VEDANTA MONTHLY

The Message of the East



VOLUME III

1914

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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. III. JANUARY, 1914 No. 1

As "The Message of the East" enters upon its third year, we wish to extend our hearty greetings to all its readers and sympathizers and to express our deep appreciation especially to those who have given it their encouragement and support. We pray earnestly to the Supreme Being that it may continue "to live for the good of many and for the happiness of many," ever carrying the message of Truth and Love with that spirit of tolerance which has always been the dominant note of all Eastern teaching, peculiarly that of India and her great Seers—a tolerance which means not compromise and mere forbearance, but breadth of vision, inclusiveness, the power to see unity in diversity. To proclaim this tolerance and to foster a loving understanding between East and West, is, as it has always been, the aim of this little magazine. With renewed hope, therefore, we now say to it:

"Resume thy march, with gentle feet that would not break the
Peaceful rest, even of the road side dust that lies so low. Yet strong and steady,
Blissful, bold and free. Awakener, ever Forward! Speak thy stirring words."

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

When a man is on the plains he sees the lowly grass and the mighty pine tree and says, "How big is the tree and how small is the grass!" But when he ascends the mountain and looks from its high peak on the plain below, the mighty pine tree and the lowly grass blend into one indistinguishable mass of green verdure. So when the sight Divine is opened, all men appear as equal and one, and there remains no sense of distinction.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

God, who creates and inspires men, willed that they should be equal. He made them all capable of wisdom; He imposed the same laws upon all; and He has promised immortality to all. As He furnishes food for all, and gives the sweet repose of sleep to all, so does He give capacity for virtue to all. With Him no one is a slave and no one is a master. He is the Father of all, and we are all, by equal right, His children.

—*Lactantius* (Early Church Father).

My doctrine makes no distinction between high and low, rich and poor. It is like water which washes and purifies all alike. It is like the sky, for it has room for all.

—*Buddha.*

God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth.

—*St. Paul.*

When man shall have studied the nature of all things, and shall come to look upon himself as not confined within the walls of one city, or as a member of any particular community, but as a citizen of the universe considered as one Commonwealth, —amid such an acquaintance with Nature, and such a grand magnificence of things, to what a knowledge of himself will man attain!

—*Cicero.*

I call that mind free which sets no bounds to its love; which is not imprisoned in itself, or in a sect; which recognizes in all human beings the image of God and the rights of His children.

—*Channing.*

The good man loves all men. He loves to speak of the good of others. All within the four seas are his brothers. Love of man is the chief of all the virtues. . . The mean man sows, that himself or his friends may reap; but the love of the perfect man is universal.

—*Confucius.*

He whose heart is steadfastly engaged in Yoga (religious practice), looks everywhere with the eyes of equality, seeing the (Divine) Self in all beings and all beings in the Self. He who, being established in unity, worships Me dwelling in all beings, that Yogi, howsoever living, abides in Me.

—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

THE PROBLEM UNIVERSAL

Lecture by Swami Saradananda

(Delivered in Calcutta)

India is the land whence arose the first anthem of peace and harmony that travelled over the then known world. It was here that the first note of tolerance and of the unity and common brotherhood of all religions was sounded. It was here that arose that joyful song whose keynote was good-will to all and respect for every opinion which man holds sacred and dear, even today throughout the world; for the hallowed Rishis of India had no words of adverse criticism for any individual or system of thought which helped any one to build-up his own self, but only soothing notes of peace and toleration and harmony and sympathy. It was in India that the three cardinal principles of religion: *Damyata, Datta, Dayadhvam*, (Control and regulate your appetites, Be charitable, Be tolerant and compassionate towards others), were held high as ideals of human life from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, from the East coast to the West. And it is my belief, in which perhaps you all share, that it is from India again that the first note of universal tolerance will go out over the civilized world, teaching men once more that Universal Brotherhood and Unity which lie beneath all the different forms of religion and philosophy and which the world has forgotten so hopelessly at the present day.

From whatever standpoint it is considered, you

will find the problem which we have met to discuss is of great importance and vital interest. It arose in the mind of the first-born man in the far beyond where history is dumb and mythology sheds none of her uncertain rays, in these four words: "Whence, How, What and Why?" and we can very rightly put the same question in the same four words even today in all the present-day light of reason and science and advancement. The universe stands a constant challenge to the human understanding, and the heart of man has been asking in all times an interpretation of his surroundings, called in one word "Nature." Our science, politics and religion, our sociology, ethics and philosophy, our beliefs about sin and atonement, right and wrong, God-vision and realization of the highest end—all these things which have helped to chasten, purify, ennoble and uplift humanity and are so dear to all our hearts, all these are the outcome of this and this alone. Man finds himself in this vast world surrounded by this infinite environment. He finds himself always acted upon by forces that are lying outside and the action and reaction between these outside forces, the physical or the natural, and those that are to be found within the consciousness of man, is the producer of all knowledge and civilization.

All complexities of thought and action, the result of the accumulations of ages and of varying conditions, have their root in this one problem of all times. Man asked himself repeatedly, What is this

universe? Whence is it? How has it come? What is its end? Questions like these came pouring into his mind and perplexed and bewildered, or ennobled and enriched his life in the long run. Ignore them however he might, he could never rid himself of them. Aye, none can give these questions up even at the present day. All men are bound to enquire, explain and act according to the interpretation they put upon them. That has been the law since the beginning of creation and that will be the law in all time to come.

From the interpretation of this one problem—What is this universe?—will come out as necessary conclusions all the different beliefs regarding God, the soul, the life beyond, and everything which we find in the religions, bibles and philosophies of the world. If we could examine the history of the different interpretations given in different ages through the crude and simple language of mythology, or through the well-balanced, precise, yet expressive language of philosophy and science, it would be a very interesting study. But for our present purpose I shall try to put before you the solution of the great Indian sages of old and compare it with the conclusions which the modern world of thought have come to, and see how far the old conclusions agree with the new ones.

All the answers given as explanations of the objective world can be divided into two principal classes. One holds that atoms are the ultimate cause of this universe; molecules are formed by a

force called molecular attraction inherent in the atoms, and out of their aggregate has come all these wonderful varied objects which we see before us. Now if we are to admit this theory, then the atoms of the materialists must have possessed in the germ state, amongst others, the qualities of consciousness and intelligence which, gradually developed and highly refined, appeared at last as human consciousness and intelligence; and not only that, but they must have had the power of organization and the will to evolve into all these things. To scientists who believe that such intelligent matter is the ultimate cause of this universe we have nothing to say. For they speak in different words only of the same principles which men have been calling God or an ever-guiding Intelligence; and therefore this atomic theory virtually coincides with the theory that God is the cause of this universe.

