, be still." Silence was with him truly "another mode of speech." By a motion of the hand, a look, or a few words on a tablet, he was able to protect or help or admonish. It is said even that he quelled a riot by the majesty of his bearing and the authority of his gesture.

The years of silence were spent chiefly in Pamphylia and Cilicia. At their close we find Apollonius at Antioch and from now on his wanderings are continuous and distant. Philostratus states that he spent some time among the Arabians, being taught of them. The places he sought were the quiet places far from the highroads of travel, where the spirit of sanctity still lingered. It was in the Temples and Shrines that he sojourned or with isolated communities devoted to higher searchings and holy living; for what he required, he said, were "*men*, not people." And wherever he might be, he held strictly to his daily routine. At sun-rise he went through certain religious practices, which were made known only to those who had undergone the discipline of a four years' silence, for like Pythagoras he believed that there could be no true spiritual attainment without a complete curbing of the tongue. "Men of light and leading use fewest words," we read in one of his letters; "if babblers felt as much annoyance as they inflict, they would not be so long-winded."

After his early morning exercises he spent some time in

conversing with the priests or the head of the community where he chanced to be. Those who were following the inner life received his special attention and he gave most freely of himself in the hours devoted to their instruction, but after mid-day he did not refuse to teach the general public. Those who lived the inner life, he said, should at dawn enter the presence of the Gods (presumably through meditation); then spend the time until the noon-hour in giving and receiving instruction in holy things. Only after noon was past should they devote themselves to human affairs. He admitted no compromise in the spiritual life. "If any say he is my disciple," he writes to a would-be follower, "then let him add he keeps himself at home and does not frequent the public Baths, he slays no living thing, eats no flesh, is free from envy, malice, hatred, from slander and hostile feelings; and has his name inscribed among those who are free."

One of the chief aims in all of Apollonius' wanderings was to restore the sacred rites and cults to the purity of their ancient tradition. He refused to enter a Temple where blood-sacrifice was performed, and in a passage (quoted by Eusebius) he declares: "It is best to make no sacrifice to God at all, no lighting of a fire, no calling Him by any name that men employ for things of sense. For God is over all, the first; and only after Him do come the other Gods. For He doth stand in need of naught e'en from the Gods, much less from us small men—naught that the earth brings forth, nor any life she nurseth, or even anything the stainless air contains. The only fitting sacrifice to God is man's best reason, and not the word which comes from out his mouth.

"We men should ask the best of beings, through the best thing in us, for what is good — I mean by means of mind,

for mind needs no material things to make its prayer. So then, to God, the mighty One, who's over all, no sacrifice should ever be lit up." And to a priest of Aesculapius he said one day: "Since then the Gods know all things, I think that one who enters a sanctuary with a right conscience should pray thus: 'Give me, O Gods, what is my due.'"

Apollonius was one of the greatest travellers of antiquity. "The whole earth is mine and it is given me to journey through it," was his answer to the officer who asked him how he dared enter the dominion of Babylon without permission. Spain, Africa, Asia Minor, Persia, Greece, Italy, Sicily, Rhodes and Alexandria all came within his line of travel. He visited the Phoenicians, Cicilians, Ionians, Achaeans. The mystic communities in upper and lower Egpyt drew him irresistibly and more than once he was in Rome. It was not strange that, as Philostratus puts it, "his mind should turn to India and the Indian sages called Brahmans or Forest-men," especially as it was an accepted tradition that Pythagoras had been there before him. His disciples tried to dissuade him from the perilous venture. "Since ye are faint-hearted," was his reply, "I bid you farewell. As for myself, I must go whithersoever wisdom and my inner self may lead me." Passing through Nineveh, where he met the faithful Damis, and on to Babylon and the Indian frontier, he pushed across to the valley of the Ganges and finally arrived at the "monastery of the wise men," where he spent four months. In speaking of his teachers there he says: "I ever remember my masters and journey through the world teaching what I have learned from them."

That Apollonius possessed extraordinary powers cannot be denied. It was his wonder-workings which aroused the interest of the Empress Julia, for she and the Emperor

and their son Caracalla were all impassioned students of the occult. Apollonius himself, however, indignantly rejected the accusation of magic. His fore-knowledge, he carefully explained, was not divination in the vulgar sense, but the outcome of "that wisdom which God reveals to the wise." And he tells his friend, the Roman Consul Telesinus, that for him wisdom was a making divine of the whole nature, a sort of perpetual state of inspiration. There can be no doubt that his miracles were the outward expression of deep spiritual knowledge. His gift of healing was phenomenal, but he never used it cheaply. In a letter to Criton he writes: "Pythagoras said that the most divine art was that of healing. If the healing art was most divine, it must occupy itself with the soul as well as with the body, for no creature can be sound so long as the higher part in it is sickly." He himself was strong and healthy in every limb and organ even at the age of four-score years.

Stern in his own discipline, but gentle and loving towards others, the miraculous deeds which are recorded of him were unquestionably acts of compassion, bred of a sympathy which made his own the pain of others. He cast out evil spirits, cured the sick, stayed the course of pestilence and foretold events. On one occasion, it is related, when Apollonius was on trial at Rome, he vanished from the tribunal at noon, and on the evening of the same day he suddenly appeared before Damis and some friends at Puteoli, more than a hundred miles away. Seeing that they doubted his actual presence, he stretched forth his hand saying: "Take it, and if I escape from you regard me as an apparition." Even the Christian writer, Justin Martyr, bears witness to his powers, for he exclaims in one of his works: "How is it that the talismans of Apollonius have power in certain members of creation? for they prevent,

as we see, the fury of the waves and the violence of the winds and the attacks of wild beasts."

Because of these super-human powers many have tried to class Apollonius as a charlatan and a juggler; but too lofty was his life to bend under the pressure of such belittling judgment. No charlatan could voice such words as these: "The law requires that we die for liberty; Nature ordains that we die for parents, friends or children. The duty of the sage is to die for that to which he has devoted his life. It is not the law that lays this choice upon him, nor is it nature; it is the strength and courage of his own soul. Though fire or sword threaten him, it will not overcome his resolution or force from him the slightest falsehood. . . Again, I think that a wise man does nothing alone or by himself, no thought of his so secret but that he has himself as witness to it. And whether the famous saying 'know thyself' be from Apollo or from some sage who learned to know himself and proclaimed it as good for all, I think the wise man who knows himself and has his own spirit as his constant companion will neither cower before what the vulgar fear, nor dare to do what others do without the slightest shame."

REPORT

Swami Paramananda, after conducting the Services on three Sundays and the intervening classes at The Vedanta Centre of Boston, again set out on a three weeks' lecture tour. He spent the first eight days in Cincinnati, delivering six public lectures at the Woman's City Club and holding several classes at the temporary home of the Cincinnati Centre. In spite of the excitement incident to the presidential election, the attendance was excellent and increased steadily until at the closing lecture the hall was

crowded. From Cincinnati the Swami went to Louisville on November 9th. Here he delivered four lectures at the Truth Centre to attentive and appreciative audiences. He also spoke twice for another New Thought Centre and conducted two classes at the meeting-place of the Vedanta study group established last winter. A special devotional Service was arranged on Sunday afternoon and so great was the response that it was almost impossible to find room for all who came. The Swami returned to Cincinnati on the 15th and remained until the evening of the 18th. He lectured three times at the New Thought Temple and held two classes for the members of the local Centre. This was the longest visit which the Swami had paid to Cincinnati and it so stimulated the enthusiasm that the members are eager to secure a permanent home for the work, feeling that it is now firmly established.

In response to an invitation of nearly two years' standing, the Swami stopped over in Buffalo to lecture before the Larkin Men's Club. He was met at the station by the President of the Club, Mr. S. S. Burnett, and invited to lunch at the Masonic Lodge. A conversation with the Commander-in-Chief led to a cordial request to address the Masons and a lecture was immediately announced for the same evening. "This was the first time such a privilege was granted," Mr. Burnett writes, "but after the Commander's interview with the Swami he was convinced that the message that the Swami had for them was of the utmost importance to all humanity. At the close of his Address, which was before an audience of Masons numbering nine hundred, it was wonderful to see the members file by and thank the Swami. Request after request was made for a repeated visit, when the Masons could also bring their families to hear him. We all anxiously await his early return to Buffalo."

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

The Message of the East

JANUARY, 1922

Issued by

THE VEDANTA CENTRE

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REPORT	

Chapel of the Vedanta Centre

1 Queensberry Street, Fenway

(Ipswich Street Car)

Swami Paramananda

of India in charge

FOURTEENTH SEASON—1922

SUNDAY, 11 A. M.—SERVICE WITH ADDRESS

SUBJECTS

January 1st Hidden Powers of the Soul
January 8th Meditation and Superconsciousness
January 15th Karma and Fate
January 22nd Healing of Body and Mind
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NEW YEAR GREETINGS

We send to all our friends and readers our most cordial greetings and best wishes for a very happy and peaceful New Year. We hope that during the coming months "The Message of the East" may prove to them a constant source of inspiration and helpfulness. We call upon all to work with us in our task of binding close the hearts of mankind in a truer spiritual fellowship.

THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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PRACTICE OF DISCIPLESHIP

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

Who is a disciple? One who has taken up the discipline of life, who does not choose the easiest path and try constantly to compromise with his loftier ideals; but one who is willing to put aside selfish ambition and gratification in order to find his way to the highest. Disciples are those who live, rather than merely theorize and talk. People call themselves disciples of Christ or of Buddha or of some other great prophet or Messiah; but unless they listen to the voice of their Ideal and follow it, they are not disciples. Religion is not an abstract principle which a man can theorize about and turn to his personal advantage; it must form his character wholly. Without character we are weak and miserable in ourselves and we bring confusion in the world. We take wrong steps and we stumble, because we are thinking all the time of our own selfish advantage.

Greatness cannot be expressed except where there is elimination of all selfishness. Education which does not accomplish this is not true education; therefore in India they hold that even those who do not take up the spiritual life should go through a primary training in discipleship. A man who has learned to be obedient does not lose in power of individual judgment. On the contrary, his opin-

ion is of greater value because it is the product of his life. He has subdued his selfish tendencies, consequently whatever he produces is worth something. It is invariably a benefit to humanity. One who has not developed his higher powers through discipline is not able to use the opportunities which come to him; rather he turns them to his disadvantage. If a child tries to manipulate a piece of machinery before he has been taught how to handle it, he may easily put his hand in the wrong place and have it crushed. The same way is it with life. Unless we have learned its right use, we shall be crushed by it.

The path of discipleship requires obedience,—obedience to higher principles. Every one needs it. Any one who thinks that he does not need to practise obedience is a much deluded person. It would be all right if we could take care of ourselves, but we cannot. We must look to those who have superior qualities and be subservient to them until we ourselves have gained wisdom. People who are ambitious and aggressive never contribute anything towards the welfare of humanity; but those who forget themselves utterly, who want nothing for themselves, they are released from the smallness of life and pass naturally into a larger sphere of action. Without self-discipline we are so disorganized, so lacking in control that we cannot do good to any one. This was the reason why the idea of discipleship entered so profoundly into the social and religious institutions of India. Every child was sent to live with a teacher, but scholarship alone did not make one a teacher. The teacher must be a man of lofty character, who lived his precepts. This was vital. Often we tell our children not to be angry or untruthful, but our instructions fail to make an impression because they are not supported by the moral force which comes through living ourselves

what we demand of others. This is one of the great benefits of discipleship, that we learn to govern ourselves through service and the practice of obedience.

Our main interest is to conquer ourselves; and conquest in any line means effort. We must work for it. No one ever gained a victory of any kind who was unwilling to be wakeful and active. It is the energetic type of mind which conquers in every line of life. We must not have a morbid idea of the spiritual life and imagine that it means merely going to church, reading the Bible and repeating prayers. True spirituality is intensely active. It must enter into our ordinary life and transform it to such an extent that there will be absolute accord between our principles and our living.

Man releases himself from the bondage of life when he finds his relationship with his own highest Self. But this requires a great many disciplines. The unruly tendencies which rise within us—anger, greed, jealousy, hatred—stifle our loftier nature. That is why we are filled with remorse when these waves pass. If we can learn to check them when they start to rise, we make a tremendous step forward in our evolution. How much easier it is when we begin early, instead of waiting until we have a deeply rooted habit of undisciplined thought. People say: "It is my nature to be impatient or irritable, I cannot help it." But these things are not natural to the real standard of humanity. There is no tendency we cannot curb, if we choose. We can reverse the current and make the opposite tendency just as natural. The beautiful teachings of religion,—"Love your neighbor as yourself," "Be perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect," "Do good to them that hate you": these are not mere sayings to repeat. We must do them; and a disciple is one who tries to do them.

It does not matter to what religion he belongs; that is of very little importance, because real religion cannot be labelled by any name. It is in the life; and those who are true followers of their faith, they live it; and by becoming living examples they extend their blessings to others. First they fill their own life with blessing, then they have something to give their fellowmen. One who has conquered himself through discipline is far happier than the man who seeks happiness in self-indulgence, because his happiness does not depend upon outward circumstances. He continues to be happy whether he is blamed or praised. He knows an inward joy, a deep inner tranquillity. It is a foolish attitude of mind when we rise and fall with every passing circumstance. We find much greater satisfaction in life when we have an ideal and follow it. The strength of character we give by living a more interior life offers us far greater sustenance than either intellectual or material power. Money, name, position, all these things fade away; but even these fleeting material advantages become beneficial when they are in the hands of a master. The masters are those who are masters of themselves and remain the same under all conditions. We may insult them or flatter them, but we cannot make them shift their ground, because they are stable; and they are stable because they do not work with any selfish motive; they have a bigger standard in life.

A religion which does not bring into every human life a higher ideal is not religion no matter what it is called. People say: "I am a follower of Christ and you are an inferior man because you are not a follower of Christ"; but let them be followers of Christ, let their life be Christlike; that is the only way they can impress the truth of their religion upon another mind. Disciples are those who fol-

low very closely, not from a long distance. Some people are thoroughly sincere. They are full of zeal, but they believe they can best serve their ideal by fighting for it; they wish to conquer by force. Real conquest, however, is only possible through the force of life and character.

There are certain principles which are inseparable from character,—humility, obedience to higher principles and vision. We cannot have faith in any ideal, any spiritual Truth, unless we have become thoroughly familiar with it by our own vision, and vision is the product of our life. If we live an orderly, tranquil, pure life, it will reflect the Truth. Truth never shines upon that heart where there is falsehood. Falsehood never really helps us. We may escape apparently from others through falsehood, but we can never escape from ourselves. If we say or do anything which is not true, it will obscure our vision. The heart must be pure and genuine to see clearly.

The practice of discipleship is very cleansing. It does not destroy or mutilate the nature; but it cleanses it of all that is non-essential and harmful to us. At times it may impose severe disciplines, but through them we grow stronger. This is its great value. In our modern life we are becoming more and more dependent on artificial help, and it is not a good sign. People have learned to depend on machines to such an extent that they would be glad if some one would invent some sort of machine to do their thinking for them. This brings degradation. It would be much better for us if we would depend less on these outer material devices and would enlarge the inner, essential part of our being. When people are given too many tools to work with, they use their mental faculties less and less. They follow a certain routine of thought and if anything unusual occurs, they are absolutely at a loss. They have

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"TRUTH IS ONE, SEEN CALL IT BY [illegible]"

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not the power to use to the best advantage this instrument given them by God; but those who have the habit of independent thinking always find a way out.

Our life should be simplified. We are so burdened. It is not by trying to satisfy every craving which rises in us that we attain the highest happiness or perfection. We must be thoughtful and discriminating. We must begin to adjust our life. We all have a vocation. We all have something to give to the world, something to contribute to the general good. We are all children of God; we are all aiming for ultimate attainment in one form or another; and until we find the highest expression of life which flows from Eternity, we shall never be free. To find it, however, requires zeal. One of the Upanishads declares that Truth can never be attained by the weak. This does not mean physical weakness; it means moral weakness, the weakness which makes us doubt and fear and shrink from anything big. Spiritual vision is born as the product of self-discipline. We have to work for it and it is better to work for it right now. Salvation does not begin after we are dead. It is here that we taste it. It is here that freedom and joy must be realized. True disciples, whether they are followers of Christianity or Buddhism or Confucianism, always maintain a cheerful heart. The God-consecrated man is always joyous, because he is not selfish. Selfish people cannot know true happiness. Even when they have gained their desire, there is always something to mar their happiness. Mere accumulation of wealth or material advantage will never bring us satisfaction, unless at the same time we unfold our spiritual nature.

Discipleship means self-discipline. It is not that some one tells us to do this or that; but out of our own love of Truth and our sense of consecration, we set for ourselves

a certain path to follow. Our life becomes a deeper life, a life which is not separated from the God Principle in anything. At first it may seem a tremendous task to acquire this continuous contact with the Divine. We say: "How can we who are so busy relate ourselves with an abstract spiritual principle? If we cease to protect our own interest, some one may deceive us." But those who devote themselves to their own interest do not really succeed or find lasting satisfaction. When, however, through discipline we have learned the deeper lessons of life, we are not wounded or distracted by the material world. This external world seems harsh, empty and artificial to us, because it is lacking in balance; and those who follow the spiritual path ardently and faithfully restore the balance. Then even this outer life becomes mellow and full of sweetness, full of hope and courage.

LEADINGS OF THE SPIRIT

From the Letters of Isaac Penington

(English Quaker Mystic, born 1617)

Sit down and count the cost of ploughing up thy field and of searching after the hidden treasure of pure and true wisdom, and consider seriously whether thou canst sell all for it, both inward and outward riches; that, if thou do set thy hand to the plough, thou mayest not look back after anything else, within or without, but mayest be content and satisfied with the pearl of true wisdom and life alone.

Now, if thou be truly willing in God's sight thus to do, thou must singly give up to follow the Lord in the leadings of His Spirit, out of all the ways of thy own wisdom and knowledge, out of all things wherein thou hast a life and delight out of Him. Thou must not determine what thou

hast a life in, but the Lord must search thy heart; and He will soon show thee (if thy heart be naked and open before Him, willing to hear and learn of Him), somewhat in thy heart, somewhat in thy ways, somewhat in thy words and thoughts, which is contrary to His pure life and Spirit; and then, that must be denied and given up immediately.

If thy heart come to feel the Spirit of God, and to wait upon Him in the measure of His life, He will be tender of thee as a father of his child, and His love will be naturally breaking forth towards thee. This is the end of all His dealings with thee, to bring thee hither, to make thee fit and capable of entering and abiding here. And He hath changed and doth change thy spirit daily; though it be as the shooting up of the corn, whose growth cannot be discerned at present by the most observing eye, but it is very manifest afterwards that it hath grown.

But wait to feel the relieving measure of life, and heed not distressing thoughts, when they rise ever so strongly in thee; nay, though they have entered thee, fear them not, but be still awhile, not believing in the power which thou feelest they have over thee, and it will fall on a sudden. It is good for thy spirit and greatly to thy advantage, to be much and variously exercised by the Lord. Thou dost not know what the Lord hath already done, and what He is yet doing for thee therein. . . . O learn daily more and more to trust Him and hope in Him and not to be affrighted with any amazement, nor to be taken up with the sight of the present thing; but wait for the shutting of thy own eye upon every occasion, and for the opening of the eye of God in thee, and for the sight of things therewith, as they are from Him.

Oh! wait, hope, trust, look over that which stands between; come into His mercy! Let in the faith which open-

eth the way of life, which will shut out the doubting and distrusting mind, and will close up the wrong eye, that letteth in reasonings and temptations, the wrong sense, and death with them. Thus mayest thou witness, in and through thy Redeemer, the abundance of His life and peace.

THE SOURCE OF POWER

By Sister Devamata

Power is not something which man can create; it is not something which he can acquire. He cannot even possess it, it must possess him. Science has discovered that there is only one force in the universe, moving in different directions. Religion too has come to recognize one Power only, impelling all life. That one Power is omnipresent and it makes itself manifest wherever there is a channel for it. It beats constantly against the closed avenues of our being. It is knocking now at the door of our heart, of our intelligence, of our physical organism. From without and from within it is seeking to take possession of us, but we beat it back; or if we open ourselves a little to it, very soon we bar its way again by the foolish pride which rises in us as we see our individual powers increasing.

Nothing so quickly checks its flow as self-consciousness. "Our best work is done, our greatest influence is exerted when we are without thought of self," Swami Vivekananda declares in his *Inspired Talks*. "All great geniuses know this. . . . Be perfectly resigned, perfectly unconcerned, then alone can you do any great work." Self-consciousness induces calculation and the habit of calculation is peculiarly hostile to largeness of life in any form. It kills all our loftier impulses. The man who stops to count the costs can never be a hero. There is no time to

make a contract with destiny when the call to noble action sounds. The opportunity passes while we are adding and subtracting probable dangers and glories.

The heroic act appears to be a sudden and exceptional expression of power; but it is only the culmination of a continuous habit of bigness of thought. If our vision were sufficiently penetrating, we would see that the genuine hero is as heroic in each commonplace task of the day as he is at the moment of peculiar stress. It is the quality of small natures to haggle and strain over every expenditure of themselves and of their resources. They have so little, it is not easy for them to be generous; and their acute anxiety to protect their own interests makes it difficult for them to get anything from the universal Source. The petty wage-earner considers it necessary to calculate his output very carefully; and so long as we live like hirelings, demanding an exact return for every service we render God or man, we too shall be apprehensive, miserly and calculating.

This does not imply that a man should throw caution to the winds and follow every impulse which seizes upon him. Discrimination and prudence lie behind every great manifestation of power, but they are interwoven always with self-forgetfulness and surrender. The man of exalted mind discriminates in order to free his vision from petty personal refractions; while prudence for him consists in remaining close to the universal storehouse of strength and wisdom. It would seem to him the height of imprudence and unreason to sever his connection even for a moment with the central Source of supply. He knows that life, power, wisdom, happiness are universal, indivisible, unmarketable qualities. They cannot be bought or sold on any exchange. They cannot be parcelled out in small

quantities. They are like the air of the high mountains or of the sea, one must go there to breathe it; it cannot be purchased by weight or measure at the street corner.

If we would partake of the attributes of Divinity, we must connect ourselves with the Divine. There must be some point of contact, and we establish this through our thought. The more we think of ourselves, of our personal joys and sorrows, our selfish advantage or disadvantage, the less of our mind remains with which to think on God and the less of godliness shall we enjoy. Every thought of self puts out a thought of God and every thought of God puts out a thought of self. But the God-thoughts are full of sweetness and light and subtle power; while the thoughts of self are full of fear and disappointment and discontent. God-thought expands and liberates, self-thought contracts and enslaves. Why then do we think so much about ourselves? Have we found the companionship of our ego so satisfying that we should be reluctant to exchange it for the holier, sweeter companionship of God? Whenever we have cause to feel ashamed and disgraced, is it not always because our selfish nature has gained the upper hand and betrayed us?

So long as we divide our attention, we shall be weak and undependable. Power comes only to the single-hearted. Christ has told us that the pure alone can gain access to the Divine; and purity means something more than mere cleanness of body, mind and heart. It means unmixed. If we take two perfectly pure chemical substances and put them together, the new substance produced is not pure; each of the constituent parts adulterates the other. Purity in the spiritual life, quite as much as in chemistry, demands uncompromising singleness—singleness of heart, singleness of mind, singleness of purpose.

To attain it we must eliminate the multiplicity of interests and obligations which now entangle us. We plead our duty to society as an excuse for not doing so. How can we withdraw from our present complex mode of living without appearing selfish and unfeeling? But this social body to which we yield such servile allegiance is not a self-existent entity. It is the creation of man and would die to-morrow if groups of human beings did not sustain it. Only those serve it truly who possess sufficient force of character to be independent of it. All great men who have led the world and benefitted it, have had the courage to cast off the fetters of custom and live in accord with their own highest conviction.

The spectacular exhibitions of power we see in the world—power of wealth, of position, of popular acclaim—must not dazzle us. They appear flimsy and puerile when placed beside the silent steady flow of Divine energy manifest in the life of a saint or Saviour. Enduring power springs not from ambition or aggressive affirmation, but from the seed of patient denial. The man who cannot govern his own appetites, has not developed the principle of rulership in his nature and is unable to command anywhere. He may make a show of authority, but it wears itself out very soon. Strength, whether of muscle, of mind, or of feeling, rests always on discipline. The rigid training of the army has a deeper aim than the mere toughening of the soldiers in its ranks. It represents an enormous economy of vital energy. We squander a large measure of our force in adapting ourselves to unaccustomed conditions. Our power of endurance is so feeble that we cannot eat or sleep unless we have just the right kind of bed or food. To be a slave to creature comforts is one of the most insidious forms of slavery. It was to

break this bondage that men began the practice of austerity. Asceticism has no merit as an end in itself, but as a means to an end it is of great value. It represents the five-finger exercises of religion, making the organism pliable and ready for higher uses.

The man who marks off his day by his meal hours and believes that one-third at least of each turn of the sun must be devoted to sleep, gains very little momentum in any undertaking. He spends his effort in getting ready to live rather than in living. Those of us who would hasten our spiritual development and increase our efficiency should begin a systematic process of hardening. We should train ourselves to be less sensitive to heat and cold, less susceptible to inconvenience and hardship. Without fortitude one cannot go far in the spiritual life. "We count them happy which endure," James writes in his general epistle. By degrees we should advance the time for rising and keep strictly to the earlier hour until it becomes natural for us. We should teach ourselves to sleep and wake easily. Gradually our body will habituate itself to less rest and will feel lighter. Nearly every one eats and sleeps too much and in consequence grows steadily heavier as he grows older. If we seem to require a large amount of food and rest, it is indicative of a habit, not of a need. We can accustom our system to make almost any demand upon us. It suffices for us to take a nap at a certain hour every day for a week to develop a new and crying necessity for more sleep. We are overpowered by drowsiness each time that hour comes round.

In the matter of food also, our taste should not be our only guide. We should choose a diet fitted to the kind of life we lead. There is no virtue in not enjoying our food, but there is great benefit in learning to enjoy that which

will give us the maximum of energy with the minimum of waste. The athlete is very rigid about his diet; and we need to be strong much more than he, because he requires only strength of nerve and muscle, while we need strength of mind and heart as well to be able to meet bravely the rigorous tests of the spiritual path. No man ever manifests real power until he takes up the life of self-denial. The Christ method of selling all for the sake of one's purpose is the practical method for success in any direction. It tells us how we may excel, whether it is in digging a ditch or in writing a poem. We must detach ourselves from the material and physical, if we would become a channel for the spiritual.

We steep ourselves in the human and then wonder why we find it so difficult to express the Divine. It is because our processes of thought are reversed. We must learn to think of ourselves last and of God first. In painting a picture the good artist puts in his high light first and refers all his color values to that. So must it be in living. We must relate each experience to our highest point of vision, not to our work-a-day self with its petty needs and complaints. When we succeed in doing this with conviction, we can carve our way through solid rock. No obstacle will stay our course. If we can keep the Ideal uppermost in our thought at all times, we shall be carried forward by Its power; and our own strength may be expended altogether in holding firmly to It.

Connection with the Source is all that should concern us, not what we shall get out of it. If we approach It devoutly and unquestioningly, we shall be filled to the full measure of our capacity; and as our capacity increases, so will our power. That one who is in unbroken touch with God will always know what is needed to be known. He

will render just the right service, he will speak just the right word, he will take just the right course. There will be no waste of energy anywhere, because he will have no steps to retrace, no mistakes to mend, and no wearing down of the bearings of life through friction. In all circumstances he will act in perfect conjunction with the one supreme cosmic Power.

Each of us has a special centre of activity in the universal scheme, a special place where we can be used to the best advantage. Nowhere else shall we be at ease. We may imagine that we are happier when we follow our own fitful will and shift ground according to our mood, but the ache and despair of our heart when we do it is evidence enough to convince us we are wrong. The musician who plays out of tune and off the beat finds little pleasure in his art; only when he falls into perfect rhythm with the orchestra does he catch the inspiration of the surging sound. Similarly when we set our own pitch and measure, our life will be full of clashing discords. But let our heart begin to beat in unison with God's great heart, at once a new harmony and rhythm will establish itself in our being, and such strength will rise in us that all the powers of the world will not be able to confound us.

It matters not to me what I do, or what I suffer, so long as I abide lovingly united to God's will,—that is my whole business. . . . The greatest glory we can give to God is to distrust our own strength utterly and to commit ourselves wholly to His safe-keeping.

—Brother Lawrence

Wisdom is one thing. It is to know the thought by which all things are steered through all things.

—Herakleitos. 5th century, B. C.

THE WAY OF BIRTH IN GOD

From Hermes Trismegistus

Hermes. Withdraw into thyself, and it (the Way of Birth in God) will come; will, and it comes to pass; throw out of work the body's senses, and thy Divinity shall come to birth; purge from thyself the brutish torments—things of matter.

Tat. I have tormentors then in me, O father?

Hermes. Ay, no few, my son; nay, fearful ones and manifold.

Tat. I do not know them, father.

Hermes. Torment the first is this Not-knowing, son; the second one is Grief; the third, Intemperance; the fourth, Concupiscence; the fifth, Unrighteousness; the sixth is Avarice; the seventh, Error; the eighth is Envy; the ninth, Guile; the tenth is Anger; eleventh, Rashness; the twelfth is Malice. These are in number twelve; but under them are many more, my son; and creeping through the prison of the body they force the man that's placed within to suffer in his senses. But they depart (although not all at once) from him who hath been taken pity on by God; and this it is which constitutes the manner of Rebirth.

And now, my son, be still and solemn silence keep! Thus shall the mercy that flows on us from God not cease. Henceforth rejoice, O son, for by the Powers of God thou art being purified for the articulation of the Reason (Logos).

Gnosis of God hath come to us; and when this comes, my son, Not-knowing is cast out. Gnosis of Joy hath come to us; and on its coming, son, Sorrow will flee away to them who give it room. The Power that follows Joy do I invoke, Thy Self-control. O Power most sweet! Let

us most gladly bid it welcome, son! How with its coming doth it chase Intemperance away!

Now fourth, on Continence I call, the Power against Desire. . . . This step, my son, is Righteousness' firm seat. For without judgment see how she hath chased Unrighteousness away. We are made righteous, son, by the departure of Unrighteousness. Power sixth I call to us,—that against Avarice, Sharing-with-all. And now that Avarice is gone, I call on Truth. And Error flees, and Truth is with us. See how (the measure of) the Good is full, my son, upon Truth's coming. For Envy hath gone from us; and unto Truth is joined the Good as well, with Life and Light. And now no more doth any torment of the Darkness venture nigh, but vanquished all have fled with whirring wings.

Thou knowest now, my son, the manner of Rebirth. . . . Who then doth by His mercy gain this Birth in God, abandoning the body's senses, knows himself to be of Light and Life and that he doth consist of these, and thus is filled with Bliss.

Tat. By God made steadfast, father, no longer with the sight my eyes afford I look on things, but with the energy the Mind doth give me through the Powers. Father, I see the All, I see myself in Mind.

Hermes. This is, my son, Rebirth—no more to look on things from body's view-point. . . .

Tat. Tell me, O father: This Body which is made up of the Powers, is it at any time dissolved?

Hermes. Hush, son. Speak not of things impossible, else wilt thou sin and the Mind's eye be quenched. The natural body which our sense perceives is far removed from this essential birth. The first must be dissolved, the last can never be; the first must die, the last death cannot

touch. Dost thou not know thou hast been born a god, son of the One, even as I myself?

Be still, my son; hear the Praise-giving now that keeps (the soul) in tune, Hymn of Re-birth. Thus then, my son, stand in a place uncovered to the sky, facing the southern wind, about the sinking of the setting sun, and make thy worship; so in like manner too when he doth rise, with face to the east wind. Now, son, be still!

HYMN

Let every nature of the World receive the utterance of my hymn!

Open thou Earth! Let every bolt of the Abyss be drawn for me. Stir not, ye Trees!

Ye Heavens open, and ye Winds stay still; let God's deathless Sphere receive my word (Logos)!

Let us together all give praise to Him, sublime above the Heavens, of every nature Lord!

'Tis He who is the Eye of Mind; may He accept the praise of these my Powers!

Ye Powers that are within me, hymn the One and All; sing with my Will, Powers all that are within me!

O blessed Gnosis, by thee illumined, hymning through thee the Light that mind alone can see, I joy in Joy of Mind.

Sing with me praises all ye Powers!

Sing praise, my Self-control; sing thou through me, my Righteousness, the praises of the Righteous; sing thou, my Sharing-all, the praises of the All; through me sing, Truth, Truth's praises!

Sing thou, O Good, the Good! O Life and Light, from us to you our praises flow!

Father, I give Thee thanks, to Thee Thou Energy of all Powers; I give Thee thanks, O God, Thou Power of all my Energies!

Thus cry the Powers in me. They sing Thy praise, Thou all; they do Thy Will.

The All that is in us, O Life, preserve; O Light illumine it; O God in-spirit it.

STORY OF SISTER MARIANNA

Retold by Br. Gurudas

Near a quiet little country town in Italy stood long, long ago a convent shaded by chestnut trees; and a river flowed by. Here in this old convent dwelled some good Sisters, devout women, who went out among the poor, helping where help was needed. Early and late the Sisters laboured, nursing the sick and feeding the poor. And among all these good women, Sister Marianna was the most patient. Kind and willing, never sparing herself, quietly she went about, choosing for her share the heaviest and most difficult tasks. Thus she lived always content quietly to bear the burden of others. She loved God and this made her most happy. And she was rich too, for God had given her the grace to choose not the world's deceitful riches, but the wealth one cannot lose, the wealth one takes with one when this earthly life is done.

The old and the feeble and the sickly and the heavy-hearted all knew and loved Sister Marianna. For she was always sure to appear when her presence was most needed. She carried food and warm clothes and blessing as she wended her way over mountain paths in summer heat and winter cold. And with her travelled One whom she always kept close to her heart. And He was the source of all her strength.

And Sister Marianna was happy—oh so happy!—if in her scanty hours of leisure she could enter her little white-washed cell. For there from the wall looked at her the

dear and holy faces that she loved above all else. From an old and faded picture the Holy Infant Jesus in His Mother's arms looked at her. And her faith and spirit of devotion lent to the dear faces a beauty and glory not seen there by any one else. And often when she returned in the early morning from a lonely home where she had watched the sick by night, she would gather a few flowers with the morning dew still on them and place them on the wooden shelf before the Holy Child and His Blessed Mother. And so Sister Marianna's life was full of sunshine, for in toiling for the Lord she had found the hidden sweetness that lies stored in common things.

But the time came—poor Sister!—when her step grew heavy, as one winter day after day she climbed the steep mountain path covered by snow to a poor rough home, far away from neighbors. And her rosy cheeks grew pale as night after night she nursed the poor young mother lying there helpless in her dingy room attacked by a malicious disease. Many a night the good Sister watched and during the day she had little rest, for her heart was with the poor patient and her babe. The husband had gone to the plains to seek for work when the young wife was taken ill and now word was slow to reach him. Waiting and hoping, patient and nurse prayed for the husband's return.

Weeks went by and the young mother grew more feeble. In vain did Sister Marianna try every simple cure she knew. The doctor had given up hope and had left his last instructions. And the priest had done his last office. Sister Marianna was left alone with the mother and the child, all unaided, still to watch and think and labour with what little strength she had. Two days more the patient lay sleeping and Sister Marianna watched beside the bed, saying prayers to help the soul departing and rocking the baby in her lap. Then something stirred within her heart.

And she spake with eyes dilated and her soul in every word, as to one she saw before her: "Thou hast been a child, my Lord! Thou hast lain as small and speechless as this infant on my knees; then, oh listen to my plea; Lord, remember for one moment what Thy Mother was to Thee! Oh, for love of Thine Own Mother, save the mother of this child!"

Then she paused and waited breathless, for she knew and felt that the Lord was there in the room listening to her passionate appeal. And she bowed her head and a strange light came in her eyes, for her soul had heard the answer that the young mother would not die.

And now night came, a lonely night. The wind and rain beat against the door and window. And Marianna, faint and weary with the strain of many days, lighted a fire on the hearth, for the poor woman she cared for would need to eat before the morning. So she prepared a dish that would strengthen the patient, a dish made of food brought from the convent. The food had to be prepared with care, and Marianna planned to do her best. But oh, she was so weary for want of sleep and rest. "Now, Lord, help me this night's labour to complete," said the Sister. And she placed the broth upon the fire, stirring it to keep it from burning. But so sleepy was the poor Sister that the spoon kept falling from her hand. Then again she would rouse herself and struggle bravely to drive off the languor. Fear filled her heart that she might faint from fatigue and no neighbors were near and the storm was raging outside. Her head ached strangely as it never did before. "Oh good Lord, only help me through the night that my eyes may not close till the mother and babe are safe."

But her pleading was in vain. Sleep had conquered and her prayer died away in a faint murmur. She slept the sleep of the weary, unconscious of how the hours sped on. Her head reclining against the wall, the firelight flared and flickered on her pale, peaceful face. And the broth was on the fire all untended. Had the Lord not heard her prayer? So earnestly she had pleaded for just a little more strength. The Lord has many ways to answer prayers—ways that His children think not of.

A long time she sat there sleeping in front of the fire. But the fire-wood kept burning and the pot boiled gently. And when suddenly, with a sense of guilt, the Sister awoke at last, a strange and sweet vision greeted her eyes. At her feet, near the fire, stood a child watching the boiling pot and keeping the fire alive. And when the child turned his face towards her and smiled, she knew that it was the Holy Child. It was the Lord who stood before her, the Child Jesus. When her willing hands had failed, when her weary eyes were closed, He had finished all she had failed in; He had watched while she rested. Sister Marianna did not shrink or start, for her faithful heart was filled with joy. When afterwards curious lips would ask the Sister how the Child looked, all she would say was: "I knew it was He, my heart melted and you also will know when you meet Him."

With that one sweet look and smile the Child passed away from her vision. But the peace it left in her heart lasted till her dying hour. The storm had ceased and the morning star was shining through the window. When later the sun was rising and Sister Marianna looked out, softly opening the door to let in the morning breeze, she saw through the trees a moving form. It was the husband

returning home. Leaving joy behind her in that home of many tears, Marianna returned to the convent. There was music in her heart. And gathering a few flowers on her way, she placed them lovingly on the little shelf before the Holy Mother and her Child. (From the *Prabuddha Bharata*, India)

REPORT

Since Swami Paramananda lectured, on the invitation of Miss Anna Maud Hallam, before the Convention of Applied Psychology last September in Cleveland, he has received urgent invitations to lecture all through the East and Middle West. In response to some of these he set out on November 27th. His first stop was in Rochester, where he spoke before the Club of Practical Psychology. So great was the interest shown that he was asked to hold a class on the following day before leaving for Syracuse, where he went to deliver a lecture for the Practical Psychology Club of that city. The meeting was held in the Universalist Church and every available space was filled with eager listeners, a number of whom persuaded the Swami to speak for them again the next morning before he returned to Rochester. In Rochester he gave a second lecture in the large hall of Exposition Park and at its close he was carried away to another meeting where he was kept busy until midnight answering questions. Cleveland was his next stop. His first lecture here was scheduled for the Hotel Winton; but the crowd which gathered nearly half an hour before the meeting so far exceeded the capacity of the hall engaged, that it became necessary to secure larger accommodations. Nothing spacious enough being available, some one suggested opening the lunch room. It was quickly filled and in order to be seen and heard, the Swami was forced to convert the lunch counter

into a rostrum. On Friday morning he held a class and in the afternoon he went with Dr. E. Thayer Ward, National Secretary of the Associated Clubs of Applied Psychology, to address the Psychology Club of Youngstown. The lecture, which was preceded by a banquet, was given in the Auditorium of the Young Men's Christian Association and so numerous was the attendance that even after filling aisles, platform, and doorways, several hundred people were turned away.

Saturday Swami spoke twice in Cleveland again—before the New Life League in the afternoon and in the evening under the auspices of another Club. Sunday was a very full day. In the forenoon he addressed the Unity Study Club on "Efficacy of Silence and Prayer"; in the afternoon he spoke on "Psychology of Yoga" for Dr. Grumbine at his New Thought Church; and in the evening he delivered a final lecture at the Hotel Winton on "Law of Compensation." He left Cleveland at midnight and spent Monday morning with the members of the Vedanta Study Group in Cincinnati. Monday evening he lectured for the Psychology Club of Indianapolis and on Tuesday morning he reached St. Louis. He began his work at 3 p. m. with a class in a private drawing-room, and at 8 p. m. he delivered his principal lecture in the auditorium of the Wednesday Club. The audience was a very large one and great enthusiasm was manifested. The president of the Club announced that the public lecture would be followed by a practical concentration class at half past ten, and a number remained despite the late hour to profit by the special opportunity. The following morning the Swami held another class and he closed his visit with a second public lecture in the evening on "Upbuilding of Body and Mind." He spoke in Cincinnati on Thursday night, and on Friday returned to Boston.

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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KARMA AND FATE

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

The great Aryan law-giver of ancient times, Manu, tells us that we cannot gather what we do not sow; as we plant the tree, so it will grow. The kind of seeds we sow, according to that we must reap. There is no such thing as chance in Nature. Nothing happens accidentally. Good fortune or misfortune, pleasing conditions or trials, come to us because consciously or unconsciously we attract them; we draw them into our life. They come as the reactions of our own actions. Whenever we do something ignoble, at some time we must suffer from it; not because there is a relentless Providence, whose task it is to punish us; but because our own better self has a sense of justice and until we make amends for our unworthy action, it will not allow us to feel free. A man may murder another in secret; no one may know anything about it; yet his own thought of it will haunt him until he can no longer bear it and he finds relief in confessing it. Does this not show that we cannot evade the greater forces of life? We create a moral obligation by our deeds; and however we may try to avoid it, sooner or later we are forced to pay every debt we incur. Until that is done, we cannot make the best use of new opportunities. But it is not only the fruit of our mistakes that we gather. We reap blessings also as we deserve them; and they become permanently ours because we have earned them.

In India this great idea of Karma, which is a Sanskrit term meaning action and reaction, cause and effect, is deeply rooted. Western scientists take full account of the law of cause and effect on the physical plane, but the Indian sages claim that it operates just as truly on the higher planes. Our present life is the culmination of our past; our to-day is the result of our yesterday, and to-morrow will be the result of to-day. Our future life will be what we make it now by our thoughts and deeds and aspirations. Buddha told His disciples that man is the product of his own thought, he is made up of his thought, because thoughts are a great deal more vital than actions. Everything which happens in the physical has its counterpart in the spiritual. It exists in seed form there. Our actions therefore cannot be productive of good unless our thoughts are first brought into harmony with the spiritual forces of our being.

Some people believe that it is their fate to be born in certain surroundings and conditions, that they are powerless to change them, so it is useless to exert themselves to counteract them. This is a very erroneous notion, both from the spiritual and from the material point of view. There is no such thing as permanence in this world of impermanency. When a little misfortune comes to us then, why should we take it as a final issue in life? It has a purpose, no doubt. These passing conditions have a great deal to teach us. When a man is confronted with loss or failure, he should not regard it as a great curse, over which he must sit in a corner and brood. On the contrary, it holds a valuable lesson for him. It may be that through it he is paying off a debt, which, when paid, will free him from some binding condition.

These experiences are not so terrible as they seem to be when we accept them with shallow understanding. Make a study of the lives of great men. Through how many hard-

ships and struggles and privations have they passed! There are certain difficult experiences in our life which quicken our inner powers much more effectively than any amount of ease and prosperity could ever do. Life means training and discipline. Those who are afraid of these never make any headway spiritually; and our physical life is governed largely by our spiritual understanding. When a man who has no comprehension of higher laws is confronted with miseries, he sees only one way of escape open to him—suicide. But does he escape from his miseries? No. Because he carries the cause of his misery in his own consciousness.

People of small understanding who take this span of existence to be all in all, cannot help but resent it when they see some one who has more than they or who succeeds where they fail. But if they could grasp the fundamental principle that nothing happens accidentally, that each one receives what he earns, they would not have such harsh, bitter feelings towards their fellowmen or towards Divine Providence. The law of Karma explains why things take place as they do in this world. A person is born deformed or blind; if we try to explain it by saying that it is God's will, we make God whimsical and arbitrary. The Indo-Aryan sages did not throw the blame on Providence; they found within the individual soul the elements which created the condition. We may not suffer the consequence of our act at once, but a record of it is graven on our own life and character; and even though we may escape from the human law, we cannot escape from the Divine law of which we are a part. That will find us out, wherever we may go, and call us to account. Thus we bring on ourselves whatever overtakes us. We reward ourselves and we punish ourselves. Therefore wise men are not overeager to seize momentary pleasures, which later on may lead to unhappiness.

This life truly can be called a harvest field. Upon this field we sow the seeds of our daily living—good seeds or bad seeds. If we yield to our lower impulses, we block the way to spiritual things and our life will be full of misery. But if through our thoughts and actions and aspirations, day by day and little by little, we make ourselves fitting instruments for God's power to express itself, we shall work out our salvation and the salvation of humanity. A person who looks wholly to his own good, who thinks solely of his own interests, is of small mind and attains only small ends. Our good must include the good of others. Our happiness must include the happiness of others. We cannot have any happiness or peace without including those who stand next to us.

We must cultivate a bigger point of view. We must not consider immediate returns only. That is the way we are trapped. We yield to the fascination of momentary glory; and when it fades, a mark of unhappiness and resentment against our own self is left. The greatest curse is when we doubt ourselves; and nothing awakens doubt within our own soul so quickly as our failures, which are often the result of misguided zeal. We do things hastily, unthinkingly; then when the reactions come, we feel powerless to cope with them and we say it is our fate. But what we make we have the power to unmake. That is one of the great principles of the Vedic teaching. Our present life conditions, whether good or evil, are the result of finite actions, finite causes; hence they cannot be everlasting. For that reason in India they have never believed in eternal perdition. There is a passage in one of the Upanishads which says that the knower of Truth is full of bliss and free from fear. Fear is the product of the selfish instinct in man. He is afraid of endangering his own interest. It is always the lack of understanding which lies at the root of all fear and depression; but as soon as we gain a larger

perspective, fear leaves us and in its place come trust and surrender.

We shape our destiny by our daily living. It may seem an arrogant attitude to say that a man is the maker of his own destiny; but it is not arrogance, it is understanding. Suppose that God moulds our destiny and bestows upon us this or that? There must be some reason why He bestows one thing rather than another. The reason lies in us. We provide the material out of which He makes our destiny. We cannot escape from the responsibility of our actions whichever way we turn. We cannot bribe Providence, as many believe. They think it does not matter how they cheat their fellow-beings or what kind of life they lead, so long as they maintain their connection with some church. They imagine that loyalty to a creed will give them a passport to heaven, but the only passport which will carry them to heaven is in their own hearts. It is not anything exterior. When we understand this, we refuse to take advantage of others. If we can make people, especially the more ignorant, understand that their good fortune and ill fortune are justly earned by themselves; that no one can give them something unless they deserve it; and no one can deprive them of what they have earned; they will have a different attitude towards life. They will refrain from doing harm to others, because they will understand that it will react upon their own life. We cannot have a slave without being a slave; we cannot make another unhappy without being unhappy ourselves.

We have the power to express ourselves through the best avenues; they are all open to us. A man can act just as well on the right course as on the wrong. The wrong way reacts upon him, brings a blemish on his life, mars his own happiness and that of his fellow-beings. Why not avoid these reactions by taking proper care before the seed is rooted in the soil of

life? Some one does us an injury; indignation rises in our heart; we begin to brood over it, until it seizes upon our mind and we give way to a revengeful act; then we suffer and make others suffer. The highest course is to take precautions at the very outset. We must so order our life on the basis of higher understanding that these reactions cannot occur. There are people who wish to have all happiness and no misery, but that is not the way life runs. We cannot take the one without the other. We have to learn to maintain our balance. When we meet with good fortune, we must not become over-elated; and when we meet with ill-fortune, we must not be overwhelmed by it.

When we have the proper understanding spirit, it is not for us a question of how much we have or what we have. It is a question of what benefit we may reap from each experience of life. A great man benefits wherever he is placed. If he is placed under privations, he finds his exaltation there; if he is surrounded by riches, instead of being haughty and aggressive, he becomes the friend of the poor. He understands the law of life, so he is not carried away by outer conditions, nor does he swing to extremes. Sometimes we are not able to see why certain things come to us in this life. We do not seem to have done anything to deserve them. Perhaps the cause lies in a past life. Our present existence has not sprung from nothing. We have brought our ideas, our instincts, our good feelings and also our obstacles with us. But that does not mean that since this life is the product of Karma, its conditions are inevitable. No matter what we have brought, we can adjust and readjust and remould. Even our body may be changed by our thought and action and by the atmosphere we create within our self.

Life is like a scale. The weight of evil may be on one side, but we can counterbalance it by loving, constructive thought

and good action. A man must become strong; and as he grows in strength, he realizes his inherent nature and ceases to weep and wail and find fault with the conditions of his life. He lifts his head and goes through every sort of condition, trusting in the Divine. Remember that no man is self-sufficient. He may have a brilliant intellect, a healthy body, many things to his advantage; but never for one moment must we imagine that we do not need the support of Divine Providence. He is a mad man who thinks he can get on without God. The more we know of life, the more we know of higher principles, the more eager we shall be to ally ourselves with Divinity. All ideas of fate and bondage vanish when we throw off the shackles of self-consciousness. As soon as we have found our connection with Divinity, our individual responsibility ends. God becomes responsible for us; and when our responsibility is in His hands, our life cannot be productive of harm. Our task is to cleanse ourselves. We should cleanse our mind, our heart, the whole sphere of our consciousness, that the great Life may shine upon us and through us.

A life of activity offers the opportunity of tremendous blessing to humanity. We wipe out our past through our actions and also we accumulate fresh causes for unhappiness. We must not be in haste. If we believe in prayer, let us pray before we act. If we have any idea of philosophy or religion, let us take that as our companion in all our tasks. Let us never leave it. It is the greatest support we can have. When we do not possess the sense of consecration, we lose our opportunities. Work is productive. It can be productive of incalculable good; also it can be productive of harm to us. It all depends upon ourselves. We have enough free will to choose our course. A man can love the good so much that he is willing to forsake all evil for it; and he can also form the habit of evil association and vulgar thoughts. Habit is a tremend-

ous influence in our life. We can cultivate the habit of loving and doing good to others; and by thus eliminating all that is base and wiping out our past, we can mould a beautiful future. All our happiness lies in the dawn of wisdom. We do not love darkness. We never feel comfortable or happy or free when we are in darkness; therefore we should always march towards the light.

It is not the kind of action which determines our merit; it is the motive. It is the motive which regenerates every human being. Where or how we are placed is of little consequence; it is what our feeling and thought and motive are. If we are actuated by nobility of purpose, no matter how insignificant our starting point may be, it will carry us over all difficult situations to the ultimate goal of unity—unity with God and unity with humanity. All the harsh, discordant feelings which dominate our life now will drop away and we shall realize that life is a great, abundant blessing. We shall be happy that we are living, that we can serve and that we can radiate God's grace through our thoughts and actions.

PRAYER

O Lord, Who art our Guide even unto death, grant us, I pray Thee, grace to follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest. In little daily duties to which Thou callest us, bow down our wills to simple obedience, patience under pain or provocation, strict truthfulness of word and manner, humility, kindness; in great acts of duty or perfection, if Thou shouldest call us to them, uplift us to self-sacrifice, heroic courage, laying down of life for Thy truth's sake, or for a brother. Amen.

—*C. G. Rossetti.*

The best days of a man's life are those in which he renders service. —*Abu 't Tarif.*

THE HOUSE OF LIFE

From the Hako—A Pawnee Indian Ceremony

(Taken from a poetical rendering by Prof. Hartley Burr Alexander of Miss Alice Fletcher's Report of the Ceremony published by the Bureau of American Ethnology.)

Within the House of Life man entereth,
A little Child with slow and faltering feet:
The breathing Heaven is in his fluttering breath,
The pulse of Earth in his swift blood doth beat.

Within the House of Life man tarrieth,
As one who for a season taketh rest:
The Blue above, below the grassy Earth,—
An oriole within a wind-swept nest.

Within the House of Life man offereth
The simple tokens of his daily need,
His prayer for food and drink, in humble faith
That some dim distant Power shall give
them heed.

Then from the House of Life he hasteneth . . .
Aye, as an Eagle in his feathered mail
Battleth adown the blast with windy Death,
Speedeth the Warrior-Soul with battle-hail!

Even a journey involving thousands of miles must begin with a single step. When going to a distant place, one must ever start from where one is. So likewise when advancing on the true Path. If one goes on learning and doing without ceasing for decades, he will reach eventually to a great distance and accomplish much. If a tradesman saves a sen daily he will finally become a rich man.

—*Kaibara Ekken, (Japanese moralist).*

REALIZATION OF THE DIVINE SELF

By Swami Vivekananda

(Notes of informal conversations)

Only in the highest state of realization can a man say truly that he is directed wholly by God's Will and is not responsible for his own actions. When your mind has been purified by work and you see that it is He Who is causing all action, then alone have you the right to speak in that way. Stop and think whether all you do in your daily life is not done with the egotistic idea that you yourself are the agent. How long do you remember that it is the Lord Who is working through you? Yet, by repeatedly reminding yourself, you will arrive at a state where the ego will disappear and in its place the Lord will come. Then you will be able to say with truth: "Thou, Lord, art directing all my actions from within." If, however, the ego occupies all the space in your heart, where is there room for the Lord? The Lord is forced to be absent.

Is God the cause of our evil impulses?

No. It is a blasphemy to think in that way. He is not inciting you to evil action. Your wrong impulses are the creation of your desire for self-gratification. If a man says that everything is done by God and then persists in wrong-doing, he brings ruin on himself. This is the origin of self-deception. Do you not feel elated after you have done a good deed? You give yourself the credit then of doing something good; you cannot help it, it is human. But how absurd to take the credit of the good act on yourself, and to lay the blame for the evil act on the Lord! This is a most dangerous idea, the effect of ill-digested Gita and Vedanta. Never hold this view. Rather say that He causes the good work to be done, while you yourself are responsible for the evil action. That will give you greater devotion and faith, and you will see His grace manifested at every step.

The real truth is that no one has created you. You have created yourself. This is discrimination. This is Vedanta. But a man cannot understand this before he attains realization. Therefore the aspirant should begin with the dualistic standpoint, that the Lord causes the good actions while he is responsible for the evil. This is the easiest way to the purification of the mind. It is very difficult to hold monistic ideas at the outset; but the dualistic point of view gradually leads to the realization of *Advaita* or pure monism. If there is no wilful self-deception and a man sincerely believes that even the most wicked impulse also springs from the Lord, be assured that he will not continue to perform evil actions very long. All the impurities of his mind will be destroyed quickly. . . .

Within there is the lion, the eternally pure, illumined and ever free *Atman* or Divine Self; and directly one realizes Him through meditation and concentration, this world of fleeting manifestation vanishes. He is equally present in all; and the more a man practises, the more quickly will the Kundalini (the "coiled-up" power) awaken in him. When this power reaches the head, his vision will be unobstructed; he will realize the *Atman*. Some attain this early and others later. One must stick to it, determined never to let go. This is true manliness. You must keep the mind fixed on one object, like an unbroken stream of oil. The ordinary man's mind is scattered over different objects; at the time of meditation, too, the mind is apt to wander. But let thoughts arise in the mind as they will, while you sit calmly and watch them. By continuing to watch in this way the mind becomes calm and no more thought-waves rise in it. These waves represent the thought activities of the mind. Those ideas which you think very deeply, transform themselves into a subconscious current and come up to the surface again in meditation. The rise of these

waves during meditation is an evidence that your mind is tending towards concentration.

Sometimes the mind is concentrated on a set of ideas; this is called meditation with *Vikalpa* or oscillation. When the mind becomes free from all activity, it melts into the inner Self, into that One which is the essence of infinite knowledge and itself its own support. This is what is called *Nirvikalpa* Samadhi, (free from all the seeds of activity). Meditate every day alone. Everything will open up of itself. Now the Divine Mother, the embodiment of Illumination, is sleeping within; hence you do not understand this. She is the Kundalini. When before meditating you proceed to purify the nerves, you must strike hard mentally on the Kundalini in the sacral plexus and repeat: "Arise, Mother, Arise!" One must practise these exercises with moderation. During meditation suppress the emotional side altogether. That is a great source of danger. Those who are very emotional, no doubt succeed in drawing the Kundalini up more quickly; but it is as quick to come down again; and when it comes down, it leaves the devotee in a state of utter misery.

Practise meditation and concentration with the utmost care. At the outset take such external help as will make the mind pure. Place fragrant flowers in your sanctuary and burn incense. Repeat the name of your Ideal and say "Peace be to all creatures and to the whole universe." Send loving wishes to the north, south, east, west, above, below, in all directions; then begin to meditate. During the early stages one must practise in this way. Do not skip a single day. If you have pressing work, still go through your spiritual exercises for a quarter of an hour at least. Can you reach the goal without steadfast devotion?

Always try to become absorbed in the eternally present *Atman*. If once you get the vision of the *Atman*, you get every-

thing; and the bonds of birth and death will be broken. . . . Every one, from the worm to Brahma, will attain *Mukti* (freedom). Be possessed of *Shraddha* (faith) and *Virya* (courage), attain to the knowledge of the *Atman*, and sacrifice your life for the good of others—this is my wish and blessing.

THE TYRANNY OF DESIRE

From the Shanti-Parva of the Mahabharata

He who regards everything—joy and sorrow, honor and insult—with an equal eye; who never strives to gratify his desire for earthly possessions, who practises truthfulness of speech, who is freed from all kinds of attachment, and who has no craving for (selfish) activity, that one, O Bharata, is a happy man.

These five, the ancients say, are the means by which one acquires perfect tranquillity and emancipation. These are called Heaven. These constitute Religion. Upon these rests the highest happiness.

The person who desires happiness should renounce all attachment. The man who is without attachments and who no longer cherishes a desire to earn earthly possessions, can sleep peacefully.

Of these two,—one who attains the fruition of all his desires and one who casts off every desire: the second, who renounces all, is superior to the other who gains the fruit of his desire. No one can ever attain to the end of desire.

Forbear from every desire for action. O my soul, thou art possessed by cupidity. Adapt tranquillity by freeing thyself from all attachments. Repeatedly hast thou been deceived. How is it that still thou dost not free thyself from attachments?

O my wealth-coveting, foolish soul, when wilt thou succeed in emancipating thyself from the desire for earthly things?

Shame on my folly. I have become thy toy. It is thus that one falls into slavery.

No one born on earth ever reached the end of desire, no one yet to be born will succeed in attaining it. Casting aside all covetous action, at last I am roused from sleep. I am now awake!

I know thee, O Desire, and all those things that are dear to thee! Seeking to satisfy thee, I shall find happiness in my (Divine) Self.

O Desire, I know thy root. Thou springest from self-will. Therefore I shall avoid self-will. Thus shalt thou be destroyed with thy roots.

The desire for earthly things can never be fraught with happiness. If acquired, great is the anxiety felt by the one who acquires them. If lost after acquisition, that is felt as death. Acquisition also is very uncertain. . . .

If I continue to be agitated by thee, O Desire, I shall be without a fixed path (by which to reach liberation). Thou, O Desire, art always the generator of thirst, of grief, of weariness and toil.

At last, after a long time, I have come to understand that the desire for earthly things is fraught with sorrow. Whatever the object, O Desire, upon which thou settest thy heart, that thou forcest me to pursue. Thou art without judgment. Thou art a fool. Thou art difficult to content. Thou canst not be gratified. Thou burnest like fire. . . .

I cast thee off, O Desire, with all the passions of my heart. Thou shalt not again dwell with me or sport with me.

I shall forgive those who slander me or speak ill of me. I shall not injure even when injured. If any one from aversion speaks harsh words of me, not heeding those words I shall speak to him friendly words. In contentment of heart and with all my senses at peace, I shall live upon what I may earn.

I shall not contribute to the gratification of thy cravings, who art my foe. Freedom from attachment, liberation from desire, contentment, tranquillity, truthfulness, self-restraint, forgiveness and universal compassion, these are the qualities which now have come to me.

Therefore let desire, greed, thirst, miserliness, avoid me. I have chosen the path of Goodness.

Having cast off desire and greed, great is my happiness. No longer shall I yield to the impulse of covetousness. No longer shall I suffer misery like a person of uncleansed soul.

One obtains happiness according to the measure of desire he is able to cast off. Truly, he who yields himself up to desire always suffers misery.

Like a person plunging into a cool lake in the hot season, so have I now entered into Brahma, (the Divine). I have given up selfish activity. I have freed myself from grief. Pure happiness has now come to me.

The felicity that results from the gratification of desire, or that other pure felicity which one enjoys in heaven: neither of these compares even to a sixteenth part of the joy which arises when one abandons every kind of thirst.

The Duke of She asked Tsze-loo about Confucius and Tsze-loo did not answer him. The Master said: Why did you not say to him: He is simply a man who in his eager pursuit of knowledge forgets his food, who in the joy of its attainment forgets his sorrows, and who does not perceive that old age is coming on?

The Master said: The reason why the ancients did not give utterance readily to their words was that they feared lest their actions might not come up to them. . . When Tsze-loo heard anything, if he had not carried it into practice, he was only afraid lest he should hear something else.

—*Confucian Analects.*

GENTLENESS AND CHEERFULNESS

From the Letters of St. Francis de Sales

Be steadfast, my dear child, aim at being God's servant as perfectly as possible. Be very watchful as to gentleness. I do not bid you love that which you ought to love, I know you do so; but I bid you strive to be even, patient and gentle. Control the ebullitions of your natural temperament, which is somewhat over-quick and eager. I wish I had a heavy hammer wherewith to pound away the edges of your mind, which are too sharp for your spiritual progress. I have often told you that devotion must be pursued in good faith and on a broad scale. If you do well, thank God for it; if ill, humble yourself. Do not be fearful any more and do not fret your poor conscience. You know that all you need is to seek the Lord's love and give Him yours. Do this, my dear child, and diligently cultivate gentleness and inward humility.

We always want sugar in our food, that is, we want to enjoy conscious love and kindness and their pleasantness, just as we would fain be free from all imperfections; but we must patiently bear with our nature, which is human and not angelic. I do not mean that we are to rest satisfied with our imperfections. But we ought not to be discouraged or surprised; we should learn from our failings submission, humility and mistrust of self; never despondency and sadness, much less mistrust of God's love for us. He does not love our imperfections, but He loves us in spite of them. Just as a mother grieves over her child's weakness and faultiness, yet still loves him most tenderly, so God cherishes us, notwithstanding all our frailty.

Be cheerful. Our Lord looks lovingly upon you and the weaker you are, the greater His tenderness. Do not allow your mind to dwell upon anything contrary to this. If vexatious thoughts arise, do not dally with them; turn away and look to God with a brave humility; dwell upon His infinite goodness,

which has regard to our frail, needy humanity in all its infirmity. I cannot understand why those who have given themselves up to God and His goodness are not always cheerful, for what possible happiness can be equal to that? No accidents or imperfections which may happen ought to have power to trouble them or hinder their looking upward. Be tranquil and abide in gentleness and humility of heart.

God calls us to Him and He allows nothing to happen save what is for our real good. He knows what we are; when we come to rough places, He will always uphold us with His Fatherly hand, so that we be not hindered. But to respond to this grace we need an absolute trust in Him. Do not look forward to the changes and chances of this life in fear; rather look to them with full hope that as they arise, God, Whose you are, will deliver you out of them. He has kept you hitherto; do you but hold fast to His dear hand and He will lead you safely through all things; and when you cannot stand, He will bear you up in His arms. What need you fear, my child, remembering you are God's and that He has said: "All things work together for good to them that love Him." Do not look forward to what may happen to-morrow; the same Everlasting Father who cares for you to-day, will take care of you to-morrow and every day. Either He will shield you from suffering or He will give you unfailing strength to bear it.

Be at peace, then; put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations; and say continually: "The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart has trusted in Him and I am helped." He is not only with me, but in me and I in Him. What can a child fear surrounded by such a Father's arms? Be truly as a child. You know children do not trouble themselves with looking forward; they leave that to others and are perfectly content so long as they are near their father. Do this, my dear child, and you will be at peace.

PARABLES

From the Hagadic Writings of Israel

Rabbi Jonathan said: "The potter does not try the vessels that have been made imperfectly, because he does not doubt that if he strikes them even once, it will break them. But he tries the fair vessels; for however many times he may strike them, they will not be broken. So he strikes them to show the purchaser how strong and good they are." Thus, God does not try the wicked but the righteous, and their trials show their virtue to the world.

Rabbi Jose bar Chanina said: "This is like unto the weaver of a fabric. The more he strikes at it and cuts at it, the more it is praised, and the more does it acquire a good name. When he knows the fabric is bad, he does not dare to cut at it even once, for fear of tearing it." Thus the Holy One, blessed be He, does not try the wicked but the righteous.

Behold this may be likened to the goodman of the house who has two heifers; one healthy and strong the other weak. On which of them will he put the yoke? Is it not upon the healthy and strong one?

There was a certain king who made a feast and invited to it all the wayfarers and strangers in his dominions; but he made a decree that every man should bring with him something to sit upon at the feast. Some brought with them beautiful and comfortable cushions, and some brought sofas to recline upon, and some brought logs of wood, and some brought stones and boulders. The king provided everything for the nourishment and entertainment of all comers, but ordered that each man should sit, at the feast, on the couch or seat that he had made or brought for himself.

Then they who were sitting on logs and stones and other uncomfortable and ugly seats, grumbled at the king and said:

"Is it to the honour of the king that we should be sitting

here in such discomfort, on stones and bits of wood?"

And when the king heard their complaints he said to them: "Is it not enough for you that you disgrace my palace with stones and logs, my palace that I have built and beautified at so much cost; but will you also insult me and fasten an accusation upon me? Your honour and splendour are such as you make for yourselves."

A certain king had a vineyard and he hired a great number of labourers to work in it. There was among them one labourer who worked better and more quickly than all the others and even more than was necessary. What did the king? He took him by the hand and walked about the vineyard talking with him. And at eventide all the labourers came to receive their reward, and that labourer came with them, and the king paid him for the full day.

Then the other labourers complained. They said: "Behold we have worked all the day while this one only worked two hours, and the king has given him a full day's pay!"

Then the king said: "What right have you to be envious? This one did more in his two hours of proper work than you did who toiled all the day."

The righteous are compared to the stars. For, as the stars (each one of which could burn up this whole world) shine in glory and never clash together and are never jealous of one another, but all go on in their appointed courses, dispensing light, so the righteous are at peace with each other and are glad when others shine.

It happened that a certain poor woman brought a handful of flour to the temple as an offering, and the priest looked at it with contempt and said: "What is this to bring as an offering? What is there in this to eat?" Then that priest was rebuked in a vision . . . and the Divine voice said to him: "Thou shalt not look with contempt upon her. It is as if she had offered her own life."

THIRTEENTH ANNIVERSARY

Of The Vedanta Centre of Boston

The Vedanta Centre of Boston celebrated its thirteenth Anniversary on the evening of January fifth. The Chapel was entirely filled and every one expressed great admiration for the additions and improvements in the house. After music and a few words of welcome by Swami Paramananda, the report of the year's work was given. It ran: "The best commentary on the growth of the Centre during 1921 is to be seen in the numerous additions to the building. The enlarged entrance, the entirely new structure covering the remaining portion of the property, the raising of the rear wing another story, and the addition of a fourth story to the front of the main building practically amounted to a complete reconstruction. As a result of the various additions, the Centre now has six more bedrooms and two more baths, a large sun-parlor, four more storerooms, a number of additional storage closets, a much larger kitchen, an enlarged dining-room, a new laundry, a reconstructed furnace room with an entirely new heating system, and a spacious work-room for the use of the publication department and the mailing of the magazine. The remodelling has also necessitated the repainting and repapering of the entire house. One of the most effective changes is the building of the new entrance porch lighted by Gothic windows. This has made possible a re-arrangement of partitions inside which has increased materially the seating capacity of the Chapel. In the large main Gothic window of the porch the symbol of the Ramakrishna Mission, which appears on all the Centre's publications and stationery, has been reproduced in stained glass, and in the arched division below is inserted the Vedic text: "Truth is one, men call it by various names."

As if stimulated by the fresh setting, the work has shown a great increase in activity. The added rows of chairs in the

Chapel are already occupied each Sunday and people keep warning us that our enlargements will prove insufficient before the season is over. The Centre has had also unusual opportunities during the past year to act as a link between East and West. Sir Rabindranath Tagore was entertained on three different occasions; and a prominent physician of Bombay, (Dr. Nair) with his entire family spent a day with us. Still other prominent visitors have come to the Centre. It has made many new friends also through "The Message of the East," as well as through the Swami's outside lectures and travels. In September he attended a large Convention of Applied Psychology in Cleveland, delivering two lectures and speaking several times informally. As the outcome of the warm interest aroused, the Swami has been besieged with invitations to lecture before the different Clubs represented at the Convention. On the last day of November he set out on a tour arranged by their National Secretary. During the twelve days it covered, he visited seven cities in four different states and delivered twenty-two lectures, sometimes speaking three times a day. The best measure of the enthusiasm and appreciation which met him everywhere is to be found in the fact that in the twelve days eighteen hundred of his books and pamphlets were sold. A number also subscribed to "The Message of the East."

Through the year the magazine has received encouraging words from many unexpected quarters: one, for instance, from a Russian refugee in Switzerland, a professor of Chinese literature, who found an early bound volume in a second hand book stall and drew from it fresh strength to bear his poverty and exile. The Message now travels each month to England, France, Germany, Switzerland, British East Africa, India, Ceylon, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, British Columbia and to many different states in this country. It was interesting to

us also to receive Hindi translations of three of Swami Paramananda's works,—"Problem of Life and Death," "Self-Mastery" and "The Way of Peace and Blessedness." The same translator brought out the Swami's "Path of Devotion" last year.

Because of the confusion incident to building, the publication department has not been as active as usual during the last twelve months. In all, through mail orders and local sales, about seven thousand books and pamphlets have gone into circulation. But no new titles have been added to the list of publications. These figures, however, do not give the true measure of the growth of the work. Its real achievement is unseen and unmeasured. It is in the stillness of the closet, when the door is closed and some yearning heart seeks God—it is then that the fruit of the Centre's effort is garnered; and that none but God sees. Therefore our part must always be not to count costs or calculate results, but by holy thoughts and eager loving service to keep the central source of inspiration free and unclouded."

In his commentary on the report, the Swami said in part: "I came to Boston about Christmas time, 1908. I had no idea of building up a work of this size; in fact I had no plans, but I was ready and willing to do anything that came to me to do. I went where I was invited, I slept and ate wherever I happened to be; my life was wholly planless; and that is the way the Centre started. My purpose was not to proselytize or to establish a church. The message I brought, it seemed to me, had a tremendous human appeal and I gave it wherever an opportunity presented itself. At first it was not easy. There was opposition and a great deal of misunderstanding. People had an idea that the Orient was full of mystery, and they were amazed to know that India had so simple and direct a teaching to offer the world. . . . Our mission here is

to create unity—unity of thought and unity of culture. Although the vital aim of the work is to fulfill the spiritual need of those who seek it, it has also another definite purpose,—to bring together East and West.

This little seed which has been sown here in the form of a very modest Centre, is bearing fruit in various ways. I do not consider it a big work. I have not the ambition to build up a big work in the outer sense. When a religious work grows pretentious, often the higher expression of feeling is lost. I like rather to feel that we are humble, that our bigness lies in the ideals we uphold and try to live up to. We have not always met with success, but we have tried to go forward with a steadfast spirit of devotion. And it is our prayer at the beginning of the new year that our conviction may be so fixed in our hearts that whether people look on us with suspicion or friendliness, whether they try to crush us or aid us, yet we may maintain a loving spirit of tolerance and deeper understanding. This is what the world has need of. If even a few of these who come here realize this in their hearts, that is enough. Our effort is to eliminate all feeling of harshness, discordance, doubt and suspicion of one another; to break down all boundary lines. We have never tried to organize, because it is difficult to express the highest ideals in a large organization. We stand for freedom, freedom of thought and action; that each one may realize the loftiest and best in his own way. We like to be able to do our share. It does not require a large institution to send out loving thoughts and to pray for one's fellowmen. On the contrary, it is easier to do it when our mind is less distracted by outside influences and concerns. Let the work ever remain modest and let our hearts grow big and full of feeling for others. It does not matter whether people agree or disagree with us. Ours is to love and serve. A spiritual work can be built up only by

putting its trust in God; if He sustains us, then nothing can thwart us. Those of you who are friends of the Centre and have your heart's interest in the work, let this be your prayer for it:—that God's will may be fulfilled in every step of its journey; that we may have ever greater courage; and that we may serve all men with selfless devotion, without asking anything for ourselves."

The exercises closed with a prayer and benediction; and the rest of the evening was spent in informal social intercourse. Refreshments were served and there was music by the gifted violincellist, Miss Florence Colby, who also played at intervals during the exercises.

REPORT

Swami Paramananda spent three days of January in Rochester. On the 16th he delivered a public lecture, on the 17th he lectured before the Psychology Club and on the 18th he spoke in a private drawing room to a group of earnest students who have become specially interested in the teaching. He also held two classes during his stay. In Boston he conducted the two regular Services each Sunday and the open class on Tuesday. The special class for members was resumed on the second Thursday in the month and will continue now until the summer.

* * *

Certain volumes of "The Message of the East" are becoming rare because some numbers in the issues of these years are exhausted and no longer available for further volumes. If any one who has copies of these special numbers cares to return them to us, we shall be glad in exchange to send them any single lecture by Swami Paramananda mentioned in our list of publications. The numbers specially desired are: January 1912; May 1913; June 1914; April, May, August, November of 1915; February, May and November of 1916; March 1918; November 1919.

MAR 1 4 1922

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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The Message of the East

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Chapel of the Vedanta Centre

1 Queensberry Street, Fenway

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Swami Paramananda

of India in charge

FOURTEENTH SEASON—1922

SUNDAY, 11 A. M.—SERVICE WITH ADDRESS

SUBJECTS

Mar.	*5th*	*Creative Power of Silence*
"	*12th*	*Spiritual Optimism*
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NOTICE

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

Published monthly except in August and September

VOL. XI MARCH, 1922 No. 3

HEALING OF BODY AND MIND

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

Man's life is inter-related. His physical life is so absolutely dependent on his moral and his spiritual life that unless he pay proper heed to these, he can never hope to be healthy. Whenever we violate the spiritual law and try to find a short cut to happiness, the fibre of our moral being is injured and we begin to feel pains and aches in the physical body. When these conditions continue and we do not try to remove them, a mark is made on the mind. Doubt, despair, despondency arise and these react again on the body. The only healing which can be effective then, will be one which brings a regenerating influence into the mind and restores it to its normal state.

How does spiritual healing take place? A sceptic says that it does not take place at all, it is a myth; but it could not be conceived by human minds unless it were founded to some extent at least on fact. All history is filled with accounts of such healing. We read of it in the life of Krishna, in the life of Buddha, in the life of Christ, of Lord Gouranga, of St. Francis. It is love conquering brute force. The force which is moving in the direction of evil is reversed suddenly and becomes a power for good. This is what I call conversion. A man can never be converted by violence or by mere persuasion. He can be transformed permanently only by a spiritual influx

which is so redeeming, so life-giving, so healing, that when he comes in contact with it, he is re-made. Whenever this influence falls upon a receptive heart, it cleanses and exalts the whole nature as a natural sequence; disturbing physical conditions fall away and mental distresses vanish. This is the only real process of healing.

In India spiritual healing has never been practised as a profession, because there they know that God's power cannot be used for any material advantage or with any sense of egotism. Only when we have no ulterior motive, no thought of self, do we become direct channels for it. Our heart must be full of purity, of selfless devotion, of real love for humanity. If on the contrary we take up healing as a profession, expecting a definite return from it, the supply is cut off. Every individual has the right and the power to connect himself with the Infinite Source and be filled constantly with fresh life and understanding. In accomplishing this the mind plays a greater part than the body. We are all anxious to maintain physical health. There is not a person who is not interested in possessing it. But in order to have it, we must acquire a well-ordered mind; because our thoughts and feelings and aspirations will produce either good health or ill health in our body. You may ask, why do so many good people suffer? Suffering is not a curse; bodily illness is not necessarily a punishment. Sometimes it comes to purify and strengthen us. Therefore those who have deeper understanding strive to make the best use of illness. Bodily suffering becomes a blessing when it teaches us to transcend outer conditions and to turn to the soul within.

Each of us is a living part of the Whole, a direct descendant of Godhead; and when we become truly aware of this, it cures all our ailments. In my own life I have known of extreme cases, pronounced hopeless by physicians, which were healed by a mere touch. Yet there was no miracle about it. It was

the transmission of a spiritual power which accomplished it. If any man can resign himself absolutely and unreservedly to the Will of God, in a moment he will be made whole, and he will be able to heal others. The healing takes place by the natural process of life. Ordinarily we seek relief through round-about ways; we seek all our consolation and help from outside; but if we can turn directly within to our own inward resources, we shall get results which will amaze us. The reservoir of life is inexhaustible. So long as we go on crying: "My strength has failed, my usefulness is gone, my faculties have lost their power to act!" we shut ourselves away from the Fountainhead. The fact that we are in that state shows that we have detached ourselves from the Source of life. A branch withers quickly when it is severed from the root, and the root of every human life is God.

If we do not believe that God is the Source of our life, in what can we believe? Can we believe in changeable mundane things and hope for perfect health or happiness through them? No. We may try to reverse the order of our life, but the Cosmic Law does not reverse its order. That is why the fundamental principle of attainment must be always: "Seek ye first the kingdom of Truth, all other things shall be added unto you." Why is it we find this so difficult to follow? Because we do not really believe in it. We may pretend loyalty to a religion, we may pretend to have lofty aspirations, we may pretend devotion to all sorts of ideals with high-sounding names, but mere pretending will not lead us anywhere. We must have real love for an Ideal in our hearts; then not only do we elevate ourselves, but we are able to bring constant benefit to the world. We see this in the lives of the Great Ones. A Buddha, a St. Francis, a man who possesses nothing, becomes a great power. He revolutionizes human society. Even material weapons drop powerless before him. In the life of Gautama Buddha

we read that once the priests out of jealousy plotted to do away with Him and engaged some wicked men to take His life. The men came to Him with drawn swords, but they were disarmed by His gentle exalted bearing and refused to do Him harm. If our faith in the all-conquering power of love is equally genuine, we also shall be victorious over evil. But there can be no compromise. In all circumstances, whether pleasing or unpleasing, we must hold fast to our ideal of love. That love never fails to cure both mind and body. It was by this love that St. Francis conquered and transformed the hearts of the three robbers.

Once three robbers came to the monastery asking for food. Brother Angelo, knowing who they were, drove them away with harsh words. St. Francis, returning from his daily round of begging, heard of it and, sad at heart, he reproached the brother for his lack of loving-kindness. "Take thou this wallet of bread," he said, "and this flask of wine which I have begged, and seek out the robbers. Kneel before them humbly and ask their pardon for thy harshness. Beseech them in my name to offend God no longer by evil-doing. Tell them, if they will do this, that I promise to provide for their needs. Give them to eat, then return hither." Brother Angelo found the robbers, and while they were eating of St. Francis' alms, their hearts were so softened they began to be overwhelmed with remorse for their evil deeds. "Let us go to St. Francis," they said to one another, "and implore Him to save us from our many grievous sins." St. Francis received them lovingly, consoled them with many tender hopeful counsels, and they all became devout members of the Order.

We often say: "I would like to be unselfish; I would like to think noble thoughts, but it is an impossiblity for me." Why should it be an impossibility? If the mind is capable of thinking ignoble thought, it has an equal capacity for loving, con-

structive thought. It is a question of training. Unless we train our body and mind and readjust our habits, it is useless to uphold visionary ideals, which remain mere theories for us. We should be grateful that difficulties come sometimes, because they test our sincerity. They show us whether we are standing on the solid foundation of spiritual conviction. If we are not, it is better that we find it out. Ailments come, misfortunes come; but they prove to be curses only when we fall under their sway. When we are not crushed by them, we rise up with greater strength. This conquest is the greatest thing man can hope for and it comes through the power of the Spirit. Wealth cannot buy it, or learning. Sometimes rather these hinder our efforts, because they confuse our mind and destroy the purity of our vision. If we would have either health or wisdom, we must keep to simplicity and directness in our mental and bodily habits.

The story is told that when Lord Buddha was preaching in the neighborhood of Shravasti, a man of great wealth came to him and said: "World-honored Master, forgive me that I do not prostrate before you with proper reverence; but I suffer miserably from obesity, drowsiness, excessive lethargy and other complaints, which make it impossible for me to move without pain." Buddha, observing the luxuries with which the man was surrounded, asked him: "Have you a desire to know the real cause of your unhappy state? The man assented and Buddha continued: "There are five things which produce the conditions from which you suffer:—opulent dinners, love of sleep, love of pleasure, thoughtlessness and lack of occupation. Begin to exercise control at your meals, and take upon yourself some occupation which will employ your abilities and make you useful to your fellow-men. In doing this you will prolong your life."

The rich man heard the words of the Blessed One and, hav-

ing regained his lightness of body and buoyancy of mind, he returned to the world-honored One afoot and without attendants. "Master," he said, "you have cured my bodily ailments. I come now to seek the enlightenment of my mind." And the Blessed One said: "The worldling nourishes his body, but the wise man nourishes his soul. He who indulges in the satisfaction of his appetites works his own destruction; but he who walks in the path of self-discipline will not only gain salvation from sin, but prolong his life." This may not seem a great miracle. Buddha made only the simplest suggestions. He did not lay His hand on the man and cure him at once, although He might have done that. But such instances of sudden healing to me are not more miraculous than this one, because this has the element of rebuilding the moral fibre; and until that is accomplished, no matter how much we may try to help any one, it will not prove a lasting blessing.

One can be cured by the laying on of hands, by prayer, by transmission of spiritual force, provided the healer is pure, exalted and free from every selfish motive. Often those who are the most powerful healers are not conscious that they are healing. Nor do they wish their power to be known or recognized. Why? Because they are not willing to mix their spirit of consecration to God with the cheaper materials of self-glorification, egotism and vanity. If you are interested in healing, do it; but keep yourself out of it. Bring in God's power and all things will be made whole for you. Do not resort to trivial methods; that is, when you have a little bodily ache or pain, do not focus your thought on it in the hope of escaping from it; or when you think you need a new dress or a new hat, do not expend your precious mental energies in trying to obtain them.

Concentrating your mind to satisfy trifling desires proves always a great detriment to your higher unfoldment, and you should do your utmost by the practice of 'discrimination to

avoid this mis-step. There are people who by concentrating realize their material ambitions, and they imagine that they possess superior spiritual power, but this is merely a snare, which cheats them of true attainment.

How do you know that what you obtain is good for you? Oftentimes we find that it is not beneficial for us to have a great deal of material prosperity. We may like the soft conditions of life; but they are not always wholesome for our higher nature. What we need is a mind which can stand firm in all circumstances; a mind which is brave and heroic. True heroism is born of Spirit, never of material conditions. Real strength does not come from the flesh, it comes only when flesh is connected with Spirit; then we can go through the greatest ordeal unmoved. All that we crave for we shall receive in unbounded supply, when we know how to use it for our own good and for the good of our fellowmen. We would all like to possess happiness and power, but these do not come to us because we are not big enough to take them. We must cultivate bigness and inwardness.