There is another group of thinkers holding a different opinion,—that everything is the outcome of mental vibration. All that I know, all these objects around me are nothing but my own mental images. The sensations and perceptions are all in my own mind and I conclude wrongly that the outside objects and the world are producing them in me. This has been called Idealism. Now here, too, we find on examination that, to show that the mind is the cause of this universe, we shall have to prove that the mind is independent of outside impressions and that it can create all and any of the images at will. But is this true? Can we bring

out any new combination, anything that we desire, out of our own minds? Certainly not. And so we find that this theory also must have a defect in some part or other. Then there is another thing. Can or do we ever know matter as separate from or independent of the mind and mental forces? Certainly not. No scientist has been able to analyse and separate matter and force. The combination of the two is there even in the smallest particle which he calls atom; and the scientist's mind has been there to give an interpretation. On the other hand, there are many who agree in thinking that atoms are nothing but so many centres of force. The actions of what we call force or energy are what give them their appearance and individuality as atoms.

Hindu philosophy considers mind as a subtle material force, but not the spirit. The mind works through the medium of the brain, and is in its own turn an instrument in the hand of the soul. The process of life and thought does not die with the death of the body, but it passes on with the soul; and when the soul takes another body, it goes on working and gathering experience again through the medium of that body. A beautiful expression of this principle comes in the fifteenth Chapter of the Bhagavad-Gita:—"Whatever body is entered into, or whatever body is departed from, the Lord takes them (the mind and the senses, etc.,) along with him like the wind (carrying) the scents off from their seats (flowers, etc.)". And the conclu-

sion of the Hindu philosophy has always been that the mind can be enlarged, developed and expanded to an infinite extent. We can see the soul only through itself in the state of superconscious existence; once there, all fetters drop off, all limitations vanish forever; the activities of the finite and the limited stop and the infinite shines out in its everlasting power and glory.

We find both these theories of materialism and idealism—the attempts to explain the origin of the universe from matter or from mind alone, however good they may be in other respects, are inconclusive and unsatisfactory to human reason; hence they are both defective. Aye, the Hindu Seers differ considerably in their opinion about this. What is their conclusion then, about the subject and the object, mind and matter, the knower and the known? They say that all these are manifestations of one Eternal Unit,—the witness that is behind. They have come out of One Substance, which is the *Akhanda Satchidananda*—the indivisible and hence unlimited essence of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. Mistake them not when they say that it is *the* indivisible principle of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. Knowledge and existence and love, as we know them, are all finite. And why have they been qualified by the old Rishis with the words indivisible, infinite or unbounded? Because human language is too imperfect to express that Eternal Witness that is behind the inner and outer manifestations. Speech and mind can never reach

There, because they are the effects of It. "Whence speech falls back baffled, with the mind"—such is the nature of the Unit behind and thus has it been extolled by the voice of the Vedas and Upanishads. The One Eternal Substance is always behind, and That has brought to light the subject and the object. Hence it can never be known by the mind. Herbert Spencer's "Unknowable" thus approaches very near to the "Substance" of the Hindu Rishis. The great difference, however, lies in this: that the Hindu Rishis hold that it is quite possible for man to attain to It and realize fully his oneness with It; and the attainment of that stage has been called by them the stage of *Nirvikalpa Samadhi*,—the state of Super-conscious Existence. In this there are no more wanderings of the mind after things that wither and perish, but it remains calm and satisfied in the realization of the nature and glory of the Soul. The old Seers of the Vedas never treated the different stages of consciousness as separate things. They came to know by introspection, of which the different methods are to be found in the different philosophical systems, that the three stages of consciousness supplement, but never contradict one another. The sub-conscious existence that we find in the lower animals and in still lower organisms, the consciousness as it exists in man and in beings higher than man, and then the highest stage of consciousness, the super-conscious existence—all these have never been looked upon as the functions of three different

minds, but as different conditions or stages of One Mind. Self-consciousness is a step in advance of the subconscious stage towards development and progress, and reaches its perfection in the super-conscious existence. Indeed there is no difference between them except in degree.

We have seen that the universe can never be the result of atoms or material particles. We have seen also that the universe cannot be the outcome of mind alone. The Hindu Sages beautifully express this view in a sublime verse in the Katha-Upanishad ;—"The universe is like an everlasting fig tree having its roots high up in the bosom of the Infinite and its branches here below." To find the root of this universe you will have to go beyond time, space and causation; because the roots are fixed there in the bosom of the Infinite. Then the verse goes on to say: "That is Pure, that is Brahman, that is Immortal." Therefore the first thing that we find regarding the universe is that it has been projected out of that Absolute Existence which forms the background of it. Then again there is another thing. They have looked upon this universe as one homogeneous whole. Outside we have this ocean of matter connecting everything that is material. Our bodies are like so many whirlpools in the ocean of matter and are always linked with the sun and the moon and other beings (if there are any) in the other planets. Behind this ocean of matter what do we find? The ocean of mind. Your mind and my mind and the mind

of everyone here or elsewhere exist in that mental ocean and are thus joined together. They are like so many centres of force in the one vast ocean of mind, and beyond that there lies the Infinite, the Absolute—that which can never be described by any word, nor be reached by the limited mind. It transcends all limits, but the reflection of that One Soul falls upon all these different centres of force in the mental ocean. We have seen how millions of reflections, produced by one sun in the millions of waves in the ocean, appear as so many different suns. Even where the water is muddy, there is the reflection, only we do not see it. And so the reflection of that One Soul is shining within you and me and within everyone. The reflection within you forms your individuality, your little ego, and so on with all the rest. But in reality there is but One Soul pervading everything; and if we can transcend the limits of the mind and the body, we shall reach the Real Truth. But the Vedanta philosophy never says that all these reflections are false. The Rishis did not say that the reflections do not exist or that the relative world, because it is a phenomenon, is an illusion. It exists, but relatively. As long as there will be relativity, there will be this world; but outside of this relativity there will be found One Infinite Ocean of Knowledge and Love reigning supreme, there will be found the One without a second. The knower and the known, the subject and the object and all these varied differentiations come under the same

category of relativity and have been projected out of One Principle of Existence. This, therefore, is the interpretation of the universe: that it is the outcome of something which is not relative but absolute in its essence. The scientists of the present age have also come to the same conclusion: that all these phenomena can never exist unless they are based on some permanent principle—a groundwork upon which all these colors have been drawn. Materialism says there is nothing but matter. Idealism says there is nothing but mind. But the Vedanta says: No, mind and matter are manifestations of one Permanent Substance; they are the outcome of One Permanent Essence which can be best described as the Infinite Ocean of Knowledge and Bliss. "Verily, out of Bliss has this universe evolved, it lives in Bliss and in Bliss does it go back and is absorbed. Know Brahman to be Bliss."