We cannot realize the highest happiness so long as we are thinking of ourselves only, of our own needs and gratifications. Not until the sun of wisdom shines and melts away these selfish limitations, not until then will rise from within our true power, which is inexhaustible. An unrivalled passage in the Upanishads tells us that in the vastness of infinitude alone lies the fullness of happiness for man; never in the finite. Men go on groping here and there to gratify their desires; and they often gain what they covet, but it never satisfies their deeper craving. We enter into our true state of being only when we forget ourselves; when we cease to believe that our body is given us for our gratification, that our mind and acquirements are for ourselves.

We must lose all self-consciousness in the great thought that

we are instruments of God; we must feel that our body must be kept clean and holy as a shrine for the dwelling-place of Divinity. If we keep uppermost in our mind these higher concepts of life, we shall refrain from doing what is ignoble. Do we wish to be strong, do we wish to be happy? If we do, then we must plant the seeds of constructive thought in our hearts. We must remember constantly that no matter what happens on the physical plane, there is a dominant ruler within, the Spirit, and that Spirit can never be vanquished. When we are able to take this stand, we can overcome every obstacle.

Why do people become selfish? Why are they guilty of unworthy acts which harm others? It is because they have lost this lofty point of view. Their whole life is centred in their flesh, in sensation, in immediate bodily concerns. But let them extend their vision, let them project their thought beyond mere physical boundary lines, and a new inner consciousness will dawn in them. Their body may still have its limit, their material surroundings may continue to be disturbing; in spite of all this, they will not be moved from the state of tranquillity they have found. This is only possible when we bring spiritual consciousness into our life. When we feel that we are direct descendants of the Infinite, when this conviction is firmly established in our hearts, then are we made whole. It is the life which brings healing. It is entering into the inner realm of consciousness where we are restored naturally. When our thought is filled with Spirit, all must be well with us; because where Spirit shines unobstructed, there is life; there can be no sickness or suffering.

Thine own self-will and anxiety, thy hurry and labor, disturb thy peace and prevent Me from working in thee. Look at the little flowers in the serene summer days; they quietly open their petals and the sun shines into them with his gentle influences. So will I do for thee, if thou wilt yield thyself to Me. —*G. Tersteegen.*

WAY OF FREEDOM

From The Samhita

(An ancient dialogue between the Sage Astavakra and King Janaka. Rendered from the Sanskrit.)

The Sage Astavakra said: He alone dwells in unshaken calmness and bliss who perceives clearly that this ego which enjoys and suffers is not the true Self.

He alone tastes the sweetness of peace who perceives clearly that the Supreme Lord is the sole fashioner of the universe. Knowing this his cherished desires drop away one by one, his ambitions melt into nothingness, and his heart craves for naught of this world.

As time rolls on, prosperity follows adversity and adversity prosperity in inevitable sequence. Knowing this, the wise man leads a healthy contented life, free from desire and free from grief.

Life is an endless series of experiences. From the Invisible emanate the forces which create and destroy. That Power inscrutable is the dispenser of human happiness and human misery. Knowing this, the wise man works without attachment and without expectation of recompense.

Convinced that he is not the body and that he does not possess it, the wise man attains oneness with his Higher Self, and casts aside all thought of himself as the doer. Rising above his worldly self, freed from the limitations of personality, and realizing his oneness with Absolute Truth, he transcends the dual plane of good and evil and merges himself in the perfect Ideal.

He who is convinced that he is present in all, from the Creator down to the meanest creature, dwells in unmodified purity. The profound peace and joyousness of his soul are never disturbed, whether he lives in riches or in poverty.

He lives peacefully, like a shining flower of perfection, desireless and detached from the world.

The acquisition of untold riches may bring ease, comfort and bodily enjoyment, but a blissful state of soul is impossible without complete detachment.

How can one whose heart is scorched by the burning fire of earthly desires enjoy blessedness? But when the charm of created things has lost its hold over him and the veil of ignorance has dropped from his eyes, then the man gains direct vision of Truth and becomes free from all grief and anxiety.

TRUE LOVE SEEKETH NO REWARD

By Saint Bernard. 12th Century

Not without reward is God loved, albeit He is to be loved without thought of the reward. True love cannot fail, yet neither is it a hireling; in sooth it seeketh not its own. It is affection, not a contract; it is neither gained nor gains by bargain. It affects freely and maketh free. True love is content with itself. Its reward is the possession of the object loved. For whatever thou mayest seem to love for the sake of something else, thou clearly lovest the ultimate end of thy love, not the means. Paul doth not preach the Gospel that he may eat, but eats that he may preach the Gospel; he loves, not meat, but the Gospel. True love seeketh no reward, but merits it. Reward is not offered to the lover; it is gained by him that loves, and rendered to him that perseveres. When we would dispose to things of a lower order, we invite the unwilling by promises or rewards, but not the willing. For who thinks that a man should be rewarded that he may do what he freely desires? No one, for instance, leads one that hungers to eat, or one that thirsts to drink, or a mother to give suck to the little son of her womb. Or who thinks that a man should be induced by prayer or price to hedge in his own vine, dig round his own tree, or build the structure of his own house? How. then, should the soul that loves God seek any other reward of her love save

God? If she seeketh another, she assuredly loves that, not God.

It is natural to every one that uses reason to desire, always in proportion to his judgment and intention, the things that are greater, and to be content with nothing than which he deems what he lacks to be better. He who is clothed with a precious robe aims at one more precious; and, possessing much wealth, he envies one richer than himself. Thou mayst see men, abounding in lands and possessions, still day by day adding field to field, and with infinite greed extending their boundaries. Thou mayst see, too, those who dwell in royal houses and ample palaces, nevertheless daily joining house to house, and, with restless curiosity, building, pulling down, changing square for round. What of men uplifted by honours? Do we not see them, with insatiable ambition, straining more and more with all their might to higher things? But it is foolish and smacks of sheer madness always to desire those things which never, I say not satisfy, but even lessen the appetite; inasmuch as, whatever of such thou mayst have, thou still longest for what thou hast not, and ever restlessly pantest for what is lacking.

Thus it happens that the mind, wandering through the various false attractions of the world, is wearied, not satisfied, by running to and fro with vain labour; while whatever it hungrily swallows, it reckons little to what remains to be devoured; and ever not less anxiously desires what are lacking than gladly possesses what are present. For who may obtain all things? And although a man is not certain when he will lose with sorrow even that little which he has obtained with labour, he is nevertheless certain that he will some time lose it. If then thou wouldst fulfill thy wish, if thou wouldst take hold of that of which the possession leaves no more to be desired—what need to essay the rest too? Thou runnest through bye-paths, and shalt die long before thou attain by this circuit to thy desire.

"Better is a little to the just, than the great riches of the

wicked;" for, indeed, as the wise man says and the fool finds, he that loveth money, shall not be satisfied with money; but they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, they shall have their fill. Righteousness is the vital and natural food of the spirit that uses reason; but money no more lessens the hunger of the mind than does wind that of the body. If, then, thou shouldst see a hungry man, with mouth opened to the wind, drawing in the air with puffed-out cheeks, as though thereby to satisfy his hunger, wouldst thou not deem him mad? So it is not less madness to think that the rational spirit is not rather puffed up than satisfied by any bodily things. For what have bodies to do with spirits? Neither can those be refreshed with spiritual things, nor these with bodily. Bless the Lord, O my soul, who satisfieth thy desire with good things. He satisfies with good, He stirs to good, He preserves in good; He prevents, sustains, fulfils. He makes thee desire, He is what thou desirest.

I said above: The cause of loving God is God. I spoke truly; for He is both the efficient and the final cause. He gives the occasion, He creates the affection, He consummates the desire. He wrought (or, rather, is what He is) that He might be loved; He is the object of hope, to be loved more blissfully, that He may not be loved in vain. His love both prepares and rewards ours. It goes before more graciously, is repaid more justly, is expected more sweetly. He is rich unto all that call upon Him; nor still hath He aught better than Himself. He gave Himself to be merited, He keeps Himself for reward, He sets forth Himself for the reflection of holy souls, He gives Himself out for the redemption of those in captivity. Thou art good, O Lord, to the soul that seeketh thee: then what to her that finds? But herein is a wondrous thing: no one can seek Thee save whoso has first found. Therefore, Thou dost will to be found that Thou mayst be sought; to be sought that Thou mayst be found.

INSPIRATION

By Marion Forster Gilmore

They are not born of us, the songs we sing,
Although they seem of our own fashioning,
O, brother bards, for we are only reeds
That grow among the other water weeds
In Life's deep ever-onward rushing river.
God gathers us and in His Hands we quiver,
With a mysterious wild ecstasy.
That we are chosen thus through melody
To give His message to a world in need.
But it is God's own breath that, through each reed
How subtly passing, ever outward floats
In marvellous and never dying notes,
Breathing of wisdom's glorious design,
Vibrant forever with a Love Divine;—
Ay, no! those songs are born of heavenly powers,
My fellow poets,—they are not ours, not ours.

SONGS OF KABIR

O Friend! this body is His lyre;
He tightens its strings, and draws from it
the melody of God.
If the strings snap and the keys slacken,
then to dust must this instrument of dust return:
Kabir says: "None but God can evoke its melodies."

* * * * *

The harp gives forth murmurous music; and the
dance goes on without hands and feet.
It is played without fingers, it is heard without ears;
for He is the ear, and He is the listener.
The gate is locked, but within there is fragrance:
and there the meeting is seen of none.
The wise shall understand it.

THE BUILDING OF CHARACTER

By Sister Devamata

The soul wears two garments,—this outer one of the gross body, and an inner one of character. The inner body contains the mind, the intellect, the moral nature and the sense of "I",—the whole of our personal identity, in short, as well as the record of our previous lives. The question is often asked: if we have lived again and again, why have we no record of it? What better record could we have than the character we wear to-day? We write our thoughts and deeds deep into our being, and every time we move or speak we betray how we have lived down the ages. No recording angel is needed.

The substratum of the character-body is memory. The slightest impression made upon the mind is graven in the memory. The chance word we hear, the headline we glimpse in the street car, the fleeting wave of impatience or resentment, even these are duly set down. Not a scratch over the surface of our thought is ever effaced absolutely, although some are so lightly traced that they can be regarded as negligible. It is the frequent repetition of an idea or a desire which imbeds it in our character and makes it a dominating principle in our action. We wonder why our good resolutions break down so easily. It is because they are undermined by our actual life. Our resolutions are theories, while the disintegrating impulses are daily habits.

Yet these habits, however firmly rooted, can be wiped out by the persistent repetition of a counteracting thought. It is attention which lends strength to our mental impressions. The entire world might be in a ferment and we would know nothing of it, if our attention were turned wholly elsewhere. We discover this in the class room when we try to teach children. If we are unable to fix their attention, the hour's lesson is lost. Our first concern in shaping our character, therefore, should

be to withdraw our attention from all destructive, weakening impressions. The more sins we have to remember, the more we must try to forget them; otherwise we increase their hold over us. The true penitent cannot afford to repent. If he will be purged and made clean, he must forget himself and all his shortcomings and merge his thought in some lofty ideal. It is a very beneficial exercise, whenever the consciousness of our limitations threatens to overwhelm us, to read or think of some holy life which illustrates the virtues we need to acquire. There is no quicker way of cultivating them; for what we think on, that we become.

A man who wishes to build a strong character must never indulge in trivial, flimsy thought. We cannot be cowards six days in the week and expect to be heroes on the seventh. We shall be what our cumulative thought has made us. If we have not borne the little stings and pains of to-day bravely, we may be sure that we shall go down under bigger wounds a week or a month hence. It is the little things which test us; and one who would build enduringly must pay heed above all to the little things. If we are faithful in the small things of life, the Bible tells us, automatically we shall become ruler over greater things.

The cardinal qualities of compassion, fortitude, loyalty to the Ideal, spiritual courage, are all bred of patient practice in the commonplace tasks of each day. So often people complain that they have no time for serious pursuits; but it is the will which is lacking, not the time. All life is an open opportunity. It requires no more effort to think of God and His greatness than of our neighbor and his smallness. It is altogether a question of habit. You may say: "How can I think on two levels at the same moment?" The human mind always carries on two collateral lines of thought,—the line of the immediate experience and a line of self-consciousness, with a connecting zig-zag line of comparison between. Now everything which occurs re-

minds us of ourself. Whatever we feel or perceive or think on, we refer spontaneously to the little self—its likes and dislikes, its advantage or disadvantage, its knowledge or ignorance. When we begin the training of our attention, our thought processes still remain dual, but consciousness of God takes the place of consciousness of self. All things are referred to the Ideal instead of to the ego. Only when we cultivate this new habit are we able to provide a solid foundation for our character.

Ordinarily we associate character with morality, with struggle and warfare in the name of virtue. But a character which does not extend its reach beyond the ethical almost invariably is angular, harsh and unyielding. It is lacking in all the subtler grace and loveliness which should adorn the superior life. St. Francis de Sales writes to a young wife: "You should not only be religious and love religion; you should make religion attractive, useful and agreeable to every one around. . . Let your religion be as winning to others as possible." Probably nothing has done more to discredit virtue than the stern, uncompromising, puritanic practice of it by those who make ethical achievement the final goal.

I would not minimize the essential value of morality in human progress. It is as indispensable to spiritual development as technique is to music. The exercises of choice and volition, which it sets for us, do much to increase the pliability and vigor of the inner body and prepare it for the soul's use. But ethics alone cannot offer a firm basis for character, because they deal wholly with the external, and all external things are shifting. The fundamental spiritual truths are the same the world over, but ethical laws vary from nation to nation and race to race. Each individual even is constantly repairing and readjusting his moral standards as his outlook on life broadens; whereas the spiritual knowledge he gains remains unaltered and unalterable.

True character building is an interior process. Nothing we are at the present moment is the result of any super-imposition from the outside. All the changes which have taken place in us as we have passed from amoeba to man have come through the outpouring of our inner nature. External conditions and surroundings have furnished merely the proper occasions for this unfolding of our essential being. We have grown as the branch does,—from within our own root and stem. In every living creature perfection exists, out of sight perhaps, yet there none the less; and because perfection is stronger than imperfection, because the Infinite is stronger than the finite, that mightier Principle of life prods us on and on; but we hold back. To this holding back are due all our aches and pains and miseries. We are like rebellious children being dragged home by the mother. We are scratched and hurt because, not wishing to leave our play, we refuse to stand up and walk on our own feet in cheerful obedience.

One of the salient marks of a man of character is his willingness to co-operate with Nature. He does not find his pleasure in breaking the law, but in going with it. Only a child-mind takes delight in defying the word of command; the grown-up intelligence likes to feel the support of a superior authority. It believes that it can move more confidently and freely when it is conscious of a supreme sustaining and restraining Power. There is a certain obstinacy of self-will which is sometimes mistaken for character, but it is sure to break under stress. The pushing, assertive man is fore-ordained to defeat when he runs counter to the man of quiet resolution, who shapes his action on cosmic lines.

The very root of character is indrawnness. The strong man acts from the centre outward. He follows the rule of Nature, which preludes every forward spring by a recoil. As the arm draws back before it deals a heavy blow, so he gathers himself

constantly to the centre of his being and attacks life from that vantage ground. The activity which begins and ends at the circumference is of necessity feeble and unproductive. In certain games, we know, a run does not count unless the player first touches base; so unless we touch the base of our life, the great Inner Principle of wisdom and strength, before each outer effort, our endeavor will be sadly ineffective. This cannot be done at random, however. There must be firmly established contact with the centre to be able to swing there quickly at the moment of need. If God remains a stranger to us, we shall forget Him in the rush of living. We must develop the habit of association with Him. This can be done only through regular practice of meditation.

The nervous unrest we feel now when we sit down and try to meditate, proves how far we have moved away from the central point of strength and stillness in us. We are like a boat with hoisted sail tugging at its moorings. We can scarcely wait to plunge into the activities of our usual round. The only way that we shall overcome this unwholesome scattered state is by setting apart certain definite hours for silent thought, and observing them with unwavering determination. It does not occur to us to skip the brushing of our teeth or the combing of our hair, however hurried we may be, and such should be our attitude towards this daily exercise of interior communion. The time devoted to it may be short, but it must be kept with rigid exactitude. Otherwise we shall falsify our values and persuade ourselves that the outer is more important than the inner.

Quietness is a salient quality of character. Lord Buddha says: "The gods even envy him whose senses have been subdued, who is free from pride and free from appetites; his thought is quiet, quiet are his word and deed, when he has obtained freedom by knowledge, when he has thus become a qui-

et man." The feeble mind is garrulous and noisy, but the man who lives in unbroken awareness of his soul feels no impulse to boisterous argument or self-advertisement. He is confident that truth will prove itself, right will protect itself, that in due season the Divine will prevail over the human. Such a man is generous by the very logic of his nature. He has touched the Source and he knows that all the basic things of life are inexhaustible. There is more than enough for all; and however much is given, the Infinite still remains undepleted.

Forgiveness is an unknown virtue to him, because he never finds anything to forgive. Forgiveness implies a consciousness of injury; but if we were truly generous, we would excuse our neighbor's fault before it has wounded us. We would cover it over as a mother eagerly cloaks her child's wrong-doing. If we are offended, the fault lies in us; we have a sore place in our character which needs to be healed. When we are sound throughout, we take even the sharpest blow with a smile. A sense of grievance is an unfailing symptom of weakness and egotism. It is we who need to be forgiven, not the one who has hurt us.

The strong man again is habitually cheerful. Despondency is like a dry rot which eats away the supporting beams of our character. All the fears and failures which induce dejection, taken together, could not do us so much harm as dejection itself. Swami Vivekananda declares despondency to be the most insidious enemy of the spiritual life. We would not willingly breathe poisonous miasmas into our lungs, why should we any more lightly give room in our mind to the poison of despondent thought? Melancholy works slowly and heavily, hence it is not so difficult to combat as the hotter passions. When we feel it beginning to press down on us, we should meet it promptly. So far as possible we should keep actively occupied, preferably in manual labor, to stimulate our physical and moral circula-

tion. Then, remembering that attention is the lever by which we regulate the mind, we should fix our attention on some triumphant example of bigness and buoyant heroism and hold it there, until the constructive influence of the example catches us on its current and sweeps us out of stagnant waters into the free-flowing midstream again. We learn a poor lesson from the stripes and buffetings of the saints and Saviours when we use them merely to console us for our own miseries. We derive profit from them only when we imbibe the spirit with which these spiritual heroes bore their hardships and thus learn from them to rise superior to our own.

Not by exercise of will can we make ourselves strong or important. Character is an organic growth and builds itself. Our only part in the work is to remove ourself from it. We do this by holding our thought resolutely on higher levels. "I shall lift mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help." Character draws its sustenance from the heights always. It staggers and swoons in the closed-in valley of petty material concerns. When we consecrate ourselves whole-heartedly to a noble ideal, through contact with it the deeper forces of our nature are set in motion and within us rises from day to day a new Temple for the living God. We may not know it, but others see it and the world is richer for it.

O insensate care of mortals, how faulty are those arguments that make thee downward beat thy wings.

—*Dante. Il Paradiso.*

The senses are not capable of Divine blessings; hence if thou wouldst be happy and wise, be silent and believe, suffer and have patience, be confident and walk on; it concerns thee far more to hold thy peace and to let thyself be guided by the Hand of God, than to enjoy all the goods of this world.

—*Michael de Molinos.*

THE MAN OF SUPERIOR MIND

Teachings of Confucius

The minds of superior men trend upward, those of inferior men trend downward. The superior man keeps his eyes fixed on virtue; the common man, on earthly things.

The man who may be regarded as moving towards perfection is one who, seeing some advantage to himself, is mindful of righteousness; who, seeing danger, risks his life; and who, if bound by some covenant of long-standing, never forgets his pledge as time goes on.

Respecting Tsz-chai, the Master said that he had four of the essential qualities of the superior man:—in his own private walk he was humble-minded, in serving his superiors he was deferential, in looking after the material welfare of the people he was generously kind, and in his exaction of public service he was just.

Some one asked the Master about his attendant, a youth from the village of Keish, whether he was improving. The Master said: "I note that he seats himself in places reserved for his superiors and that when he is walking he keeps abreast with his seniors. He is not one of those who care for improvement; he wants to be a man all at once."

Superior men are modest in their words, but lavish in their deeds.

The man of superior mind is placid and composed, the small-minded man is in a constant state of perturbation.

The firm, the unflinching, the plain and simple, the slow to speak, these accomplish their duty towards their fellowmen most truly.

Not even when he eats his meals will the superior man forget what he owes his fellowmen. Even in hurried leave-takings, even in moments of greatest confusion, he keeps true to his standard of conduct.

Be courteous in your private sphere, be serious in any task you undertake, be loyal-hearted in your intercourse with others. Even though you were to go among the savage tribes of the hills, it would not be right to neglect these duties.

The wise escape doubt; the good-hearted escape trouble; and the courageous escape fear.

Admirable indeed was the virtue of Hwuy. With a single bambu dish of rice, a single gourd dish of drink, and living in his mean narrow lane, while others could not have endured the distress, he did not allow his joy to be affected by it.

It is no light thing to endure poverty uncomplainingly and no easy thing to bear wealth without growing arrogant.

Those who keep within restraints are seldom losers.

Once the Master said: "Would that I could dispense with speech!" "Sir," said Tsz-king, "If you were never to speak, what would your pupils do?" "Does Heaven ever speak?" the Master said. "The four seasons come and go, and all creatures live and grow. Does Heaven ever speak?"

Now we see that a carpenter by learning certain things becomes a carpenter; and a pilot by learning certain things becomes a pilot. Probably, then, it is not sufficient merely to be willing to be wise and good; but it is also necessary that certain things should be learned. The philosophers say that we are first to learn that there is a God, and that His providence directs the whole; and that it is impossible to conceal from Him, not only our actions, but even our thoughts and emotions. We are next to learn what the Gods are: for such as they are found to be, such must he who would please and obey them to the utmost of his power endeavor to be. If the Deity is faithful, he too must be faithful; if free, beneficent, and exalted, he must be free, beneficent, and exalted likewise; and, in all of his words and actions, behave as an imitator of God. —*Epictetus.*

REPORT

In all public work there is an inevitable ebb and flow, and one soon learns not to measure growth by the maximum or decline by the minimum of interest and attendance. Keeping to the mean line, however, there can be no doubt that the Vedanta Centre of Boston has entered upon a new period of growth. What a year ago was the maximum attendance at the Sunday Services has now become the minimum, while the Tuesday class has doubled in size. Many more also are eager to enter the students' class on Thursday, but this is now open only to regular members who have been attending the other meeting for some time and have acquired a certain understanding of the teaching. In addition to the regular classes and Services during February, the Centre gave an informal tea on Saturday afternoon, the tenth, in order that the students and friends of the work might have an opportunity to see the various improvements in the house beyond the entrance and Chapel. The chief point of interest was the sun parlor, which every one entered with a cry of admiration. It is built on the fourth floor over the circular tower-like corner of the house. The entire circle forming two sides of the room is made up of casement windows, through which one looks out over the park, with its winding stream, to the long line of Greek columns of the Art Museum, on up to the towering spires of the large Mission Church belonging to the Redemptionist Fathers, and still beyond to the slopes of Parker Hill, sparkling with lights at night. The sweep of the view follows the whole course of the sun, so that one sees both the sunrise and the sunset from the windows. The green wicker furniture, the prevailing tones of green in the rugs and the row of blooming plants on the window-sills, give one the impression, facing in one direction, that one is out of doors; while at a turn of the head the pale grey walls and white woodwork, the

well-stocked book case and a bright open fire remind one that one is under shelter and safe from the weather. It is undoubtedly a rare privilege near the heart of the city to have a quiet spot so full of fresh air and sunshine as this.

Swami Paramananda spent the week of February 12th lecturing in Ohio. On the 13th he spoke for the Club of Applied Psychology in Cleveland and held a class there on the following day. Wednesday and Thursday were devoted to Akron, where again he lectured before the Psychology Club and held a class. On Friday he spoke at Canton, as the guest of the Psychology Club of that city. Over six hundred people gathered to hear him and as elsewhere great interest and enthusiasm were manifested. In order to reach Boston in time to conduct the Service on Sunday morning, he was obliged to spend the greater part of Friday night travelling in motor across icy country roads to catch the express at Cleveland; but the President of the Club was glad to make this long cold ride to Cleveland and back, considerably over one hundred miles, in order to secure for the Canton Club the privilege of hearing the Swami. There was also great demand for the literature in both Akron and Canton. It is gratifying to see how eagerly the psychology movement, which has swept the country and dotted it with clubs, links its eminently modern point of view with the age-ripened teaching of Vedanta. Impartial students are coming more and more to recognize that the root soil of the various phases of thought which have sprung up in recent years is to be found on the lofty heights of the Himalayas, where in far ancient times the Indo-Aryan sages evolved the practical science of higher development known as Yoga, and the subtlest system of metaphysics and psychology known to the world even to-day. Any touch with this older system cannot fail to impart added power to these younger movements.

APR 20 1922

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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Chapel of the Vedanta Centre

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Swami Paramananda

of India in charge

FOURTEENTH SEASON—1922

SUNDAY, 11 A. M.—SERVICE WITH ADDRESS

SUBJECTS

Apr. 2nd	*Soul's Potentiality*
9th	*Even-mindedness*
14th	*Special Good Friday Service—5 p. m.*
16th	*Reincarnation and Resurrection*
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30th	*Science of Breathing*

NOTICE

Certain volumes of "The Message of the East" are becoming rare because some numbers in the issues of these years are exhausted and no longer available for further volumes. If any one who has copies of these special numbers cares to return them to us, we shall be glad in exchange to send them any single lecture by Swami Paramananda mentioned in our list of publications. The numbers specially desired are: January 1912; May 1913; June 1914; April, May, August, November of 1915; February, May and November of 1916; March 1918; November 1919.

THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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THE CREATIVE POWER OF SILENCE

By Swami Paramananda

What sleep does for our body and nervous system, silence does for our mind and spirit. All the discordant conditions in our life are greatly due to our lack of co-ordination of both physical and mental forces. Until we can learn to think and act with calm and unruffled attitude, we cannot make our life productive. The practice of silence is a very great help for acquiring evenness of mind and tranquillity of body. The silence which leads to efficiency, however, is not a negation, a state merely of sitting and doing nothing. It is experienced only when the whole being has been unified and is flowing through one channel in perfect rhythm.

The productiveness of our activity depends entirely on what we put into it and in order to put our best into each thought and action, we need to order our mind, to gather up all its scattered forces, to establish our equilibrium; and we cannot do this unless we withdraw at intervals from the haste and noise of outer occupations. That is why Yogis and those who are seeking earnestly for light look upon the practice of silence as essential to their spiritual progress. In the first place it enables us to store up a great deal of life force which now we expend unwisely in needless talking. We wear ourselves out, disturb others, and say much which might better be left un-

said when we talk constantly. We also dull the mind and lessen its power of penetration. All spiritual vision and deeper understanding are unfolded in the hours of silent reflection. It is in the moment of silence that we hear the voice of the Infinite. When our ears are listening to the loud voices of the world, we cannot know that another voice is speaking in our heart. Therefore, those who have obtained direct vision of Truth are not inclined to make their own voice heard.

The productive life is always a silent life. When a man is creating something, he is not inclined to talk. He becomes rapt in thought and gradually through his concentrated thought he gains access to the hidden recesses of nature. He does not squander his forces by telling each little revelation as it comes to him. Sri Ramakrishna gives us the parable of the pearl oyster. It comes to the surface of the water to catch a rain drop falling at the auspicious moment when the star *Svati* is in ascendancy. Then it goes down to the bottom of the sea and remains there until the pearl is formed. The same is true of the genuine seeker after wisdom. As soon as he has found his access to God, he becomes deep and silent.

Silence is considered so necessary in India that there are great sages who become *Munis,* or silent ones. Some of them take the vow of complete silence and direct all their physical and mental forces towards spiritual illumination. Others refrain from speaking of non-essential matters. Through the observance of the vow of silence they become gifted in prophecy and power to bless others. Even the atmosphere of the place where they live is charged with a definite spiritual force. An example is given in one of our sacred books of a youthful sage, radiant with illumination, sitting in meditation under a Banyan tree. A disciple, old and weary with life's cares, approached him with mind and heart full of doubt and depression. The disciple asked many questions, but even though

the teacher ever remained silent the doubts of the disciple were destroyed and he went away in peace. This shows us that if the Light of Truth shines within us clearly without obstruction it will reach and enlighten others.

Yet you may say, what can a silent man do? His scope of usefulness must be very limited. The greatest amount of good in the world is not done by the talker or even by the worker who is constantly busy with his hands and feet; but by the one who has found the true centre of his being. His very existence throws radiance on countless numbers of people. We may have a great desire to help others, but if we have not found the remedy for evil in our own life, even our best intentions will not do much for them. These *Munis* may not speak, but they have the burning effulgence of the spiritual light within themselves. Their life itself is an expression of Truth, and whether they speak or not, they are constantly shedding their holy influence on others.

If we would help ourselves and our fellow-beings, therefore, we must take certain hours when we can shut out the noise of the world and commune with the Infinite. The deeper themes of life we can discover only when our mind is not disturbed by worldly agitations. Even a scientist, a musician, an artist must have communion with his ideal, and this cannot be done without silence.

The practice of silence, however, does not mean merely refraining from speech. It means stilling the vital energies so that there is a cessation of all activity both inner and outer. The body must be without motion, the mind must be serene and heart tranquil. We cannot accomplish this by merely withdrawing to a secluded spot. It is an interior quality rather, although outer conditions may aid us tremendously in attaining it. But without the inner poise it is impossible to reach.

Our thoughts grow undisturbed and uninterrupted on the

silent soil of the mind. We are able to think better and we are able to express our ideas through our outer actions more effectively. When we cultivate this we gain not only greater efficiency, but also fortify ourselves with wonderful blessing of serene attitude. People who are used to talking much, it is better for them to cultivate talking less and less, and learn to act with more quiet and composed bearing. Almost invariably we find that people who talk in excess are those who think less clearly and collectively. An idle tongue is one of the greatest curses. It not only hurts the person who is directly responsible for it, but disturbs the peace of mind of many others. Sri Chaitanya, one of India's foremost saints, taught his disciples never to take part in gossip. He said that they should not only refrain from making gossip, but never even listen to any idle talk, for by doing so they only encouraged the mischief-mongers. We cannot possibly conceive any lofty thought or lift our prayers to the Divine until our mind and heart are full of serenity.

The practice of physical silence restores our body and sense organs. The practice of mental silence refreshes our mind and quickens all our inner faculties. The power gained through it is tremendous. When we undertake anything hastily and nervously, we make mistakes and have to do it over, thus wasting our time and energies. Without deliberation and balance we can accomplish nothing worth while, and a moment of silence before each task enables us to maintain our balance. Its physical benefit is apparent at once. If we learn to bring ourselves to a state of absolute stillness, checking all unnecessary expenditure of energy, our whole body is refreshed and strengthened. This reacts on the mind and makes it alert and free. Even from the point of view of worldly advantage, therefore, it is wise to practise silence. The majority of people have a very false standard of life. They imagine that

when two or three human beings are together, they must always entertain each other. Often nature is providing us with inspiration and we miss it, because of this foolish habit. Why should we suppose that whenever we are with others we must always talk? It means that our mind is empty. The noble mind is one that is filled from within and does not need continual diversion from without. It is not dependent or demanding. Its thought is calm and deep and still. Only as we become more and more silent will our inward life unfold.

Whenever we have conceived an idea, if we put it into words, the greater part of its strength is dissipated and its success is rendered doubtful. Is not the logic of this evident? As soon as we draw our mind away from the idea itself and begin to discuss it, we set up counter currents of thought, our mental strength is expended to combat these and little is left to carry our idea to fulfillment. If we would be successful we must conceive in the silence, work in the silence and achieve in the silence. Great things are always done silently. Whenever a life is fruitful, we shall always find that it is a silent life. If we would make our endeavor more productive, we must try never to talk unnecessarily. It is a wonderful thing to have a controlled tongue. When we have established balance at this point, we shall find that the other parts of our being will become balanced and our whole life will gain a new rhythm and illumination. In India they adopt the simple practice that before they eat, or drink, or study, or go to sleep, or undertake any business, they sit in silence for a moment and try to unite themselves with the centre of their being. When we are distracted by outer conditions or concerns, we lose our sense of proportion and we cannot do well what we have to do. As long as our physical eyes lead us to see the many, we cannot see the one; so the devotee closes his outer eyes that he may open his inner eye and with it perceive the deeper

realities within. He closes his outer ears that he may hear the voice of the Infinite in his heart.

The practice of silence has a profound significance when we embrace the spiritual life. As only still waters reflect the perfect image, so only on the surface of the silent heart do we receive the unbroken image of Truth. Knowledge always destroys our ignorance and unrest, and we cannot increase our knowledge until we go down into the quiet recesses of our inner being. We must give ourselves a chance. There is not one who is not hungering for perfect health, for perfect peace and happiness; but these cannot come to us unless we create the right conditions for them. If we learn to live right, to think right, to make our life balanced and tranquil, we shall reap the result in a fuller expression of spiritual perfection. Now our ears do not hear the voice of the Supreme. The great teachers tell us to listen to that voice, to be guided by that voice. The ordinary man, however, says that he cannot hear the voice; it is all an imagination; but the mystic hears it, because he has made his outer being silent and has found access to the inner shrine of his soul.

When we begin to live the spiritual life, we touch a deeper note and we cease to judge from the surface. All differences are to be found only on the surface and one who lives constantly on the surface does not see the connecting link between man and man, between one soul and another; but one who has learned to live below the surface sees unity everywhere. He is not dependent on human judgments; he is not influenced by the world. He is wholly guided and protected by the Divine. In all his undertakings he is led by the hand of God. To him God is more real than any creature of flesh and blood. He walks with God; he talks with God; he lives with God. His whole being is centred in God, so that, whether he speaks or does not speak, he expresses the thought of God. He does not

have to use words to do it. Rather he knows that the Infinite can never find full expression in finite words. Therefore in the Vedas it is said that the glory of the Supreme is beyond mind and speech.

It is the ignorant man who claims loudly that his belief is the only belief, his path the only path; but one whose vision has become expanded through a larger realization grows dumb and his silence is the most eloquent expression of Truth. Let our lips sometimes be dumb that our heart may sing the glory of the Infinite. Let us give our inner being a chance to listen to the voice which is too subtle for the physical ear to hear. If for a few moments only each day we can still the noisy energies of our mind and body and learn to practise true silence, it will create a dynamo of spiritual power and elevate our whole being to the lofty heights of a new consciousness.

Certainly, in our own little sphere, it is not the most active people to whom we owe the most. Among the common people whom we know, it is not necessarily those who are busiest, not those who, meteor-like, are ever on the rush after some visible charge and work. It is the lives, like the stars, which simply pour down on us the calm light of their bright and faithful being, up to which we look and out of which we gather the deepest calm and courage. It seems to me that there is reassurance here for many of us who seem to have no chance for active usefulness. We can do nothing for our fellow-men. But still it is good to know that we can be something for them; to know (and this we may know surely) that no man or woman of the humblest sort can really be strong, gentle, pure, and good, without the world being better for it, without somebody being helped and comforted by the very existence of that goodness. —*Phillips Brooks.*

PREPARATIONS FOR HIGHER LIFE

Extract by Swami Vivekananda

The first thing necessary is a quiet and peaceable life. If I have to go about the world the whole day to make a living, it is hard for me to attain to anything very high in this life. Perhaps in another life I shall be born under more propitious circumstances. But if I am earnest enough, these very circumstances will change even in this birth. Was there anything you did not get which you really wanted? It could not be. For it is the want that creates the body. It is the light that has bored the holes, as it were, in your head, called the eyes. If the light had not existed you would have no eyes. It is sound that has made the ears. The object of perception existed first, before you made the organ. In a few hundred thousand years, or earlier, we may have organs to perceive electricity and other things.

There is no desire for a peaceful mind. Desire will not come unless there is something outside to fulfill it. The outside something just bores a hole in the body, as it were, and tries to get into the mind. So, when the desire shall arise to have a peaceful, quiet life, where everything will be propitious for the development of the mind, that will come,—you may take that as my experience. It may come in thousands of lives, but it must come. Hold on to that, the desire. You cannot have the strong desire if its object is not outside for you already. Of course, you must understand, there is a difference in desire and desire. The master said: "My child, if you desire after God, God will come to you." The disciple did not understand his master fully. One day both went to bathe in a river, and the master said, "Plunge in," and the boy did so. In a moment the master was upon him, holding him down. He would not let the boy come up. When the boy struggled and was exhausted, he let him go. "Yes, my child how did you feel

there?" "Oh, the desire for a breath of air!" "Do you have that kind of desire for God?" "No, sir." "Have that kind of desire for God and you shall have God." That, without which we cannot live, must come to us. If it did not come to us life could not go on.

If you want to be a Yogi, you must be free, and place yourself in circumstances where you are alone and free from all anxiety. He who desires a comfortable and nice life and at the same time wants to realize the Self is like the fool who, wanting to cross the river, caught hold of a crocodile mistaking it for a log of wood. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Unto him comes everything who does not care for anything. Fortune is like a flirt; she cares not for him who wants her; but she is at the feet of him who does not care for her. Money comes and showers itself upon one who does not care for it; so does fame come in abundance, until it is a trouble and a burden. They always come to the master. The slave never gets anything. The master is he who can live in spite of them, whose life does not depend upon the little, foolish things of the world. Live for an ideal, and that one ideal alone. Let it be so great, so strong, that there may be nothing else left in the mind; no place for anything else, no time for anything else.

That is the one great first step,—the real desire for the ideal. Everything comes easy after that. That, the Indian mind found out; there, in India, men go to any length to find truth. But here, in the West, the difficulty is, that everything is made so easy. It is not truth, but development, that is the great aim. The struggle is the great lesson. Mind you, the benefit in this life is struggle. It is through that we pass,—if there is any road to Heaven it is through Hell. Through Hell to Heaven is always the way. When the soul has wrestled with circum-

stance, and has met death, a thousand times death, on the way but nothing daunted, has struggled forward again and again and yet again,—then the soul comes out as a giant and laughs at the ideal he has been struggling for, because he finds how much greater is he than the ideal. I am the end, my own self, and nothing else, for what is there to compare to my own self. Can a bag of gold be the ideal of my soul? Certainly not! My soul is the highest ideal that I have. Realizing my own real nature is the one goal of my life.

There is nothing that is absolutely evil. Our mistakes have places here. Go on! Do not look back if you think you have done something that is not right. Now, do you believe you could be what you are to-day had you not made those mistakes before? Bless your mistakes, then. They have been angels unawares. Blessed be torture! Blessed be happiness! Do not care what be your lot. Hold on to the ideal! March on! Do not look back upon little mistakes and things! In this battle-field of ours, the dust of mistakes must be raised. Those who are so thin-skinned that they cannot bear the dust, let them get out of the ranks.

So, then, this tremendous determination to struggle, a hundredfold more determination than that which you put forth to gain anything which belongs to this life, is the first great preparation. And then along with it there must be meditation. Meditation is the one thing. Meditate! The greatest thing is meditation. It is the nearest approach to spiritual life—the mind meditating. It is the one moment in our daily life that we are not at all material,—the soul thinking of itself, free from all matter,—this marvellous touch of the Soul!

Seek for the noble Pearl; it is much more precious than this whole world; it will never more depart from you: And where the Pearl is, there will your heart be also: You need not here

ask any further after Paradise, Joy and the Heavenly Delightfulness; seek but the Pearl, and when you find that, then you find Paradise, and the Kingdom of Heaven, and you will be so taught, as being without it you cannot believe.

Jacob Behmen.

THE LIVING FLAME OF LOVE

By St. John of the Cross

O Living Flame of Love,
That woundest tenderly
My soul in its inmost depth!
As Thou art no longer grievous,
Perfect thy work, if it be Thy will,
Break the web of this sweet encounter.

O sweet burn!
O delicious wound!
O tender hand! O gentle touch!
Savouring of everlasting life,
And paying the whole debt,
By slaying Thou hast changed death into life.

O lamps of fire,
In the splendours of which
The deep caverns of sense,
Dim and dark,
With unwonted brightness
Give light and warmth together to their Beloved!

How gently and how lovingly
Thou wakest in my bosom,
Where alone Thou secretly dwellest;
And in Thy sweet breathing
Full of grace and glory,
How tenderly Thou fillest me with Thy love.

HOLY SIMPLICITY

By Sister Daya

It is impossible to conceive of holiness apart from simplicity. Throughout the ages the lives of Eastern sage and Western saint have burned with the fires of renunciation. Always the first sign of spiritual awakening has been this desire to strip away every non-essential, to stand naked before God. Modern civilization, based as it is upon the gratification of desire, naturally repudiates renunciation as something which strikes at its very life, and yet in spite of this it has played ever and again with the idea of simplicity. Sermons are preached upon it, little books are written about it till the individual harassed by the endless complexities of life cuts out a luxury here or a necessity there, in sporadic attempts at simple living. The trouble has been that we have no real standard of simplicity. When we strive for it we know not how to begin or where to end, or even what it is that we are seeking. We look upon simplicity as a mode of life, a thing of calculation, something that we can put on or take off. That is why we never achieve it. Our simplicities are relative merely, never final. But there is a final simplicity and it is that which the mystics knew.

Centuries ago in India, Kabir, the rug-weaver sang: "In simplicity I will unite with the Simple One, my love will surge up." God, the Root of all, One without a second,—The Simple One! The heart that unfolds to that One is the simple heart; the mind that meditates upon that One is the simple mind; the life that knows union with that One is the simple life. Such was the Christ-life and the Buddha-life and the life of every Saviour no matter where it has been lived, in what age or in what land or by what name it has been called. Misunderstood by all but the few, it has cruelly suffered at the hands of imitators. Again and again have they dragged its joyous spirit of renunciation down into a harsh asceticism until

now it is associated in many minds with pain. Especially is this so in the West where the shadow of the crucifixion lies across the mystic way. The truly illumined, having gained the Kingdom need nothing less. Fanatics, misinterpreting this, discard everything in their lives that is lovely or gracious, hoping that by thus giving up the outer they may gain the inner. They mistake barrenness for simplicity and hold themselves in this prison-house by the force of their lower wills. Acting largely from selfish fear or at best from a purely mental concept, they flee the world because they are still its slaves. Strange perversion! When even the faintest glimmering of that one indwelling life brings bliss.

"The embodied," says the Gita, "through the practice of abstinence can deaden the feelings of the senses, but longing still lingers in the heart; all longings drop off when he has seen the Supreme."

The renunciation of the Blessed is but a falling away from their lives of the unreal, a spontaneous turning towards those things which are not bent or twisted by man's will but are fresh from divine creation, as it were. They do not know they have renounced, they only know that they have found. They go singing with glad face and the heart of a child. This is what it means to become as little children. It means that we become children of God, playing with Him in His universe, possessed of all His beauty from the stars to the stones, without being owned or enslaved by anything. The true mystic goes forth as says the French poet of the child, *"Ouvrant sa jeune ame comme une fleur au monde,"*—Opening his young soul like a flower to the world. And yet to blinded eyes he will seem but a homeless wanderer upon the face of earth.

Among the followers of Christ there were great saints but none, perhaps, so radiantly simple as il Poverino, St. Francis of Assisi. His simplicity sprang from its true source and

therefore it was full of bliss. The lady Poverty with whom he wed was not in rags, she had all nature for her wedding dress. So deep was his sense of Divine Presence that he cherished the dust beneath his feet and worshipped the flames upon the hearth. He sang of "brother sun, sister moon, brother wind, and sister water." He preached sermons to his little brethren the birds and had singing contests with the nightingale.

Once when he and Friar Masseo were travelling through the country, they came to a town and being hungry they took their begging bowls and went each by a different street, meeting later at a beautiful fountain. When Francis saw that Masseo, who was far more beautiful in body than he, had received plentifully where he Francis had received only a few mean scraps he rejoiced exceedingly and said, "O, Friar Masseo we are not worthy of so great treasure," and Friar Masseo said, "O Father, how can you speak of treasure when there is such a great poverty and lack here of everything needful. Here is neither tablecloth nor knife, nor trencher nor porringer, nor house nor table, nor man-servant nor maid-servant." And St. Francis answered: "And this is that which I esteem great treasure, where there is nothing prepared by human industry, but that which there is, is prepared by Divine Providence as may be manifestly seen in the bread which we have begged, in this beautiful table of rock and in this clear spring. Wherefore I pray with my whole heart that He make us to love the so noble treasure of holy poverty which hath God to servitor."

Every race has had its flowers of the spirit; every religion can furnish glorious examples of holiness, but above and beyond them all stands India as the true mother of the soul. Her children draw in the ideal of renunciation with their first breath and they die with the name of God upon their lips. Not oppression or want, or famine or plague has

been able to shake their allegiance to true poverty. For this reason practically all their heroes are spiritual heroes.

Five hundred years before Christ, Prince Siddartha fled from his pleasure palaces, fled from love and luxury, from pomp and power in search of Truth. He had glimpsed, not God, but the tragic impermanence of human life, and his heart wrung with pity for the world, urged him forth to find the remedy. Not till he attained Nirvana did the Great Peace come to him, the radiant simplicity. As the Lord Buddha he returned home to his royal city of Kapilavastu, clad as a mendicant and carrying a begging bowl. When his father in a fury met him and asked him how the son of a king could so debase himself before his subjects, he replied that it was the custom of his race. "Thy race!" exclaimed his father in amaze. "Thy race counted a hundred thrones from *Maha Sammat* but no deed like this!" "Not of a mortal line, I spake," answered the Blessed One, "but of the race of Buddhas. Of these am I and what They did I do."

In the fifteenth century there swept across the face of India like a fire of love, Lord Gouranga, the Golden One, the Light of Nadia, known sometimes as the Indian Christ and the Indian St. Francis. Beautiful as few have been beautiful, brilliant, honored, the adored of countless hearts, when the madness for God seized him, he forgot everything, food and raiment, friends and comforts, and wandered stript into the wilderness at the call of the Beloved. His mere word or touch sufficed to raise a soul to the ecstacy of vision. Thousands were eager to lay their all before his holy feet, and yet when one who had been his wife, Vishnuprya, came to him and begged her share in the blessing in the shape of some little thing of his to treasure, he said: "But you see I have nothing," and she replied: "Lord, there are your sandals," and he gave them to her and she put them upon her head and worshipped them.

Simplicity, true simplicity is a state of consciousness, not a mode of life, but few there are who can live in the midst of luxury untouched. Only to the extent that our soul is free can we do it and with most of us sooner or later, the world will enter and take possession of our soul.

"It is not life and wealth and power that enslave men" said the Buddha, "but the cleaving to life and wealth and power." It is our desires which involve us in the complex, binding us by a thousand chains of hope to the petty and the personal, the easy and the pleasurable. Not till all our desires are fused in one desire, not till all our longings are lost in one mad longing, not till our whole being flows in one undivided stream towards God, will the confusion of life fall away from us and we shall renounce not so much the things of the world as the valuation which men put upon those things.

Till then can there be no simplicity for us? We are not Saviours; we have not had the great vision; we even cling to what binds us; how then may we find peace? We can find it through the gift of ourself. The Simple One dwells always within us but our realization of His Presence will be only in proportion to our consecration. Consecration makes the heart single, and the mind one-pointed and the body full of light. It leaves no room for multitudinous desires, for all the griefs and hates and heart-aches and envies which follow in their train. There never was a great life that was not a consecrated life, never a consecrated life that was not simple. God-consecration is the supreme consecration and brings the supreme peace, but if there are some for whom that is as yet too vast, then let them fasten the forces of their being with utter devotion to some ideal. Surrender to the highest we know even though it be not the highest there is, will bring us glimpses of reality and a truer sense of values. Not until we have found something for which we are ready to die do we truly begin to

live. We must be utterly sincere; we must be steadfast, otherwise the voices of the world will call us back. We must not hear them even, be we poet or painter, musician or scientist, or the seeker after God.

Of the poet, Emerson writes, that he must abdicate the complex life, must be content to be thought the fool and the simple one by all but a few who love and understand; "And this," says he, "shall be thy reward, the ideal shall be real to thee; and the impressions of the actual world shall fall like summer rain, copious but not troublesome to thy invulnerable essence. Thou shalt have the whole land for thy park and manor, the sea for thy bath and navigation without tax and without envy. The woods and the rivers thou shalt own, and thou shalt possess that wherein others are only tenants and boarders. Thou true landlord! Sealord! Skylord!"

All real artists know this lordship. We may possess beauty but we cannot grasp it, for it is the garment of the Simple One, the Seamless Robe of God. Simplicity is the law of its being, the restraining power without which we would have a confusion of lights, colors and sounds, purposeless and undirected as are the vagaries of an insane mind.

In statuary it is the simple mass which is the sculptor's first concern, he sees it as a whole and adds his details later. The promise of great paintings is contained in the few bold lines of the original sketches. And as with painting and sculpture, so with music. It is the single theme, the motif, which binds together the vagrant notes into a mighty symphony.

The dedicated lives of countless scientists is bringing material science itself close to the basic simplicity of God. More and more is science seeking out ultimate substance and is looking for the final secret not in the many but in the one.

The great Simplifier is at work even in the camps of complexity. What is order and system in business but a form of

simplifying, a doing away with non-essentials? It is this which makes greater efficiency possible. Advertisers are proving the psychological appeal of simplicity. The complex could not exist were it entirely complex. It cannot draw itself utterly away from the Simple One and live.

We hear much of reform in education. We read of new methods of sense development of moral and mental discipline, but if we could give to the child through mystic suggestion a growing sense of the fundamental unity of life so that he could recognize the one Self shining at him from every pair of eyes, we would be doing more for him than all the schools and the systems. But the world does not as yet know this. It does not know that before unity can reflect itself in human relations it must be experienced as reality in the human heart and that without this inner realization brotherhood is but an empty word.

As all this is borne in upon our souls, we are amazed to see how close to us is the Simple One, how His hand is upon everything. There is nothing in this world or out of it that does not draw its being from Him. He is reflected in every drop of dew, in every shining atom. That is why if we succeed in penetrating to the infinite nature of anything, we touch Divinity. There is but one Teacher, one Saviour, one Poet, one Artist. There is no illusion that does not owe its glamour to Him, no reality that does not owe its truth to Him. He is "The Silence of secrets;" He is "The Wisdom of the wise." He binds and He makes free.

Why then should we fear to fasten our heart to Him Who is so eternally present? If desires blind our eyes let us worship Him in our desires. Does He not beckon us from every side? What life have we ourselves apart from Him? How can we forget Him even for a moment?

When such remembrance comes, when such surrender, the

Simple One Himself will break our chains, it is His promise: "I am the Origin of all, everything evolves from Me. Knowing this the wise worship Me with loving ecstacy. To these ever steadfast devotees, I give that Yoga of wisdom by which they come unto Me. Out of pure compassion for them I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy the darkness born of ignorance, by the effulgent light of wisdom.

NATURE OF TRUE PRAYER

By Girolamo Savonarola

He who prays to God ought to address Him as if He were present, for He is everywhere, in every place, in every man, and especially in the souls of the just. Seek Him not therefore on the earth, or in heaven, or elsewhere—seek for Him in your own hearts; do as did the prophet who says, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak." In prayer, a man may be attending to the words, and this is a thing of a wholly material nature; he may be attending to the sense of the words, and this is rather study than prayer; and lastly, his whole thoughts may be directed to God, and this alone is true prayer. It is unnecessary to be considering either sentences or language,—the mind must be elevated above self, and must be wholly absorbed in the thought of God. Arrived at this state, the true believer forgets the world and its wants, he has attained almost a foreshadow of celestial happiness. To this state of elevation the ignorant may arrive as easily as the learned. It even frequently happens that he who repeats a psalm without understanding its words utters a much more holy prayer than the learned man who can explain its meaning. Words in fact are not indispensable to an act of prayer; when a man is truly rapt in the spirit, an uttered prayer becomes rather an impediment, and ought to yield to that which is wholly mental. Thus it will be seen how great a mistake

those commit who prescribe a fixed number of prayers. God does not delight in a multitude of words, but in a fervent spirit.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

Excerpt of Address by Swami Paramananda

(Delivered at Commemorative Birthday Service)

It is said in India that when the lotus blossoms it no longer needs to invite the bees, they come of their own accord and partake of its sweetness. The life of Sri Ramakrishna was like that. It was gentle, it was not filled with adventure or with incidents which we call great and glorious; it was more like the perfume of a flower, but it drew to him people from all over the world, and even the most learned were like little children when they came before him.

Some of you, perhaps, do not know very much about Sri Ramakrishna. He was born of humble parentage; his education amounted to almost nothing, that is his secular education, but right from the beginning he had a yearning to gain something higher, more satisfying, from a source that could not be questioned.

He entered the life of the priesthood and as he went through the outer forms of worship a madness seized him to know for himself the truth of what lay behind them, to have absolute contact with God. In his searching he became utterly forgetful of his own physical life, he suffered and he strove, but he came out victorious with this tremendous vision: that there is but one Deity. Men conceive Him differently, worship Him differently, but He is the final goal of every path. Because of this realization he was able to meet all men on their own ground, to see the self-same ideal manifesting through all. This idea of universal tolerance is not new. I do not think any of the great teachers or saviours bring anything new.

They bring a fulfillment of the old. In Vedic conception we find it again and again repeated that there is but one God, one Deity, and all the different ideals are manifestations of that One. But Sri Ramakrishna became a living interpretation of it. He realized it and constantly lived it. His teaching is so simple that even a child can understand it; it is like a fresh spring just bubbling with new life.

India is noted for cults and sects and the people from many different sects came to Sri Ramakrishna. There was always welcome in his heart for every truth-seeker. Even Mohammedans came and thought he was one of their prophets. Christians and members of the Brahmo-Samaj gathered around him and remained spellbound in his presence. One of the Brahmo leaders said that all he had read about Jesus of Nazareth, of Buddha, of Lord Gouranga, and of the other great saints, he saw fulfilled in the life of this simple, aspiring devotee. But Sri Ramakrishna would not accept any worship. He always shrank from any show of reverence towards him, because his attitude was that God was all, he was nothing but a mouth-piece. He never regarded himself as a grown-up person. He called his Deity Divine Mother and he was always Her little child. Whatever he said, whatever act he performed, he would always first have communion with Her.

In the Occident you observe the birthdays of your political leaders, your war heroes. In India they observe the birthdays of their spiritual heroes no matter how humble these were in the worldly sense. In the same way Sri Ramakrishna's birthday has become a sacred day. Because he did not believe in caste or creed, when his birthday is celebrated at the head monastery of the Ramakrishna Mission on the banks of the Ganges, nearly fifty thousand people of all creeds and castes and nationalities gather there to do him homage. There is no special ceremony, but all day long a spontaneous outburst of

feeling. People form in groups and sing their devotional songs; they bring portraits of this great prophet and make other demonstrations. Then they are all fed. In India feeding a lot of people is a gigantic undertaking because of their caste feeling, but here it melts away before the gentle power of this wonderful character. Countless poor are fed on this day throughout India. Help is given to the helpless, and all this is done with humble spirit of service, for the devotees feel that when they render service to the destitute and suffering children of God, they pay their highest tribute to Sri Ramakrishna, who was an embodiment of love and humility. Service is the dominating spirit of the Ramakrishna Mission, and out of this spirit have grown many and varied activities quite different from what we understand by charitable institutions. *Seva Ashramas,* they are called, or Homes of Service. I think it is a very much sweeter name than hospitals and dispensaries. Homes of Service, where thousands and thousands of people are helped every year. If they are sick, they are given medical help; if they are homeless, they are given a home. Wherever there is famine or fire or flood, always Mission workers go and give voluntary aid. Sri Ramakrishna considered himself the servant of all and his followers, inspired by his lofty example, freely give themselves, because they love, because they see God under every form and serve Him in the form of the lowly, in the form of the poor, in the form of the helpless.

Thus we see how one who really manifests the spirit of God can live in a remote village or even in a mountain cave and become a beneficent power not only for his own community, but for humanity. That is the sum total of the blessing we find in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. He came gently, he lived humbly but he has left behind him a mighty influence for love, for tolerance, and for universality.

REPORT

During the month of March Swami Paramananda again responded to lecture calls from the middle west. He left Boston on the 5th of March for Cincinnati and spoke there on the night of the 6th before a large and appreciative audience. The following morning, Tuesday, he held a class at the Hotel Gibson, and that same evening gave an address at Dayton, Ohio, for the Dayton Club of Practical Psychology. On Wednesday morning, the 8th, he conducted a study class at the New Thought Temple. In the evening eight hundred people gathered to hear him in the Auditorium of the Chamber of Commerce in Columbus, Ohio. This resulted in a series of interviews the next day, lasting without intermission from 9 a. m. to 6 p. m., and leaving the Swami just time to prepare for a public lecture at 7:45 that night. This concluded his first tour.

The 19th saw the Swami Paramananda once more on his way, this time for Memphis, Tennessee, stopping en route, however, at Cincinnati, where on the night of the 20th he addressed a large meeting at the Unity Centre Auditorium, and on the afternoon of the 21st gave a practical class lesson to about seventy-five students. On the 22nd he reached Memphis and that night spoke at the Goodwin Institute on "The Conquest of Fear" to an audience of about one thousand. Thursday morning, March 23rd, at eleven, there was a study class conducted by the Swami at the Hotel Gayoso. "Concentration and Right Thinking" was his subject for the evening when another large public meeting was held at the Goodwin Institute. He had still two more meetings in Memphis and eight engagements to fill in other cities when he was called home by an unexpected development at the Boston Centre. It was with the deepest regret that the Swami was forced to cancel his obligations and disappoint those who had gone to

much trouble and expense in preparation for his coming. He hopes at some future time to be able to make it up to them.

In addition to these two tours, the Swami accepted an invitation from the Applied Psychology Club of Providence, Rhode Island, to speak there on March 14th. The meeting was held at the Church of the Mediator, and there were about eight hundred people present. Providence being only a short run from Boston, the Swami was able to go and return the same evening.

On the 26th of February, at the request of Dr. Wm. Norman Guthrie, the Swami Paramananda spoke in New York City at St. Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie. His subject was "Sri Ramakrishna, Prophet of Universal Tolerance," and the occasion, a religious celebration in honor of India. As the Swami's visits to New York are rather infrequent, this gave him a chance to renew his connection with many old friends.

* * * *

During Swami Paramananda's last trip to New York he had the pleasure of visiting the new home of the Vedanta Society there. The New York Society was one of the first works established in this country by Swami Vivekananda. Its work for the last several years has been carried on in rented quarters, but through the earnest and steadfast efforts of Swami Bodhananda, the present head of the Society, it has now secured a permanent home. This will undoubtedly prove a great impetus to the Vedanta work in New York.

* * * *

The Vedanta Society of San Francisco has just published an attractive booklet, "The Inner Consciousness, How to Awaken and Direct It," by Swami Prakashananda. It is written clearly and simply, an excellent little book which puts a big subject within the mental grasp of the ordinary reader. It is now many years since the establishment of the San Francisco Society. Its growth has been steady, and under Swami Prakashananda's wise guidance it is not only extending the influence of Vedanta, but is ever becoming more firmly rooted in the hearts of its members.

MAY 19 1922

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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The Message of the East

MAY, 1922

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Swami Paramananda

of India in charge

FOURTEENTH SEASON—1922

SUNDAY, 11 A. M.—SERVICE WITH ADDRESS

SUBJECTS

May 7th	*Can We Change our Fate?*
14th	*Yoga of Self-Mastery*
21st	*How to Cultivate Joyousness*
28th	*Psychic and Spiritual Phenomena*

NOTICE

Certain volumes of "The Message of the East" are becoming rare because some numbers in the issues of these years are exhausted and no longer available for further volumes. If any one who has copies of these special numbers cares to return them to us, we shall be glad in exchange to send them any single lecture by Swami Paramananda mentioned in our list of publications. The numbers specially desired are: January 1912; May 1913; June 1914; April, May, August, November of 1915; February, May and November of 1916; March 1918; November 1919.

THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

Published monthly except in August and September

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THE REDEEMING POWER OF LOVE

Love is not a theory, or a speculation, nor is it a form of study or investigation. It is the supreme feeling of the human heart made divine by its radiance. Love is all. It permeates all things. When we unite ourselves with the spirit of love, we include all that we can think of and that we are incapable of thinking, for it is the greatest force in cosmic life and universe. It is life itself; it flows through all, unites all, expressing through the highest and the lowest. Its impelling power is greater than any power the human mind has ever conceived. It heals all our inharmonies and ailments. It gives our mind freedom without which it can have neither happiness, peace nor repose.

Let us think of every one our mind can encompass with a heart full of love, compassion and tenderness, and feel the greatness of Divinity manifesting through all living beings. Let us abandon selfishness and pride for they are detriments to the expression of true love. They make us narrow. They make us bound. They make us forfeit our right to Divinity and partake of what is vulgar and material.

Let us strive with inward fervor and strength of will to free ourselves from the bonds of egotism and selfishness that we may taste at least in some measure the nectar of love, which is the Supreme Himself. In this realization we are made whole and made one with Him from Whom we have descended.

THE VALUE OF FOOD IN SPIRITUAL UNFOLDMENT

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

The value of food is not limited merely to our physical well-being. It is true that food builds up our body and strengthens our muscles, but also at the same time it produces in us certain definite characteristics. If we are keen enough to analyze different human beings, their stature, countenance, expression and general disposition and relate these to their habits of life, especially their mode of eating, we shall be astonished to find what a vital part food plays in their destiny. In the Upanishad it is declared, "All creatures are produced from food; they live by food and in the end they return to food." Of course this implies only the physical constitution of man, but we naturally have to deal first with the physical before we can find our access into spiritual realities.

Our body is the most immediate and imminent reality to us at the present time and in order to make this vehicle efficient, healthful and fitting for our spiritual advancement, we must take utmost care of everything which contributes towards its well-being. The primary object in partaking of food is to draw nourishment to sustain our physical body and our nervous system, and to quicken our thinking faculty. In order to accomplish this effectively we must use discernment, for every kind of food has not the power to bring this about. Therefore we must necessarily discriminate carefully in regard to what we eat. Food has the power to produce in us distinct qualities. According to Indo-Aryan conception, our bodies are composed of three different elements which they call the *Gunas* or qualities: *Sattwa,* the quality of fineness, lightness and intelligence; *Rajas,* that which gives rise to ambition and excessive zeal; and *Tamas* which overpowers one with lethargy, inertia, indiscrimination and ignorance. We all have these qualities in varying proportion. They prevail in us making us feel some-

times dull, sometimes restless and then again full of peace. Because of this also we see such great variety in human temperament.

In the Gita, Sri Krishna gives a very definite description of the three types of people in whom these three *Gunas* or qualities are dominant and shows how they even crave different kinds of food, for foods are also of three-fold nature and are liked by each of these according to the *Guna* which predominates. Likewise they have a tendency to produce similar effect in those who partake of them. "The foods," says the Gita, "which increase life-force, energy, strength, health, joy and cheerfulness, and which are savory, soothing, substantial and agreeable, are liked by the *Sattwica* nature. The *Rajasica* nature likes foods which are bitter, sour, saline, overhot, pungent, dry, burning, and which produce pain, grief and disease. That which is stale, insipid, putrid, cooked over night, even leavings or unclean food is liked by the *Tamasica* nature." We can sum up the idea of these three qualities in our modern and more accustomed language as matter, energy, and intelligence. The Sanskrit word *Tamas* is typical of dense matter and is identified with heaviness and flesh; *Rajas* typifies energy and action, often lacking in proper sense of moderation, resulting in restlessness and uncontrolled passions, while *Sattwa* represents higher intelligence and spiritual attributes of gentleness, self-control, poise and wisdom.

In India the first marked change in a man when he takes up the spiritual life is a complete readjustment in his outer mode of living because he cannot expect to have a higher power of perception until he has purified his bodily instrument. Nothing plays so great a part towards this end as diet. In one of the Upanishads it is proclaimed: "Through pure food *Sattwa* element becomes purified." The idea of pure food, however, varies among different peoples. According to Indian

Scriptures there are three causes which make food impure: *Jati-dosha,* inherently impure, such as onion, garlic, red meat and all forms of gross food which produce *Tamas*—heaviness and inertia in the system; *Nimitta-dosha,* impurity caused by presence of alien objects such as dirt, hair, insects, etc. Through the presence of such objects the food becomes unclean and unsuitable for eating. The third defect arises through evil contact. This is called *Ashraya-dosha,* when touched by wicked persons, or when food is cooked by an unclean and impure hand. It is comparatively easy to avoid the first two, but the third one is difficult to control. How can we be responsible for our cook's evil temper and bad habits? It is true that this is a very difficult problem, but perhaps by making ourselves more spiritual and gentle we can set a higher standard and eventually reform the cook.

These are, however, more or less technical ideas of food. The most important and spiritual idea that saturates almost all religious scriptures of the world, especially those of India, is of non-killing. "Cause injury to none." This of course includes not only humanity, but all forms of life. From the early dawn of the Vedic revelation to the more modern scriptures of India, everywhere it is given with dynamic insistence, "one who desires to attain beatitude let him abstain from animal food," for no cruel person can ever attain a high degree of refinement, either physically or morally. We must remember the question of food is not merely what we throw into our system, but the effect it produces. Through our own keen observation, we know that certain kinds of food and drink produce heaviness in us. After partaking of such things we feel unfit in a short time either for any energetic physical activity or for clear thinking. Then again there are things which create restlessness of both body and mind, because certain foods contain elements which can heat our blood and disorganize our whole

nervous system. Then there is a kind of food which is by quality energizing, and at the same time soothing, producing a lightness of feeling in the body and invigorating our mental faculties. Although we may find a distinct type of food which has marked value, yet without proper discrimination and sense of moderation we can easily produce ill effect even from the finest regime, and this is often seen in the case of over-zealous, hasty adaptation of vegetarianism.

To-day the superior merit of non-meat diet is almost conclusively proved by eminent dieticians and men of science. My feeling is that we derive a great deal of benefit in regard to diet through other people's observations and their suggestions, but we must always apply these principles according to our individual need because it is almost impossible to have any set rule of diet for the entire humanity. In the first place people are not all constituted alike, and in the second place the climates, environments and occupations have a great deal to do with our physical need. Therefore, we have to use our common sense even when we are applying the most elevating ideal of non-meat-eating. I never advise any one to make a radical change in diet. For instance, people who all their life have been used to flesh food in a large measure should not give it up suddenly, but should by degrees reduce it and also find proper substitute for it.

Many meat-eaters have the notion that if they give up their accustomed habit, they cannot find proper nourishment any other way. This is an erroneous idea because grains, nuts, fruits and vegetables contain just as much nutriment, only perhaps they do not possess as much stimulus. Dr. Haig, one of the great authorities on diet, says: "It follows, also, that quite an exaggerated and erroneous estimate has been formed of the power of meat to produce force, because its stimulating effect has been mistaken for power and the depression which follows

has either been overlooked or later has been counteracted by alcohol, tobacco, and other more harmful stimulants; but the man who gets his albumen from a less stimulating source, having no early stimulation has also not subsequent depression, and so probably never feels the want of any alcohol at all. Hence it comes about that those who take alcohol or tobacco on a flesh diet, generally very soon give it up when they give up flesh, having no craving for any stimulant." Diet is in great measure a question of habit. An average person becomes a slave to his habit and shrinks from any change.

The idea of abstaining from meat-eating was not only prevalent among the Hindus and Buddhists, but it was strongly advocated by the ancient Greek philosophers, such as Pythagoras, Plato, etc. Pythagoras laid great emphasis on pure and abstemious diet, and it is supposed that he gathered his inspiration largely as he came in contact with the Oriental nations and their culture. Apart from all religious sentiment the great virtue of non-meat diet is effectively demonstrated by some of the recent scientific experiments, putting people under different regimes, such as strictly meat diet, meat and vegetable diet, and purely vegetable diet; and in all athletic contests such as running, walking, etc., the non-meat-eaters have always proved their greater endurance and ability.

It is not true that we cannot have adequate strength unless we partake of animal food, because some of the strongest people are among the vegetarians. Indian Sikh soldiers are a glowing example of this—stalwart and possessing remarkable physical strength, valor and endurance. We also read in Rollins' Ancient History: "In the most heroic days of the Grecian army, their food was the plain and simple produce of the soil. The immortal Spartans of Thermopylae were, from infancy, nourished by the plainest and coarsest vegetable aliment; and the Roman army in the period of their greatest valor

and most gigantic achievements subsisted on plain and coarse vegetable food. When the public games of ancient Greece—for the exercise of muscular power and activity in wrestling, boxing, running, etc.,—were first instituted, the athletae, in accordance with the common dietetic habits of the people, were trained entirely on vegetable food."

Another important factor in non-meat diet is the agility and flexibility that are produced in the body. Sometime ago a very interesting article appeared in regard to the mode of living of the Russian dancers who created such wide-spread sensation by their remarkable agility and suppleness, and it was found that they were all without any exception strict vegetarians. Indian Yogis who observe rigid diet, subsisting mostly on roots and fruits, sometimes even renouncing all cooked food, acquire superhuman power of mastery over flesh, proving their endurance in heat and cold and absolute control over all physical propensities and appetites.

Prof. Wiener of Harvard University tells us that "looking at vegetarianism in the light of comparative anatomy, it is self-evident that man was designed to be a vegetarian and nothing else. Quadrupeds are divided into classes according to their foods and with the single exception of man, no animal as a class has ever varied from the design of nature. These classes are: the carnivorous, or flesh-eating, the fruit-eating, the grass-eating, and the omnivorous. Each of these classes has distinctive organs adaptable to the digestion of the kinds of food it eats and to no other kinds. Man has artificially become an omnivorous animal in spite of the fact that anatomically he is a fruit-eating animal." One of the most obvious facts in regard to this is that the teeth of the flesh-eating animals are fashioned very differently from ours and frugivorous creatures. History shows that non-meat-eaters are as a rule peace loving people because they are finely organized physi-

cally, and have different mental caliber. Food has the power to produce these effects among nations. People who live mostly on flesh food are more susceptible to violent emotions such as jealousy, anger and hatred. This is noticeable even among animals. You may go to a menagerie and verify this fact. Tigers, wolves and hyenas which are fed exclusively on meat and blood, see how restless they are,—nervous and ferocious, creating most unquiet atmosphere about them and emitting a very foul odor. Then you may watch the elephant. He is an herbivorous animal, yet he excells others in strength and intelligence and is always gentle and calm.

It is strange that the majority of people who are so easily upset at the sight of blood and mangled flesh never stop to think that the meat they eat is directly connected with such unpleasantness. For instance every one shrinks from a butcher because he is regarded as unclean and cruel and yet when it comes to non-meat-eating, people are prejudiced against it. I have known cases where these unpleasant phases shocked their aesthetic sense so violently that they were cured of their hankering for meat. Once we were passing by a slaughter-house and the foul odor which emanated from it was so strong that we all enquired of each other wherefrom it was coming. When we discovered the cause of it a little child who was with us asked what the slaughter-house was for and when she found out that animals were killed there and that beef was animal, she was so horrified and saddened by it that she refused to eat meat again.

I do not hold that unless one becomes a complete vegetarian there is no salvation. If that were so, certain grass-eating animals would surpass us. There are people who live a very austere life, refraining from meat and all other forms of physical indulgence, and yet who exhibit feelings of arrogance, conceit and hatefulness towards others, especially those who do

not follow their rule of living. If through pure diet we fail to develop gentler feelings for our fellow-beings, we have missed the aim of non-killing, and are attaching more importance to the merely mechanical side of diet than to kindness, lovingness, tolerance and compassion. Even a lofty ideal can thus be dragged down by those who follow only its outer form.

It is most unfortunate that when children refuse to partake of flesh food, because it is repulsive to them, parents should force them to eat such things, thereby destroying their finer faculties. This is often done with good intention because parents worry for fear their children may be under-nourished, but they never consider the matter from a higher and more spiritual point of view. A child does not refuse certain foods without proper reason, and if only we are able to handle the situation with delicacy of feeling and greater wisdom, it would give the inherent nature a chance to manifest a higher type of manhood and womanhood.

Once a prominent clergyman told me that he was a vegetarian not for any religious or ethical reason, but because he found that without meat his mind worked better. Often people say they cannot think, they feel so heavy and dull and the mind does not work. Nine times out of ten this is caused by over-eating quite as much as by wrong diet. Greed takes the upper hand, and what is the result. We take in more than our system can assimilate and then we suffer. The result may not come at once, but ultimately we suffer both physically and spiritually, for greed is a great barrier to higher attainment. The main object of food is to make the body stronger, but if we take too much of even the most nourishing food, it weakens us and draws on our reserve force. People suffer not nearly so much from under-eating, as they do from over-eating. Nourishment is not a question of quantity, but of choosing the food which our system can most quickly and completely assimilate.

There is no written book that can control our appetite. Our greed and gluttony no one can check. We must always avoid both over-eating and under-eating. Our own system must be the judge and by degrees we must learn to develop this sense of just proportion. There is an excellent saying in India,—"Eat according to your own taste and dress according to the taste of others." If you do not dress according to other people's liking, you may make a caricature of yourself, but in eating you cannot follow somebody else's view because no one knows either your appetite or your capacity. But this is certain that if we can avoid over-eating, our body will feel light, our mind will feel light, and all our faculties will be at their best.

The idea of the consecration of food also plays a very vital part in the upbuilding of our spiritual nature, because this body is the holy temple of God, and only that which is suitable to God should be offered unto it. This is not an old-fashioned sanctimonious idea, but it contains a very deep spiritual principle, for when we eat food without the sense of consecration, merely to gratify our physical appetite, it will produce a very different effect than when we take it with a sense of dedication. In the Bhagavad-Gita, Sri Krishna gives this warning: "He who enjoys the objects given by the gods, without first offering to them, he is indeed a thief. The righteous, eating the remnants of *Yajna* (spiritual sacrifice) become free from all sins, but the unrighteous, who cook for themselves, eat sin and live in sensuality." Does not the Supreme Being bestow on us all our blessings? Why should we not then show our sense of recognition and humble gratitude? These ideals form the basis of all spiritual observances, such as asking a blessing, saying grace or prayer. The custom of fasting and prayer which exists in many of the religions is not without a just cause. It is good for us to fast once in a while even from the physical

standpoint, because it is most cleansing. It absolutely washes out the interior and then we enjoy our food more and assimilate it better. But if we add prayer and meditation to it we naturally obtain greater benefit.

Some people are interested in vegetarian diet purely for the upbuilding of health, and that is an excellent hypothesis because as we become healthier physically, our inner faculties have greater opportunity for quickening and we have much better chance for spiritual advancement. If we carefully avoid all eccentricities and going to extremes, we can derive great benefit through wholesome diet, for clean food produces purity of body and mind, and through purified body and mind the power of Truth shines forth unceasingly.

Harmlessness as the first flower; restraint of the wandering senses as a flower; compassion for all beings as a flower; forbearance or forgiveness as a most special flower; knowledge or wisdom unto salvation as a flower; penance or self-restraint as a flower; meditation as a flower; and truthfulness as a flower; these eight as flowers shall prove acceptable to the Omnipresent.—Prapanna Parijata.

Who knows if love and its beatitude, clear manifestation as it is of the universal harmony of things, is not the best demonstration of a fatherly and understanding God, just as it is the shortest road by which to reach Him? Love is a faith, and one faith leads to another. And this faith is happiness, light, and force. Only by it does a man enter into the series of the living, the awakened, the happy, the redeemed,—of those true men who know the value of existence and who labour for the glory of God and of the Truth. Perhaps it is through love that I shall find my way back to faith, to religion, to energy,

to concentration. . . . Believe, then, in a fatherly Providence and dare to love.—Amiel.

MERIT OF NON-INJURY

Laws of Manu

He who injures animals that are not injurious from a wish to give himself pleasure, adds nothing to his own happiness, living or dead.

While he who gives no creature willingly the pain of confinement or death, but seeks the good of all sentient beings, enjoys bliss without end.

He who injures no animated creature, shall attain without hardship whatever he thinks of, whatever he strives for, whatever he fixes his mind on.

Flesh-meat cannot be procured without injury to animals and the slaughter of animals obstructs the path to beatitude; from flesh-meat, therefore, let man abstain.

Attentively considering the formation of bodies and the death or confinement of embodied spirits, let him abstain from eating flesh-meat of any kind.

The man who forsakes not the law and eats not flesh-meat like a blood-thirsty demon, shall attain good-will in this world and shall not be afflicted with maladies.

He who consents to the death of an animal; he who kills it; he who dissects it; he who buys it; he who sells it; he who dresses it; he who serves it up; and he who makes it his food; these are eight principles in the slaughter.

Not a mortal exists more sinful than he who, without an oblation to the manes or the gods, desires to enlarge his own flesh with the flesh of another creature.

By subsisting on pure fruit and on roots, and by eating such grains as are eaten by hermits, a man reaps not so high a reward as by carefully abstaining from animal food.

PYTHAGORAS AND PYTHAGOREAN DISCIPLINE

By Sister Daya

Self-discipline is the basis for achievement. Body, mind, heart,—all must be tuned up if a man is to manifest something more than the ordinary in any walk of life. And if this is true in secular occupation, it is preeminently true in spiritual endeavour where the whole human instrument has to be sublimated and prepared to receive and handle the infinitely subtle forces of the spirit. Because of this, spiritual aspirants everywhere have always approached the mysteries of God by the path of self-discipline. The heart of this discipline is never contained in a formula, but there are certain fundamental requirements which may be recorded and it is just such a record as this that has been handed down to us from the school of Pythagoras at Crotona in Italy. Our chief testimony as to the life and work of Pythagoras comes from Diogenes Laertius, Iamblicus and Porphyry. M. Dacier, a Frenchman, gives us the essence of these writings in a quaint little volume published in the early part of the 18th century. The extracts which I will quote are from him and from Iamblicus.

Towards the XLVII Olympiad or about the year 570 B. C., a merchant from the Island of Samos, Mnemarchus by name, "a few days after his marriage, went with his wife to Delphos, there to sell some goods during the feast; for he was a graver by trade and dealt in rings and other trinkets. During his stay there, he received an oracle from Apollo, who told him that if he embarked for Syria the voyage would be very pleasant and fortunate to him, and that his wife would there bring forth a son who should be renowned for beauty and wisdom, and whose life would be useful to all posterity. After so plain an oracle, Mnemarchus failed not to go into Syria. But first he changed the name of his wife, and instead of Parthenis, called her Pythais, in remembrance of this oracle of Apollo,

who was surnamed *the Pythian*. At Sidon, Parthenis or Pythais, was brought to bed of a son, who was called Pythagoras because he had been foretold by this oracle of Apollo. Mnemarchus being come back to Samos, expended the greatest part of the money he had got in his voyage, in building a temple to Apollo, and took care to breed up his son answerably to the great hopes he had conceived of him."

Even as a youth, we are told, the young Pythagoras was god-like in nature and in appearance so that he was "reverenced by the multitude as one under the influence of divine inspiration." His fame spread abroad to neighboring cities and everywhere he was celebrated as the *long-haired Samian*. The most illustrious of philosophers gave him welcome, men such as Thales at Miletus, and Bias at Priene, so that he could even then have announced himself as a philosopher and teacher, had he so desired. But nearly forty years of preparation still lay ahead of him and it was not till his fifty-sixth year that he felt himself ready to take up his great work. In that long interval he travelled extensively, delving into the sacred mysteries of many peoples.

Under Thales he learned among other things the art of conservation of time and "for the sake of this," writes Iamblicus, "he entirely abstained from wine and animal food, and still prior to these from voracity, and confined himself to such nutriment as was slender and easy of digestion. In consequence of this, his sleep was short, his soul vigilant and pure, and his body confirmed in a state of perfect and invariable health." Having been urged by Thales to go to Egypt, he embarked from Phoenicia on a chance ship that touched its coasts and it is written of him that he remained silent during the entire voyage and for two nights and three days sat in the same unmoved state without food or drink or sleep. The sailors who had plotted to seize him and sell him as a slave were completely

conquered by his deific appearance and actions so that "they concluded that a divine daemon had in reality passed over with them from Syria into Egypt. Hence speaking both to Pythagoras and to each other with greater decorum and gentleness than before they . . . . at length happily landed on the Egyptian coast."

For twenty-two years he remained in Egypt where he underwent without flinching the terrific disciplines with which the Egyptian priests jealously guarded their secrets, "and was initiated, not in a superficial or casual manner, in all the mysteries of the gods." He was finally brought by the soldiers of Cambyses as a captive to Babylon where he had opportunity to study under the Magi and perfect himself in mathematics, music and other disciplines. After twelve years with them he returned home to the island of Samos. His own people received him with reverence but did not respond to his philosophic instruction as they should, and because of this and other considerations, he left Greece and went into Italy, ultimately arriving at the noble city of Crotona where he soon had a following of at least six hundred philosopher disciples and thousands of other disciples known as auditors or *acusmatici.*

All of these associated under him in a community which for its magnitude resembled a city and was known as Magna Graecia. There they dwelt together in unbroken concord, owning everything in common, and receiving laws and mandates from Pythagoras as they would receive them from a god. Indeed he was considered by many to be Apollo himself and it is recorded of him that he could subdue even wild animals by his voice for it is said that he "detained the Daunian bear which had most severely injured the inhabitants, and that having gently stroked it with his hand for a long time, fed it with maize and acorns, and compelled it by an oath no longer to touch any living thing." He ordained that his disciples should

show justice not only to men but to animals, especially those of similar nature to themselves and "commanded them to consider these as their familiars and friends, so as neither to injure, nor slay, nor eat any one of them." Savage animals he corrected and instructed through words and deeds rather than by punishment.

But not merely for the sake of mercy and justice did Pythagoras forbid certain meats to his disciples. "Each kind of food that is introduced into the body, becomes the cause of a certain peculiar disposition. Hence it requires great wisdom to be able to know and perceive what kind and what quantity of food ought to be used." For this reason not only was almost all animal food prohibited, but also those foods calculated to produce intemperance and mental sluggishness. He held that "nutriment greatly contributes to the best discipline, when it is properly used and in an orderly manner. Universally, therefore, he rejected all such food as is flatulant and the cause of perturbation, but he approved of the nutriment contrary to this. Hence likewise he thought that millet was a plant adapted to nutrition. But he altogether rejected such food as is foreign to the gods; because it withdraws us from familiarity with the gods. He likewise exhorted them to abstain from such things as are an impediment to prophecy, or to the habit of temperance or of virtue. And lastly he rejected all such things as are adverse to sanctity, and which obscure and disturb the other purities of the soul."

It was the effort of the Pythagoreans to keep their bodies always in the same condition and without variation as regards weight. "In a similar manner also with respect to the mind they were careful that they might not be at one time cheerful, and at another sad, but that they might be mildly joyful with uniformity. . . . . If at any time they were in a rage or oppressed with sorrow or anything else of this kind, they sepa-

rated themselves from the rest of their associates, and each by himself alone, endeavoured to digest and heal the passion. This also is said of the Pythagoreans, that no one of them when angry, either punished a servant or admonished a free man, but each of them waited till his mind was restored to its former tranquil condition. They accomplished this waiting by employing silence and quiet."

By means of music Pythagoras was wont to heal the body and to banish unclean passions of the soul. He used appropriate melodies to turn aside anger, envy, jealousy, hate and to induce that gentleness and elegance of manner for which the Pythagoreans were noted. "When his disciples were retiring to sleep," writes Iamblicus, "he purified the reasoning power from the perturbations of the day by certain odes and peculiar songs and thus procured for them tranquil sleep and few and good dreams. When they rose from bed he again liberated them from the torpor and heaviness of sleep by songs of another kind." They always arose before sunrise and after arranging their beds in an immaculate manner were not supposed to lie down upon them again during the day. Sleep at noon was especially prohibited.

After arising "they walked alone in secluded and charming spots where there were temples and groves," for Pythagoras held that "there was nothing more prejudicial to the tranquillity of the soul than to go early in the morning into company, and plunge one's self into the hurry of affairs, e'er by the help of music, or meditation and of prayer, we have calmed and composed our mind, and brought it into the state and harmony that is most becoming and most worthy of man." A little later he assembled with them in the Temple, after which "they used a little exercise for the sake of their health and then din'd on a little bread and honey without wine; when dinner was over, they minded the publick or their private affairs, and when they

had dispatched their business they took a walk as in the morning, bath'd themselves, and supp'd before sun-set, (never more than ten assembling together for this purpose). Their supper was generally some bread, some herbs, a small pittance of the victims of the sacrifice, seldom any fish, (which for certain reasons was not useful to them) and a little wine. At the end of the meal they made the libation, which was followed by some good lecture, that the oldest at the table, as President, made the youngest perform. The lecture over, they made another libation, and the President dismissed the assembly, giving them as a task to meditate on some symbol of their Master."

In the Pythagorean school there were, however, many different grades of disciples and to each was allotted his own peculiar discipline. Thus the contemplatives were forbidden the use of all animal food and all wine; nor were they permitted to sacrifice animals to the gods nor to injure them in any way. Pythagoras himself lived after this manner but "he permitted others whose life was not entirely purified, sacred and philosophic, to eat of certain animals; and for these he appointed a definite time of abstinence. The following apothegm was always employed by him in every place,— . . that we should avoid and amputate by fire and sword, and all various contrivances, from the body, disease; from the soul, ignorance; from the belly, luxury; from a city, sedition; from a house, discord; and at the same time, from all things, immoderation."

Small marvel that disciples crowded to a man such as this but he did not admit them lightly into his confidence. "First he considered their physiognomy, and from thence drew probable tokens of their inclinations; he observed their discourse, their laughter, their gait; he informed himself of their conduct, of their trades and occupations, and examined with great care to what they were most addicted." After having made these

observations concerning them, he neglected them for three years in order to test their stability and true love of learning. "If he had reason to be satisfied with their perseverance, he admitted them into his noviceship which was indeed very severe. . . . Pythagoras at first enjoined his disciples a five years' silence, during which they were only to hear, without daring to start the least question, or propose the least doubt. These five years' silence were sometimes reduced to two, in behalf of those he found to have any extraordinary qualifications. While this probation lasted these disciples were called *Hearers;* and when they were thought to be sufficiently instructed in this so difficult a science of Hearing and being silent, they were permitted to speak, to propose their doubts, and to write down what they heard; and then they were called *Initiated in the Sciences.*

But what deserves our observation, from this silence they often proceeded more expert and more learned than they generally do from the schools. . . . So true is it that silence is the ready way to instruction. Long before Pythagoras, King Numa, knowing the advantage of silence, commanded the Romans, particularly to honor one of the muses, under the name of the *Silent Muse,* thereby to recommend silence to them. . . . When Pythagoras had set at liberty the tongues of his disciples, he gave them not leave to speak without bounds and without measure; for he often said to them, 'You ought either to hold your peace, or to say things more worth than silence. Choose rather to throw a stone at random than an idle or useless word. And say not a little in many words but much in a few.'" If any of the disciples tired of the life and desired to forsake it, all his personal fortune was returned to him from the common fund with generous increase, and his fellow disciples raised a tomb to him and considered him as dead.

"As dyers previously purify garments," comments Iambli-

cus, "and then fix in the colors with which they wish them to be imbued, in order that the dye may not be washed away . . . . after the same manner also that divine man prepared the souls of those that were lovers of philosophy, so that they might not deceive him in any of those beautiful and good qualities which he hoped they would possess." As a result his disciples chose rather to lay down their lives than to transgress his mandates. "This also is a beautiful circumstance, that they referred everything to Pythagoras, and called it by his name, and that they did not ascribe to themselves the glory of their own inventions, except very rarely. But all the purifying disciplines in the world could not have produced Crotona without the living presence of Pythagoras. It took more than a good and great man to do what he did. It took one with the Divine quality, capable of inspiring such love and devotion in the hearts of his followers that everything else was forgotten in that. They were united in him and through him. For them he was the ideal made real, in whose sublime atmosphere all warring thoughts must perish. Because of this the final disruption of the colony was due not to inner dissension but to the blind malice of a powerful man who had been refused admittance into the school. He pursued the Pythagoreans with implacable hatred till but few were left alive, and he hounded Pythagoras from city to city till he finally died of starvation, so it is held by some, in the Temple of the Muses whither he had fled for refuge. The recorded life of Pythagoras is overlaid with much of the miraculous, but no miracle can be greater than the miracle of his successful colony at Crotona which retained to the end its harmony and lofty ideals, becoming a mighty tradition of all that is noble and beautiful in Grecian life and thought.

Friend, I learn as long as I live.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

KINDLINESS, COMPASSION AND SOBRIETY

By Jan van Ruysbroeck

(Flemish Priest and Mystic. 13th Century.)

By gentleness and kindness, charity is kept quick and fruitful in man, for a heart full of kindness is like a lamp full of precious oil; for the oil of mercy enlightens the erring sinner with good example, and with words and works of comfort it anoints and heals those whose hearts are wounded or grieved or perplexed. And it is a fire and a light for those who dwell in the virtues, in the fire of charity; and neither jealousy nor envy can perturb it.

Out of kindliness springs compassion, which is a fellow-feeling with all men; for none can share the griefs of all, save him who is kind. From this compassion springs generosity; for none can be generous in a supernatural way, with faithfulness and good-will towards all, save him who has a pitiful heart —though a man may often show generosity to a particular person without charity and without supernatural generosity.

By generosity of heart all other virtues are increased, and all the powers of the soul are adorned; for the generous man is always blithe in spirit and untroubled of heart, and he flows forth with desire, and in his works of virtue, to all men in common. Whosoever is generous, and loves not earthly goods, how poor soever he be, he is like God: for all that he has in himself, and all that he feels, flow forth and are given away. And in this way he has cast out the fourth mortal sin, which is covetousness or avarice. Of all such Christ says: Blessed are the merciful.

Out of this generosity there spring a supernatural zeal and diligence in all virtues and all that is seemly. This zeal makes a man grow in reason and prudence, and practise the virtues, both of soul and of body, in righteousness. Through this supernatural zeal all the powers of the soul are laid open to God,

and are made ready for all virtues. And the conscience rejoices, and the grace of God is increased; the virtues are practised with joy and gladness, and the outward works are adorned.

From this zeal there spring temperance and sobriety, both inward and outward; for none can possess the right measure of sobriety save him who is greatly zealous and diligent to keep his soul and body in righteousness. Sobriety divides the higher powers from the animal powers; it saves a man from intemperance and from excess. Sobriety wishes neither to taste, nor to know, those things which are forbidden.

A man should keep his senses in sobriety and should restrain the animal powers by means of the reason; so that the lusts of the flesh do not enter too far into the savouring of food and of drink; but he should eat and drink as the sick take their physic, because it is needful to support his strength, that he may serve God therewith. This is sobriety of body. He should also observe method and moderation in doing and in leaving undone, in words and in works, in silence and in speaking, in food and in drink, according to the custom of Holy Church, and after the example of the saints.

By inward and ghostly temperance and sobriety a man preserves firmness and constancy of faith, purity of intelligence, that tranquillity of reason necessary to the comprehension of truth, an impulse towards all virtues according to the will of God, peace of heart, and serenity of conscience. And herewith he possesses an enduring peace, in God and in himself.

And by temperance and sobriety of the outward bodily senses, a man often preserves the health and the soundness of his natural body, the dignity of his outward life, and a good reputation. And thus he lives in peace with himself and with his neighbors; for by his temperance and sobriety he draws to

himself and pleases all men of good-will. And thus he casts out the sixth mortal sin, which is intemperance, greed or gluttony. Of all such Christ says: Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.

LIGHT WITHOUT MEASURE

By Jacopone da Todi

(A Franciscan Monk of 14th Century)

Love beyond telling, Good unimagined, Light without measure, shine now in my heart.

Vast, ineffable Light!
Great Sun—and undiscovered
Save by the lone souls darkly led
Through night's obscurity.

Mock'd by a rush his sight,
Who, "Lo 'tis here" doth certain call,
And claims to measure all
Its height and mystery.

This know I only, night
Is day resplendent; but no strength
Have I to prove its breadth and length,
Its shining verity. . . .

In midst of this great vast
Abyss, thou findest never more
Or landing-place or shore,
Or any path or clue.

Self has forgot its past.
Thou art—but say, what meaneth "thou"?—
Reborn and all transformed now,
And clad in raiment new.

IN MEMORIAM

A cablegram from India brings the sad news that Swami Brahmananda, the President of the Ramakrishna Mission, breathed his last on the eleventh day of this April.

After Sri Ramakrishna left the world, when the Mission was first organized by Swami Vivekananda, the choice of a head inevitably fell upon Swami Brahmananda, the specially beloved of Sri Ramakrishna who always looked upon him as his spiritual son. Later when the illustrious founder, Swami Vivekananda passed away, the Mission was able to sustain the blow received, because of Swami Brahmananda's great and illumined presence; for his presence was a constant blessing to those who worked under him and to the thousands who came to him from all parts of the world. He was neither lecturer nor preacher, but like the Northern star, fixed and immovable, shone with a steady radiance upon all who looked to him for light. He was indeed a pillar of the Mission and his passing is for it an irreparable loss. He will be mourned everywhere by those who love and reverence him throughout India and around the world.

JUN

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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The Message of the East

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"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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DIVINE GIVER.

By Swami Paramananda

O Thou unasked, unceasing Giver,
Thou hast given me Thy endless blessing,
Thou hast drawn me close to Thy heart.
Thy bounty runs through my life to over-flowing;
Yea, tender Lord, by Thy magic charm
Thou hast driven away all my past wretchedness.
Can we with all our might offer Thee
Aught worthy in Thy blessed sight?
Can we ever make our heart so free
Of mundane stain that Thy light of love
May shine and glow unceasingly?
Thou art ever merciful to the lowly,
We bring Thee our humble hearts;
No merit have we save our faith
In Thy infinite compassion.
Do Thou make of us Thy tools
That at all hours, in work and play,
We may revolve in Thy safe-keeping.

This little invocation is humbly and reverently dedicated to the sacred and beloved memory of Swami Brahmananda, the late president of the Ramakrishna Mission.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

I have now come to a stage of realization in which I see that God is walking in every human form and manifesting Himself alike through the sage and the sinner, the virtuous and the vicious. Therefore when I meet different people I say to myself: "God in the form of the saint, God in the form of the sinner, God in the form of the righteous, God in the form of the unrighteous."—*Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna.*

Renounce injustice and violence; never utter harsh words that wound the heart. Be generous whatever happens, O soul of my soul; let thy tongue outrage no one! To wound thy brother to the heart is the worst of sins, the greatest of all iniquities. Labor with ardor to raise up those who have fallen; wouldst thou desire to overthrow the throne of the Lord?—*The Counsels of Nabi Efendi.*

Let this truth be present to thee in the excitement of anger, that to be moved by passion is not manly, but that mildness and gentleness, as they are more agreeable to human nature, so also are they more manly; and he who possesses these qualities possesses strength, nerves, and courage, and not the man who is subject to fits of passion and discontent.—*Marcus Aurelius.*

Soft speech acts like water on the fire of wrath. Do not the soldiers on the battle-field wear armour consisting of a hundred folds of silk? O friend! be humble when thou dealest with a fierce foe, for gentleness will blunt the sharpest sword.—*Bustan of Sadi.*

He whose mind is not agitated in calamities and who has no longing for pleasure, free from attachment, fear and anger, he indeed is said to be a saint of steady wisdom.

He who is free from all attachment and neither rejoices on receiving good nor is vexed on receiving evil, his wisdom is well-established.—*Teachings of Sri Krishna.*

I have heard that he who possesses the secret of life, when travelling abroad, will not flee from rhinoceros or tiger; when entering a hostile camp, he will not equip himself with sword or buckler. The rhinoceros finds in him no place to insert its horn; the tiger has no where to fasten its claw; the soldier has no where to thrust his blade. And why? Because he has no spot where death can enter.—*Sayings of Lao-Tzu.*

Invent not evil reports, neither do ye repeat them. Carp not, but look for the good sides of your fellow-beings,—that you may with sincerity defend them against their enemies.

Waste not the time with gossip, but speak to the purpose or keep silence. Covet not, nor envy, but rejoice at the fortune of other people.

Cleanse your heart of malice and cherish no hatred, not even against your enemies; but embrace all living beings with kindness.—*Teachings of Gautama Buddha.*

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven.

For He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?

And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so?

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.—*Teachings of Jesus the Christ.*

POWER OF LOVE AND NON-RESISTANCE.

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

"Let a man overcome anger by love, let him overcome evil by good; for hatred does not cease by hatred at any time; hatred ceases by love; this is an old rule." This admonition of Gautama Buddha is not peculiar to Buddhism only as he himself says that it is an old rule. Prior to the rise of Buddhism the same principle stands out throughout the Vedic revelations of the ancient Indo-Aryans. Glowing examples of all-conquering love, forgiveness of enemies, and super-human endurance of adversities are ever exemplified in the lives of the holy rishis and saints of India.

Jesus the Christ taught His disciples not to follow the idea of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. "Resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek turn to him the other also, and if any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." Christ proved it, Buddha proved it, St. Francis and other saints and mystics throughout the ages have proved it by their lives. You can also prove it,—that through love man has power to conquer all. Non-resistance was the very foundation of early Christianity and her saints and martyrs drew their sole inspiration from this supreme teaching and bore bravely all the trials and tribulations that their enemies imposed upon them. All the great world teachers have laid special emphasis on the power of love and non-resistance, and yet to-day there are very few who really believe this to be a practical theme. This has naturally caused great conflict in the minds of men. They ask how can they accept a teaching unless it is practical. Some try to explain by saying that it is not practical for this age. Why should not a profound spiritual teaching be practical for all ages? It is practical, but it does not seem so to a person who is impatient for an immediate return, who wants gratification of his desires at once.

It makes very little difference whether we call ourselves Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, or by any other name, if we do not believe absolutely in the fundamental essential points of our faith, if we are not strong enough to follow and prove to ourselves the practical value of our spiritual conviction, we have not entered into the realm of true religion. We may use big-sounding words, we may have many doctrines and dogmas, we may set out to conquer other people and convert them, but we have not converted ourselves to the true faith. Conversion is not accomplished through violence. If we want to impress any one with our great mission we must do so by our superior love, by our superior character, forgiveness and nobility. This is the only practical way.

On the material plane things move very rapidly—just come and go. One who has focussed his whole life and interest on the physical and whose mind is absolutely overpowered with bodily consciousness is not willing to wait patiently for the working out of spiritual laws. If a person strikes him he thinks the only way he can take revenge is to strike back—a natural impulse. If a person treats him hatefully, in order to get even with him he feels that he must hate in return, perhaps with stronger hatred; a person takes advantage of him and he thinks he must also take equal or even greater advantage. Thus the whole scheme of life is on a superficial and perverted basis and has no connection whatsoever with spiritual ideals. A man may think he is very strong because he is yielding to his anger, is striking back forcibly, but he is really weak because he has not the power to control his lower propensities. The true hero who follows the path of God demonstrates his control over anger, over hatred, so much so that he will refuse even to hear ill of his enemies. A great Sufi mystic tells us, "I have heard that the heroes in the path of God will not distress the hearts even of their enemies. How canst thou

attain this dignified station who art at strife and warfare with thy friends?" Non-resistance of evil is never found practical by a moral coward. It requires spiritual strength to stand on this higher and loftier sphere of life and remain unbaffled even in the midst of the most adverse circumstances.

There are two factors in our life: one the physical, "the eating, drinking, sleeping man," as Emerson calls it, and the other, a deeper and more profound being within. When we are overwhelmed with the consciousness of the eating, drinking, sleeping man we cannot connect ourselves with anything bigger. We think our whole life is circumscribed by this little span of existence, and unless we take advantage of every moment and look after our own interest it will be lost. It is for this reason that we are so impatient. We are impatient to gain something, impatient to revenge whenever any harm is done to us, but this way we defeat our true aim.

To hate another does more harm to one's self than to the person against whom hatred is directed. This is true even on the ordinary plane. A person who broods with revengeful spirit injures himself physically as well as morally. He may become sick and his whole system poisoned, while mentally he is not able to do so much because he has shattered a certain amount of his moral fibre. And how ignoble one feels when one yields to these lower propensities. You may say that they come in a moment. In a moment they come, but these moments are the result of all other moments spent idly, thoughtlessly, or with thoughts that are ignoble. A very simple logical statement is given in almost all the great Scriptures of the world,—that as a man thinketh, so is he. If he turns his mind towards good things he becomes good; if he lifts his mind to holy things his life becomes holy. And yet strangely enough man reverses this order at every step. The things which are hateful, degrading and harmful, such thoughts absorb his mind and in-

terest more often, more persistently than the things that make for nobility, strength and upliftment. As man goes deeper within his nature he cannot find any satisfaction in living this way. Then is the beginning of his spiritual life. In order to gain our access to higher realities, in order to become truly helpful to humanity, we must find our way to these deeper aspects of life.

People often say: but what can the individual do when even the great organizations fail to apply non-resistance successfully? Therein lies the whole secret. Individuals bring the great power. The individual silently living the life of consecration creates a power within himself. He it is who sets a great spiritual victory in motion by his own achievement. It is through individuals that the destiny of human life is moulded. Here and there you find instances of a man refusing to strike back. At first you think he is a fool because others will take advantage of him, but in the deeper spiritual sense no one can take advantage of him, no one can really rob him. Material things may be taken away from him, but no one can take from him his dignity. There is great joy in endurance. A man may find actual happiness and exaltation in enduring injury, discomforts and all manner of afflictions from his enemies. There is great benefit for every soul that bravely meets these ordeals. Our characters are formed by such sublime experiences. We must learn to direct life's latent forces in such a manner that things which are proving evil now may become of infinite good. When love governs our life and becomes a ruling passion, when no other motive but this actuates our entire thought and action, then no harm can befall us or any one else through us.

It is the motive that counts. Non-resistance is not what we merely do with our hands and feet. It depends mostly upon our motive. While we never need harm any one physically, or

otherwise, while we must always hold loving thoughts, sometimes the appearance of resistance may be necessary, especially in connection with the ignorant. Non-resistance is not a question of mere passive and morbid forbearance. Sometimes it may become necessary to make a show of resistance in order to prevent a foolish man from doing a greater wrong. This is seen in the lives of great men who often express righteous indignation. For instance, some one comes and speaks ill of your friends, or tries to blaspheme a holy character. If we morbidly listen to such people we not only desecrate our ears, but also we do them harm, because we encourage their evil ways. This we can prevent without entering into a dispute or quarrel. For instance, we can easily withdraw ourselves from such company silently, or can speak with such decisiveness as to avoid all possibility of a quarrel. We are always justified in making a show of resistance in order to prevent a greater evil, provided our heart does not bear any malice.

Our great Master, Sri Ramakrishna, gives a vivid parable illustrating this. Once a venomous snake dwelt in a certain place which no one dared approach for fear of being bitten. One day a holy man was passing that way and the boys warned him of the venomous serpent. But he of tranquil heart had no fear and when the snake approached him it lost all its wrath, being overcome by the gentleness of the holy man. The sage admonished it for its evil conduct and asked it to harm no more. The snake was chastened by this experience and tried to lead a life of non-injury, but in a short time the neighboring children took notice of the sudden change in it and thought that it had lost its venom. They pelted it with stones and whirled it ruthlessly by its tail. It was in a miserable state, but fortunately the sage returned that way and asked it the reason for its sad plight. The snake replied, "Holy sir, following your advice I do not injure any more, but the children

not knowing my motive tried to harm me." Then the sage rebuked it. "I only asked thee not to bite, why didst thou not hiss to protect thyself from the ignorant children?" This is a fine distinction between hissing and striking. One may make a show of resistance and yet keep his heart free from the contamination of wrath and hatred. Living in the world and having to meet as we do with all kinds of perplexing situations, complete non-resistance may not seem possible and practical in our every day life, especially for the average layman. But certainly every one of us can cultivate absence of anger, absence of calumny, absence of hatred. By doing so we may prepare for ourselves and for our fellow-beings a better and more glorified humanity.

Love is a tremendous force. If we are not impatient it will work at every turn, but do not always begin by looking for results. To-day you have held a loving thought towards some one and to-morrow you are trying to see if it has brought the full measure you expected. Expect nothing and your return will be greater. Love because you believe in love, because it is the greatest ideal to follow and when your whole heart and soul and mind are consecrated it will become a mighty power in your life. First we may begin loving only the people with whom we live, and who are related to us and who are pleasing to us; then we may succeed in extending our love to cover an entire community, then a country, then the whole of humanity. A flower when it blossoms gives its fragrance to all regardless of personalities. The same way there are characters so pure, so lofty, so free from all selfish thought that they give because they feel God's bounty within them; there is no fear that they may lose, there is no calculation that they may be poverty-stricken because they are giving a little too much. They feel an endless, inexhaustible reservoir welling up from within. Such people can love freely; love even their enemies and they

conquer them. There are many instances in the lives of holy men who vanquished brute forces by no other means than the power of gentle love and holy humility.

In India often the holy men live in the jungle unprotected and surrounded by tigers, snakes, lions, and all kinds of ferocious animals, but they have no thought of self. They have no idea of harming, nor have they any sense of fear because they believe absolutely in God and they remain in His safekeeping. In consequence these animals come to them and forget their ferocious nature. We can find this even in connection with birds and little squirrels in the park. They understand your motive and according to that they react towards you. But these things are not accomplished by mere theory. Non-resistance is a power we evolve through our own life. Love is not just in words. It is a power which we possess and demonstrate. Some say, I want power and if the power of love conquers I will give it a chance. It is not merely a question of giving it a chance, setting a limited time, trying it for a few hours or a few days. We cannot do these things in such cut and dried half-hearted way.

There is a little parable about a man who thought he had absolute surrender to the will of God. One day when he was molested by an enemy he said, "O Lord Thy Will be done, I surrender myself wholly to Thy Will," and kept on repeating this; but as his enemy still did not let him go, he began to feel a little anxious and doubtful as to whether the Lord was coming to his rescue and so started to defend himself. Now, according to the story, the Lord was coming to save him, but as he took the matter in his own hand, it was no longer necessary. How often we find this true in our own life.

Love is also healing. It not only heals the bodily wounds, but it heals especially the moral wounds which cannot be reached by any other means. For instance when a man is mor-

ally injured and falls into the path of evil the world looks down on him and makes him conscious of his sinfulness and degradation. This only accentuates his hopelessness and helplessness. But sometimes a child's unquestioning love redeems him and transforms him, while all other efforts to reform him may prove fruitless. How often in life even a kind and loving word performs a miracle for one who is crushed by life's weight. It seems to bring new courage, new hope, and gives a fresh start, because it is actuated by love. Love is the greatest cure. It succeeds when all else fails. But do not look for immediate results; they may come now, they may come eons later.

Love for love's sake is the noblest motto. Sri Krishna taught this in India,—that we should love for the sake of loving, and not bring a spirit of bargaining into it—that we want something in return—but because love is the redeeming power in life. This was the supreme secret in the lives of the great Saviours. They asked nothing for themselves. They had no ulterior motive; they had no axe to grind; they had no fear, and their love was unbounded. It was not merely directed to the people who were good, it was also for the miserable, the wretched, for all are from the same source. We love freely when this consciousness dawns in our heart,—that God abides within us just as He abides in all. When a man is aware of this he becomes irresistable, he no longer needs to resist evil; evil melts away before him just as the ice melts before the sun.

Spiritual life expresses itself through our daily actions, thoughts and feelings. We cannot afford to take chances with our spiritual life. No one becomes a saint suddenly. It is through the sum total of all that we think, all that we aspire for. But unless our motive is pure and consecrated, our actions will be empty and devoid of any meaning. Therefore at every moment we should direct ourselves wholly with a sense of consecration so that however small and insignificant our life

may seem, we may place it unreservedly in God's hand, that He may use it and find it worthy to scatter His blessings of love.

The secret of non-resistance is this,—that one who does not think for himself and is only filled with the thought of God and his fellow-beings is protected by God and His creatures. "Those who worship Me and meditate on Me without any other thought, to these ever steadfast devotees I secure safety and supply all their needs." One whose holy life and love resemble infinitude, no one can ever harm. Can you hit the sky? Try. It only hurts you. The sky is an example of the characters who practise non-resistance. No evil can reach them, because they have transcended in their consciousness the material plane of anger, jealousy, hatred and malice. It is only when we overcome these evils by love that we find the practicality of non-resistance and are made impregnable by its mighty power.

OVERCOMING DIFFICULTIES

Selection from Mahabharata

Yudhisthira said,—"Creatures are seen to be afflicted by diverse causes and almost continually. Tell me, O grandsire, in what way can one overcome all those difficulties!" Bhishma said,—"They that never practise deceit, they whose behaviour is restrained by salutary restrictions, and they that control all worldly desires, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that do not speak when addressed in evil language, they that do not injure others when injured themselves, they that give but do not take, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that always give hospitable shelter to guests, they that do not indulge in malice, they that are constantly engaged in the study of the Vedas, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. Those persons who, conversant with duties, adopt that behaviour towards parents which they should, they that abstain from sleeping during the day, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that do

not commit any kind of sin in thought, word, and deed, they that never injure any creature, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that always speak truth in this world even when life is at stake, and that are examplars for all creatures to imitate, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They whose acts never deceive, whose words are always agreeable, and whose wealth is always well spent, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that have checked all the qualities that appertain to passion and darkness, are possessed of high souls, and practise the qualities that are called good, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They of whom no creature stands in fear and those that do not fear any creature themselves, they that look upon all creatures as their own self, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. Those that are good, that are never inspired with grief at the sight of other people's prosperity, and that abstain from all kinds of ignoble behaviour, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that bow to all the gods, that listen to the doctrines of all creeds, that have faith, and that are endued with tranquil souls, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that do not desire honor for themselves, that give honor unto others, that bow down unto those that deserve their worship, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that restrain their own wrath and pacify the wrath of others, and that never get angry with any creature, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that abstain, from their birth, from honey and meat and intoxicating drinks, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that eat for only supporting life, that seek the companionship of women for the sake only of offspring, and that open their lips for only speaking what is true, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that worship with devotion that Supreme Lord of all creatures, that origin and destruction of the universe, succeed in overcoming all difficulties."

RESIST NOT EVIL

By Count Lyof N. Tolstoi

Jesus said, simply and clearly, that the law of resistance to evil by violence, which has been made the basis of society, is false, and contrary to man's nature; and he gave another basis, that of non-resistance to evil, a law which, according to his doctrine, would deliver man from wrong. "You believe" (he says in substance) "that your laws, which resort to violence, correct evil; not at all; they only augment it. For thousands of years you have tried to destroy evil by evil, and you have not destroyed it; you have only augmented it. Do as I command you, follow my example, and you will know that my doctrine is true." Not only in words, but by his acts, by his death, did Jesus propound his doctrine, "resist not evil."

Believers listen to all this. They hear it in their churches, persuaded that the words are divine; they worship Jesus as God, and then they say: "All this is admirable, but it is impossible; as society is now organized, it would derange our whole existence, and we should be obliged to give up the customs that are so dear to us. We believe it all, but only in this sense: That it is the ideal towards which humanity ought to move; the ideal which is to be attained by prayer, and by believing in the sacraments, in the redemption, and in the resurrection of the dead."

"Resist not evil." They are very simple, these words; but they are, nevertheless, the expression of a law divine and human. If there has been in history a progressive movement for the suppression of evil, it is due to the men who understood the doctrine of Jesus—who endured evil, and resisted not evil by violence. The advance of humanity towards righteousness is due, not to the tyrants, but to the martyrs. As fire cannot extinguish fire, so evil cannot suppress evil. Good alone, confronting evil and resisting its contagion, can over-

come evil. And in the inner world of the human soul, the law is as absolute as was even the law of Galileo, more absolute, more clear, more immutable. Men may turn aside from it, they may hide its truth from others; but the progress of humanity towards righteousness can only be attained in this way. Every step must be guided by the command, "resist not evil." A disciple of Jesus may say now, with greater assurance than did Galileo, in spite of misfortunes and threats: "And yet it is not violence, but good, that overcomes evil." If the progress is slow, it is because the doctrine of Jesus (which, through its clearness, simplicity, and wisdom, appeals so inevitably to human nature), because the doctrine of Jesus has been cunningly concealed from the majority of mankind under an entirely different doctrine falsely called by his name.

SONGS OF KABIR

Behold what wonderful rest is in the Supreme Spirit! and he enjoys it, who makes himself meet for it.

Held by the cords of love, the swing of the Ocean of Joy sways to and fro; and a mighty sound breaks forth in song.

See what a lotus blooms there without water! and Kabir says "My heart's bee drinks its nectar."

What a wonderful lotus it is, that blooms at the heart of the spinning wheel of the universe! Only a few pure souls know of its true delight.

* * * * *

The flute of the Infinite is played without ceasing, and its sound is love:

When love renounces all limits, it reaches truth.

How widely the fragrance spreads! It has no end, nothing stands in its way.

The form of this melody is bright like a million suns: incomparably sounds the vina, the vina of the notes of truth.

PAY HOMAGE TO TRUTH

Extract by Swami Vivekananda

In these days we have to measure everything by utility,—by how many pounds, shillings and pence it represents. What right has a person to ask that truth should be judged by the standard of utility or money? Suppose there is no utility, will it be less true? Utility is not the test of truth. Nevertheless, there is the highest utility in this. Happiness we see is what every one is seeking for, but the majority seek it in things which are evanescent and not real. No happiness was ever found in the senses. There never was a person who found happiness in the senses or in enjoyment of the senses. Happiness is only found in the Spirit.

Therefore the highest utility for mankind is to find this happiness in the Spirit. The next point is that ignorance is the great mother of all misery, and the fundamental ignorance is to think that the Infinite weeps and cries, that He is finite. This is the basis of all ignorance, that we the immortal, the ever pure, the perfect Spirit, think that we are little minds, that we are little bodies; it is the mother of all selfishness. As soon as I think that I am a little body, I want to preserve it, to protect it, to keep it nice, at the expense of other bodies, then you and I become separate. As soon as this idea of separation comes, it opens the door to all mischief and leads to all misery. This is the utility, that if a very small fractional part of human beings living to-day can put aside the idea of selfishness, narrowness and littleness, this earth will become a paradise tomorrow; but with machines and improvements of material knowledge only, it will never be. These only increase misery, as oil poured on fire increases the flame all the more. Without the knowledge of the Spirit, all material knowledge is only adding fuel to fire, only giving into the hands of selfish man one more instrument to take what belongs to others, to live upon

the life of others, instead of giving up his life for them.

Is it practical? is another question. Can it be practised in modern society? Truth does not pay homage to any society, ancient or modern. Society has to pay homage to truth, or die. Societies should be moulded upon truth, and truth has not to adjust itself to society. If such a noble truth as unselfishness cannot be practised in society, it is better for a man to give up society and go into the forest. That is the daring man. There are two sorts of courage. One is the courage of facing the cannon, and the other is the courage of spiritual conviction. In the Mutiny of 1857, there was a Swami, a very great soul. A Mahomedan mutineer stabbed him severely. The Hindu mutineers caught and brought the man to the Swami, offering to kill him. But the Swami looked up calmly and said: "My brother, thou art He, thou art He!" and expired.

What good is it to talk of the strength of your muscles, of the superiority of your Western institutions, if you cannot make Truth square with your society, if you cannot build up a society into which the highest truth will fit? What is the good of this boastful talk about your grandeur and greatness, if you stand up and say, "This courage is not practical." Is nothing practical, but pounds, shillings, and pence? If so, why boast of your society? That society is the greatest, where the highest truths become practical. That is my opinion, and if society is not fit for the highest truths, make it so, and the sooner, the better. Stand up, men and women, in this spirit, dare to believe in the Truth, dare to practise the Truth! The world requires a few hundred bold men and women. Practise that boldness which dares know the truth, which dares show the truth in life, which does not quake before death, nay, welcomes death, makes a man know that he is the Spirit, that, in the whole universe nothing can kill him. Then you will be free. Then you will know your real Soul!

LIVE PEACEABLY

By Thomas a Kempis

Keep thyself first in peace, and then shalt thou be able to pacify others. A peaceable man doth more good than he that is well learned. A passionate man turneth even good into evil, and easily believeth evil. A good peaceable man turneth all things to good. He that is well in peace, is not suspicious of any. But he that is discontented and troubled, is tossed with divers suspicions: he is neither quiet himself, nor suffereth others to be quiet. He often speaketh that which he ought not to speak; and omitteth that which were more expedient for him to do.

First, therefore, have a careful zeal over thyself, and then thou mayest justly be zealous also towards thy neighbour. It were more just that thou shouldest accuse thyself, and excuse thy brother. If thou wilt be borne withal, bear also with another.

Behold, how far off thou art yet from true charity and humility, which knoweth not how to be angry with any, or to be moved with indignation, but only against its own self. It is no great matter to associate with the good and gentle; for this is naturally pleasing to all, and every one willingly enjoyeth peace, and loveth those best that agree with him. But to be able to live peaceably with hard and perverse or undisciplined persons is a great grace, and an exceedingly commendable and manly deed.

There are some that neither are in peace themselves nor leave others to be in peace: They are troublesome to themselves. And there are that keep themselves in peace and study to bring others unto peace.

Nevertheless, our whole peace in this miserable life consisteth rather in humble sufferance than in not feeling adversities. Whoso knoweth best how to suffer will keep the greatest peace.

VICTORY OF LOVE

An incident from the life of Lord Gouranga, the Light of Nadia.

Compassion is an attribute of every real spiritual teacher, but there are some great beings who seem the very incarnation of love. Thus it is written of the Indian saint, Lord Gouranga, the Light of Nadia, that he had within his heart such burning love for all creatures, such tender mercy, that he would grieve more bitterly over some wayward soul than a mother would over a lost child. Even to hear of a man's misdeeds caused him intense anguish. On finding himself face to face with the evil-doer the tears would stream from his eyes and so heart-rending was the sight of his divine grief that the man would fall prostrate before him crying, "Lord, Lord do not weep I can bear to suffer hell, but I cannot bear to see the anguish of your heart for my unworthy self. Henceforth I shall try to deserve thy blessing."

Once when Lord Gouranga was wandering in South India he heard of a most cruel and rapacious robber chief, who was terrorizing the whole countryside. He sought him out instantly, going alone to his stronghold. The chief greeted his holy visitor in amazement. "What! a saint here in the midst of robbers?" he asked, and the Lord replied: "I come to pay my homage to you who are also a saint." "I, a saint?" exclaimed the chief. "I am only a robber!" "That may be," said the Lord, "but I see a gem of divine love shining within you which will make of you a saint." These simple and fervent words went straight to the heart of the robber. For the first time in his life he heard some one speak to him with real love and trust. It roused in him a new feeling. He became aware of his higher nature and realized that there was good in him. The tears of repentance came. Flinging away his sword he offered himself at the Lord's feet and followed him humbly for the rest of his life as his disciple.

BUDDHA THE COMPASSIONATE

(Dramatic adaptation of "The Light of Asia" by Georgina Jones Walton, now known as Sister Daya.)

SWAN SCENE

(*Gardens of King Sudhodana's Palace. King and Viswamitra, his prime minister.*)

King.—Oft in the hunt
The prince will pause and let the deer pass free
Or yield a half-won race because his steed
Fetches a painful breath.
Viswamitra.—Our Sakya lords
Are wont to show forth kindness and calm ways.
(*Enter Sidhartha—afterwards known as the Buddha—and Devadatta.*)
Devadatta.—We'll bag some royal game to-day, a deer
Or two,—perchance a swan—Come cousin!
Sidhartha.—Nay!
I have no heart in this, I cannot slay
In idle sport. (*He throws himself down*).
King.—Viswamitra, did you mark him then?
It is that gentle trend which troubles me.
Viswamitra.—He is but resting, King.
King.—But this is something more, a brooding fate—
Thou dost remember when my son was born
Asita spoke, and the dream-readers told,—
That there would come a day when he must choose
Between two widely differing paths, one path
The way of glory and of kings, and one
The path whereon the beggars walk. I fear
Sidhartha dreams about this lesser path.
Viswamitra.—In all his life our prince hath never seen
A beggar; can he choose a thing he knows not of?
King.—He must not choose it, nay it shall not be!

Sidhartha, dearer than my own heart's blood,
To tread this sad and lowly path of pain,
Gaining who knows what good when all is lost
Worth keeping; when he could be if he would,
A king of universal dominance
Trampling the neck of all his enemies,—
A king of kings,—(*Enter Sidhartha bearing swan*)
Look now, what does he there?
Viswamitra.—He bears a bird.
Sidhartha.—O, it was cruel to wound thee so, fair swan;
That arrow point must be most stinging sharp.
(*Enter Attendant*)
Attendant.—Thy pardon, noble sir, my prince has shot
A swan which fell among the bushes there
He bids me pray you send it—will you send?
Sidhartha.—Nay! I will not. Were the bird dead
To send it to the slayer might be well
But the swan lives; Devadatta hath but killed
The God-like speed which throbbed in this white wing.
(*Devadatta has entered quietly.*)
Devadatta.—Has he indeed, my cousin? The wild thing
Living or dead is his who fetched it down
'Twas no man's in the clouds, but fall'n 'tis mine,
Give me my prize!
Sidhartha.—Thou shalt not have the bird.
King.—What is the reason for this loud dispute?
Devadatta.—This swan! I shot it, Sire; it must be mine!
He speaks of killing but the God-like speed!
What Sakya Lord can find a reason there?
Sidhartha.—If life be aught, the saviour of a life
Owns more the living thing than he can own who
Sought to slay. I claim the living bird.
King.—(Sternly) Sidhartha, 'tis well to be kind-hearted,

But this goes too far and smacks
Of woman's weakness. (*To Devadatta*)
Boy, the bird is thine.
Sidhartha.—(Gently) My father, it sought refuge here with me.
King.—Wilt thou oppose my will?
Sidhartha.—Forgive me, Sire, I must.
Viswamitra.—Undutiful!
King.—Dost thou forget it is thy father speaks?
Viswamitra.—Also thy King!
Sidhartha.—My father, thou art a King
Of the great warrior caste—the Kshatrya—
Whose law it is to shield all wounded things
I am a Kshatrya, and I shield this bird.
Devadatta.—(Snatching at bird) Thou feeble soft heart—'tis a subterfuge.
(*Sidhartha repels Devadatta and keeps the bird*)
King.—Leave us Sidhartha!
Devadatta go!
And shame on both of you!
Devadatta.—It is not just
It makes a mock of all our Sakya sports.
(*Devadatta glares at Sidhartha and exits. Sidhartha walks quietly away.*)
King.—How may we lure him from these brooding thoughts
And turn his stubborn will to kinglier things
Than wounded cygnets?
Viswamitra.—Maharaja, love
Will cure these thin distempers; weave the spell
Of woman's wiles about his idle heart.
Find him soft wives and pretty playfellows.
King.—It shall be so! Command a festival
Where the realm's maids shall be competitors

In grace,—The prince shall give the prizes
To the fair—There's surely one whose beauty's lure
Shall win him to the joy he knows not of
So may we choose for love with love's own eyes
And cheat his Highness into happiness.

(*King and Viswamitra exeunt*)

(*Sidhartha kneels by pool and washes the bird's wound*)

Sidhartha.—Poor hunted thing of the wild forest
Am I the only one who grieves for thee?
Hark how the thickets rustle with small life
Of lizard, bee, beetle and creeping things
Pleased at the spring. Yet lizard feeds on ant
And snake on him, and kite on both. It is
A rage to live which makes all living strife;
My heart is heavy with this world's dumb woe.

REPORT

Good Friday this year had special significance for the Vedanta Household in Boston. The day before, word came from India of the passing of a very holy personage, Swami Brahmananda, beloved president of the Ramakrishna Mission. Therefore it was with deep feeling that they observed Good Friday by fasting and prayer before the Sanctuary. Perhaps because of this the public Service at five o'clock was peculiarly impressive.

Swami Paramananda spoke on the true meaning of the crucifixion. Many were present and all seemed aware of an unusual depth and tenderness in Swami's message. Owing to lack of space, this address could not appear previously in the magazine, but it is hoped that at least a portion of it will be printed in some later issue.

Eastertide was celebrated at the Vedanta Centre with spirit of holy joy. Both Shrine and Chapel were fragrant with lovely spring blossoms. Glorious red tulips in the Shrine win-

dow caught the morning sunlight in their cups and glowed with the splendor of the Holy Grail.

Swami Paramananda spoke upon "Reincarnation and Resurrection." "Resurrection", he said, "was not just from the grave. Even here in this life we can raise ourselves from the burial ground of matter, and after that even the last enemy, death, loses its power over us. That is the significance of the spring awakening. The feast of resurrection reminds us that we must not sleep in ignorance, buried in material consciousness and overwhelmed with the thought that we are only of the flesh. On the contrary, it should remind us anew with greater clearness that our real life is of eternity. It is knowledge of the Infinite that helps us to rise from the bondage of the finite. That is the spiritual interpretation of the resurrection of the soul from the body."

At the close of the Service the Swami made an important announcement which may have far-reaching effect on the work. Holding in his hand a small piece of paper, he said that contrary to his usual custom he was going to refer to an urgent business matter. The paper, he said, was a cheque, an Easter offering from a friend who gave it with the hope that it might prove a nest egg for the new Temple. He explained further that in spite of the extensive enlargements recently completed, the Centre had already outgrown its present quarters. Sunday after Sunday, this season, the Chapel had been crowded to the utmost, making plans for the future imperative. How soon the Temple materializes depends entirely on the co-operation of friends and members. In the meantime, Swami begged the congregation to be patient and not mind the inconvenience of being crowded. Inspired by the Swami's announcement one of the members has created a beautiful minature temple with carved columns and gold-tipped dome. This stands in the entrance hall, a constant reminder to all who come of the growing needs of the work.

JUL 25 1922

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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The Message of the East

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FOURTEENTH SEASON—1922

SUNDAY, 11 A. M.—SERVICE WITH ADDRESS

SUBJECTS

July	*2nd*	*Heredity and Reincarnation*
	9th	*Raja Yoga—(Science of Self-Mastery)*
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	13th	*Will Power*
	20th	*How to Gain Poise*
	27th	*Healing and Meditation*
Sept.	*3rd*	*Can We Re-Mould our Destiny*
	10th	*Secret of Happiness*
	17th	*The Higher Consciousness*
	24th	*Overcoming Evil*

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"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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REINCARNATION AND IMMORTALITY

By Swami Paramananda

Continued existence of the soul after the death of the corporeal body opens before us a field of endless speculation. As far back as we are able to go, penetrating the dimness of the remote past in every country and in every age, the theme of the soul has been of the most absorbing interest to all thinking minds. Concept of soul's immortal nature is not peculiar to any particular religion or philosophy, but it forms the cornerstone of all religions and philosophies. Even physical science is ever in pursuit to solve the question of soul on a plausible scientific basis. We are at once inclined to ask why this age-long problem has not been solved conclusively by the great minds of the wise, and then again if it has not been solved for so long, is it not futile for us to venture it at all? It is one of the ideas that we are incapable of putting aside, for our living here, surrounded by other lives, constantly brings before us the problem of soul and its destiny. Whether our vocation is material, intellectual, scientific, philosophic or religious, we are confronted afresh at every turn of life with the problem of the soul.

"These bodies are perishable, but the dwellers in these bodies are eternal, indestructible and impenetrable. No one is ever able to destroy the immutable soul." This ancient saying of the

Bhagavad-Gita gives us a picture of our subtle and incorporeal life. If this is true, then we cannot help but ask, "What happens to the soul after death?" "How do we exist?" The Indo-Aryan concept is that the destruction of the gross body in no way impairs the subtle body composed of mind, intelligence, and ego. This subtle body of the soul continues its existence and carries with it all its accumulated experiences of mortal life.

In recent years the efforts of the psychical research work to prove scientifically the survival of the soul after the bodily death has been of great importance. One of the main difficulties in proving the existence of the soul is that soul is not a by-product like all other created things of the phenomenal universe. Therefore, it becomes an almost impossible task to demonstrate it by mechanical means. Our investigations in this realm cannot be wholly successful unless we are willing to join our rationalism with the intrinsic spiritual instinct latent in us. Of course on this point there are many who are extremely credulous as to whether we can rely on the perceptions which are not demonstrable to the physical senses. The study of the soul, however, is frought with endless difficulties unless we are willing to ally our unseen and imperceptible inner faculties with our visible life.

Immortality of the soul is the basic principle upon which all religions and philosophies, both ancient and modern, stand and must always stand. There are two ideas which are immediately connected with the soul's immortal nature, and they are preexistence and reincarnation. We cannot believe in future existence of the soul unless we are willing to take account of its previous existence. It is strange to observe how many people who are so ready to accept the doctrine of immortality as continued life after death are strongly opposed to the idea of life before birth; but rationally we cannot accept future life unless

we are willing to admit life in the past, for our future life proves that our present life will be its pre-existence.

It is impossible to explain the intricacies of our present existence without taking account of what has gone before. When we see suffering imposed upon an innocent babe without any apparent reason, or an honest person deprived of his blessings, we rise up with indignation and scorn for such incredible injustice. But in the cosmic universe there is no anarchy or chance happening. There are of course orthodox views which hold that these things are due to the will of an almighty, omnipotent Providence, but such explanations seldom give us any consolation or throw any light on truth. For why should an all-just and all-merciful Being impose on His children suffering? Even a kind father is more merciful to his children. How can One, then, Who is the embodiment of all-love be cruel to His children? In order to find true explanation, we must look into the depth of life itself, for therein lies the index of every detailed work of our present physical existence.

Here we shall be inclined to be skeptical saying, if we existed before, why is it we do not remember our past? This seeming potent argument against pre-existence and reincarnation is really a very frail objection, for how little we can depend on our memory. Sometimes we do not remember what has chanced yesterday or the day before, while there are people who have a genius for remembering details of their lives even during infancy, nay, even prior to their infancy back into a former life. Merely non-recollection of parts of our life does not disprove our existence. For instance, we cannot say that our soul did not exist in our infancy because we cannot recall that period of our life. There is, however, a great blessing in this forgetfulness, for sometimes our past recollections prove to be most fatal to our progress. They hang over us like dark clouds overshadowing our destiny. Therefore, this veil is a

great mercy of Divine Providence causing us to forget, and helping us to start afresh with each new life.

Another valuable idea which is connected with the soul and its destiny is that of evolution. And evolution pre-supposes pre-existence; that is, something cannot be evolved out of nothing. Our present life is evolved from another form of life, but it is certain that it did not spring up out of nothing. In India the theme of evolution was not limited merely to the physical aspect of life; it was inter-related with the intrinsic spiritual essence, without which no life is possible and no evolution is practical. For instance, there may be perfectly good soil and you may water the soil faithfully, but that will not produce a harvest. In same manner there may be abundance of material substance which is essential for creation, but without the co-ordination and co-operation of the Spirit no creation is possible. Inert matter can never move of itself, nor can it ever evolve to any grandeur without the aid of the spiritual essence. The soul of a saint has evolved not suddenly, but through experience. The mind of a genius has also reached its present state after having travelled through many roads of success and failure. Evolution is not limited to the mineral kingdom, or vegetable kingdom, or animal kingdom, or merely to human heights. It continues until ultimate perfection is reached, and this is not possible in a short duration of time. However much we may strive, one little span of existence proves insufficient to fulfill our high aspirations, and in order that we may complete our course and that we may reach our highest ideal, we are given opportunities afresh, and reincarnation of the soul gives these opportunities for the soul's evolution.

Reincarnation is not as is supposed by many hasty thinkers, a pagan doctrine; it has its roots in the very foundation of the spiritual world. It explains the incongruity of life in light of reason. It offers us consolation in the deepest sense. It

makes clear that our disadvantages and our sufferings are not imposed upon us by an arbitrary hand, but are the fulfillment of just laws. Also it teaches us that our lost opportunities are not taken away from us forever. We are given new chances that we may learn, that we may evolve, that we may set free our soul from the bondage of ignorance, and every time we are born into the flesh we bring with us added knowledge, added power from our previous life. Nothing of real value is ever lost, nor our misdeeds, our cruel and treacherous acts, forgotten until we have atoned for them. It is not that some being is keeping account of our thoughts and deeds, but we ourselves keep a complete record of even the things we do in the dark and the thoughts that we entertain secretly in our heart, and we reap the sum total of these thoughts and deeds in our every embodiment. We obtain our body, mind, brain, senses, our gifts, our merits and demerits,—all—in accordance with our deserts. As we evolve spiritually we obtain higher and higher opportunities for our self-expression. Even our body and senses evolve greater powers of purity, subtlety and keener perception, for evolution takes place in every department of our life. There is organic evolution, mental evolution and spiritual evolution.

Here some may think, why is it not possible to explain all the intricate problems of life through the law of heredity, for children inherit their qualities from their parents. To a certain extent this may be proved true, but often we are unable to associate their gifts with parents or grandparents. Children may resemble their parents in a great many ways, physically, mentally, and in some of their habits, but often-times we are unable to relate them in their deeper instincts. For instance, we are frequently puzzled to find an explanation for a child genius, a born musician, or an artist. When we begin to investigate we find that neither in his father, mother, nor in

his grandparents, can we trace any of his qualities, and yet it is not through accident that he is born of those parents and placed in that environment. There are soul connections which are not apparent on the surface, for there is the law of attraction. Like attracts like. Our setting is given to us according to what is best for our evolution, and sometimes our adverse circumstances we have to accept because we have deserved them by our misdirected thoughts and deeds. How often we feel great indignation that an innocent soul should be born of criminal parents, but if we can look deeply into that soul and its heritage, we shall find that it is the past which links it to its present condition and surroundings.

The theme of metempsychosis or transmigration is very grossly misunderstood and misinterpreted. It is at once connected with rebirth in animal forms. We are not compelled to return in animal bodies, or in any kind of bodies. We create our chain of circumstance by our own thoughts and deeds which hold us bound to certain moral retribution. This does not necessarily mean punishment, but it implies that we must fulfill our unfulfilled desires, we must complete our uncompleted tasks, and in order to accomplish this we are given what is most suitable to such ends, and also what we are most deserving of. It is not necessary for a wicked and cruel person to be born in the animal kingdom, but there are many who exhibit animal instincts in their thoughts and deeds, even though they wear the human garb. There may be extreme instances when the soul degenerates itself to a lower plane of existence through its vile inhuman conduct, but that is only a temporary state in its evolution to give it an opportunity to learn certain lessons before it can continue its onward march in the course of evolution.

Reincarnation is not purely an Indian doctrine—Hindu and Buddhistic—but it permeates almost all the great religions of

the world. Nor is it opposed to the teaching of Christ, although many are inclined to think so. It was believed by the early church fathers as one of the most potent themes of life, and even in the life of Christ we find traces which strongly suggest its ascendancy at that time. "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" asks the Christ. "And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets."

Our salvation is not in any way dependent upon our belief or disbelief in reincarnation, but it is a great help to find a rational and logical explanation of life and all its happenings so that we may work with conviction, so that we may direct our forces fortified by the power of Truth, and thus not only upbuild our own life and destiny, but lend our helping hand to our fellow-pilgrims who are struggling along, carrying their cross and weight of life. In order to be able to do this successfully we must not always turn the eye of our intelligence to outer life, but we must form the habit of contemplation, for it is in the light of spiritual meditation that these deeper mysteries of the soul are made clear to us, and once we see and feel its reality, we are made impregnable to the influence of materialism and doubt. If we can only remember that our life here is not an accident, a mere chance, but for a definite mission, ordained to us by the Supreme Power, and that as we are consciously and constantly able to ally ourselves with that Power, then are we freed from the rounds of birth and death, disease and calamity, and thus our soul shall attain its final beatitude.

The curtains of yesterday drop down, the curtains of to-morrow roll up; but yesterday and to-morrow both *are*. Pierce through the time-element, glance into the Eternal. Believe what thou findest written in the sanctuaries of man's soul, even as all thinkers, in all ages, have devoutly read it there.

—*Thomas Carlyle.*

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

We must infer our destiny from the preparation. We are driven by instinct to hive innumerable experiences which are of no visible value, and we may revolve through many lives before we shall assimilate or exhaust them.—*Emerson.*

Man is not a product of the world of sense and the end of his existence can never be attained in that world. . . . All death in nature is birth, and precisely in dying the sublimation of life appears most conspicuous. There is no death-bringing principle in nature, for nature is only life throughout. Not death kills; but the non-living life which is hidden behind the old, begins and unfolds itself. Death and birth are only the struggles of life with itself to manifest itself in ever more transfigured form, more like itself.—*Fichte.*

Birth is not a beginning; death is not an end.—*Chuang Tzu.*

Those who, in the season of prosperity experience pain and grief, suffer them on account of their words or deeds in a former body, for which the Most Just now punisheth them.
—*Zoroaster.*

Do ye not remember that all pure spirits who are in conformity with the divine dispensation, live on in the loveliest of heavenly places, and in course of time they are again sent down to inhabit sinless bodies, but the souls of those who have committed self-destruction are doomed to a region in the darkness of the underworld?—*Josephus.*

It was in India and among the Aryas that the doctrine of the pre-existence, the immortality, and the individuality of the soul first arose. Recent researches in Egypt have failed to show any trace of the doctrines of an independent and individual soul existing before and after the earthly phase of existence. Some of the Mysteries were no doubt in possession of this idea, but in those it has been traced to India.—*Swami Vivekananda.*

HISTORY OF REINCARNATION

By Sister Daya

The idea of reincarnation or rebirth is not associated with any one race or epoch, it is coincident with the history of human reason. Of this ancient concept James Freeman Clarke writes in his "Ten Great Religions,"—"It" (reincarnation) "was taught by three great religions, that of Egypt, of Brahmanism, and of Buddhism; by Pythagoras, Empedocles, and Plato among Greek philosophers; by the Neo-Platonists, the Jewish Kabala, and the Arab philosophers; by Origen and other church fathers; by the Gnostics, the Manichaeans, the Druids; and in recent times by Fourier and others."

Let us go as far back as possible in human tradition and discover if we can the earliest mention of this theory of spiritual evolution. Although there are many discussions as to the priority of this Bible or that, it is safe to assume that the Vedas of India are sufficiently ancient to be ranked among the first of holy books. At any rate they are the oldest Aryan heritage that we have. The date of the Vedas is given as about 2000 B. C. These Scriptures consist chiefly of childlike hymns in worship of nature. They are songs of praise almost entirely—but they are vibrant with the sense of endless manifesting life and consciousness, which later developed into the grand and more organized concept of the soul's round of births and deaths as it is set forth in the Upanishads, the Bhagavad-Gita, and in practically all the great Indian epics and Scriptures. In fact reincarnation is the very warp and woof of Hindu life, socially, philosophically and spiritually. As the oldest sacred books refer all their knowledge to a teaching infinitely more remote, it is fair to assume that it was an ancient idea with the Vedic Rishis.

Egypt comes next in our consideration. Herodotus states that "the Egyptians are the first who propounded the theory

that the human soul is imperishable and that where the body of any one dies it enters into some other creature that may be ready to receive it, and that when it has gone the round of all created forms on land, in water and in air, then it once more enters a human body born for it; and that this cycle of existence for the soul takes place in three thousand years." He likewise says that "some of the Greeks adopted this opinion, some earlier, others later, as if it were their own." Egypt undoubtedly must have had a very profound philosophy to have held such minds as that of Pythagoras for instance, who spent many years in Egypt delving into her deepest mysteries. But to-day we lack the key which would unlock for us these mysteries so jealously guarded by her priests. As a result her religion appears to us confused and often grotesque, while her idea of rebirth through animal and other forms seems a perversion of the pure Indo-Aryan concept. The true wisdom of Egypt is often conveyed to us by the Greeks who came under its influence, notably Pythagoras. He likewise seemed to teach the descent of the soul into the bodies of beasts. But this is declared by some of his later followers to be merely symbolic.

Plato's great name has always been associated with the idea of rebirth. Aristotle also makes reference to it. Nemesius emphatically declared that all the Greeks who believed in immortality believed also in reincarnation. Greece was constantly in touch with Oriental thought and receptive to its influence. Thus Neo-Platonism which arose around the first century and was contemporary with the Alexandrian Gnostics, sought to combine the doctrines of Pythagoras, Plato and Buddhism. Ammonius Saccas, Plotinus and Porphyry in the third century, Iamblichus in the fourth, Hierocles and Proclus in the fifth and Damascius in the sixth were among the great Neo-Platonists, who helped establish the idea of reincarnation in the West. The Alexandrian Gnostics likewise taught it. They sought to

furnish young Christianity with an adequate philosophy and echoes of their influence sound through the Fourth Gospel. Christianity was most powerfully affected by these ancient ideas. Especially did reincarnation cause her disquietude. It was too reminiscent of the pagan world. Origen and many of the early church fathers held to it. Origen's master, Clemens Alexandrinus taught it as a divine tradition, authorized by St. Paul himself. Ruffinus in his letter to Anastasius says that "This opinion was common among the primitive fathers." Heretical sects such as the Manichaeans, were rife with it and handed it down to medieaval times where it was perpetuated in the teachings of the Bogomiles, Paulicians, Priscillians, and many others. Mr. Walker in his book on "Reincarnation" states that "It was an essential part of church philosophy for many centuries in the rank and file of Christian thought." Its prevalence can be gauged by the fact that at the Council of Constantinople about 550 A. D. the Church pronounced it Anathema.

That there must have been a strong Hebrew influence upholding it is more than likely although it does not seem to be included in the Old Testament. Some of the Apocryphal books refer to it as does the Talmud and the Kabala. The Jewish Therapeutae of Egypt and the Essenes of Palestine from whom some claim Christ received His early teaching, were imbued with it. There is nothing in the New Testament opposed to it and certain statements of the Christ Himself more than implied it, showing it to be a prevailing tenet of the day. There is little question that Persian thought added its stream of influence to those streams flowing in from Greece, Egypt and India. The Magi, so intimately connected with the birth of Christianity, brought it as one of their gifts.

But because of church bigotry on the one hand and materialism on the other, the Christian West seems to have dropped the

idea of the soul's evolution, without which its much vaunted physical evolution is an empty husk. But this is only "officially speaking." It would take many pages to recount the utterances of occidental thinkers, upholding the idea of rebirth. Italy of the middle ages had her voices which proclaimed it. Giordano Bruno's for example. Many sects and societies secretly held it. The troubadours and mimes are thought by many to have conveyed under romantic imagery the most profound truths of the human soul.

The German philosophers gave it their serious attention: Schopenhauer, Lessing, Hegel, Leibnitz, Herder, and Fichte the younger. Richard Wagner long had it in mind to write a great opera around the theme of Buddhism, while the Scandinavian mythology from which the legends of "The Ring" are derived included metempsychosis or reincarnation. Jacob Boehme, Swedenborg, Paracelsus and other great mystics adhered to it. The Cambridge Platonists, conspicuously Henry More, spoke for it. It captivated Fourier and Leroux. Poets and fiction writers have used it as a theme and many refer to their belief in it. Even in the modern church it has had its defenders. Bishops in England and Ireland have not hesitated to promulgate it. Especially since modern means of transportation have brought about closer contact with the Orient, has this age-old conception renewed its hold on our imaginations. It has been recently calculated that among the orthodox movements in this country, such as Theosophy, New Thought, etc., there are at least 12,000,000 followers, and of these very many hold to the idea of reincarnation. In fact in the world to-day the majority of the human race believe in it. All the countries which have welcomed Buddhism, such as Ceylon, Burma, Java, China, Japan, Tibet, Central Asia, Siberia and even Swedish Lapland, come under its influence. The primitive heart and the philosophic mind find equal satisfaction in it. It encircles

the world and has left its traces everywhere. It is making belief in immortality again possible for the skeptical West. As the materialistic philosopher Hume states in his essay on "The Immortality of the Soul," "The soul, therefore, if immortal existed before our birth, and if the former existence noways concerns us, neither will the latter * * * Metempsychosis is therefore, the only system of this kind that philosophy can hearken to."

THE REBIRTH OF KATSUGORO

From "Gleanings from Buddha-Fields" by Lafcadio Hearn.

(The following story is an exact translation by Mr. Lafcadio Hearn of an old Japanese manuscript. The writer of the story, Matsudaira Kwanzan Dono, Daimyo, or lord of a province, states in a letter to a Buddhist Priest, that it is an accurate account of the rebirth given as he heard it from the lips of the boy's grandmother. Mr. Amenomari, a friend of Mr. Hearn's, discovered the manuscript in the library of Count Sasaki of Tokyo. It was very much signed and sealed and contained besides the account here given, several letters and depositions all attesting the genuineness of the story.)

Some time in the eleventh month of the past year, when Katsugoro was playing in the rice-field with his elder sister, Fusa, he asked her,—"Elder Sister, where did you come from before you were born into our household?" Fusa answered him: "How can I know what happened to me before I was born?" Katsugoro looked surprised and exclaimed: "Then you cannot remember anything that happened before you were born?" "Do you remember?" asked Fusa. "Indeed I do," replied Katsugoro, "I used to be the son of Kyubei San of Hodokubo, and my name was then Tozo—do you not know all that?" "Ah!" said Fusa, "I shall tell father and mother about it." But Katsugoro at once began to cry, and said: "Please do not tell!" * * * Fusa made answer, after a little while: "Well,

this time I shall not tell. But the next time that you do anything naughty, then I will tell."

After that day whenever a dispute arose between the two, the sister would threaten the brother, saying, "Very well, then—I shall tell that thing to father and mother." At these words the boy would always yield. This happened many times; and the parents one day overheard Fusa make her threat. Thinking Katsugoro must have been doing something wrong, they desired to know what the matter was, and Fusa, being questioned, told them the truth. Then Genzo and his wife, and Tsuya, the grandmother of Katsugoro, thought it a very strange thing. They called Katsugoro, therefore; and tried, first by coaxing, and then by threatening, to make him tell what he had meant by those words. After hesitation, Katsugoro said: "I will tell you everything. I used to be the son of Kyubei San of Hodokubo, and the name of my mother then was O-Shidzu San. When I was five years old, Kyubei San died; and there came in his place a man called Hanshiro San, who loved me very much. But in the following year, when I was six years old, I died of smallpox. In the third year after that I entered mother's honorable womb, and was born again." The parents and the grandmother of the boy wondered greatly at hearing this; and they decided to make all possible inquiry as to the man called Hanshiro of Hodokubo. But as they all had to work very hard every day to earn a living, and so could spare but little time for any other matter, they could not at once carry out their intention.

Now Sei, the mother of Katsugoro, had nightly to suckle her little daughter Tsune, and Katsugoro therefore slept with his grandmother, Tsuya. Sometimes he used to talk to her in bed; and one night when he was in a very confiding mood, she persuaded him to tell her what happened at the time when he had died. Then he said: "Until I was four years old I

used to remember everything; but since then I have become more and more forgetful; * * * but I still remember that I died of smallpox; I remember that I was put into a jar; I remember that I was buried on a hill. There was a hole made in the ground; and the people let the jar drop into that hole. It fell *pon!*—I remember that sound well. Then, somehow, I returned to the house, and I stopped on my own pillow there. In a short time some old man,—looking like a grandfather—came and took me away. I do not know who or what he was. As I walked I went through empty air as if flying. I remember it was neither night or day as we went; it was always like sunset-time. I did not feel either warm or cold or hungry. We went very far, I think; but still I could hear always, faintly, the voices of people talking at home; and the sound of *Nembutsu* being said for me. * * * I remember also that when the people at home set offerings of hot *botamochi* before the household shrine, I inhaled the vapor of the offerings. * * * *

After that I only remember that the old man led me by some roundabout way to this place—I remember we passed the road beyond the village. Then we came here, and he pointed to this house, and said to me: "Now you must be reborn; for it is three years since you died. You are to be reborn in that house. The person who will become your grandmother is very kind; so it will be well for you to be conceived and born there." After saying this the old man went away. I remained a little time under the Kaki-tree before the entrance of this house. Then I was going to enter when I heard talking inside; some one said that because father was now earning so little, mother would have to go to service in Yedo. I thought, "I will not go into that house;" and I stopped three days in the garden. On the third day it was decided that, after all, mother would not have to go to Yedo. The same night I passed into the house through a knot-hole in the sliding-shutters;—and after that I

stayed for three days beside the *kamado*. (The cooking place in a Japanese kitchen, L. H.). Then I entered mother's honorable womb. * * * I remember that I was born without any pain at all."

The grandmother told Genzo and his wife what Katsugoro had related to her; and after that the boy would often say to them; "I want to go to Hodokubo. Please let me make a visit to the tomb of Kyubei San." Tsuya went with Katsugoro to Hodokubo; and when they entered the village she pointed to the nearer dwellings and asked the boy, "Which house is it?—Is it this house or that one?" "No, answered Katsugoro,—it is further on—much further,"—and he hurried before her. Reaching a certain dwelling at last, he cried, "This is the house!"—and ran in, without waiting for his grandmother. Tsuya followed him in and asked the people there what was the name of the owner of the house. "Hanshiro," one of them answered. She asked the name of Hanshiro's wife. "Shidzu," was the reply. Then she asked whether there had ever been a son called Tozo born in that house. "Yes," was the answer; "but that boy died thirteen years ago when he was six years old."

Then for the first time Tsuya was convinced that Katsugoro had spoken the truth; and she could not help shedding tears. She related to the people of the house all that Katsugoro had told her about his remembrance of his former birth. Then Hanshiro and his wife wondered greatly. They caressed Katsugoro and wept; and they remarked that he was much handsomer now than he had been as Tozo before dying at the age of six. In the meantime, Katsugoro was looking all about; and seeing the roof of a tobacco shop opposite to the house of Hanshiro, he pointed to it and said: "That used not to be there." And he also said,—"The tree yonder used not to be there." All this was true. So from the minds of Hanshiro and his wife every doubt departed.

GLORIFYING PAIN AND ADVERSITY

By Swami Paramananda

(Excerpt of address given on Good Friday at the Chapel of the Vedanta Centre, Boston.)

There are certain great fundamental lessons in life which are true not only once, but at all times. Crucifixion—the significance of Good Friday—is such a lesson. Many people bear a cross because it is thrust upon them, but only the few master spirits of the world know how to take a cross and make it a symbol of spirituality. Pain is a wonderful thing in life, a mighty blessing if it does not sink deep down to our root and distort our vision. Crucifixion can kill one, can destroy one physically, morally and spiritually, and also it has the power to make one immortal. That is the symbolic meaning of this celebration. It is what we find in the lives of great saviours—in the life of Christ—a glorifying of pain, a glorifying of adversity, bitter opposition met without force, without supplication even. When the disciples and friends of the Christ wanted to protect Him you all know His attitude: What need have I of protection from the human? Can I not pray to the Heavenly Father?

We are here in this world for no ordinary purpose. There is deep significance in life, and it is not the man who merely seeks to escape from adverse circumstance who attains the high and the glorious, but rather he who suffers all and yet remains above it, who when pain comes is not crushed by it, but transcends it. It seems that there must be another life within this life. There is—the life of the spirit, but we fail to reach it because of our ignorance, prejudice, superstition and lack of feeling. The only way we find our access to it is by opening our hearts simply with faith, with feeling, with love. Love does conquer everything. It is the only glorifying essence in our existence. We can bear any amount of pain through love; we can surmount any degree of opposition through love; its

victory is everywhere. It is only those who are spiritually blind who fail to perceive its significance, its magnitude, its undying quality. This is one of the fundamental virtues and without it no one can become a true follower of any religion. For it was not only Christ who brought us a living example of this, but the Christ-Spirits throughout history. If we would follow them we must do as they did.

It is not enough on Good Friday merely to pray or fast or go through certain ritualism, although this has its uplifting effect. There is a deeper significance and it is in the living of it. I do not mean that we should invite a cross in order to be tormented. There is no need for that. Life itself offers us constant, unlimited opportunities to prove our spiritual worth. Do we not meet almost every day with something that is unendurable, something that is unjust, something that arouses within us the feeling of antagonism, hatred or anger? These are the feelings that we must overcome through the glowing example of the crucifixion. As these experiences come to us, these trials and tribulations, let us prove our strength by trying to conquer them not by force, not by scheming, not by shrewdness or unkind thoughts, but by love. Is not that the way of the Christ? Christ had no enemies. He exalted His life and the Spirit of God by refusing to recognize enmity.

Now can we pray with our whole heart for those who do not belong to us? It is an excellent practice for Good Friday. By doing it we help ourselves infinitely more than we help others. It is easy to love people who love us and feel towards us as we would like to have them feel, but to pray for those who do not feel kindly towards us is not so easy. The greatest gift that man can bring to himself and to his fellow-beings is the spirit of forgiveness—love conquering all, always. It is this which gives the key to Christ's character. He suffered all and yet caused suffering to none. Did He not again and

again implore His disciples to love one another as He loved them? It was almost His last appeal to them and even though they afterwards forgot and denied Him there was never anything in His heart for them but forgiveness and love. Surrender was the dominant factor in His life—Thy Will be done in life, in death, in torment and in glory, under all circumstances. Why can we not feel this? We are too faint-hearted. Why are we so faint-hearted? Because we do not believe in the Spirit. We believe more in the flesh and there is always fear when we believe in the flesh too much. When we cling to it, foster it and try to make it the exclusive concern of our life we cannot help but suffer. Every man and woman, every soul should strive to transcend the flesh by the Spirit, by thinking of the Spirit, by clinging to It, by learning to love It.

Religion is very wonderful when it becomes living,—wonderful for the individual who lives it and wonderful for those who see it lived. It becomes a glowing factor in our life. All the mysteries, all the vagueness vanish and we see light everywhere. We see light in our own life, we see the same light above and below and all about us, and that is the Spirit of God. When that enters into us we do not need to fear. If we have much to bear we know that the more we have to endure, the greater the opportunity to prove our spiritual wisdom. When we have achieved that spiritual light and love, whatsoever we touch in life is glorified. The Spirit is so dominant in us that in spite of all the things that are wrong and detrimental we can stand up with undaunted courage. That is why wise men pray that they may have little in the world so that they may never forget the most vital thing of life. The mother of Arjuna, the hero of the Bhagavad-Gita, was a great devotee, a very wonderful character in Indian history. She prayed to the Lord not just for her own safety and the safety of her children, but that He might not fail to send her trying circumstances. "Test

me," she prayed, "place me in difficulties so that I may never forget Thee." People generally pray when they are in trouble so that they may be rescued, but a wise soul does not desire that kind of rescue; what he wants is to be given greater understanding that he may glorify the spirit of God.

That is to me the significance of this day. It is not to mourn. Rather is it for us to mourn when we fail to take up our burden and bear our cross with a valiant heart. The great Saviours of the world would rather be crucified and tormented and misunderstood than fail to uphold that which is true. If we can feel this, then have we found real religion in our soul; then have we found a rock upon which we can stand,—the stability which the sages and wise men speak of,—an island of security which no wind can reach, no storm or element disturb. You may ask, why then did Christ weep? Perhaps His heart was especially heavy for the world which was so ignorant, for the world which was so dense that it could not accept anything so delicate, so exquisite, so highly organized. It was that, perhaps, which saddened Him more than anything else. It is not the personal loss or suffering which grieves the great soul. Rather is it when his life, his motive, his love fail to reach the hearts of men. That is why we should always pray for a heart that is true and open, so that the Spirit may enter into it in such a way as to exalt us and glorify us and strengthen us, that we may never forget that our supreme duty is to serve and to love and even when needful to lay down our life with undaunted courage and absolute faith in the Supreme. This is what gives the true foundation for the spiritual life. That is the example that Christ set for us in the crucifixion.

Let us in this hour when our hearts should rise to higher things try to lift our inmost prayers to that One Who alone can fulfill our desires. O Lord, Thou art ever present in our hearts; Thou art ever near; it is only through our ignorance

that we fail to hear Thy voice, to feel Thy presence. Do Thou, All-compassionate Being, destroy our ignorance, our delusion, that we may learn to take all experiences, sweet and bitter, with the same feeling and with a spirit of thanksgiving, for Thou art the Giver and Thou art the Gift—all things come from Thee. Make us true children, free from all egotism and self-seeking, that every hour, in every condition, we may humbly look up to Thee. Thou art the strength and Thou art the Strength-Giver. Give us strength that may never fail us. Oh Thou All-seeing, Thou knowest our failings and shortcomings; make us fervent, make us true, that ever with undaunted courage and unwavering faith we may serve Thee and Thy children. May the Infinite Spirit, Who manifests Himself in Christ and through all the great Saviours of the world, bestow upon us His loving and abiding protection and keep us ever in peace.

FIRE OF DIVINE LOVE

By Swami Paramananda

Thy flame of love touched my garment.
I was startled and affrighted
Lest all my possessions and cherished hopes
Be burned to nothingness.
I fled for fear of life, but Thy unquenchable fire
Ever followed me.
With troubled heart and misgiving
I opened my eyes only to find
That Thy bright and blazing flame
Was not of destruction.
It burned, yet destroyed it naught.
Oh, Thou effulgent spark,
I fear Thee no more,—I love Thy presence;
My soul delights in Thy presence;
Thy presence is my supreme joy!

TWELFTH ANNUAL DINNER

The June activities of the Vedanta Centre of Boston swung chiefly around the 12th annual dinner given by Swami Paramananda to his friends and students upon the evening of June 15th. This is a peculiarly happy occasion for the Swami as it affords him opportunity to pour out his warm spirit of welcome upon many faithful hearts. Considering as he does that an offering made to his guests is the same as an offering made to God, he lovingly prepares every dish with his own hands. To cook for over a hundred people is no light task. During the day of the dinner, hour after hour, the Swami stood and stirred huge cooking pots, creating new variations of such favorites as *Bhuni Khichuri, Curry Unity in Variety, Paramannam,* etc., etc. In referring to these preparations, in his little after dinner speech, the Swami said that when he saw the great quantity of greens arranged and waiting to be cooked, he felt as if he had come across a nice little vegetable garden which he hoped was now in its proper place.

As usual the library was transformed into a banquet hall with two long tables connected at the upper end by a transverse table where the Swami sat. In the entrance hall, recently enlarged, was space for two extra tables where late comers were placed. June is the month for flowers but this June the floral offerings were more than usually profuse and beautiful. Back of the Swami's seat hung an orange silk Indian *Chadar,* against which was outlined the delicate tracery of green leaves with glorious white peonies in the foreground. Peonies pink and peonies white, laurel, roses and other blooms softened the austere beauty of the rooms with their warm glow and radiant coloring. The whole house was sweet with their fragrance.

After the actual dining was over the Swami called on various speakers. Mr. John Orth, the noted musician, proposed Swami's health at which all the guests rose. Following him

Miss Beresford, Miss Shepherd and Prof. Perrin of the Boston University, expressed their gratitude to the Centre. There were guests who had come for this occasion from Louisville, Ky.; Cincinnati, Ohio; Rochester, N. Y.; New York City, and from other places nearer Boston. Mrs. Macherlein, of Rochester, and Mr. Murray, of Cincinnati, both responded to the Swami's greeting with warm words of appreciation. The youngest speaker of the evening was little Miss Burton who gave two poetic recitations. One of the Swami's oldest friends, Dr. Allen, who has just returned from a trip around the world, spoke with deep feeling of the Ramakrishna Mission in India and of the indelible impression made upon him by his visit to its *Seva Ashramas* or Homes of Service in Benares and Calcutta. He told of the warmth of hospitality extended to him, the efficiency of the service rendered to all who had need, and above all of the spirit of love, the true Christ spirit, which he felt active in the work and in all the workers of this great Mission, of which the Vedanta Centre is a branch.

Mr. Ennis, a Boston member, touched a deep spiritual note in his simple and sincere tribute to the Swami and his work. Mr. Ennis said in part: "For some years I was privileged to be a minister in the radical church—the Unitarian—and I was thinking as Swami spoke, if only I could do what he does I would go back to the pulpit. I can't tell you what he does because it does not need to be put into words. The nearest I can approach it is by the one word feeling. Since I came here something has taken place in me. I am working—I am a roofer—I am not thinking, but oh, how rich is that one thing—that feeling—I can't express it! Feeling of what? Sympathy does not say it. Perhaps the Swami has encompassed the meaning in the beautiful word which so often falls from his lips—unity—unity of everything. These flowers here, how much they are my friends; even the hum of the fan—the light

here in the candles—the beautiful flavors in our food; what is it? Why unity. The chair under my hand with sharp edges and dark color—that solid surface, how beautiful! You feel related to it. Is that pantheism? If it is, then I want more. We belong nowhere; we belong everywhere. It is this feeling that the Swami gives us,—this feeling that makes people want to be what down deep in their hearts they must recognize that sometime they are going to be."

These yearly dinners like all other established customs of the Boston Centre, are the result of spontaneous growth. They were never planned. The very first gathering was in 1910, in the city of Washington, when the Swami drew thirty-five of his friends around him to celebrate Christmastide. When he returned to Boston he gave a similar entertainment for his Boston students and inevitably the "Swami's dinner" grew into its present proportions. People travel sometimes thousands of miles to be present, for it is far more than a physical feast and the food the Swami prepares is not merely material. Many nationalities come and are made conscious only of their spiritual kinship. This was especially notable during the great war when guests from various warring nations sat down together and did not even remember to forget their differences because under the fusing influence of the Swami's universal spirit, they had for the moment, no differences to forget. The President of the Browning Society who was present, pointed out the deep significance of this fact and remarked that over the Vedanta Centre was flying the white flag of peace.

REPORT

The Vedanta Centre of Boston will hold its Services as usual during the summer months and Swami Paramananda will remain in Boston to conduct them. Owing to the length and heat of the day at this season, the hour of the Sunday Vesper Service has been changed from five in the afternoon to eight in the evening.

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

The Message of the East

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Ezekiel.

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Tyndall.

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INSPIRATION

By Swami Paramananda

Inspiration, Thy coming is like the falling of noiseless dewdrops on unopened flowerbuds, not conscious of their heavenly heritage.
Thou divine Magician,
Transformer and Transmitter of beauty,
Thou dost change all earth's harsh notes into heaven's unspeakable sweetness.
At Thy touch a broken reed sounds divine harmony,
And mortal voice sings immortal song.
When all is covered by the blank sheet of darkness and naught is seen,
Thou enterest unaware with Thy all-filling light,
Transforming gloom into brightness.
The touch of Thy holy hand is my sole adornment.
A glance from Thy smiling eyes hath poured upon me a shower of countless blossoms.
Now I gather these scattered flowers day and night with ecstatic joy,
For they bear the blessing of Thy divine fragrance.

Thou art the enchantment of song,
Rhapsody of rhyme,
Intoxication of ecstacy!
Thou art the might of the mighty,
Sanctity of the saint,
Melody of the musician!
Thou all-glorious Spirit of transcendent loveliness,
In awe and dumb wonderment
I adore Thee!

THE RAMPARTS OF WISDOM

Excerpt from Dialogues of Seneca

Will there be no one who will try to do an injury to the wise man? Yes, some one will try, but the injury will not reach him; for he is separated from the contact of his inferiors by so wide a distance that no evil impulse can retain its power of harm until it reaches him. Even when powerful men, raised to positions of high authority, and strong in the obedience of their dependents, strive to injure him, all their darts fall as far short of his wisdom as those which are shot upwards by bow-strings or catapults, which, although they rise so high as to pass out of sight, yet fall back again without reaching the heavens.

Wisdom leaves no room for evil; to it, the only evil is baseness, which cannot enter into the place already occupied by virtue and honour. If, therefore, there can be no injury without evil, and no evil without baseness, and baseness cannot find any place with a man who is already filled with honour, it follows that no injury can reach the wise man; for if injury be the endurance of some evil, and the wise man can endure no evil, it follows that no injury takes effect upon the wise man. All injury implies a making less of that which it affects, and no one can sustain an injury without some loss either of

his dignity, or of some part of his body, or of some of the things external to ourselves; but the wise man can lose nothing. He has invested everything in himself, has entrusted nothing to fortune, has his property in safety, and is content with virtue, which does not need casual accessories, and therefore can neither be increased or diminished; for virtue, as having attained to the highest position, has no room for addition to herself, and fortune can take nothing away save what she gave. Now fortune does not give virtue; therefore she does not take it away. Virtue is free, inviolable, not to be moved, not to be shaken, and so hardened against misfortunes that she cannot be bent, let alone overcome by them. She looks unfalteringly on while tortures are being prepared for her; she makes no change of countenance, whether misery or pleasure be offered to her. The wise man therefore can lose nothing of whose loss he will be sensible, for he is the property of virtue alone, from whom he never can be taken away. He enjoys all other things at the good pleasure of fortune; but who is grieved at the loss of what is not his own? If injury can hurt none of those things which are the peculiar property of the wise man, because while his virtue is safe they are safe, then it is impossible that an injury should be done to a wise man.

Consequently, no one can do either harm or good to the wise man, because divine things neither want help nor are capable of being hurt; and the wise man is near, indeed very near to the gods, being like a god in every respect save that he is mortal. As he presses forward and makes his way towards the life that is sublime, well-ordered, without fear, proceeding in a regular and harmonious course, tranquil, beneficent, made for the good of mankind, useful both to itself and to others, he will neither long nor weep for anything that is grovelling.

See then, Serenus, that the perfect man, full of human and divine virtues, can lose nothing; his goods are surrounded by

strong and impassable walls. You cannot compare them with the walls of Babylon, which Alexander entered, nor the fortifications of Carthage and Numantia, won by one of the same hand, nor the Capitol and citadel of Rome, which are branded with the marks of the victors' insults; the ramparts which protect the wise man are safe from fire and hostile invasion; they afford no passage; they are lofty, impregnable, divine.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Four kinds of virtuous men worship Me; the distressed, the seeker of knowledge, the seeker of material prosperity and the wise. Among them the wise, ever steadfast, devoted to the One (to Me) excels; for I am supremely dear to the wise and he is dear to Me. Noble are all these, but I regard the wise as my very Self; for with soul ever steadfast, he is established in Me alone as his supreme goal.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established: and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches. A wise man is strong: yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength.—*Proverbs.*

A wise and just man could be as happy in a state of slavery as in a state of freedom.—*Plato.*

Tsze-Kung asked saying: "On what ground did Kung-wan get that title of *Wan* (accomplished)?" The master said: "He was of an active nature and yet fond of learning, and he was not ashamed to ask and learn of his inferiors. On these grounds he has been styled *Wan.*—*Confucian Analect.*

The Deva asked: "Now I have only one doubt to be solved; pray, clear it away: What is it fire can neither burn, nor

moisture corrode, nor wind crush down, but is able to reform the whole world?"

The Blessed One replied: "Blessing! Neither fire, nor moisture, nor wind can destroy the blessing of a good deed, and it will reform the whole world."—*Gospel of Buddha.*

How should you be a lamp when you yield no light to what is close beside you?—*Akhlaq-i-Jalali* (*Sufi*).

We need only obey. There is guidance for each of us and by lowly listening we shall hear the right word.—*Emerson.*

Strive to see God in all things without exception, and acquiesce in His will with absolute submission. Do everything for God, uniting yourself to Him by a mere upward glance, or by the overflowing of your heart towards Him. Never be in a hurry; do everything quietly and in a calm spirit. Do not lose your inward peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset. Commend all to God, and then lie still and be at rest in His bosom. Whatever happens, abide steadfast in a determination to cling simply to God, trusting to His eternal love for you; and if you find that you have wandered forth from this shelter, recall your heart quietly and simply. Maintain a holy simplicity of mind, and do not smother yourself with a host of cares, wishes, or longings, under any pretext.—*St. Francis de Sales.*

The man immersed in worldliness cannot attain Divine wisdom. Does the muddy water ever reflect the sun or any surrounding object?