ANCIENT HINDU STORY

In ancient times there was a sage well-versed in all the Scriptures. Yet though he studied by night and by day, he found no satisfaction for the craving of his mind. He longed to know the whole of God, but always that knowledge evaded him. At last he threw aside his Books, retired to a lonely spot in the jungle close by the sea and built for himself a hermitage of bamboo poles and dried palm leaves. All around there was silence and peace. Nothing came to disturb him in his long hours of searching and meditation. Days and

months passed, but still he seemed to know as little as ever of the Supreme. Year after year rolled by, and his ignorance continued. Youth faded and his head grew gray, still the problem remained unsolved.

One day he was walking on the beach bent and dejected, questioning within himself whether he should give up his search, when he suddenly caught sight of a little boy busily engaged at the edge of the water. Thinking that a certain fisherman's son had been left there while the father had gone to the open sea to catch fish, he drew near to speak to the child. The little boy, however, was so absorbed in taking up the water in his small hands and throwing it on the sands that he did not hear the sage approach. Several times the old man called, but still the child went on dipping out the water. Nothing could turn him from his task. At last, however, the importunate sage gained his attention, but all the boy would say was:

"Excuse me, sir, I have no time to talk with you. Do you not see that I have to throw out all the water of this ocean and dry it up?"

"Are you mad?" the sage exclaimed. "You little creature! You think you can empty the whole of this vast ocean?"

"Why not, sir?" answered the sweet laughing child. "Is it any more impossible for me to dry up this finite ocean with these little hands of mine, than for you to unravel the infinite depths of God by that limited mind of yours?"

KATHA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda

(The Katha-Upanishad is probably the most widely known of all the Upanishads. It was early translated into Persian and through this rendering first made its way into Europe. Later Raja Ram Mohun Roy brought out an English version. It has since appeared in various languages; and English, German and French writers are all agreed in pronouncing it one of the most perfect expressions of the religion and philosophy of the Vedas. Sir Edwin Arnold popularized it by his metrical rendering under the name of "The Secret of Death" and Ralph Waldo Emerson gives its story in brief at the close of his essay on "Immortality.")

PEACE CHANT

May He (the Supreme Being) protect us both.
May He be pleased with us. May we acquire
strength. May our study bring us illumination.
May there be no discord among us.
Om! Peace! Peace! Peace!

The Peace Verse was always chanted by both teacher and taught before beginning their study in order to tune the minds one to the other and bring all hearts in accord. Also it helped them to focus their energies, to bring their thoughts to one point, that they might gain direct perception and not merely the knowledge which comes from the study of books.

PART I

I

Vajasrava, being desirous of heavenly rewards, made a gift of all that he possessed. He had a son by the name of Nachiketas.

II

When the offerings were being distributed (Nachiketas) although young, being possessed with faith (Shraddha), thought:

III

"These cows have drunk water, eaten grass and given milk for the last time, and their senses have lost all vigor. He who gives these (such gifts) undoubtedly goes to joyless realms."

In India the ideal of charity has always been to give freely, for the joy of giving, without asking anything in return; and the whole purpose and merit of the charity is lost, if the giver entertains the least thought of name, fame or individual benefit. The special sacrifice (Viswajit) which Vajasrava was making, required of him to give away all that he possessed. When the gifts were brought forward to be offered, however, his son Nachiketas, although very young (probably a lad about 12 years of age), began to discriminate within himself regarding their nature. His heart became filled with *Shraddha*. There is no one English word which can convey the meaning of *Shraddha*. It is more than mere faith. It also implies self-reliance, an independent sense of right and wrong, and the courage of one's own conviction. As a boy of tender age he had no right to question his father's action and yet, impelled by the awakening of his higher nature, he could not but reflect within himself: "Surely by merely giving these cows which have lost all their usefulness, my father cannot

gain any worthy end. That alone can be a true sacrifice when the best is offered." Therefore anxious for his father's welfare, yet not wishing to find fault directly with his action, he approached him gently and reverently.

IV

He said to his father: "Dear father, to whom wilt thou give me?" He said it a second time, then a third time. The father replied: "I shall give thee unto Death."

Nachiketas, being a dutiful son and eager to atone for his father's inadequate sacrifice, tried to remind him thus indirectly that he had not fulfilled his promise to give away all his possessions, since he had not yet offered his own son, who would be a worthier gift than useless cattle. His father, conscious that he was not making a true sacrifice, tried to ignore the boy's question; but irritated by his persistence, he at last impatiently made answer: "I give thee to Yama, the Lord of Death." The fact that anger could so quickly rise in his heart proved that he had not the proper attitude of a sacrificer, who must always be tranquil, uplifted and free from egoism.

V

(Nachiketas thought): "Among many (of my father's pupils) I stand first; among many (others) I stand in the middle, (but never last). What is there to do for (my father) with Yama (Ruler of Death), which can be done by me today?"

It was not arrogance which led Nachiketas to thus consider his own standing and importance. He was weighing his value as a son and pupil in order to be able to judge whether or not he had merit enough to deserve his father's love. Seeing that he had not failed in his duty in any way, he was able to understand that his father's harsh reply was only the expression of a momentary outburst of anger. Yet he believed that his command must not be disobeyed. So he said to his father, who was overwhelmed with grief at his own hasty words:

VI

"Look back to those who lived before (ancestors) and look to those who live now. Like grain the mortal decays and again springs up (is reborn)."

Absolute truthfulness is necessary for the attainment of the Highest. Whatever is said must be done. Nachiketas, realizing this and not wishing his father to fall back or swerve from Truth, sought to strengthen his resolution by reminding him of his ancestors who never sacrificed Truth for worldly gain or for mortal pleasure. All things perish, Truth alone remains. It is the only sure basis of life. Thus Nachiketas convinced his father that he should remain true to his word and send him to Yama, the Ruler of Death. Then Nachiketas went to the abode of Death, but Yama was absent and the boy waited without food or

drink for three days. On Yama's return one of his attendants said to him:

VII

Like fire a Brahmin guest enters into houses, (a good host) quenches that fire by an offering. (Therefore) O Vaivaswata, bring water.

VIII

The foolish man in whose house a Brahmin guest remains without food, all his hopes, expectations, company of holy men, all his good words and deeds, his sons and cattle are destroyed.

According to the ancient Vedic Ideal a guest was the representative of God and should be received with due reverence and honor. Especially was this the case with a Brahmin or a Sanyasin whose life is wholly consecrated to God. Anyone who fails to give proper care to a holy guest brings misfortune on himself and his household. When Yama returned, therefore, the attendants anxiously informed him of Nachiketas' presence and begged him to bring water to wash his feet, this being always the first service to an arriving guest.

IX

(Yama said): O Brahmana! Reverend guest! As thou hast remained three nights in my house without food, my salutations to thee, O Brahmana, and may all be well with me. Therefore (in return) ask three boons.

(This offer of three boons was one for each of the nights Nachiketas had waited in the abode of Yama without food or drink.)

X

Nachiketas said: May Gautama, my father, be free from anxious thought (about me). May he lose all anger and be pacified in heart. May he recognize me and welcome me when I am sent back by thee. This, O Death, is the first of the three boons I choose.

XI

Yama replied: Through my will Auddalaki Aruni (thy father) will recognize thee, (and be loving toward thee) as before. He will sleep in peace at night. He will be free from wrath when he sees thee released from the mouth of death.

XII

Nachiketas said: In the realm of heaven there is no fear, thou (Death) art not there; nor is there fear of old age. Having crossed beyond both hunger and thirst and being above grief, (they) rejoice in heaven.

XIII

Thou knowest, O Death, the fire-sacrifice that leads to heaven. Tell this to me, who am full of Shraddha (faith and sincere eagerness). They who live in the realm of heaven enjoy freedom from death. This I beg as my second boon.

XIV

Yama replied: I know well that fire which leads to the realm of heaven. I shall tell it to thee. Listen to me. Know, O Nachiketas, that this is the means of attaining heavenly realms and their support. It is seated in the heart of all beings.

Fire is regarded as "the foundation of all the worlds," as stated in the next verse, because it is the revealer of creation. If there were no fire or light, no manifested form would be visible. We read in the Semitic Scriptures, "In the beginning the Lord said, 'Let there be light.'" This fire, which stands in the external universe as one of the purest symbols of the Divine, also dwells in subtle form in the heart of every living being as the vital energy, the life-force or cause of existence.

XV

Yama then told him that Fire-sacrifice, the foundation of all the worlds. What bricks, how many and how laid for the altar. Nachiketas repeated all as it was explained to him. Then Death, being pleased with him, again said:

XVI

The Great-souled one (Yama) being pleased, said to him (Nachiketas): "I give thee now another boon. This fire (sacrifice) shall be named after thee. Take also this garland of many colors."

XVII

He who performs this Nachiketa fire-sacrifice three times, being united with the three (mother, father and teacher) and who fulfils the threefold duty (study of the Vedas, sacrifice and alms-giving) crosses over birth and death. Knowing this worshipful, shining fire, born of Brahman, and realizing Him, he attains eternal peace.

XVIII

He who knows the three-fold Nachiketa fire and performs the Nachiketa fire-sacrifice with three-fold knowledge, having cast off the fetters of death and being beyond grief, he rejoices in the realms of heaven.

XIX

O Nachiketas, this is thy fire, that leads to heaven, which thou hast chosen as thy second boon. People will call this fire after thy name. Ask the third boon, Nachiketas.

The Vedas are divided into two parts: one the *Jnana-Kanda* or the wisdom-portion, dealing with pure knowledge of God and the higher Self; the other the *Karma-Kanda,* which is entirely devoted to ceremonials, by which health, wealth, cattle, sons, long life, the fulfilment of worldly desires, can be gained. The wise Rishis or Seers of Truth, whose words are recorded in the Vedas, did not deny such gratifications to mankind. They recognized that it was useless to ask ordinary human beings to give up earthly pleasures, because it would not be possible for them, so they told them how they could acquire these through proper performance of certain sacrifices and rituals. Although those Sages had themselves renounced all earthly possessions, they knew that the majority of mankind could not follow the path of the Absolute or Unconditioned. They knew that the day would come when through their own experience every

human being would outgrow his lower desires and seek for higher things. In the meanwhile, they said, let him enjoy, let him want long life, health, wealth; and the *Karma-kanda,* or ceremonial portion of the Vedas, was to tell him how these could be attained.

The preceding verses deal with the *Karma-Kanda.* Yama tells Nachiketas how, by performing sacrifice with the three-fold knowledge, he may transcend grief and death and reach heaven. The three-fold knowledge referred to, is: (1) how to prepare the altar; (2) how to conduct the service (there must be perfect harmony with father, mother and teacher, proper study of the Scriptures and almsgiving); and last the sacrificer must have the knowledge of the Self as manifest in the shining form of fire. Nachiketas being eager to learn, listened with whole-hearted attention and was able to repeat all that was told him. This so pleased Yama that he granted him the extra boon of naming the fire-sacrifice after him and gave him a garland set with precious stones.

Verses 16-18 are regarded by many as an interpolation, which would account for certain obscurities and repetitions in them.

(To be continued)

REPORTS

On Dec. 16th Swami Paramananda delivered a lecture on "India and Her Achievements" before the First Parish Club of Quincy, Mass. The lec-

ture was preceded by a dinner at which 180 of the Club members were present. Others joined the gathering at the hour of the lecture, making up the largest attendance of this season. The Rev. A. L. Hudson, who presided, showed remarkable breadth in his short but eloquent introductory address. He reminded his listeners that when the West was still in barbarism, India was highly civilized. Indian civilization, he continued, seemed remote from that of the West, because it was essentially spiritual, while Western civilization was daily growing more material. To check this on-sweeping wave of materialism and maintain a state of equilibrium we could learn much from the East. Indeed, he had fully realized after talking with the Swami, how untrue was Kipling's oft-repeated couplet: "East is East and West is West and never the twain can meet." On the contrary for twenty-five years Indian thought had been spreading through the West in the form of Christian Science, New Thought, Theosophy, etc. but he believed it was better to go directly to the source. In closing he alluded to the fact that the Swami had recently translated from the Sanskrit the "Bhagavad-Gita, one of the greatest classics of the world."

The Swami then began his lecture, in the course of which he passed in review all of India's glorious past—her religion and philosophy, her language and her great architectural monuments, showing some lantern slides to add vividness to his words. The audience listened with the closest attention for an hour and a half and kept the speaker on the platform for some time longer answering questions.