As the troubled surface of the water does not reflect the full moon perfectly but in broken images, so the mind disturbed by worldly desires and passions does not fully reflect the light of God.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

SPIRITUAL MEDIUMSHIP

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

The idea of mediumship is generally associated with spiritualism or with what is known as spiritualistic mediums who are supposed to be in touch with the departed and are capable of conveying their messages. But in reality the term mediumship has a much wider significance. It is perhaps through a peculiar trend of circumstance that we are inclined to connect this idea entirely with seances, trances, etc., but this is only a narrow and one-sided concept. Mediumship to my mind means simply instrumentality. Whenever any force, idea or thought is conveyed, whatever conveys it becomes the conveying medium. It means becoming a channel through which a power may flow unobstructed. We can become an instrument through which God Himself may express His highest and sublimest love, truth and potentiality, and also we may make ourselves a vehicle for evil forces. It all depends upon the fitness of our instrument and this implies both mind and body.

In one sense we are all mediums because we are always conveying to the world through our physical and mental vehicle what we are capable of transmitting. So do we consciously and unconsciously radiate our inherent nature which is continuously under process of composition through our cherished ideas and ideals. As air is the conductor for odors both good and noxious, similarly the mind is our most potent and efficient medium for both higher and lower influences. But even the physical body plays a tremendous part. According to its fineness, according to its purity, according to its clearness it becomes either fit or unfit for higher expression. Every one of us can become a conveying medium for spiritual forces. If we live in right rhythm, with a sense of holy consecration and love of Truth, in course of time we become so absolutely in tune with higher powers that both knowingly and unknowingly we transmit them to others.

There are spiritual personages and saintly characters who perpetually feel a definite connection with the Source of being. Plotinus defines this type by saying: "Perhaps we ought not to speak of vision; it is rather another mode of seeing; an ecstasy and simplification, an abandonment of oneself, a desire for immediate contact, a stability, a deep intention to unite oneself with what is to be seen in the sanctuary. . . . Such is the life of the gods, and of god-like and blessed men; a liberation from all earthly bonds, a life that takes no pleasure in earthly things, a flight of the alone to the Alone. In knowing God, the Spirit knows also itself. . . . to see is to become oneself the thing seen. . . . True being knows no gaps, no developments, no progress, no extension, no before or after. The One is everywhere and nowhere. Even here, a wise life is the most truly grand and beautiful thing. And yet here we see but dimly. Yonder, the vision is clear. For it gives to the seer the faculty of seeing, and the power for the higher life; the power, by living more intensely, to see better and to become what he sees."

Not only are these great souls conscious of this alliance with the Supreme Intelligence but they have made themselves over wholly to that Power,—body, mind and soul. They possess wisdom and are possessed by wisdom. They possess God and are possessed by God. But this possession by the Holy Spirit is entirely different from obsession, for one is the outcome of pure and holy living, and the other is caused very often by morbid and melancholy brooding and unclean, abnormal habits of living. For this reason we are required to live in the right rhythm. If we think unkind thoughts, if we live ignoble lives we make ourselves susceptible to evil influences and the only power to which we can open ourselves will be detrimental,—not the power of the good, not the power of the holy.

At the present time there is great interest in this phase of

psychic phenomena. People have gone mad over the idea of spirit communication through the means of seances, ouija board, automatic writing, etc. It is quite possible to come in contact with the departed as it does not require any degree of spiritual development. Some people are so constituted that they can easily make themselves receptive for psychic messages. Often these experiences instead of proving beneficial are rather disastrous. Merely departing from this physical life does not necessarily give one access to higher knowledge and power, and if therefore we in our over-credulous zeal connect ourselves with an undesirable spirit, it can be a very great hindrance to our higher development. If a man was not noble while on earth, if he did not have access to truth, if he was bound by ignorance and selfishness, do you suppose that he can suddenly become a saint, a master, a free spirit, that he can at once gain entrance to the eternal storehouse of wisdom? If he told untruth in life he will probably do likewise after death.

People sometimes drift into these things through idle curiosity. They think,—how lovely to be able to communicate with the departed! It would be very wonderful if we could communicate with some lofty soul who could give us transcendental knowledge and free us from our bondage; but through idle curiosity we make ourselves morbid and come in contact with spirits who are not pure, whose motives are not free and unselfish, and thus we may become obsessed by a power which we cannot control. There was once a poor man who conceived the idea that if he could only get command over some spirit or ghost all his miseries would cease. So he went about with eager expectancy to find some one who could give him such control. One day he came upon a certain wise sage. The poor man implored and besieged him saying, "Sire, help me to find a ghost." The sage tried to dissuade him from this foolish notion, but he was determined. Finally the wise man gave him

a magic word and told him that if he repeated it a certain number of times he would gain his heart's desire, but also he warned him of its peril.

The man went his way and repeated the magic word. At once a giant-like form appeared saying, "I am conquered by your magic; now you must keep me constantly busy else I'll kill you." Then the man said, "Cut down this forest." It was done. He asked the ghost to build him a palace; that was also instantly done. He asked for money; the money was there. But when the ghost demanded more work the man began to be frightened as he was not able to cope with his rapidity. So he ran in haste to the sage and sought his protection. He was trembling with fear as he saw the dreadful figure approaching him. The sage out of compassion showed him a dog with a curly tail and said: "Give him that curly tail to straighten out." The ghost carefully worked on it, but no sooner did he let go than it curled up again. Once more he tried; again it curled. Finally utterly exhausted he begged the man to release him from the magic charm. Unfortunately we do not all possess the readiness of wit to find the curly tail when the undesirable complications arise. We pray with our whole heart for our desires to be fulfilled, but very often the fulfillment of desires brings unexpected and unhappy results which we are not always able to avoid.

Perhaps you have lost dear ones—a son, a brother, a father, or a mother. Naturally you want to get in touch with them, but how do you know it is good for them? How do you know it is good for you? They have their work there as much as they had here. If you love them, then you must be willing to leave them free. We interfere with God's laws when we assert our own will in regard to these things and the result is not wholesome. The only kind of mediumship that is wholesome for us individually and collectively is the mediumship that

comes from opening ourselves to such influence as will make us more wise, more true, more pure, more conscious of the spiritual realities. We can do this quite naturally by living in accordance with higher laws. It is not by any artificial means that we become spiritual mediums; it is by purifying ourselves. No book or formula can give this to us; no creed or dogma can give it. It is by losing ourselves that we find it. We acquire it through complete self-abandonment.

Meditation plays a tremendous part. No evil spirit can take possession of us when we are fortified by lofty thought, by spiritual prayers, by a consciousness which is pure, definite and dynamic. When we have made of ourselves a channel through which God's power can flow constantly, then we are fortified without any calculation even. Let your light shine. Why do you make it so dim? Why do you cover it? You say, I have no light. Of course you have the light of the soul burning within you; you have the light of God within yourself. To deny it is to deny God, to deny your own life and true happiness.

We do not begin to use our natural heritage—the power of the Spirit—all that is embedded in us. Many people are unconscious of possessing it, but we can become conscious possessors of that great power, that light and life which is ours, ours because we are part of it—the Infinite. We are all His children. It is a very sweet, natural and normal consciousness for us to carry. Whatever religion we may be indentified with, this is the fundamental fact, that we are children of God. If we can face this fact in our actions and thoughts, in all our modes of living, then no evil can creep into our life and we shall be incapable of doing anything harmful. We find some people becoming so pure that they have supernormal sight; they see more than the average person. An intellectual man sees more than a man who is engrossed in the physical. He

has developed his mind, he knows how to use his brain and to scheme, yet the spiritually minded man without all these efforts sees far more clearly because of his greater power of penetration.

Physical happiness comes and goes, prosperity comes and goes; praise and blame revolve; we cannot have one without the other, but the wise do not rise and fall with all these small temporary waves of life; they have fastened their heart to something that is eternal. Sometimes it is better for us that we still these outer activities at certain intervals during our daily round. It is needful not merely from the spiritual point of view, but even from the physical. A person who is over-active sooner or later becomes nervous. He loses all his control; he accomplishes less and less and eventually he becomes a wreck. But that is not the case with one who has given himself spiritually. He who does not depend wholly on the material aspect of life naturally has greater resources to draw from. These are lessons we must learn; we must not blind ourselves to higher realities.

Every one of us would like to have a spiritual guide, a guardian angel to watch over us and protect us. These ideas are not mere fancies; there is profound truth behind them. We can have a guardian angel and also we can be haunted by an evil spirit, and we open ourselves either to the one or to the other. There are some people who become like living and moving receiving stations for high and spiritual communion. They consciously and definitely ally themselves with the Divine Source. The mystics, for instance, wipe out all self-consciousness, all littleness, all pettiness. They refuse to raise their own voice so that the voice of the Infinite may speak through them. One of our great teachers, Sri Ramakrishna, who lived in the latter part of the 19th century, was a remarkable example of this. He made himself so completely a mouth-piece

that whenever he spoke it was with the full consciousness that it was his Divine Mother (as he termed the Deity) speaking through him. He completely wiped out the idea of "I, me and mine". He never took any praise to himself when people came and offered him worship. He was always aware that he was only a little child completely dependent on his Mother, incapable of doing anything himself, but as the Divine Mother guided him, so would he act. Words of wisdom poured out of him, yet he had no book-learning whatsoever. His channel was so clear that at every moment of his existence he was directly connected with the Fountain-head and whatever flowed through him was peculiarly full of blessing and upliftment.

Such utterances are very different from the average talking and teaching, because what comes directly from the Fountain-head is soothing, refreshing, enlightening. The only way we can make ourselves a channel for the supreme Power is by purifying and cleansing ourselves inwardly. One may cleanse one's body with soap and water; one may rub and scrub and make the outer life shining, but the inner can be made fitting for spiritual manifestation only by living,—living the Truth. You say: What is Truth? You do not need any definition of Truth; no one needs it, because we are part of it, it is that which we possess, that which we know absolutely. If we want to accomplish anything we should seek our alliance with that, we should have conscious union with that.

The aim of religion is to bring spiritual reality into our daily life, to make us better instruments, better children of Divinity. This is not accomplished by belonging to a special creed, but rather by belonging to our intrinsic divine nature, because there we find absolute unity, the fullness of love, the fullness of life and the fullness of wisdom. When we descend from there we fall into confusion and division. We hear so many voices and these voices differ; but when we go to the Fountain-head we

find but one great Power permeating all, radiating all, sustaining all,—and that is our Ideal.

One way or another we are all seeking. It is a splendid thing that people have convincing proof in regard to the existence of the soul; but it does not interest me very much because I do not think the soul requires any proof. I do not need any proof from a medium to convince me of its existence; you do not need it either. There is a sight within you which will show you if you are but willing to open it in your hour of silence, in your hour of purity, in your hour of prayer. You do not need any book, or any preacher or any medium to prove to you that you are a child of God. The only thing you need is to come into direct contact with your spiritual being. That which you know indistinctly, vaguely; that which you carry within yourself without having full possession of it,—to know that definitely, to carry it definitely, is the fulfillment of life. When people come into a heritage without being aware they have inherited a fortune, it does not do them much good. The same way if we do not know our spiritual heritage, if we do not know that we are direct possessors of the Infinite, we go on weeping through life. We blind-fold ourselves and we think that we are petty and small and puny. That is the reason for all suspicion and misery. It is only when we can make ourselves direct channels of Divinity that we find unending power. Power flows through our body and through our mind,—all our faculties become quickened.

In India instead of believing in a personal devil they believe that the personal devil is already with you in the form of ego. If you begin to draw a picture of it you will see the resemblance. It is egotism that makes us intolerant, that rouses in us anger. It is the egotistic man, the man who is unjust, unloving, ugly, who causes war, who creates hideous conditions through his selfishness. When we banish the ego and establish

our definite alliance with God-head, then we live truly in a heavenly atmosphere. These are the things of the real spiritual world. We find its fulfillment in our mortal world. After we have made our contact with the Spirit, after we have made ourselves susceptible to the Spirit, open, so that it may flow through us, our material life is filled with its radiance and we do not lack for anything.

There is one question that will come. What can we do to rescue ourselves from wrong conditions? Often a person says, I am haunted by an evil influence; what can I do? Shall I fight it? Your angel, your guardian angel, will fight for you. All you need to do is to keep close to the light of the Spirit. Whenever you are aware of any defects in your nature, you can pray or meditate. If you are crushed by them, ignore them; if you find it very difficult to ignore them, ignore them more, and the best way you can ignore them is by filling yourself with wholesome thoughts,—thoughts of cheerfulness. You say, how can I make myself cheerful? As soon as you know you are a child of God it fills your whole heart with cheerfulness and radiance. As long as you feel you are a lost soul, it throws you into the abyss of despair. It is not the light of the sun that makes your day bright; it is the definite sense that you are near that infinite Power, that that Power is within you, that you have made yourself so clean and pure and fitting that it always accompanies you.

Our heart is like a mirror. Sometimes it becomes so covered with dirt and dust and all the things we accumulate on the outside that whatever it reflects is distorted. When we have cleansed it, when we have so polished it that there is not a blemish or a speck of dust anywhere, then we have a clear reflection of Truth, and that is the true spiritual mediumship. The Truth shines forth from within so clearly, so definitely that we have no more room left for doubt. And we are able

to convince others, not so much by what we may say, but by the radiance of our own life, for our life becomes the commentary of what we have found. This is my concept of spiritual mediumship, and it is a very beneficent thing to possess. A man may possess it silently, but he becomes a great power and his elevating influence is not limited to his immediate surroundings. It extends far beyond to his community, to his country, to all humanity.

WORKINGS OF THE SPIRIT

From the Letters of Isaac Penington

English Quaker Mystic. 17th Century.

O my friends and brethren in the pure life! be faithful to the Lord in returning to Him all the incomes of His Spirit; follow on in every drawing of His love, while any of the virtue of it lasts upon your spirits. Walk with Him all the day long, and wait for Him all the night season. And, in case of erring from Him, or sinning grievously against Him, be not discouraged; for He is a God of mercies, and delighteth in pardoning and forgiving much and very often. What tender mother can be more ready to forgive and embrace the child that appears broken and afflicted with her sore displeasure!

It is a wonderful thing to witness the power of God reaching to the heart and demonstrating to the soul the pure way to life, as in His sight and presence. Surely, he that partakes of this is therein favored by the Lord and ought diligently to wait for the giving up to the leadings of His Holy Spirit in everything; that so he may travel through all that is contrary to the Lord, into that nature and spirit which is of Him.

And be not careful after the flesh, but trust the Lord. What though thou art weak, and little; though thou meet with those that are wise and knowing, and almost every way able to reason

thee down; what though thou hast not wherewith to answer; yet thou knowest and hast the feeling of God's pure Truth in spirit, with a desire to have the life of it brought forth in thee, and so, to witness the change and renewings which are by His power.

O dear heart! herein thou art accepted of the Lord, and here His tender love and care will be over thee, and His mercy will daily reach to thee. Yea, thou shalt so feel the Lord to help His babe against the strength of the mighty, in the seasons of His good pleasure, as shall exceedingly turn to His praise; and so, thou shalt experience, that whom God preserves, all the gates of hell shall not be able to prevail against.

Therefore, look not out at men, or at the words and wisdom of men; but keep where thou hast felt the Lord visit thee, that He may visit thee yet again and again, every day, and be teaching thee further and further the way to his dwelling-place, and be drawing thee thither, where is righteousness, life, rest and peace forever.

The Lord keep open that heavenly eye in His children and servants, which looks over this world with the affairs and concerns thereof, to that which is immortal and invisible; where our life is hid from others, though made manifest in and felt by us from the living spring which quickens, nourisheth and refresheth.

If thou come to know God's Spirit and to receive it and feel it work in thee, and its pure light shine from the fountain and spring of life, thou wilt have a quicker sense and discerning therefrom, than can arise either from words written, or from thoughts; that is, the Lord will show thee the way whereof thou doubtest, quicker than a thought can arise in thee; and the Lord will show thee evil, in a pure sense of the new nature, quicker than thou canst think or consider of anything.

O my Friend, look not out at what stands in the way; what

if it look dreadfully as a lion, is not the Lord stronger than the mountains of prey? but look in, where the law of life is written, and the will of the Lord revealed, that thou mayest know what is the Lord's will concerning thee.

And learn but in quietness and stillness to retire to the Lord, and wait upon Him; in whom thou shalt find peace and joy, in the midst of thy trouble from the cruel and vexatious spirit of this world. So, wait to know thy work and service to the Lord every day, in thy place and station; and the Lord make thee faithful therein, and thou wilt want neither help, support, nor comfort.

Flesh should be silent before Him. Alas! what room is there for His Spirit and power, when there is such a multitude of thoughts and workings and reasonings, such a noise of flesh in many hearts and spirits. Happy is he who feels flesh silent, who comes to an end of his own willing and running, though that is a time of great distress, when the full mind is emptied and brought low; but, He that shows mercy is near, and the day of mercy is not far off to that soul. The Lord raise up that in thee, which is of Him; and so guide and order thy heart, that it may long and cry after Him, and be heard and satisfied by Him.

KNOWLEDGE

By St. Cadoc. 6th Century.

Without knowledge no power
Without knowledge no wisdom
Without knowledge no freedom
Without knowledge no beauty
Without knowledge no nobleness
Without knowledge no victory
Without knowledge no honor
Without knowledge no God
The best of attitudes is humility.

ATTAINMENT OF POWERS

By Swami Ramakrishnananda

The Scriptures say that as long as man cares for powers he can never attain salvation. Evolution means rolling out; that is the inner powers become more and more manifest. Man is made in the image of God; he possesses all the powers of God, only in a miniature form. Development means getting more and more—increasing our power. But say we have at the end of this year ten times more power than we have now; at the end of two years one hundred times more, and so on until we may have a million times more power than at the present time, still the quantity is limited and a limited or finite quantity, however great, compared to infinity, is infinitesimally small or zero. So by the development of powers we can never hope to attain to God; for powers must always remain finite while God is infinite.

Can there be any conception that is not based on the experience of the senses? No. Every finite conception pre-supposes sense perception and for that reason they are all deceiving and false. Truth is the only reality. It is the only real thing of which all other things are qualities. All things are based on this one Truth; but it is not possible to conceive the Truth, for it itself is the conceiver. All these conceptions are mere reflections of the Truth; but because they have that little reflecting light of Truth in them, we take them to be true. We can never *know* Truth, but we can *be* Truth; for the finite can never know the infinite. However, we can no doubt have some intellectual perception of what Truth is; if that were not the case, why should we be so eager to know it? To a simple mind Truth is much more conceivable and forcible than to a mind which has been given a definite shape by much reading and study.

Only a man can do a man's work and only God can do God's

work. It is foolish for us to suppose that we can work for God. We can only be channels through which He does His work. What can we do for Him when He is all-perfect? We cannot help God. It is He Who is doing everything. It is He Who makes the baby weak, but it is also He Who gives a loving mother to care for it. So whenever He creates a need, He also creates the means to satisfy it. Work means self-amelioration. The ordinary work we do chiefly benefits ourselves, and Swami Vivekananda was right when he said that the receiver should stand and permit, the giver should kneel down and give thanks that the needy man has given him an opportunity to unfold himself. This is no exaggeration. It is literally true, for what happens when you do good to another? You actually expand your own heart and grow more unselfish. But suppose there were no needy people then to help, what would happen? You would become a selfish brute.

We are all fallen from our Divine state and we need to serve others in order to lift ourselves up out of this degeneration; so we should be grateful to those whom we help for making it possible through service to raise ourselves out of this degraded state. That is the chief good that comes out of all we do for others. We make ourselves strong. We must not, however, waste any time in grieving over our shortcomings and failures. The idea that we have committed a sin is one which we should never dwell upon. The only sin is to call a man a sinner. Remember always that by our real nature we are pure, we are perfect, we are Divine. A man may mistake a rope for a snake, but any amount of imagination will not turn the rope into a snake. So we may think that we have committed a sin, but nothing can ever change our real, pure, divine nature. That remains always the same and we are always that.

This was the peculiarity of our Master, Sri Ramakrishna.

He never told us that anything was wrong. On the contrary He knew there was nothing wrong in these enjoyments of the world, but by tasting them He felt sure that His children would come to realize their worthlessness and then be satisfied only with higher enjoyments. He was not merely the protector of the good. He also was the protector of all the wrong-doers. He tolerated all sides. He was literally too pure to see iniquity. He only wanted all His children to be happy; and if one of us came with the least shadow on his face, He could not bear it and He would at once scold us.

We are like the bird on the tree about which the Upanishads tell us. The tree is full of hundreds of luscious fruits and the bird, seeing one, thinks: "Oh! if I could only taste that one, I am sure it would give me pleasure"; so he goes nearer and although he may have to thrust his head through thorns, still he takes a bite out of the fruit; but alas! he finds it very bitter. So with perhaps twenty or thirty fruits, until he is almost discouraged and is about to give up. Then he happens to taste one that is sweet. This gives him new expectation and again he starts out searching for another sweet fruit, perhaps tasting ten or twelve bitter ones before he finds one sweet one. Only when no more taste sweet to him is he ready to give up.

How has evil come into the world? A man comes to sell sugar candy—a sugar man, sugar mango, sugar doll. A little boy looks at them and says, please father buy me that bird because I believe the bird will taste sweeter, but in reality all are the same. In the same way man looks at the world and says this is good and this is bad, but as a matter of fact it is all made out of the same substance. One must get everything from inside or from Nature. Nature is God's book and blessed is the man who knows how to read it. There is a vast difference between man-made books and God-made books. The first tell only relative facts and the second tell the absolute Truth.

If we would know the Truth therefore, we must go directly to the book of Nature. God is the only existence that is real and all other existences are unrealities, behind which God exists as the reality.

PASSING OF A GREAT SOUL

Once again the hand of death has been laid upon the Ramakrishna Mission, and again it has summoned one of the most dearly beloved. On July 21st, only four months after the loss of the Swami Brahmananda, first President of the Mission, Swami Turiyananda, another disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, entered into Mahasamadhi,—the final supreme vision,—as the passing of an illumined soul is called.

The fragrance of a holy life cannot be conveyed by words, the best we can do is to indicate the facts of that life that they may hint at the spirit within. When Sri Ramakrishna gave up his physical body, he left behind him an ardent group of youthful Sannyasins or monks, young men absolutely consecrated to the ideals of renunciation and service as laid down to them by their divine Master, and all on fire to spread them abroad among men. Swami Turiyananda was one of this little company of disciples. He labored with them, endured with them and gloried with them when the great Mission of Ramakrishna was only a seed in their hearts, and he lived to see its tender healing touch laid upon the heart of the Motherland and its benign influence reach the farthest shores of the world. He was by nature endowed with the "divine properties", a rare combination of devotion and wisdom balanced by action. Indeed Sri Ramakrishna said of him at their first meeting that he was "a yogi of the type described in the Gita".

He accompanied Swami Vivekananda to the West on his second trip to America, and was left in charge of the newly established Vedanta work in San Francisco. No one could

have been better fitted than he to lay its spiritual foundations. And they were laid so quietly and unobtrusively. Perhaps his most potent influence radiated not so much from the headquarters in San Francisco as from the retreat in the hills where he spent many months surrounded by earnest and devoted hearts. These students built for him with their own hands a small log house and around this clustered their tents. Even the furniture was hand-made, being constructed out of packing boxes and barrels. The life both outer and inner was one of absolute simplicity and suggested the forest life of the early Aryan teacher and his pupils. It was the majestic calm of nature sanctified by a holy presence. None who lived there with the Swami can ever forget it. Many souls in the West are still vibrant with his influence and to this day his name is spoken with deep feeling even by those who made but a passing contact with him.

On returning to India he was greeted with the news that his adored brother sannyasin, Swami Vivekananda had been drawn back into the Master's heart. The thought that he would never see him again in this life struck very deep and in his sacred grief he went for a time into retirement. All the remainder of his life was spent in India and for the last five years he lived in the holy city of Benares. It was there that he died. His final release was not unexpected for his body had been gradually breaking, but none save the Swami himself knew that the end was so near. On hearing that Swami Brahmananda had gone, he predicted his own departure in about three months. Soon afterwards a physical trouble developed which made his words come true. Five days before the end he said: "Five days more shall I remain with you." And again on the night before, "To-morrow is the last day."

An American lady, a pupil of Swami Vivekananda writes: "I stopped off at Benares twenty-four hours to see dear Swami

Turiyananda. Alas, he died on July 21st and was like Swami Brahmananda, triumphant to the end. His bed was surrounded by loving disciples. About thirty monks had come to Benares on account of his serious illness, for to the Hindu to be at the death of a great Sadhu or Saint, is a blessing, and relays of these monks were privileged to wait upon and serve him day and night. As soon as I arrived I saw and talked to him. Such a welcome was alone worth coming for to India! Then the next day before I left, early in the morning, he sent for me. He seemed like a lion, conquering, fearless. Rousing himself from the pain he seemed to forget it and his body."

It is thus great souls bless even in dying, for true holiness can so sanctify pain and disaster as to make them seem the rarest gifts of life. Some of this blessing is conveyed to us in these lines from Swami Saradananda, Secretary of the Mission. He says: "His physical suffering was terrible for a whole month, for it was impossible to find a comfortable position to rest the body. But never have we seen anything like the way he bore all that, not only with patience and calmness but withal with joy! He would forget all his sufferings as soon as any one would speak of the Master or the Swami Vivekananda and he was heard sometimes to say, 'Who is suffering? Do I care for the body and its ailments!' On the morning of the last day he told Swami Akhandananda 'A good and blessed morning, we are Divine Mother's and the Mother is ours!' Calling all by his bedside a little before he passed away, in the afternoon he made them repeat the words 'Brahman (Absolute Being) is true, the world too is true, life, (prana) is established in truth.' Then the Swami Akhandananda chanted 'Brahman is Truth, Knowledge and Infinitude—Brahman is supreme Knowledge and Bliss' and the great soul passed away chanting those supreme words:" "No sign of pain or anguish on his face, it was filled with heavenly bliss."

REPORT

For over a year now Swami Paramananda, head of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, has given his time almost exclusively to the Boston work. He has made no extended trips either to California or abroad and has seldom been absent over a Sunday, even when on lecture tour in the Middle-West last Fall and Winter. For the past seven months he has not been away at all. As a result of his continued presence, the work in Boston has shown a marked increase. All through the quiet summer months the attendance at both the Sunday Services and at the Tuesday evening classes has been uninterruptedly large. During August, perhaps the deadest month in the year, the Chapel was always crowded, even upon holidays such as Labor Day when thousands leave the city. An unusual number of visitors have come from all parts of the country, often making special pilgrimage to the Centre, thereby strengthening its lines of connection with Cincinnati, Louisville, Rochester, Cleveland, Washington, D. C., and the states of New Hampshire and New York.

A new and lovely feature has been introduced into the Sunday evening Service,—the reading by Swami Paramananda of his own poems which are now in the hands of the printer and will be out in book form by the first of November. This has drawn many people Sunday after Sunday who would not miss the rare privilege of hearing the Swami's voice in these poems.

In the latter part of September a long cherished dream of the Centre came into actual being. A printing press was installed and was put into immediate and successful operation, turning out the month's lecture announcement for the Sunday Services and weekly classes. Although publication has always been a vital part of the Centre's activities, up to this time the technical work connected with it has been done outside.

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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The Message of the East

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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HOW TO CULTIVATE JOYOUSNESS

By Swami Paramananda

One of the most beautiful names man has ever given to the Supreme is Anandam—Bliss. The Vedic sages in India from the early days of their spiritual revelation defined the one absolute Being by a three-fold name, Sat-chit-anandam, which means Absolute Existence, Absolute Knowledge and Absolute Bliss. When man reaches his Source he obtains these three aspects of Divinity which make for complete happiness, complete wisdom and complete security in life. For in the Absolute there is no death or fear of death; in the Absolute there is no error or ignorance, for the power of evil cannot prevail against It. In the Absolute there is unbounded life and fullness of joy.

We are all directly or indirectly aiming for this one end,—to gain unbroken happiness. We may not always admit this, but if we sum up our entire philosophy, our devotion to life and its activities, we shall find that in one way or another we are reaching out for that which promises happiness. Some try to acquire happiness by unjust means, but all their efforts bring only contrary reactions. A thief robs, a murderer kills in thirst for happiness, but their misguided zeal brings upon their soul only gloom and bitterness. It seems strange that we aim for one end and obtain another. It is because we do not utilize

the God-given power of discernment. We cannot afford to pursue the wake of every selfish impulse for soon we discover that self-love is the cause of all our bondage, and self-seeking lies at the root of all our misery, and only as we learn to discard these from our heart is it filled with the unfailing light of Truth and unending bliss.

If God is Bliss, then His children must have full share in it and must always radiate that blissfulness, and if they fail to radiate it, then there must be something wrong, some condition that obstructs its free manifestation. When a person allows himself to fall under the sway of worries, depression and sadness, he loses his grasp on this fundamental principle of life. He believes more in his physical reality than he believes in the power of Truth; in fact instead of depending on the all-ness and all-pervading power of the Infinite he depends on his own limited strength of bodily life, and as a natural result of this limited consciousness he soon gets into a great tangle and not being able to liberate himself from this, he settles down into a morbid sense of failure and becomes a prey to all kinds of anxious thoughts.

Through the ages we find that the followers of a certain type of religion form the habit of an unwholesome sadness; they think they must not have any sense of buoyancy or gladness of heart, especially when they enter a place of worship. But a child of God should always have a heavenly smile upon his face. However, we cannot wear this smile unless we cultivate that joyousness within. This means that we have to go deep down to the very foundation of life. Also such joy is contagious. If we possess it we can impart it; if we have it not, pretending gives nothing to us or to any one else. A person may smile and that smile may scorn another. It must be wholehearted, it must be from within, and this smile of joy from within is our birthright and we can all manifest it.

There are some people who say, how can we be happy when this world is merged in misery? Why should you be unhappy and add to the burden of the world? Did you ever remove any one's unhappiness when merely out of sympathy you began to weep with him. If you possess the true spirit of joy, then alone can you lift the veil of despair from another.

A great principle of the Indian philosophic system is that one should always practise contentment and cheerfulness of heart, for without it the spiritual path is very arduous and one is easily discouraged. You may ask how can we be content when we have so little, we could be satisfied if we had a fortune. It is not a question of fortune or of misfortune. There are some people who are never contented. If they have a little they are discontented, if they have more they are still discontented. They always find some reason to be unhappy. This is a very serious disease of the mind; also it is infectious. They breathe an unhappy morbid atmosphere and they fill the radius of their life with unhappiness so that others feel it. You know what a tremendous drag it is in a household when one of the members is always melancholy and depressed. There is nothing one can do to help him but he can help himself.

It is the same mind which reflects both happiness and unhappiness; it is the same mind which recognizes bondage and freedom. By the power of that God-given heritage we are able to rise, to lift up our head and also by means of it we can drag ourselves down to the very depths. There is great value therefore in cultivating a sense of joyousness, of lightness of heart. It helps one physically, it helps one mentally and morally, and it lays the foundation for our spiritual life. It is not anything we can buy. Is is something that we earn. Good deeds earn one happiness and good deeds we can perform just as readily as we perform bad deeds. An unselfish act brings one happiness at the time and also it leaves the flavor of happi-

ness; the fragrance of it lingers long after the act, but it must come from within one's own soul.

There is a beautiful little incident in connection with the Buddha's life. Once when he was wandering as a mendicant he came to a house. A servant was cutting the grass in the meadows nearby. When the servant saw this holy figure approaching he knew that he came for alms, so he ran to the house and begged for his share of the food. It was given. Returning to the Buddha he offered it all to him without thinking of himself, and the Buddha blessed him. The daughter of the household, witnessing his act said, "That is well done, Amabhara thou hast earned merit." "Indeed," the man replied, "I feel full of happiness because of it." When the master of the house heard of this he said: "Won't you share your merit with me?" The servant went to the Buddha and asked: "May I share my bliss with my master?" In reply the Buddha told him a parable. He said: "Once there was a village with hundreds of houses but with only one light. All the villagers came and lighted their lamps and torches from it, but although that one light gave birth to many lights and made the village brighter, it was none the poorer. Give thy merit then to another. Thou mayest give without losing." Amabhara returned to his master and said to him: "I gladly share my merit with you." His master offered him a sum of money in return but Amabhara replied, "Not so, my lord, if I accept your money it would be selling my share. Bliss cannot be sold."

Those who have found their joy of God within are not reluctant to share with others. It is only those who have not found their inherent treasure who rob and cheat and plan and scheme that they may have for themselves; but they never find anything because that is not the way to happiness. How often we see a man of untold wealth in such depths of misery that sometimes he commits suicide. It is not money that makes for

happiness, not material possession, but the quality of mind. A person may be buoyant, happy, exalted, full of usefulness to his community and yet have nothing, while another who has much and can easily lend a hand to his fellow-beings does not, but thinks he ought to have more and is filled with dissatisfaction. We do not have to make a study of philosophy or religion to understand this; we see it every day before our very eyes, and yet we do not learn because we are led by the thirst for the external. It does not give us what we really seek, but nevertheless every individual is seeking, is reaching out, nor can he stop until he finds his life's ideal.

If we have found access to that light which can illumine our heart, which can destroy our darkness and heaviness, then we give, just like that parable. Others may come and light their torch and their candle and their lamp, and yet we lose nothing by it. Even though we may perceive many things, even though we may use high-sounding words of charity and giving, our gift is very meagre. We are always calculating what we may get from it. But a lover of God, a knower of Truth, he does not calculate because he has reached the inexhaustible Source. God is Bliss. When a man finds Him all his miseries vanish, and until he has found Him he cannot get away from misery. When we approach that light, darkness departs, because the nature of light is to dispel darkness. The same way when we reach the universal Spirit—the heart of Truth—all our burdens fall away.

You say, how may we attain this? We have to attain it gradually. We have allowed our mind to become saturated with all kinds of worldly thoughts and feelings, selfish thoughts and desires. If we once more want to implant something high and holy, we must do so with patience and perseverance. Whenever any one, even in a small measure, finds that he has within himself something higher, greater and more satisfying

than all that the outside world can give him, will he not then be freed from all feverish unrest and grow quiet and serene-hearted? Will he not add to his own happiness and to the happiness of his household, his friends, and his fellow-beings? There are those who even in the midst of storm and turbulence, maintain their equilibrium. This cheerfulness is not mere pretence. They have found the right value of life because they no longer live on the surface. People who live altogether on the surface have ups and downs. It is unfortunate that we depend so wholly on the exterior. Our outer life and experience would be far more rich and effective if we always tried to draw from our spiritual resources.

This life gives us countless avenues through which we can earn our happiness and share it with our fellow-beings, and also it has perplexities and complexities by which we may mar our happiness, yet all we do when misfortune comes is to blame others and say,—I would be happy, I would have great power, I would be successful if only other people did not interfere with me. Spiritual joy is unconditioned; it is not dependent on any one, on what others may say or do. No one has any power to mar our inner happiness once we have found it. There is no one who has any access to it. In fact we should not allow any one to have access. It is the place of Divinity. The altars and sanctuaries which the religions have evolved according to their different concepts are but the outer forms and symbols of that which every one should carry within himself. Each living being should have an altar in his heart where he can see the face of the Divine,—a secluded corner which no turbulence can reach. You say, how can we do this when we are so busy? We have to think of our bread and butter, our families, our obligations. No one is asking you to refrain from thinking of these things. You may think of them, but it will bring a sense of satisfaction into your life and you will

look after your duties with greater efficiency if you have the higher guidance. There is no mortal who is self-sufficient, but this does not mean that a person is always dependent on others. One must find joy within. There are certain people who always have to draw on somebody else for their recreation, their happiness, their strength. They cannot be left alone one single moment; they feel weighted by life. We must never allow ourselves to fall into a state in which we are not capable of taking care of ourselves. We should be glad when circumstances offer us opportunities for aloneness, that we may reflect silently deep down within our own soul and cultivate the love of high ideals.

We can be a blessing and also we can be a curse to ourselves and to others. It is not what a man says, but what he is. If he has that great love in his heart, if he has that sense of rest and recreation within, which can only come with spiritual upliftment, he radiates it just like a flower which gives its fragrance regardless of who receives it. Such a person, whether he is travelling or at home, walking or sitting, talking or silent, is imparting something vital and valuable to those around him. His very being, his very expression inspires one, electrifies one with hope, inspiration and courage. Another person who has shut his door to these blessings, finds much unhappiness in his own soul and he invariably and involuntarily thrusts his gloom and his burden upon others. These are facts we have to cope with in every day existence and real spiritual teaching is to help us lift the burden from our daily life. As we learn to do this we build a heaven for ourselves, and as we always share our possessions, we find that we are also building a heaven for others. Therefore no matter what our vocation is, no matter how we are placed, we must try to lift up our head, not with aggressiveness and arrogance but with a sense of spiritual dependence.

Behind us there is the Infinite; before us there is the Infinite; all about us there is the Infinite and we live, move and have our being in that Infinite Life. We cannot trust in the Divine and be faint-hearted at the same time. The nature of misfortune is to crush, but the spiritually minded transform calamity into blessing and find their exaltation in crucifixion, danger and difficulty. They have found the secret of life. It is not the opportunities we have but how we utilize them,—the secret lies in that. If we have found our access to Divinity, then our whole life must testify to it. In the commonest word that we may utter, in the most ordinary task that we perform,—everywhere do we carry that great Spirit with us because He is present everywhere from the atom to the Infinite. He is the Light, the Source of all happiness and when we do not have happiness it means that we do not possess Him consciously. One of the attributes of all spiritual teachers is their great joyousness, their cheerfulness under all circumstances. "The Knower of Truth is ever fearless and is ever full of bliss" say the Upanishads. The Knower of Truth is indeed full of bliss and free from all fear, not an aggressive fearlessness, but a fearlessness which is undaunted because there is no selfishness behind it. There is absolute trust in the Divine.

When we have found our home in Truth we have a true home to which we can welcome all, our friends and fellow-beings, and we can relieve them from their sadness and gloom. When we live in the higher life we can always adjust lower conditions. In the morning when we rise our day need not appear gloomy because the sun is not shining on the horizon, but if we are not able to find our spiritual connection, then indeed is it a gloomy day. If we learn to carry that unfailing light always with us on all occasions, we shall never fail to find abundant life and joy.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Man is born in this world with two tendencies,—the tendency towards liberation and the tendency towards world and bondage. When born, both tendencies are in equilibrium like the scales of a balance. The world soon places its enjoyments and pleasures on one scale, and the spirit its attractions on the other. If the mind chooses the world, the worldly scale becomes heavy and gravitates towards the earth. But if it chooses the spirit, the spiritual scale rises towards God.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

If thou didst but know the pleasure of abandoning pleasure thou wouldst never more talk about the pleasures of sense.—*The Dabistan.*

Let the oxen work merrily; let the men work merrily; let the plough move on merrily. Fasten the traces merrily, ply the goad merrily.

Let the ploughshares turn up the sod merrily, let the men follow the oxen merrily. May Parjanya moisten the earth with sweet rains. O Soma bestow on us happiness.—*Rig-Veda—Hymn dedicated to the Lord of the Field.*

I, Lord, went wandering like a strayed sheep, seeking Thee with anxious reasoning without, whilst Thou wast within me; I wearied myself much in looking for Thee without, and yet Thou hast Thy habitation within me, if I long and breathe after Thee. I went round the streets and places of the city of this world, seeking Thee, and found Thee not; because in vain I sought without for Him who was within myself.—*St. Austin.*

If you do not wish for His Kingdom, don't pray for it. But if you do, you must do more than pray for it; you must work for it.—*John Ruskin.*

Remember that you are an actor in a drama, of such a kind as the author pleases to make it. If short, of a short one; if long, of a long one. If it be His pleasure, you should act a poor man, a cripple, a governor, or a private person, see that you act it naturally. For this is your business, to act well the character assigned you; to choose it is another's.

If you ever happen to turn your attention to externals, so as to wish to please any one, be assured that you have ruined your scheme of life. Be contented then in everything with being a philosopher; and if you wish to be thought so likewise by any one, appear so to yourself, and it will suffice you.—*Epictetus.*

We can't choose happiness either for ourselves or for another; we can't tell where that will lie. We can only choose whether we will indulge ourselves in the present moment, or whether we will renounce that, for the sake of obeying the Divine voice within us, for the sake of being true to all the motives that sanctify our lives. I know this belief is hard; it has slipped away from me again and again; but I have felt that if I let it go forever, I should have no light through the darkness of this life.—*George Eliot.*

He, whose heart is unattached to external contacts of the senses, realizes the happiness that is in the Self; being united with Brahman by meditation, he attains to eternal bliss.

The enjoyments which are born through contact with sense-objects are ever generators of misery; they are with beginning and end. The wise do not seek pleasure in them.

He whose joy is within, whose pleasure is within, and whose light is within, that Yogi, being well-established in Brahman, attains to absolute freedom.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

CONVERSE WITH GOD

By Fenelon. 17th Century.

You do not yet know the attractive, happy side of religion. You see what it takes away, but you do not see what it gives: you exaggerate its sacrifices without perceiving its consolations. No indeed, it leaves no void in the heart; it will only draw you to that which you will learn to prefer to all that has so long enthralled you. If the world never exacted anything but what your heart could accept lovingly, would it not be a better master than it is? But God will take heed for you, wait for you, prepare you, give you the will before He asks you to act. He loves you better than you know how to love yourself. He pursues you in mercy, and disturbs your heart in order to conquer it.

What does He ask of you, save to be happy? Have you not realized that one is happy in loving Him? Have you not felt that there is no other real happiness, whatever excitement may be found in sensual pleasures, apart from Him? Be cheerful, as one who has found his real treasure and has no further need of anything. Take the day as it comes, without anxiety; each day, as our Lord tells us, will "take care for the things of itself." Each day brings its own grace and help as well as its troubles and temptations. Talk freely with God; be simple as a child with Him. The more your will is dead to all the vain longings and unholy pleasures of the world, the more you will be alive to that innocent, childlike happiness which is far beyond the most gorgeous scenes vainly devised by the great ones of this world for their satisfaction. How weary and bored they are, poor people, amid their splendour! You will laugh at their folly, miscalled wisdom, in your true wisdom, which asks naught save God, and can enter in all simplicity into the joy of the Holy Spirit.

A man becomes lifeless and without heart directly that he is

without the indescribable something which sustains, upholds, renews him hour by hour. All that which the mad lovers of this world say in their frenzy is literally true after a fashion. To be without love is not to live, and to love feebly is rather waste than growth. God made us to live through Him and His love. We were born to be fed and consumed by that love, like as a torch is wasted while it gives forth light. This is the blessed flame of life which God has kindled in the bottom of our heart; all other life is mere death. We must love.

What will you love? This body of clay which fetters our reason, and subjects the soul to present sickness and approaching death? What then? Will you love nothing? Will you drag on a lifeless existence rather than love God Who loves you, Who seeks your love, and would have you to be wholly His, only that He may give Himself wholly to you? Do you fear that you should lack aught, possessing such a treasure? Do you not believe that the Infinite God can fill and satisfy your heart? Put not your trust in yourself or in anything created; it is all a mere nothing, which can never satisfy the heart of man, made as it is for God. But never mistrust Him Who contains every good thing in Himself, in order to bring you forcibly back to Himself.

Make it your habit to speak with God, not of the set thoughts you work out, but of the warm feelings with which your heart is filled. If you feel His Presence, and are kindled by His love, tell Him so; thank Him for drawing a soul so unworthy of His love. At such times of sensible sweetness you will find no difficulty in pouring out your heart. But what, you will ask, are you to say in seasons of dryness, coldness and weariness? Still say what rises in your heart. Tell God that you cannot feel His love, that you are empty and cold, that He wearies you, that His Presence does not move you, that you would fain leave Him for the idlest pleasures, that you will

never be easy till you are far from Him and full of self. Tell Him all that you know is wrong in you. Do you ask what to say to Him? Is this not subject-matter for plenty to say? While you are telling Him your troubles you are praying Him to cure them.

There is no need to say much to God. One often does not talk much to a friend whom one is delighted to see; one enjoys looking at him, and one says some few words which are purely matter of feeling. The mind has little or nothing to do with it; one says the same thing over and over again. One does not so much seek interchange of thought as rest and communion of heart with one's friend. Even so it should be with God, Who vouchsafes to be our tenderest, most cordial, most familiar Friend. . . But with respect to God, a word, a sigh, a thought, a feeling, says all. Nor is it needful to be always in a state of excitement and emotion; often a very dry, bare, insipid, lifeless goodwill may be most acceptable in God's sight. After all, we must be content to offer Him His own gifts: a kindled heart, if He kindles it; or a heart faithful and steadfast amid dryness, when He denies it warmth and sensible sweetness.

ECSTASY

By St. John of the Cross

Rapt in oblivion, the soul
Doth in a single moment learn
More than the busy brain and sense,
With all their toil, could ever learn.

Mirrored within its God, it views
To-day, to-morrow, and the past,
And faith sees here in time the things
That through eternity shall last.

CONTENTMENT

Reflections of Marcus Aurelius

Wilt thou then, my soul, never be good and simple and one and naked, more manifest than the body which surrounds thee? Wilt thou never enjoy an affectionate and contented disposition? Wilt thou never be full and without a want of any kind, longing for nothing more, nor desiring anything, either animate or inanimate, for the enjoyment of pleasures? Nor yet desiring time wherein thou shalt have longer enjoyment, or place, or pleasant climate, or society of men with whom thou mayst live in harmony? But wilt thou be satisfied with thy present condition and pleased with all that is about thee; and wilt thou convince thyself that thou hast everything and that it comes from the gods; that everything is well for thee and will be well, whatever shall please them and whatever they shall give for the conservation of the perfect living being, the good and just and beautiful, which generates and holds together all things? Wilt thou never be such that thou shalt so dwell in community with gods and men as neither to find fault with them at all, nor to be condemned by them?

Whether the universe is atoms or Nature, let this first be established, that I am a part of the whole which is governed by Nature; next, I am in a manner intimately related to the parts which are the same kind with myself. For remembering this, inasmuch as I am a part, I shall be discontented with none of the things which are assigned to me out of the whole; for nothing is injurious to the part if it is for the advantage of the whole. For the whole contains nothing which is not for its advantage; and all natures indeed have this common principle; but the nature of the universe has this principle besides, that it cannot be compelled even by any external cause to generate anything harmful to itself. By remembering, then, that I am a part of such a whole, I shall be content with everything that happens.

LIMITING ADJUNCT OF MIND

Extract from Conversation by Swami Vivekananda

Man is man because qualified by the limiting adjunct of mind. With the mind he has to understand and grasp everything and therefore whatever he thinks must be limited by the mind. To argue from the analogy of his own personality, the personality of *Ishvara* (God) is the natural way of man. Man can only think of his ideal as a human being. When buffeted by sorrows in this world of disease and death, he is driven to desperation and helplessness; then he longs for a refuge, relying on whom he may feel safe. But where is that refuge to be found? The Self-existent, omnipresent *Atman* is the only Refuge.

At first man does not see this. He comes to know it when discrimination and dispassion arise in the course of meditation and spiritual practice. But in whatever way one may progress on the path of spirituality, one is unconsciously awakening the *Brahman* (the Supreme) within him. The means, however, may be different in different cases. Those who have faith in the Personal God, have to perform spiritual practices, relying on and holding to that idea. If there is sincerity, from that will come the awakening of the lion of *Brahman* within. *Brahmajnana* (knowledge of *Brahman*) is the one goal of *Jivas* (individual souls); the various ideas regarding it are the various paths to it. Although the real nature of *Jiva* is the *Brahman*, still so long as he has identification with the qualifying adjunct of mind he suffers from doubts and difficulties, pleasure and pain. But every one, from the *Brahma* (the Creator) to a blade of grass, is advancing towards the realization of his real nature. Obtaining human birth, when the desire for freedom becomes very strong and is combined with the grace of a person of realization, then man's desire for *Atmajnana* (self-knowledge) becomes very powerful; otherwise the mind of men, given to

desire for wealth and lust, never inclines that way. He who has the desire in his mind to attain wealth, fame, and to be bound up within the narrow circle of life, how will the search for the knowledge of *Brahman* arise in him? He who is prepared to renounce all, who is calm, steady, balanced and awake to Reality in this strong current of duality—good and bad, happiness and misery—such a man endeavours to attain to Self-knowledge. He alone by the might of his own power tears asunder the net of the world and breaking the barriers of Maya, emerges like a mighty lion.

Always ponder that this body is only an inert instrument. The self-existent *Purusha* within is your real nature. The adjunct of mind is His first and subtle covering, this body is His gross covering. The unbroken, changeless, self-effulgent *Purusha* is lying hidden under these veils; for this reason your real nature is unknown to you. The mind now directed towards the senses has to be turned within. The body is gross; it dies and dissolves in the five elements. The bundle of *Samskaras* or mental impressions which make up the mind does not die soon. It remains for sometime in seed-form and then sprouts and grows into a tree; then obtaining a physical body, it goes round the wheel of birth and death until Self-knowledge arises. Therefore do I say that by meditation and practice and by the power of philosophical discrimination plunge this mind in the ocean of Absolute Existence and Bliss.

Will you sit and wait for this? At once set to work digging the channel which will convey the waters of spirituality to your life. Sri Ramakrishna used to urge the giving up of all lukewarmness, as in such thoughts that religion will come gradually and there is no hurry for it. When real thirst has come, can a man sit idle? Does he not run about searching for water? Because your thirst for spirituality has not come, therefore you are sitting idle. The desire for knowledge has not become

strong; for that reason you are living absorbed in the little thoughts of household life. The end and the means are all in your own hands, I can only stimulate your desire for knowledge

DIVINE COMMUNION

From the Maxims of Brother Lawrence

What offering is there more acceptable to God than thus throughout the day to quit the things of outward sense, and to withdraw to worship Him within the secret places of the soul? Besides by so doing we destroy the love of self, which can subsist only among the things of sense, and of which these times of quiet retirement with God rids us well-nigh unconsciously.

In very truth we can render to God no greater or more signal proofs of our trust and faithfulness, than by thus turning from things created to find our joy, though for a single moment, in the Creator. Yet, think not that I counsel you to disregard completely and for ever the outward things that are around us. That is impossible. Prudence, the mother of the virtues, must be your guide. Yet, I am confident, it is a common error among religious persons, to neglect this practice of ceasing for a time that, which they are engaged upon, to worship God in the depth of their soul, and to enjoy the peace of brief communion with Him.

Great would be our surprise, if we but knew what converse the soul holds at these times with God, who seems to so delight in this communion, that to the soul, which would fain abide ever with Him, He bestows favours past numbering; and as if He dreaded lest the soul should turn again to things of earth, He provides for it abundantly, so that the soul finds in faith a nourishment divine, a joy that has no measure, beyond its utmost thought and desires; and this without a single effort on its part but simple consent.

THE CONQUERING SWAN

Rendered from the Mahabharata

There lived on the other side of the ocean a Vaisya possessed of wealth and grain and a good heart. He had many sons whom he loved and he was kind to all creatures. These well-behaved young children of the Vaisya were accustomed to give the remains of their food to a crow that lived in the neighbourhood, so that he fared well on curds and milk and sugared milk with rice and honey and butter. Thus fed, he grew arrogant and came to look down upon all birds that were equal to him and even upon those that were his superiors.

Now it chanced that certain swans of cheerful heart and great speed came to that side of the ocean. The Vaisya boys beholding them, urged on the crow. "O ranger of the skies," they cried, "thou art superior to all winged creatures!" Hearing these ignorant words the crow, swollen with conceit and folly, believed them. Proud of the refuse upon which he fed, he alighted in the midst of those kingly birds of tireless wing and challenged their leader to compete in flight. The assembled swans began to laugh and one replied, "We are swans, having our abode on the holy lake Manasa in the eternal snows. We traverse the whole earth and none can out-distance us. Being as thou art, only a crow, how canst thou, O fool, challenge a swan? Tell us, O crow, how shalt thou fly with us?"

The boastful crow, repeatedly finding fault with the words of the swan, at last gave this answer: "I shall without doubt fly, displaying a hundred and one different motions,—rising up and swooping down and whirling around and coursing straight and proceeding gently and performing diverse courses up and down in a slanting direction. I shall presently rise into the sky. Point out duly, ye swans, by which of these motions I shall course with you through supportless space." "O thou of red eyes," answered the swan, "fly thou in any kind of manner

that thou likest. I shall, however, fly according to that one motion known to all birds, for I do not, O crow, know any other."

Then those two, the swan and the crow, rose into the sky, challenging each other. They began to soar and alight repeatedly, coming down and rising up from tree-tops and the surface of the earth till the crows were filled with great joy and began to caw loudly. The swans also laughed in mockery, uttering many remarks disagreeable to the crows. The swan, however, with that one kind of slow movement with which he was familiar, began to traverse the skies and for a moment seemed to yield to the crow. "The swan is falling behind!" screamed the crows. At this, the soaring swan flew westward with great velocity towards the ocean. Then fear entered the heart of the crow. He became almost senseless when he saw no island or trees whereon to perch when he grew tired. For what is a crow to the ocean? Its waters are as limitless as space.

The swan, having in a moment covered a great distance, looked back at the crow, and though able to leave him far behind, would not do so. Out of compassion he waited for him. Completely exhausted by his flight, the crow struggled to come up to the swan, who desirous of rescuing him asked, "Why dost thou repeatedly touch the water with thy wings and beak? What is the name of this new kind of flight that thou art practising?" Sinking with fatigue the crow made answer: "We are only crows. We wander hither and thither crying *caw, caw!* O swan, I see no limit to this watery expanse. Without thy aid I am surely lost,—save me!"

Seeing him at the point of death the swan spoke with pitiful heart: "Thou that wouldst fly in a hundred different courses, thou that art superior to me,—alas, why then art thou tired and fallen on the waters?" With his *caw, caw!* ever growing

feebler, drenched by the waves, repulsive to look at and trembling with fear, the weeping crow replied: "Proud of the leavings on which I fed, I regarded myself as thy equal and looked down upon all other birds. I now, however, place my life-breath in thy hands. Take me, O swan, to the shores of some island and I will cast off all pride and arrogance. Never again will I scorn another." Without a word, the swan took the crow upon his snowy back and quickly carried him to that island from which they had flown. Placing him on dry land he comforted him and then, fleet as the mind, soared into those lofty regions which were his home. But the crow, conquered by the swan, henceforth lived near the earth, a life of humility and peace.

PRAYER OF THE CHILD-SAINT DHRUVA

Translated from the Sanskrit of the Vishnu-Purana

O God, I am only a little boy, how can I sing Thy glory, Whom even the great sages, learned in the eternal Vedas, have not been able to know fully? My heart is filled with devotion to Thee, O Sovereign Lord! Do Thou grant me such understanding that I may be able to lay my humble praise and adoration at Thy Feet.

Thou abidest in all, Thou art all. Thou assumest all forms. All are from Thee. Thou art the Soul of all. Glory unto Thee, Lord of all beings.

As Thou art the Soul of all, the Lord of all, the Origin of all, what can I say unto Thee Who knowest already the innermost thoughts of my mind, since Thou abidest in the heart of every living being?

Thou knowest all creatures and their desires; Thou, Who art the Soul of their soul, the Lord of creation.

O Supreme Ruler of the universe, by Thy Grace has my prayer been heard of Thee. Fully hast Thou blessed me, since Thou hast revealed Thyself unto me. All Glory be unto Thee, Eternal Lord of all.

SONGS OF NATURE

By Swami Paramananda

(Reprinted from "Soul's Secret Door")

Coming of the Morn

How lovely and fragrant is the coming of the morn!
How tenderly it wakens the Lord of day to His dawn!
How sweetly it sings its heralding!
How quietly it opens the mansion of its King!
How gently it rouses the flowers from their night's repose!
My soul delights at the coming of the morn;
My heart sings at the approach of dawn.

Awake Brother

The tree-tops are glistening with beaming smile as they are lightly touched by rays of the rising sun.
They rose early to bathe in the pool of sweet dew-drops,
And awaited eagerly to pay homage to their Lord.
Now they are greeting all the early risers with refreshed spirit of joy.
O awake, brother! Linger thou no more!
Come and see this newness and freshness of love, life and joy!

Happy Chorus

A choir of sweet voices awoke me from my dreaming.
It was the hymn of praise of the birds
To Sun, the Lord of Light.
They sang their heart's thanksgiving
For their night's rest and safe-keeping.

SOUL'S SECRET DOOR

Review by K. F. Sherwood

When we heard that the Nobel prize had been awarded to Rabindranath Tagore, a native of that far away land, India, the Western world awoke to a new idea. The poems were widely read and appreciated and when later "The Songs of Kabir" came to our notice we opened our eyes and wondered. Now we have a new volume of exquisite verse from the hand also of a Hindu, one in our very midst,—Swami Paramananda, the head of The Vedanta Centre, which he established in Boston in 1908 for the spread of Vedic ideals and which has grown to proportions undreamed of at that time. The poetic tendency of the Swami's lectures and writings has been frequently remarked upon, but this outpouring of deep devotional verse is something which has come within the last six months. The present volume—"Soul's Secret Door"—just published, containing seventy-two poems worthy to be ranked with the best of its predecessors, was completed within the short interval of ten weeks.

When one reads these poems the direct appeal to one's own deeper nature and the uplift that comes with the reading are a proof of the inspirational quality of the verses themselves. Following the modern form—the *vers libre*—discarding the obligation to rhyme considered necessary in previous periods, it links the present with the distant past when great thought in devotional lines gave us epics and lyrics which time has never dimmed.

To speak of special numbers in the present volume is difficult. Each one sounds a peculiar note and the variety of the subjects is almost equal to the number of poems, while through them all is the undercurrent of deep understanding which unites them. When we read "Wouldst Thou dwell in this house of mine, O Thou King of the great universe?" how our hearts

expand! And then how the words, "Brother, thy load is heavy and thou art weary," and all that follows puts us in touch with our fellow-beings and the suffering of the world, while in "Soul's Physician" when we read, "My life's wounds are healed at Thy touch" we feel a peculiarly human sympathy. How gently we are rebuked when told "Do not touch the altar flowers with unwashed hands," a rebuke to our lack of reverence, but given only with the remedy "Bathe thyself in the water of life, The earth water cannot cleanse thy stain."

In that exhortation to the ego to depart, "Come thou no more into this house of mine, Nor do thou bring thy companions" there is no uncertain language, while in "the Cave of My Heart" and in "My Lowly Cottage," The Wondrous Lover who is to take its place is offered a retreat and a dwelling. In contrast to these, a differentiation rather, we have the Nature Songs, putting us in touch with the beauty around us, the trees, the flowers, day-time and night. What more exquisite than the words "How lovely and fragrant is the coming of the morn!" and in the "Spirit of Rose": "Thy sweet perfume hath spoken to my soul its language of love." In the "Welcoming Host" we feel the true spirit of the mighty tree: "Motionless tree, speaking its welcome with a living tongue to the tired birds at nightfall, offering them shelter." One of the most beautiful in the collection is "Thy Holy Lamp." It is a complete picture of the life of a spiritual teacher and one can see him standing patiently waiting to have his teaching recognized. How one pities him when he says: "My heart grew anxious and I called aloud." Knowing the value of the holy lamp which he holds, again he says: "O unhappy fate that leads the weary travellers from light to dark." Not a word too much; no verbiage; each poem is complete in its idea and form and expression, a second reading giving one a deeper sense of its meaning than the first.

The most lofty heights are reached perhaps in the "Dedication" and "Inspiration". In the former we have the spirit of consecration of the author when he says, "To Thee Whose holy hand kindled my heart with this fire of love, I consecrate my soul's outpouring," and in the latter, "The Hymn of Adoration" is voiced complete comprehension of what inspiration is: "Thou art the enchantment of song, Rhapsody of rhyme, Intoxication of ecstasy!"

In all there is that spirit of universality, neither East nor West, neither Hindu nor Christian, neither "Jew nor Greek", but an outpouring of that which underlies them all and which all are seeking. So we have a volume of seventy-two poems rich in ideas, clothed in perfect language and uplifting to the soul. Surely such poems come from no other source than that whence comes all true inspiration. The world of letters has had an addition that is really valuable, which is not only a gem of literature, but contains a message for many hearts.

RELIEF WORK IN BENGAL

Inspiring reports of the relief work of the Ramakrishna Mission have reached us. A letter from one of the workers gives a vivid picture of its activities during a recent flood in Eastern Bengal: "The distress of flooded areas cannot be described; homeless, helpless, moneyless, foodless are the villagers! They have lost their everything. Many of them are suffering now with fever and other maladies so you can imagine their distress. The Ramakrishna Mission has opened six or seven relief centres. They are rebuilding the houses and supplying the inhabitants of the afflicted area with rice, clothes, money and all other necessaries." The Mission workers not infrequently swim through the flood to carry aid to those who are cut off by the waters. According to a recent traveller from India, in every disaster they are the first to come and the last to go. Any contributions sent to the Vedanta Centre of Boston will be thankfully received.

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

The Message of the East

DECEMBER, 1922

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By

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

Published monthly except in August and September

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CHRISTMAS REFLECTION

At this holy season as I reflect on the import and significance of the Christmas feast, my mind pictures the Christ of the East, the incarnate spirit of love and wisdom radiating divine majesty in human flesh, a messenger of unfailing light shedding its beneficence upon all, withholding its blessing from none. It is this universal spirit of Divinity who loves without hate. Can we not for a moment forget our differences of belief and creed and other small affairs of human life and think of that One who loves without hate? Can we not by reflecting on the great examples of divine compassion forgive our transgressors? Before we are swept by the outer feasting of Christmas, let us bring to the holy Christ-child our first offering of a pure, loving and gladdened heart.—*Paramananda.*

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Sacrifice to this or sacrifice to that god, each god is but His manifestation, for He is all gods.

Lord of the Universe, glory to Thee! Thou art the Self of all, Thou art the maker of all, the enjoyer of all; Thou art all life, and the lord of all pleasure and joy. Glory to Thee, the tranquil, the deeply hidden, the incomprehensible, the immeasurable, without beginning and without end.—*Upanishads*

O Truth who art Eternity! And Love who art Truth! And Eternity who art Love! Thou art my God, to Thee do I sigh night and day. When I first knew Thee, Thou liftedst me up, that I might see there was somewhat for me to see, and that I was not yet such as to see. And Thou streaming forth Thy beams of light upon me most strongly, didst beat back the weakness of my sight, and I trembled with love and awe.—*St. Augustine.*

God is a kind Father. He sets us all in the places where He wishes us to be employed; and that employment is truly "our Father's business." He chooses work for every creature which will be delightful to them, if they do it simply and humbly. He gives us always strength enough, and sense enough, for what He wants us to do; if we either tire ourselves or puzzle ourselves, it is our own fault. And we may always be sure, whatever we are doing, that we cannot be pleasing Him, if we are not happy ourselves.—*Ruskin.*

To whatever worlds He carries our souls when they shall pass out of these imprisoning bodies, in those worlds these souls of ours shall find themselves part of the same great Temple; for it belongs not to this earth alone. There can be no end of the universe where God is, to which that growing Temple does not reach,—the Temple of a creation to be

wrought at last into a perfect utterance of God by a perfect obedience to God.—*Phillips Brooks.*

In whatever way men worship Me, in the same way I fulfill their desires. In every way men follow My path.

Fill thy mind with Me, be thou My devotee, worship Me and bow down to Me; thus, steadfastly uniting thy heart with Me alone and regarding Me as thy Supreme Goal, thou shalt come unto Me.

I am the Origin of all, everything evolves from Me. Knowing this, the wise worship Me with loving ecstasy.

With their heart fixed on Me, with their life absorbed in Me, mutually enlightening one another, and perpetually singing My glory, they are contented and rejoiced.

Out of pure compassion for them, I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy the darkness born of ignorance, by the effulgent light of wisdom.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.—*Jesus the Christ.*

To love and serve all men is to delight in God.—*Mencius.*

I am a man, and nothing that concerns human beings is indifferent to me.—*Terence.*

The universe is but one great city, full of beloved ones, divine and human, by nature endeared to each other.—*Epictetus.*

CHRIST OF THE EAST

By Swami Paramananda

As we stand on the watch-tower of life and observe the upgrade and down-grade of human destiny, we are at once struck forcibly what an impelling power religion holds over human life and what influence it exerts on civilization. On one hand nothing is more potent than religion to unite human lives, and on the other hand nothing has greater power to divide the human family into separate groups. What is the cause of this dual aspect of religion? Religion itself, in its wide sense, is not dual. Its aim and objective are always the same, but our acceptance and application of what we call our particular religion creates endless diversity. It is due to this multiplicity of non-essentials that we are separated into so many distinct groups. It will not be necessary for me to seek far to illustrate this, for here in Christendom there are ample examples to be found through its varied expression of Christian denominations. Do they all follow the path of Christ? They all claim to do so. Yet keen observation and scrutiny will show us that they have little connection with one another except in name.

Ritual and dogma do not make religion, though religion sometimes finds these useful in its practical application. And yet what grip dogma has upon most religious creeds. Perhaps it is due to this that we find greater division than unity even in the same religion. When one wants to learn of Christ one's natural inclination is to go to the institution which bears His name. But how difficult it is! Some represent Christ as a militant aggressor, some as a social reformer, some as an intolerant leader, and still others, according to their special prejudice. There arises even a greater difficulty when we try to find a point of contact between the personality of Jesus of Nazareth and those who claim to represent Him. So if we are earnestly seeking to solve this problem, we have no small difficulties to overcome.

Let me draw before you a picture of the Christ as He is conceived in the soul of the East. The mind of the Easterns conceive Him as a messenger of light. They clothe Him with robe of gentleness, bearing majestic by divine right; they picture Him as the incarnate Spirit of love and divine loveliness,—lowly of heart, mighty of Spirit, Brother, Friend and Saviour of man! You may say these very attributes are also applied by the Christians. What is the difference? There is one very great and vital difference. Orthodox Christianity exalts Christ to the exclusion of all other divine manifestations, while the Eastern soul receives Him as the cosmic Light, blending its harmony with both past and present. Whichever concept we hold will have a marked influence upon our life and destiny. For the one invariably works for the destruction of what is not its own and the other for the preservation and assimilation of what may not seem at first sight to be its own. The one holds to the dogmatic Christ, the creed-bound Christ of organization and institution; the other looks to that Christ Who is the Soul of Divinity, Who cannot be partitioned off any more than we can partition off the infinite sky. If the East feels any rebellion, it is against dogmatic Christianity.

If you were to ask me, are you a Christian? I should say no. If you were to ask me, are you a Buddhist? I should again say no, and yet I can say sincerely from my heart that I am a devout follower of both these ideals, and to me there is no difference between them. All great faiths are the expression of the one great cosmic Spirit coming down to man to show him his relationship with the Divine. The difficulty comes when we fail to bring these ideals into our life, then we can see nothing but differences. We even destroy each other in the name of God. Is this religion? Is it the theme of any religion that man should strike man, should destroy man, should create enemies and disturb the balance of the universe?

There was a time when people believed that if the whole world were converted to one religion, it would be saved. There are still those who believe that the salvation of the world depends on its being converted to Christianity. But the last war has proved it to be otherwise. Was it fought by the Christians in their religious zeal against the non-Christians? No, it was Christian brothers, for the most part, cutting each other's throats, and Christian minds scheming by diabolical means to annihilate one another. And what does it mean? That it is not the sectarian acceptance of any faith, no matter how lofty, that is going to bring saving grace to the world. It would be wonderful if all people could be converted to the lofty and beautiful teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of the Orient, the lowly, prayerful, devoted, yearning Christ Who seeks divine grace above all other things, Who shows man that his first and foremost duty is to find God, to live for God, and to make God a living presence in his life.

This is not to give you a picture of another Christ. It is not to prove to you that Christ went to India for a period of time and studied there. God forbid! These things are of very little importance. Wisdom is never confined to any corner of the world, although it is true that the Orient has become symbolic of religion. Great Saviours and Seers have risen from the East. It is natural that they should because the Eastern heart yearns primarily for spirituality.

In India if a man comes with a message hundreds of people will eagerly listen to him. If however he teaches love and exhibits hatred in his actions, if he preaches brotherhood and condemns with bitterness those who do not agree with him, at once they will say, if your religion is true why do you not practise it? Prove your faith by your life and we will die for it. It is here the Eastern heart beats. It is here that we find the great difference between life and creed. A man who has

touched the heart of God has touched the universal heart. He is no longer capable of being petty, small and fanatical, of being jealous or hateful. In India there is a parable that if base metal is brought in contact with the philosopher's stone, it is transformed into gold and is no longer base. Even a sword brought in contact with that stone is at once transformed so that it can no more harm any one. The same is true of us.

Suppose we believe that we have a higher ideal than another? Are we going to conquer him by inferior means, by fighting him? Can we force him to change his ideal? The only way we can influence him is by our superior quality. In this way true religion becomes the most dominant factor in evolution. It does not go with gun and sword to destroy. By the means of destruction we never can do any good. If we have something, let us prove it by our life. What does Christ teach? He teaches love—love which overcomes hatred, not the love that sometimes loves and again hates, but the love which overrules all afflictions, all dualities and becomes the ideal. Is this ideal merely for those who profess Christianity? No, it is a world ideal. There are people in India who have never come in contact with the Christian teaching, but who exemplify it in their lives. God's spirit is cosmic, universal. It is the common heritage of humanity. One becomes a good Christian not by clinging to an especial creed, but by living. Living the life is the basis of all religions.

Can man ever say that his God is infinite and then limit Him? Could it please his Deity for him to turn away from any one, to shun any one, to condemn any one? Would there be room in his heart after that for Divine love? Would his prayers be acceptable to God? How often Christ told His disciples to go and make peace with their brethren before placing their gifts on the altar. Though we may have the biggest church conceivable, though our altar may be glittering with

gold and diamonds, our offering will not be acceptable to God if we have in our hearts aught against any one.

There was a little cartoon which appeared some years ago in Florence, Italy. The import of it was that Christ came into the world to-day and naturally went to His own churches, churches which bore His name, which claimed to be founded upon His teaching. He entered them but the people were so engaged with ostentation that they had no time for the lowly Christ; he was unable to draw their attention because they were too busy with what they called Christianity and its propagation. Then He went into the streets but the people were too occupied with their own affairs to have time for Christ. Even the poor people were so absorbed in their poverty that they were not looking for religion. So the lowly Christ went weeping and walking through the wilderness.

Can we say Christianity is a failure? Some one once remarked that it had not yet been tried. It is not that we should find fault with any religion. We can never realize the ideals of any faith in its externals. The heart of every religion is vibrant with life, but we have to reach that heart; then do we find that it is always the self-same Truth flowing through different channels. India has never yet rejected a Divine Incarnation and the reason is this: in the Bhagavad-Gita, one of her most holy and ancient Scriptures, the Lord declares: "Whenever and wherever virtue declines and vice prevails then I embody Myself. For the protection of the good and for the destruction of the evil and for the re-establishment of religion, I am born from age to age." The Lord's promise is not confined to India, or to any particular place or locality. All are His children. This God of the Vedic conception is universal and infinite. He has only one heart and in that heart there is love for all.

This Vedic ideal of God saturates the whole of India's prac-

tical life. As soon as we begin to live our ideal a strange transformation takes place: our heart grows quieter and more understanding. We become incapable of doing anything ignoble. The example of the bee is given in India. The bee makes a great noise until he has found the heart of the flower. Once he has tasted the honey, he is quiet. The same way it is with all the intolerance and sectarian wars that are going on in the world,—it is because man has not touched the heart of religion. We never find the great spiritual teachers coming with aggressive spirit to convert the world. They live gently; their appeal is very lowly and tender. But how often zealous followers distort their message of love and gentleness. We always make a mockery of our ideal unless we live it.

Non-resistance of evil, one of the vital themes of Christ's teachings, can only be proved by our life. It is beautifully exemplified in the story of the Indian religious mendicant who was set upon and beaten by an ignorant man. He fell to the ground unconscious and lay there till his brothers from the monastery came and picked him up. They took him home and nursed him and as he was returning to consciousness one of them asked: "My brother, who is caring for you?" and he replied: "Verily, the same one who beat me." It was that feeling of oneness, that refusal to recognize any but the One which animated him. Indian conception does not admit two forces, one God and the other devil. There is only one infinite, all-abiding Spirit Who dwells within the hearts of all. When we worship Him, love Him, and draw close to Him, then do we find the fulfillment of life and its great realization dawns within us. When the sun shines, the darkness vanishes; when the light of Spirit dawns within us, the bondage of materiality breaks.

The life of the world can be enriched by the life of the individual. We either bring a discordant note or we bring a

note of harmony into this great universe by our life. We do not have to become a preacher to spread the great Gospel of Truth, but we have to live, and as we live we create an atmosphere. A person feels exalted or he feels depressed on coming near us. Unconsciously we can hurt others and also unconsciously we can do them good. That is the Christ example. Let a man live, let his light shine so that his Father in Heaven may be glorified through him. We should not act with any other motive. We should not pray to God merely because we are in despair. That is not the highest flight of religion. When we really feel hungry for it, thirsty for it, when we feel suffocated by materiality, then we naturally want to breathe in the open, and that is the aspiration of the soul. We become spiritual because we are hungry for spiritual things. As a man thinks so is he. If we hunger for the spiritual, it makes no difference where we live, we shall find the radiance,—the light that shines from Christ and from Buddha and from all the other Saviours.

It is only through superior living that we make converts. Not by argument or logic or any other material power do we conquer human hearts, but always through gentleness. Our love, our spirituality radiates. That is my conception of Christ. He brings inspiration because He comes from God. He lives in God. He makes no compromise. He lives the life. That is His appeal. It not only brings benediction upon a few but upon all, because what is good for the individual is good for the whole, and we cannot progress unless we are equally concerned in the welfare of our fellow-beings. There is no selfish happiness. That is the supreme example in the lives of all great teachers. Christ brings the message of love and it must be realized through love. If we are able to love so much that we recognize no hatred at all in our hearts, then we shall indeed feel the Christ heart within us, we shall truly be-

come a glowing example of that ideal. Even without word of mouth we shall be able to fulfill our mission. What have we to give to the world with words unless our thoughts are the product of spiritual realization? As we are dragged into the whirl of outer life and scatter our forces we become more and more impoverished spiritually. That is the great lack of to-day. We have all the things that are outer, but we need the inner.

We should not change our faith; we do not need to change it because each faith is part of the one great faith. Every church, every creed, every religion, has at its heart the glowing light of spiritual reality. The Indian Banyan tree is a very wonderful example of the spiritual life. It keeps on spreading and spreading till it becomes a mighty forest. The same way it is in the cosmic universe. There is only one God, one religion, but it has many aspects. Should we destroy any one of these because we are incapable of understanding it? In realizing the heart of religion, the spirit of it, we give a deathblow to all fanaticism and pettiness.

We should never lose faith either in Divinity or in humanity. Faith is a precious light and we should never be without it. It helps us to walk safely through the darkest hour of life. When we place our faith in Him Who is the Source of All; when our mind and heart are filled with the consciousness that we are children of the One, should we not be capable of doing greater good to our own kinsmen? For when we realize our divine heritage, our common Parent, we are invariably related to each other as we are related to Him, and this becomes the practical basis for true and ideal brotherhood.

We are by nature inclined to love mankind. Take away love and benevolence, and you take away all the joy of life. Men are born for the sake of men, that they may mutually benefit one another.—*Cicero.*

THE DIVINE PROMISE

From the Buddhist Psalms of Shinran Shonin

(Japanese Apostle of Buddhism. 12th Century.)

Only to Him who is above all things is known the glory of the Land of Peace. Wide as the sky and boundless is it spread forth.

Whoso believeth in the power of the Divine Promise shall verily be at one with the holy Essence, even as the turbid stream is clear and pure within the ocean depth when they have flowed together.

The heavenly spirits and those souls freed from illusion, they who are born in the land of purity from the wisdom deep as the ocean of the Divine Promise, differ not the one from the other in their powers. Pure are they as the air is pure.

He whose heart is great and who shall attain unto the true enlightenment is he also that desireth the salvation of all living, and verily the true faith given of that Blessed One is salvation.

The single heart perceiveth the true faith, and so doing is strong and clear as the diamond, and this strength is the wisdom of the supreme that strengtheneth us.

By the merit of His Infinite Light, when we attain unto that faith divine and omnipotent, the ice of illusion shall melt into the water of perfect wisdom.

No other way is there of attaining unto the Perfect Enlightenment save only by birth into the Land of Gladness, and therefore have all the Enlightened Ones exhorted men that they should receive the Doctrine of the Kingdom Purity.

There is no way unto the Kingdom of Gladness save only by attaining unto the true faith through that Holy Name, the very Jewel of Wonder.

When the new birth through the clearness of the Divine Promise is attained in the Eternal Kingdom, it is not like unto

the birth of this world; then is there no inferiority even in those that in this world were sinners, for they have entered into Paradise.

Unto us hath our Father given those two spiritual gifts. Of these the first is the Virtue whereby we attain unto His Kingdom, and the second is the Virtue whereby having so attained we return into this world for the Salvation of men.

The One true freedom is the Highest, and the Absolute is perfect freedom. And when we attain unto that freedom, for us shall desire and doubt vanish away.

When every man is beloved of us, even as the son of our own body, there is the Universal Mind made perfect in us.

UNVEIL THY SOUL

By C. Christians

In the silence of prayer an inner voice spoke: My child, give up all selfish desires. Look not for thy personal benefit. Think only of the Lord and His work. Do not perform thy duties to gain the praise and good will of others; but perform them for the sake of Him. Make thy thought His thought; thy word His word; thy deed His deed. Do thou the Will of the Lord at all times, for He abideth within all and speaketh through all. Thou wilt neither err nor lose power through surrender to Him, but thou wilt find glory in Him. Envy not those who have blessings which thou sharest not in. It is His Will thou shouldst not have them now.

Trust in Him, go to Him, confide in Him thy heart's yearning for His contact. Do not despair when thy prayers are as dead. Have faith! Pure and earnest supplications are never lost nor does the Lord fail to hear. Through gent'e love and holy obedience unveil thy soul that the Blessed Lord may reveal Himself in Thee.

CHILD CHRIST AND CHILD KRISHNA

By Sister Daya

There are two main ways by which the heart of man has ever approached the Divine. One way is that of supplication, soul-hunger, need. We draw near to holy feet in order to receive their blessing, to gather strength and peace from their contact, to find an abiding place and a safe refuge. In supreme worship our heart goes out to That which can so infinitely bestow and our life seems a small thing to give in return. Always on this Path we are the yearning, helpless children, receiving aid and blessing from the Father-Mother God.

The other way is just the reverse. God becomes to us the essence of all that is tender, defenceless and appealing. The sweetness of babyhood, the fragrance of young flowers, the helplessness of every tiny thing is wrapped up for us in the form of some infant Saviour. Our one thought is to cherish and to protect, to give our very life-blood if necessary, in order to make the way smooth for the little feet, to keep all wounds from the trusting heart; to enfold the precious life with our last vestige, if need be, of love and strength, that it may never be bruised by our thoughts or stabbed by our actions. Though we may call it the baby Christ or the baby Krishna, deep down in our souls we know that it is the seed of all beauty, of all love, and of all joy, sowed by God in the hearts of men.

Of these two paths the most selfless and the most joyous is the last. We do not come because of need, we are drawn by pure love. Life becomes a marvellous play in which we sport blissfully with the Divine Child and all unconsciously are lifted up to His Divinity. The mother-love in all hearts, in the hearts of men and women alike, is here given its ultimate expression. The human relation of parent and child is but a faint reflection of this supreme relationship. Nothing is omitted; even the mischief that makes the human child ador-

able is enacted in this holy play and our hearts are ensnared by the divine naughtiness of the little Lord. He delights in bewildering His devotees by sudden flashes of infinite power and then, before the mind has grasped the wonder, to reassume His smiling, dimpled aspect. He is a teaze and a darling and a play-fellow, bewitchingly beautiful, yielding to all, yet forever elusive. The hearts that would follow Him must be girded with delicious mirth and utter self-forgetfulness.

There is hardly a religion in the world that has not its sacred play-room. Peeping from behind the stately figures of the World-Teachers are the smiling faces of Their baby counterparts,—the wistful Christ-child, the grave little Buddha, lovely and laughing Gopalam or Krishna. Even from ancient Egypt comes the picture of the little Horus looking up into the eyes of Mother Isis,—"Queen of Heaven", "Star of the Sea", "Immaculate Virgin".

But among them all, baby Krishna and baby Christ stand out supreme. In India the pranks which Gopalam played thousands of years ago in the forests of Vrindavana, still enthrall the hearts of His people. They recount with glee how He stole the milk and curds from the neighbouring villagers (out of pure mischief, for His foster-father was king of the shepherds) and fed them to His friends, the monkeys and the birds. When His mother sought to tie the little hands in punishment, she could not find a cord long enough to go around the small wrists though she pieced the lengths together endlessly. Finally Gopalam out of pity for her efforts, removed the spell and then the first short cord easily served the purpose. When He was very tiny, her darling was into everything. Poor mother Yashoda could not find time to do her work, make her butter and cheese and attend to her household duties. So she tethered that bad little Krishna by a long rope securely fastened to an old cart-wheel, and went about her affairs with a peace-

ful heart, just as mothers do to-day. But that baby, so the people hold, was God, and He dragged the cart-wheel after Him as if it were a pebble. Finally it caught between two great trees. One little gentle pull and down they came crashing to the ground, at the same time releasing two souls who had been imprisoned there thousands of years by a magical spell. Hearing the noise, mother Yashoda came on the run, only to find her baby unhurt and smiling innocently just as though He had done nothing.

These tales are dear to the Hindu heart and it has treasured them through the ages. In India, tiny charms are sold of baby Krishna, round and dimpled, sucking His big toe, even as we of the West depict our Christ babe in its mother's arms. Krishna with flute in hand and peacock feathers on His head, romping all the days through with His comrades, the little shepherds and shepherdesses, is still a living concept to India's millions. The call of His flute would draw His playmates from any distance, for it was the call of His love, the call of the Divine to the human. He was their King and they would each take the place He assigned them. They had mad games of hide and seek when they would search for Him distractedly, the flute mocking them from a hundred places at once. All nature adored Him, so the legend goes. "Even the grazing animals had a special love for the Lord, and lowed happily whenever He caressed them or came near, gathering about Him in a ring to listen whenever, standing with feet crossed beneath the beautiful *Kodumbha* tree, He played upon his flute. Some say, indeed, that at such moments the lotus-buds lying on the Jumna waters opened and the river itself bent out of its straight course."

Over the child-hood life of Jesus hangs a veil of silence. Yet there are legends of Him, sprung from what far source who can say. Just as Yashoda looking into the mouth of the

infant Krishna, beheld the universe, so did Mary perceive by many wonders that her little Son was infinite in His being. Like Sri Krishna He was greatly beloved by His simple neighbours and always had many play-fellows of His own age. He too, was sometimes naughty and full of mischief, but His mischief ever proved a blessing.

"On a certain day also, when the Lord Jesus was playing with the boys and running about, he passed by a dyer's shop whose name was Salem. And there were in his shop many pieces of cloth belonging to the people of that city, which they designed to dye of several colours. Then the Lord Jesus going into the dyer's shop took all the cloths and threw them into the furnace. When Salem came home and found all the cloths spoiled he began to make a great noise and chide the Lord Jesus, saying, 'What hast thou done to me, O thou son of Mary? Thou hast injured both me and my neighbours, they all desired their cloths of a proper colour, but thou hast come and spoiled them all.' The Lord Jesus replied, 'I will change the colour of every cloth to what colour thou desirest.' And then he presently began to take the cloths out of the furnace, and they were all dyed of those same colours which the dyer desired." For this reason, even unto this day, such shops in Persia are called "Christ Shops."

The supremacy of Jesus was never questioned by his comrades. "In the month Adar, Jesus gathered together the boys, and ranked them as though he had been a king. For they spread their garments on the ground for Him to sit on; and having made a crown of flowers, put it upon His head, and stood on His right and left as the guards of a king; and if any one happened to pass by, they took him by force and said, Come hither and worship the king that you may have a prosperous journey."

Once the boys hid from Him and Jesus hunting for them

asked some women where they were. They replied they knew not. "Who are those ye see in the furnace?" asked Jesus who knew they were there. And they answered, "Kids of three years old." Then Jesus cried out aloud and said, "Come out hither, O ye kids, to your Shepherd!" And presently the boys came forth like kids and leaped about Him. The women trembling besought Him to restore the boys to their former state. Then Jesus said, "Come hither, O boys, that we may go and play," and immediately in the presence of these women, the kids were changed and returned into the shape of boys.

This is strangely reminiscent of an incident in the life of Sri Krishna. All His comrades and their cattle were thrown into an enchanted sleep and locked in a cave. Not being able to find them, the Lord created duplicates of them from His own being, so that the parents never realized that it was not their own who returned to them that night. They even loved them with a more intense love than they had ever felt for them before. After a year, the spell was lifted and the children restored without any one being the wiser.

Again and again both Christ and Krishna performed miracles of healing. Some of the play-mates of Krishna were stung by a serpent and He "casting upon them an eye of divine mercy, they immediately arose". Once Christ healed James, the son of Joseph, from the bite of a viper, by blowing on the wound and at another time He caused a snake to come and draw forth its poison from a boy, after which the snake burst asunder and the boy recovered. Of Christ and Krishna also it is told that they caused death by their displeasure. But to the Lord where is the difference between life and death. They are equally part of His play and His blessing flows through both alike. Thus the soul of a great serpent-demon which Krishna slew, is said to have attained the regions of the Blest, "for the touch of the Lord ever brought salvation

even though to the body He might mete out death".

To the Hindus every legend of Krishna is precious, but to the Christian peoples these tales of the boyhood of Christ are little known and less believed since they are not included in the authorized Gospels. One picture contains it all for them: the Christ baby in the manger, the arms of Mary around Him, the cattle looking down on Him, light all about Him and the Star over His head. This to the West has become the symbol of nascent spiritual life, of all that is unresisting, pure and eternal. The truly devout behold the new-born Christ as ever blessing with His tiny hands, ever placing Himself at the mercy of mankind. In truth, there are not two Christs, the Child and the Saviour. There is only one,—the holy babe who lay in the manger and who hung upon the Cross. Human beings may change but the Divine Incarnations are changeless and carry with Them through the years the undying enchantment of youth.

Gopalam or Christ-Child, what matter the name! Once we take Him as our own, not in fancy but in fact; once we feel His living presence within us and without, all harshness, all heaviness, all weariness will fall away from us. As we eat with Him and play with Him and live with Him, never again will our arms be empty or our hearts sad. For He will fill them utterly and forever with His ineffable sweetness, and He will satisfy our life's greatest need,—the need to love, to worship and to give.

HIDDEN CHRIST

By Jalaluddin Rumi

In each human spirit is a Christ concealed,
To be helped or hindered, to be hurt or healed;
If from any human soul you lift the veil
You will find a Christ there hidden without fail.

SELF-LOVE AND GOD-LOVE

By St. Francis de Sales

We forget how the saints tell us that we ought daily to begin anew our endeavours after perfection; if we did remember this we should not be so surprised at finding so much that is wretched and needs correction in ourselves. The work is never done; we must perpetually begin afresh, and always begin heartily afresh. What we have done so far is good, but what we are going to begin will be better; and when that is finished we will begin again better still, and so on, until we leave this world altogether, to begin another life, which will know no end, inasmuch as there can be nothing better. So we must not begin to weep because we find things going wrong with us, but we must rouse up fresh courage to go on anew, never stopping to look back; and where it is necessary to cut off superfluities, we must remember that "the word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow."

Self-love often dazzles us, and it is very difficult to see ourselves fairly. Therefore it is that the great apostle exclaims, "Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." Self-love may be mortified, but it never dies within us; from time to time, and on sundry occasions, it puts forth fresh shoots, which prove that though cut down, it is not rooted up. This is why we do not find the satisfaction that we ought to have in seeing others do well; we do not altogether rejoice in good works which are not to be found in ourselves, whereas we greatly admire all that is our own, and that because we love ourselves so exceedingly. But if we had a perfect charity, which causes us to be of one heart and soul with our neighbor, we should rejoice unfeignedly in whatever of his is good and perfect. Self is forever seeking self, self-

will and self-love; but if we were perfect in the love of God, we should prefer to obey, because in obedience there is more of God and less of self.

We must never be surprised to find self-love alive within ourselves; it is ever there. At times it sleeps like a crafty fox, but then suddenly it dashes out anew. We must keep a steady watch over it, and be always on the defensive, though gently and patiently. If sometimes self-love wounds us, and we are forced to unsay what we have said, to disown what it has made us do, we shall be partly cured.

A TRIBUTE

By Katherine F. Sherwood

(Written after reading the poems of Swami Paramananda.)

Whence comes this feeling in my heart—
my heart so long quiet and dead?
My whole body vibrates with emotion;
I feel uplifted from the dead level of cities
and books and thoughts.
It is the singing of a new bard—
Bard or bird, which is it?
Straight from heart to heart comes the song,
and oneness gives the thrill.

O Bird of Spring, sing on!
Tell me yet more from out the recess of thy
heart
Where lies that blissful store.
Sing from those fields
Where man has never been;
From tree-tops tall
Which eye has never seen;

Sing with that voice
More rare than earthly bird,
Sing yet a theme
That man has never heard,—
Music that thrills
And words beyond compare
Waking our hearts
To feel that God is there!
Sing on sweet Bird
Nor stay thy rapturous song.
Be free, and warble
All the daylight long
Songs of the dawn
Or evening's silent close;
Songs of the heart
To quiet all our woes.
Oh may we listen with attentive mind
And take such blessing which is hard to find!
Sing on, Sweet Bird!

REPORT

It is difficult to convey in the words of a report the living spirit of joyous hospitality which was vibrant in the home of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, on the evening of November 9th. Officially speaking, it was a reception, given for the purpose of introducing to friends and the friends of friends, Swami Paramananda's first volume of poems, "Soul's Secret Door", just out upon that day. But in reality it was far more than that, it was thanksgiving and rejoicing for the precious gift that had come to us in these poems of mystical exaltation, —come, so the Swami feels, not from him but from the one divine Source and given to him merely in trust for others.

This feeling of holy giving went into every detail of preparation. The rooms looked as though October herself had been invited in, for they were bright with autumn leaves and golden crysanthemums. These were arranged with special profusion at the end of the Chapel in front of the platform, climbing up in amber and ruby colored masses to a beautiful drooping fern set high on a concealed column, which formed, as it were, the crown of some strange tropical tree outlined against the flaming sunset tints of a silk Indian chuddar, used as a background.

Very many came; every space was filled. More than a few were utter strangers to the Centre, unfamiliar with the Swami and his work. Yet in spite of this, the quiet was profound when the Swami began to read. As he stood before the flower-garlanded book-shelf, someone remarked that it seemed like a door-way through which he had just stepped, and another suggested that it was the "Soul's Secret Door". One lovely poem after another he gave, the deep attention and appreciation of his listeners drawing them forth. At the end came a surprise: a real song of dawn with music as well as words by the Swami, who sang it without any accompaniment, quite spontaneously, the members of the household adding their voices in an intermittent refrain. This brought a dear and close friend of the Centre, Miss Katherine Sherwood, to her feet with some lovely verses written by her in tribute to the Swami after reading his poems. The repeated line,—"Sing on, sweet bird!" seemed a peculiarly fitting close to the Swami's song.

Sister Devamata then spoke a few words in deep appreciation of "Soul's Secret Door". The poems, she said, had seemed to her like flashes of light from behind grey clouds, carrying her through many long hours of pain. Rythm, she said, had always had great power over the minds of men from

the time of the ancient Hymalayan sages down to the present day. As the poems were read to her, the lyrical beauty of the lines seized upon her mind. Soon she found herself meditating in them, thinking in them, praying in them. They had the peculiar power of remaining with her after one reading, showing that they came from a Source beyond memory, from that realm in which one does not remember but in which one *knows*. They were Scriptural in quality. She added that the Swami's inspiration had not been intermittent, often as many as five or six poems coming in one day.

While refreshments were being served, the Swami was kept busy autographing copies of his book for many eager friends. Even those at a distance were represented, a wire having been received from eight or nine of the Swami's students in Cincinnati, ordering between them 109 copies of "Soul's Secret Door". This small group feels especially close to the Boston work, several of them having visited the Centre this past summer and heard the poems from the Swami's lips, before the book was published.

On the 13th of November the Swami spoke by invitation before the Brookline Teachers' Association, at the Brookline Public Library. His subject was "The Value of Relaxation and Concentration". A member of the Association writes: "Great interest was shown by the unusually large attendance, nearly the entire membership being represented and, what was not customary with them, staying till the end. The Swami's address was filled with inspiration and helpful suggestions. As one absorbed listener remarked, "What practical help he has given us! Where can we hear more from this speaker?" There were similar words of deep appreciation from all sides. At the request of the President, the Swami closed his address with a few selections from his poems.

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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Message of the East

VOLUME XII

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JANUARY, 1923

MASTERY OF SELF

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Soul's Secret Door

By

Swami Paramananda

Handsome Flexible Binding, $2.00. Postage 10 Cents.

Like the Psalms of King David; "Soul's Secret Door," by Swami Paramananda, is a collection of seventy-two poems that resemble nothing else so much as they do the Psalms. They are marked by a fine spirituality and profound devotion. In vers libre, they have an unexpected lyrical quality.—*Cincinnati Times-Star.*

One marvels at the command of English which the author possesses no less than at the deep understanding he displays in linking the distant past with the present. Each poem is complete and in all of them is to be found a spirit of universality—a feeling that all men are of the same kind whether of one race or of another, whether of this century or two thousand years ago. Uplifting, refreshing and thought-provoking, for the more one reads the author's poems the more fully does one begin to understand them. "Soul's Secret Door" is a collection of literary gems with a message for all.—*St. Louis Times.*

It contains real pearls of poetic beauty and pure feeling.
—*Westliche Post, St. Louis*

A wise man from the East, whose philosophy of worship finds expression in a book "The Soul's Secret Door."—*Boston Herald.*

Writing in free verse, a devout Hindu gives us a book of poems, "Soul's Secret Door," and it is interesting to note how essentially Christian is his Oriental faith.—*Literary Digest.*

The Swami shows a remarkable command of English, his modern use of vers libre linking the present with the distant past.
—*Publisher's Weekly, New York*

The sense of rest, peace and security that emanates from these verses comes like a healing balm in this turbulent and restless atmosphere in which we live. The verses teach patient waiting and infinite faith in the all-abiding good.
—*The Bookseller and Stationer*

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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THE MARCH OF LIFE

By Swami Paramananda

NWARD, ever forward in the march
of life,
My soul, onward, ever forward
March on!
Perchance the flame of thy life burns dim
Or flickers in the wind of this world.
Fear not its extinction.
Hold fast with all thy faith.
No power in gale or storm,
Nay, naught in heaven or earth,
Can rob thee of thine immortal flame.
It is assigned thee by Eternal Hand.
It is thine forever, at all times
With no beginning or end.
When thy feet are tired, rest them.
If mind is weary, refresh it.
Pause awhile in the still peace of thy
inmost cave;
Then rise again with renewed spirit of faith,
hope and courage.
Onward, ever forward in the march of life,
Ever onward, ever forward, my soul,
March on! March on!

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

There is no king like him who is king of himself.

—*St. Cadoc.*

When the fruit grows the petals drop off of themselves. So when Divinity in thee increases, the weakness of humanity in thee will vanish.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

Out of love and hatred, out of earnings, and borrowings, and lendings, and losses; out of sickness and pain; out of wooing and worshipping; out of travelling, and voting, and watching, and caring; out of disgrace and contempt, comes our tuition in the serene and beautiful laws. Let him not slur his lesson; let him learn it by heart. Let him endeavor exactly, bravely, and cheerfully, to solve the problem of that life which is set before him.—*Emerson.*

To bear what you think you cannot bear is really to bear.—*Ancient Japanese Saying.*

A vexation arises, and our expressions of impatience hinder others from taking it patiently. Disappointment, ailment, or even weather depresses us; and our look or tone of depression hinders others from maintaining a cheerful and thankful spirit. We say an unkind thing, and another is hindered in learning the holy lesson of charity that thinketh no evil. We say a provoking thing, and our sister or brother is hindered in that day's effort to be meek. How sadly, too, we may hinder without word or act! For wrong feeling is more infectious than wrong doing; especially the various phases of ill temper,—gloominess, touchiness, discontent, irritability,—do we not know how catching these are?—*F. R. Havergal.*

The Absolute Beauty is the Divine Majesty endued with the attributes of power and bounty. Every beauty and per-

fection manifested in the theatre of the various grades of beings is a ray of His perfect beauty reflected therein. It is from these rays that exalted souls have received their impress of beauty and their quality of perfection. Whosoever is wise derives his wisdom from Divine wisdom.—*Jami* (*Sufi*).

My dear Simmias, I fear that virtue is not really to be bought in this way, by bartering pleasure for pleasure, and pain for pain, and fear for fear, and the greater for the less, like coins. There is only one sterling coin for which all these things ought to be exchanged, and that is wisdom. All that is bought and sold for this and with this, whether courage, or temperance, or justice, is real: in one word true virtue cannot be without wisdom, and it matters nothing whether pleasure, and fear, and all other such things, are present or absent. But I think that the virtue which is composed of pleasures and fears bartered with one another, and severed from wisdom, is only a shadow of true virtue, and that it has no freedom, nor health, nor truth.—*Plato.*

The Yogi's ideal is freedom from nature. Conquest of nature is his standard of work. The Yogi says that all power is in the soul, and by the controlling of the mind and body one conquers nature by the power of the soul.

He is free, he is great, who turns his back upon the world, who has renounced everything, who has controlled his passion, and who thirsts for peace. One may gain political and social independence, but if he is a slave to his passions and desires, he cannot feel the pure joy of real freedom.—*Swami Vivekananda.*

Man is born upright. If he cease to be so and live, he is lucky to escape.

The highest goodness is to hold fast to the golden mean.

Waste begets self-will, thrift begets meanness; but better be mean than self-willed.

A superior man is calm and large of spirit, the vulgar are always fretting.—*Sayings of Confucius.*

Whose discrimination is stolen away by the love of power and pleasure and who are thus deeply attached therein, for such people it is impossible to obtain either firm conviction of purpose or God-consciousness.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

THREEFOLD WISDOM

From the Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad.

The threefold descendants of Prajapati,—Devas, men and Asuras—dwelt as Brahmacharins (students) with their father Prajapati. Having finished their studentship the Devas said: "Tell us something, Sir." He told them the syllable *Da.* Then he said: "Did you understand?" They said: "We did understand. You told us *'Damyata,'* Be subdued." "Yes," he said, "you have understood."

Then the men said to him: "Tell us something, Sir." He told them the same syllable *Da.* Then he said: "Did you understand?" They said: "We did understand. You told us *'Datta,'* Give." "Yes," he said, "you have understood."

Then the Asuras said to him: "Tell us something, Sir." He told them the same syllable *Da.* Then he said: "Did you understand?" They said: "We did understand. You told us *'Dayadham,'* Be merciful." "Yes", he said, "you have understood."

The divine voice of thunder repeats the same: *Da Da Da,* that is, Be subdued, Give, Be merciful. Therefore let that triad be taught, Subduing, Giving, and Mercy.

MASTERY OF SELF

By Swami Paramananda

The thirst for happiness is a common instinct in all mankind; but every one of us does not possess the secret of acquiring it, nor have we the power to retain it when it comes to us. This requires both wisdom and endurance. Perhaps for this reason the great men of all countries and ages have laid such tremendous emphasis on a life of self-discipline and self-control. Self-discipline enables us to organize and unite all our scattered forces. This necessarily increases our power for both thought and action. It is not true, though it appears to be so, that we have many isolated factors in our life. The same energy which pulsates through our heart and brain also operates our hands and feet; therefore learning to collect and control this inherent energy which now we fritter away through lack of co-ordination and co-operation would mean the greatest asset in our life.

Self-mastery is a far greater possession than the possession of all earthly goods. If we do not possess ourselves we may possess all the fine things of life and be unable to use them to any advantage. More than that, we may unconsciously strike at the very root of our life. Often in a sudden impulse of anger we destroy a finer part of ourself; in a moment we lose something that may take long to build up again. When a person is under the influence of hatred or any other violent emotion he may do something which he will always regret. If you ask him why he did it, he will say that he could not help it, that it was done before he knew it, in a flash of impulse. But why should such an impulse rise at all? It comes because we lay the foundation for it. It is not through chance that we fall under the sway of all these evils; but it is directly due to our long-standing habits of thinking and living. It is we who make it possible for these detri-

mental influences to rise in us, also it is in our power to make it impossible. If we reflect and penetrate into the depths of our being, we shall never fail to find that every event in our life is based on a just cause. If a man does something destructive to himself or to another it is because of his careless way of living and thinking. He has allowed destructive thought to over-power him; he is no longer himself. When he loses mastery of himself he may do something in a moment which may mean the undoing of all that he has done before.

In the great Indian spiritual classic, the Bhagavad-Gita, the Lord of Wisdom tells us: "Let a man raise himself by his Self, let him never lower himself; for he alone is the friend of himself, and he alone is the enemy of himself. He who has conquered himself by the Self, he is the friend of himself, but he whose self is unconquered, his self acts as his own enemy like an external foe." But who, you may ask, would knowingly be his own enemy? Whenever we start to do anything with dejected mind, or carry any evil impulse in our heart, do we not act as our own enemy? We know ethically and intellectually the bad effect these have upon our moral and physical being, and yet we stagger on carrying a load which exhausts us. How can we explain it, that an intelligent person should allow his mind to be filled with detrimental thoughts and feelings?

We become our own enemy when we are thrown out of balance by anger, hatred, grief or any intense emotion. We are for the time being obsessed by something alien. Anger is such an obsession. It is a very ugly thing in life. It disfigures a person. One who is pleasant and lovable suddenly becomes so distorted by anger that even if you try you can no longer find any trace of beauty in his face. Yet the whole of us is not obsessed. We are like two persons,—the person

who is angry and the person who is not. There is a dual principle in us. One part of us aspires for the highest, best, purest and finest; the other is earth-bound, weighted down by material concerns. Whether we want to or not, until we have gained full possession of our being, we will often go against ourselves. The Self is the friend of self for him who has conquered himself—his lower self—and one whose self is unconquered, his self acts as an enemy.

Of course we blame others. There is hardly a soul who does not blame somebody else for his misfortune, his failure. But the eye of wisdom reveals to us that instead of trying to lay the blame on others we should find the cause in our own life,—in the self. This self-adjustment and self-possession is most essential to our well-being.

In the Gita there is another passage which runs: "Lust, anger and greed, these three are the soul-destroying gates of hell. Therefore one should forsake these three." When we analyze them we find there is very little distinction between them. A greedy person longing for some object of desire with all the lust of his soul, becomes angry if he cannot have his way. Anger brings self-delusion. The cause of it and of all these things is ignorance. Sometimes we think that when we are excitable and angry we are exhibiting strength. It is the weak person who yields to these things. A weak person is more unforgiving than a strong one. I have seen it among athletes. The strongest athletes are those who can best endure insults from an inferior. He who is nervously disorganized naturally has less endurance. We cannot sever our spiritual evolution from our mental and physical. What we manifest in body and mind are the results of what we are in our spiritual consciousness. They are absolutely inseparable. Happiness is something that we have within us and if we have it there no matter what obstacles

are placed before us, we surmount them. We become truly our own friend. The Roman philosopher, Marcus Aurelius puts this very strongly,—"Be cheerful also, and seek not external help nor the tranquillity which others give. A man must stand erect, not be kept erect by others." He who possesses himself wholly may be confined in a dungeon, or he may be forced into crowds alien to his temperament, and yet he will maintain himself. In the midst of all dual conditions—heat and cold, pleasure and pain, noise and stillness, he will carry with him the realization of his higher Self.

We cannot expect, if we follow the trend of life, to have everything made smooth for us. I have great doubt in my mind whether it would be really good for any individual. We need discipline, and the discipline of life is a very wonderful one. Mastery is not for those who are always trying to shirk and shun everything that is disagreeable. If we keep on avoiding what is difficult we shall never go one step forward. It is this which awakens within us our inner faculties. That is the reason theoretical knowledge and actual experience are two different things altogether. We may know theoretically that wherever the mind dwells, according to that will be our knowledge, our strength and our success; but we have to know how to manipulate the mind, how to hold it, how to possess it. Here is where we must be practical.

We pray, we meditate, we study, we do all kinds of things which we think should give us spiritual impetus, and yet we stay still almost, or take a backward step. Why is this? A man may use high-sounding words expressing moral ideas but if he lacks in the fundamental principle of life, if he lacks in patience, forbearance, forgiveness, he will burst out into anger some day and then all his dogmas and theories will go for nothing. That is the reason religion often becomes a noxious thing to some people. We are just like a man who

is pulling on his oars but can make no headway because he has not lifted the anchor. What we have heard, what we sometimes feel instinctively to be our own, we can only make our own through experiencing it. We may know that we have a higher Self and that it is our true friend, but in its light when we actually grasp its meaning and its application, the whole aspect of our life changes. We become bigger, stronger, more enduring. Endurance is one of the greatest assets in life. Those who do not know how to endure, break down under the pressure of circumstance. They have not yet learned the real art of life and living.

Realization is born of our own experience, is inseparable from us. In an emergency, in moments of great tragedy, the man of tranquillity, of serenity, of wisdom, remains stable while another man possessed of the knowledge that all the books can give, loses his control and his balance. Why does he lose it? Because he never had it. What is ingrained in our nature we are incapable of losing. We always carry our light with us—always. Plato declares a wise man will be as happy in a state of slavery as in a state of freedom. When we have absolutely transformed ourselves there is no question of calculation: shall I be angry or not, shall I speak harshly or shall I contain myself? These thoughts do not rise because in the heart of the holy there is no room left for any darkness; no possibility left for the uprise of anger or evil.

Spirituality is not a question of calculation. We either have it or we do not have it. It is not a question of doctrines or words or theories. It is something we evolve within us and after we have evolved it others benefit by it. Our life becomes transformed. We are the same and yet we are not the same. We have the same hands and feet, but they are put to better use; we have the same mind and heart but

they are filled with greater ideas and ideals. The only way we can rise, the only way we can lift our fellow-beings, is to find a higher level of consciousness. If we have a higher standard of life, if we possess self-control, if we are masters of ourselves, we cannot help but benefit those living around us. They may become impatient with us, intolerant that we are different from them, but if we try to walk in their ways we do not benefit them. If, however, we hold fast to our own ideals, they will turn to us in moments of distress. In time of storm, anger, impatience or great grief, one who is not molested by these things becomes like a rock, others cling to him and find their consolation.

This does not mean that we must grow unfeeling like a block of wood or a stone. It is not the person who is harsh and hard that is master. Unfeeling people are often self-centred and selfish. We must not confuse these ideas. It is rather one whose consciousness has become expanded, who instead of revolving round and round with the petty feelings of self and selfishness, suddenly comes into possession of another part of his life. He is infused with divine power and naturally is incapable of doing anything on a lower level.

This does not imply that we must crush every desire that rises in our mind, it would be like covering a fire with ashes, —the fire would still be there intact. We do not free ourselves from our lower propensities by this method, but by gaining greater knowledge, by gaining greater unity within ourselves. When our thought and mind and heart, when our whole being is focused in absolute unison, then shall we find high ideals rising within us, then the things that belong to the lower levels will touch us no more. It is not by satisfying our lower desires that we shall find any lull but rather by uniting them and making them harmonious with our higher purpose.

Self-realization means that our life is connected with its root, its source. One who is master over himself, no matter where he is placed, is always the victor. Therefore self-mastery is a necessity if we would enjoy in full measure all the blessings of life. Our blessings are now often carried away by our shortcomings. Many a person after his first failure settles down and says: I am not born equipped; it is not in my nature to do this. He has not even investigated his inner nature; he is judging only from the surface. If he would go deeper he would find that he has all the inherent powers and possibilities, more than he can possibly use. Let us remember our dual nature: faltering, failing, weak and unstable on the one side and on the other: majestic, potent, invincible. Self-depreciation means that we have no faith in a higher Spirit, we have no clear concept of our higher Self. That is the reason we run ourselves down. Egotism exists as much in the life of the poor and miserable as in the life of ostentation and pride. The balanced state of mind is what we need above all else, not merely in our spiritual life but in our life of every day. No teaching gives this middle path with so much force and practical wisdom as the Vedic revelation.

Sometimes people have the foolish notion that they cannot be spiritual unless they show a certain self-abasement. But the humility which is essential to spirituality is illustrated by the fruitful tree bending its boughs in fruition. A barren tree stands stiff and gives nothing. When our life becomes fruitful it cannot help but show forth gentleness, mellowness, beneficent qualities—no more room for harshness. A life which is unproductive always finds fault with others, always strikes a harsh note somewhere. That is why we should strive to unfold these principles within. It is so easy, —the same mind which is capable of thinking evil, hateful

thoughts also has infinite capacity for good and constructive thoughts. The same mind which is unwilling to practise high ideals also has the power to practise them and benefit by them. It is all a question of turning and directing the will. The will which is tormenting us and disregarding our lofty feelings and aspirations, can also be made to do what is nearest to our hearts.

One of the most beautiful thoughts that Buddha gave to his disciples was that a well-ordered mind will do greater good to us than a friend or a father or a mother or any one from outside. People who live on other people's opinions, do they ever accomplish anything? When you do something that you know is good, is beneficial, when you do it with your whole being, with unselfish spirit, whether others see it in the same way or not, it has given you joy and a sense of uplift. If we depend on praise and recognition we are done for. When our inner life is empty we cannot help but depend on the exterior, but after our inner life is filled we care less and less for all outer conditions. We are happier because of this, we create a happier atmosphere, an atmosphere of strength.

If we start one day with an exalted attitude of mind, with courage, consecration and fearlessness, and another day with depression, doubt or dissatisfaction and observe their effect upon our life, we shall realize very quickly why it is declared that we are our own friend and our own enemy. Through depression we not only drag ourselves down but we drag others down with us. A great teacher used to say that one who is melancholy has no right to touch another person's life. Life is not meant for sadness; we should not throw our burden on another. We cannot be self-indulgent. Some indulge themselves in unhappiness; they seem to love it. You pull them out of it and again they settle down. They have formed the habit of staying in that sphere and they alone

can rescue themselves from it. All the religions, all the high ideals cannot help them from without, till they have awakened themselves from within. That is the reason why the Gita says so forcibly, raise thyself by thine own Self—never lower thyself.

Even from the stand-point of self-preservation or personal happiness, we should cultivate mastery of self, because therein lies the secret, the strength, the fulfillment. If we do not have all that we desire, let us make the best use of what we have. The greatest artists are those who depend less and less on outer conditions. They have creative genius within themselves and with little material produce the best. It is not the material which makes the artist, it is the artist himself who shapes the material. If we bear this in mind we shall cease to complain, to find fault either with ourselves or our outer conditions. Whatever comes our way, let us use it. The efforts we are making now will bring us the highest; all they need is direction and fortification. That is what self-mastery means. Self-mastery gives us such wisdom that we may always under all circumstances, depend upon our own inward strength.

INVOCATION

To Kwannon, the Merciful Deity

(From the Japanese Work "Hokkekyo")

O Thou whose eyes are clear, whose eyes are kind, whose eyes are full of pity and sweetness,—O Thou Lovely One, with thy beautiful face, with thy beautiful eyes,—

O Thou Pure One, whose luminosity is without spot, whose knowledge is without shadow,—O Thou forever shining like that Sun whose glory no power may repel,—Thou Sun-like in the course of Thy mercy, pourest Light upon the world!

THE PHILOSOPHY OF HAPPINESS

Kaibara Ekken. Seventeenth Century.

(Japanese moralist. He uses "pleasure" throughout in the sense of "happiness.")

To be spiteful, to be haughty, to speak evil of others, to rebuke their small faults, to be provoked by their careless words, and to be angry at their rudeness, is not only to deprive yourself of pleasure; but is also to betray your own littleness to the world.

Suppress anger and selfish desires; be broad-minded and think no evil of others. By this way you can keep yourself calm and happy, for there is no discord which can then jar your harmonious spirit. Men in this world do many unworthy deeds. Do your best to lead the crooked into the true path. But if they neither listen, nor repair their ways, let them alone—they are fools, and to be pitied. With such even the sages could do nothing; do not allow yourself to be tormented by the stupidity of others.

One whose heart is not here, sees and yet sees not. He may stand before a landscape radiant with beauty and charm yet sees it not. For such a one the spring has no glory, the autumn no beauty. His heart remains unmoved at the sight of moon and flowers. Sitting before the open books of the sages, he reads them not. Endeavoring to satisfy his selfish desires, he leaves the pure pleasures behind, and lives a life distressing both to himself and others. How sad it is to permit a short life to slip away in the performing of naught but despicable deeds!

The poor man who is foolish seeks pleasure and finds it not, because his heart is laden with envy and malice. The rich man who is foolish seeks pleasure in the spending of his treasure; but being idle, extravagant, and covetous, fails to

find it. Pleasure cannot be ours as long as we wander from the true path of mankind. In your heart, therefore, seek the true path, and then pleasure shall be added.

If we make our heart the fountain-head of pleasure, our eyes and ears the gates of pleasure, and keep away base desires, then our pleasure shall be plentiful; for we can become the masters of mountains, water, moon and flowers. We do not need to ask any man for them, neither to obtain them need we pay a single sen; they have no specified owner. Those who can enjoy the beauty in the Heavens above and the Earth beneath need not envy the luxury of the rich, for they are richer than the richest.

The pleasures of the vulgar pass away and bitterness remaineth instead, for they are harmful both to mind and body. But the pleasures of the wise are pure and food for the mind. From morning until night, without injury, may he enjoy them; for no one can hinder him, neither do his pleasures provoke the rebuke of the gods. He delights in the moon and the mountain, the flowers and water. With the wind he sings, while listening to the song of the birds. Simple pleasures such as these may be enjoyed by all, whether rich or poor. But the rich, because of their love for idleness and extravagance, may not obtain them so easily as do the poor.

The wise man knows contentment, because he is not covetous; he is rich in mind, though poor in worldly goods. There is an old saying, that the hearts of those who know contentment are rich: but the hearts of the foolish are poor because they know not contentment. To be content with simple things is to enjoy life. The older the man, the more content he should be in either his poverty or riches.

He who is his own friend, is a friend to all men.—*Seneca.*

Silence is a healing for all ailments.—*Jewish Proverb.*

THE MEDICINE OF WISDOM

From the Mahabharata

The body of a creature is called the car. The living principle is the driver of that car. The senses are said to be the steeds, our acts and the understanding are the traces. He who followeth after these running steeds has to come repeatedly to this world in a round of rebirths. He, however, who being self-restrained, restrains them by his understanding, hath not to come back.

The man, O King, who has restrained his senses and subdued wrath and covetousness, who is contented, and truthful in speech, succeeds in obtaining peace. The loss of kingdom, of friends and of children, O Bharata, and such as these, overtake him who is still under the influence of desire.

He that is wise should apply the medicine of intelligence to all great griefs. Indeed, obtaining the medicine of wisdom which is truly very efficacious and is almost unattainable, the man of restrained soul would kill that serious disease called sorrow.

Neither prowess, nor wealth, nor friends, nor well-wishers, can cure a man of his grief so effectually as the self-restrained soul. Self-restraint, renunciation and heedfulness are the three steeds of *Brahman.*

He who rides on the car of his soul, unto which are yoked these steeds with the aid of traces furnished by good conduct, and drives it, casting off all fear of death, proceedeth, O King, to the region of *Brahman.*

That person, O monarch, who gives unto all creatures an assurance of his harmlessness, goes to the highest regions. The fruit that one obtains by giving an assurance unto all creatures of his harmlessness cannot be obtained by a thousand sacrifices or by daily fasts.

Amongst all things there is certainly nothing dearer than self. Death is certainly disliked by all creatures, O Bharata! Therefore compassion should certainly be shown unto all.

Endued with diverse kinds of errors, entangled by the net of their own intelligence, they that are wicked and are of good vision, wander repeatedly on the earth. They, however, that are wise and endued with subtile sight, attain to a union with *Brahman.*

SURRENDER

Extract from letters of Swami Turiyananda

With love at heart and sincere prayers to the Lord, the spiritual aspirant has to wait for nothing else. The Paramatman who knows the workings of everybody's heart arranges everything favourably for him. A modest attitude is a great help to self-improvement. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "Water accumulates in a low land, while it runs off from an elevation." All virtues flock to the modest man. Modesty is a wonderfully desirable thing. Go on doing your work to the best of your ability and knowledge, and never mind for the consequences. Lay them all at the feet of the Lord. He is made of goodness and will do nothing but good.

If one sets his mind on Him, has he to be afraid of going astray? Is He not the pole-star of our life? He is the Goal, He is the means, and He is the consequences. Its beginning, middle and end,—everything is He. There is no other refuge but Him. "When you lie down, think that you are prostrating yourself to the Mother; when you sleep, think you are meditating on Her; and while taking food consider you are offering an oblation to Mother. Whatever you catch through your ears is a Mantram of the Mother, for Mother is verily the whole alphabet and in every letter She resides. In glee does Ramprasad sing that the Divine Mother is in every being; and when you roam about in the streets think

that you are circumambulating the Mother." If one bears this in mind one has no more chances to slip. She is the All. . . .

If I mistake not, you have expressed anguish at not being able to achieve anything yet in the way of realization, and have written also that your days are passing without joy. Why so? If you are really dispirited at not being able to realize God, rest assured that your auspicious moment is at hand. The more intensely you feel like that know, that the Lord's grace is approaching. But if any other desire lurking in the mind has created a sort of dullness, then try to remove it from the mind without delay, and never neglect it in the least. For know that to be the greatest obstacle in the path of spiritual realization. Always try to acquire fitness; then the Lord will be pleased and make you the recipient of all bliss.

Our chief duty is to lie in all humility at the Lord's door. If we can do that, His mercy is bound to come. Dullness of spirits will make room for surpassing joy. It would be the height of mercy on His part if He but allows me to lie submissively at His door; he who realizes this, undoubtedly receives His full grace without delay. Try to love Him with your whole mind and soul—why do you calculate your own joy or depression of spirits? Surrender yourself to Him and pray whole-heartedly that you may have the deep-rooted conviction ever alive in your heart that whatever condition He may put you in, it is for your welfare. Then everything will lead to good.

The perfect man shares the food of this earth, but the happiness of God. He does not incur trouble either from men or things. He does not join in censuring, in plotting, in toadying. Free from care he comes, and unconscious he goes; —this is the art of preserving life.—*Chuang Tzu.*

CONTEMPLATION

By Richard Rolle. Early Fourteenth Century.

(Known as the Hermit of Hampole and called the father of English mysticism.)

Contemplative life or contemplation has three parts: reading, prayer and meditation. In reading God speaks to us; in prayer we speak to God. In meditation angels come down to us and teach us that we err not; in prayer they go up and offer our prayers to God, joying in our profit; that are messengers betwixt God and us.

If it be asked what is contemplation it is hard to define. Some say that contemplative life is nought else but knowledge of things to come and hidden: or to be void of all worldly occupation: or the study of God's letters. Others say that contemplation is the free sight into the visioned truths of wisdom, lift up with full high marvel. Others say that contemplation is a free and wise insight of the soul all spread about to behold His might. Others say, and say well, that contemplation is joy in heavenly things. Others say, and say best, that contemplation is the death of fleshly desires through the joy of the mind up-raised.

To me it seems that contemplation is the joyful song of God's love taken into the mind, with the sweetness of angels' praise. This is the jubilation that is the end of perfect prayer and high devotion in this life. This is the ghostly mirth had in mind for the Everlasting Lover, with great voice out-breaking. This is the last and most perfect deed of all deeds in this life. Therefore the psalmist says: "Blest be the man who knows jubilation," in contemplation of God. Truly none alien to God can taste the sweetness of His love. But if he desires to be ever kindled with the fire of everlasting love, in patience, meekness, and gentle manners; and to be made fair with all cleanness of body and soul, and dight with ghostly ointments; he is lifted up into contemplation.

This is the manner for perfect men to keep: all worldly goods for God to despise, and yet to take of the same meat and clothing; and if this want at any time, not to murmur but to praise God; and as much as they may to refuse superfluities. The warmer a man waxes with the heat of everlasting light, the meeker shall he be in all adversities. He that is truly and not feignedly meek holds himself worthy of being despised, and neither by harm nor reproof is provoked to wrath. Wherefore lowing himself to continual meditation, it is given him to rise to the contemplation of heavenly things, and the sharpness of his mind being cleansed as the sickness of the flesh suffers, it is given him to sing sweetly and burningly with inward joys. And truly when he goes to seek any outward thing, he goes not with a proud foot, but only joying in high delights . . .

And in this truly is love perfect when man, going in the flesh, cannot be glad but in God, and wills or desires nothing but God or for God. Hereby it is shown that holiness is not in crying of the heart, or tears, or outward works, but in the sweetness of perfect charity and heavenly contemplation. Contemplative sweetness is not gotten but with full great labour; and with joy untold it is possessed. Forsooth it is not of man's merit but God's gift. And yet from the beginning to this day a man might never be ravished in contemplation of everlasting love unless he before had perfectly forsaken all the vanity of the world. Moreover he ought to be used in healthful meditation and devout prayer before he come truly to the contemplation of heavenly joys.

Contemplation is sweet and desirable labour. It gladdens the labourer, and hurts not. No man has this but in joying: not when it comes, but when it goes, he is weary. O good labour to which mortal men dress them. O noble and marvellous working that those sitting do most perfectly! It be-

hooves that he take great rest of body and mind whom the fire of the Holy Spirit truly enflames.

Nothing is more profitable, nothing merrier, than the grace of contemplation that lifts us from these low things and offers us to God. What is this grace but the beginning of joy? And what is the perfection of joy but grace confirmed? In which is kept for us a joyful happiness and happy joy, a glorious endlessness and everlasting joy; to live with the saints and dwell with angels. And that which is above all things: truly to know God; to love Him perfectly; and in the shining of His majesty to see Him and, with a wonderful song of joy and melody to praise Him endlessly.

To whom be worship and joy, with deeds of thankfulness, in the world of worlds. Amen.

LETTERS OF APPRECIATION

Since the appearance of Swami Paramananda's recent book of poems, we have received numerous appreciative letters from different sources. In order that we may share these with our friends, we are giving a few extracts from them.

Dr. John Haynes Holmes writes the Swami: "Your poems, 'Soul's Secret Door', are very beautiful. What a magic touch you Hindus have of majesty, repose and insight."

From Dr. and Mrs. Partridge, of New York, come these appreciative words: "After a first little peep, we settled ourselves to enjoy Swami's outpouring—first one reading aloud and then the other. The 'Dedication' itself is uplifting, attuning mind and heart through its simple, self-evident sincerity. As we read on and on, we were thrilled and humbled into an exalted mood. A lovely blossom, indeed, is each and every poem, with ample variety among which to make choice suited to the need of the moment! The collection as a whole

makes a wonderful garland most acceptable, we think, to Whom it is dedicated. It gives full evidence of the blissful sanctity of the mood attained when the Soul's Secret Door was opened by its author—and it inspires in the reader desire to open each for himself the same door. It must have been a treat, indeed, to hear Swami read his poems."

"I can scarcely close the 'Soul's Secret Door' long enough to tell you of my great joy in the possession of these exquisite poems. What a wonderful Christmas gift to the world." A. D., Louisville, Ky.

"I think that I was in a peculiarly receptive attitude of mind for the poems in their utter naturalness and simplicity struck home to my heart in a way that nothing I believe that I had read before had ever quite done for me. I love them all. The ones called 'Surrender' and 'Holy Waters' and also the one from which the book takes its name, I think, are my favorites. I shall prize your little book beyond measure and I thank you with all my heart for that which you have given me through it." N. M. H., Louisville, Ky.

"Swami's book came yesterday and I have found some lovely thoughts. The 'Wonder of Wonders' is one which is very beautiful, and also are 'Ego' and 'Freedom.' 'The Holy Lamp' impressed me as if it were the story of Swami's early struggle in Boston. Only a pure, lofty soul could write in such loving and sweet words, seeking to inspire us who are dwelling in more or less ignorance and darkness. I can imagine the pleasure of those privileged to hear him read the beautiful poems. They remind me of the Psalms, as they are written in somewhat of the same style. We enjoy Swami's beautiful poems and find much inspiration for thought and thankfulness to him for writing such a helpful book. It should be known from coast to coast." Mrs. E. C. Morgan, San Francisco.

"I am so very happy and grateful for your beautiful book, especially its pristine message of faith and freedom. Thank you heartily for letting me share this little volume, —fragrant as a May morning and sweet and poignant as night beneath June's moon! The poems—well I think that I like them the better because they are crowned with a simple genuineness and a frank and complete sharing of the beauty which you have caught from common, lovely 'pathway' things. For days I have been conscious of delicious lines that come back again and again to memory. Thank you indeed!" Prof. E. L. Baker, Kenyon College.

"From the bottom of my heart I thank you for the message it contains for me. In all my search for the Truth, never have I found such inspiration as when reading and re-reading any of the poems. It truly is a message from where words cannot reach. During the reading of the poems it has come to me that as we have learned, that when the Apostle Paul came to Athens and he saw the many temples dedicated to the different gods, and one of the temples dedicated to the Unknown God, he declared to them that the same gods whom you worship ignorantly, Him I declare unto you real and a living God, and this is what I feel the poems declare unto me, a real living God." W. H. Starick, Cincinnati.

"The more I read them the better I realize how full they are of the joy of spiritual life and the delight in nature as the boundless expression of the Infinite Love and Wisdom. There are certain lines which I find especially uplifting and impress me as wonderful material for meditation." Marion Foster Gilmore, Louisville.

"The book has arrived and to say I am pleased with it does not begin to express my feeling. The poems seem to grow in power and depth of wisdom at each reading." Mr. Morrison P. Helling, of the Home of Truth, Utica, N. Y.

REPORT

On Christmas Eve, as usual, The Vedanta Centre of Boston, became a centre of glowing light, the flickering candles in its windows sending out through the night something deeper than cheer—a sense of holiness and of serene joy which found tender expression in the little window altar with its smiling Mother and Child, its ruby vigil light, its star-like tapers and its garlands. Strangers were irresistibly drawn in to the Christmas Eve Service, members came from out of town, while two friends travelled from distant points just to spend Christmas at the Centre. As a result the Chapel was filled to over-flowing and for the first time many availed themselves of the Centre's Christmas blessing. Chapel and shrine, with their soft lights and their profusion of flowers, threw a spell of silence over all hearts. There were carols before and during the Service, the members of the household singing together.

Swami Paramananda, after reading some of his yet unpublished poems, spoke in simple and loving words of the spirit of Christmas. "There are moments," said the Swami in part, "when the soul sings and these are very precious moments. The soul only sings when it has found its real joy. The significance of Christmas or similar feasts which we have in all countries among all nations, is to my mind the song of the soul, when the spirit rejoices, when it sings aloud with a sense of triumph. And why? Because in the world of gloom and despair it suddenly realizes its divine heritage, —a spark, a light, that comes from the darkness, revealing all things, relating all things and making us feel our own true worth. To me, that is the real significance of Christmas or the birth of any great Saviour." During the last meditation, the Swami's own beautiful song of Dawn, the words and music of which came to him recently at sun-rise, was sung without accompaniment, a single voice carrying the melody, and the combined voices coming in on the refrain "It is Dawn, holy Dawn." Many who had not heard it before took it for an ancient carol and for all it was indeed "The call of the Awakener" for the New Year.

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

FEBRUARY, 1923

Surrender and Spiritual Heroism

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Soul's Secret Door

By SWAMI PARAMANANDA

Handsome Flexible Binding, $2.00. Postage 10 Cents.

A NEW SINGER FROM OLD INDIA. Swami Paramananda, a gifted Oriental writer, offers an exceptionally fine book of verse. "It seems almost impossible that one born of another race could have so remarkable a command of English. There is a deep religious atmosphere about 'SOUL'S SECRET DOOR'. The intense devotion of which the Oriental mind is capable is the motivating power behind all his poems. To speak of special numbers in the present volume is difficult. Each one sounds a peculiar note and the variety of subjects is almost equal to the number of poems. In contrast to his more religious poems we have the Nature Songs, putting us in touch with the beauty around us,—the trees, the flowers, daytime and night. Throughout all the poems one finds a remarkable spirit of universality. One feels that it is distinctively neither East nor West, neither Hindu nor Christian, neither 'Jew nor Greek.' So we have a volume of seventy-two poems rich in ideas, clothed in perfect language and possessing the rare combination of refreshing simplicity and lyrical beauty."

—*Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.*

One marvels at the command of English which the author possesses no less than at the deep understanding he displays in linking the distant past with the present. Each poem is complete and in all of them is to be found a spirit of universality—a feeling that all men are of the same kind whether of one race or of another, whether of this century or two thousand years ago. Uplifting, refreshing and thought-provoking, for the more one reads the author's poems the more fully does one begin to understand them. "SOUL'S SECRET DOOR" is a collection of literary gems with a message for all.

—*St. Louis Times.*

The sense of rest, peace and security that emanates from these verses comes like a healing balm in this turbulent and restless atmosphere in which we live. The verses teach patient waiting and infinite faith in the all-abiding good.

—*The Bookseller and Stationer, N. Y.*

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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PRAYER

O THOU eternal, all-compassionate Spirit, our lack of love hinders our access to Thee.

Do Thou lift our hearts from the mire of delusion that we may rejoice in Thy Presence.

Grant that we may learn to be firm and strong and selfless in Thy service, never losing the vision that Thou art the Doer and we are only instruments in Thy hands.

Help us to surrender our little will to Thine and to be wholly consecrated to Thee.

Thou art the Giver of all strength, give us undying spiritual strength.

Thou art the Giver of all inspiration, give us high and holy inspiration.

Thou art the Giver of all light, illumine our hearts with Thy divine radiance that our darkness and ignorance may vanish.

Thou art the Giver of all blessedness, fill our life with blessing and noble aspiration.

Thou art the Giver and Thou art the Gift; grant unto us the power to receive Thy gift.

Do Thou ever protect us and guide us by Thy compassionate hand.

Make our steps steadfast and unfaltering.
Teach us how to follow Thy holy path with unwavering faith and undaunted courage;
Though many times we fail and stumble, still may we never doubt Thy loving care.
Free us from all selfishness and egotism that we may live happily, loving even those who do not bear love towards us.
Thou art our tender Mother and protecting Father,
Thou art our Friend, Companion and Spiritual Guide.
Do Thou reveal unto us Thy abiding Presence that we may learn to surrender with wholeness of devotion and fulfill Thy Will through our life and actions.
We pray unto Thee to bless and sustain us and bestow upon us Thy divine peace. —*Swami Paramananda.*

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Take refuge in Him with all thy heart; through His grace thou shalt attain Supreme Peace and the Eternal Abode.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

O Lord, give what Thou wilt, and how much Thou wilt, and when Thou wilt. Deal with me as Thou thinkest good. Set me where Thou wilt, and deal with me in all things just as Thou wilt. Behold, I am Thy servant, prepared for all things: for I desire not to live unto myself, but unto Thee; and oh, that I could do it worthily and perfectly!—*Thomas a Kempis.*

Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust.
—*Psalms.*

In the prayer of rapture man is effaced from self, so that he is not conscious of his body, nor of things outward

and inward. From these he is rapt, journeying first to his Lord, then in his Lord. If it occur to him that he is effaced from self it is a defect. The highest state is to be effaced from effacement.—*Ghazzali.*

Have I ever been restrained from what I willed? Or compelled against my will? Indeed how is this possible? I have ranged my pursuits under the direction of God. Is it His will that I should have a fever? It is my will too. Is it His will that I should pursue anything? It is my will too. Is it His will that I should obtain anything? It is my will too. Is it His will that I should be tortured? Then it is my will to be tortured. Is it His will that I should die? Then it is my will to die.—*Epictetus.*

Let us throw self aside; no more self-interest, and then God's will, unfolding every moment in everything, will console us also every moment for all that He shall do around us or within us for our discipline.—*Fenelon.*

The Tathagata teaches a complete surrender of self, but he does not teach a surrender to those powers that are evil, be they men or gods or the elements of nature. Struggle must be for all life is struggle of some kind. But he that struggles should look to it lest he struggle in the interest of self against truth and righteousness.—*Buddha.*

Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.

—*Proverbs.*

If one acquires the conviction that everything is done by God's Will, that one is only the tool in the hands of God, then is one free even in this life.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

When the mind thinks nothing, when the soul covets nothing, and the body acteth nothing that is contrary to the will of God, this is perfect sanctification.—*Anonymous.*

SURRENDER

By Swami Paramananda

In spiritual life the surrender of self-will plays a most vital part, yet this abnegation to some higher power than our own should not be confounded with self-immolation. In fact spiritual surrender is just the opposite of what is understood in the world by surrender. In material life after we have exhausted all other resources, after every effort has failed and there is nothing more left for us to do, we begin to think about surrendering to God. It is forced upon us; we have no other alternative. In spiritual life it is quite the contrary. When we feel the dawning of a new consciousness, we realize that our physical life should depend upon its spiritual Source. This awakens in us a sense of higher power within—a power so vibrant and majestic that we surrender before it with gladness of heart. It is not through a sense of helplessness or defeat that we turn to this Supreme Source, but with the realization that finite should always seek its support in the Infinite. Herein lies the fullness of our strength and our unfailing security.

Surrender is never accomplished through mental calculation. It is the spontaneous feeling of our heart. It comes when we know, when we feel, that there is nothing more trustworthy, nothing more secure, nothing more wise or more competent than the Supreme. Saintly characters do not take their destiny in their own hands. They depend rather on the will of God. They do not ask for anything even in their prayers; they accept joyfully whatever comes through the divine Will. This requires great strength, faith and spiritual insight. We cannot expect to gain this all at once. The majority of us have been brought up with a very different idea; our education, sur-

roundings and atmosphere have been the very opposite of surrender. It is our ego that is dominant. Yet even when we do not have the spirit of complete surrender, we should try as much as possible to connect ourselves with the Infinite Source.

Our egotistic sense plays a treacherous and very unhealthy part in our life. It holds out so much promise and it gives so little! In its self-importance it wants to take the place of the Lord. When we have even a little flash of spiritual wisdom we come to see how unwise it is to depend upon the mundane and the fleeting. Our understanding grows deeper and we learn to surrender, not only sometimes but at all times,—in happiness and misery, in success and failure. We strive, not to suit our own convenience, but to adjust our life to the divine order. A real lover of truth, a devotee, takes everything in this light. He would rather have poverty with the Will of God than riches without His Will. We must never lose sight of this goal.

It is a beautiful thing to be able to feel and know that we are in God's hands. Whether our life is of apparent insignificance or of great importance, it is equally in His hands. These relative matters do not count; what counts is this deeper aspect wherein we feel our spiritual existence. Love of God is not confined to any station in life; it has nothing to do with riches or with poverty; it requires sincerity, purity of heart, guilelessness, and these are every man's natural heritage. He who possesses these qualities, his life is always pointed towards God. When misfortune thwarts him, he accepts it with thanksgiving; when good fortune shines upon him, he takes it as a blessing.

Sri Ramakrishna gives the parable of a poor working

man who was also a great devotee. Every evening when his work was done his custom was to sit alone in the outer court of his house and chant the Name of the Lord. It was his only recreation and his source of re-creation. One night as he was doing this he became so absorbed in the companionship of the Holy Presence that he lost all sense of time. The hour grew late and a band of robbers who were passing seized him and forced him to carry their loot for them. As they were robbing a house, they were surrounded, but they all escaped, all except the poor devotee.

When he was brought before the judge, the whole community protested; they said that he was a holy man, incapable of doing such an act. Finally the judge questioned him and the man replied: "Through the Lord's Will I ate my supper and through the Lord's Will I was resting and through the Lord's Will I was repeating a holy chant. Through the Lord's Will it was a late hour, and through the Lord's Will some thieves were passing and seized me. Through the Lord's Will I was arrested and through the Lord's Will I have been brought before you." One who has the right feeling of surrender never forgets.

"Thy Will be done!" Many among us can easily repeat these beautiful words. It is a saying which runs through almost all religions; but it is much easier to repeat than to put into practice. At first we are afraid that we may lose our individual independent action by surrender; but when we realize the infinitude of God, it is out of fullness and gladness and great wisdom that we fasten our heart, our whole being, to that One. There was once a mystic who said: When will that blessed day come when I shall be imprisoned hand and foot, heart and mind and brain? When will that blessed hour come when I shall

wholly lose my freedom? It may seem very confusing to the average mind that any one should want to be so imprisoned to the Will of God that he no longer has any independent will of his own.

How often in the life of Christ it was asked of Him why He did not save Himself, He Who was so great. "He saved others, himself he cannot save." He never wished it otherwise. Was not His constant prayer,—Thy Will be done in all things? Is it not the prayer of all great souls,—the height of spiritual realization? It does not mean asking only for that which seems to us to be good. Our vision is not far-reaching; we often blunder. Even apparent good may prove neither good nor permanent. Therefore the devotee puts aside his self-will and prays that God's Will may work through him, through his body, his mind, his heart, his soul; and this is called surrender. There is no difference between the wise man who knows his Self to be united with God, and says "I am He; I and my Father are one"; and the other wise man who says, "Not I, not I! Let Thy Will be done in all things! Not I, but Thou!" They have both transcended the limitations of name and form and self-will and have found their refuge in that unbounded Spirit. They are both surrendered before the one omniscient Will. They voice the same experience in two different utterances. He who says, "I am He" does not mean this flesh, this little personality, but That which permeates and pervades the whole; while the other who says: "Not I! Thou art all!" has become so filled with the Presence of God that he surrenders awe-stricken before the Infinitude of Deity.

But this inner life is shut to most people,—a closed book. There are some who think that they can grasp the theme of God intellectually and prove the existence

of Divinity through a series of arguments. That is not practical in the realm of spiritual reality. On the contrary these processes often drive us further away from our goal. It is rather the inner vision that we need in order to get free from the turbulence of the world. To gain this clear vision, we must cultivate steadfast devotion to our ideal. Devotion, prayer, meditation,— these practices which are inseparable from the spiritual life are the means by which we gain it. Spiritual life should always unfold itself with freshness of feeling. We may take inspiration from all sources, but no matter wherefrom it comes, we must give it spontaneous expression through our thought, word and action.

There are people who live in only one thought:—to realize God, to express spiritual beauty through their life and consciousness. In India to-day you will find hundreds of men and women who go about without any thought for themselves because their supreme faith is fastened, not on their muscles or their material revenue, but on God. They know that whatever comes, they will be taken care of. It is most wonderful, that when a man can express this feeling of perfect surrender, no evil can come to him. He has given a death-blow to evil. It is our calculation, our lack of faith, our doubt of ourselves, and of truth which open avenues for ailments and imperfections. When we rely on the spirit of God with absolute firmness and conviction, then when the unexpected comes, even if it is not pleasing to us, it will make no difference. If our surrender is complete we shall not be thwarted or unnerved, but if it is merely a theory, we cannot help but be overthrown by every difficulty.

I know through my own experience as well as from what I have seen in the lives of holy men, that the spirit

of surrender is the greatest treasure one can procure for oneself and for humanity. We do not ask to be protected and yet we are eternally protected; we do not ask for anything for ourselves and yet the supply is so inexhaustible that it fills our life till it overflows and gives abundantly to others.

DEPENDENCE ON GOD

By St. Catherine of Siena

A soul that loves God perfectly ends by forgetting herself and all other creatures. Such a soul, seeing that of herself she is nothing, and that all her being depends on God, in Whom alone and in no creature, she finds by experience that her happiness must rest, forsakes both herself and all things, to plunge herself as it were into the love of Him, directing to Him all her works and thoughts and powers. Without Him she cares not to be, because in Him she finds all that can delight the heart, all beauty, all sweetness, all quietness and all peace. And so, the bond of love between her and God growing closer, she comes as it were to be wholly transformed in Him. And at length it comes to pass that she can love, delight, think and remember no other thing than Him only. All other creatures she loves and considers in Him, even as a man who dives and swims under the water sees and seeks nothing which is not either the water or what is contained in the water. And even if he sees anything out of the water, he sees it not properly as it is in itself, but as the likeness of it appears in the water.

All the affections and powers unite in perfect souls to produce one harmonious sound, like the chords of a musical instrument. The powers of the soul are the great chords, the senses and sentiments of the body, the smaller

ones. And when all these are used to the praise of God and in the service of our neighbour, they produce one sound like that of a harmonious organ. All the saints have touched this organ and drawn forth musical tones. The first who sounded it was a sweet and loving Word, whose humanity united to His Divinity made sweet music of the wood of the cross. And all His servants have learnt of Him as of their Master, to give forth the same music, some in one way and some in another, Divine Providence giving all instruments on which to play.

MAN IS THY LYRE

By Julia P. Dabney

Man is Thy lyre, O Lord,
Man is Thy lyre!
Sweep us with uttered word;
Strike us with fire!
Set every fine-stretched string
Vitally vibrating,
Teaching our souls to sing
As Thy word may require.
Man is Thy lyre, O God;—
Touch us with fire!

Man is Thy lyre, O Lord!
If the string slack,
Cometh no living word
Answering back.
Oh if a string shall break,
Never a song shall wake,
Only a quivering ache,
Mocked of its high desire!
Man is Thy lyre, O God;—
Grant us Thy fire!

SPIRITUAL HEROISM

By Sister Daya

Heroism is a quality that lies latent in all human hearts. There is no coward so mean as not to have felt at some time or other life leap up within him in response to the heroic. It is like a bugle call to the human soul, bidding it come out into the big, free spaces of thought and action and give itself utterly. The heroic by its very nature wipes out all petty thoughts of small self-interest, in scorn of the mean and the personal. So mighty is its power that at its touch men struggle for the privilege of sacrifice and death. It brings out in us all that is magnanimous, noble and self-forgetting.

Man cannot live without the heroic. He must have it in some form or another, though we must admit that he generally prefers to take it vicariously through books. There comes a time, however, when mere words prove powerless to satisfy the hunger which he feels, to give himself for something that is greater than himself. It is out of this restless craving that wars are often born. When life becomes heavy with matter, when physical comfort fattens into an ideal and sordid self-seeking is held up as the wisest course of action, then men grow sick at heart, they know not why, and lacking higher vision, turn to the sacrifice of war as though it were food for their starving souls.

But man, if he only knew it, does not need to turn to war for the heroic. There is a heroism so much greater than the heroism of war that the laying down of the mere physical life seems comparatively easy beside it. There is an ideal so much loftier than all other ideals that the least we dare offer it is our whole being. The spiritual life is the heroic life. Those who turn away from it and re-

vile it, those who meet it with ridicule or contempt are not big enough to understand it and not brave enough to live it. The heroism that it requires is not an emotional heroism nor is it destructive to others. It is the continual and deliberate slaying of the petty self with its brood of demands and desires. It is the doing of this not for any hope of reward, not even to gain power or illumination, but for pure love of the Divine,—the all-wonderful Spirit within.

To struggle for months and then to fail, yet not to let that failure cloud our heart, our faith or our courage, is to be heroic. To guard ceaselessly every act and every thought that the enemy, self, may not enter in and to do this as vigilantly in times of spiritual deadness as in hours of burning fervour, is to be heroic. To refuse to hear any voice but the clear voice of the Spirit even when jealousy, anger and spiteful tattle are most clamorous, is to be heroic. To give all that we have and are through endless time to the Ideal and be content to find our only reward in the giving, is to be truly heroic. "The blessing of the vision is the vision itself, there is no other." Once we have gained that vision we know there could be no other, but on the way to it come moments of such blankness that if we are not steadfast, there is danger of our casting the hope of eternity aside for some fleeting human comfort.

Non-resistance, utter surrender to the Supreme! Dare the man of the world say that these take no heroism. No heroism to strip oneself bare of everything and place oneself in the hands of a Power that one as yet knows only through faith? It requires divine heroism. Some make the attempt, but they forget that "renunciation means giving up never to take back" and when danger threatens they resist with all the force of their human will. Theirs

is not the heroic spirit. The true hero will never take himself back. Even when faith is gone he will still give from the depths of his despair.

Giving is the key-note, ungrudging giving, but this giving must not spring from impulse. It must be the expression of our attitude towards life. Be too great of spirit ever to claim anything for yourself. Offer to life more than life can possibly take. Whatever it demands of us let us reply: "Is this all that you ask? I am ready to give far greater things than this." Remember that it is the resistance of the body that makes possible the cut of the sword.

Even physical pain can be lessened by non-resistance. When pain comes, if instead of shrinking from it, we throw open all the gates of our body as though we welcomed it; if we cease opposing it with tense nerves and contracted muscles we shall find that it becomes more friendly. But this is only incidental. The heroic spirit is not seeking for itself; it sweeps us beyond self into a purer region. Many times we touch those heights and cannot hold them. Yet that is no reason for discouragement if we have the strength to keep steadily on upon our chosen path, unshaken and unshakable.

To feel the Divine Flame within is an enormous aid, but our real spiritual gain is made when that flame seems to burn low. It is then that we learn to be steadfast and unless we are steadfast in every condition, how may we be trusted? It is during the hours of darkness and lack of vision that the petty human considerations seek entrance into our consciousness. Therefore the victories we gain then are fundamental. We are impregnable at no time if we are not impregnable at all times.

In India disciples are often put through searching tests

in order to try the metal of their souls. Do they seek surrender to God? Then let them show how well they can obey their spiritual Master. Swami Vivekananda used to question his pupils when they would speak of their undying devotion to him: "Would you be willing to go into the jaws of a tiger or before the mouth of a cannon if I were to ask you?" He knew that words without acts were like empty pods and also he knew that such devotion backed by action would sweep away all obstacles to spiritual attainment.

This uncalculating, selfless spirit has animated every true Saint and Saviour. They all stand forth as heroic figures. The worldly minded are apt to think of the spiritual life as lacking in red blood, an anemic existence fit only for weaklings and women. But let them who think thus stand as did the Christ before false accusers and keep silence. A thousand little injustices will come up in every day life by which they can test their inward strength. Have they the power to refrain from self-justification? We sometimes can control great anger, intense passion, but the small things, the passing spite, the gossipy word, the foolish vanities and hypocricies, choke our soul's growth in spite of all our efforts.

Dwelling on the heroic is an enormous help in the inner life. We need the bigness of it. A man may practise all manner of austerities, may be unflinching in the discipline which he gives his physical body, he may even be a so-called teacher of men, but if he is capable of subtle insinuations, of mean jealousy, of slurring remarks about a brother, he is neither heroic nor spiritual. There is something in the petty, utterly stultifying to the human soul. Even war with all its terror and awfulness is not as detrimental to man's progress as are the small daily conten-

tions of personal life. War has given us many instances of selfless devotion, such for instance as the sacrifice of Arnold von Winkelried at the battle of Sempach. The Swiss army was being broken to pieces on a solid wall of Austrian spears when von Winkelried leaped forward, gathered in his arms as many spears as he could reach and buried them in his own breast. This caused a breach in the enemy's ranks through which the Swiss rushed to victory. Anything that has the element of bigness gives room for the stirring of Spirit but there is nothing heroic in a household squabble.

When we feel inclined to brood upon paltry wrongs, let us summon before our mind's eye these uplifting pictures. Let us think of the great Indian Saint, Sri Ramakrishna who while in meditation under the Panchabati tree consciously entered into the one great Life of the universe as it moves through countless forms, becoming so dissolved in it that afterwards he was able to share the feeling of even a tiny leaf when it was broken. As we dwell on this will there be room in our minds for small grievances? Shall we not share a faint reflection of his vision? Or let us take the Gita and stand on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, beholding through the eyes of Arjuna the supreme and infinite form of the Lord. It was Arjuna who when given the choice by Sri Krishna, the Lord, of having a great army without His presence, or of having Him, the Lord, as his charioteer and no army, chose to stand alone with the Lord.

Shall we be capable of petty demands or thoughts of self if we constantly contemplate such things? India, the very cradle of the Spirit, has raised her children on ideals like these. She has always united the heroic with the spiritual. They must be united where realization crowns

theory, where "being and becoming" is demanded of the devotee. In the Occident, religion became associated in men's minds with weakness and inefficiency only when realization was no longer demanded of its protagonists.

It is an interesting fact that almost all the great Hindu Avatars and spiritual reformers have come not from the Brahman or priestly caste, but from the Kshatriyas or rulers, who were warriors by tradition and heroes by nature. "Bravery, energy, firmness, skill and also not flying from the battle, generosity, lordliness, are the duties of Kshatriyas" says the Gita. Likewise it was true of them that they gave refuge to the wounded and protection to all who sought sanctuary with them. They were truly Aryan or noble and they awakened India again and again with the living word of the Spirit: "Arise! awake! Having reached the Great Ones gain understanding." Sri Krishna's chiding of Arjuna at the opening of the Gita, strikes the same heroic note: "O Arjuna, whence comes upon thee in this critical moment this depression unworthy of an Aryan, disgraceful, and contrary to the attainment of Heaven? O son of Pritha, yield not to unmanliness; it does not befit thee. Casting off this mean faint-heartedness, arise, O terror of thy foes!"

It may be asked what instinct is there in the human soul that urges it on into the heroic. Surely only a fool gives everything for nothing. Why should one surrender to an abstraction even to the point of death? The answer to the first question answers them all. The instinct which leads and will lead men to the heroic Ideal is the God-instinct within us. There is but one Life manifesting through ever-shifting form. We are That; we live because of That; we love because of That; we think because of That; we breathe because of That. From It springs

our aspiration for It is the life-breath of the soul.

All we lack is realization of this oneness. Like a man fighting his way through nightmare dreams to the sunlight of morning, we struggle through this dream of separated life to an awakening beyond mind and speech. Once we have even faintly recognized our Source, we must strive and ever strive for conscious union with It. Surrender to that One is said to be the crowning glory of existence, the ultimate fulfillment of all desire. Every yearning we have ever felt for anything has been but a yearning for this ultimate Light and Life, though we knew it not, and when it fills us it will fill us utterly. At first it may seem only an abstraction but to the brave, steadfast heart it soon manifests as supreme reality, more intimate than the personal, more vast than the sky. "The blessing of the vision is the vision itself," but only he who is heroic enough to cast all his human littleness into the pure fire of renunciation, will be great enough to perceive it.

THE PURE MEN OF OLD

By Chuang-Tzu. 4th Century B.C.

He who knows what God is, and who knows what man is, has attained. Knowing what God is, he knows that he himself proceeded therefrom. Knowing what man is, he rests in the knowledge of the known, waiting for the knowledge of the unknown. Working out one's allotted span and not perishing in mid career, this is the fulness of knowledge.

But what is a pure man?—The pure men of old acted without calculation, not seeking to secure results. They laid no plans. Therefore, failing, they had no cause for regret; succeeding, no cause for congratulation. And

thus they could scale heights without fear; enter water without becoming wet; fire, without feeling hot. So far had their wisdom advanced towards Tao (the Divine).

The pure men of old slept without dreams, and waked without anxiety. They ate without discrimination, breathing deep breaths. For pure men draw breath from their uttermost depths; the vulgar from the throat only.

If men's passions are deep, their divinity is shallow. The pure men of old did not know what it was to love life or to hate death. They did not rejoice in birth, nor strive to put off dissolution. They did not forget whence it was they had sprung, neither did they seek to hasten their return thither. Cheerfully they played their allotted parts, waiting patiently for the end. This is what is called not leading the heart astray from Tao, nor letting the human seek to supplement the divine. And this is what is meant by a pure man.

Such men are in mind absolutely free; in demeanor, grave; in expression, cheerful. If it is freezing cold, it seems to them like autumn; if blazing hot, like spring. Their passions occur like the four seasons. They are in harmony with all creation, and none know the limit thereof.

The outward appearance of the pure men of old derived its charm from the store of goodness within. They seemed to be of the world around them, while proudly treading beyond its limits. They seemed to desire silence, while in truth they had dispensed with language.

If you do not permit yourself to live for yourself, then involuntarily from boredom you begin to live for others.

—*Tolstoy.*

FOURTEENTH ANNIVERSARY

Of The Vedanta Centre of Boston

On the evening of January 9th the Vedanta Centre of Boston celebrated its 14th anniversary. So swiftly do the years fly by and so vivid are the memories of the Centre's small beginnings and early struggles that it is hard for the older members to realize that it has grown to be an old and established work with a very real place in the community. In spite of a night that had turned the sidewalks into paths of ice—a cold stormy night—the Chapel was well filled. Many old friends were present as well as many new ones and not a few strangers, who then and there became friends. A rare and lovely simplicity, characteristic of all the Centre's activities, seemed to pervade the whole atmosphere, causing every one to feel spiritually at home.

Swami Paramananda spoke as usual with directness and spontaneity on the growth and the ideals of the work. First, however, he called upon Sister Daya to give a brief report of the year just passed. The Sister did not touch upon dates and figures but strove to draw a picture of the inner life which lies back of the outer life of the Centre. She said that what the world would call a good report might be a danger signal in a work of this kind; but that the members need have no fear of the material element creeping in and destroying the spiritual beauty of the Vedanta Centre. It had a safe-guard that would protect it even though it grew many times as large and that safeguard was the Swami. So long as he was the head and the heart of the work it would never lose its spiritual quality. She referred to the peculiarly rapid growth that had been made during the past year in the face of outer difficulties and problems. "But just as flowers when

bruised breathe forth a richer scent, so a soul," she said, "under the pressure of circumstance manifests its essential quality." The weight of trouble had drawn from the Swami neither despondency nor complaint, but a collection of rare poems which had sustained the household through many trying hours and had seemed, as it were, the fragrance of his spiritual being. In this way even hardships had been turned into blessings.

SWAMI PARAMANANDA'S ADDRESS

Then the Swami spoke. "This celebration" he began, "is like the birthday of an individual, but it should not be observed merely through feasting. Its aim and object is to prepare us for another year's work so that we may set forth with hearts full of prayer and humility, with clear inner conviction and with renewed consecration. When these are united within us we cannot go wrong, but when we lack these, no matter how vigorous our efforts may be, our path is fraught with danger.

When this work was first started it was a question whether or not we should organize it as every society is organized with by-laws and officers. Of course organization has its advantages. It provides a background; but also spiritually it can weaken. I wanted to experiment, to build on a spiritual basis, laying just as little importance as possible on the mechanical side. It is no easy thing to begin a new work, especially in a strange country among strange people. Out of many thousands you perhaps find one who has the courage and the conviction to stand up and acknowledge his belief. The majority are too afraid of public opinion. In these circumstances many of my friends doubted the wisdom of trying to adopt new methods; but it was my firm conviction and through divine grace it has, I think, proved successful. I hope it

may always prove so. If we have too many forms and boundary lines we become narrowed down.

A point now has been reached where the work justifies a place two or three times as large as its present home, even to accommodate the Sunday attendance. But when it comes to enlarging the work I feel reluctant. It is not limited to this place. I hope it never will be, for the Spirit to which we have consecrated our lives, is not limited. There are yearning hearts everywhere. The work has eager friends all over the United States and even abroad. I have travelled as much as 25,000 miles in one year, sometimes going twice to California and back, as well as making many trips to nearby places,—cities within a thousand miles or less. As a result of these journeys, people have been drawn here from great distances. This year there have been friends from Louisville, Washington, New York and Cincinnati. Recently a gentleman whom I met in Portland, Oregon, came over from New York City where he was visiting, just to attend our Christmas services. He returned to New York and he is with us again to-night. These things are gratifying. They mean that the Centre in a small measure is fulfilling its mission.

I have gone on quietly these years and I am perfectly willing to wait. What we are trying to do is to create an atmosphere with our life, our devotion and our spirit of service. If we had weighed and measured our success, if we had calculated how many came or stayed away, I think there would be few here now. That driving attitude for success would have made it impossible for me to endure the ordeal I went through right here in Boston. To-day we have a big place and a large number of friends. It was not

always so; but always I have had One Friend to guide me and always will I take the guidance of that Friend.

Whether the Centre grows or receives a check may we ever bear in mind that ours is to render service with the same spirit that prompted us to start this work and to carry it on. So long as we hold to the ideal of simplicity and directness, the Spirit will not fail us. No man is so great that he should ever feel superior or indifferent to his fellow-beings. If he does he is no longer great; he has barred the road to greatness. True greatness consists in the simple life. It is a motto we are striving to make our own. Only when human calculation enters in do we grow narrow and mechanical. I pray with all my heart that those who come into this work may never lose that breadth of vision.

Before closing I would like to speak of one more thing: our little monthly magazine, "The Message of The East." When I returned from India in 1911 my mind conceived the idea of sending forth a message which would strike a universal note,—the message of the East. It was started very modestly, its growth has been unostentatious, but to-day it enters its twelfth year. The eleven volumes which comprise it are a wonderful addition to any library because in them we have tried to set forth not merely the mysticism of India or the tenets of any creed or cult, but the cream, the essence, of all the great thoughts of the world, Indo-Aryan, Greek, Persian, Chinese,—all.

It has not been an easy work. Practically every magazine carries a large number of advertisements. We have never had one single advertisement except our own book list. We were warned that it was a visionary idea, that we could never make such a magazine self-supporting. But a tree is known by its fruit. In recent years "The

Message" has fully paid for itself. People are learning to value it more and more. Not long ago a gentleman spent a generous sum trying to obtain an early volume.

You must realize that our workers, none of them, are paid anything for their efforts. It is a labor of love. In India, the Ramakrishna Mission of which this work is a part, has various lines of activity, not merely teaching but relief work of all kinds. At the call of distress whether from flood, famine or plague, the Mission brothers and their assistants go voluntarily to render service because they love to serve. Love for love's sake; service for the sake of service, this is the inspiration of our work. We have been asked what we get out of it. What we get out of it is incalculable; the results cannot be measured. Should we spoil them by seeking a small material return? Can we calculate the influence the work is exerting to-day among people? May it always be that way,—"Noiseless dew-drops falling on unopened flower-buds, not conscious of their heavenly heritage,"— so that those connected with the work may grow stronger, more courageous, more unselfish, more wholly consecrated. In our human relationships we do not often gain outer recognition, but if we can keep our inner fire clear and glowing, then whether we are thrown among friends or in the midst of strangers we shall find a bond of fellowship just from the fact that we are human beings, born of the one common Divine stock."

Interwoven with the various activities of the evening was lovely music from cello, violin and organ, contributed by three talented friends of the Centre. Light refreshments were served after which the guests went reluctantly home. Even then the celebration continued, for at midnight, by special invitation, Mr. Walter Hampden, the

great Shakespearean actor, with Mrs. Hampden and other prominent members of the company walked from the theatre to the Centre in a driving snow and stayed till two o'clock in the morning.

REPORT

On January 14th immediately after the Sunday morning service, Swami Paramananda left for the middle west on a short lecture tour, his first trip away from Boston since last March. Cincinnati, Louisville and Dayton were the only cities he was able to visit. This gave the Swami ample time to speak at least twice in each place and yet be back in Boston for the following Sunday. Louisville was particularly warm in its welcome, but everywhere he met with deep and sincere appreciation. One new feature was added to his program,—the reading of his poems at the morning class following the evening address.

In Cincinnati the Swami's coming gladdened the hearts of the small group of faithful workers who truly constitute an outpost of the Boston Centre. For long months they have held together with unshakable faith and fervour, thus proving their steadfastness. Six of the devoted students even followed the Swami to Dayton in order to be present at his evening lecture before the Dayton Psychology Club. This necessitated their leaving Cincinnati in the afternoon immediately after the close of business and returning from Dayton before dawn so as to be back home for the opening of business in the morning. Of the blessing this brought to them all, one of the young men writes: "I can still hear the lingering accents of Swami's voice, giving us his blessing and pouring forth those sacred poems. 'Forward, ever onward, my soul, march on!' Surely he has opened my Soul's Secret Door. As our train sped along the next morning I felt as though I was leaving hallowed ground."

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

MARCH, 1923

POWER OF FAITH

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Soul's Secret Door

By SWAMI PARAMANANDA

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There is poetry in the soul of India. Rabindranath Tagore has taught this to the western world, thanks largely to the fame and influence incident to his winning of the Nobel Prize. But there are other singers native to this country, both ancient and modern, whose voices have the authentic note of inspiration.

One of these, well known to many persons in America, is the leader of the Vedanta Centre in Boston (Massachusetts), Swami Paramananda, whose most recent publication is a volume of poetry entitled "Soul's Secret Door." Here is the calm, exalted type of spirituality which is so distinctive of Hindu thought at its best and highest. A noble mysticism, expressed in lovely, simple, lucid English phrase, is present in all these verses as at once an atmosphere and an illumination. What is there in the Hindu mind which enables these easterners to set forth these fundamental truths of the inner life, both of the soul and of the universe in which the soul has its abode, with a candor and clarity which altogether escape the intracies of meaningless abstraction into which our western minds so easily tumble when they attempt to grapple with the infinite? And what is the secret of the sheer beauty in which this mind surely clothes its thought?

"Soul's Secret Door" reminds the western reader of "Gitanjali," and other writings of Tagore, but only as Longfellow would remind the eastern reader of Lowell and Whittier. East is east and west is west, after all! But behind this common cadence of the soul is originality, seeking its own thought by its own right and its own way. We append one of the poems, ("My Lowly Cottage"), that our readers may taste this book in anticipation of feeding upon it.—*John Haynes Holmes, Unity, Chicago.*

The contemplative mood of the Hindu psalms in the Swami Paramananda's book, "Soul's Secret Door," is characteristically Oriental. All sing the oneness of the soul with and in God. Some of these lyrics reprove the material character of our times. The book sheds an almost tonic sense of peace and repose.—*Evening Post, New York.*

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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KINGDOM OF PURE THOUGHT

By Swami Paramananda

OUR thoughts lift us up to vision's lofty heights,
Where we stand upright and strong
As if out of evil's ominous reach.
Then again our own thoughts,
Blinding our mind by false persuasion,
Lead us downward to a narrower sphere,
Enchaining us to a world of endless conflict.
Here we struggle, carrying heavy loads,
And our dejected hearts bend down with broken faith.
Greed, ambition, self-love and pride
Drag us on through this mire of ignorance.
Help us! Help us! we cry in agony of soul.
Give us again our lost kingdom of pure thought;
Restore unto us our peace.
We ask no more for the vanities of this world.
Master of Fate!
O Lord of Light!
Save us! Save us!
With helpless heart we pray unto Thee!

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Have faith in God. Therefore, I say unto you what things soever ye desire when ye pray believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them.—*Jesus the Christ.*

The heart of love and faith spreads, as it were, a beneficent shade from the world of men to the world of gods.

Therefore, O Bhikkhus, be full of faith, modesty in heart, afraid of sin, anxious to learn, strong in energy, active in mind and full of wisdom.—*Buddha.*

We sleep in peace in the arms of God when we yield ourselves up to His providence, in a delightful consciousness of His tender mercies; no more restless uncertainties, no more anxious desires, no more impatience at the place we are in; for it is God who has put us there, and who holds us in His arms. Can we be unsafe where He has placed us?—*Fenelon.*

He who has not faith in others, shall find no faith in them.—*Laotze.*

He who can resign himself to the will of the Lord with simple faith and guileless devotion, attains unto Him without delay. He who has faith has all, and he who lacks faith lacks all.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

He who believes in God is not careful for the morrow, but labors joyfully and with a great heart. "For He giveth His beloved, as in sleep." They must work and watch, yet never be careful or anxious; but commit all to Him, and live in serene tranquillity; with a quiet heart, as one who sleeps safely and quietly.—*Martin Luther.*

Man consists of his faith. He is verily what his faith is.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

CONSTRUCTIVE POWER OF FAITH

By Swami Paramananda

What economic value faith exerts upon our life! Our modern life so bent on practical utility will have no share in visions and uncertain speculation. So must we not set aside the doctrine of faith as an ornament of by-gone age? Yet in spite of all this barricade of material logic, the soul of man invariably turns its ear to the echo of the distant past,—"Verily I say unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place: and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." It leaves very little room for speculation. "Nothing shall be impossible unto you" is very definitely stated. Faith is a dynamic and a constructive force in our life. Through the exertion of this divine gift men have wrought miracles in every age and in every country. We may scoff at the very mention of faith and try to discard it from our highly civilized modern life, but in no way do we shake this eternal foundation of truth save to impoverish our individual life.

Perhaps one strong reason for our disinclination towards faith is that it cannot stand the test of science. Faith and rationalism are not opposed to each other. In fact they supplement each other. The faculty of pure reasoning leads us to knowledge and knowledge gives us faith. Perhaps if we put belief, reason, knowledge and faith together, we have the complete picture of mental phenomena. How our mind, as it were, climbs from belief to reason and through reason to knowledge, and from knowledge to ultimate faith. Perhaps we can make it clearer by relating it to our every day experience. Sometimes we gain information through a trustworthy source and we say we believe it and are willing to make further

investigation in the matter. But if the same information is given by an untrustworthy person and if it seems unreasonable, we drop it and no further inquiry is made. So first we believe because of the trustworthy source; then we exert our reasoning faculty; we strive and inquire, and as the result of this we gain true knowledge of the subject. Then we can stand up and say, I have absolute faith in this. If this is true in our material life, how much more true it must be in the spiritual realm. For when we come upon the threshold of what science designates as unknowable phenomena, what better means can we have than to place our trust in that part of our being which does not come within the evidence of our physical senses.

From the crudest concept of religion to its purest and loftiest expression, tremendous emphasis has always been laid upon faith. Throughout the ages we find numberless instances of miracles perfomed through the power of faith. Are not miracles the working out of higher laws on the spiritual plane? The man of consecration who depends primarily on God, and knows that he is sustained by the Will of God, can perform that which may seem impossible or supernatural because he has united himself with the basic power of the universe. The skeptic, however, looks upon these happenings as brain hallucinations because he confuses faith with a morbid idea of non-action and argues that it is not for this age,—that we cannot live by faith alone. No teaching, however lofty it may appear, however much it may appeal to the aesthetic or intellectual sense, can hold man's regard for long unless it has a practical basis. Faith has found its fulfillment in the lives of the world's greatest men.

We are all creatures of faith. It is not that any of us fundamentally lack faith, but we all place our faith dif-

ferently; and a great deal of our variance springs from this cause. Our devotion to higher ideals of life, or lack of it, is directly due to where we place our trust. We are not attached to materiality through accident. It is because our inherent nature believes it to be of paramount importance. Our mind and heart will naturally follow their accustomed ways in spite of all our codes and creeds. We prove it especially in the hour of emergency. For instance, when a person is ill he calls a physician because he has faith in the power of the physician to cure him. Whenever we are in need of human assistance we call on those who can fulfill our requirements, because we have faith in them. Similarly there are souls who have unquestioning faith in God, and naturally in their hour of need they call on Him and receive their assistance from that divine Source. Faith in the Divine, however, can never be imitated. It must be natural, spontaneous and genuine.