The Christmastide was observed, according to the usual custom, at all the Vedanta Centres of America. In San Francisco three Services were held on Christmas day, at which lectures were delivered, by Swami Trigunatita and Swami Prakashananda on "The Nativity and Christ," "Christ as a Messenger of Light," and "What is True Worship of Jesus?" In New York there was also a Service; and at The Vedanta Centre of Boston the day was celebrated by a special Service at eight in the evening, to which all the friends of the work were invited. Swami Paramananda delivered an address on the salient points of Christ's Teaching, and the true spirit of Christmas. At the close of the meeting the blessed fruits and flowers from the altar were distributed.

The other meetings at the Boston Centre throughout the month remained the same as usual. In January Swami Paramananda hopes to begin a course of Sunday afternoon lectures in a public hall, and will probably continue them through February and March. But the regular Sunday morning Service and the classes on Tuesday and Thursday evening at 8 o'clock will remain as heretofore.

We beg to acknowledge with thanks the kind offerings received for the flood sufferers in India.

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The Message of the East



FEBRUARY 1914

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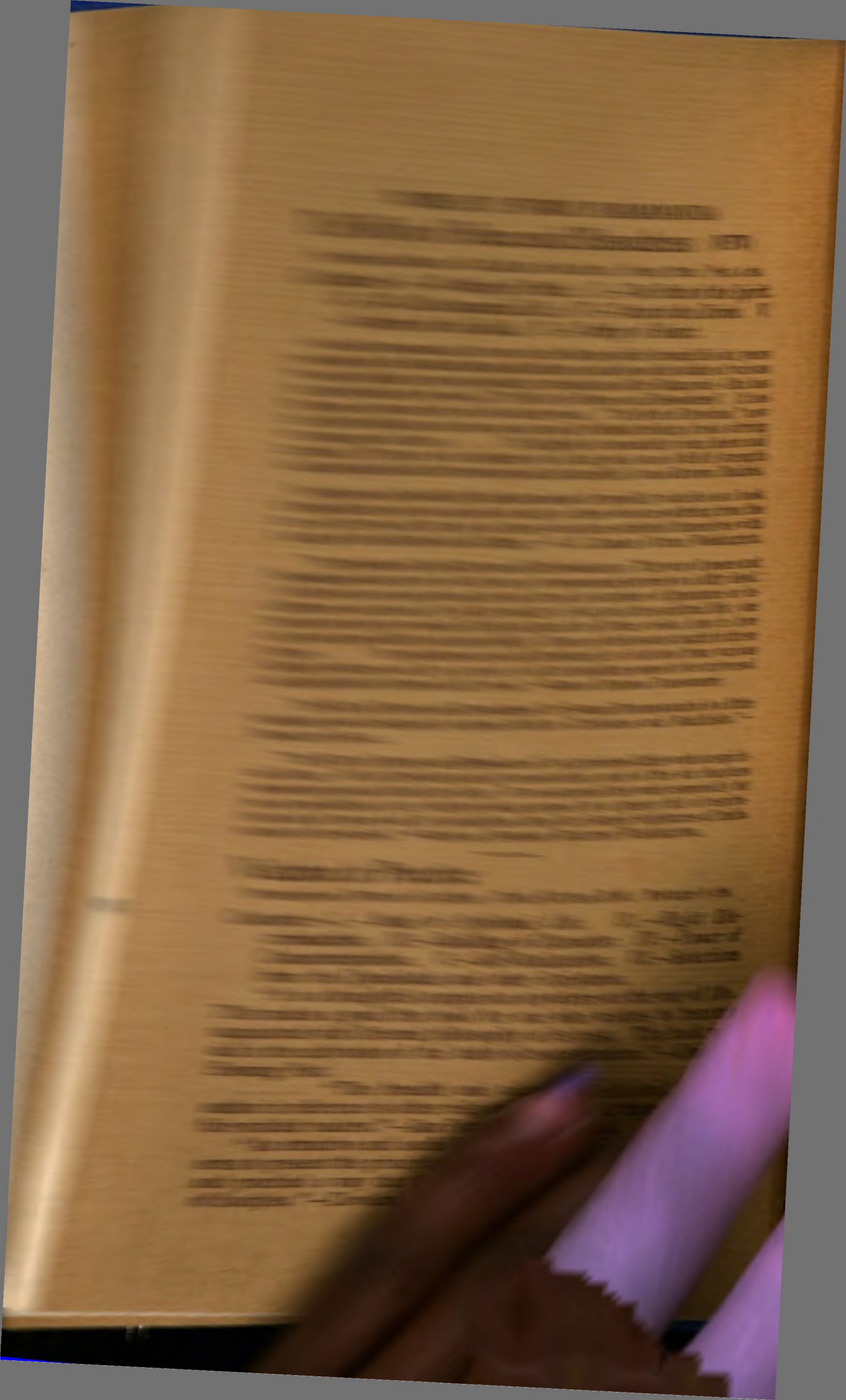
THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"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. III. FEBRUARY, 1914 No. 2

The Indian doctrine of Karma is not fatalism as so often erroneously represented. On the contrary, it declares man to be the creator of his own destiny. All that predetermines his condition and environment is his own previous mode of life and thought. Each of his actions brings a reaction of like nature and duration as truly as in chemistry or physics, and it rests wholly with him to determine the character of the reaction by the choice he exercises in his action. Absolute free will is impossible on this plane of relativity. Freedom for man consists here in a knowledge and conscious application of the law. He can rise above that law only by transcending the sphere where it operates. Karma viewed merely as a chain of effects appears like fatalism, just as the universe looked upon only from the outside seems the plaything of a cruel, relentless Deity. But when one passes into the invisible causal realm, then the chaos transforms itself into a cosmos, the wonder of law and order is everywhere, and the Soul's existence is seen as a logical unbroken sequence of causes and effects, in which man's own word or thought or deed is the cause, which, operating in accordance with the law,



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"
Isaiah

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The Indian doctrine of Karma is not fatalism as so often erroneously represented. On the contrary, it declares man to be the creator of his own destiny. All that predetermines his condition and environment is his own previous mode of life and thought. Each of his actions brings a reaction of like nature and duration as itself, as in chemistry or physics, and it rests wholly with him to determine the character of the reaction by the choice he exercises in his action. Absolute free will is impossible on this plane of relativity. Freedom for man consists here in a knowledge and intelligent application of the law. He can rise above that law only by transcending the sphere where it operates. Karma viewed merely as a chain of effects and causes, like fatalism, just as the universe looked upon [illegible] from the [illegible] seems the play of a [illegible] relentless [illegible] but when the [illegible] visible [illegible] self in [illegible] the [illegible]

brings him a certain condition or experience as a natural and inevitable consequence. Let him once understand this law and he will no longer cry out against the fate which is of his own making; but he will direct the full force of his will towards setting in motion a new set of causes which will bring him more desirable results. Thus he becomes the master and builder of his own life, building as he chooses in time or in eternity.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

Thou canst not gather what thou dost not sow; as thou dost plant the tree, so will it grow. . . Whatever the act a man commits, whate'er his state of mind, of that the recompense must he receive in corresponding body. —*Laws of Manu.*

Indian philosophy contains no outcry against divine injustice, and in no way encourages suicidal expedients. They would, in fact, be of no avail, because according to Indian views, the same troubles and the same problems would have to be faced again and again in another life. Considering that the aim of all Indian philosophy was the removal of suffering, which was caused by nescience, and the attainment of the highest happiness which was produced by knowledge, we should have more right to call it endæmonistic than pessimistic.