We may ask, what is the philosophy of faith? It is most simple, but subtle. For this reason how often the worldly wise pass by its gate unaware of its benevolent power! That is why we find great men telling us again and again, unless we become like little children we cannot enter this holy kingdom of faith. But all our philosophic reasoning and genuine search will always lead us to the ultimate conclusion that the why and wherefore of our being is contained in the great Cause.

There is a great difference between faith and what people call belief. Belief is superficial and is most easily shaken, but faith makes us strong and steadfast. We cannot have faith in God unless we know that He exists. We cannot have faith in the immortality of our soul unless we have an inner conviction of immortality. Faith

is not an abstract indefinite sentiment to be put away on a shelf. At the outset it is necessary for us to exert our intellectual faculties to the utmost, but there are things we cannot grasp by reason only,—things which belong to the Infinite, and to these we can find our access more naturally through childlike simplicity and trust. A great teacher once said to a disciple who was inclined to tear things apart intellectually: "My son, do you think you can measure the Infinite with a tape measure?"

Divinity is ever present in every heart, but through our critical attitude and doubting mind we often deprive ourselves of Its beneficent Presence. Sri Ramakrishna used to say one finds God very directly and simply through faith, but intellectual arguments only drive Him further and further away. How often Christ said: "As ye believe, so will it be." A man of faith constructs something beautiful even in the midst of chaos, while he of doubting mind always destroys even that which has been created for his happiness. A doubting mind is a diseased mind. We are able neither to receive a blessing nor retain it so long as our mind is full of doubt and despair. Humanity finds its best expression in those who place their utmost trust in God and remain firm under all the varying circumstances of life. In this age of materiality it is most inspiring to see a man who is willing to face any difficulty, to lay down his life for the sake of his ideal. The skeptical man of the world will not believe in the conquering power of such a life. He wishes to accomplish everything at once. He has neither the spiritual insight nor the patience to wait, and he who will not wait for the cosmic law to work out, always perishes.

The man who is full of faith in the Divine does not work for self-gratification. He has a larger point of view.

He works for humanity. How could it be otherwise with one who has become part of God's plan? He has learned to offer himself in perfect faith and no matter in what circumstances he is placed, he never forgets that his life belongs only to that One. The man who stands on this rock of truth is unshakable. He is no longer connected with the small and the personal; he has connected himself with the cosmic force; he has set his faith right and because of that has become invincible. But placing our faith in God does not mean that we are going to eliminate all our troubles and tribulations. That is not so. On the contrary, our test may be greater than that of others. We should be very glad to have hardships placed upon us so that we may prove our faith. People who lack faith are, as a rule, always faint-hearted. Whenever a difficulty comes or too much is demanded of them, they give way because they have no trust in the infinite, inexhaustible reservoir of life.

Faith has a three-fold aspect. When we limit our concept of life to this little span of existence, we cannot help but doubt ourselves, doubt humanity and doubt God. These three go together. A man who has no faith in his own divine heritage cannot have faith in God; and a man who has no faith either in God or in himself certainly cannot have faith in humanity. Doubt throws the whole world into a state of turmoil. It destroys the moral fibre of humanity as well as the entire social fabric. Men grow suspicious of each other and this suspicion is not limited to a community or a country, it becomes a world-wide disease resulting in war, intolerance and all kinds of hideous conditions. The starting place for all this is the individual heart. Doubt is like a little germ which gets lodged in the heart and infects the whole being.

The degradation of the individual begins when he loses faith in the power of God and no longer believes that he has any access to Divinity. As soon as man allows himself to believe that he is not of God he cannot help but doubt himself. As he doubts himself, he lowers his standard and becomes incapable of doing anything good or noble. The Shepherd of Hermes tells us: "Turn unto the Lord with all thy heart and ask of him without doubting and Thou shalt know the mercy of the Lord; how that He will not forsake thee, but will fulfill the request of thy soul. For God is not as men mindful of the injuries He has received; but He forgets injuries and has compassion upon His creature. Wherefore purify thy heart from doubting and put on faith and trust in God; and thou shalt receive all that thou shalt ask. But if thou shouldst chance to ask somewhat and not immediately receive it, yet do not therefore doubt because thou has not presently received the petition of thy soul."

We must have faith. Faith in what, you may ask. In the nearest thing we can find. Is our life so devoid of good that we have nothing in which we can place our trust? There is a divine spark in humanity and the man of faith finds it; not only does he find it but with his faith he inspires even the skeptical and the doubting. That is one of the greatest services the master-spirits render to the world. By their own faith they awaken the faith of humanity. They trust even the wicked who come in contact with them and they overwhelm them by their child-like, simple and unquestioning trust. Such souls exert a constructive influence not only upon individuals but upon a whole community. Faith regenerates. There is no limit to the power of the human soul. A man who thinks himself the most sinful of all sinners, fallen without hope, rises to

his feet again when a wise and loving heart comes and rekindles in him the divine spark. No matter what he has done, no matter how deep has been his sin, he is redeemed.

You sometimes say, how can I believe when I have failed so many times? Do not doubt yourself. Do not be conscious only of the material aspect of your life; go deeper, to the Root, to the Source. Are we not part of the Cosmic universe? No matter how small or insignificant we may seem at times,—we are always connected with the great whole. That should be the starting point for our thought and action. As we think, so we become. If we begin by thinking we are sinners, born in iniquity, we shall very quickly become so. If we think that human beings cannot be trusted, because they are evilly constituted, we do injustice to humanity. But when people cheat us, rob us, maltreat us, how can we place our faith in them? There is a place in every heart upon which we can absolutely depend. We must try to find that. No matter how degraded a person may be, there is still within him the divine spark. If we fail to call that out, we have failed in our duty towards ourselves and towards our fellow-men. It may seem a difficult task. It is. It is no ordinary task. It is not for the person who is impatient for results and wants everything for himself. It is for those who have ideals and are ready to live and die for them.

We must learn to go deep down in our soul. As soon as we have found our centre of being, the whole aspect of of life changes. The person we doubted before, we now trust. The persons we shrank from, we now want to draw close to, for we find the same heart beating in their breasts as in our own. This discovery binds us to them with a bond of love. Do not lose your faith in humanity. The

spark of Divinity is everywhere. It may not always be shining on the surface. But never doubt, because by doubting we hinder ourselves and we also hinder others. No matter how many times we may be deceived we must make our faith more unshakable. Have faith in your spiritual being; believe in your divine heritage; remind yourself constantly that you are a child of God, that your life is not a matter of chance or accident, but that you have come directly from that one unchanging Source. This is a good way to lay our foundation.

Faith is a marvellous gift. It gives us direct access to Divinity. Contrary forces may come and try to make us disbelieve, but we have felt and we have known. When we feel and know, we do not doubt We should gather up all our efforts in order to reach that point in our spiritual evolution. One direct glimpse of our ideal will convince us. All the great personages in sacred history were men of tremendous faith in their spiritual power, in their divine heritage. Nothing could tempt them because what they had was infinitely finer than anything any one could give. They would not exchange their treasure for any material possession. It is said of Mohammed that his uncle tried to dissuade him from his religious ardor, as it was making him unpopular among the people. He offered him a large sum of money if he would keep quiet about his faith. This was Mohammed's answer: "If you gave me the sun in one hand and the moon in the other, I should not give it up." A stream can never go backward. When that stream of faith once begins to flow, it washes us clean of alien matter.

The more we know of the vastness, the infinitude of God, the greater grows our humility. There are certain principles which go with the spiritual life: faith, humility

and steadfast devotion. This devotion is not sentimentality; it is a definite glowing feeling that arises spontaneously from one's own inner depths. Without it we lose much of the beauty of life. There is no happiness for the man of doubting mind either in this world or the next, because we carry to the next world only the things we have set our heart on here. If our heart is set on the small and ephemeral, if petty ideas overwhelm us, we carry those with us. Therefore we must begin to make a spiritual foundation right from the beginning.

When a man says "I can't", it is because he is depending too much on his physical strength and his mental calibre, and does not take into consideration that higher power which sustains and directs him. Self-reliance and faith are not opposed. When we combine these two ideas we are invincible. God is ever seeking our co-operation and we must ever seek the aid and co-operation of God, no matter what task we undertake. When we place our trust in the Divine we can surmount all dangers and even death cannot thwart us.

One who knows definitely the majesty of his own soul and his alliance with Divinity never loses his courage or his faith. There are people who condemn a religion or philosophy without knowing anything about it, or even taking the trouble to investigate it. They think themselves very clever. On the contrary, they are destructive to themselves and to their fellow-beings. The Katha Upanishad says of these: "Fools dwelling in ignorance, yet imagining themselves wise and learned, go round and round in crooked ways, like the blind leading the blind." Such people again and again fall under the sway of disease, death and affliction. A simple trustful nature carries us smoothly over the sea of life, but when we be-

gin to dispute the why and wherefore of things we are overwhelmed. Once a man wanted to cross a river and a sage gave him an amulet and told him that it would carry him across the water safely. The man started with it and was surprised to see that he was able to walk over the water; but when he reached the middle of the river, curiosity entered his mind and he opened it to see what it was. He found only the name of the Lord Rama written on it and thought, "Is that all!" As soon as he lost his faith, he sank down.

Let us be silent and full of faith so that we can hear God's voice. This turbulent mind of ours plays havoc with us. It has power to create and also to destroy. It is one of the most potent instruments we have. We can so train it that it will be free from suspicion and doubt, full of trust in the Divine; or we can make it so unruly that it tears everything to pieces, even the most beautiful. We find people in the world who create an atmosphere of destruction behind them and before them and all about them. They not only have no peace in their own hearts, but they destroy the peace of others. For this reason Sri Krishna says with such dynamic force: "Cutting asunder with the sword of wisdom this doubt of Self, born of ignorance, lying in the heart, take refuge in Yoga of wisdom and arise!" It is good counsel for all of us. There are moments when we lose courage. The haze of doubt enshrouds our high vision and we feel downcast. But let us always carry in our heart the precious light of faith. At first it may seem very small, a little flickering candle light; but it will suffice, it will grow in volume, in power, if only we know how to nurture it. That is all we need to do.

Every one of us cannot become a master, but we can

place ourselves with unflinching faith directly under the guiding hand of God; but not with calculation as to how much we are going to get out of it. Those who ask nothing for themselves are the richest. They have abundance to give in the way of love, life and strength, because they are not beggars. Do not let us be beggars. When we know that the Infinite is our heritage, as our faith increases in that, the less we feel oppressed by material circumstances. The heart of the mystic always knows this and cries: "Oh! faith, faith; oh! marvellous virtue, which illumines the spirit of man and leads him to the knowledge of his Creator. Oh! virtue altogether lovely, so little known, and still less practised, yet which, once known, is so glorious, so full of unspeakable blessing."

SUMMUM BONUM

By Louise Imogen Guiney

Waiting on Him who knows us and our need,
Most need have we to dare not, nor desire,
But as He giveth, softly to suspire
Against His gift with no inglorious greed,
For this is joy, though still our joys recede;
And, as in octaves of a noble lyre,
To move our minds with His, and clearer, higher,
Sound forth our fate: for this is strength indeed.

Thanks to His love let earth and man dispense
In smoke of worship when the heart is stillest,
A praying more than prayer: "Great good have I,
Till it be greater good to lay it by;
Nor can I lose peace, power, permanence,
For these smile on me from the thing Thou willest!"

TRUST THYSELF

By Ralph Waldo Emerson

There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better for worse as his portion; that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till. The power which resides in him is new in nature, and none but he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know until he has tried. Not for nothing one face, one character, one fact, makes much impression on him, and another none. This sculpture in the memory is not without pre-established harmony. The eye was placed where one ray should fall, that it might testify of that particular ray. We but half express ourselves, and are ashamed of that divine idea which each of us represents. It may be safely trusted as proportionate and of good issues, so it be faithfully imparted, but God will not have his work made manifest by cowards. A man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best; but what he has said or done otherwise shall give him no peace.

Trust thyself; every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events. Great men have always done so, and confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being. And we are now men, and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny; and not minors and invalids in a protected corner,

not cowards fleeing before a revolution, but guides, redeemers and benefactors, obeying the Almighty effort and advancing on chaos and the dark.

SEEK THE HIGHEST

By Swami Vivekananda

Let your souls ascend day and night like an "unbroken string" unto the feet of the Beloved, whose throne is in your own hearts, and let the rest take care of themselves, that is the body and everything else. Life is evanescent, a fleeting dream; youth and beauty fade;—say day and night, "Thou art my father, my mother, my husband, my love, my lord, my God—I want nothing but Thee, nothing but Thee. Nothing but Thee, nothing but Thee. Thou in me, I in Thee; I am Thou, Thou art me." Wealth goes, beauty vanishes, life flies, powers fly—but the Lord abideth forever, love abideth forever. If there is glory in keeping the machine in good trim, it is more glorious to withhold the soul from suffering with the body—that is the only demonstration of your being "not matter," by letting matter alone.

Stick to God. Who cares what comes to the body or to anything else! Through the terrors of evil, say,—my God, my love! Through the pangs of death, say,—my God, my love! Through all the evils under the sun, say, —my God, my love! Thou art here, I see Thee. Thou art with me, I feel Thee. I am Thine, take me. I am not the world's, but Thine; leave not then me. Do not go for glass beads leaving the mine of diamonds! This life is a great chance. What, seekest thou the pleasures of the world!—He is the foundation of all bliss. Seek for the highest, aim at the highest and you shall reach the highest.

LET THY SOUL BE AT PEACE

From Letters of St. Francis de Sales

Nothing can really disturb us save self-love and self-esteem. If we have no tenderness of heart, no taste or sentiment for prayer, no inward sweetness in meditation, we begin directly to be downcast:—if we find it difficult to do right, if hindrances come between us and our good intentions, we grow anxious and eager to thrust them aside. And self-love is one cause of our troubles, self-esteem is another. Why are we so astonished, disturbed, impatient when we commit some fault? Doubtless because we thought that we were good, steadfast, firm; and finding that it is quite otherwise, we are vexed and put out; whereas, if we realized what we are, so far from marvelling because we fall, we should rather marvel how we ever stand upright! But we like nothing save what is pleasant, and we do not like to be brought face to face with our own weakness and worthlessness.

Keep your soul in an attitude of heartfelt trust in God, and the more you are encompassed with troubles and infirmities, hope the more steadfastly in Him. Be very humble; but let it be a generous, restful humility. Be very faithful in serving our Master, but let your service be child-like and loving, free from all that is harsh and repelling. Strive to maintain a holy gladness, which may shine forth in your words and actions, and be attractive to those around you, leading them to glorify God—our only aim.

He who makes God the object of all his intentions and does what he can, has no reason to torment himself, or to be disturbed or fearful. God is not terrible to those who love Him. He is satisfied with a little, for He knows so well that we have not much to give. Remember, too, that our Lord is called the Prince of Peace in Holy Scripture,

and that wheresoever He is Lord alone, He keeps all things in peace. True, before peace, He sometimes requires war; dividing the heart and soul from affections to which they cling; such as excessive self-love, self-confidence, complacency, and the like. And when He tears us from these cherished passions, He seems to be scarifying the very heart, and we can hardly help resisting a process which is so painful. But even such resistance is not devoid of peace, if, however overwhelmed, we still strive to unite our will to that of our Lord, nailing it to His Cross, and working steadily on in our appointed course—even as He resigned His Will to His Father's. Surely it well befits the Prince of Peace to be at peace amidst war, and to possess sweetness amid all bitterness. Learn, then, that while we think we have lost our peace amid troubles, it is not really so, if we are renouncing ourselves and clinging to God's good pleasure, obeying Him in our daily duties. Learn, too, that we must suffer pain while God tears off the "old man" in order to put on the "new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Nor need we be disturbed, or imagine ourselves displeasing to God, therefore. Be sure that all restless, excited thoughts do not come from God, the Prince of Peace, but are temptations of the enemy, to be rejected and banished.

Strive everywhere and in all things to be at peace. If trouble comes from within or without, receive it peacefully. If joy comes, receive it peacefully, without excitement. If we must needs fly from evil, let us do it calmly, without agitation, or we may stumble and fall in our haste. Let us do good peacefully, or our hurry will lead us into sundry faults. Even repentance is a work that should be carried on peacefully.

MORALITY AND RELIGION

By Swami Ramakrishnananda

Essentially there is no difference between morality and religion. An immoral religious man is as impossible to imagine as a triangular circle. Religion consists in the renunciation of sensual pleasures, so does also morality; morality raises a man from the kingdom of animals to the kingdom of God, and religion takes him by the hand and leads him into that kingdom and brings him face to face with God. Morality is the active side of religion. Its existence is in practice and not in theory. Man's higher religion consists in meditation and enjoyment of God when once he is admitted into that higher plane of morality. Morality is the gate-keeper of the kingdom of heaven and higher religion is a guide in that kingdom to lead the man to God, who is the one eternal Truth and Bliss combined together.

The path of morality is an uphill path and therefore not so easy to travel. It requires an effort on the part of the traveller. It is easy to get angry, but it is difficult to restrain anger; it is easy to curse, but it is difficult to bless him who despitefully curses you. It is easy to love friends, but it is difficult to pray for the well-being of one's own enemy. But we must always remember that there can be no royal road to moral perfection, as there is no royal road to geometry. To realize that highest end we must struggle hard and always pray to God to help us. Says Jesus, "Ask and it shall be given you, seek and you shall find, knock and it must follow that the gate of the kingdom of heaven shall be opened to you." Heaven helps those who help themselves. The Father in heaven is always watching our works here with interest and when He sees one of His children sincerely laboring to gain a certain

end and not finding it, which always demands a little more strength from Him, He stretches forth His helping hand and enables His child to reach his ideal. Such being the case, why should we lose heart, knowing that we have an ever-merciful and almighty Father always beside us to help us out of all difficulties and give us whatever we want?

Faith in God is the surest and easiest means to make you great and good and morally perfect. "A fool hath said in his heart there is no God," says the Bible. "I had rather believe all the fables in the Legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind," says Bacon. Although Bacon, because he was a Christian, could not believe in all the fables of the Alcoran, as a Mohammedan should do, yet he could not bring himself down to believe that this universal frame was without a mind. God appeared to him to be so self-evident. Looking at the creation, no sane man can bring himself to believe that there is no creator behind it. So if God is a reality, and if that God is all-merciful and everywhere, is it not a matter of great advantage to us to achieve whatever is noble and high and great, since the ever-smiling and ever-helping God is ready to help us whenever we want? When I do a certain difficult action in the presence of one who can easily do that and will readily help me to do it, if I only ask him, I never get disheartened at seeing the difficulty of the work, but rather try my best to do the work myself without asking the help of my superior. I find a certain energy and alacrity in doing that difficult piece of business instead of getting disheartened and being doubtful of my success. Such is the case with the man who has faith in God, who lives and moves and has his being in God, who knows God to be his nearest and dearest Friend.

IMPREGNABLE SECURITY

By Epictetus

Our wall is secure, we have provisions for a very long time, and every other preparation. These are what render a city fortified and impregnable, but nothing but its principles render the human soul so. For what wall is so strong, what body so impenetrable, or what possession so unalienable, or what dignity so secured against stratagems? All things else, everywhere else, are mortal, easily reduced; and whoever in any degree fixes his mind upon them, must necessarily be subject to perturbation, despair, terrors, lamentations, disappointed desires, and incurred aversions.

And will we not fortify then the only place of security that is granted us, and, withdrawing ourselves from what is mortal and servile, diligently improve what is immortal and by nature free? Do we not remember that no one either hurts or benefits another; but the principle, which we hold concerning everything, doth it? It is this that hurts us; this that overturns us. Here is the fight, the sedition, the war.

Now, the very nature of every one is to pursue good, to avoid evil, to esteem him as an enemy and betrayer who deprives us of the one, and involves us in the other, though he be a brother, or a son, or father. For nothing is more nearly related to us than good. So that if good and evil consist in externals, there is no affection between father and son, brother and brother; but all is everywhere full of enemies, betrayers, sycophants. But if a right choice be the only good, and a wrong one the only evil, what further room is there for quarrelling, for reviling? About what? About what is nothing to us? Against whom? Against the ignorant, against the unhappy, against those

who are deceived in things of the greatest importance?

Mindful of this, Socrates lived in his own house, patiently bearing a furious wife, a senseless son. For what were the effects of her fury? The throwing as much water as she pleased on his head, the trampling a cake under her feet. "And what is this to me, if I think such things nothing to me? This very point is my business, and neither a tyrant nor a master shall restrain my will; nor multitudes, though I am a single person; nor one ever so strong, though I am ever so weak. For this is given by God to every one, free from restraint."

These principles make friendship in families, concord in cities, peace in nations. They make a person grateful to God, everywhere in good spirits about externals as belonging to others, as of no value. But we, alas! are able indeed to write and read these things, and to praise them when they are read; but very far from being convinced by them.

BOOK REVIEW

"Dissertation on Painting" by Babu Mohendra Nath Dutt, published by Seva Series Publishing Home, Calcutta, India.

The treatment of the subject is quite out of the ordinary. The author shows a wide grasp of the subject, and this is due to his travels abroad for many years and his ability to assimilate the art and ideals of other nations of the world. In the chapter on "What is Painting" is revealed the author's aim and tendency towards spiritual transcendentalism. We quote passages for the benefit of our readers.

"Painting is an attempt to represent or reproduce a picture of the mind through colour and lines or by certain

suggestives. In the mind we have the picture, we visualise the ideas in a glaring form; we stop short, compose our nerves and try to reach a calmness, a dignified attitude and sober state of the mind. We select a few materials—the colour and the lines and attempt to represent through this symbology what is passing inside the mind. The one is the ideal, the other is the representation. In this stage the painter actually remains in a state of conscious trance. He tries his utmost through these suggestive representations to bring down the ideal within the observing faculty of persons or to raise up the mind of the observer to the level and high pitch of his ideal. . . . This sort of representing the ideal is really the highest stage of meditation. The divinity is attempted to be expressed through suggestive hints either by symbology or lines and colours. . . .

"When in the deep state of identification, the inner and outer layers of the mind become separated, the outer layers or the changeable portion of the mind becomes identified with the observed object and the constant or the unchangeable part of the mind remains calm as an observer. The one part plays out the observation—Lila, while the other is the calm unchangeable one—Nitya. But what is beyond Nitya and Lila we cannot affirm,—it is the Avaktyam, the unspeakable state. All that the painter does is that he bifurcates himself into his dual self, either from the real or projected self. In the first state the mind of the painter and the corporeal form stand apart making the observed object as a separate entity. . . .

"The mind makes introspection and retrospection—the inward and the outward courses. The outward coating or his corporeal form slowly fades away. He forgets his own body and limbs and deep meditation comes in. The

more he can make himself incorporeal, the better he can understand the other thing—the suggestive; and as the notion of observation rises higher and higher from the corporeal to the incorporeal, the suggestive and his gross corporeal stages drop off and in the highest stage the presence of the substratum of one becomes identified with the substratum of the other. In this highest stage the painter sees the object, visualises it, but cannot move his body—a state of conscious trance is reached, the divinity or Prana of the object then reveals and slowly as he comes back to his corporeal form and gradually comes down to his separate bodily existence he brings back with him the reminiscence or the notion of the ideal and tries to draw out a few lines and marks to make a suggestive of the idea which he has visualised. It is through this constant state of meditation of making oneself incorporeal and coming up to the higher stage of the mind that many painters in the later days of their life turn out to be saints; for meditation of divinity must pass through all the psychological stages which the painter is undergoing. The real painter must be pure in mind and pure in body and saintly in his behaviour that he might reveal the pith and marrow of the idea. Painting might be called a system of philosophy written out by symbols and colours. . . .

"To exhibit subtleness of the mind, an earnest longing to know more of the ideal and to be identified with it are the mental stages of the painter. Hence saintly soul is the only fit person to be a great painter. What is devotion to a religious man, what is philosophy to a thinker, the very same is the ideal of a painter. Calmness, gravity and majestic demeanour with full amount of devotion must be developed in a person before he becomes a great painter. Hence great painters in their after life turn out to be saints."

REPORT

The birthday of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated at the Vedanta Centre of Boston on the evening of Sunday, February 25th, at eight o'clock. There was a large attendance. The Swami's address was on the life of this great Saint and was greatly appreciated. He spoke of His daily living, of His character; of His connection with the Temple where for so many years He worshipped God in the form of the Divine Mother. He told how, although He was unlettered, He could expound the deepest philosophy; and although He was born a Hindu Brahmin with all the rigidity of caste and religion that that implies, He realized God through the various paths of Christian, Mohammedan, dualist, monist, etc., and proclaimed from personal experience the fundamental fact that "Truth is One, men call It by various names." He was sought after by people of all castes and religions to solve their problems and answer their questions.

The Swami said: "The life of a holy person is doubly blessed because he not only brings blessing to himself, but to countless others. A holy life is like a spiritual flower bringing into the world a perfume which is so subtle and potent it permeates everywhere. Here was a poor man who lived in India, died in India, without wanting His name to be recognized, without asserting Himself in any way, and to-day He has become a world figure. He never claimed anything for Himself. He never even said He had any power. We often read in great classics and mystical literature that when people touch the Source, the Fountainhead, nothing is lacking in their lives; and it was this we find illustrated in the life of Sri Ramakrishna."

Following the address an offering was made for the poor of India. Later refreshments were served.

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

APRIL, 1923

LIFE HEREAFTER

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Soul's Secret Door

By SWAMI PARAMANANDA

Handsome Flexible Binding, $2.00. Postage 10 Cents.

There is poetry in the soul of India. Rabindranath Tagore has taught this to the western world, thanks largely to the fame and influence incident to his winning of the Nobel Prize. But there are other singers native to this country, both ancient and modern, whose voices have the authentic note of inspiration.

One of these, well known to many persons in America, is the leader of the Vedanta Centre in Boston (Massachusetts), Swami Paramananda, whose most recent publication is a volume of poetry entitled "Soul's Secret Door." Here is the calm, exalted type of spirituality which is so distinctive of Hindu thought at its best and highest. A noble mysticism, expressed in lovely, simple, lucid English phrase, is present in all these verses as at once an atmosphere and an illumination. What is there in the Hindu mind which enables these easterners to set forth these fundamental truths of the inner life, both of the soul and of the universe in which the soul has its abode, with a candor and clarity which altogether escape the intricacies of meaningless abstraction into which our western minds so easily tumble when they attempt to grapple with the infinite? And what is the secret of the sheer beauty in which this mind rarely clothes its thought?

"Soul's Secret Door" reminds the western reader of "Gitanjali," and other writings of Tagore, but only as Longfellow would remind the eastern reader of Lowell and Whittier. East is east and west is west, after all! But behind this common code, of the soul in originality, seeking its own thought by its own right and its own way. We append one of the poems, "My Lowly Cottage," that our readers may taste this book, in anticipation of feeling more in it. — *John Haynes Holmes, The Unity.*

The contemplative mood of the Hindu psalms in the Swami Paramananda's book, "Soul's Secret Door," is characteristically Oriental. All [illegible] with and in God. Some of these [illegible] material character of our time. [illegible] of peace and repose [illegible]

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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LIFE HEREAFTER

By Swami Paramananda

"The curtains of yesterday drop down, the curtains of to-morrow roll up; but yesterday and to-morrow both are. Believe what thou findest written in the sanctuaries of man's soul, even as all thinkers, in all ages, have devoutly read it there."—(*Carlyle.*) If we let our life here be covered by the veil of unknowing, then the same veil will inevitably cover our sight after death. Life hereafter is not enshrouded with so much mystery as we imagine. The skeptical man will say, as he has always said, that there is no conclusive proof of an after life, that it is wholly a matter of speculation. We are not fair when we ask for a material proof where matter does not exist. If we want spiritual proof, then we must awaken that part in us which transcends matter. It is indeed the Spirit that gives us the power to see, but if we limit our vision to the physical, if we judge everything from the viewpoint of material experience, then we can never come to any definite understanding in regard to the higher realms of life.

In spite of all our advancement in scientific realms, there are people even to-day who try to uphold the idea that before this life there was nothing, that we have been created out of nothing. Both science and philosophy, however, are in one accord, that it is impossible for something to come out of nothing. Yet

man, because he is not able to see clearly in the realm of spiritual existence, often accepts and clings to that which is illogical rather than investigate and try to awaken within himself the seeing faculty. "There is no existence for the unreal and the real can never be non-existent. Know That to be indestructible by which all this is pervaded. No one is ever able to destroy that Immutable. These bodies are perishable, but the dwellers in these bodies are eternal, indestructible and imperishable. The soul is never born, nor does it die, nor once having been does it go into non-being. The soul is unborn, eternal, changeless. The dweller in the body of every man is ever indestructible. Therefore thou shouldst not grieve over any creature." What a wonderful picture this is which the Bhagavad-Gita gives of the majesty of the soul. It is the heritage of every man. If we believe in it, it will bring us definite and conclusive proof of our immortal life here and will remove all doubt in regard to our life hereafter.

In this world we are so busy trying to eliminate evil. We seek to make people better, to bring greater happiness into their lives; but what will bring them greater happiness? What will give them the power to counteract evil? It is life always which overcomes death. If we want to overcome disease and affliction, let us fill ourselves with life. The voice of Truth always tells us that we are already filled with the essence of life. Know it and discard all that is not life. We rise to great heights when we know more of this inner life and when we cease to identify ourselves with our physical body and our material surroundings, and direct our thoughts to that which is beyond, which underlies our life and is the background of every living being.

But there is always the other point of view reminding us constantly that we must not risk our happiness and prosperity by looking for something which is indefinite and not tangible.

This snare of the soul, entangling the individual with the notion "let us eat, drink and be merry" while the opportunities last, is probably one of the most difficult obstacles to surmount and the outcome of this attitude is always disastrous. It blindfolds our higher vision and limits us to a narrower sphere of immediate physical life and desire. As long as man adheres to this viewpoint, he cannot free his mind from evil propensities. If a man does not believe in continued existence and progress, what will prevent him from gratifying his selfish desires by wrong means? But when the higher understanding fills our heart, we realize that our action here invariably paves the road for our life hereafter. Usually people imagine that there is a recording angel keeping record of our good and evil deeds, but we are our own recording angel. Even the things that we do in the dark, no one else may see or know them, but we are fully aware of them. They leave their imprint so vividly upon our thoughts that when we want to forget them, we are not able to. If we have harmed some one, if we have cheated or robbed some one, the thought of it haunts us. It deprives us of our freedom. It prevents our happiness. This law of just compensation which governs our life here will also control our destiny in the after-life.

Life hereafter is not a visionary dream. We need not think that whatever we may do here or however we may live, we shall all go to heaven after death. If heaven is a place full of beauty, divine atmosphere and peace, then it stands to reason that we must fit ourselves for it. We must earn the right to take our place there. One who does not try to unite himself with heavenly things through his life and action here will find himself entirely out of place in heaven. We see this verified in our every-day life. If we are given an opportunity to come in contact with something which is beyond us and which our mind cannot grasp, we are unable to take any interest in that. Simi-

larly heaven will not prove a real haven of rest and peace for those who have not within themselves the right attitude. We must try to cultivate our taste for higher things now in this life if we expect to enjoy them after the life here. This world is a training school and in this training school any one who shrinks or shuns and thinks that he may bribe Divinity and escape his misdeeds is much mistaken.

There is no arbitrary power which is holding its rod of threat over us, but we punish ourselves. No one can deprive us of our blessings as much as we can deprive ourselves. Life gives us opportunities; and it is in this life, through its blessings and by well-directed and constructive action, that we build our bridge which takes us across to the other shore. If we live in doubt and darkness now, when the time comes for us to leave the body, in that moment of pain which often accompanies ordinary death, we shall have only darkness to carry with us, but if a man fills his consciousness with the light of understanding, then not only does that light not fail him at the hour of death, but it does not fail him at any time. Death loses all its horror, for the light always brightens our path. What a marvellous idea the Gita gives of this death concerning which the world feels such mystery and melancholy:—"As man casts off worn-out garments and puts on others which are new, similarly the embodied soul, casting off worn-out bodies, enters into others which are new." We are all eager for greater opportunities; but only as our bodies and minds evolve can we make use of such opportunities.

From very ancient times the Indo-Aryans have known that this gross body of ours is not all; there is another, a subtler body, less destructible than this physical body and more potent, composed of mind, intellect and the sense of ego. It is just like a sheath which holds the soul. After death the soul of the individual still continues to live in this body along with all that

he has accumulated, both good and bad. He must carry this with him until he has reaped the full harvest. He it was who did the sowing, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, and he it is who must do the reaping. Every individual has the power to make his own choice. This life is a harvest-field. The man who is industrious, who ploughs his field in the right season, who sows his seed and watches over it, can look upon the fruit of his labor with a sense of satisfaction. Do not think that we can have a rich harvest by accident. There is no such thing as accident in the cosmic universe. A man does not accidentally receive a blessing. Even if he did, he would not know how to retain it. When out of charity we give to the undeserving, we find that somehow or other they manage to come back to their original poverty.

Our defective mentality, our bondage, our distorted vision,—these are the natural products of our thoughts and deeds. Thoughts and actions cause our bondage, also they free us. We cannot afford to take a negligent attitude. We all need a spiritual background. We need a bigger, more lasting faith in ourselves. Without this man can never progress. It is with this that we rise; it is with this that we face all our difficulties. It has infinite healing! A man who really believes that his soul is immortal and indestructible, he rises above his physical ailments. You may say all these ideas of the soul and its immortality are nothing but imagination. There are good imaginations and bad ones. It is better to imagine lofty things; it is better to cling to high ideals, because in this way we enrich ourselves. What we think, that we become. Our whole future life depends on what we are doing now. We are either building a bridge which will take us across, or we are breaking it down.

There are some people who are rebellious when they see injustice in the world. But this injustice is man's own creation.

He brings it upon himself. Also he can redeem himself. No power can hamper us if we lift up our head and have this bigger point of view. There is a law working; and when we learn to work in perfect harmony and rhythm with that law, nothing can thwart us; if we try to go against it, we defeat ourselves. We cannot break the law, we only break ourselves. What is the consequence when a man foolishly tries to go against a locomotive? He is crushed; but if he knows how to utilize its power he can derive benefit through it. The same is true of our life. When we learn to join our forces harmoniously with this irresistible machine of life, it works for our upbuilding. If we try to oppose it, we cannot avoid the consequences.

Out of our ignorance we think we can find a short cut to happiness, but at every turn we are shown that there is no such short cut. What is ours will come to us; if it does not come to-day it will come to-morrow. Have you not faith in to-morrow? If you have faith in to-morrow, then you must have faith in life hereafter, because it means that. This life is to-day and what comes after is to-morrow; and to-day and to-morrow will always remain incomplete unless we also add yesterday; because what we are to-day is the product of yesterday, and to-morrow we can look forward to if we are putting everything to right use to-day. This may seem like a poetic picture, but it is not. If we put to right use our efforts, our energies, our thoughts, with clear vision to-day, I do not think that our efforts will fail to bring us a brighter to-morrow. We do not take a chance with our life here. A man who is very keen for success from the business point of view does not take any chances; he stores up his bank account and makes all kinds of provision for his life in the future. A wise man also makes provision for life hereafter. This does not necessitate our neglecting this life. On the contrary, if we take the proper care

of this life, if we utilize every blessing in the right way, with understanding, with steadfast devotion to our ideals, we shall build up our future even unconsciously.

When we know our real self we cannot stoop down below our level. It is only when we do not know our real worth, when we feel oppressed by the material situation, that we take to all kinds of unworthy devices because of our weakness. When we know our power, these evil means never occur to us; we never turn to them, nor can they find any access to our heart. So the light of the soul should fill our mind and our heart, our brain and our body. It is by that we live; but when we live without knowing that it is this power that sustains us, we do not make full use of our life. The conscious possession of one's eternal and immortal nature is the greatest possession.

We may think these are not practical ideas. They are practical ideas. They are so very practical that we cannot live without them. As we begin to think of these things, as we begin to put them into our life, even though the whole world may not understand, it will not matter. The world should not be our standard; we should make the standard for the world, even if we have to stand alone. But we shall not have to stand alone long because people are hungry for these truths. They may not always know it, but they are seeking; even when they blunder, it is because they are seeking. But we cannot give anything to those who are hungry until we have found the right food of the Spirit. Spiritual life is not following some creed, it is evolving the consciousness of Spirit within us, and that does not come accidentally. What we think, what we believe, what we work for, that we evolve; and if we evolve this consciousness of Spirit now before we are separated from this physical body, we shall carry it with us. The light will always go before us and when we walk by that light we shall not find any darkness either in this life or in the life hereafter.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Some look upon It (Soul) with wonder, some speak about It with wonder, some hear about It with wonder and yet others, even after hearing about It, know It not. The dweller in the body of everyone is ever indestructible; therefore, O Bharata, thou shouldst not grieve over any creature.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

There are two kinds of existence, the one visible, the other invisible. And the invisible is unchanging, while the visible is always changing.—*Plato.*

The truly spiritual see Spirit as Spirit, not as matter. It is Spirit that makes nature move, it is the reality in nature, so action is in nature, not in the Spirit. Spirit is always the same, changeless, eternal. Spirit and matter are in reality the same, but Spirit, as such, never becomes matter, and matter, as such, never becomes Spirit.—*Swami Vivekananda.*

We cannot describe the natural history of the soul, but we know that it is divine. I cannot tell if these wonderful qualities which house to-day in this mortal frame shall ever reassemble in equal activity in a similar frame . . . but this one thing I know, that these qualities did not now begin to exist, cannot be sick with my sickness, nor buried in my grave.—*Emerson.*

The holy oracles always represent Paradise as our native country, and our present life as an exile. How can we be said to have been banished from a place in which we never were? This argument alone would suffice to convince us of pre-existence.—*Chevalier Ramsay. Early 18th century.*

And thou son, who through thy mortal weight shalt again return below.—*Dante.*

Call with devotion upon His Hallowed Name and the mountain of your sins will disappear, just as a mountain of

cotton will burn up and vanish if it but catches one spark of fire.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

Spring redeems winter's devastation. Crucifixion finds its crowning in resurrection. What may seem tragic in our life at one time has its counterpart in another expression of the same life. It we can learn to wait our turn with ungrudging patience and watchful vigil, we shall find to our amazement how the long and short days of summer and winter are but pleasant pastimes for our soul, to renew and refresh her. Does not nature hold vividly before us the picture of restoration?—*Swami Paramananda.*

THE WORLD

By Jalaluddin Rumi

The lovers of the All are not the lovers of the part.
He who loves the part falls short of the All.
When the part loves the part
Too soon its loved object flits away into the All.
He stands forlorn among strangers
His arm becomes palsied and he dies.
The creature flies to the Creator and he is left behind.
The rose-odour flies to the rose and the thorn is left behind.
Like the fool who sees the sunshine
Gleam on the wall and becomes thunder-struck at the sight;
He loves the wall, for he saith, "Here is the true brightness."
He knows not that it is but the reflection of the sun;
And when the sunbeam returns thither whence it came
He sees the dark wall standing alone in its place;
While he himself remains afar from his desires
With a lost purpose and an empty aim and a weary foot.

THE SOUL

From Hermes Trismegistus.

(Egyptian Teaching. Date Unknown.)

The soul is, then, incorporal essence; for if it should have body, it would no longer have the power of being self-maintained. For every body needeth being; it needeth also ordered life as well.

For every thing that comes to birth change also must succeed. For that which doth become becomes in size; for in becoming it hath increase. Again, for every thing that doth increase decrease succeedeth; and on decrease destruction.

It is the soul that doth supply this intellectual life. It is called living through the life and rational through the intellect and mortal through the body.

Soul is, accordingly, a thing incorporal, possessing in itself the power of freedom from all change.

For how would it be possible to talk about an intellectual living thing, if that there were no living essence to furnish intellectual life?

Soul then is essence containing its own end within itself; in its beginning taking to itself the way of life allotted it by Fate, it draws also unto itself a reason like to matter, possessing "heart" and "appetite."

"Heart" too is matter; if it doth make its state accordant with the soul's intelligence, it then becometh courage, and is not led away by cowardice. And "appetite" is matter too; if it doth make its state accord with the soul's rational power, it then becometh temperance and is not moved by pleasure, for reasoning fills up the "appetite's" deficiency.

And when both these are harmonized and equalized, and both are made subordinate to the soul's rational power, justice is born. For that their state of equilibrium doth take away the "heart's" excess and equalizes the deficiency of "appetite."

The source of these, however, is the penetrating essence of all thought, its self by its own self, working in its own reason as its rule. It is the essence that doth lead and guide as ruler; its reason is as 'twere its counsellor, who thinks about all things.

The reason of the essence, then, is gnosis (knowledge) of those reasonings which furnish the irrational part with reasoning's conjecturing,—a faint thing as compared with reasoning itself, but reasoning as compared with the irrational, as echo unto voice and moonlight to the sun.

And "heart" and "appetite" are harmonized upon a rational plan; they pull the one against the other, and so they learn to know in their own selves a circular intent.

The kinds of souls are three:—divine, human and irrational.

Now the divine is that of its divine body, in which there is the making active of itself. For it is moved in it and moves itself.

For when it is set free from mortal lives, it separates itself from the irrational portions of itself, departs unto the godlike body, and as 'tis in perpetual motion, is moved in its own self with the same motion as the universe.

The human kind has also something of the godlike body, but it has joined to it as well the parts irrational,—the appetite and heart.

These latter also are immortal, in that they happen also in themselves to be activities; but they are the activities of mortal bodies.

Wherefore, they are removed far from the godlike portion of the soul, when it is in its godlike body; but when this enters in a mortal frame, they also cling to it and by the presence of these elements it keeps on being a human soul.

But that of the irrationals consist of heart and appetite. And for this cause these lives are also called irrational, through deprivation of the reason of the soul.

RECONSTRUCTION

By K. F. Sherwood

As we look about us to-day and consider the sad state into which the world seems to be plunged, let us regard also the many helps that are coming to us, among the most evident of which are the new methods of healing. There are many and they are good, so far as they effect cure. Looking into the practice of medicine, which is the conservative method, we will find that while now it treats matter with matter, "in the beginning it was not so". Long ago when disease was considered to come from the gods, to the gods also they looked for healing and the priests were the physicians. To-day it is so among the American Indians. The Medicine-man is also a kind of priest. Aesculapius is one of the first recorded by history who could be called a physician. He was called the inventor of the art of healing. Down to the time of Hippocrates some kind of magnetic sleep was induced in the patient in which he revealed his own condition; or if this failed, a state of ecstasy or trance was induced in the priest in which he revealed the method of cure.

Hippocrates (B. C. 460) was called the father of rational medicine, and it was he who brought the art of healing into the realm of science. He originated the idea of the healing power of nature which is recognized until now, but he regarded it as a spiritual principle. As the treatment of disease became more of a science, they began to make a distinction between the soul and body. In Plato's Phaedo we get the teaching of Socrates in regard to this most beautifully brought out—this distinction between soul and body with supremacy given to the soul. About the beginning of the Christian era there was a revival of the Platonic idea of a Pueuma or spirit and a medical school was founded under the name of Pneumatists whose practice was based on this principle.

W. F. Evans in his valuable book "Soul and Body" men-

tions these facts. Also he says that "after the subsidence of the Pneumatists the spiritual idea of health and disease seems to have been lost sight of in the practice of medicine," the system of Claudius Galen taking its place in the second century A. D. It was purely materialistic, but reigned supreme for 1300 years when it was disputed by Paracelsus. Evans says again, "Why in writing the history of medicine the theory and practice of Jesus the Christ is left out, it is difficult to conceive. Whatever view we take of Him, as either man or God, He was certainly the Great Physician of soul and body; and the principle on which His practice was based deserved the profoundest consideration and study. And it is certain that He employed no chemical remedies. His method of cure was psychical and not material."

The Psychical Research Society go on seeking for proof and discovering fraud, but even the miracles of Jesus are now being explained and by churchmen on a psychological basis. That which we call matter or materialization has been shown by one professor of Electro Therapeutics to be but a collection into form of particles attracted from, shall we say the air or the ether or something in which we live and move, and held in place by that more subtle form or vibration which exists on another plane which we call spirit and which is more subtle and more potent. There is a spiritual side to everything. Any material may be good in itself, but given an imperfect form according to the mind or ideal held in mind by the sculptor or painter or architect. It is in this formative laboratory that our work must be done—our work of making good and healthy bodies which are so necessary as instruments to work with.

The body by the most ancient schools of philosophy was considered as nothing—not to be considered—a no-thing, and that is what is being discerned and taught to-day by some of the new schools, and which continue despite contradiction and ridi-

cule. As in the old story of the healing of the blind man—"Whereas I was blind now I see"—many are saying who know not the cause, but note the difference in themselves, and many are trying to discover the cause and teach others that they "may sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon them." We hear the word "re-education" from some of these new teachers and healers—"reconstruction of ideas" might be a better term. They are taking their stand in connection with the more subtle body where the real trouble lies—the spiritual body—or mind body, and they are showing that fear of one kind or another is responsible for bodily ailments and faith, that "substance of the thing hoped for"—that reality out of which the new form is really made—that combination of thought and feeling which underlies the new form and supports it is a constructive force; that denial of the old idea helps to decompose it and a reconstruction takes place in the mind or subtle body and eventually that of the gross body follows the pattern.

In this new method there is every variety of treatment leading by gradual steps to the most ideal, which without knowing it has for a background that highest of all philosophies, the Monism of the Indo-Aryan. Spirit is all and I am that, says the monist. All that we cognize by the senses is unreal—Maya —no existence of itself. Of this unreal world our bodies are a part. We know them only through or by the same senses with which we contact the whole external world and at first we say this is "I." Even those senses are not body. We identify ourselves with it and fall into delusion, the great teachers tell us, but we must say "no, this is not I. I am one with the Father, the great creative Principle. I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute." Where is there any room for inharmony or disease in that realm of perfection? If we could but realize this if only for a few moments at a time our outer bodies would fall into line and express the same perfection, un-

less we at the same time are clinging to false ideas that exist in our subconsciousness and which will express themselves by the same law. This is the Sun of Righteousness which rises with healing in His wings, a real and lasting healing both for the body and the soul, not a temporary healing of the body only, but a reconstruction that is lasting, that while it is not all that could be done, yet it starts us in the right path from which we must take care not to fall away. Our bodies exist in us, not we in our bodies; that is, our conception of what our bodies are is in our mind, and our mind is greater than can be confined in this body. A part of our consciousness is there, but only a part and a small part. As we grow in this thought and live by it and act upon it we may one day expand our consciousness until we really know what we are and that we are one with all that is. Till then let us not be deceived. Let us see through this outward appearance to the real which is within. As St. Paul said, "Now we see through a glass darkly, then face to face. Now we know in part, then shall we know as we are known." This has been thought to refer to after the death of the body, but why wait? We live in that Spirit world now, but our eyes are holden. There is no doubt about it except for those who always live in doubt. Christ said, "If one rose from the dead ye would not believe." That is as true to-day as then. Human nature is the same. Only those who have faith, that "evidence of things not seen" that wish to believe, that combination of hope of the mind and desire of the heart built on some knowledge of the great possibilities of life, only they get what they are looking for.

Doubt is death. Faith is constructive and as a power of thought can reconstruct on the plane where life really is according to the pattern held in mind. This is what Coue means by the imagination, the imaging faculty which makes the pattern, and he says, "Mark those three important words—'in every

way,' and what does that mean? It means in *every* way." Does he not subtly suggest that it is in soul as well as body that we are to get better and better? "He that hath ears to hear let him hear." Has he not pointed us to the principle which underlies healing whenever it occurs, not only healing but disease? We are constantly making an auto-suggestion and affirming something in regard to ourselves, usually on the external plane, and the result of some feeling or sensation from which we draw wrong conclusions. At such times we should remember that we are primarily mind functioning in a form that we call body. Let us get if we can a new idea of body. It is very important. It will be to us exactly as we think it. Some one has said, "The body does not feel—we feel—the body vibrates." There is evidently something external to what we know as ourselves and we get our idea of it from sensations received in our sensorium. That sensorium exists in our mind body, not the material body, and from those sensations we form our idea of body.

Some one will say, "But how do you know?" Suppose we do not know. That which we have thought we knew has not been a complete success. Let us try something new even if only an hypothesis. Let us make it "X", our unknown quantity, and work out our problem until we find the real meaning of "X." Then perhaps we will know and by experience which is the only sure way. But we must have faith, which is the "substance of the thing hoped for." That is necessary. That faith can be cultivated by placing it first on something that we can perceive as true, no matter how small. It will grow by exercise according to the law of growth. In the face of all that we see around us that is discouraging, we can surely find something of the opposite in which we can have faith, and thus reconstruct our ideas in every line getting a better understanding that will lead us to right activity of mind and body and get-

ting rid of false notions that are holding us from a state of real health keeping the thought that we are spirits not bodies. This will be a real springtime for us, a renewal of life and we can better appreciate what is meant by the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings. But we must remember the promise is to "you who fear or think upon my name."

TRANQUILLITY OF SPIRIT

Spiritual Maxims of St. John of the Cross

Live in this world as if God and your soul only were in it; that your heart may be a captive to no earthly thing.

Do not weary yourself to no purpose, nor seek spiritual joy and sweetness, unless it be by denying yourself in that which you aim at.

Be interiorly detached from all things, and do not set your affection upon any temporal things, and your soul will gather in a harvest of blessings beyond its comprehension.

The goods of God, which are beyond all measure, can be contained only in an empty and solitary heart.

So far as it lies in your power, refuse nothing asked of you, though you may have need of it yourself.

He will never attain to perfection who will not labour to be satisfied with this: that all his natural and spiritual desires should be satisfied in the absence of everything which is not God. This is most necessary for abiding peace and tranquillity of spirit.

Let your soul be always ordered by a desire not for that which is easy, but for that which is most difficult; not for that which is most pleasant, but for that which is most unpleasant; not for that which is elevated and precious, but for that which is vile and despised; not for great things, but for little things; not to seek for anything, but to seek for nothing; not for that

which is best, but for that which is worst; desiring to enter, for the love of Jesus, upon detachment, emptiness, and poverty in everything in this world.

If you will cleanse your soul of strange possessions and desires, you will understand all things spiritually; and if you will restrain yourself from setting your heart upon them, you will rejoice truly in them, and understand them certainly.

All people will be your servants, and all things will minister to you, if only you will forget them and yourself.

You will never have to do with necessities greater than those to which you made your heart yield itself; for the poor in spirit are most happy and joyous in a state of privation; and he who has set his heart upon no thing, finds fullness everywhere.

The poor in spirit give generously all they have, and their pleasure consists in being thus deprived of everything for God's sake, and out of love to their neighbour, ordering all things by the law of this virtue.

Poverty of spirit looks to the substance of devotion solely, and making use only of what is sufficient for it, is weary of the multiplicity and curiosity of visible means.

A soul withdrawn from exterior things, detached from its own will, even in divine things, will not be raised by prosperity nor subdued by adversity.

The poor that are naked shall be clothed: and the soul that will strip itself of all its desires, likings, and dislikings, God will clothe with His own purity, His own joy, and His own will.

The love of God in a pure and simple soul, detached from every desire, is frequently in act.

Restrain your desires, and you will find that which your heart longs for: how can you tell that your desire is according to the will of God?

Not only do temporal goods, the delights and the tastes of

sense, hinder and thwart the way of God, but spiritual delights and consolations also, if sought for, or clung to eagerly, disturb the way of virtue.

WORKING FOR THE LORD

From Letter of Swami Turiyananda

Man is but the instrument and the Lord is the manipulator of it. Blessed is he through whom He gets His work done. Every one has to work in this world, no one can avoid working; but one who works for selfish ends, work, instead of liberating him, adds fresh bondage. The intelligent man works for the Lord, breaks through the fetters of work, and enjoys the bliss of *Mukti* (liberation). Not I, but He; He is the agent: this knowledge severs all bonds. And this is the eternal truth. The notion that I am the doer is merely a delusion. It is difficult to trace what the ego is. If we carefully analyze the ego, it ultimately melts in Him. Our identification with the body, mind and intellect, etc., is merely a delusion created by nescience; they do not survive till the end. Analysis puts an end to them all. They all go, and there only remains the One Reality from whom all things proceed, in whom they rest, and into whom they merge at the end.

That Reality is the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, the Witness of the ego-consciousness; and again, It is the omnipresent Lord who is creating, preserving and destroying the universe, yet is untouched by it all. This machine of a universe rests in Him and is working through His power. The ever playful Lord is watching His play and enjoying it. He only unto whom He unfolds this secret understands it, while others cannot understand it even though they hear of it. They consider themselves apart from Him and fall under delusion. This is His Maya. This Maya vanishes if one works surrendering himself unto Him. The doer then understands that he

is not the doer, but only an instrument. This is what is called inaction in the midst of action. This is realizing oneself as not doing anything—this is liberation in this life.

It is with a view to enjoy the bliss of this liberation in life that the soul takes up a body; otherwise it goes against reason that the eternally free soul can ever be born for the purpose of enjoying sense-pleasures. The ultimate goal of human life is the realization of one's being above the body-idea, even though possessed of this body. Realizing this, man attains the consummation of his life. Our sincere prayer to the Lord is that we may through His grace attain to that bliss of liberation in this life in this very birth; that this life may be our last life, that is to say, that we may not have to take up another body for the fulfillment of any selfish ends; that He may give us in this very life the conviction, the realization that our life is for Him and for nothing else. May the Lord be propitious to us!

ALTAR-FLOWER

By Swami Paramananda

Altar-flower, I have watched thee with deepest wonderment.
Thou fragrant beauty of delicate loveliness,
Thou hast given thine all.
Now thou art fading.
Art thou dead?
Nay, thou art risen to thy glory;
Thou art ascended!
Thy immortal soul of sweet perfume
Hath risen to the throne of thy Lord.
Thou art no more separate from Him.
Thy humble heart hath taught me a holy secret,—
Yea, thou hast given thine all.

REVIEWS

SOUL'S SECRET DOOR

(We give here below the exact copy of review by Sam. T. Clover which appeared on February 10th, 1923, under the heading of "Cream of Current Poetry" in "Saturday Night," leading weekly of the Pacific Coast.)

To those specialized readers in touch with the publications issued from the Vedanta Centre, at Boston, the works of Swami Paramananda are well known for their beautiful simplicity, their sincerity and fine spiritual quality. These attributes are so markedly evident in his latest book of poems, the "Soul's Secret Door," that they should make appeal to a far wider circle, to a humanity which rises above all creeds and denominations, finding in these outpourings of a soul a reflection of unspoken self-communion as earnest as they are divinely fresh, simple, yet profound.

Not from the mind in daily contact with the money-changers, the barterers of commerce could such ecstatic poems emanate. Of necessity, they are from within, apart, introspective and adorational. This singleness of purpose thus evinced is the resultant of years of segregated living, thinking and sanctification. If, at times, we question the self-immurement of the ascetic, the value of such intense devotions to a sin-tossed world, in outpourings such as these is revealed their worth to mute souls physically, as well as mentally, unable to express their heart longings.

It is not a revengeful or jealous God before whom Swami Paramananda prostrates himself, as "Worship" discloses:

> "Wouldst thou worship the High, the Holy?
> Then strip thyself of this garment of self and put on
> a fresh vestment of humility.
> Why art thou fearful and trembling?
> He is not a God of revenge.
> Cast off thy false belief and let Him fill thee anew.

Contrast this creed with that sung with such acclaim by our progenitors who lustily shouted, while their women-folk, doubtless, trembled:

God the omnipotent, mighty avenger,
Watching invisible, judging unheard.

Neither a God of wrath nor yet a God of terror is the one whose shrine is behind the secret door of this poet, but a tender Lord, whose magic charm has dissipated past wretchedness, who is ever merciful to the lowly, to paraphrase from the "Unceasing Giver." It will be at once asserted by the orthodox-minded that the poet's God is in nowise more attractive, more gracious than the one so beautifully expressed in that sweet old hymn, "Dennis":

How gentle God's commands
How kind His precepts are.

Which is, of course, true and gives point to the further reflection that these poems contain the seed of all beliefs, hence will be as precious manna to the hungry soul. What could be more sympathetic in treatment than "Silence," beginning:

Hush! This is the hour of silence
When soul seeks its refreshment.

or, "Be Thou Patient," with its fine poise and vision:

Brother, thy load is heavy and thou art weary;
But One who has placed the load upon thy head will
also give thee strength to carry it.

"Harvest," "Ecstacy," "Restoration" and "Surrender" are exquisite psalms of spiritual light, for that is what these poems of the Swami's suggest. One last quatrain must be permitted from, "My Sleep is Ended":

The resonance of Thy voice roused me
Who was slumbering in idle dreams.
My waking was only for a moment,
But Thou hast wrought a strange miracle within my
soul.
Now even in sleep I find something in me always
awake and watching.
That which Thou hast roused in me can sleep no more.

As companion on the bedside table to Thomas à Kepmis' "Imitation of Christ," to Amiel's Journal and the New Testament may be safely recommended the "Soul's Secret Door" for those meditatively and devoutly inclined.

THE EASTERN BUDDHIST

"The Eastern Buddhist," issued by The Eastern Buddhist Society, Kyoto, Japan, is devoted to the study of Mahayana Buddhism. We are happy to note that since the first publication of this magazine in May, 1921, it has published many scholarly articles in its various issues on what is Mahayana Buddhism, Zen Buddhism, Shin-Shu Buddhism, and also the development of Buddhism in India. It shows the literary and religious activities among the Buddhist scholars in Japan. Such a publication is not only helpful as religious literature, but it is specially valuable in the field of broader education and comparative study. We heartily welcome this magazine and wish it all possible success. We quote from one of the articles:

"What is Mahayana Buddhism? Why do we have more than one Buddhism? Why should Buddhism be divided into Northern and Southern, or Mahayana and Hinayana? We might ask as well, Why is Christianity divided? For in Christianity do we not find the Roman Catholic Church, the Greek Church, and the Protestant Church with all its different sects? Yet all of these different branches and sects assert Christ as the mainspring of their religious life and claim to interpret the spirit of their faith and to derive from Christ's teachings the basis of their tenets of belief. It is exactly the same in Buddhism. Just as Christianity has changed according to the different periods of time and peoples with whom it has come in contact, so has the primitive Buddhism received new developments as different minds reflected and studied the Buddhist teachings. All these sects and schools of Buddhism, however, claim the Buddha as their inspiration and believe that in their teaching and presentation the spirit of the Buddha is reflected and that the kernel of thought is developed but not radically changed.

"When the Buddha was alive, he preached for many long

years, but like Christ he wrote nothing himself, and his sermons and discourses were not written down until one hundred years after his death. The monks of the Southern school who wrote in Pali soon began to emphasize the ethical teaching of the Buddha and did not develop the metaphysical and speculative elements.

"Later when Buddhism was brought to China and later still to Japan, the teaching was still further developed into what we may call Eastern Buddhism. There are certain differences in these schools of Buddhism, but there are also a great many points of similarity, and as mentioned before they all claim that the great Buddha Shakyamuni himself was the inspirer of their doctrine, and to represent the spirit of the Buddha's teaching, if not always the letter of what is sometimes called primitive Buddhism."

REPORT

During the first three Sundays of March it was necessary for Swami Paramananda to be absent from Boston, but the usual services at the Chapel of the Vedanta Centre were conducted by one of his assistants. During this short interval Swami visited Utica, Syracuse, Buffalo, Cincinnati and Los Angeles. All his lectures were warmly received. On every occasion he was urged to read from his new book of poems, "Soul's Secret Door." They met with deep appreciation everywhere; but special enthusiasm was shown for the poems of his unpublished second volume, from which he also read and which will soon go to press. While in Los Angeles Swami lectured in Hollywood and Altadena, as well as in Los Angeles, but his visit was chiefly directed towards procuring a suitable Peace Retreat as an extension of his work in Boston. A remarkable piece of property in the arms of the Sierra Madre mountains covering 135 acres was secured. It is declared to be one of the most beautiful spots in southern California. A detailed account of it will be given in the next number of the Message.

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

MAY, 1923

HEALING IN MEDITATION

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Soul's Secret Door

Flexible bindings, $2.00. Postage 10 cts.

There is poetry in the soul of India. Rabindranath Tagore has taught this to the western world, thanks largely to the fame and influence incident to his winning of the Nobel Prize. But there are other singers native to this country, both ancient and modern, whose voices have the authentic note of inspiration.

One of these, well known to many persons in America, is the leader of the Vedanta Centre in Boston (Massachusetts), Swami Paramananda, whose most recent publication is a volume of poetry entitled "Soul's Secret Door." Here is the calm, exalted type of spirituality which is so distinctive of Hindu thought at its best and highest. A noble mysticism, expressed in lovely, simple, lucid English phrase, is present in all these verses as at once an atmosphere and an illumination. What is there in the Hindu mind which enables these easterners to set forth these fundamental truths of the inner life, both of the soul and of the universe in which the soul has its abode, with a candor and clarity which altogether escape the intracies of meaningless abstraction into which our western minds so easily tumble when they attempt to grapple with the infinite? And what is the secret of the sheer beauty in which this mind surely clothes its thought?

"Soul's Secret Door" reminds the western reader of "Gitanjali," and other writings of Tagore, but only as Longfellow would remind the eastern reader of Lowell and Whittier. East is east and west is west, after all! But behind this common cadence of the soul is originality, seeking its own thought by its own right and its own way. We append one of the poems, ("My Lowly Cottage") that our readers may taste this book in anticipation of feeding upon it.—*John Haynes Holmes, Unity, Chicago.*

The contemplative mood of the Hindu psalms in the Swami Paramananda's book, "Soul's Secret Door," is characteristically Oriental. All sing the oneness of the soul with and in God. Some of these hymns reprove the material character of our times. The book sheds an almost tonic sense of peace and repose.—*Evening Post, New York.*

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.
Published monthly except in August and September

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HEALING POWER OF MEDITATION

By Swami Paramananda

Whenever we are in trouble physically, or distressed mentally, we seek for help in the outside world, but very seldom we think that there is already within us the most potent and infallible remedy. Meditation opens to us such a source of remedy. It has a decided healing power both over body and mind, but unfortunately the majority of people regard it as a negative state, entirely aloof from our every-day, active life. But it is not so. It is the greatest creative force within us. Consciously and unconsciously we all make use of it. There are certain thoughts which have a hold upon us; we cannot get away from their influence; but whether our meditation is voluntary or involuntary our mind always takes the imprint of our thoughts. Whenever we are able to keep our mind connected for any length of time with something beautiful and restful, we feel refreshed. A tired person coming in contact with nature becomes rested just by looking at the trees, the flowers and the birds. It is not that he has actually taken anything away from nature. Nature still stands intact, but the thought has lifted him from his tired bodily conditions and restored him.

People are always striving to avoid physical and ner-

vous reactions, but it is very difficult to get away from them. Whenever we act, no matter what the action is, it brings reaction and not always a pleasing one. Unless we know how to control this constant action and reaction which is taking place, we must feel the wear and tear of life. How often we hear it said, "I am a complete wreck; I have worked so hard, I have no energy left." It is not by refraining from action that we restore our energy and maintain our health. True healthfulness is something to be found from within. If the mind is diseased, sooner or later the body will feel it, but nature is inevitably healing in its effect and will reconstruct if left unhindered. Whenever we have a cut or a burn, if we rub it, it becomes worse. A physician will tell you to leave it alone, not to touch it; he will even bandage it up so you will not irritate it. If your eyes are inflamed your natural tendency is to rub them; but the more you do so, the more inflamed they become. Nature works the same way in our mental ailments. The more we dwell on these things, the more acute they grow; but when we are able to forget them, we are restored.

Whenever we are tired or disturbed, instead of allowing our mind to be full of agitation, if we withdraw it entirely from the source of disturbance, we shall not only have a sense of refreshment, but by disconnecting ourselves in this way from our trouble we shall gain a more correct view of it and be able to find the remedy for it. This is a general principle and not merely to be applied to physical ailments. These ailments are after all not so important as we think. Let us take this question up very frankly. Here in the Occident, especially since the rise of certain modern movements, healing has played

a tremendous part. There are some people who hold that unless a person has good health he does not amount to anything; that illness is a great curse. In India there is quite another attitude. There, when a person has a little fever or headache or some other physical ailment, it is not held that he has fallen from grace or that a curse has fallen upon him. On the contrary, it is felt that to be able to meet these conditions with absolute equilibrium, without being afflicted, is a great achievement. If we are able to keep our balance in all circumstances, no matter what comes, affliction will not appear to be affliction, because we shall have a consciousness and a power by which we can cope with everything. Is not that much better than merely trying to follow the path of affirmation? To deny pain when you feel it is a very good practice; but to keep on denying it, if it continues, is to be slightly lacking in a sense of true value.

Body and soul each has its own place in our life, and if we can keep these two separate in our mind, often we can make our adjustment. Whenever something happens on the physical plane we should not take it as an inevitable finality. Spirit can always transcend bodily limitations. That is one of the great thoughts of the Indo-Aryan school of philosophy. This does not mean that there are no healing methods in India. Healing is one of the most essential elements in her spiritual evolution. It is an accepted thing that one who has risen to a great spiritual height can dispel ignorance, the cause of all illness, by his touch, his word, his very presence. Whenever there is light, there can be no darkness. Healing is accomplished in that way, but another element is introduced in order that people may help themselves instead of depending on others, and that is the element of meditation.

When we are in physical or mental trouble, it is well to forget it sometimes. In the world, when we have any perplexing problem we say: "I want to think it over, I want to sleep on it." In other words we wish to reflect, to find a clear light before we give our decision. That is exactly what meditation means. The body requires a certain amount of inward recreation which the mind can give. Body and mind, when united, find balance, a sense of rest within. Retired from all worldly disturbance they both grow stronger. Whether we are in public life or following some line of spiritual study, we cannot do without these times of retirement. The nervous disorders of modern life are due not so much to our intensity of action as to our lack of understanding, the wrong direction of our energy. We must have balance, and meditation gives us that balance. Without it we cannot maintain our health, our happiness or our peace of mind. One person in a household who maintains his balance becomes a great power. He helps even unconsciously. In this day it is hard for us to believe that any one can instruct without speaking. We believe more in noise than in silence; that is our misfortune. We miss the subtler, the finer, the more beautiful part of life when we merely follow the noisy trend of the world.

In India it has been proved by practice that those who live in rhythm, who have a sense of inner values, are naturally possessed of a meditative mind. They go through life without showing any strain. Sometimes they live many years without wrinkles or any sign of old age. For what causes wrinkles? Wrong meditation; that is, a continual dwelling on anxieties and worries. We may feel that we have very good reason to be anxious, to worry; but have we ever gained anything through it except marred

physical health, disturbed mental peace and an atmosphere of unrest, which others feel? Meditation is the means by which we can control both body and mind and keep them turned in the right direction, so that even when we have reason for disturbance we can quickly adjust and detach ourselves. This is most refreshing. When we are very tired and feel that we have almost come to the breaking point, it is an excellent practice to take a deep breath and close our eyes for a few moments. But it does not do any good to go through these outer forms if our mind is wandering somewhere. If, however, the mind at the same time can be fixed on a beautiful thought, then both body and mind will feel revived.

It never does us any good to dwell on our ills and ailments, either physical or mental. But great help comes by being able to rise above them. Do not think that we can always do this through mental calculation. We may understand our philosophy perfectly in theory, but the practical application is quite a different thing. If, however, we can apply it practically, we not only rid ourselves of our troubles, we create an atmosphere of peace even in the midst of unrest. There lies the value of noble lives, of people who do not merely theorize, but who live their ideals and radiate them. We can all do the same, but we must do it very quietly. We are more successful when we are quiet about it. On this one point there is a great difference between the Oriental and the Occidental point of view. When an Easterner conceives an idea he goes into retirement. "How selfish!" you may say; "he should come forth and preach it to the world." But he wants first to gain direct and absolute knowledge of it. He is not content to take a truth because he has heard it from some one else. He wishes to verify it and make it his

own, so first he meditates upon it and then he acts.

Most people act first and think afterwards. It is a dangerous thing to do. We cannot reverse the order in this way in our daily life and expect something heavenly. That is not possible. Keep your inner and your outer life in unison. When these two are flowing in one current without any cross currents, then indeed we have reached a great height. We should strive to do this so that we may maintain rhythm and harmony within ourselves, and never contradict ourselves. How often you remark: "I did not intend to say that." But if you did not intend to say it and yet your mouth uttered it, that is a terrible defeat. It means you have not the meditative habit by which you can completely adjust your life.

Every particle of our body can be brought so absolutely into rhythm that nothing can go out of harmony. You may say that is not possible in this world of chaos. It seems hopeless; we have many obstacles, but that makes it all the more necessary for us to have this inward practice. We do it in our mind, on the street car, walking along a crowded thoroughfare, on the railroad train, wherever we may be. No one should be able to disturb our thoughts, no one should have any control over our minds, but in order that our mind may be absolutely master of the situation, we need to form the habit of meditation,—meditation on the beautiful, meditation on the true. We should ally ourselves as often as we can and as constantly with the Unbounded and the Infinite. In the Upanishads we are taught that in That which is infinite and unbounded lies happiness, real strength and the fulfillment of life. When we are able to look up to That, not only sometimes but always, we live happily. Can we have any real fullness of life if we are separated from the very

root of our existence? Have you ever seen a flower or a branch of a tree survive when it is severed from the root? It is not possible. Meditation teaches us how we may keep ourselves united with the Source of our life. This is our heritage. No one should ever regard himself as so sinful, so degraded and so benighted as not to have access to this Source. It is through our mental distortion that we think we have drifted from the Source, that we are weak, impure and selfish, that we have nothing. We have everything. We are the descendants of the infinite, all-beautiful, all-living Spirit. The more we can form the habit of thinking of this, the greater will grow our inward power. Then we can easily cope with all the little things of life. At no moment shall we feel at a loss. At no moment shall we feel that we have to rob any one or cheat another to gain our happiness, because we ourselves shall have so much that it will not only suffice for our own life, but we will be able to share it with others gladly and abundantly.

PRAYER AND MEDITATION

By Katharine F. Sherwood

In prayer, O Lord, my thoughts to Thee ascend.
In prayer, O Lord, my knee to Thee I bend.
In meditation, Lord, my thought I stay
That I may hear Thy voice and know Thy way.

In prayer, O Lord, I am a thing apart,
Though worshipping with all the mind and heart.
In meditation, Lord, the self is gone.
Conscious of Thee alone, the two are one.

WALK WHILE YE HAVE LIGHT

From Spiritual Letters of Fenelon. 17th Century

The Greatness and Goodness of God should be a frequent subject of your meditation; but you should not try to meditate without taking some special words, in order to fix your mind, which has been little accustomed to abide calmly in God's Presence; you will otherwise only lose your time without strengthening your heart. You should always have a definite, plain, simple subject, on which you should reflect simply. Ask chiefly to be drawn to God through the affections, for it is not by intellectual processes or arguments that He wins souls; it is by the quickening of the heart and the humbling of the spirit. Do not hope to attain to a point in which your meditations will be free from distraction,—it is not possible; but try rather to make use of your distractions by bearing them with humble patience, never being discouraged. Every time you find them out, turn yourself quietly to God again. Anxiety concerning your distractions is the worst distraction of all.

I would have you always on your guard against haughtiness, self-trust, over-decision in speech. Be gentle and humble in heart, by which I mean that your gentle manner should spring from real humility; harshness and want of consideration always come from pride, and he who would grow milder must learn to humble himself from the bottom of his heart. A humble heart is always kind and pliable at bottom, even when the outside is rough owing to a naturally brusque manner. Watch, pray, labour, bear with yourself without self-flattery. Let your reading and prayer tend to enlighten you as to your faults, to correct them, and to overcome your natural disposition through God's help.

Only a word, dear son, to urge candour more and more upon you, and that you avoid self-seeking, which is the cause of most of your troubles and faults. The simpler you are, the more docile and pliable you will be; and to be this effectually you should be so towards all who find fault with you out of charity. It is very acceptable in God's sight when one is always willing to be blamed, despised, corrected.

Be kindly, without pride or imperiousness, censoriousness, disdain, fastidiousness, or any other token of self-conceit. Be true and frank in spite of yourself. Be steadfast in thwarting your vanity and the sensitiveness of self-love directly that God points them out to you. "Walk while ye have light, that ye may be the children of light." I pray that God may make you gentle, lowly, and childlike.

MIRACLE OF FAITH

Parable by Sri Ramakrishna

A milk-maid used to supply milk to a Brahmin priest living on the other side of the river. Owing to the irregularities of boat service, she could not supply it punctually every day. Once being rebuked for her lateness, the poor woman said, "What can I do, Sir? I start early from my house but have to wait a long time at the river bank for the boatman and the passengers." The priest said, "Woman! they cross the ocean of life by uttering the name of God and canst thou not cross this little river?" The simple-hearted woman became very glad at heart on finding this easy means of crossing the river. From the next day the milk was supplied early in the morning and the milk-maid was also happy, as she saved her fare. One day the priest said to the woman, "How is it that you are no longer late now?" She said, "I cross the river by utter-

ing the name of the Lord as you told me to do, and don't stand in need of the boatman." The priest could not believe this and said, "Canst thou show me how thou crossest the river?" The woman took him with her and began to walk over the water. Looking behind, the woman saw his sad plight and said, "How is this, Sir, thou art uttering the name of the Deity with thy mouth, but at the same time with thy hands thou art trying to keep thy clothes untouched by water? Thou dost not fully rely on the Diety." Entire resignation and absolute faith in God are at the root of all miraculous deeds.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.—*Micah VII, 8.*

We cannot describe the natural history of the soul, but we know that it is divine. I cannot tell if these wonderful qualities which house to-day in this mortal frame shall ever reassemble in equal activity in a similar frame, but this one thing I know, that these qualities did not now begin to exist, cannot be sick with my sickness, nor buried in my grave. —*Emerson.*

The body is our enemy, and yet is our friend. Which of you can bear the sight of misery, and which of you cannot do so when you see it only as a painting? Because it is unreal, we do not identify ourselves with it; we know it only as a painting; it cannot bless us; it cannot hurt us. The most terrible misery painted upon a piece of canvas, we may even enjoy; we praise the technique of the artist; we wonder at his marvellous genius, even though the scene he paints is most horrible. That is the secret: that non-attachment. Be the Witness.

—*Swami Vivekananda.*

GOD AND THE GODS

Compiled by Sister Daya with an extensive excerpt from Egyptian Monotheism by Robert Hillyer, which appeared in "The Freeman," February 14th, 1923.

Polytheism, as it is understood in the Occident, is very different from the Oriental concept of it. The Western mind cannot reconcile a worship of the gods with recognition of one sole Diety. For it there is God and there is His creation; but for the more philosophic Eastern mind, nothing exists outside of Divine Consciousness. Thus the universe for the Eastern is a living universe, vibrant with Divinity, while for the Western it is at worst a chemical compound and at best a kingdom over which God reigns. The general concept in the Occident is that animals, plants, minerals,—all are created for the use of man.

"Fire is sacred," cries the Hindu, "It is the material counterpart of spiritual flame which burns up the dross in our natures. It purifies everything without itself becoming impure!" All the elements are for him living forces, worthy of reverence. They bring Deity closer to man. The Absolute Being is too removed from the human mind by reason of Its infinitude, but the manifested God,—the Divine Mother, may be worshipped and known through any one of Her countless aspects. Thus she is adored under myriad forms and names, just as She Herself enters the human heart through many avenues, but always there is but the One Supreme Mother of the Universe, supporting all, underlying all, and this even the most ignorant worshipper understands. Superstition there may be, ignorance there undoubtedly is, but also there is a basic wisdom which is never utterly over-laid.

There are in India uncompromising Monists who sweep aside all manifestation as illusion and proclaim their identity with the One. "I am He; I am He!" they declare, "I

know neither birth nor death; I am beyond heat and cold; beyond pleasure and pain! I am that unchanging One!" Sri Sankaracharya was such a reformer and there have been many others who reproclaimed to their countrymen the ultimate reach of all worship.

Ancient Egypt likewise had her God and her gods, but so strong was tradition in Egypt, supported as it was by the power of the initiated priests and kings, that there was little chance for the monistic reformer. For this reason the sublime basic truth of the One Deity was probably withheld from the masses. In the XVIII Dynasty, however, there arose a mighty reformer with the spiritual power to proclaim an unwavering monism, and the temporal power to enforce it. He overthrew the temples, the priests and the worship of the gods, and gave to the many the Knowledge which had been reserved for the few. This was Amenhotep IV, later known as Khu en Aten or Ikhnaten father to King Tut-ankh-Amen, whose tomb so lately has been opened up in the Valley of Kings.

A recent article in The Freeman, by Robert Hillyer on Egyptian Monotheism, throws so much light on the subject of polytheism in general, that we take pleasure in reprinting the following extracts from it.

"The Chapters of 'Coming Forth by Day,' commonly known as the Egyptian Book of the Dead, incorporate every detail of the old religion, from the worship of surviving tribal gods to the sublime concept which King Khu en Aten (Amenhotep IV) taught to his people. For such a conservative and devout race, the excision of any symbol or sacred name from the liturgy would have been unendurable sacrilege. About 3500 B. C., when the first chapter of 'Coming Forth by Day' was set down by the scribes, many of the symbols were already so ancient that the men who

wrote them were ignorant of their significance. Yet all were retained, for all were holy to the traditional-minded people of the Nile. Thus, the accumulated ramifications of four thousand years, embodying the cults of old local gods, gods taken over from foreign nations, and various primitive beliefs, almost obscure that inner faith which remained immutable through all the years in the hidden places of the temple.

"To understand that inner faith, one must unravel the single thread which runs in golden continuity through the shadowy mass of exterior symbolism. The Egyptian pantheon, with all its complications, is simple enough in principle. At the head stand the nine great divinities: Ra, the Sun, who signifies the One God; Shu and Tefnet, who came forth from the mouth of Ra, and who, in turn, begat the earth-god Seb and the sky-goddess Nout, whose children were Osiris, Isis, Set and Nephthys. Now obviously these separate divinities, however real they may have been to the people, held for the priests a significance which is easy to follow. The Nine, as well as the less important group of gods, were simply different aspects of the One God. Ra is the self-created life-principle from whom proceed the male and the female, or powers of reproduction (Shu and Tefnet). From the twofold law of reproduction comes forth the material Cosmos, Seb, the Earth, and Nout, the Sky, and out of them springs human divinity: Osiris, who became mortal that he might redeem mortality; Set, his brother and adversary, who brought about the Passion of Osiris; Isis, the wife of Osiris, who by her occult powers raised him from the dead and became the mother of resurrection, and Nephthys, wife of Set, who aided Isis and comforted her. Although Set slew Osiris, he is in no manner to be considered the Egyptian Satan or Evil One; he,

too, was a god and played a necessary part in an encounter which cannot be judged by the moral laws of humanity. In other words, Set the Destroyer is as worthy of worship as Osiris the Creator, since without death there can be no resurrection from matter. To these Nine Gods we must add the generation of the younger Horus and a host of other deities. It is clear that each of these gods is merely a single attribute of the One, a child of the life-principle. Furthermore, the various gods and goddesses frequently merge into one another, change names and characteristics and sybmols. Thus, Ra is the Young Man Horus when he arises in the East; when he sets in the West, he is the Old Man Tem. Nout and Hathor share the sky and exchange identities.

"The Chapters of 'Coming Forth by Day' provide verbal proof of this doctrine, which no hair-splitting can set aside, since the words are unequivocal. Beside numerous references to the One and the One God, there are many more explicit statements, from which I quote the following:

> It is Tem . . . or, as others say, it is Ra.
> I am Yesterday. I am To-day. Yesterday is Osiris and To-day is Ra.
> O One, Mighty One, of myriad forms and aspects.
> O Thou glorious Being, thou who art dowered with all sovereignty!
> O thou Eternal, thou Only One.

"The reader must not conclude from this that the Egyptian laity was convincedly monotheistic; such was not the case. But amid all the apparent confusion of the system, there was an ordered unity which the initiates knew well. The best analogy is found in the Roman Catholic Church, with its tripartite One manifested through the myriad forms of archangels, angels and saints; each an individual, yet each a part of the mystical body of Christ. The Roman Catholic laity may be prone to emphasize the mani-

festations, and to single out for particular veneration the Virgin Mother or some less conspicuous saint, with the effect, perhaps, of removing the Godhead to a more remote shrine. This partakes of the nature of a refined polytheism. Indeed, the loveliest and most profound experiences of humanity have always induced a turning aside from the straight road of the One, who is too nebulous and awful for intimate contemplation, and have lured the spiritual traveller into the chapel of some less divine but more human luminary.

"From a review of these facts, one is led to believe that the monotheistic revolt of King Khu en Aten was less a break with tradition than a revelation of secret doctrine to the vulgar gaze. This remarkable personage, with his strangely sensuous yet mystical face, was of that elect company who cannot endure the existence of darkness, and desire to let their light shine before men. Therefore, he attempted his grand reformation, and flashed the full dawn of spiritual revelation on a people whose eyes, accustomed to the shadows, were only dazzled and blinded by the glare. He put away the Many and publicly acknowledged the One, whom he worshipped under the symbol of Aten, the Sun Disk; and changed his own name from Amenhotep—Servant of Amen—to Khu en Aten—Glory of the Disk. In a country where priests of various deities form a large and powerful element in the population, such a change is not lightly suggested or easily accomplished. Although Khu en Aten put away the many gods and their priesthoods, he was worn out by the struggle. He breathed life into his religion, his own life; and as the religion waxed in spiritual strength, he waned in physical well-being, and, after a reign of about twelve years, he died. The immense hostility which he conquered only at the cost of his own

life sprang from three sources: the conservative and devout temper of his subjects, the fury of priests deprived of their benefices, and, finally, the horror of all the initiates at this frank avowal of doctrines which were the secret of the inner courts of the Temple. After his death, the old cults swept back into power under King Tut-ankh-Amen. His monuments and his name were effaced. He was darkly referred to as the criminal and the Heretic, but his criminal heresy consisted merely in this: that he attempted to teach real orthodoxy to his people. The beautiful hymns that he wrote contain no more 'heresy' than the earlier hymns to the Sun, unless we consider as heretical the omission of the pantheistic catalogue and genealogy. For the traditional hymns to the Sun contain the apostrophe 'O Thou Eternal! Thou Perfect. Thou Only One!' The religion of Khu en Aten was simply an amplification of that apostrophe.

"This king remains, then, not the originator of monotheism, but the teacher of a recognized doctrine to a people unprepared for it. If anything, the courage and beauty of his nature are shown to be even more majestic from this point of view. Had he invented the faith, he would have been little more than a fanatical innovator; as it is, he was an isolated crusader striving to give unto the meanest of his subjects the same sublime vision which was vouchsafed to a privileged minority of intelligent or ordained individuals. Time defeated him; his system collapsed and the old polytheistic beliefs were re-established. But it should not be forgotten that this polytheism was nothing more than the external aspect of a religion which acknowledged the One God, and, with that faith as its essential power, held sway over the most important part of the ancient world for more than four thousand years."

HYMN TO ATEN

By King Khu en Aten

Splendour of Aten, Thy dawning is beautiful in the horizon of heaven, O living Aten! Beginning of life!
When Thou risest in the eastern horizon of heaven, Thou fillest every land with Thy beauty;
For Thou art beautiful, great, glittering, high over the earth;
Thy rays they encompass the lands; even all Thou hast made.
Thou bindest them by Thy love.
Though Thou art afar, Thy rays are on earth;
Though Thou art on high; Thy footprints are the day.
Bright is the earth when Thou risest in the horizon, when Thou shinest as Aten by day.
The darkness is banished, when Thou sendest forth Thy rays.
The two lands (Egypt) are in daily festivity, awake and standing upon their feet for Thou hast raised them up.
Their limbs bathed, they take their clothing; their arms uplifted in adoration to Thy dawning.
Then in all the world they do their work.
All cattle rest upon their herbage,
All trees and plants flourish,
The birds flutter in their marshes, their wings uplifted in adoration to Thee.
All the sheep dance upon their feet, all winged things fly,
They live when Thou hast shone upon them.
The barques sail up-stream and down-stream alike.
Every high-way is open because Thou hast dawned.
The fish in the river leap up before Thee, and Thy rays are in the midst of the great sea.
Thou art He who createst the man-child in woman,

Who makest seed in man, who giveth life to the son in the body of his mother, who soothest him that he may not weep, a nurse even in the womb.