—*Max Muller.*

One needs only to understand the full meaning of the metaphysico-physiological axiom, that in

reality nothing can be created or annihilated, to recognize that the soul must have existed prior to its becoming visible in a physical body.—*Fichte.*

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. These bodies are perishable; but the dwellers in these bodies are eternal, indestructible and impenetrable.

—*Sri Krishna* (*Bhagavad-Gita*).

LAW OF KARMA AND REINCARNATION

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

Life does not begin suddenly. Life does not spring from nothing. Science at least proves so much,—that something cannot come out of nothing. A tree cannot come into existence without the seed; and unless we know the seed, we cannot fully know the tree. What we perceive in this manifested universe is already latent in the unmanifested; and without a knowledge of the unmanifested we cannot find a satisfactory explanation of the manifold forms of life. There are certain happenings which we cannot explain because we are ignorant of the cause. We judge from the outer alone, from the surface, hence things seem to us mysterious or unjust, but when our sight is open and we can penetrate the depth, then we discover the cause and everything becomes clear to us. So it is with the great inequality which we see in

the universe. Why are some born prosperous, happy, talented, and others not? We are all human beings; we have all come into existence more or less in the same way. What makes these differences? There are some who try to explain them by saying that God Almighty creates them. True; in one sense nothing happens without God's will; but there must be some reason. If the Almighty creates suffering for one and blesses another, He must have some reason for it. The Ancient Sages of India did not try to throw the blame on the Infinite, on Invisible Providence; they found the cause in each human being. A man who is suffering has done something to bring it on himself, because what we sow, that we reap; this is the Law. So the doctrine of Reincarnation, which may seem a strange doctrine to many, is neither contrary to nature nor to reason. It is in strict accordance with the Law; it explains the course of evolution and accounts for all the great diversity which exists.

There are many who believe in a future existence, but they are not ready to accept rebirth or pre-existence. But we cannot believe in one without believing in the other. We cannot believe in a future life without believing in a previous existence, because this life will be pre-existent to our future life. This is logic; and it must appeal to our common sense. Nor is this idea absolutely alien to the teaching of Christ. Do we not find traces here and there in the history of the people of that time which show that they also believed in

pre-existence? In the Bible we read: "And they asked him (John the Baptist): Art thou Elias? And he said I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered. No." In another place Christ speaks thus to His disciples: "Whom say the people that I am? They answering said: John the Baptist; but some say Elias, and others say that one of the old prophets is risen again." How shall we explain this if a belief in pre-existence was not prevalent among the people? Do we not see here clearly the idea of Reincarnation? They could not talk in this way about a thing which was not generally accepted. The prophet Elias had existed and they evidently expected him to come back. As Christ Himself declares later: "But I say unto you that Elias is come already and they knew him not. . . . . Then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist." So Reincarnation could not have been altogether a strange doctrine in Palestine.

If we study the Scriptures intelligently and without bias, we find everywhere shown the connection between this life and the previous one, and the connection of both of these with the future life. How can we deal with just this span of life, with only this one point, without taking into consideration the two ends which make life complete? If we do not take account of the past and the future, we cannot explain the present. Without these, the Soul would be just as mortal as anything in the phenomenal universe; it would be like the grass

springing up and withering. There would be no reason in our trying to live our lives nobly, in trying to do good. But the law teaches us that man reaps whatever he sows. Therefore our birth here in this life shows what we have acquired. According to that, we have found body, mind, intelligence, surroundings, everything in just proportion. Our character and our conditions contain all that we have earned,—evil and good, bitter and sweet. We go through varied experiences, but not in one life only. What is this life? Life does not begin and end with this one span. It is eternal. It is everlasting. Do you suppose one who is born here and suddenly dies has lost everything? No. Life is not ended for that individual. With the new experience he has gained, he will continue his onward journey until he attains the completion, the fulfillment of life. Evolution is constantly going on in each soul. Every one must grow; every one must unfold. What each one has in germ-form must evolve until he reaches the highest; because we are all potentially Divine. Divinity is our birthright. We all have that mightiness, that soul-consciousness within us, that which is part of God; but now we do not know it. Until we become fully conscious of it, however, we are not liberated; we still remain under the sway of ignorance. The journey towards this consciousness is called the process of evolution. Suppose we strive in this life with all earnestness to accomplish an Ideal, and before we have accomplished it, we are taken away? Do you

imagine that all our effort is in vain? No; what we have gained is ours.

This is the only explanation of the great diversity and inequality which we find. When we know the Law, we do not have to blame any one for existing conditions. It is the Law which explains everything and it is the knowledge of the Law which gives us the power of endurance. A man who does not see the past, who does not see the future, if suffering overtakes him, his impulse is to put an end to this life. But escape from suffering cannot come by merely going out of the body, by destroying this physical instrument; if that were true, there are many who would be liberated. But this is not the case. You may break the physical instrument, but the mind, the intelligence and ego remain, that which is called the subtle body; and this continues after death. It is this subtle body which contains the individual character; all that the individual has earned through his striving, all the intelligence he possesses, all the good or evil which he has done are stored up in that. No one can rob him of what he has earned; no one can give him anything more.

This is the Law of Karma or the law of cause and effect as applied to human life and activity. It is not, however, anything arbitrary. It does not mean that, when we have done something wrong, there is no hope for us, that we cannot counterbalance our mistake. We have put a weight of wrong-doing on one scale, which leads to misery;

but when we put a weight of right-doing on the other scale, it must counterbalance. So we are given this consolation: what we make, we can unmake. It is not that we have simply to fold our hands and wait for things to be worked out, saying "What can I do? I am born like this." True, you may have been born with certain limitations, but they are only the outcome of your own past thoughts and actions, which you can counteract by your present life. In the East we find wonderful endurance and patience even among the poorest. What gives them that endurance? It is the understanding of this Law. Even a peasant knows that it is no use blaming others, no use cursing his own fate. He recognizes that if misfortune has fallen upon him, it is because he has done something which makes him deserve it; but he also recognizes that it is not lasting. Pleasure and pain come and go just as clouds gather, then pass and the sun shines again. We too often forget this and take conditions too seriously. All our feelings, all our experiences of joy and sorrow, when they come, we think that they are going to be enduring. But the effect can never be more lasting than the cause; and since our mistakes are finite, so must be the suffering created by them. For this reason the doctrine of eternal reward and punishment has never found a place in the teaching of Vedanta, because it is irrational, illogical and contrary to the law.

You may say: "If we have existed before, how is

it that we do not remember?" In the Bhagavad-Gita Arjuna asks a similar question, and the Lord replies: "Both you and I have gone through many births. You know them not because of your ignorance, but I know them all. It is not that we have come into existence today. We have all been before and we shall be in future." The fact that you do not remember your past existence does not disprove anything, because the memory is very unreliable. We find people who remember certain things which happened years ago, and there are others who do not even recall what happened yesterday; so we cannot refute this doctrine on that ground. There are many things that occurred in our childhood which we cannot recollect; but from that must we conclude that we did not exist in our childhood, that our life began from where we began to remember? That would be absurd. Similarly, it cannot be a very sound argument to doubt our past existence because we do not remember it. There are people who not only remember every thing which has happened in this life, but who also get hold of the thread which connects this with their previous life. Their eyes have developed a greater power of vision, their ears are able to hear more, their intellect has been clarified, they can penetrate the unseen realm and they do not doubt regarding their past or future. They know and their knowledge is based on actual perception.

There are still other problems for which Reincarnation seems to offer the only solution. We see

here and there one who is born with remarkable genius, with a brilliant mind, with wonderful talent for music or art or science. Even in childhood he manifests these gifts; where does he acquire them? We know that all knowledge is based on experience; no knowledge can come by chance; whatever we possess we have acquired. If you say, "I have not done anything to gain it in this life," then you must have earned it sometime in the past; because all that we have now is wholly the result of our own effort somewhere. Even if something is given us, we cannot retain it unless we have developed the capacity, unless we deserve it. So the child who possesses any unusual power within him, must have earned it through his own striving; and he is now reaping in the form of genius, as a scientist or an artist, the fruits of earnest labor in past lives. It shows that he has already lived and worked and gathered experience along these same lines and that here he is merely taking up the thread where he dropped it; or, in other words, that this life is nothing but the continuation of a previous existence.

We must not look upon our life as confined within the limits of this earthly existence. We must not think that we have only this one life-time to acquire all that we desire. It is this which makes us impatient and weak. This is also the reason why people are often selfish, why they try to rob others; it is because they think they are losing their one opportunity. But the knower of the Law, who

believes in the eternity of the soul, is patient and serene. He can wait. He works calmly for whatever he desires, knowing that if he does not get it here and now, he will have another opportunity; because his life is unending. The soul which is immortal, which has been and will be, is manifesting not only in this life, but is connected at either end with a previous life and a future life. Unless we take account of that which has been already, we cannot understand the present, much less can we explain the future. They are all joined with one another. Thus the doctrine of Reincarnation makes clear to us the law of cause and effect and teaches us to live and work hopefully and patiently.

As we go through the process of evolution, we pass from one life to another. We go onward and forward, and as we advance, we find the conditions and environment which are especially suitable for the unfoldment of our character. Just as when we are climbing a mountain, we occasionally go down, then up, but always we are coming nearer the top; so in this life we see here and there a person who from the social standpoint may seem to have fallen, yet we should not judge, for perhaps this special lesson is necessary to his growth and next time he will come nearer the Goal. As we pass through this succession of lives, what determines our condition and environment? The Lord says in the Bhagavad-Gita: "Whatever state (or being) One dwells upon in the end, at the time of leaving the body, that alone he attains, because of his constant

thought of that state or being." This idea that we are born in accordance with our last thought means that whatever thoughts have been dominant in our heart, whatever has been the greatest and most obvious form of activity in our life, this will rise at the moment of departing. It is impossible for us to think of something new when giving up the body. In the agony of death, there is great suffering, especially for those who lack in spiritual knowledge, because everyone naturally clings to life. Who wants to abandon life? As long as there is unsatisfied desire in our heart, we hold to this existence for the fulfillment of that desire; and there is inevitable pain when we are being forcibly separated from it. In such a moment we cannot think of anything strange or new. All the thoughts which have governed our life naturally rise. So the Lord says again: "Therefore at all times think of Me and perform thy duties. Having offered thy mind and intellect to Me, thou shalt without doubt come unto Me."

This is the aim and object of human life,—not to lose sight of Truth, because without Truth we are weak. All that seems so mysterious,—previous life, future life—no longer remains a mystery after we come in direct contact with God. It is because we live apart from Him that we feel so absolutely helpless; it is this which makes it so difficult for us to explain everything; but the moment we touch the Source, all things regarding life and death become clear to us. Life in any form, even in the

greatest misery, is not a curse. A knower of the law feels that life in itself is a blessing and he works with faith and perseverance, realizing that even if he does not accomplish his end in this birth, in the next he may reach the heights. This is the consolation which Reincarnation offers,—that even if we fail in one life, all is not lost; but we can start afresh and go higher and higher until we reach the Goal. All that we have gained before helps us, and gives us the courage to go on with new strength and hope. Reincarnation is not an inevitable thing. It is we who cause our own rebirth. As long as there is imperfection in us, as long as there is unfulfilled desire, that means we have not completeness of life; we crave something which we do not possess. The effort to satisfy this craving carries us from birth to birth; but as we grow in understanding, we learn that true satisfaction is not to be found in external things, but that the Kingdom of Heaven is within; that in our own inner being alone can we find fullness of life. Then all the desires which have bound us drop off and the soul becomes free from birth and re-birth. This is called *Mukti* or liberation. Having attained this, a man is no longer bound by the fetters of Karma (cause and effect) and need not incarnate again. If he comes, it is for others. There are perfect souls who return voluntarily to uplift their fellowmen, to give them knowledge, to lead them towards freedom.

Such is the doctrine of Reincarnation. It means

that we go through a gradual evolution, passing from birth to birth, advancing step by step until we reach the highest, where we see that we are free, that we are one with God. Then we transcend death and realize eternal life.