Who giveth breath to animate every one that He maketh,

When he cometh forth from the body on the day of his birth Thou openest his mouth in speech,
Thou suppliest his necessities.

When the chicklet crieth in the egg-shell, Thou givest him breath therein to preserve him alive,

When Thou has perfected him that he may pierce the egg,

He cometh forth from the egg to chirp with all his might;

He runneth about upon his two feet, when he hath come forth therefrom.

How manifold are all Thy works! They are hidden from before us O Thou sole God,

Whose powers no other possesseth! Thou didst create the earth according to Thy desire while Thou wast alone.

Thou makest the beauty of form through Thyself alone.

Thou art in my heart; there is no other that knoweth Thee save Thy son Ikhnaten.

Thou hast made him wise in Thy designs and in Thy might.

By Thee man liveth, and his eyes look upon Thy beauty until Thou settest.

All labour is laid aside when Thou settest in the west.

Since Thou didst establish the earth, Thou hast raised it for Thy son, Who came forth from Thy limbs,

The king living in truth, the Lord of the two lands, Nefer-khepru Re-wan-Re. The son of Re, living in truth, Lord of diadems Ikhnaten, whose life is long;

(And for) the great royal wife, his beloved, Mistress of the Two Lands Nefer-Nefru Aten, Nofretete, living and flourishing forever and ever.

ANANDA ASHRAMA

Sunday, April 29th, marked the beginning of a new phase in the work of The Vedanta Centre of Boston. On the afternoon of that day, under the blue sky of California, Swami Paramananda opened his new Peace Retreat—Ananda Ashrama—with a lovely and impressive service, held out of doors among the trees and flowers in God's great temple of the hills.

So quickly has this new development come about that many are as yet not fully aware of it, nor do they know that it is but the sudden flowering of a dream that the Swami has held in his heart for years. Within the past eighteen months the growth of the Boston Centre has been phenomenal. Sunday after Sunday the Chapel has been filled to overflowing. It has been apparent to every one that some change would have to be made. It was the parting of the ways. Either it was necessary to move the Centre into larger quarters and build up a more institutionalized city work, or to relieve the pressure on the Boston work by expansion in another direction. The city proves a splendid field for spiritual work; there are countless yearning hearts in Boston for whom the Centre has been a place of refreshment and peace. The Swami prays that it may always be so. The Boston Centre will be maintained. But there are certain aspects of the spiritual life which cannot find full expression in the atmosphere of a city. In India the quiet of the forest was always sought by the spiritual teacher and his pupils. Nature draws man's thoughts inevitably to God, and is in itself the mightiest of teachers. With this in mind Swami Paramananda came across the continent about two months ago. Friends had already been searching the southern California hills for a place which would meet his requirements, but without

success. Their report to him was full of discouragement. A little over a week after his arrival, however, he was led as though by a divine Hand to one of nature's sanctuaries, in the Sierra Madre or Mother Mountains, placed high like a platform or altar five hundred feet above the valley of La Crescenta, and twenty-two hundred feet above the sea. Ten minutes after standing on the edge of this great plateau gazing through the misty gap of the Verdugo hills across the valley to where beyond lay the Pacific, he turned and said, "This is the place I have been seeking!" In every way it seemed a gift of God, set aside and held inviolate for this purpose.

The first public Service was held four days after the Swami's second return from Boston. Nothing could have been simpler. People were notified by post card and through local papers. Hurried arrangements were made to meet those who came by trolley or bus and to motor them up the mile and a half of road which rises by a steep grade to the Ashrama. Benches were made and folding chairs borrowed for the purpose of seating those who might come. The platform upon which the Swami stood was of grass. Locust trees in full blossom, masses of yellow broom, white syringa, wild sage, and the lupin made the air fragrant around him. Those who have been to the Centre in Boston are familiar with the great round symbol of the Word which hangs above the altar. Over the Swami's head on this Sunday afternoon, hung the symbol of the Word, Its truest symbol, the flaming sun. Behind him, as in a Greek amphitheatre, rose the hills, level after level, softly veiled and shadowed, forming an almost perfect triangle between two arms of which lay the natural platform upon which stands the house.

From three o'clock on, the motors began to climb up

from the valley and it was after four when they ceased coming and the Swami felt that he could begin. While waiting, the people formed into groups and wandered through the shaded paths or sat under the trees. There was no tedium in the delay for all nature was alive and glistening. When all were assembled every seat was taken. Old friends were there, but there were many who came in touch with the work for the first time. Some were drawn by curiosity, some by association and some by deep spiritual hunger. Beautiful and profound as the Swami's words have seemed to his listeners in Boston and in other places, even more simple and beautiful did they there on the natural altar of Ananda Ashrama. Little lizards ran up the limbs of the tree above the Swami's head and shyly made their way over the grass at his feet, birds hopped trustingly near and humming birds flashed through the air. The Swami spoke as always of that great unity which underlies all diversity, of that One Infinite which man can no more partition off than he can partition off the infinite sky. His Sanskrit prayers had a new majesty, heard out of doors with the undertone of nature, and his peace chant mingled with the peace of the hills and seemed to flow forth over the world below. All felt the speel of it and lingered till the long shadows told the lateness of the hour and the three crescent-shaped ranges turned amethyst with the evening haze. The lights of the cities, Glendale, Los Angeles and even San Pedro were already twinkling, when the last guest had gone. It could not have been a lovlier or more propitious beginning.

Much has already been done with the property by Mr. Fusenot, a French gentleman with artistic taste, who planned and developed it; but much remains to be done. A charming red-tiled house gives accommodation to the

workers already there, but when others come, there will have to be further construction. Then, of course, there is to be a Temple and this, the Swami hopes, all the workers will aid in building, so that it may be a real temple raised by loving hands to the glory of God, as were so many of the great temples and cathedrals of old. Mountain springs provide deliciously pure water, but much of this goes to waste, causing a shortage in the time of irrigation. One of the first activities will be the enlarging of two dams in the canyon above the plateau. This not only will conserve the water but will form two lovely miniature lakes around the edges of which will grow the Indian lotus. As one friend said, who came to the Ashrama, "You have a lifetime of work before you, spiritual and material." But in all the development that will take place, the charming wildness of the place will be maintained in order that it may ever have the nature of a true Ashrama or Retreat. Placed as it is in the National Forest Reserve, it will be safe from the intrusion of the city. It is rare indeed to find a spot which combines so perfectly the quality of remoteness and accessibility, for Ananda Ashrama is only sixteen miles from Los Angeles and the journey can easily be made by automobile in forty-five minutes. It is only eight miles from Pasadena, six miles from Glendale and four miles from the Flint Ridge Country Club. Those who come to the Sunday afternoon Service by street car are met by the Ashrama automobiles between three and four o'clock at the end of the Glendale-Montrose car line.

The Swami will divide his time between California, Boston and other cities, but even during his absence there will be Sunday afternoon Services. It is hoped that the Ashrama will soon become a place of pilgrimage, the goal for many a yearning soul from all over the world.

REPORT

On the evening of April 2nd, Swami Paramananda held a reception at The Vedanta Centre of Boston, for the purpose of announcing to friends and students the recent purchase of land at La Crescenta, California, to be used as an Ashrama or Peace Retreat. He made it clear that this is to be but an extension of the Boston work,—a home where the workers can express certain ideas and ideals under more favorable climatic conditions than in New England. "You cannot imagine out door life in zero weather," said the Swami. "We shall create out there a place where a community of workers can live and express their talents along different lines,—music, art, industry. It will not be limited to religion, although that will be the soul of it. Silent living. People who dare live and wait patiently, whether the world gives any recognition to them or not. This home is going to be created for that purpose. It is not a sudden change. For some time I have felt the need of a different line of action. Life is to be put on a simplier basis. It does not mean giving up any thing; it means only expansion. We are going into something bigger."

The Swami called upon Mr. Charles Larkin who had accompanied him from California to give a description of the new property and of the finding of it. Mr. Larkin by means of maps which he had himself made, showed how La Crescenta lay in relation to Los Angeles and Pasadena. The spirit of Ananda Ashrama he said, was expressed in Dr. Van Dyke's "God of the Open Air."

"Thou who hast made thy dwelling fair
With flowers below, above with starry lights
And set thine altars everywhere,—
On mountain heights,

In woodlands dim with many a dream,
In valleys bright with springs,
And on the curving capes of every stream:
Thou who hast taken to thyself the wings
Of morning, to abide
Upon the secret places of the sea,
And on far islands, where the tide
Visits the beauty of untrodden shores,
Waiting for worshippers to come to thee
In thy great out-of-doors!
To thee I turn, to thee I make my prayer,
God of the open air."

Deep interest was shown by all in the Swami's announcement and a surprising number declared their readiness to follow him west and take up a new life in California. A description of the Ashrama is given in this number.

* * * *

During Swami Paramananda's absence from Boston the regular Services at The Chapel of the Vedanta Centre were ably conducted by one of his assistants, Miss Katharine F. Sherwood, who has been closely associated with the work ever since the establishment of the work in Boston in 1909. All the Services were well attended and Miss Sherwood's earnest and clear presentation was found peculiarly helpful by everyone. Her talks on "Reconstruction," "Religion and Modern Life," "Christianity," "Practical Vedanta" and "Personality" were especially appreciated, and we hope to publish some of these from time to time in the coming issues of the Message. The Swami expects to remain in Boston through the entire month of June and possibly the first two Sundays of July.

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

JUNE, 1923

SILENCE AND CO-ORDINATION

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"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.
Published monthly except in August and September

Vol. XII JUNE, 1923 No. 6

THE VEIL OF UNKNOWING

By Swami Paramananda

IT is not death that robs our life,
Nor is it the dark of night that bars
our inward sight;
Nay, it is the Veil of Unknowing.
Behold how the sky of our fair heart is
darkened by the rising mist of
jealousy and anger, suspicion
and doubt.
These powers of blackness by their
quick alliance, form this Veil
of Unknowing.
Shall we not keep the sky of our heart
clear and fair like the polished
mirror, to reflect the truer
image of our inmost soul?
One speck of this doubting dust lodged on
our heart, draws another and yet
another
Till no longer our vision is true.
We pray unto thee, Thou Destroyer of darkness.
Help us to keep our heart pure, clear and
free from this Veil of Unknowing.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Loud speech, profusion of words, and possessing the skillfulness in expounding Scriptures are merely for the enjoyment of the learned. They do not lead to liberation.

—*Sankaracharaya.*

Silence is a healing for all ailments. Silence is good for the wise; how much more so for the foolish. All my days I have grown up amongst the wise, and I have found naught of better service than silence.

—*Ancient Jewish Proverb.*

The repose of the sage is not what the world calls repose. His repose is the result of his mental attitude. All creation could not disturb his equilibrium; hence his repose. When water is still, it is like a mirror, reflecting the beard and the eyebrows. It gives the accuracy of the water-level, and the philosopher makes it his model. And if water thus derives lucidity from stillness, how much more the faculties of the mind! The mind of the sage, being in repose, becomes the mirror of the universe, the speculum of all creation. —*Chaung Tzu.*

Keep thine own sentiments and faith to thyself. Do not talk about them abroad, otherwise thou wilt be a great loser.

Keep thyself aloof at the time of thy devotions from those who scoff at them and those who ridicule piety and the pious.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

When thou prayest enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father, which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore

like unto them, for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him.—*Jesus the Christ.*

Silence is the heart of all things; sound the fluttering of its pulse,

Which the fever and the spasm of the universe convulse.

Every sound that breaks the silence only makes it more profound,

Like a crash of deafening thunder in the sweet, blue stillness drowned;

Let thy soul walk softly in thee, as a saint in heaven unshod,

For to be alone with silence, is to be alone with God."

—*Beyond the Sunrise.*

With understanding held by firmness, and mind established in the Self, let him thus by degrees attain tranquillity; let him not think of anything else. Wheresoever the restless and unsteady mind may wander away, let him withdraw it from there and bring it under the control of the Self alone. He whose passions are quieted and mind perfectly tranquil, who has become one with Brahman, being freed from all impurities, to such a Yogi comes supreme bliss.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

What if the wicked nature, which is as a sea casting out mire and dirt, rage against thee? There is a river, a sweet, still, flowing river, the streams whereof will make glad thy heart. And learn but in quietness and stillness to retire to the Lord, and wait upon Him; in Whom thou shalt feel peace and joy, in the midst of thy troubles from the cruel and vexatious spirit of this world.

—*Isaac Penington.*

SILENCE AND CO-ORDINATION

By Swami Paramananda

A seed in the womb of mother earth lies in silence absorbing nourishment and other natural blessings until its expanded soul bursts forth into blossom. The spirit of genius, nurtured in the bosom of quiet contemplation, awaits patiently its appointed hour of awakening. Silence, the great unseen power, the miracle of life, works upon our character with strange contrast, at times overwhelming us with its oppressive stillness, and again it falls upon our heart as a shower of refreshing rain-drops on a sultry summer day. How often silence acts as a tonic, invigorating and reviving our dull spirit. Then again its effect upon us is like that of a narcotic, putting our life's energies into a state of morbid sleep. All great forces of nature work in contrast.

In the world of religion and philosophy the practice of silence plays a most vital part. It creates an atmosphere and enables the seeker to find access to an inner sanctuary entirely hidden from the restless and turbulent material world. Whenever we are listening to fine music if someone speaks or makes a noise we are distracted, and jarred by it, and often we lose the subtle beauty of the music. Similarly in spiritual study if our attention is diverted we receive little or no benefit. That is the reason why the idea of complete silence before a spiritual study is strongly advocated by many of the great schools of thought. We can easily see its technical reason, how it aids us in the act of concentration, but its more profound significance is the unfoldment of our higher nature. Even to-day, we find many of the places of worship maintain rigid silence to create an atmosphere so needful for spiritual devotion and prayer. We can never hear the language of

the soul if our ears are filled with the loud noises of the world. One of the Sufi mystics expresses the import of this beautifully. "Be silent that the Lord Who gave thee language may speak, for as He fashioned a door and lock, He has also made a key. . . . I am silent. Speak Thou, O Soul of Soul of Soul."

All the mystic teachers and illumined sages emanate a peculiar atmosphere of calm and quiet dignity. In India some of the great seers completely refrain from speech and yet they exert a most potent influence upon the lives of their followers. One of the first forms of spiritual discipline the neophytes have to undergo is the practice of silence. They never speak before their teachers unless they are asked to do so. What is the most direct blessing they receive through it? It makes their mind receptive and whatever it receives it can easily assimilate. The necessity of this is felt even in our secular education. Unless the mind is receptive any amount of time expended in study is of very little avail. It is interesting to note how Madame Montessori in her system of education advocates this idea of silence. In India its value was felt from time immemorial and was widely practised from child-education to the advanced study of Vedic revelation. This mode of living and thinking, however, is quite out of fashion with our modern life and habit. There are some who even feel a strong aversion to it and this is because they confuse the idea of silence with dullness and inaction.

The aim of silence is not to free our mind from thought and assume a state of emptiness and passivity. On the contrary silence becomes a definite factor for our efficient and concentrated thought. Silence means co-ordination of our body, our mind, and all our faculties to such an extent that every particle moves in one rhythm. In this state all

our aspirations and ideals work in harmony, so much so that there is no friction. You can verify this in connection with machinery; that which avoids friction most makes the least noise and endures the longest. In the world of life and all forms of activity, we find this to be true. The life that moves without inharmony and friction is the most efficient life. A man whose mind is well-ordered and whose whole system is well-organized is always finding something of interest within himself. He does not offer his opinion to others because he has found something within. He has become quiet, and through his balance of mind and attitude he is always discovering an inner interest. That is what the Indo-Aryans recognized as the most essential factor in all forms of study. No one can study successfully unless he has the power of concentration and co-ordination, and this power cannot be achieved unless we come to an attitude of silence. A silent being is a very restful being. Even in a household we find a person who is calm and composed and thoughtful radiates a powerful influence. Nervously disorganized people find a great source of rest through him.

One of the most interesting phenomena that takes place in connection with the practice of silence is that the mind evolves creative genius. For instance when a person who is used to intense activity and outer diversion for his pastime and pleasure is suddenly thrown on his inner resources, if he is not thwarted by it, his mind will have a peculiar reaction and he will discover his own inner reserve and originality. This also is true in connection with children's education. If we do not try to keep their minds altogether occupied with artificial toys and noisy games, they will work and invent newer ones, and this quickening of the inner faculties is the gist of true education. We

think better when our mind is not weighted down by matter. We see more clearly when our eyes are focussed on a single objective and nothing is more efficacious towards this end than the practice of silence.

All wise people realize that the deeper part of our nature can only be expressed effectively when our outer being is still. That is why so often they retire from the crowd. They are not keen to offer their opinions. They think deeply and act quietly. We often misunderstand this type of people who are not constantly active like ourselves. We imagine that their lives are wasteful because they are not constantly engaged in outer occupation, but we can never measure the good that radiates from a calm and contemplative spirit. It is not in India alone that they have this view that a person does not have to talk in order to impart his teaching, but it is shared by many of the mystics and seers of the world. In one of the great Indian classics an illustration is given of a pupil approaching a teacher with his mind filled with doubt and ignorance. Although he asked many questions the teacher remained silent, but the disciple's doubts cleared away even as he sat in his presence. A parallel instance is given by Plato. "I will tell you, Socrates," says Aristides, "a thing incredible but nevertheless true, I made a great proficiency when I associated with you, even if I was only in the same house, though not in the same room; but more so when I was in the same room; and much more when I looked at you. But I made by far the greatest proficiency when I sat near you and touched you."

We have to have certain fundamental virtues before we can make any headway with our spiritual life. If our mind is filled with noble thoughts we do not find ourselves lonely and unprotected at any time. The average

person is lonely whenever there is no one to entertain him or talk with him, but a person who has entered into his spiritual depth, even in a small measure, is very glad to find an opportunity when he can be alone, communing with his inner Self. We should all learn to be alone with ourselves. People imagine that they cannot be happy unless they are constantly in the company of others. Then again some think that they must get away from everything and everybody in order to have their peace of mind. However, we are never alone even though we may enter a mountain cave if we are tormented by our own ignorance and selfishness. You may wonder what I mean by silence if it is not getting away from the crowd, if it is not breaking away from the noisy part of life. It does not mean that. It requires something more than running away from people. You may enter the forest's untravelled depths and yet you may not find any quiet if your own mind is noisy, if your own attitude is distracted, or if you have not the harmony within your own self. These are the things which we have to cultivate and it is better for us to cultivate them before we fall into the entanglement of life.

We cannot go into this world and expect to find everything just the way we should like it. There are disappointments and unexpected happenings, but in spite of all these upheavals we can carry ourselves safely and with poise if we have acquired the silent attitude of mind and habit. You may believe intellectually that it is a wrong thing to be angry, it is a wrong thing to be impatient, it is a wrong thing to speak harshly; but the words come unexpectedly, and before you realize it you have spoken unkindly. We can order our mind in such rhythm and connect our life with

higher forces that these calamities will never befall us.

The great secret of success is that we work with our whole being, and we cannot do this without being absolutely still and concentrated. These are the simple facts of life, but not so easy to accomplish. We cannot expect somebody else to do it for us. There are many people who would like to have others think for them. Even the greatest mind cannot think for another. We are never going to gain our heart's satisfaction, or our highest wisdom, in that way. Another mind and another brain cannot think out our problem, because it does not know the entire situation. We cannot give a true picture to any one no matter how much we may try. There is, however, a way of finding our own solution, and that is when we learn to enter within our own depth.

It is not so much work that wears us out. Sometimes lack of work may do it. It is not knowing how to direct ourselves; it is not knowing how to find that attitude of collectiveness and poise. When we are equipped with these qualities we always have greater power of penetration. Intellectually we may grasp the value of these things, but that is only the ethical aspect of it. It is the most dynamic, most practical and most valuable thing when we have applied it in our life, and that is where we find the fruition. A person who is nervous ceases to be nervous; a person who is physically weak and disorganized, gradually becomes calm, and a person who is dull, without any power of magnetism or attraction, suddenly blossoms and has a certain amount of light. Now this comes from within, and for that reason it has a far-reaching effect. There are many people who can talk and preach and make a noise, but nothing superficial can bring us satisfaction. It is by living quietly and earnestly that we evolve the true

spiritual insight which enables us to find our intrinsic value from an inner depth.

Great ideas and ideals are always before us. Everybody hears them, but when a genuine soul hears an idea he takes it; he says, I must know more about it. He thinks, reflects and meditates. He goes into his very inmost depth, and then he brings it to fruition. However, it does not come to a man who is in haste and wants it all at once. That is one of our greatest calamities. The things we acquire by long, steadfast, devoted effort are the things which last and bring into our life great richness. Therefore we must abandon as soon as we can this idea of haste and wanting results at once. The deep things do not come suddenly. Let us be patient,—patient with ourselves. We may recognize many defects in our nature. No matter how much blemish we may have within ourselves, or how much disorder, it can all be removed. Go on working silently. If you do not succeed at once, put more energy and force into it. One who is willing to wait, the very attitude saves him and enables him to surmount the insurmountable difficulties, and one who is impatient, he loses his opportunities. Therefore silence and patience go together. It has a wonderful creative power. Make a study of the lives of the great men. They conceive an idea; they do not go out and shout it before the world, but they think silently and work quietly until they realize their ideal.

If we can form the habit of devoting a certain time for silent relaxation, it will have a very definite beneficial effect upon both our physical and moral being. When in course of our daily round of duties we find ourselves growing physically tired or mentally tense, if we can take an attitude of relaxation and co-ordinate our thoughts,

discarding all feelings of vexation and unrest, we will feel restored and refreshed. It will even enable us to do our work better. How often people go to bed after their day's labor and they do not rest. The next morning they wake up feeling very weary, without any freshness or sense of rest. What is the cause of it? They were not working at night. No, but they were worrying about their work. They took their work, all their worries and anxieties to bed with them. That is not the way to order our life. There is time for work, there is time for recreation and rest, and silence is the best rest giver. There is nothing which can rest us more quickly than the attitude of silence, and every one has the right to it. When everything is still, when our thoughts are quieted down and our entire nervous system is in order, when we have naught against any one and our mind is calm and poised, then in the inner depth of stillness we find something which is so ennobling and restful that others even feel it.

"How sweet is the sound of silence! How tender is its touch! How fragrant is its breathing! How lovely is its form! O be still yet awhile that my soul may see and feel, hear and touch its own in this realm of peace divine." There are delicate things in our life, most potent and most vibrant, but we miss them because we lack in delicacy of feeling. When we are distracted by the visible material glamour of life we miss our mark, but in that hour of silent co-ordination, when all our faculties are in perfect tune, we realize that we are part of the cosmic Life. It is in this hour we find the fullness of our life, for then our little life has become united with the great Life, and our little mind with the cosmic Mind. Only at such moments when the finite and Infinite are so commingled does our mind stand apart with speechless silence and unspoken wonder.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SILENCE

(Experience in the use of prayer without words by small groups including both Quakers and Anglicans.)

First began the stilling of mind and soul. The very activity of the brain may make a man a bad listener, and listening was our goal. The intellect needs to learn how to be still, no less than the body, if it is to concentrate all its powers. This bringing of the mind away from its distractions and restlessness to a single and sustained attention to God is the crux of the whole matter.

The recollection of God under some aspect of His boundless immensity—His greatness, His awful sanctity, His enfolding Being, His Presence in the soul of man;—these are the kind of cosmic thoughts, in themselves casting upon the mind the hush and still wonder which is the avenue to contemplation.

"God's greatness lies around our incompleteness,
Round our restlessness His Rest."

Here too, it is useful to have in mind some quick word of recall, by which the wandering of thought can be instantly, and as often as needed brought back to the central purpose—the word "God", not spoken, but sounding in the mind. This preparation may take long. It is worth persisting in until it has gained its end, until mind and soul are silent unto God.

Thus we pass to the centre of our silence. The will is at its highest activity. As an insect poised in the air, seemingly motionless, with wings in such rapid motion that they are invisible, is all the while sustained by its resistance to the air, so the will in this listening is not passive. It holds fast to its rest in God by sustained resistance to all that would drag it down or invade its silence. This is very far from making the mind a blank.

It is the filling of the mind with God to the exclusion of all else. Not in words, nor visions, nor signs, did we look for the communications of God. Thoughts rising spontaneously, movements and stirrings welling up from the depths of the soul, the inner glory of God hidden in the soul of man, emerging, filling the Temple, none of these word images conveys what can be conveyed. Only we knew God, and we knew that we knew Him.

THE LOST SON

Parable by Buddha

A certain householder's son went away into a far country, and while the father was accumulating immense wealth the son became wretchedly poor. Seeking for food and shelter, the son chanced to come to his father's door, not knowing who dwelt within. But the father beheld him and ordered his servants to call him. The son, however, observing the magnificence of the palace, thought: "Perhaps this rich man suspects me to be a thief and will throw me into prison." So he fled without seeing the master of the house.

Then the father dispatched messengers to overtake his son and bring him back, despite his loud lamentations. But the servants were admonished to deal tenderly with the young man and to give him employment as a helper on the estate. The youth was well satisfied with his position and labored diligently. This so pleased the father that he promoted him to higher and higher duties.

After many years had passed, he summoned his son, called together all his servants, and made known the secret to them. The son, overjoyed to find his father, took his rightful place in the household, and became a dutiful son.

Thus it is that only when the mind is made ready for higher truths, can it receive and understand their value.

INFLUENCE OF MIND UPON MIND

By W. F. Evans

(Excerpt from Esoteric Christianity)

All true education is a spiritual development. Spiritual knowledge is imparted, not by verbal discourse merely, but by the silent influence of mind upon mind. It is a principle that has always been recognized in the world, that one mind, by the influence of its silent sphere, can lift another mind to a higher intellectual level. This has always been a method of instruction practised by the Hindu adepts in teaching the neophyte the principles of their occult philosophy. The *chela*, or scholar, is subjected to the psychological influence of the *guru*, or teacher, who aims to impart to him knowledge through the Universal Mind. The disciple waits upon the master in a spirit of emptiness, and the intellectual sphere of the teacher's mind fills the vacuum. This is a method of education and of acquiring spiritual knowledge entirely unrecognized in our Western systems of instruction, but has long been known in the Orient, and was practised by Jesus, and belongs to Christianity.

The spirit of man searches out all things; yea, the deep things of God. It is the spring of all inspiration and revelation. As our individual spirit has a voice, so has the Universal Spirit, in whom we are included. Let us turn the inward ear towards the "speaking silence" to receive the soundless word, "the deep and calm revealing." If with a sincere desire to know the truth, and live the truth, and use it for the good of mankind, and not from a mere idle curiosity or for the sake of gain, we are found listening at the door of the temple of wisdom and the "halls of learning," the door will be unlocked and thrown open to us,

and we may enter in and read the records of the hidden wisdom, which God appointed before the ages for our glorification. It is only in the deep silence of the soul that God speaks. Silence is the bosom of the Infinite Life, and contains the indelible record of all the truth that ever entered the mind of man.

MAN THE IMAGE-MAKER

By Sister Daya

Is it true, as we are so often told, that we all have the equipment for achievement if we will but use it? When a master-spirit assures us with dynamic force that he possesses no special endowment or faculty that we do not possess; but that he has merely learned how to employ and direct forces and faculties common to all mankind, way deep in our heart we are inclined to be skeptical. How well we feel we know ourselves,—our limited mental powers, our fluctuating purpose, our confined outlook upon life. We say we have not the genius and are content to place the burden of our failure upon what we assume to be an inherent lack.

But we are using or misusing every passing minute a faculty that lies at the very root of genius. Let no one say he lacks equipment who possesses the image-making faculty, and every one does possess it for without it man could not be a rational being. In the depths of our consciousness lies our workshop where we are ceaselessly engaged in building mental moulds into which our character and our life will be poured. With this in mind, let us look within and understand why our character is ill-proportioned and full of distortions, why our life seems to be so chaotic and purposeless. Are our mental pictures balanced, sustained, clear and vivid? Or are they vague

and changing like a never-ending freak "movie" throwing confused shadows on the screen of our mind?

No man in any age has ever brought anything into being that has not first been but a mental image. This applies both to the inner and to the outer life. In order to make this more vivid let us contemplate the man-made world around us. From its most gigantic structure to its finest and most intricate invention, from the painting on the walls of a palace to the design on a birthday cake there is nothing man has made that was not first a thing of the imagination. We can infer from this fact alone, the supremacy of Spirit over matter. Strange indeed if the mind that has given birth to the civilizations of the earth was itself only a material reflex.

This is the process: First a mental image is formed, then according to the persistency, the intensity and the clearness with which we can hold it, it is precipitated, as it were, into matter. There is nothing that cannot be achieved through this power of imagination. The secret of its use comprises the mystery of every system of spiritual or of occult development. It is the key to heaven and likewise to hell. No one ever yet yielded to outer temptation who did not first yield to his own mental picture of it. No one ever grew into sainthood who had not long contemplated in imagination the beauty and blessedness of selflessness and renunciation. Into the holy image he builds himself slowly and imperceptibly. That is why such a point has always been made in India of living with the Holy. One cannot be in the company of great souls without being mentally possessed by their greatness. They become a dominant picture in the mind that draws us up to its own likeness. When that image would fade, the living presence of the original revivifies and strengthens it. A

mental habit becomes established which after a time acts as a man's guardian angel, reasserting itself at critical moments.

Most of us now have the habit of chaotic thought; our imagination seldom reaches the dignity of a creative force but confines itself to idle day-dreaming which is neither distinct nor sustained enough to produce anything but its own shifting likeness. Watch the faces of passers-by on the city street and read the record of the imagination. How many are vital, striking, purposeful, illumined? How many are lighted by noble thoughts or selfless striving? What record is written on your face to the observer? What thoughts are you carrying with you as you pass along the street? Are you building petty images around your own petty self and its interests? Are you busy exalting your ego in some little play of the imagination? If you are, then strive to stop doing so. It may not be easy. There may be an enormous inertia to overcome, perhaps mental habits of life-times. It may take life-times to build new habits to take the place of the old, but that should be no discouragement. The joy is in the doing. It can be the most wonderful game in the world, this game of self-reconstruction. There need be no struggle against the old habit; all that you need do is to begin to turn your mind towards that which represents the highest Ideal in your life. Learn to love it more and more, reach ever higher and higher; it will supplant the old tendencies. They will fall away like dry leaves. A great teacher from India once said, "Renunciation comes from fullness." When our heart and mind are full of the beautiful constructive images there will be no room left for the old.

Why not begin this divine task to-day? It will have to be done some day. To the one who has entered the richer

world of pure imagination, the average mental picture gallery seems unbearably dull and lifeless. Such a one wonders how people can go on year after year living in such a dead world. As your Ideal grows, as your imagination reaches out beyond the selfish interests, life grows into a radiant delightful experience, thrilling, absorbing, blissful. Begin now! Never mind how weak your imagination, how feeble the Ideal. Yearn for something greater and the little paltry image-making faculty will gradually build you pictures that will exalt your soul and make you into a noble human being.

The average mind is merely futile but there is also the illegitimate use of the imagination,—the building of mental pictures destructive to oneself and others,—the seeds of crime and disaster. Then there are the lesser perversions, imaginary worries, sickness and woe, built up in the mind and dwelt upon till an atmosphere is formed that is a veritable culture-bed for trouble.

You may ask, is not imagination often but a vision of the unreal? A sort of "fool's gold"? Do not people experience many things inwardly that have no foundation in fact? What is fact and what is fancy? Is it really possible for us to conceive of anything that is outside of existence? We may make strange distortions, combine and recombine, but does not nature the same? It is a matter of very real fact that imagination,—pure, legitimate imagination,—may be the open door through which we reach something greater than fact,—reality. So long as we dwell in the realm of self our imagination will often deceive us, lead us by false trails; but when we give it wings to soar outside of self into the divine realm, it will bring back to us immortal pictures which will be the matrix for our spiritual being. This is pure imagination.

As we stand on the threshold of the inner life, devoid as yet of realization, we could not advance but for the images we make of our Ideal. We must have something tangible into which we can build ourselves. Our body, our mind, our character will by a divine law, follow our imagination. Well did the great Hindu teachers of old know the value of the image as a focussing point for the Ideal. Some of the mightiest of their seers gained illumination through the reality with which they were able to imbue a symbol. The very atoms of our body fall into place along our mental lines of cleavage if we have the one-pointedness needful to hold the picture. Outer symbols aid enormously in this one-pointed concentration. Herein lies the reason for idols and idol-worship. So-called idol-worship springs from a spiritual science which like many sciences can produce life or death.

Most of us could not approach the formless Spirit without the aid of form. We must make Spirit real, tangible, living; or we shall never realize it. Sri Krishna in the Gita very definitely states that the formless path is almost impossible for the embodied to attain. Picture your divine Ideal; place your heart upon it; make it your darling, your companion, your mother, your father,—anything you please to make it; but make it real. It will be real. It is real, more real than you can as yet possibly conceive and it will fill with its reality any form you are capable of building, will lead you by that form to itself.

As you draw your Ideal close, you will love it and as you love it you will lose yourself in it and when you lose yourself God rushes in. Meditate upon God as an infinite divine Essence forever out of reach and you will keep on meditating till the end of time with little or no result. Meditate upon God as a living presence in the heart in

Whom you confide, Whom you can serve, at Whose feet you can consecrate yourself, and never again will you think of yourself as an isolated fragment of consciousness, such bliss will fill you, such a sense of completion and peace. All barriers will fall away; all littleness will be forgotten; only will there exist that eternal Being filling and expanding the heart with Itself.

We wait and wait for some formula, some magic word, some initiation to do for us what we must do for ourselves. There is a magic word,—earnestness. The Buddha tells us that earnestness is the path of life and heedlessness is the path of death. Be earnest and nothing will resist you, but be earnest for great ends. Why should we speak of the lesser uses of the imagination. The man of vital imagination will be the creator and producer in any line that he undertakes; but these words are being written for those who having once seen the vision of the Highest can never again direct their God-given faculties to anything less than Its realization.

Man's destiny lies within the scope of his imagination from the little ego-filled dreams of childhood to the mature vision of the Infinite. Linked to the imagination is the will. Some modern psychologists exalt the imagination over the will. But we must discriminate, we must decide what the mind shall dwell upon, what type of picture it shall form and this involves an act of will. In its turn, the picture will lure the will on to more sustained endeavor. When we begin to analyze human psychology we enter a confused realm and are removed a thousand miles from the utter simplicity of Divine realization. Let us rather, like children with a wonderful picture book, be content to rest in the arms of the eternal Divine Mother, trusting Her to turn the pages and tell us the story.

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL MAN

By Emanuel Swedenborg.

It is not contrary to rationality and liberty to compel oneself. It has been shown already that man has an internal and an external of thought, and that these are distinct as prior and posterior, or as higher and lower; and that because they are so distinct, they can act separately and can act conjointly. They act separately when a man from the external of his thought says and does in one way while he interiorly thinks and wills in another; and they act conjointly when a man says and does as he interiorly thinks and wills; this is common with the sincere, the other with the insincere. Now since the mind's internal and external are thus distinct, the internal may even fight with the external, and by combat force it to consent. Combat exists when man thinks that evils are sins and therefore wishes to desist from them; for when he desists, the door is opened; and when it is opened, the lusts of evil that occupied the internal of thought are cast out by the Lord and affections of good are implanted in place of them. This is done in the internal of thought. But as the enjoyments of the lusts of evil which occupy the external of thought cannot be cast out at the same time, therefore combat exists between the internal and the external of thought. The internal wishes to cast out those enjoyments because they are enjoyments of evil and not in concord with the affections of good in which the internal now is; and, in place of the enjoyments of evil, it wishes to introduce enjoyments of good which are in concord; the enjoyments of good are what are called the goods of charity. From this contrariety arises combat, which if it becomes severe is called temptation. Now as a man is man from the internal of his thought, for this is

man's very spirit, it is evident that a man compels himself when he compels the external of his thought to consent, or to receive the enjoyments of his affections, which are goods of charity.

When, therefore, the internal conquers, as it does when the internal has reduced the external to consent and compliance, then the Lord gives man liberty itself and rationality itself; for then man is withdrawn by the Lord from infernal freedom, which in itself is slavery, and is brought into heavenly freedom, which in itself is real freedom, and there is given him fellowship with the angels.

AN EAST INDIAN POET

(Book Review—by Anna Blanche McGill, Louisville Evening Post.)

Rabindranath Tagore is doubtless more widely known than his fellow-countryman. His books reveal more nuance of perception and thought, perhaps more power. But in this book by Paramananda we find a certain freshness of poetic charm, a sincerity and spontaneity of expression, more pleasing than the more elaborated effusions of the older poet. Here we catch fewer echoes of The Song of Solomon and other familiar writings; we are aware of a poet and mystic making a forthright personal record of aspiration and emotion.

The volume is divided into groups of communings, Songs of Nature, and a Hymn of Adoration. Though patently Oriental in tropes and atmosphere, the lines speak the universal language of the mystical and poetical who, in spite of the insistent claims of old mortality, are addicted to spreading wings of aspiration toward a "diviner ether, a purer air," toward the Spirit of Perfection that inspires "the might of the mighty, sanctity of the saint, melody of the musician."

In the poet's constant awareness of a spiritual Presence, there is an occasional suggestion of Francis Thompson's "Hound of Heaven" and the Psalm, "Though I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea." The East Indian's phrases run: "Seeking for my soul's freedom, I have wandered far. . . . In vain have I sought my liberation apart from Thee. . . . Henceforth I am Thy Captive."

Ardor and simplicity are among the notes that charm throughout the volume. These characteristic words have a familiar ring to Western readers: "Tell me, O, Thou wondrous Being, why dost Thou choose the lowly hearts? Is it to make them bright with thy footprints?" Agreeably different, on the whole, from the vague yearnings, the steep transcendent climbs up which some of the Easterners lead is the author's concrete and condensed phrasing.

The vitality of perception and response to beauty in the Nature poems may surprise those who consider the Hindus merely passive and renunciatory. Particularly pleasing the lines to the "Spirit of Rose: teach me more of thy subtle and wondrous ways of love; I am thy ignorant brother, stranger to this new world of thine."

The poet writes flexible and fluent English. His form is rhythmic verse, sometimes flowing into rhythmic prose, but nearly always with a poetic content.

REPORT

Whether we know it or not, our blessings are increased whenever we share them with others. The Boston Centre is finding this true in the extension of the work to the Pacific Coast. Never before has there been such a spontaneous blossoming of responsiveness and appreciation. This was especially marked in the glow of joyous welcome that awaited Swami Paramananda's home coming a few

weeks ago. All through his absence there was a united and sustained interest at all the public Services. On the first Sunday after his return this culminated into an attendance that crowded the Chapel and the adjoining hall to full capacity. There was a silent welcome of keen anticipation and radiance as the Swami opened the Service and gave his powerful and inspiring message. The subject of his address was most fittingly, "The Higher Consciousness." At the close of the hour he was received with many warm expressions of joy and eager questions as to the latest developments of the work in California. A great number are contemplating visits to the new Ashrama for spiritual recreation and inspiration and so prove conclusively that "Ananda Ashrama" is filling a need already felt by many.

* * * *

As various addresses of the Swami are published in "The Message of the East" from month to month, it gives us a sense of sharing with our readers the Sunday Services held in the tranquil and inspiring atmosphere of the Chapel. We wish that in a similiar way we might share with all the fragrant beauty of the floral offerings. Through the devotion of many this has grown into a vital feature of the day's Service. Wild and cultivated flowers come from friends not only in Boston, but many outlying towns. New Hampshire contributes generously, nor are Cincinnati and Rochester too distant to have a share, and California has sent her orange blossoms more than once to mingle their fragrance with the incense of the Sanctuary. Gradually and spontaneously a moment's silent pause at the door of the Sanctuary has become to many an indispensable part of the worship. In their effortless fragrance and beauty these altar flowers become concrete symbols and expressions of many unspoken prayers.—*G. P.*

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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MY LIFE'S FULFILLMENT

By Swami Paramananda

MY life's broken harmony is restored,
The unfinished song is now complete
Since I have found my place at Thy
sacred Feet.

Thy beckoning hath saved me from
falling into the snare of deception.
Contact with Thy holy being hath
refilled my ebbing life;

Verily Thou art my life's fulfillment.
The cause of my joy and sorrow, laughter
and grief;
My soul's sunshine and heart's
rain-cloud.

I have nothing apart from Thee;
I am nothing apart from Thee;
I want nothing other than Thee.
Wilt Thou not stay with me who am so
dependent on Thee?
Wilt Thou not take me who have no
other than Thee?

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? —*Malachi.*

In whatever manner men worship Me in the same manner do I fulfill their prayers. My path men follow in every way. —*Bhagavad-Gita.*

We are all children of Heaven, and therefore should love one another, as Heaven loves us all.

—*Kaibara Ekken.*

Next to faith in God, the chief duty of man is to treat his fellow men with gentleness and courtesy.

—*Arabian Wisdom.*

The Being who remains awake while all sleep, who grants all desires, That is pure, That is Brahman, That alone is said to be immortal. As fire, though one, having entered the world, becomes various according to what it burns, so does the *Atman* (Self) within all living beings, though one, become various according to what it enters. It also exists outside. As air, though one, having entered the world, becomes various according to what it enters, so does the *Atman* within all living beings, though one, become various according to what it enters. It also exists outside. —*Katha Upanishad.*

It is not to Israel alone that God has spoken and revealed His will; nor even only to recognized prophets, whether in Israel or among the nations. But to all who have His work to do He speaks, much or little, clearly or in parables and visions, according to their needs and according to their fitness to hear and understand.

—*Wisdom of Israel.*

Is God the God of the Jews only? Is He not the God of the nations also? Yea, of the nations also.

—*Romans* 3:29.

God is one, but many are His aspects. As one master of the house appears in various relations, being father to one, brother to another, and husband to a third, so one Lord is called in various ways according to the particular aspect in which He appears to His devotee.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to Him.—*Acts* 10:35.

Men are members each of many,
The self-same stuff in all as any.
When fortune wrings a single limb,
Others sympathize with him.
How shouldst thou to man pertain
Who carest not for others' pain?—*Sadi.*

All this, whatsoever exists in the universe, should be covered by the Lord. He who sees all beings in the Self and the Self in all beings, he never turns away from the Self. He who perceives all beings as the Self, for him how can there be delusion or grief, when he sees this oneness everywhere? —*Isa Upanishad.*

The Tao of Heaven has no favourites. It gives to all good men without distinction.—*Laotzu.*

Wretch, will you not bear with your own brother, who hath God for his father, as being a son from the same stock, and of the same high descent? But if you chance to be placed in some superior station, will you presently set yourself up for a tyrant? Will you not remember what you are, and over whom you bear rule? That they are by nature your relations, your brothers: that they are the offspring of God?—*Epictetus.*

PRACTICAL RELIGION AND COMPARATIVE STUDY

By Swami Paramananda

Our object in surveying the world of religion and making a comparative study of it is not in any way to prove the supremacy of one over another, but to find a sympathetic chord which may serve as a common synthesis for all. When the great Parliament of Religions was convened in 1893 in connection with the Columbian Exposition held in Chicago, it met with no small opposition from the eminent dignitaries of the orthodox churches, and even from the prominent laymen. Some thought it was a sacrilege to admit that there was any true religion other than Christianity. After much discussion and opposition, when this great ideal of bringing diversified religions together became an actual fact, even then many devout Christians candidly believed that it was going to prove once for all the supremacy of Christianity over all other existing faiths, but its effect was quite the contrary. It proved that noble ideas and ideals were not exclusive to any country or nation, but were present among all peoples of the earth.

Since the latter part of the nineteenth century the comparative study of religion has been somewhat in vogue. Independent thinkers and learned men and women of all nations are now strongly advocating it; but, alas, in the major portion of literature which deals with comparative study, we cannot help but find a decided biased attitude. Some one starts with the idea of proving the exclusive superiority of his faith and compares it with other religious ideas and ideals with this special aim in view. We cannot expect any fairness in this method of dealing with the subject. Seeing through a biased mind is precisely like looking through the colored glass. We cannot judge

another if our mind is already prejudiced, and it is no small problem to overcome our prejudices, no matter what our ethical theories are in regard to virtue, universal tolerance and seeing good in others. With the rare exception of the few master-spirits of the world, it is difficult to find among mankind people who are free from prejudices and personal motives.

"Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven." This saying of Jesus the Christ to my mind gives the key to the problem. It is not the dogmatic religion that ennobles us or widens our vision, but it is the practical religion,—"doing the will of the Father." Herein lies the whole secret. A man may proclaim charity in a loud tone, but if he lacks charity in his heart, what avails? A religion comes to us with a claim of universal love and brotherhood of mankind, but if it manifests aggression and bitterness towards those who do not follow its tenets, what lasting effect will it have upon our mind?

We may pretend and play hypocrites in the world of commerce, in the field of science and politics, but in the realm of religion it is an utter impossibility. Some people acclaim their supremacy because of the great antiquity their religion possesses; others for its being ultra-modern; but the vitality and truth of its thought are not proved by either of these means. The earnest soul invariably cries out for its practical value, and the practical value is found not in the crust of dogma, but in the living flame of life itself. What proves that we are living? It is life's motion that testifies our existence, and if we possess high ideals they must be equally evidenced through our life's activities. A person who possesses a great treasure and

keeps it hidden, it neither profits him nor another. If you have a bright light, come out with it, let others see it and profit by it; but if you do not have it in your real and practical life, the theory of light is of little use either to yourself or to your fellow-beings.

This is my concept of practical religion which makes a great ideal living and real by looking upon which others may find strength, inspiration, joy and peace. When we view the world of religion from this angle, it at once takes a universal aspect. Whether this ideal is realized through the study of Jewish Kaballa, Sacred Book of the Babylonians, Egyptian Secret Codes, Greek Mythology, Chinese Wisdom, Vedic Revelation, or through the Christian Bible, is of small consequence. Men are brothers only when they realize consciously that they have a common Father. Before this realization dawns in the individual heart, no amount of theories of brotherhood will make him charitably inclined to another. "First seek ye the kingdom of Truth, all other things shall be added unto you." "Know thyself that thou mayst know all else." These are the true and fundamental thoughts of the spiritual world. If we do not abide by them and follow their saving diction, we are but led by the crooked paths of whims and self-will, although we may claim our alliance with high and lofty religions of the world. Our alliance must be from within and primarily with the One Infinite Source, Who knows no division or fraction, but is ever the same to all His creatures.

For myself I am certain that the good of human life cannot lie in the possession of things which for one man to possess is for the rest to lose, but rather in things which all can possess alike.—*B. Spinoza.*

AKBAR'S DREAM

By Alfred Lord Tennyson

Akbar was one of the noblest souls in history. He was a great Mogul emperor who lived in India during the latter part of the sixteenth century. The policy of his government was especially marked by his religious tolerance. We quote below the inscription written by Abul Fazl, Akbar's chief friend and adviser, for a Temple in Kashmir; and also a few passages from "Akbar's Dream" by Tennyson.

O God in every temple I see people that see Thee, and in every language I hear spoken, people praise Thee. Polytheism and Islam feel after Thee. Each religion says, "Thou art one, without equal." If it be a mosque people murmur the holy prayer, and if it be a Christian Church, people ring the bell from love to Thee. Sometimes I frequent the Christian cloister, and sometimes the mosque. But it is Thou Whom I search from temple to temple.

He knows Himself, men nor themselves nor Him,
For every splinter'd fraction of a sect
Will clamour "I am on the Perfect Way,
All else is to perdition."

Shall the rose
Cry to the lotus "No flower thou"? the palm
Call to the cypress "I alone am fair"?
The mango spurn the melon at his foot?
"Mine is the one fruit Allah made for man."
Look how the living pulse of Allah beats
Thro' all His world. If every single star
Should shriek its claim "I only am in heaven"
Why that were such sphere-music as the Greek
Had hardly dream'd of. There is light in all,
And light, with more or less of shade, in all
Man-modes of worship.

I dream'd
That stone by stone I rear'd a sacred fane,
A temple, neither Pagod, Mosque, nor Church,
But loftier, simpler, always open-door'd
To every breath from heaven, and Truth and Peace
And Love and Justice came and dwelt therein.

VALUE OF MANY-SIDED DEVELOPMENT

By Swami Vivekananda

We want to become harmonious beings, with the psychical, spiritual, intellectual and active side of our nature equally developed. Nations and individuals typify one of these sides or types and cannot understand more than that one. They get so built up into one ideal that they cannot see any other. The ideal is really that we should become many-sided. Indeed the cause of the misery of the world is that we are so one-sided that we cannot sympathize with each other. Consider a man looking at the sun from beneath the earth, up the shaft of a mine; he sees one aspect of the sun. Then another man sees the sun from the earth's level, another through mist and fog, another from the mountain top. To each the sun has a different appearance. So there are many appearances, but in reality there is only one sun. There is diversity of vision, but one object, and that is the sun.

Each man, according to his nature, has a peculiar tendency and takes to certain ideals and a certain path by which to reach them. But the goal is always the same to all. We must be as broad as the skies, as deep as the ocean; we must have the zeal of the fanatic, the depth of the mystic, and the width of the agnostic. The word "toleration" has acquired an unpleasant association with the conceited man who thinking himself in a high position looks

down on his fellow-creatures with pity. This is a horrible state of mind. We are all travelling the same way, towards the same goal, but by different paths made by the necessities of the case to suit diverse minds. We must become many-sided; indeed we must become Protean in character, so as not to tolerate but to do what is much more difficult, to sympathize, to enter into the other's path, and feel with him in his aspirations and seeking after God. There are two elements in every religion—a positive and a negative. In Christianity, for instance, when you speak of the incarnation of the Trinity, of salvation through Jesus Christ, I am with you. I say, "Very good, that I also hold true;" but when you go on to say, "There is no other true religion, there is no other revelation of God," then I say, "Stop I cannot go with you when you shut out, when you deny." Every religion has a message to deliver, something to teach man, but when it begins to protest, when it tries to disturb others, then it takes up a negative and therefore a dangerous position, and does not know where to begin or where to end. Every force completes a circuit. The force we call man starts from the infinite God and must return to Him. This return to God must be accomplished in one of two ways,—either by slowly drifting back, going to nature, or by our own inward power, which causes us to stop on our course, which would if left alone carry us in a circuit back to God, and violently turn round and find God, as it were, by a short cut. This is what the Yogi does.

I have said that every man must choose his Ideal which is in accord with his nature. This Ideal is man's *Ishtam*. You must keep it sacred, and when you worship God, worship according to your *Ishtam*. How are we to find out the particular method? It is very difficult, but as you persevere in your worship it will come of itself.

THE RETRIBUTION OF SELFISHNESS

A Popular Russian Legend as told by Prince Serge Wolkonsky

There was an old woman who for many centuries suffered tortures in the flames of hell, for she had been a great sinner during her earthly life. One day she saw far away in the distance an angel taking his flight through the blue skies; and with the whole strength of her voice she called to him. The call must have been desperate, for the angel stopped in his flight, and coming down to her asked her what she wanted.

"When you reach the throne of God," she said, "tell him that a miserable creature has suffered more than she can bear, and that she asks the Lord to be delivered from these tortures." The angel promised to do so and flew away. When he had transmitted the message God said: "Ask her whether she has done any good to any one during her life." The old woman strained her memory in search of a good action during her sinful past, and all at once: "I've got one," she joyfully exclaimed, "one day I gave a carrot to a hungry beggar."

The angel reported the answer. "Take a carrot," said God to the angel, "and stretch it out to her. Let her grasp it, and if the plant is strong enough to draw her out from hell she shall be saved." This the angel did. The poor old woman clung to the carrot. The angel began to pull, and lo! she began to rise! But when her body was half out of the flames she felt a weight at her feet. Another sinner was clinging to her. She kicked, but it did not help. The sinner would not let go his hold, and the angel, continuing to pull, was lifting them both. But, lo! another sinner clung to them, and then a third, and more and always more—a chain of miserable creatures hung at the old woman's feet. The

angel never ceased pulling. It did not seem to be any heavier than the small carrot could support, and they all were lifted in the air. But the old woman suddenly took fright. Too many people were availing themselves of her last chance of salvation, and kicking and pushing those who were clinging to her, she exclaimed: "Leave me alone; hands off; the carrot is mine." No sooner had she pronounced this word "mine" than the tiny stem broke, and they all fell back to hell, and forever.

INDIA AND HER THOUGHT

I

Brahmanism is one of the oldest religions of the world. It was flourishing in India at a period before history was written. It was coeval with the religion of Egypt in the time of Abraham, and perhaps at a still earlier date. But of its earliest form and extent we know nothing, except from the sacred poems of the Hindus called the Vedas, written in Sanskrit probably fifteen hundred years before Christ,—for even the date of the earliest of the Vedas is unknown. Fifty years ago we could not have understood the ancient religions of India. But Sir William Jones in the latter part of the last century, a man of immense erudition and genius for the acquisition of languages, at that time an English judge in India, prepared the way for the study of Sanskrit, the literary language of ancient India, by the translation and publication of the laws of Manu. He was followed in his labors by the Schlegels of Germany, and by numerous scholars and missionaries. Within fifty years this ancient and beautiful language has been so perseveringly studied that we know something of the people by whom it was once spoken,—even as Egyptologists have revealed some-

thing of ancient Egypt by interpreting the hieroglyphics; and Chaldaean investigators have found stores of knowledge in the Babylonian bricks.

The Sanskrit, as now interpreted, reveals to us the meaning of those poems called Vedas, by which we are enabled to understand the early laws and religion of the Hindus. It is poetry, not history, which makes this revelation, for the Hindus have no history farther back than five or six hundred years before Christ. It is from Homer and Hesiod that we get an idea of the gods of Greece, not from Herodotus or Xenophon.—*From "Beacon Lights of History" by John Lord.*

II

If one rushes through India one may indeed depart with little liking for India's swarming millions. But it is hard for me to conceive how one can stay any time among them without finding them a truly lovable people and without imbibing genuine respect and admiration for the simple dignity of their lives, the quiet courtesy of their manners, their uncomplaining endurance of hardships, their unbounded hospitality, and the feeling for spiritual values which, in spite of gross superstitions, is unmistakable in the Indian atmosphere. These things—or rather the memory of them—strike one, perhaps, most forcibly after his return from the East to the familiar sights and sounds of Western civilization. For my part, at any rate, in the rush of our city streets and the complacent satisfaction of our beer-gardens and our moving-picture shows, and amid the descriptions of war and hate and horror that fill every day's reports from Europe, I find myself thinking of the banks of the Ganges and the silent monasteries of Burma; just as I shall tell myself, in the midst of the snows and piercing winds which our coming New England

winter is already preparing for us, that the Irrawaddy is still pursuing its course to the sea between groves of flowering trees and banks crowned with golden pagodas, and that the roses are still blooming in Benares.

—From "India and Its Faiths" by James Bissett Pratt.

III

As I draw near to discern the elements of the Oriental consciousness, I find among them those that produce on me impressions of sublimity. Not without reflection do I use that term "sublimity." It is one of the noblest of words. The august word "sublimity," like one of your own Himalayan mountain peaks, rises on the field of English speech into the upper air of truth; its summit crowned with light, its base lost in the haze of distance. It signifies that which strikes the mind with a sense of grandeur or power. The invariable condition of the emotion of sublimity is vastness, power or intensity in the objects, material or moral, that produce it. I believe that in the Occidental consciousness as well as in the Oriental consciousness these are elements of sublimity. It is not my province to deal with the former in these lectures, but the time will come, I trust, when some mind, stronger and more skilled than my own, shall undertake in India an unprejudiced analysis of qualities in the consciousness of the West, which, when rightly understood, when seen in their ultimate relations to the soul, when studied in the spirit of love, may be declared, in the high court of India's most critical opinion, not unworthy to be called sublime.

From that ancient and most complex psychological mystery, which I have called the Oriental consciousness, I select four elements, each of which produces upon my Western powers of apprehension the impression of sublimity. They are these: The Contemplative Life; The

Presence of the Unseen; Aspiration Toward Ultimate Being; The Sanctions of the Past. —*From "Christ and the Eastern Soul" by Rev. Charles Cuthbert Hall.*

IV

India is not, as you may imagine, a distant, strange, or at the very utmost, a curious country. India for the future belongs to Europe, it has its place in the Indo-European world, it has its place in our own history, and in what is the very life of history, the history of the human mind.

You know how some of the best talent and the noblest genius of our age has been devoted to the study of the development of the outward or material world, the growth of the earth, the first appearance of living cells, their combination and differentiation, leading up to the beginning of organic life, and its steady progress from the lowest to the highest stages. Is there not an inward and intellectual world also which has to be studied in its historical development, from the first appearance of predicative and demonstrative roots, their combination and differentiation, leading up to the beginning of rational thought in its steady progress from the lowest to the highest stages? And in that study of the history of the human mind, in that study of ourselves, of our true selves, India occupies a place second to no other country. Whatever sphere of the human mind you may select for your special study, whether it be language, or religion, or mythology, or philosophy, whether it be laws or customs, primative art or primitive science, everywhere, you have to go to India, whether you like it or not, because some of the most valuable and most instructive materials in the history of man are treasured up in India, and in India only.

—*From "India: What Can It Teach Us?" by Max Muller.*

THE NEED OF COMPARATIVE STUDY

By Sir Monier Monier-Williams

It appears to me high time that all thoughtful Christians should reconsider their position, and—to use the phraseology of our modern physicists—readjust themselves to their altered environments. The sacred books of Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Islam, are now at length becoming accessible to all and the Christians can no longer neglect the duty of studying their contents. All the inhabitants of the world are being rapidly drawn together; Paul's grand saying—that God has made all nations of men of one blood—is being brought home to us more forcibly every day. Surely, then, we are bound to follow the example of Paul, who, speaking to the Gentiles, instead of denouncing them as "heathen," appealed to them as "very God-fearing" and even quoted a passage from one of their own poets in support of a Christian truth; and who directed Christians not to shut their eyes to anything true, honest, just, pure, lovely, or of good report, wherever it might be found, and exhorted them, that if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, they were to think on these things. Surely it is time we ceased to speak and act as if truth among Gentiles and truth among Christians were two wholly different things. Surely we ought to acknowledge and accept with gratitude whatever is true and noble in the Hindu character, or Hindu writings, while we reflect with shame on our own shortcomings under far greater advantages. Nor ought we to forget the words of Peter, when we label Brahmans, Buddists, Parsis, Muslims, and Fetish worshippers with the common label heathen. Peter, when addressing Gentiles, assured them that God had taught him not to call any man common or unclean; and declared that God was no respecter of persons, but

that in every nation he that feared Him and worked righteousness was accepted by Him. It is becoming more and more a duty for all the nations of the world to study each other; to inquire into and compare each other's systems of belief; to avoid expressions of contempt in speaking of the sincere and earnest adherents of any creed; and to search diligently whether the principles and doctrines which guide their own faith and conduct rest on truth or not.

NOBILITY OF GENEROSITY

Counsels of Nabi Efendi to his son Aboul Khair

(Turkish Philosopher and Poet. 17th Century.)

O thou who dost enumerate carefully the advantages of success, and dost consider the spectacle of refusals and welcomes, throw not a look of indifference on thy neighbor! Turn with interest to the unfortunate. Observe the rights of thy neighbors with justice; let the expression of thy countenance wound no one. Be not so parsimonious with thy food that thou canst not share it with others. Provide for their needs as much as possible. Let all the weak take refuge in the shadows of thy generosity! Do not entertain sentiments of hate and enmity against any one; do not acquire the habit of tumult and agitation. Beware of anger, rage, and revenge; show to no one a countenance furrowed with discontent.

Live on good terms with all the world and be always of an equable disposition. Do not annoy thy inferiors, nor impose upon them the constraint of cold formalities. Let not the expression of thy countenance grieve any one; captivate every one with thy good nature. Let no one be a victim of thy injustice, never return evil for evil. Be not a burden on thy friends, do not make thyself in-

supportable by thy bad disposition. Let no soul be in anguish for thee; rather labor to elevate those who are desperate. Bring no lawsuit against ony one, that God may preserve thee in turn from litigants. Do not compromise thy honor in this world and in the next for strange interests. Be neither guardian, counsellor, nor trustee.

Fly the domain of chicanery; do not rush into profitless agitation with lowered head. He who enters into quarrelling and strife with others brings down upon himself trouble and anxiety. Never follow the road of disputes and strife, for they provoke the flames of hatred! Raise not a finger to do evil: let one of thy hands be always busy in doing good. Carry not thy complaints to the door of the prince; refer to God's tribunal him who hath wronged thee. However great be thy weakness and impotence, will the Lord therefore be less zealous for thy defence? Resigned and modest, be without care and without anxiety.

Never reply harshly; when thou speakest to any one let it be with sweet courtesy. Reproach no one face to face with his hidden faults; lend to his discourse a friendly ear. Never expose the ignorance of any one. Why cover with confusion a creature of God? Renounce injustice and violence; never utter harsh words that wound the heart. Be generous, whatever happens, O soul of my soul; let thy tongue outrage no one! To wound thy brother to the heart is the worst of sins, the greatest of all iniquities. Labor with ardor to raise up those who have fallen; wouldst thou desire to overthrow the throne of the Lord? Avoid reproaching others for their blindness in sin, and declaring thyself free from stain. O soul of thy father, know well; when thou dost accuse thy brother, thou dost render thyself guilty.

WHO ART THOU LORD?

By Katharine F. Sherwood

Fain would I give myself to Thee
And worship at Thy Sacred Shrine.
A craving in my hungry heart
Upreaches toward the things divine.
Love moves me, and I long to lose
    myself in adoration blessed—
But who art Thou? How shall I know
    if Thou canst hear the words confessed?
Art Thou a Being far from me
With heart and body, soul and mind?
Or art Thou Energy Itself
The Cause of earth and humankind?
Art Thou the Spirit of this earth,
Art Thou the Power that moves my speech?
Art Thou the Light behind the sun?
Art Thou the Life within the life?
The Force that makes all nature one?
Art Thou the Spirit of this earth
The all-pervading Essence of each part?
Art Thou the Breath that makes us live?
Art Thou the Life-beat of each heart?
If this be true and Thou art Essence,
    Breath and Life
Thou art no longer far from me
In truth my very Self Thou art
    and greater far
Than I have ever thought myself to be.
If Thou art all and yet in me a part,
Then I am one with Thee, O thought sublime.
Thou art my Self—I live because of Thee
And knowing this I am divine.
Then what to worship? Where to bend the knee?

If Thou my Self the Essence art?
It is the little "self" the "I" I see
That bows before the greater part.
So vast the thought—I cannot hold it quite
At first so real, it vanishes like mist—
I reach the summit but I fall again
I cannot keep the place I wished.
Around I see so many forms
And every form a name attends,
If I would make Thee real to me
Then name and form must serve that end.
And though Thou art my Self in very truth
I call Thee Father—Brother—Friend—
For by such names I bring to me
The closest feeling, and the knee I bend.
I ask for help—for courage and for peace
And know that Thou wilt give them me.
For art Thou not my very Self
And anxious for my good to be?
And when in meditation I
Can rise above the things I see,
And lost in contemplation high
Become absorbed and one with Thee,
Detain me, Lord: infill me quite
With Thy full life, and let me know
    my oneness so complete,
That when I touch the earth again
I may not lose the blessing, but can meet
The daily life with calm and blissful heart
And unto others of my kind the same
    eternal bliss impart.
So is my question answered. Not again
I need to ask, Lord Who art Thou?
But finding, following, trusting, leaning,
Worship I may and gladly do I bow.

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL DINNER

There is no occasion in the whole round of the year's activities more joyous than that of the annual dinner. We all refer to it as the Swami's dinner for it is literally that. He plans for it, he prepares it and also serves it, and those who have the privilege of assisting him in this are blessed in seeing what joy each task can afford when work is not distinguished from worship. The Swami's guests are frank in their anticipation of his dinner, for many inquired beforehand when it is to be so that they might arrange their plans accordingly. Each year the joy seems to grow as the number of guests increases. This year there were about a hundred, the limit being due to lack of space alone. In his welcoming speech Swami Paramananda expressed his intention of having out-of-door dinners in California where he might entertain on a much larger scale. Already there are many in Boston who hope themselves to witness such an event.

Those of our number who are at Ananda Ashrama sent their greetings by wire announcing that they too would keep feast time with us, and that on the date of the dinner (June 14th) the first building of cottages was to begin and a new garden to be ploughed. Their message was signed "Ashrama Pioneers" a name of which they may well be proud.

The dinner, as usual, was served in the library and chapel thrown together, the long tables extending into the hall. The screen behind the Swami's chair at the head table was banked with flowers, also the bookcases, the mantle and the organ were completely covered with them. For beauty nothing surpassed the golden sunshine and chaste outline of the day lilies; peonies contributed mass and fra-

grance, while an unusual abundance of sweet syringa added delicacy and perfume. Against this profuse background of green and flowers, the white linen of the tables with the tall candles and dainty vases of flowers looked very beautiful.

The guests began arriving about seven and by seven thirty all were seated. Dainty menu cards printed on tinted Japanese paper only aroused the curiosity of the guests, for who could tell what "Begooni Crisp" "Curry Chamatkar" or "Salad Surprise of Chana" meant? Each one of the nine courses on the menu appeared like a product from wonderland. To many it was a revelation of what a vegetarian dinner might be, while one guest spoke of it as "poetic cooking" an expression which truly described it. At the close of the dinner all the little glasses were filled with a specially refreshing drink which the Swami had created. Before drinking an opportunity was given for toasts when one of the faithful members, Miss Agnes Raymond, surprised us all by making a toast in the form of an acrostic, the initial letters spelling down the Swami's name and the whole expressing a rare tribute of devotion and appreciation of what the Swami's life in our midst has meant to us. Deep feeling mingled with gladness as Swami, raising his glass, said "To you all" and every one rising joined him in this fitting expression of a common bond of spirit. A special toast was made for Ananda Ashrama and all its pioneers present and future. When all were again seated the Swami called for speeches. Mr. C. C. Nelson, Mr. Joseph Mahoney and Mr. Ennis spoke spontaneously expressing in different ways the practical value and help they found in the teaching. There was no formality but simply a free expression of the fullness of their heart. Mrs. Joseph Mahoney, well known as a writer under the name of Bangs Burgess, and an ardent California enthus-

iast, gave a beautiful description of a trip she took through the main canyons of that State and especially made vivid the beauty and grandeur of the rare yucca blossoms which many devoutly call "candles of the Lord." She read several nature poems, some of them original, descriptive of various aspects of beauty. We quote here one of Mrs. Mahoney's poems written in appreciation after the dinner.

TO SWAMI PARAMANANDA

Midst eager, loud, contending throng,
Untouched by evil thought
Nor dwarfed by craft or guile or greed;
A radiant soul of all compassing love,
Sage of an age-long wisdom,
Master of earthly lore,
Serene and humble,
Meek, unvexed, unswerved,
He goes his way of duty
With the simple sweetness of a child.

Miss K. F. Sherwood and Dr. Gerda v. B. Perry brought out the dramatic effect of one of the Swami's unpublished poems called "Sun and Twilight" by rendering it in dialogue form. The Swami was called upon several times to make comments or answer questions. When it was time to close the evening, flowers were distributed to all the guests and so ended a happy occasion which will ever abide in our memory.

REVIEW

We cannot resist sharing with our readers the following unusual review which appeared in the May issue of the Vedanta Kesari, India. It is different from the ordinary review and is more like a commentary. We take pleasure, therefore, in reproducing it as it appeared, but giving only portions of the poems and omitting entirely the "Hymn of Adoration" which appeared in the October, 1922, issue of the "Message of the East."

Those who have read the prose works of the author of "The Path of Devotion," have felt a peculiar fascination in them. A book of poems such as the one that is presented now has been long expected. As the outpourings of a devotional soul, the seventy-two poems contained in the "Soul's Secret Door" have in them the power of communicating to the reader's heart the painless pain of longing for the Lord.

Whither lies the source of poesy? The reed pipe when touched by the lips of the Divine Cowherd of Brindaban

showers forth strains of soul-stirring melody. Thus doth the Lord's whisper fill the heart of the devotee with unending song:

Thy whisper hath filled my soul with an unending song.
In noise and stillness, in crowd and alone, Thy
gentle tone is always in my ear.

The Lord Himself is the Mysterious Guide to the unknown land of eternal bliss.

Come hither, O friend, I shall tell thee the secret
of this unknown land.
Let us shut the outer gates and the inner doors.
Have no fear or doubt, for the strange Guide to
this unknown land is marvellous wise.
He knoweth our unacted acts, nay, even our unformed
thoughts, our life's pulsation and every heart-
string in His grasp.

Complete self-surrender to the Lord brings to the devotee a feeling of utmost safety. "Not I, my Beloved Lord, but Thou Who knowest what is good for me" is the burden of the devotee's song.

It is best that Thou dost hold my hand and lead me
where'er Thou deemest.
I shall follow Thee now with unfaltering faith.

The mystery of Divine Grace is expressed in the following poem which lends the title to the collection.

I seek no more for I have found Him, not by seeking,—
He came to me when I was not looking,
Opening my soul's secret door.
Friend, how can I tell thee of this strange mystery?
He is seen unsought only through this, the soul's
secret door.

The "Hymn of Adoration" the closing poem of the collection is a poetic gem and exhibits the artless art of the saintly poet.

Every one of the poems has a charm of its own and it is not possible to do justice to the work by commenting upon it in a general way or by quoting stray poems. We can only say that the "Soul's Secret Door" makes a distinct addition to devotional literature and that the country which has given birth to Jayadev, Kabir, Tulsidas, Tukraram, Ram Prasad, Thiyagaraja and Gnana Sambhanda continues to be the birth-place of saintly poets who by the charm of their song could lead the wayward soul Godwards.

REPORT

The friends and members of The Vedanta Centre of Boston extended a very warm and loving welcome to Swami Prakashananda of the San Francisco Hindu Temple when he was entertained here on his return from his recent visit to India. During the week of his stay at the Centre, Swami Paramananda asked him to conduct the regular Tuesday evening class and also made special arrangements for the Sunday evening Service at which Swami Prakashananda addressed a much larger and more representative Boston audience. His subject was "Divine Inspiration" and his message was received with marked interest and appreciation.

Two younger members of the Ramakrishna Mission, Swami Raghavananda and Swami Prabhavananda, arrived with Swami Prakashananda from India to assist respectively in the work now being carried on in New York and San Francisco. Naturally it is with deepest and most cordial feeling that we bid welcome and Godspeed especially to the new Swamis.

* * * *

During Swami Paramananda's absence from Ananda Ashrama the Sunday Services were faithfully carried on by Sister Daya. It is hoped that during the next few months a great deal will be accomplished in organizing this new phase of the work. Swami Paramananda will personally conduct the public open air services held every Sunday afternoon at 3:30 beginning with July the 15th. His addresses will be on Practical and Productive Religion.

The Ashrama will be open to visitors certain days. Those who desire any special information in regard to the California work please address:

ANANDA ASHRAMA
LA CRESCENTA, LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

NOV 13 1923

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

OCTOBER, 1923

PSYCHOLOGY OF THOUGHT

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(POEMS)

Handsome Flexible Binding, $2.00. Postage 10 cents.

As companion on the bedside table to Thomas a Kempis' "Imitation of Christ," to Amiel's Journal and the New Testament may be safely recommended the "Soul's Secret Door" for those meditatively and devoutly inclined.—**Sam T. Clover, Saturday Night, Los Angeles, Calif.**

Here is the calm, exalted tone of spirituality which is so distinctive of Hindu thought at its best and highest. A noble mysticism, expressed in lovely, simple, lucid English phrase, is present in all these verses as of rare atmosphere and an illumination.—**John Haynes Holmes, Unity, Chicago.**

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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DIVINE MOTHER HEART

By Swami Paramananda

GREAT MOTHER HEART, how tender
art Thou!
Thy love, transcending all mine iniquities,
Pours upon my life its benign sweetness.
How oft my imperfect nature lies mortified
and ashamed in Thy protecting bosom,
overwhelmed by Thy unfathomed tenderness!
Who art Thou that givest this endless bounty
to me, meritless and ignorant?

Divine Mother Heart, proof of Thy unceasing
care I find in every turn of life.
With many arms dost Thou shield me;
With many hearts dost Thou love me;
With many minds dost Thou guide me to the
road of safety.

Forget I may at times when dark clouds
gather;
But to have seen Thy face of love
And known what is not known, save when
Thou dost lift the veil,
Is joy forever and crowning glory of life!

Written August 19, 1923
Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta, California

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

It is the mind that makes one wise or ignorant, bound or emancipated. One is holy because of his mind, one is wicked because of his mind, one is a sinner because of his mind, and it is the mind that makes one virtuous. So he whose mind is always fixed on God requires no other practices, devotion, or spiritual exercises.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, think on these things.—*St. Paul.*

By inaction one can become the centre of thought, the focus of responsibility, the arbiter of wisdom. Full allowance must be made for others, while remaining unmoved one's self. There must be a thorough compliance with divine principles, without any manifestation thereof. All of which may be summed up in the one word, tranquillity. For the perfect man employs his mind as a mirror. It grasps nothing; it refuses nothing. It receives, but does not keep. And thus he can triumph over matter, without injury to himself.—*Chuang Tzu.*

As he thinketh in his heart, so is he. Apply thine heart unto instructions and thine ears to the words of knowledge.
—*Proverbs.*

Thou art but an atom, He the great whole; but if for a few days thou meditate with care on the whole, thou becomest one with it.—*Jami.*

Make yourself nests of pleasant thoughts. None of us yet know, for none of us have been taught in early youth, what fairy palaces we may build of beautiful thought—proof against all adversity. Bright fancies, satisfied memories, noble

histories, faithful sayings, treasure-houses of precious and restful thoughts, which care cannot disturb, nor pain make gloomy, nor poverty take away from us,—houses built without hands, for our souls to live in.—*John Ruskin.*

Twice blessed be the man that reflects long before he acts! One that reflects long before he acts is certainly possessed of great intelligence. Such a man never offends in respect of any act.—*Mahabharata.*

A man sins in thought when he thinks aught against God, if he occupies his heart not with the praise and loving of God, but suffers it to be abstracted or stirred with divers thoughts, and to go void in the world.—*Richard Rolle.*

To overcome sorrow and win happiness men wander in vain, for they have not sanctified their thought, the mysterious essence of holiness. Then I must keep my thought well governed and well guarded; what need is there of any vows save the vow to guard the thought?—*Santi-Deva.*

A rush of thoughts is the only conceivable prosperity that can come to us. Fine clothes, equipages, villa, park, social consideration, cannot cover up real poverty and insignificance, from my own eyes or from others like mine. Thoughts let us into realities. Neither miracle nor magic nor any religious tradition, not the immortality of the private soul is incredible, after we have experienced an insight, a thought. I think it comes to some men but once in their life, sometimes a religious impulse, sometimes an intellectual insight. But what we want is consecutiveness.—*Emerson.*

Fill thy mind with Me, be thou My devotee, worship Me and bow down to Me; thus, steadfastly uniting thy heart with Me alone and regarding Me as thy Supreme Goal, thou shalt come unto Me.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

PSYCHOLOGY OF THOUGHT

By Swami Paramananda

"Thoughts are things." This simple sentiment so often expressed by us has far greater significance than we usually attach to it. Our thoughts become concrete things in our life. Thoughts produce actions and actions produce like reactions. Thus all our happiness and unhappiness, success and failure and the endless multiplicity of moods and feelings are but fruits and flowers from the tree of life, first existing in the seed form of thought.

In the Dhammapada we read: "All that we are is the result of what we have thought; it is founded on our thoughts; it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage. All that we are is the result of what we have thought; it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him like a shadow that never leaves him." The whole psychology of thought phenomena can be summed up in these two ideas. We, as a rule, do not observe the subtle cause but deal largely with the effect. For instance, we observe a flower in blossom or a plant that is withered, but neither blossoming nor withering is through chance. The causes often are hidden due to their abstract quality and subtlety, but they are never separated from all the effects that are produced in the phenomenal world. If we ever experience any happiness there is a very definite reason for it. Likewise whenever we experience unhappiness there is also a definite reason for that. We are all keenly interested in doing things that will earn happiness and safeguard our well-being, but these we cannot earn merely through the action of our hands without first creating the foundation of right thought. In fact there can-

not be any true standard for right living without the basic principle of right thinking.

People whose outer life is intensely active are inclined to misunderstand the significance of such a theme and may imagine that giving too much eminence to thought is apt to lead to morbidity. But this is only due to surface observation. Thought does not necessarily mean inaction. On the contrary, thought generates action both in the mind and in the body. This can be easily verified by every individual. Whenever we are engaged in concentrated thought, it immediately produces a certain vibration which results in making the body tense or mobile. Sometimes our thoughts cause us to feel dull, heavy, melancholy; again they generate such tremendous force that we feel we are not touching the ground. When we are walking, if the mind is charged with some powerful thought, it carries the body; unconsciously we walk faster. The weight of the body is lifted by the velocity of thought. These are not fancies, they are actual facts, but often they go unobserved and that is why we lay greater stress on action than on thought. If we are not able to understand the fundamental value of right thinking, then all our high ideals will be of little avail. No one can create great things merely with his hands or his material assets. He must be sustained by noble thoughts.

Thought is most potent in moulding our destiny. But do not imagine that all we have to do is to sit and think and everything will come to us. That will bring us nothing; it is inconsistent. If a man is animated by lofty thoughts and high aspirations, what is the most immediate thing for him to do? He seeks to express them; he strives to make them real. Thought and action are inseparable and they must always be inseparable just as a tree and its root. You cannot conceive of a tree living and flowering if severed from

its root. So is it with our life and all its multiplicity of thoughts and feelings.

Every man who turns his attention inward sooner or later must realize that there is no such thing as accident. It is only the man of limited understanding, the man who does not see beyond the scope of the phenomenal, who says: It happened by chance; I did it in a moment of impulse. All that we do is the result of certain lines of thought. Not very long ago there was an article in a magazine, a discussion in regard to a criminal case: a judge had sentenced a youth of seventeen. Many thought he should have shown more mercy. They argued that the boy was ignorant, that he had acted on impulse. The judge cross-questioned this youth and found that it was not at all a momentary impulse, that for months he had brooded deliberately over this idea of robbing a bank. The idea came to him first as a simple thought, then it ground into his very being, became part of his life, and when the outer opportunity offered, he fell. Our happiness is not through chance, and our unhappiness is not through chance. It is better to understand this from the very beginning because it will help us to eliminate unrest from our own minds and to free the minds of others. When we live only on the surface of life, then we feel the unrest in ourselves and in the world, and only when we see things from the surface, do we say it was an accident. There is always a deep underlying cause. Chance is the notion of idle people; they are constantly looking for miracles and miracles never come to them. Miracles come only to those who are awakened, who are pure and exalted in spirit. They alone can perceive what the world calls miracles.

When things go wrong with us, when we allow ourselves to be mentally disturbed, we find many excuses. We explain that it was because of other people,—their thoughts, their

influence upon us, their actions. "He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me," we complain; but when we realize that nothing can really have any disturbing or harmful effect upon us, once we are purified within, then all idea of complaining falls away from us. If we hold hateful, unkind thoughts, unhappiness will never cease for us, hatred will never cease. Happiness has nothing to do with how much we have or how little; it does not depend on where we are placed or in what circumstances. Material conditions do not secure for us our peace. It is entirely the quality of mind. The small mind sees the limited; the big mind sees the unlimited. The vision of limitation is our own creation and the vision of the unlimited is a quality of our unfoldment. We have heard this many times and we may have to hear it many more times, because we do not always hear with the inner ear. Our inner life does not always respond to these sayings. It is a question of unfoldment, and unfoldment of our real nature is not possible save from within. Outer things we can have done for us by others, but the inner things we must do for ourselves. In modern life we forget this; we like to have people think things out for us. But there is no one who can think for us and make us wise. It is a very great tragedy when we are overcome by such spiritual lethargy.

There are certain invariable laws. There is the law of compensation. It is very definitely stated: "If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage." But compensation does not mean merely reward and punishment. It means that everything which comes to us, good, evil, and mixed, comes only because we ourselves have made it possible. We sow the seeds by our own thoughts.

"He who lives looking for pleasure only, his senses un-

controlled, immoderate in his food, idle and weak, *Mara*, the tempter, will certainly overthrow him, as the wind throws down a weak tree." What is this tempter? Here is a point of dogma. Some people believe in a personal devil. The devil does exist, but in the individual himself. In India they call it the ego. "There is no enemy so potent, so hostile, so difficult to conquer as the ego." We may have all the blessings the world can give, but if the ego is rampant we shall know neither rest nor happiness. Ego always demands. If we have little, it wants more. If we have more, it wants everything. It sets us on fire. Ambition is like that. It consumes us. We can have no chance for peace or stability so long as we follow these lower propensities. And how do they first get their hold on us? Through our thoughts. We have the power to transform our life by changing our mode of thinking. In the Upanishads, one of the most ancient Scriptures of India, this is given very simply and directly: "Mind alone is the cause of man's bondage, and mind alone is the cause of his liberation."

We are born with certain tendencies, with a natural spirit of nobility, or the reverse. When we say we inherit it from our parents, we give a very unsatisfactory explanation. The individual himself sowed the seeds of good or evil in the soil of his life—not this small span of life necessarily. There is a connecting link with other existences. Our life did not begin with this physical body. Our whole evolution and freedom do not depend upon these few short years of living. Our book of destiny will never be complete nor shall we be able to read one complete line of it, until we connect the present existence with what has gone before. Then we shall see even more fully than we do now that if a man thinks kind thoughts and performs kind acts, if his intentions are pure, happiness will follow him like a shadow and it will never

leave him. You may deny this. You may say that the good suffer; they are often cheated and robbed and they meet with calamity. That is true, but they never suffer as do the ignorant. Whatever we earn by our own merit, that no one can take from us. We see this at every turn. A noble soul may be deprived of many of the blessings of this material existence. His enemies may torment him, but they cannot touch what is his birthright, they cannot rob him of his peace. A man who commits a crime through brooding evil thought, tries to escape from pain but he cannot. Where do we feel pain most? In the mind. We cannot do something harmful to another without suffering. That is the reason the Bible teaches—love thy neighbor as thyself. Why should one love one's neighbor as one's self? In the Vedic Upanishad the wise sage tells his disciple: My son, verily thou art thine own neighbor. From the point of view of soul we cannot rob some one without robbing ourselves. We rob our own dignity, we rob our own peace, we rob the finer things in our life. We cannot harm some one without harming ourselves. We cannot cheat the greater law, and a wise person not only never wants to evade the law, he wishes to benefit by it.

Thought is a power—a power for good and a power for evil. If we do not direct the mind through the proper channels of kindness, wisdom, love and all things that are constructive, it will find other avenues that will be perhaps destructive. Here is our responsibility. You may say everything is done through Divine Will, why should we then have responsibility? If we have reached that point of surrender and vision where we can perceive the Divine Will, then we are rid of responsibility; but there are very few of us who can say sincerely that we abide by the Divine Will, that we have no individual desires. So long as we have desires, so long as we have ambition, so long as we have the play of any

of these emotions, we must direct them through the right channels.

Every intelligent human being knows the law of life: As a man thinks, so is he. It is the supreme secret. To possess the knowledge of it gives the greatest power. But if we know it only superficially it does not benefit us. How few there are who are able to apply it! We all know that if we surround ourselves with thoughts of love and purity, they safeguard us, they build a tremendous barricade of protection around us, and yet in spite of our mental grasp of this, when some one has offended us or injured us, we allow these incidents to absorb all our thoughts. If we let our mind be filled with evil thoughts and sordid feelings, if we allow it to be clouded by envy, jealousy and anger, can we expect to find peace? The more we brood, the more our mind becomes colored with our brooding. It gradually poisons our whole being. Yet the same mind which feels itself incapable of anything good or lofty can become potent, victorious, its own liberator. Sometimes we become hypnotized by the idea of weakness and inability. No one can help us so long as we allow ourselves to remain under that influence. Its antidote is to have the counteracting idea—I am strong. Even though we cannot say it with conviction, if we are in earnest, if our spirit is desirous of throwing off the weakness, we shall find that gradually like the sun it will dispell all the dark clouds and bring us strength. Sometimes this is called affirmation. It creates an opportunity for the mind to make its contact with that which is all-powerful. Not by dwelling on weakness do we get rid of weakness. It is rather by dwelling on strength that we become strong. It is by dwelling on light that we conquer darkness; it is by dwelling on wisdom that we overcome ignorance.

No one can give us salvation. You may say, it is not so.

If we follow religion we shall be saved. But following religion means living religion. It is not by professing creeds or attaching importance to rituals that we become spiritual. It is when our life and our belief correspond, when there is no inconsistency—mind and mouth working together, thought and action running harmoniously. That is the whole psychology of existence. To-day, particularly in America, people have become interested in what they call Practical Psychology. It is indeed most practical; but do not for a moment think that true psychology of thought can be lowered to the plane of petty desires, that it can be used to satisfy the longing for a new hat or a new coat, or that by sitting down and concentrating one can acquire prosperity or some such small end. No! True psychology brings an expanded consciousness. We testify to our faith by our actions, by our very being. You may ask, are we capable of this? We are as capable of it as of something small and insignificant. The same amount of energy we expend in idle talk, in imagining things which never come to a focus, if concentrated and directed, would give us power to accomplish mighty things.

Every thought becomes a reality—kind thoughts and unkind thoughts. This should not carry with it any idea of doom even to the selfish and ignorant. We can redeem ourselves no matter where we stand or how we stand. We can remould our life to a great extent. Some may think it is an egotistic notion, that a man should take the responsibility of moulding his life. If he thinks that he alone does it, if he does not take account of a higher Power, it will be egotistic and he is bound to fail. But he cannot be egotistic if his motive is pure, if his heart is kind, if he has a sense of consecration. These feelings will lead him to the higher Ideal.

Self-dejection is the greatest enemy we can possibly have.

Man should remember that he has the spark of Divinity within himself. Whatever may be his philosophy or religion makes no difference. There is no one who does not have a faith, call it what he will. Let him cling to that; let him fasten his whole being to that and he will be inspired to redeem himself. The power of inspiration is within us and we must awaken it. The man who is hungry and thirsty for happiness will find it if he creates a foundation of pure thoughts and noble ideals. If we have that foundation within us, even though we are condemned and ridiculed by the whole world, we shall walk in safety. If we have it not, the whole world may befriend us and yet we shall feel unhappy. Pain follows him who acts with selfish purpose. Happiness follows him who acts with pure motive. These two eternal principles are ever before us, simple, direct, scientific, logical and true.

We need people of character more than men of action. It is very dangerous to enter into this arena of activity without meditative thought. A man plunges into the field of action without co-ordinated thought, and what is the result? He does things which have to be undone. This means waste and waste means not only loss of time and energy, but moral dejection. Therefore we must think first, deep down within our own being, and to our thought add spiritual reflection. There is no human being so depraved that he cannot look up to his Creator. This process of keeping our channel clear and free so that we may have unbroken access to the Highest is the sum and substance of religion. All other things are side issues.

Love brings love. Kindness brings kind feelings. If we are capable of sending love from our hearts, should we not then gather good results from the tree of life? If we approach some one with kindness and meet with no response,

let us not be discouraged or faint-hearted. There is no haste in the spiritual world. Eternity is before us and behind us and all about us. When our heart is thus pregnant with lofty thoughts we shall reap the rich fruition of true spiritual blessing.

HOLY ART THOU

Hermes Trismegistus

Holy art Thou, O God, the universal Father.

Holy art Thou, O God, whose Will perfects itself by means of its own powers.

Holy art Thou, O God, who willeth to be known and art known by Thine own.

Holy art Thou, who didst by Word make to consist the things that are.

Holy art Thou, of whom all-nature hath been made an image.

Holy art Thou, whose form nature hath never made.

Holy art Thou, more powerful than all power.

Holy art Thou, transcending all pre-eminence.

Holy Thou art, Thou better than all praise.

Accept my reason's offerings pure, from soul and heart for aye stretched up to Thee, O Thou unutterable, unspeakable, whose Name naught but the silence can express.

Give ear to me who pray that I may ne'er of Knowledge fail, which is our common being's nature; and fill me with Thy power, and with this grace of Thine, that I may give the Light to those in ignorance of the race, my brethren, and Thy sons.

For this cause I believe, and I bear witness; I go to Life and Light. Blessed art Thou, O Father. Thy man would holy be as Thou art holy, e'en as Thou gavest him Thy full authority to be.

UTILITY OF THOUGHT

From Marcus Aurelius Antoninus

Do not waste the remainder of thy life in thoughts about others, when thou dost not refer thy thoughts to some object of common utility. For thou losest the opportunity of doing something else when thou hast such thoughts as these,—What is such a person doing, and why, and what is he saying, and what is he thinking of, and what is he contriving, and whatever else of the kind makes us wander away from the observation of our own ruling power. We ought then to check in the series of our thoughts everything that is without a purpose and useless, but most of all the over-curious feeling and the malignant; and a man should use himself to think of those things only about which if one should suddenly ask, What hast thou now in thy thoughts? with perfect openness thou mightest immediately answer, this or that; so that from thy words it should be plain that everything in thee is simple and benevolent, and such as befits a social animal, and one that cares not for thoughts about pleasure or sensual enjoyments at all, nor has any rivalry or envy and suspicion, or anything else for which thou wouldst blush if thou shouldst say that thou hadst it in thy mind.

The man who is such, and no longer delays being among the number of the best, is like a priest and minister of the gods, using too the deity which is planted within him, which makes the man uncontaminated by pleasure, unharmed by any pain, untouched by any insult, feeling no wrong, a fighter in the noblest fight, one who cannot be overpowered by any passion, dyed deep with justice, accepting with all his soul everything which happens and is assigned to him as his portion; and not often, nor yet without great necessity and for the general interest, imagining what another says, or does, or thinks. For it is only what belongs to himself that he

makes the matter of his activity; and he constantly thinks of that which is allotted to himself out of the sum total of things, and he makes his own acts fair, and he is persuaded that his own portion is good. For the lot which is assigned to each man is carried along with him and carries him along with it. And he remembers also that every rational animal is his kinsman, and that to care for all men is according to man's nature; and a man should hold on to the opinion not of all, but of those only who confessedly live according to nature. But as to those who live not so, he always bears in mind what kind of men they are both at home and from home, both by night and by day, and what they are, and with what men they live an impure life. Accordingly, he does not value at all the praise which comes from such men, since they are not even satisfied with themselves.

O SOUL OF MINE

By Jacopone da Todi

O Soul of mine, how noble wert thou made!
Be not afraid,
Nor deem thy nature low;
Thou art not so,
High is thy birth, and lordly thine estate.

So high and in such honour wert thou born,
Thy nature's morn
Awaked in gentlehood.
Ponder the grace and beauty thou hast worn,
So shalt thou scorn all else with fortitude.
Naught here is good,—no creature fair enough;
No earthly stuff deserves thy heart's desire;
God is thy Sire,
To Him be consecrate.

MATTER, MIND AND SELF

Brahmavadin

We have now seen that Sankara, in his analysis of matter and mind, arrives at a principle of unity, unknown and unknowable, which he calls *Sat* and *Chit*, from the objective and subjective standpoints respectively. These are nothing but "the matter in itself" and "the mind in itself" of some of our modern metaphysicians. For instance, both Kant and Hamilton, though from methods different from those of Sankara, have arrived at conclusions exactly the same. Hamilton says that the secondary properties of matter are only the mental effects produced by the action of certain modifications of the primary on the organism, whereas the primary qualities are perceived as they are in bodies. Still, what we know of matter is only through its primary qualities; and the matter in itself apart from the primary qualities remains unknown and unknowable. In the same way he seems to think that what we know of mind is only its modifications as made known to us through consciousness. But what it is in itself, apart from those modifications, we do not and cannot know. But Sankara goes further and says that there are no two distinct entities as "matter in itself" and "mind in itself." They are one and the same substance or being, which manifests itself as the knower with all his faculties on the one hand, and the known as limited by attributes on the other.

The doctrine of Herbert Spencer, that the Absolute is unknown and unknowable, and that what we know is only phenomenal, approaches more nearly the conclusion of Sankara than that of any other modern agnostic philosopher. Spencer regards both mind and matter as parallel manifestations of the Absolute; rather he takes matter as the primary manifestation, and mind only as a secondary one, as it always

implies material conditions to manifest its activities. But Sankara, consistently with his Absolute Idealism, looks upon mind as the primary manifestation and matter as only a mode of mind.

The analysis of the totality of existences, according to Sankara, thus leads us to two factors, mutually contrasted by permanence and change; the permanent Reality or God, that underlies all phenomena on the one hand, and the changing universe of phenomena on the other. The two co-exist and cannot be confounded one with the other. God is the one unchanging universal plane in which the whole drama of the cosmic process is enacted. The one is not the cause of the other; for the Absolute Being unchangeable can in no way be connected with an effect which implies change. Nor can we regard them as two independent realities which constitute the totality of things, because the one is Absolute, the other relative; the one is Infinite, the other finite. The European Pantheists agree with the school of Sankara that God is the only substance, the only reality, that underlies the changing appearances of all finite things and persons. But by making God co-substantial and co-extensive with the finite universe they fall into the absurdity of supposing that the Absolute Reality is at once finite and infinite, the substance and the mode, undifferentiated and determined in necessary forms. This error is removed by Sankara and his school by their doctrine of *Maya,* according to which the universal process is no reality but an illusion superimposed on the absolute and infinite existence by the thinker (the ego) who is himself a fictitious self-limitation of the Absolute.

This principle of illusion is supposed to be at the very root of our knowledge of things, and cannot, therefore, be demonstrated by any process of perception or logical inference, in both of which it is involved. But its existence can be

proved by sort of analogical reasoning from an illusory experience in perception. We sometimes mistake, in our perceptive experience, a rope for a serpent; mother of pearl for silver. Just in the same way it is, according to this monism, that we superimpose our mental creations on the Absolute and call them phenomena. Therefore, man's highest goal, or what is called the attainment of liberation (*Moksha*), involves the complete realization of the illusory nature of the cosmos, and the absolute unity behind all phenomena in *Brahman*. To this end he must, by a sort of ecstatic trance, rid himself of all the illusory appearances of the world; nay, even of his thought emotions and volitions. He must keep his mind completely insensible to all external impressions. All mental modifications, whether determined from within or without, ought to be avoided; so that the self may abide in its essential nature of absolute unity.

This is what the monistic philosophers call absorption into God-head, or the merging of the individual in the universal soul. To this state we approach every day in deep sleep. In sleep, the self exists in its real unity, untrammeled by the illusory phenomena of both internal and external experiences. The only difference between this and the state of *Kaivalya* (abiding in the self) is that, in sleep, illusion exists in a potential condition and takes us back to the world of phenomena on waking; whereas, in the other, the illusion becomes completely extinct, and the self is left in its essential state of absolute unity, or the all in all.

Heed not distressing thoughts when they rise ever so strongly in thee; nay, though they have entered thee, fear them not, but be still awhile, not believing in the power which thou feelest they have over thee, and it will fall on a sudden.

—*I. Penington.*

KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE OF TRUTH

By Swami Vivekananda

The might of the universe is within you. "Why weepest thou, my friend? There is neither birth nor death for thee. Why weepest thou? There is no disease nor misery for thee, but thou art like the infinite sky; clouds of various colors come over it, play for a moment, then vanish. But the sky is ever the same eternal blue." Why do we see wickedness? There was a stump of a tree, and in the dark, a thief came that way and said, "That is a policeman." A young man waiting for his beloved saw it and thought that it was his sweetheart. A child who had been told ghost stories took it for a ghost and began to shriek. But all the time it was the stump of a tree. We see the world as we are. Suppose there is a baby in a room with a bag of gold on the table and a thief comes and steals the gold. Would the baby know it was stolen? That which we have inside, we see outside. The baby has no thief inside and sees no thief outside. So with all knowledge.

Do not talk of the wickedness of the world and all its sins. Weep that you are bound to see wickedness yet. Weep that you are bound to see sin everywhere, and if you want to help the world do not condemn it. Do not weaken it more. For what is sin and what is misery, and what are all these but the results of weakness? The world is made weaker and weaker every day by such teachings. Men are taught from childhood that they are weak and sinners. Teach them that they are all glorious children of immortality, even those who are the weakest in manifestation. Let positive, strong, helpful thought enter into their brains from very childhood. Lay yourselves open to these thoughts and not to weakening and paralyzing ones. Say to your minds "I am He, I am He." Let it ring day and night in your minds like a song,

and at the point of death declare: "I am He." That is the Truth; the infinite strength of the world is yours. Drive out the superstition that has covered your minds. Let us be brave. Know the Truth and practise the Truth. The goal may be distant, but awake, arise, and stop not till the goal is reached.

HOLY HUMILITY

From "The Little Flowers of St. Francis"

Whenas Saint Francis on a time abode in the House of Porziuncula with Brother Masseo of Marignano, a man of much sanctity, discretion and grace in speaking of God, for the which cause Saint Francis loved him much: one day Saint Francis returning from the wood and from his prayers, and being at the entrance to the wood, the said Brother Masseo desired to make proof of his humility, and stood over against him, and as though mocking said: "Why after thee? why after thee? why after thee?" Replied Saint Francis: "What is this thou wouldst say?" Quoth Brother Masseo: "I say, why doth all the world come after thee, and why is it seen that all men long to see thee, and hear thee, and obey thee? Thou art not a man comely of form, thou art not of much wisdom, thou art not noble of birth: whence comes it then that it is after thee that the whole world doth run?"

Hearing this Saint Francis, all overjoyed in spirit, lifting up his face unto heaven, stood for a great while with his mind uplifted in God; anon returning to himself again, he knelt him down and rendered thanks and praises unto God; and then with great fervour of spirit turned him to Brother Masseo and said: "Wilt thou know why after me? wilt thou know why after me? wilt thou know why after me, that the whole world doth run? This cometh unto me from the eyes of the most high God, which behold at all time the evil and

the good: for those most holy eyes have seen among sinners none more vile, none more lacking, no greater sinner than am I: wherefore to do this marvellous work the which He purposeth to do, He hath not found upon the earth a creature more vile, and therefore hath He chosen me to confound the nobleness and the greatness and the strength and the beauty and wisdom of the world: to the intent that men may know that all virtue and all goodness come from Him, and not from the creature, and that no man may glory in himself; but whoso will glory, may glory in the Lord, unto whom is honour and glory for ever and ever."

Then Brother Masseo, at so humble a reply uttered with so great fervour, was afraid, and knew of a surety that Saint Francis was rooted and grounded in humility.

You can control nothing but your own mind. Even your two-year old babe may defy you by the instinctive force of its personality. But your own mind you can control. Your own mind is a sacred enclosure into which nothing harmful can enter except by your permission. Your own mind has the power to transmute every external phenomenon to its own purposes. If happiness arises from cheerfulness, kindliness, and rectitude (and who will deny it?), what possible combination of circumstances is going to make you unhappy so long as the machine remains in order? . . . "Look within." "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." "Oh, yes! you protest. "All that's old. Epictetus said that. Christ said that." They did. I admit it readily. But if you were ruffled this morning because your motor-omnibus broke down, and you had to take a cab, then so far as you are concerned these great teachers lived in vain. . . . And all because you have a sort of notion that a saying said two thousand years ago cannot be practical.—*Arnold Bennett.*

ANANDA ASHRAMA

In the early days of California, the Franciscan Missions which stretch like a chain along El Camino Real (The King's Highway) from San Diego in the south to Sonoma in the north, were not as they are now for the most part,—abandoned, silent and in ruins; they were centres of life and light and spiritual brightness. Father Junipero Serra, their saintly founder and head, placed them so that they were apart, each from the other, but one day's journey on foot, in order that those who travelled up and down the coast might never lack shelter at night.

Now it is said that Father Serra had in his mind a Mission which was never built, and this Mission, according to John Stephen McGroarty, famous modern chronicler of California and its Missions, was to have been constructed somewhere between San Gabriel and San Fernando. He has taken upon himself the building of this Mission and his choice of location has fallen upon the beautiful valley which holds in its cup the villages of La Crescenta, Sunland and Tujunga. But perhaps Father Junipero's dream has already found its embodiment. In the Sierra Madre mountains in the Valley of La Crescenta, Ananda Ashrama, dedicated to the Universal Spirit and founded "for the good of many and the happiness of many," is bringing to the California of to-day, the pure faith, the sense of surrender to God, the heroism and the indomitable spirit of consecration which flamed in the hearts of those ancient Franciscans. Why should it not be so? The vision of the holy is never lost and God cares nothing for creed or form.

Already in six months the benign influence of the Ashrama is being felt far and wide. To the casual observer, the location seems remote, yet during Swami Paramananda's visits there in the spring and in the late summer, Sunday after

Sunday motors climbed the long grade and people even walked in order to hear the Swami give his supreme message out under the open sky. The most distinguished and talented came and came again. And as a matter of fact Ananda Ashrama is remote from the world only in the spiritual sense. It is within less than an hour's ride of Pasadena, Glendale and Los Angeles.

Meanwhile the work of development goes quietly on. New roads have been built, opening up hitherto inaccessible parts of the property. Cabins have been constructed to house the ever-growing band of workers. Some years ago, a little boy with great love in his heart declared, "Swami, if ever I get rich I'll buy you a goat." That same little boy, now fifteen years of age, is a worker at the Ashrama and he brought with him nine goats, two cows, a donkey, and other live stock. Real devotion makes our words come true. As the rainy season approaches, out-of-door services may have to be abandoned, so already plans are being drawn for library and recreation-hall large enough to seat two or three hundred people, while the present building is to be enlarged for dwelling purposes. Later the main Temple will be built. There is to be an architectural committee composed of three of the most distinguished architects of California, each of whom is giving his skill and his time as an offering to the Ashrama. The young fruit trees on the place have yielded abundantly, large, finely flavored peaches, apricots, pears, walnuts. In truth the Ashrama is a blessed spot and must inevitably become a place of pilgrimage for the thousands who flock to California from all over the world.

The Swami who is now at the Boston Centre expects to return to the Ashrama in November. During his absence there will be no public Services, but the members of the Ashrama will be at home to visitors Sunday and Thursday afternoons.

REPORT

Swami Paramananda remained in Boston through the first two Sundays in July when he returned once more to Ananda Ashrama and the growing activities of the new work. During his absence the Sunday Services were ably conducted, as before, by Miss K. F. Sherwood. To her remarkably sympathetic understanding of the many vital world questions of our time, she brings her experience of fifteen years of devoted and active service in the work. This enables her to combine most constructively the ideals of the East and the West. The fundamental theme of the readings and addresses given was the essential and ever manifesting oneness of all apparent variety. Through the faithful co-operation and attendance of many, the summer proved fruitful and satisfactory.

The regular Tuesday night class was carried on as a study group under the charge of Miss Philadelpheus. Two evenings were devoted to the study of the life of Sri Ramakrishna —that humble God-intoxicated saint of modern India to whose surpassing love is due the new tide of divine mercy which is sweeping away the barriers of prejudice and making the West and the East common inheritors of the Truth which makes man free. Two more evenings were taken up with the life of the most universal and sublime of Christian saints— the Little Poor Man of Assisi. Besides these the writings of Swami Vivekananda and Swami Paramananda were chiefly studied as guides to the practical application of the teaching of Vedanta to daily life.

At the close of September the Boston Centre rejoiced once more in welcoming the return of its beloved founder and leader. With the first Sunday in October the Swami resumed his usual charge of the work. His long and frequent absences since the opening of the California work have only deepened in the hearts of many the appreciation of his message.

DEC 4 192

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

NOVEMBER, 1923

PHILOSOPHY OF WORK

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MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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SECRET OF RIGHT ACTION

By Swami Paramananda

The secret of right action is in reality no secret at all. It does not lie in any formula which we repeat. There is no magic by means of which we can follow the path of idleness and yet make our life productive. No! The secret lies in our own motives, in our power of application. It is not the strong physical vehicle which makes the productive human being; it is skillfulness in action, knowing how to adjust ourselves quickly, how to perform a task with the least expenditure of energy. This is what gives immediate success. There are some people who talk little and accomplish more, while others talk much and accomplish nothing. Though a man may speak very glibly on religion, on the great ideals of love, service and brotherhood, that does not make him religious. But if he is "a doer of the law" as Christ said, even in a small measure; if he knows how to direct his life and its forces, he will not only be religious, he will be a better, stronger human being and his influence will reach others. This is what I call practical religion,—a religion productive of good, of men and women of an inspiring type,—and not the morbid religion which merely clings to dogma. Not that!

One of the most interesting studies in life is to note how our false concept can distort even a holy example so that it

no longer bears any resemblance to the original idea. For instance, the average man looks upon the world of religion as entirely apart from active life. He thinks that in order to become religious one must abandon worldly activities and assume a mournful repentant attitude. This is not a true concept of religion. What good will even the loftiest ideal do us or our fellow-men if we do not live it and bring it to fruition? Unless it gives us something definite and dynamic it might just as well not exist for us. The whole purpose of religion and philosophy is to give us that which is inspiring, elevating and constructive. Merely going to church or professing a creed, whether it be Christianity or Buddhism, or any other "ism," is not active religion. It is not practical religion. It is a mockery. It is degradation for the soul of the individual and for the soul of the race. It can only produce a lot of hypocrites and fanatics.

True religion we carry into our outer activities; we make it alive, alert and productive. If a person does nothing and gives nothing for the benefit of his fellows, how do we know he is religious? Merely upholding a theory is nothing. If we have high ideals we must express them in our lives. This problem confronts us all. Whether we are laymen or in religious life makes no difference whatsoever. We are living souls in contact with other souls; we have to be active. These are the ideals of Karma Yoga, the great Indian system of right action. It proclaims that religion is not merely for the man who is inactive. On the contrary it holds that the man who is active and energetic, who is constantly doing something in the world has just as much right to enter the Kingdom of Heaven as the hermit without duties and without obligations. It pays great tribute to the people who live in the world and carry their ideal intact. They are the heroes.

There is no one who can claim that he does not need to

take part in active life. Whether we spend our days at home or go out daily, we must be doing something for our self-preservation. A man who does nothing, his mind and his physical vehicle quickly deteriorate. He becomes dead although carrying on an existence. One who is so convinced of his own principle that he is indifferent to what others say, and who is willing to give himself to his task, that man will accomplish his purpose. Great artists know this, also scientists,—though perhaps unconsciously. They plunge into their work. There are moments when we forget our environment, forget everything but the one thing that we are doing, and those are the supreme moments of our life. They make it possible for us to attain success.

How does the average person work? He works with a sense of weight and drudgery or else with feverish intensity. Either will break him. One who works with indifference, how can he accomplish anything? His heart is not in it. His mind, his soul, his energies are all divided. If our heart is not in our task we shall resemble laborers who have no real interest in what they are doing; they only pretend. If they break things they do not care; they merely want their wage. Such work can never bring satisfaction to us or to any one and we learn nothing from it. When the aim is low it can only produce something very small and unsatisfying. On the other hand, a person who is driven by the fever of a selfish motive, who works with nervous excitement, how long will he last? Sooner or later he will break his machine.

What we need is the understanding spirit—the love element. By that I mean, we must learn to love the task we are performing. Any machine which does not receive sufficient lubrication will break because of friction very quickly, and it is the element of understanding, of love, which keeps our human machine in running order. No one can do his work

properly unless he has feeling. A person with cut and dried attitude may try to do his duty, but he will not be really productive. Many charitable organizations are like that. They are excellent institutions but they seem to be untouched by human feelings. It is not intended for human beings to destroy the finer part of their life and become like machines. We may direct a machine, we may use it, but we must have intelligence and feeling in abundance. It is not an arduous task to put these ideas and ideals into practice. What we now do with small, selfish mind we can do just as well with idealistic motive. It will refresh us. Instead of feeling crushed and broken down by our work, we shall be filled with energy, we shall know greater inspiration.

We have spoken of master artists, musicians and scientists, how through concentration and one-pointed love for their art, they attain their ideal. There is a point here. An ordinary person when he undertakes anything at once begins to think of the money he is going to get out of it, or some other return. It stands to reason that we cannot fill our mind with these calculations and imaginings and not weaken it for the task in hand. The logic is plain. Instead of doing his work with the wholeness of his being, he is dividing himself into many parts, is thinking of the non-essentials. Naturally his return will be very small. He has scattered his forces thereby wasting his time. Of course work done in this way, half-heartedly, with distracted mind, must be done badly and often has to be taken apart and done over again. Poor laborers turn out this sort of work, or sometimes shrewd people who think it will pass unnoticed. But there are others more shrewd and they find it out. This not only means lost labor, but it has a very demoralizing effect upon the laborer.

Action and reaction are constantly taking place in this world. No one can escape them. We may declare that we

are going to have in our life only happiness and beauty, that we will have riches and not poverty. But the pairs of opposites are always playing. We cannot have happiness without unhappiness. We cannot have light without darkness. What is the remedy? It is given in the Gita: "To work alone thou hast the right, but never to the fruits thereof." The man who is a slave to his passions, who is bound by small ideas of gain and loss, must suffer from reaction. Suppose we scheme and plan and then something goes wrong? We not only lose that which we have set our heart upon, but we no longer have the will or inclination to try again. The man of discerning mind, however, who understands the secret and is not attached to results, rises above a failure. He does better the next time and still better, till he finally succeeds. He gives no thought to the fruit. The fruit will come when we are deserving of it, and we make ourselves deserving by learning to throw our entire being into our acts. This is what makes us dynamic. Let the fruit alone for the time being. Do not be afraid that some one else will take it from you. No one can. What is your rightful heritage will be yours.

If it is a fact that you do not want to lose anything, physically, mentally, morally or spiritually, then do not play the losing game. Never think anything too small to do. The truly great do not discriminate between big tasks and little. Their keenness, their power of appreciation, their desire to do what they do well, makes them forget that a task is little. This is the true sign of greatness. Men of vision, of genius, never feel that any work is beneath them. There is nothing beneath us and nothing beyond us. That should be our attitude. By doing small tasks whole-heartedly with concentration and skillfulness, we evolve within ourselves a power which will enable us later on to perform some great task which now seems like a mountain, inaccessible and unobtain-

able. It will melt away before us when we know the secret, and this power of single-hearted devotion is the secret; it is a gift, an inspiration, subtle and noiseless. We cannot force it upon another mind. Each soul must evolve it. That which we evolve within, saturates our whole life. We may not be regarded as religious by our community, but that makes no difference. We carry a sustaining influence. When an emergency arises we know how to adjust ourselves quickly. We possess the power to do our work, no matter what its nature, and come out unsullied and unspoiled.

So do not imagine that religion means retiring from the world. That idea brought corruption among the great schools of philosophy and religion in the past. Disciples began to think that the religious life meant simply withdrawing and meditating. Meditation is a very active thing,—that is, true meditation. It means first seeing clearly, and then putting into practice what we see. Love is an abstract ideal if we lay it to one side, but the act of loving service,—filling the heart with love and expressing it through our life,—brings a dynamic return. Think what a tremendous benefit it would be to the world if all men who believed in Christ and His message of love would practise that love even in small measure. What a mighty thing it would be if the five hundred million people who profess Buddhism would follow the wonderful example of their compassionate teacher Gautama Buddha and practise non-killing,—not merely refraining from partaking of animal food, but never harming another by a hateful thought, actually practising non-injury in thought, word and deed. What an atmosphere would be created in this world! And that is what the world needs to-day.

The superiority of any religion or philosophy lies in its practical life and not in its theories or dogmas. Religions are not high or low because of these. Each religion has one

supreme pinnacle, but it is when we touch practical living that we bring to fruition all that these great ideals stand for. We go on with a sense of consecration, a sense of high duty. The nature of our work does not matter. It is not high office that ennobles a man, but his motive. We need not boast because of any position that we hold, or feel degraded because of lack of opportunities. Opportunities will come when we have proved our fitness. That is the law of compensation. There is an Indian parable of a rich man who employed two servants,—one, a talker, clever and convincing; the other, not so skilled in words, but industrious, always busy in the orchard producing things. One day the rich man came to visit the garden. The clever, shrewd servant began to praise his master's person, flattering him, telling him how beautiful were his hands and face and everything pertaining to his personality. The other servant said nothing; he went and gathered all the things that he had produced through his silent labor and placed them before his master. With whom do you suppose the master was pleased?

It is not the talker, the noisy, aggressive type of human being who produces the most or who brings the greatest amount of blessing. It is the quiet, concentrated worker. Although he asks nothing, he receives everything. Whether we care for the fruit or not, it will come to us when we deserve it. Let us carry that in our mind, in our consciousness. It will ennoble us; it will heal our wounds when we are disappointed. We are placed here by a divine hand. To disconnect ourselves from that, to feel and think that we are isolated and unprotected, existing merely for our own self-gratification, is the greatest tragedy that can befall us. To restore ourselves to that One is to rid the soul of selfish desires.

Let us have a great ideal, an ideal that will startle us at

first with its greatness. That is the only kind of an ideal to hold before our mind's eye and to work for. Little by little our imperfections and difficulties will vanish and instead of regarding life as a drudgery, instead of shrinking from it, we shall bless this life which offers so many opportunities; we shall find joy even in the little daily tasks and wherever we are placed we shall know happiness.

WORK AND RENUNCIATION

Dialogue between Buddha and a Householder

Anathapindika said: I see that thou art the Buddha, the Blessed One, the Tathagata, and I wish to open to thee my whole mind. Having listened to my words advise me what I shall do. My life is full of work, and having acquired great wealth, I am surrounded with cares. Yet I enjoy my work, and apply myself to it with all diligence. Many people are in my employ and depend upon the success of my enterprises. My heart yearns to do what is right and to be a blessing unto my fellows. Let me then ask thee, must I give up my wealth, my home, and my business enterprises, and like thyself go into homelessness in order to attain the bliss of a religious life?

And the Buddha replied: The bliss of a religious life is attainable by every one who walks in the noble eightfold path. He that cleaves to wealth had better cast it away than allow his heart to be poisoned by it; but he who does not cleave to wealth, and possessing riches, uses them rightly, will be a blessing unto his fellows. It is not life and wealth and power that enslave men, but the cleaving to life and wealth and power. The bhikkhu who retires from the world in order to lead a life of leisure will have no gain, for a life of indolence is an abomination, and lack of energy is to be despised.

The Dharma of the Tathagata does not require a man to

go into homelessness or to resign the world, unless he feels called upon to do so; but the Dharma of the Tathagata requires every man to free himself from the illusion of self, to cleanse his heart, to give up his thirst for pleasure and lead a life of righteousness. And whatever men do, whether they remain in the world as artisans, merchants, and officers of the king, or retire from the world and devote themselves to a life of religious meditation, let them put their whole heart into their task; let them be diligent and energetic, and if they are like the lotus, which although it grows in the water, yet remains untouched by the water, if they struggle in life without cherishing envy or hatred, if they live in the world not a life of self but a life of truth, then surely joy, peace, and bliss will dwell in their minds.

As the strength of the tree shows itself in the fruit, so the true divine strength in a man is shown in his good works and virtues. "There is no faith without works." Otherwise prayer is but a mockery and an outward form, and does not attain to the city of God. . . . God is well-pleased with everything that is not false, or contrary to the love of God and man. If one should carry stones into the sea to please his brother, he would be as well-pleasing to God as a preacher in the pulpit. For what work does God need? Just as the flowers of the field do not envy each other, although one may be more beautiful and comely than another, but live happily with each other and enjoy each the other's virtue, so do we all please God, who dwell in His will alone—we are all in the same garden.—*Jacob Behmen.*

It is the business of a musician to harmonize every instrument, but of a well-educated man to adapt himself harmoniously to every fortune.—*Demophilus.*

THE GIFT OF THANKFULNESS

By Sister Daya

True thanksgiving comes as a sense of wonder in the soul, felt only in those moments of profound humility when the heart stripped bare of all self-conceit and pride of power is conscious both and at once, of its own barrenness and of the glory which floods it. Prosperity, health, wealth, good fortune so-called, these gifts for which man so often gives his all, for which he kneels and says: "My Lord I thank Thee," seem in the face of the one supreme gift of God Himself like tinsel or glass in the face of the sun. To him who has experienced this moment of wonder, that which the world is pleased to term success is but the pity of the gods. The outer life of such a one may be limited on every side by pain, by hunger, by want, by misunderstanding, even by torture, but when that supreme moment comes of complete emptiness and complete fulness, that yielding of the finite to the Infinite, then the very soul overflows with thanksgiving. Just as Mary sang her Magnificat, so the heart, the little handmaid of God, gives thanks for the ineffable Light that has entered it. This is the true thanksgiving,—an eternal flow of love and gratitude, untouched by time or circumstance.

Outer fortune comes with the dawn and goes with the sunset; its very blessings are doubtful. Even while the soul, crowned by fame and adorned by wealth, is revelling in what it feels to be God's bounty, the real gifts of God are withdrawn,—the gifts of thankfulness, humility and vision. Blind to its loss, the soul reaches out ever more and more for that which is destroying it. It gives perfunctory thanks (if it gives thanks at all), self-conscious and calculating; but at bottom it takes everything as its right and its gratitude for favors received is balanced by its curse when favors are withdrawn. The world recognizes all this theoretically but continues to pray for "fool's gold."

The quality of our desires proclaims our spiritual status. Give me wealth and authority, prays the fool; serenity and peace, the love of children, the power of giving and of loving, supplicates the noble soul; "Anything or nothing" so that it be Thy Will; grant me only Thy blessed Presence, is the prayer of the truly illumined.

There was once a holy man whose life was so pure that God desired to bestow upon him some signal blessing. An angel messenger was sent to him and offered him fame, but he refused; wealth, he refused; wisdom, love,—the rarest gifts of God to man; but still he refused. "Surely there is something which God may bestow that you yearn for?" said the angel. "Name your own gift." "Let Him grant me," replied the holy man, "to be able to bless others endlessly without ever knowing that I am blessing." "So be it" said the angel. From that moment wherever that holy man's shadow passed, new life arose. If it touched the sick, they became well; the miserable, they became happy; the restless, they became full of peace; but the man went on his way all unconscious. No taint of vanity or ego tortured his soul or marred the purity of his gift; it flowed untainted from the hand of God, blessing the heart through which it passed to other hearts. In time even the man's name was lost and he became known as "The Holy Shadow."

Many may exclaim; the only joy in blessing is to know that we bless. We fail to realize that the moment the sense of "I do" enters, the power to bless withdraws. That is why the holy ask only for God and there lies the difference between goodness and holiness. The good desire power to bestow and they pray for the means to help their fellow-men. The holy know that there is only One who gives, only One who blesses; so with utter surrender they pray, "I do nothing; Thou doest all things. Possess me so utterly that there is naught left in

me that is not Thee. Not I, not I, O Lord, but Thou!" With most of us it may take many lives for this prayer to be granted. Ancient encrustations must be broken from the heart before it can expand sufficiently to receive God. But though we may not yet be able to experience the supreme wonder of gratitude, we can strive to "cover all things with the Lord." There is nothing in the world too dense or dark for His Face to shine through.

If discontent frets us then it is well indeed,—being young souls,—to remember even our outer blessings: the mother hands that held us, the milk that nurtured us, the very protecting influences which have kept us alive and given us vision enough to yearn. Every humble, grateful thought will fill the heart with sweetness and melt a little of its hardness. Gratitude can become worship and in worship, self is forgotten. There is no life that cannot count its blessings when it views destiny in this light, when it sees one little human existence as only a short act in the great drama of the soul. So many lovely things come to us from the Infinite Mother! Let us be truly grateful to Her. Let gratitude flow from our heart spontaneously just as it flows from the heart of the true artist for the gifts of light and shade, form and color, for the flash of a sunset in the dusk, or the bend of a flower in the dawn. In fact the great artist comes very close to covering everything with the Lord. Does he not reveal God in that which to the unseeing is merely dark or even sordid?

It is not what we receive but what we are able to gain from what we receive that constitutes the gift of God. One small gift may bring to the surrendered heart an ocean of blessing while the selfish, contracted heart may not be able to receive even a drop of blessing from an ocean of giving. We covet what another has, we see him surrounded by all that we lack, all that we long for; but if we, lacking all that,

can be possessed of a humble heart and the power of gratitude and he, possessed of all that, lacks in thankfulness and humility, then he has nothing and we have everything. Ingratitude and a complaining heart shut the doors of our soul against "the unasked, unceasing Giver." Then though He gives, we cannot take. His bounty is never lacking, but our power to receive is lacking. By our attitude we turn away beautiful things which are at our very threshold. We would dictate what He should give and how and when and where. Then when He bestows something far more precious in His own way and time, we reject it.

In our greed we barely begin to enjoy one gift before we are crying for another. We would always pluck the fruit before it is ripe. If we would be content to wait; if we would concern ourselves with our own fitness or unfitness to receive rather than with God's slowness to give, then the fruit of our yearning would come at the moment of ripeness and we should be prepared to draw from it the essence of its sweetness. God knows best what we need and when we need it. Nothing is blessed save that which comes from His own hand at His own time. Our concern, anyway, should not be over what we desire to receive, but over that which we long to give. The final divine gift is the power to give, not this or that, but our whole being,—mind, heart, soul, body, to the Supreme. If we have to grieve, let it not be a petty grieving over some favor withheld, but let it be a noble grief over our inability to lay our all at God's feet. Let us transform our longing for things into yearning for God. One is desire and the other is true prayer. When He enters the heart there will be need for no words, for no teaching. He is the only Teacher, the only Lord, the One Revealer. "To the knower of God all the Vedas are as of little use as a small water tank in flood time." We must give all to receive all. "God says pay for

it and take it" writes Emerson. It is true. We pay for everything in some coin or other. If we take unrealities, then we must pay for them in the coin of realities; but if we take realities we pay for them in the coin of the unreal. We give the finite and receive the Infinite.

We can allow our minds to dwell on anything, on our lack or on our fulness; on what has been denied us or on what has been granted. How can we be unhappy or fretful if we are constantly thinking of God's Presence in our heart and His blessing in our life? He who has an ungrateful demanding heart will never know either satisfaction or peace, but will be driven whipped from one unfulfilled desire to another. Let us never take anything as our right. To what have we an especial right? Every little thing that comes to us, let it be to us as a divine surprise. Then will some passing kindness glow with the freshness of a young flower and God will smile at us from every pair of smiling eyes.

Shall we be grateful for pain? Swami Vivekananda once said that until we can receive pain as the kiss of the Divine Mother we shall never know Spirit in Its wholeness. There is a marvelous litany from the Sanskrit which gives the key to true thanksgiving. If we say it from our hearts, its great meaning will be unveiled little by little and we shall be overwhelmed with gratefulness for the enfolding presence of the Supreme. It sings the worship of the One Infinite Mother in and through all things,—in hunger, in thirst, in peace, in power, in faith, in compassion, in beauty and even in mistakes. Nothing is excluded and there is this final promise, "He who takes shelter at Thy Feet never meets with any danger but becomes the shelter for other souls."

Let us then take shelter at Her Feet. Let us have intimate and tender communion with Her in every event of life. She will reach us through a thousand channels, blessing, guid-

ing, disciplining. Let us offer every task, even the meanest and most trying, to Her, for it is She Who has given it to us to do. Above all, let us feel Her as real, Reality Itself, the close Companion of the heart, the Essence of all love, all comradeship, ever present,—a Being that we can feel and hear and see once we learn to use the senses of the soul. In the Infinite lies all power even the power to make Itself known to the finite. If we can even long to do this; if we even have the power of yearning for the divine Presence, then there will come to our hearts the marvel of thanksgiving and then although we may be cast into the streets, naked and starving, we shall feel ourselves richer than the richest king, blessed as only the little ones of God are blessed.

VIRTUE OF SINGLE INTENTION

By John Ruysbroeck

Mark how, in each of our works we shall go out to meet God and shall increase our likeness unto Him, and shall more nobly possess the fruitive unity. By every good work, how small soever it be, which is directed to God with love and with an upright and single intention, we earn a greater likeness, and eternal life in God. A single intention draws together the scattered powers into the unity of spirit and joins the spirit to God. A single intention is end, and beginning, and adornment, of all virtues. A single intention offers to God praise and honour and all virtues: and it pierces and passes through itself and all the heavens and all things, and finds God within the simple ground of its own being.

That intention is single which aims only at God and in all things only at their connection with God. The single intention casts out hypocrisy and duplicity, and a man must possess it and practise it in all his works above all other things; for it is this which keeps man in the presence of God, clear in under-

standing, diligent in virtue, and free from outward fear, both now and in the day of doom. Singleness of intention is the inward, enlightened, and loving tendency of the spirit; it is the foundation of all ghostliness; it includes in itself faith, hope and charity, for it trusts in God and is faithful to Him. It casts nature underfoot, it establishes peace, it drives out ghostly discontent, and preserves fullness of life in all the virtues. And it gives peace and hope and boldness toward God, both now and in the day of doom.

Thus we shall dwell in the unity of the spirit, in grace and in likeness; and shall always go out to meet God by means of the virtues, and offer up to Him with a simple intention our whole life and all our works; and thus in every work, and ever more and more, we shall increase our likeness. And thus we rise up out of the ground of our single intention and pass through ourselves and go out to meet God without means, and rest in Him in the abyss of simplicity: there we possess that heritage which has been prepared for us from all eternity. All ghostly life and all works of virtue consist in the divine likeness and in the singleness of intention; and all their supreme rest consists in simplicity above all likeness. Nevertheless, one spirit surpasses another in virtue and in likeness, and each possesses its own proper being in itself, according to the degree of its nobleness. And God suffices each one in particular, and each one, according to the measure of his love, seeks God in the ground of his spirit; both here and in eternity.

We cannot say that God is gracious because He feeds us, for every father is bound to supply his children with food; but when He keeps us from going astray and holds us back from temptations, then He is truly gracious.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

DESTINY NOT A MATTER OF CHANCE

Selection from the Mahabharata

Draupadi said: It seemeth, O Yudhishthira, that creatures derive the character of their lives from their acts of former lives. Amongst mobile creatures man differeth in this respect that he aspireth to affect his course of life in this and the other world by means of his acts. Impelled by the inspiration of a former life, all creatures visibly reap in this world the fruits of their acts. Indeed, all creatures live according to the inspiration of a former life. Cover thyself up with action as with an armour. There may or may not be even one in a thousand who truly knoweth the utility of acts or work. All the creatures in the world would have been exterminated, if there were no action.

Those persons in the world who believe in destiny, and those again who believe in chance, are both the worst among men. Those only that believe in the efficacy of acts are laudable. He that lieth at ease, without activity, believing in destiny alone, is soon destroyed like an unburnt earthen pot in water. So also he that believeth in chance, sitteth inactive though capable of activity, liveth not long, for his life is one of weakness and helplessness. If any person accidentally acquireth any wealth, it is said he deriveth it from chance, for no one's effort hath brought about the result. And, O son of Pritha, whatever of good fortune a person obtaineth in consequence of religious rites, that is called providential. The fruit, however, that person obtaineth by acting himself, and which is the direct result of those acts of his, is regarded as proof of personal ability.

Some say that everything is the result of chance; others that everything is the result of providential dispensation; others again, that this is not so, but that everything which is supposed to be the result of destiny or chance is the result of

the good or the bad acts of former lives. It is seen that possessions are obtained from chance as also from destiny. Something being from destiny and something from chance, something is obtained by exertion. That person that doth not act, certainly succumbeth, O Yudhishthira. The man of action in this world generally meeteth with success. The idle, however, never achieve success. If success becometh impossible, then should one seek to remove the difficulties that bar his way to success. And, O king, if a person worketh hard his debt to the gods is cancelled whether he achieveth success or not. The person that is idle and lieth at his length, is overcome by adversity; while he that is active and skillful is sure to reap success and enjoy prosperity.

The acts of others, it is seen, are crowned with success. It is probable that ours also will be successful. How can one know beforehand what the consequence will be? Having exerted thyself, thou wilt know what the fruit of thy exertions will be. The tiller tilleth with the plough the soil and soweth the seeds thereon. He then sitteth silent for the clouds after that are the cause that would help the seeds to grow into plants. If, however, the clouds favor him not, the tiller is absolved from all blame. He sayeth unto himself,—What others do I have done. If, notwithstanding this, I meet with failure, no blame can attach to me. Thinking so, he containeth himself and never indulgeth in self-reproach. O Bharata, no one should despair, saying,—Oh, I am acting, yet success is not mine! For there are two other causes, besides exertion, towards success. Whether there be success or failure, there should be no despair, for success in acts dependeth upon union of many circumstances. No man should ever disparage himself, for the man that disparageth himself never earneth high prosperity. O Bharata, success in this world is attainable on such conditions! In fact, success in the world is said to de-

pend on acting according to time and circumstances. My father formerly kept a learned Brahmana with him, he said all this unto my father. And, O Yudhishthira, while at intervals of business, I went out of the inner apartments and sat on the lap of my father, that learned Brahmana used to recite unto me these truths, sweetly consoling me therewith.

Thus ends the thirty-second section of the Arjunabhigamana of the Vana Parva.

OUR LADY'S TROUBADOUR

A Mary-Legend

Near Roc Amadour, in the country of France, lived one, Pierre de Syglar, a minstrel, who in all the world knew nothing but to play upon his viol. Being of courteous heart, he loved to pleasure gentle ladies with lai and rondel; but above all, his delight it was to laud and honour Her Who is Queen of all ladies,—Mary the Blessed.

There came a day, when to Her church at Roc Amadour, he went on pilgrimage in company with others. There were pilgrims young and pilgrims old, artisans, labourers, craftsmen skilled as well as those who ate the fruit of idleness. All went for the salvation of their souls and all went empty-handed, save only Pierre, who carried underneath his arm, his viol, for he loved it overdearly. Now in the shrine of Our Lady candles shone and votive offerings glistened. Pierre watched the pilgrims as they entered there and knelt before Her feet. Always they asked of Her somewhat, always they prayed, imploring this or that, and She smiled on them always from above the flickering lights. So gracious is Our Lady! Then Pierre timidly approached and made his orisons.

"Blessed Mother of God, dear Madame," so he prayed, "Meseemeth many come here to beg of Thee; but scarce one cometh here to give. Many supplicate Thy help and comfort;

yet who thinks to service Thee in aught? I am only a poor troubadour; but if Thou wilt deign to listen, my very great joy will be to entertain Thee with sweet music, to laud Thee with voice and viol as every loyal troubadour should laud the Mother of his King. Most sweet and holy Lady, I implore Thee to listen; for know, that if this be too poor for Thy acceptance, then in no wise can I serve Thee, since in the making of melody is my only skill."

Then very softly Pierre began to play in honour of his Queen. The sound at first was like an angel's breath, but ever as he drew his bow across the strings, the music swelled and throbbed until it flamed like to the seraphim and all the space within the silent church was filled with heavenly strains, while folk drew nigh to hear Our Lady's troubadour. Following this, he sang to Her (as was his wont with other ladies, and the which pleased them much) of battles and of heroes slain, of lovely fair in tears above their dead of happy chance and bright adventuring. And as the music died away he flung himself before Her smiling image and humbly asked of Her a gueridon,—one little boon; a candle from the many at Her feet, since ladies all reward their troubadours. Then, it is written, by angelic hands, Mary the Mother sent a candle down to rest upon Pierre's viol, the fairest and the tallest of them all, the one that burned immediately before Her.

But since the shrine was very rich in treasure, an abbey stood there keeping guard. A harsh and witless man he was, dry and barren of all favour. "Wicked enchanter!" cried he in a rage, "This is vile magic and a desecration!" And he did fall on Pierre and took from him the candle, placing it once more at Mary's feet. But the jongleur, nowise moved, silently thanking Her, took up his viol anew and sang with such high heart that the song staid not on earth at all but went beyond to where the angels are. For what cared he for wrath of man

now that he had Our Lady's grace? And Mary heard and once again She sent Her light and once again the sacristan with cruel hands did cudgel Pierre and take it from him. But when in quietness he went on playing with such high fervour that the tears did roll adown his cheeks and fall upon his viol, the third time Mary caused the candle to descend to Pierre, Her troubadour. Then did the bells ring out and all the countryside gave thanks for such a blessed miracle.

Upon the following day, Pierre came again and offered at Our Lady's shrine the candle wherewith She had paid his songs. Nor did he ever fail in his devotion. Through all his life, no matter whom his songs might praise, they silently were offered unto Her Who had so graciously received his gift, and always on that day at each new year, he laid before Her feet, within the chapel of Roc Amadour, a candle made of virgin wax and a full pound in weight. So may we all, with humble heart, offer unto God our only skill, nowise ashamed though it seem small and mean, for He will make it sweet and glorious.

When thou makest a dinner, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor the rich neighbors, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed. For they cannot recompense thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.—*Jesus the Christ.*

Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou offerest as oblation, whatever thou givest and the austerities thou performest, do that as an offering to Me. Thus thou shalt be freed from the bonds of action.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

NEW POEMS

By Swami Paramananda

Rendered into English from the Original Bengali.

I

Suddenly, meteor-like, there hath risen
a glory in the sky of my heart!
Blissful of form, effulgent, beneficent, gentle!
Embodiment of music and song,
Radiant with heavenly smile,
It hath awakened in my soul great memories.

Hail to Thee, Thou Goddess of Inspiration!
Holy art Thou! Forever adored!
Thou art the very foundation of life!
Whatsoever thought ariseth
In the kingdom of our mind,
Be it gross or be it subtle,
Never is it veiled from Thee.

Power have I none to worship Thee;
But if Thou, manifesting Thy compassion,
bestowest upon me Love,
Then, through the strength of Thy gift,
A current strong as the great river Sindhu
Will well up in the inmost recess of my heart.
Bathing in that sacred flow,
Men and women will be sanctified;
Drinking of its holy water,
Their mind and heart will be soothed and sated.

Thou Source of all might! Thou Soul of music!
If Thou wilt but enter my heart as Inspiration
Then will I be blessed, singing Thy eternal song.

II

Thy sleep is over,—arise, O India!
Thy dark night has ended at last, O Mother!
Listen with attentive ear!
The voice of new dawn is calling thee with sweet and gentle tone.
Doubt Her call no longer:
It is the Voice of God.
O India, open thine eyes and behold!
With what tender affection the rays of the morning sun kiss thy brow!
This, O Mother, is thy most auspicious day!
With uplifted heart and bowed head,
Receive the blessings the gods are bestowing upon thee.

COMMENTS ON BENGALI POEMS

By P. Guha Thakurta, B. A.

Here are two of Swami Paramananda's most recent poems, translated from original Bengali. Two most remarkable facts have to be remembered in connection with this new phase of Swami's poetry. He has written nothing in his own native language for these last seventeen years of his stay in America, and prior to his coming to the Occident he spent five years in Madras. Thus Swami has been practically out of touch with Bengali language and literature in original for this long time. All his literary work has hitherto been written in English, yet these new Bengali poems have come, as all poetry comes to him—spontaneous and free. It would be an impossible task to convey through these translations the poetic grandeur or the musical roll of the original verses, not to speak of their superb rhythmic variety and the characteristic tone-quality; yet we could at least render unto our readers the great and noble message which these poems inspire.

Most of these poems were written at his new Peace Re-

treat—Ananda Ashrama in California. Though each poem varies in theme and form, all of them suggest a new awakening in Swami's Oriental memories. Swami's new home in California is characteristically Oriental in atmosphere and surroundings. Maybe the silence that is in the open sky or the deep that is among the lovely hills has revived in the poet the grand images of the Orient. But to Swami, above all, his poetry is his soul's outpouring, expressing itself this time only in a different language and form.

REPORT

In India every autumn there is celebrated a very great religious Feast, known as The Feast of the Divine Mother or *Durga Puja*. At that time, according to popular belief, the Infinite Mother comes down for three days and dwells with Her children. It is an occasion of profound joy and feasting. Gifts are exchanged and on the final day even enemies embrace and forgive. In honor of this Feast, Swami Paramananda held an informal reception at the Vedanta Centre of Boston on the evening of October 19th. Every one entered into the spirit of the occasion so that a peculiarly happy and loving atmosphere was created. Miss Florence Colby gave very real pleasure with her cello. Mr. Das Gupta, organizer of the Union of East and West, spoke on the Indian village theatre. At Swami Paramananda's request Sister Daya gave a description of Ananda Ashrama, which the Swami crowned with a vivid account of incidents relative to its acquiring and upbuilding. The question of the evening was, who wrote the verses about King Tut? Miss Sherwood read them, but disclaimed authorship. Perhaps she dropped a hint when she said, "A little nonsense now and then is relished by the wisest men." This revealed to many Swami's humorous aspect and provided ample amusement. Before the guests went home they were given a folder upon which was printed the Poem "Divine Mother Heart," which appeared in the October Message. It was Swami's *Durga Puja* gift to his guests and gave in his own illumined words the spiritual import of the celebration.

JAN 3 1924

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

DECEMBER, 1923

CHRIST AND CHRIST-MASS

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MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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PURE SPIRIT

WHEN the pure Spirit shines
who sees it?
Few, yea, only a very few!
For not many have the
seeing eye.
Many see the light of the sun, the moon,
the far-distant stars
And the light of the road-side lamp;
But only the pure heart with the eye of
love
Can see the light that shineth from pure
Spirit.

SELFLESS-HEART

YE WHO love and serve
without thought of
self, are blessed.
Ye who give your all and
seek no gain,
Are blessed again and evermore.
For what shrine more holy than the self-
less heart?
What offering richer than the gift that
asketh no return?

—*Swami Paramananda.*

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

No decrying of other sects—no depreciation of others without cause, but on the contrary a rendering of honour to other sects for whatever cause honour is due. By so doing, both one's own sect will be helped forward, and other sects benefitted. By acting otherwise, one's own sect will be destroyed in injuring others.—*Rock Inscriptions of Asoka.*

The very thing which now is called the Christian religion existed among the ancients, nor was it absent in the beginning of the human race before Christ came into the flesh, since when the true religion which already existed, began to be called Christian.—*St. Augustine.*

By diverse creeds we worship, thou and I:
The ear of One alone receives our prayer.
Each turns his face in longing toward the sky
To see his secret soul reflected there.
—*Popular Hindu Saying.*

He that is praised is in fact only One. In this respect all religions are only one religion. Because all praises are directed towards God's Light, these various forms and figures are borrowed from it.—*Jalalud-Din-Rumi.*

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.—*Jesus the Christ.*

With pure heart and fulness of love, I will do towards others what I do for myself.—*Teachings of Buddha.*

O Arjuna, he who looks upon pleasure and pain everywhere with the same regard as when it is applied to himself, that Yogi is highly esteemed.—*Sri Krishna.*

Those who worship the Merciful One are they who walk on the earth gently, and who, when fools speak to them, say "Peace."—*Koran.*

Love thy neighbor and suffer the little offences he may give thee.—*Thales of Miletus.*

The awakened man goes not on revenge, but rewards with kindness the very being who has injured him, as the sandal tree scents the axe of the woodman who fells it.

—*Sayings of Buddha.*

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.—*Jesus the Christ.*

The light which resides in the sun, in the moon, in fire, and which illumines the whole world, know that light to be Mine.—*Sri Krishna.*

All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life and the life was the light of men.—*St. John.*

I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

—*Jesus the Christ.*

I am Yesterday, To-day and To-morrow, for I am born again and again; mine is the unseen Force which createth the gods and giveth food to those in the Tuat.

—*Egyptian Book of the Dead.*

O Arjuna, I am the Self existing in the heart of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle and also the end of beings.—*Sri Krishna.*

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.—*Revelation.*

That Purusha (Spirit), of the size of a thumb, is like a light without smoke, lord of the past and the future. He is the same to-day and to-morrow.—*Katha-Upanishad.*

SONG OF THE SOUL

By Swami Paramananda

(Address delivered on Christmas Eve, 1922)

There are moments when the soul sings and these are very precious moments. The soul only sings when it has found its real joy. The significance of Christmas or of similar Feasts, in all countries and among all nations, is the song of the soul, when the Spirit rejoices, when it sings aloud with a sense of triumph. Why? Because in the world of gloom and despair it suddenly realizes its divine heritage,—a spark, a light comes from the darkness, revealing all things, redeeming all things and making us feel our own true worth. That, to me, is the real meaning of Christmas, the real meaning of the birth of any great Saviour: it is to give man a new sense of his own spiritual birth.

We never understand the true life of a Saviour or of any saint or holy personage until we enter into that spirit, and it is not outer feasting that enables us to do so, or even a great show of charity. In cultivating the true Christmas spirit, more is needed than mere outer ostentation. To make it complete, to make it real, there must be the inner awakening. Christmas stands for more than just the birth of the physical Christ-child. It symbolizes the Christ Spirit born anew in our hearts,—the love, the light, the redeeming power, transcending all material bondage. When we experience that, or when we even try to experience it through similar thoughts, feelings and ideas, then we taste bliss, then our soul truly sings. That is the song which brings real joy.

At first perhaps, we are unable to grasp the import of this, but the meaning is that wherever there is infinite Bliss, there is no room for heaviness, heartache or any unhappiness, and whenever that spirit is born in our midst, is manifested in our midst, it removes all sorrow. Then the sorrowing world

can truly smile, not with any sense of fickleness, but with a sense of security, of peace. However much a man may try to be fearless, when he is in the dark he trembles, he fears, he hesitates, in spite of all his logic and intellectual ideas; but he never can have hesitancy or fear or doubt when he is face to face with light. The light reveals, not only the things that are surrounding him, it reveals his own true worth, it gives him new strength, a new consciousness, and that is what I mean by the Christ Spirit being born anew within us. The man—the human, struggling, blundering man—feels for the first time that he has a part in higher things, that he does not need to depreciate himself, to think, "Oh well, I cannot do anything," "I have no power to redeem myself." On the contrary he feels that the redeeming power is already there in his own soul.

Now a Saviour does this for us. Yet we often hold such a One aloof, distant. We think it is enough if we bow before the altar and offer our worship. It is not enough. My concept of spiritual life is to have intimate relationship with our Ideal, just as a child has intimacy with his mother or father. He does not fear. He goes to them in his moments of despair and also in his moments of exaltation. All things he shares with them, and that is what we do when we understand spiritual feasts. We share all things, there is nothing to hide. Who will hide from the beneficent Spirit? When we know that One Who gives all blessings, then we shall not be reluctant to take those blessings. We shall not be afraid, because we shall know that there is an infinite Source from which we can draw. We cannot exhaust it. When we have that realization of an inexhaustible supply before us, above us, below us, then will come a sense of joyousness, a sense of relief. A spiritual avenue will open before us; the spirit of divinity will be born within us. Unless it is born within we

shall never know what it means to come in contact with our higher resources. We may fast, we may pretend religion, we may practise its outer forms with ostentation, but it will give us nothing real, nor shall we be able to convey anything real to any one else.

It is the inner life that we must have, the spirit of joy that comes from within,—the song of the soul, and Christmas, transcending all gloom and sadness and sorrow, forgetting all bitterness, is that Spirit. Through it we rise above materiality with renewed spirituality. That is the birth of Christ,—the birth of any Saviour. He is born anew and will continue to be born anew. One who lives in the turmoil of worldly concerns never seems to understand that access to that Spirit cannot be gained merely by belonging to a church or creed. It is by being born within one's self. People regard spiritual life as being full of mythical sayings. But they are not mythical, they are real. We are born again. The man of flesh who grieves, who sorrows, who blunders and who struggles, suddenly realizes that he has another Self which neither blunders nor grieves. That is the spiritual birth. A Saviour gives it. He tries to bring to us that glowing spiritual exaltation which transcends all things, not only when everything is going the way we want it to go, but even when everything is going against us.

The real glory of the Spirit is found within and when we have found it within, when it is born within us as reality, then we feel safe, then we realize the significance of Christmas. You can give a very great gift to your friends, to all people with whom you come in contact if you have kindled that spark within yourself, that hope, that courage, that something which lifts us above all material conditions. Then you have the real gift and a gift that is unbounded. It is not limited to the Christmas season. It redeems at all seasons. It has a very

beneficent power. By looking at your face a person may be inspired with new faith and resolution.

Christmas comes to remind us how we should love and how we should forgive, how we should be even willing to die this material death so that the Spirit may triumph, and the Spirit always triumphs and will always triumph if we only allow it to do so. If we are able to put aside our hide-bound ideas and materialistic notions, then the Spirit will be victorious and in that victory we shall rejoice and the soul will sing freely its blissful song.

Let us unite our thoughts and prayers so that we may have a sense of the spiritual Presence. Let us remember that the only rest we can create for our divine Guest, is our quietude, our peace, our serenity of soul. Let us in silence lift our hearts so that we may all find our peace in that infinite and unbounded One—the Giver of all blessings, the Embodiment of all blessedness, the Basis of our life and strength—our Source and Sustenance.

PAWNEE INDIAN HYMN

Ha, many things have the stars to tell us,
the morning star, the evening star,
Many things have the constellations to tell
us, all about the heaven.
But Chakaa, (the stars), they would guide
us all aright,
They would teach the people how we may cleave
one to another in the heavenly places,
Having one mind alone to mount into the still-
ness of the night and shine.
Wherefore, we sing this song, made for his
people by the wayfarer
Whom their leader visited in dream and saved;

Yea, hearken, we sing it circling solemnly
four times about the holy lodge:—
"They come to us, they rise, behold!
Over the marge of Mother Earth
Into Father Sky, they rise, they rise,
Chakaa the silent brethren!
Ah 'tis a blessed thing to behold them yonder
More blessed yet for us to mount with them,
To shine together each in his place as they!
They come to us, they rise,
We come to them, we rise,
We as Chakaa mount on high!
Behold them coming, climbing,
And we as they
Brethren in unity together."

* * * *

Such holy things and many more the stars
would tell us all,
Us the children of the Heavenly One, our Father:
How we should stand each in his place, and move
together forward with his fellows:
How we should dwell among men as Father Sky
doth brood over Mother Earth,
How we should leap invisibly, in spirit only,
full of the heavenly gladness,
How we should hang as the sign of God and lift up
the eyes and the hearts of men
Till they may become one soul in a shared hunger
for the Heavenly One,
Who verily set his token for them even whence
he doth send down
His breath to be their life, his stillness their awe,
his love for them—their joy.

CHRIST-MASS

By Sister Daya

Will it take from the tender and holy joy of Christmas-tide, to know that the same day which we of the West hold sacred as the birthday of the infant Saviour, had for the peoples of the past an almost identical significance? The 25th of December was not originally the day upon which the Christ Mass was celebrated. Not only the natal day of the Christ but the natal year is most uncertain. Both can be inferred only from texts which do not always agree. The year has been set back as far as the third century B.C., and forward to 10 A.D. As for the day, it was not till the fifth century that the 25th of December was definitely chosen. Up to that time various dates had been observed, ranging from the 3rd of January to the 20th of May. The reason for the final choice may sound strange to Christian ears. December 25th was fixed upon by the early church as the birthday of Christ Jesus, because that day was already set aside as a great festal occasion by almost the entire pagan world.

On the first moment after midnight, December 24th, practically all nations solemnized the birth of the sun at the winter solstice. Yet it was more than an astronomical observance. There seems ever to have been an intimate connection between the world's religions and the solar myths. The lives of the divine heroes and Saviours bear close resemblance, not only to each other, but to the sun's course in space. Thus Mithraism, young Christianity's most formidable rival, established the worship of Mithras as *Sol Invictus* or the Invincible Sun, Spirit of Truth and Light, "Mediator" between humanity and God. His birth within a cave was celebrated yearly on December 25th, not only in Persia and other parts of Asia Minor, but throughout pagan Europe.

It was a great holy day in ancient Rome when was observed

the festival of Sol the Invincible. There were games at the circus and universal rejoicing. "All public business was suspended, declarations of war and criminal executions were postponed, friends made presents to one another, and the slaves were indulged in great liberties." Mr. Gibbon in his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" states, "The Roman Christians, ignorant of the real date of His (Christ's) birth, fixed the solemn festival to the 25th of December, the *Brumalia* or winter solstice, when the pagans annually celebrated the birth of Sol." St. Chrysostom (390 A.D.) refers to it: "On this day also, the birth of Christ was lately fixed at Rome, in order that whilst the heathen were busy with their profane ceremonies, the Christians might perform their holy rites undisturbed."

As a matter of fact, the Christian rites in themselves both in purpose and observance, seem closely akin to these "profane ceremonies." From what source do we inherit the Yule-fire, the Christmas-tree, the garlands and greens? There is nothing in the Christ story to account for them. But when we turn to the north we find the Yule-feast being celebrated by the ancient Germans with great rejoicing and good-will at the time of the winter solstice. The same date in Scandinavia marked the greatest festival of the year. The night of its observance was known as the "Mother-night" in commemoration of the birth of Freyr, son of the supreme god Odin and the goddess Frigga. From these northern peoples we derive our remnants of nature worship. Godfrey Higgins writes concerning the Druidic festival on December 25th: "The Druids kept this night as a great festival, and called the day following it Nolagh or Noel, or the day of regeneration, and celebrated it with great fires on the tops of their mountains, which they repeated on the day of the Epiphany or Twelfth Night." The mistletoe and the Christmas-tree are

our heritage from the Druids. France still calls Christmas Noel.

Even in the Far East the close of December is marked by religious solemnities and cessation of business activities. Centuries before Christ the Egyptians depicted the god Horus,—the "Saviour," the "Lord of Life," the "Only-Begotten,"—as a little child in the arms of his Virgin Mother, Isis: "Queen of Heaven" as she was called. His birth was likewise coincident with the winter solstice or the 25th of December, and effigies were shown of him lying in a manger, like the infant Jesus. An ancient Christian work, the "Chronicles of Alexandria," says: "Watch how Egypt has constructed the childbirth of a Virgin and the birth of her son, who was exposed in a crib to the adoration of the people." Among the Greeks, Bacchus, Adonis and Hercules were all born at the time of the winter solstice. Bacchus was always called a Saviour and was said to have been born of a virgin.

Do these facts detract in any way from the Christian story? Do they not rather enrich it by linking it with the aspirations and religious ideals of the races of men who had gone before? What greater symbol of light and life could man have than the sun? It was natural for him to identify its birth in December with the birth of Prophet or Teacher coming as the Sun of Righteousness to a darkened world. Why should not the life of a God-man, symbol of divine Light, parallel the course of the sun in the heavens, symbol of material light? The stars swing in obedience to the same Law which swings our lives. Does it not make God seem very close to us? After all, may not the association of the birthdays of Saviours with the birthday of the sun be but an eternal promise to man that as dawn follows night day after day, as spring follows winter year after year, even so and as unfailingly will the Eternal One manifest Himself from age to age "for the pro-

tection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers and for the re-establishment of virtue and religion upon earth."

What has the Christianity of Christ to fear from any Higher Criticism? Nothing can detract from the glory of that Life. It stands because it is true, because it is beautiful, because it is a divine expression of the deepest aspirations of the human soul. Relate it to Egypt or India, to Buddha, Krishna or Horus and still it stands, because its strength is eternal, is not dependent on historical facts but on spiritual realities. Even if the Man of Nazareth were proved to be a myth, Christ would yet live! If His Teachings were found to be but borrowings from the past, the Sermon on the Mount would remain the living voice of realization, more glorious because of the testimony of time.

There is but one Christ-life lived over and over again,—the life of selfless love, suffering and surrender. He who takes his stand on that will find all great faiths his own, all aspiring souls his kin, and will see in all Christs the One Christ —the One Krishna—the One Buddha: that eternal, unchanging Redeemer Whom no man in any age calls upon in vain.

Once a dispute arose in the court of the Maharajah of Burdwan among the learned men there as to who was the greater Deity, Shiva or Vishnu. Some gave preference to Shiva, others to Vishnu. When the dispute grew hot a wise pandit remarked, addressing the Raja, "Sire, I have neither met Shiva nor seen Vishnu; how can I say who is the greater of the two?" At this the dispute stopped, for none of the disputants really had seen the Deity. Similarly none should compare one Deity with another. When a man has really seen a Deity, he comes to know that all the Deities are manifestations of one and the same Brahman.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF

By Katharine F. Sherwood

We read in the Gospel according to St. Matthew, 19th Chapter, verses 16 to 22, "And behold one came and said unto him, 'Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?' And he said unto him, 'Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God; but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.' He said unto him 'Which?' Jesus said: 'Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not bear false witness, honor thy father and thy mother and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'" And again in a later chapter a lawyer asks him: "Which is the great commandment in the law?" and Jesus answers quoting from the Scriptures, Deuteronomy 6:5—" 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might.' This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself'," from Leviticus 19:18.

This same story is given in the Gospel according to St. Luke, but with the account of the good Samaritan added. In this one the lawyer asks: "And who is my neighbor?" and Jesus tells him the story of the man who on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves who robbed him and stripped him of his raiment and left him half dead. A priest came and passed him by, likewise a Levite, but a certain Samaritan came that way and had compassion on him, bound up his wounds, took him with him, brought him to an inn and took care of him and on the morrow when he departed left money for the care of him. "Which now of these three" Jesus said, "thinkest thou was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves?" And the lawyer said, "He that showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said unto him, "Go and do likewise."

The fact that it was a man of Samaria who did this makes the story all the more powerful for the Samaritans were looked down upon by the Jews because there were no Jews in Samaria any more and that idea of superiority was so strong. We are accustomed to this saying and it is always quoted as an utterance of Jesus the Christ, and so it was, but he quoted it from the Jewish Scriptures as was his wont, to give that authority from the law and the prophets, knowing well that this would the more impress the Jewish mind. We come to this teaching again in the writings of St. Paul. In a letter to the Romans he says: "Owe no man anything but to love one another, for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this: Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness (against thy neighbor), thou shalt not covet and if there be any other commandment it is briefly comprehended in these words: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." And again writing to the Galatians he says: "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."

Once more in the Epistle of James, the brother of Jesus, we read, "If ye fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture 'thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself' ye do well," and in that great letter to the Hebrews (it brings it closer to us to call it a letter) we read: "Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them, and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body."

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the

prophets." Matthew 7:12. All is summed up in that simple golden rule, to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us. If it were possible to do this we need have no deep philosophy, no laws, no government. It would be the fulfilling of the law. Why do we find it so difficult, this loving our neighbor as ourself? Who can do it? Who tries to do it? The Christian teaching has followed the same line as the Jewish and has given us directions with no explanations. It is still the law without explanation and we must go farther back in order to get that explanation which will give us the understanding necessary for an acceptance of the law. It is not enough for us to be told to love our neighbor as ourself. But when we come to know another teaching which says that our neighbor *is* ourself we begin to see that it is not only a direction to follow blindly, but it is a necessity inherent in the law of our being.

How long we have been coming to this understanding and how long it will be before we fully understand it! For a full understanding of that fact of unity depends on our own evolution. Until we come to a realization of our true spiritual nature, we will continue to see separateness. What then can we do? We can at least listen to those great seers who have risen to that higher plane of consciousness and if they all agree in what they say we can at least accept it as Truth and long for the time when we too can see it as they do.

Now what do they say? It is the ancient, sometimes called the hermetic or secret teaching of all the great races and religions that there is but one soul in the universe manifesting in variety, manifesting as many. The Hindus call it the *Paramatman,* the individual soul they call the *Jivatman.* It has been called the Adam Kadmon in the Kaballa of the Jews. Swedenborg calls it the Grand Man; Emerson, the Over-Soul. It is also the Universal Christ. It is one of the great mysteries,

—how this can be and we not see it as it is. How can there be only one and we see it as so many? It is said in the Bhagavad-Gita, that great Scripture of the Hindus, "The Supreme Lord abides in all bodies equally." And again, "Indivisible, yet it exists as if divided in beings." I know of nothing more difficult to understand. Yet we must try. Much depends on it to-day. We are still having wars and rumors of wars. Who heeds the words of St. Paul, "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another"?

Greed and desire for possession are paramount in the world to-day. It takes some horrible calamity as has just befallen, (the earthquake in Japan), to draw people together and perhaps beget a better understanding. Under such circumstances at once everything is forgotten in the desire to help. Loss of life and property is something that we can understand, and it is most inspiring to see the true spirit of brotherhood that comes out at such a time. No theorizing is necessary, no philosophy, just the outpouring of love and mercy goes freely to those who are suffering and many will be the sacrifices made in the months to come by those who perhaps a short time ago were full of criticism and suspicion. The great lesson for us to take to our hearts is the feeling of oneness that comes at such a time, the feeling of pity which is akin to love. Often we might say that to love our neighbor as ourself was impossible, but at such a time we have a stronger feeling than one of self. Selfish love ceases as we think of the suffering and the loss and the necessity for patience and courage in starting life again for those who are left. It is inspiring to think of the many congregations who are listening to-day to words of love and sympathy being poured out from the fulness of the heart from many pulpits all over the world as we are drawn together in this common affliction. If we can realize that, it will be a great step toward the realization of the

oneness of life. It almost seems useless to give our attention to the philosophies or theories underlying it, for we can feel it true. It is like the shining of the sun which puts out all the other lights.

"One touch of nature makes the whole world kin." That touch of nature is the underlying spirit which unites all in oneness. The diversity is all on the outside. What difference does it make that one skin is white and another brown and another black? "He has made of one blood all the Nations of the earth." That there is one life, not many, is fundamental in all deep teaching. The seeming separateness is what is called illusion and is seemingly necessary in the process of development. Some one has said that it seems as if man found every way of going wrong before finding the right way. But when he finds it he knows and that gives him the faith of knowledge which is greater than the faith of belief. The teaching of the Hindu sages and Scriptures is *Tat Twam Asi,* Thou art That, find it out for thyself. This is the end of all life: to know God "Whom to know aright is life eternal." Christ said, "If ye love not your brother whom ye have seen, how can ye love God Whom ye have not seen?"

After rising to heights of the universal we must always come back to the particular with which we have to deal immediately. How to love our brother when he seems unlovely. "Man looketh on the outward appearance." That is natural. Love in its deepest sense is perhaps too intense in its meaning for use in this case. Sympathy is a better word. That is the first step and getting away from prejudice is the next one. We must learn to feel for others and in order to do this we must have imagination, must be able to put ourself in another's place, to take his point of view. If we can throw ourselves into the lives of others and feel for and with them, we enlarge our own consciousness and it is said that speaking

other languages puts us in touch with the thoughts of other peoples. If we go to a new country we are first impressed with the differences; but if we stay long enough and try to understand the people we find that many of those differences disappear; others do but enlarge our life if we let them. If we are so fixed in our own way, however, that cannot happen. Froebel's teaching is to begin with the concrete and expand to the universal, to begin with that which is nearest to us and be led as far as we can go. Most of us wish to do something big, far away, but if each one would try to be sympathetic with those people whom our lives immediately touch, to feel with them, get under their skin, it would be a step in the right direction, and with the big things which pertain to the community, the state, the nation, know that what is bad for one is bad for all. Cultivate a public conscience, enlarge ourself into that of the city, the state, the country and not stop there, but the whole world for it is a unit, expressive of the One Spirit within, which is slowly evolving to a complete consciousness of itself through the evolution of the individual or personal consciousness.

Dostovievsky says: "For our psychology stops at that part of self which emerges from the soil, noting minutely individual differences, but forgetting that this is only the top of the plant, that nine-tenths are buried, the feet held by those of other plants. This profound or lower region of the soil is ordinarily below the threshold of consciousness, the mind feels nothing of it." The symbol of the iceberg is also given to illustrate this fact, the greater part of it being submerged. But what symbol can give any idea of so vast a concept?

In practical living there are so many sides to the question. One thing we must always remember and that is the law of Karma, individual Karma and collective Karma, and another is, that freedom is the only condition of growth. We must

never interfere with any one's freedom to choose and develop his own life. Know that there are many paths all leading to the same goal, that even mistakes are sometimes best, if they bring an awakening or teach a lesson and that each one must learn his own lessons. No one can learn our lessons for us no matter how much he loves us, and the greatest love for the neighbor can often be shown in non-interference.

It is a great comfort to know that when we must sometimes be inactive in our desire to help, that our attitude of mind is very important. Christ said: "And I, if I be lifted up will draw all men unto me." The Scripture adds "signifying by what death he should die," and it has been so connected with His crucifixion that it is difficult to loosen it, but in the light of greater understanding we must see that He meant something very different, that it has a spiritual significance, that His spiritual upliftment is what is meant, and that in that all men can be included. We can all apply it to ourselves. If we are really all one and this separateness is only what in the highest Hindu philosophy is called *Maya,* illusion of sense, then what we do for ourselves we do for all, be it good or ill, but not in any selfish way. A great educator once told me that the way to decide any question of conventional right and wrong was to make it universal,—would it be well for all to do the same under the circumstances? If I cause my brother to offend by eating meat, then I must abstain. Would we get rid of greed in the world? Get it out of ourselves. Would we eliminate deceit and anger and all uncharitableness? Cast them out of ourselves. Let us look to the beam in our own eye, not the mote in that of the other man. Is not the influence of a true life widespread even as we look at it outwardly?

If then we consider the inner side where there is unity, not diversity, it is even more far-reaching and potent. The sage who has retired from the world is a part of us, sending

out thought which may reach us if we are open to it. The man in the jungle is part of us. Shall his thought reach us or ours reach him in this vast world of unity? You know the lines:—

"Without me God could not one moment live.

"If I to death should go, He too would death receive."

This use of the name "God" of course refers to the immanent God, the Over-Soul about which we have been speaking, the Grand Man in which we all live, and it means to show the impossibility of being disconnected from our Source. If then God and man are one, as is claimed, this must be true. This human plane upon which we are manifesting is one of decision which way we will go—up or down. Shall we help or shall we hinder? Shall we live to ourselves alone, which no one really can, if what we claim is true, or shall we feel a part of that great whole and strive to help in every way that we can toward the development of that consciousness of unity implied in the simple teaching of all ages and all prophets and all Saviours,—"Love thy neighbor as thyself."

WHO IS THY NEIGHBOR?

Quoted From Prof. Josiah Royce

What, then, is our neighbor? Thou hast regarded his thought, his feeling, as somehow different from thine. Thou hast said, 'A pain in him is not like a pain in me, but something far easier to bear.' He seems to thee a little less living than thou; his life is dim, it is cold, it is a pale fire beside thy own burning desires. . . . So, dimly and by instinct hast thou lived with thy neighbor, and hast known him not, being blind. Thou hast made (of him) a thing, no Self at all. Have done with this illusion, and simply try to learn the truth. Pain is pain, joy is joy, everywhere, even as in thee. In all the

songs of the forest birds; in all the cries of the wounded and dying, struggling in the captor's power; in the boundless sea where the myriads of water-creatures strive and die; amid all the countless hordes of savage men; in all sickness and sorrow; in all exultation and hope, everywhere, from the lowest to the noblest, the same conscious, burning, wilful life is found, endlessly manifold as the forms of the living creatures; unquenchable as the fires of the sun, real as these impulses that even now throb in thine own little selfish heart. Lift up thy eyes, behold that life, and then turn away, and forget it as thou canst; but, if thou hast known that, thou hast begun to know thy duty.

THE SPIRIT OF ASIAN CULTURE

By T. L. Vaswani, M. A.

The word for culture in ancient books is *prabuddhita.* He who, by being adored alike in India, China, Korea and Japan, has become the nexus of the nations of the East—Sakyamuni Buddha—was the typical man of "Culture." This culture, *prabuddhita,* is not mere understanding, the *verstanden* of German philosophy. Culture is the life of the higher reason in man. India has been a votary of culture from the beginning of her days; indeed it has been said over and over again in Indian scriptures that there is no *mukti* (salvation) without culture. Knowledge is increase of sorrow; such is the sentiment of an ancient Jewish writer. The Aryan sentiment is different; knowledge is the ending of sorrow. This knowledge, this higher reason, is often referred to also as *darshan,* vision. Of What? Vision of the One Eternal Self in all. There to my mind, is the very secret of Asian culture.

Asia is one because Asia has borne witness to this Spirit-consciousness through the ages. The culture problem has been approached in the East from diverse standpoints,—intellectual,

aesthetic, ethical, religious; it has engaged the attention of thinkers and poets and prophets in India, in Persia, in China, in Japan, in Arabia, in Afghanistan. The problem has been interpreted in diverse tongues and diverse ways; but there is, I believe, an underlying unity. For the soul-consciousness of Asia is one. It is indicated in the text of an Upanishad which says:—"The Eternal is one; He hath no caste." Asian culture is one continuous effort through the ages to interpret in art and poetry and philosophy and worship this consciousness of the One Eternal Self in all. Not without significance is the fact that all the world-religions have been born in Asia. Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Islam are Asian in their inspiration; and Christianity is a gift of the East to the West. Asia, unlike Europe, has not talked of conflict between science and religion. Nor have Asian sages imagined, as some western thinkers have, a conflict betwen culture and nature. Culture in India has been regarded as growing out of nature's inspiration; and some of the noblest books which have enriched the world's literature were written in *asrams*, in forest-universities. Asian culture, again, is not like the *kulturs* of European nations, an aggressive force. The ancient culture of India developed on no narrow nationalism; it was inspired by profound reverence for humanity, indeed for all forms of life. Kinship with all creatures in and through the universal Self,—that was the supreme conviction of Hindu and Buddhist cultures in their highest forms.

Asian idealism, is the world's piteous need to-day. The Vision Spiritual was the secret of Asiatic greatness in the past; the Vision Spiritual is what a bankrupt Europe needs urgently to-day to enrich civilization. As that seer of science, the late Professor Tyndal, said "The light once came from the East; once more will the light return to Europe from the

East." I believe profoundly in Asia's spiritual message to the West. The world looks to Indians to give the message; and they can give it,—but on one condition; that they do it in deep humility for the service of humanity. Patriotism tarnished with pride, with passion, with hate and strife, will not make India great. A Chinese sage has said: "Be gentle and you will be bold; be simple and you will be liberal; be humble and you will be a leader among men." And if India is to be, as I believe the spirit of history wants her to be, a spiritual leader among the nations, she must be humble,—a servant of humanity, a servant of God. The modern age dominated by machinery and materialism may yet be saved by the spirit of Asian culture, by the Vision Spiritual which has inspired the philosophies and literatures and arts and idealisms of the East. (*Reprinted from "Orient"*)

INDIA'S TASK

By Rev. C. F. Andrews

(Excerpt from a recent address)

I believe that India is to teach the world what Christ truly taught; what life Christ truly lived; what Christ truly was and is. For in the West, what I feel so much on my return to England is this, that we in England and in Europe have lost for a time the Christ; we have lost him in our belief in force, in our belief in violence and war; we have lost him in our search for wealth, and for more wealth, and for ever more wealth. We have lost him in our greed for possessions and empires and colonies and all the rest. So we have to find him again. We have to find him, who said, "Come unto me all ye who are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest to your soul; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."