REBIRTH AND IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

Extract by Swami Vivekananda

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 traces 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. "I am convinced," says Karl Heckel, "that the deeper we enter into the study of the Egyptian religion, the more clearly it is shown that the doctrine of metempsychosis was entirely foreign to the popular Egyptian religion; and that even that which single mysteries possessed of it was not inherent to the Osiris teachings, but derived from Hindu sources." Later on we find the Alexandrian Jews imbued with the doctrine of an individual soul, and the Pharisees of the time of Jesus not only had faith in an individual soul, but believed in its wanderings through various bodies; thus it is easy to find how Christ was looked upon as the incarnation of an older prophet.

Pythagoras is said to have been the first Greek who taught the doctrine of palingenesis among the Hellenes. As an Aryan race already burning their dead and believing in the doctrine of an individual soul, it was easy for the Greeks to accept the doctrine of Reincarnation, through the Pythagorean teaching. According to Apulejus, Pythagoras had come to India where he had been instructed by the Brahmins. . . Schopenhauer in his book "Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung," speaking about palingenesis, says: "These constant new births, then, constitute the succession of the life-dreams of a will which in itself is indestructible, until, instructed and improved by so much and such various successive knowledge in a constantly new form it abolishes and abrogates itself. . . . . It must not be neglected that even empirical ground supports a palingenesis of this kind. As a matter of fact, there does exist a connection between the birth of the newly appearing beings and the death of those that are worn out. It shows itself in the great fruitfulness of the human race, which appears as a consequence of devastating diseases. . . Every new born being comes fresh and blithe into the new existence, and enjoys it as a free gift; but there is and can be nothing freely given. Its fresh existence is paid for by the old age and death of a worn-out existence which has perished, but which contained the indestructible seed out of which the new existence has arisen; they are one being." The great English philosopher Hume, nihilistic though

he was, also says in his sceptical essay on immortality: "The metempsychosis is therefore the only system of this kind that philosophy can listen to."

So far as explaining the tendencies of the present life by past conscious efforts goes, the reincarnationists of India and the latest school of evolutionists are one; the only difference is that the Hindus, as spiritualists, explain it by the conscious efforts of individual souls, and the materialistic school of evolutionists only by an hereditary physical transmission. The schools which hold to the theory of creation out of nothing are entirely out of court. The issue has to be fought out between the reincarnationists, who hold that all experiences are stored up as tendencies in the subject of those experiences, the individual soul, and are transmitted by reincarnation of that unbroken individuality, and the materialists, who hold that the brain is the subject of all actions and the transmission through cells. It is thus that the doctrine of Reincarnation assumes an infinite importance before our mind, for the fight between Reincarnation and mere cellular transmission is, in reality, the fight between spiritualism and materialism. If cellular transmission is the all-sufficient explanation, materialism is inevitable and there is no necessity for the theory of a soul. If it is not a sufficient explanation, the theory of an individual bringing into this life the experiences of the past is as absolutely true. There is no escape from the alternative, reincarnation or materialism. Which shall we accept?

KATHA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda

(Continued from January Number)

PART I.

XX

Nachiketas said: There is that (well known) doubt regarding what becomes of man after death. Some say he exists, others that he does not exist. This knowledge I desire to gain, being instructed by thee. Of the boons this is the third boon.

XXI

Yama replied: Even the Devas (Bright Ones) of old doubted regarding this. It is not easy to know; subtle indeed is this subject. O Nachiketas ask another boon. Do not press me. Give up asking this of me.

XXII

Nachiketas said: O Death, thou sayest that even the Devas had doubts about this, and that it is not easy to know. Another teacher like unto thee is not to be found. (Therefore) no other boon can be equal to this one.

XXIII

Yama said: Ask for sons and grandsons who shall live a hundred years, many cattle, elephants, gold and horses. Ask for lands of vast extent and live thyself as many autumns as thou desirest.

XXIV

If thou thinkest of any other boon equal to this, ask (for that)—wealth and long life; be ruler over

vast lands. O Nachiketas, I shall make thee enjoyer of all desires.

XXV

Whatsoever desires are difficult to obtain in the realm of mortals, ask them all as thou likest; these maidens with their chariots and musical instruments, such as are not obtainable by mortals—be served by these whom I give to thee. O Nachiketas, do not ask regarding death.

The third boon asked by Nachiketas concerning the great Hereafter was one which could be granted only to those who were freed from all mortal desires and limitations; therefore Yama first tested Nachiketas to see whether he was ready to receive such knowledge. "Do not press me regarding this secret," he said. "Even wise men cannot understand it and thou art a mere lad. Take rather long life, wealth, whatever will give thee happiness on the mortal plane." But the boy proved his strength and worthiness by remaining firm.

XXVI

Nachiketas said: O Death, these are fleeting; they weaken the vigor of all the senses in man. Even the longest life is short. Keep thou thy chariots, dance and music.

XXVII

Man cannot be satisfied by wealth. Shall we possess wealth when we see thee, [Death]? Shall we continue to live as long as thou rulest? Therefore that boon alone (which I have already asked) is to be chosen by me.

XXVIII

What man dwelling on the decaying mortal plane, having approached the undecaying immortal one, and having known the nature of pleasure produced from the beauty and contact of women (sense-pleasure), would delight in long life?

XXIX

O Death, that, regarding which there is doubt, of that great Hereafter, tell us. Nachiketas asks for no other boon than that which penetrates this secret.

PART II

I

Yama said: The good is one thing and the pleasant another. These two, having different ends, bind a man. It is well with him who of the two chooses the good. He who chooses the pleasant misses the true end (goal).

II

The good and the pleasant approach a mortal; the discriminative man looks on both and distinguishes between them; the wise prefers the good to the pleasant, but the foolish man chooses the pleasant through greed and avarice.

III

O Nachiketas, after wise reflection thou hast renounced the pleasant and all pleasing forms. Thou hast not accepted this garland of great value (wealth) in which many mortals sink.

IV

Wide apart are these two,—ignorance and what is known as wisdom, leading in opposite directions,

producing different results. I believe Nachiketas to be one who longs for wisdom; since many desires have not turned thee aside (from the path).

With this second part Yama, the Ruler of Death, begins his instructions regarding the great Hereafter. There are two paths,—one leading Godward, which is *Sat* or good; the other leading to worldly pleasure, which merely gives satisfaction to the physical nature. He who follows one inevitably goes away from the other; because, like light and darkness, they conflict. One leads to the imperishable, spiritual realm; the other to the perishable, physical realm. Both confront a man at every step of life. The intelligent man, distinguishing between the two, chooses the Real and Eternal and he alone tastes true happiness; while the ignorant man, preferring that which brings him immediate and tangible results, misses the true purpose of his existence. There are some who gladly sacrifice their physical comfort for the sake of their soul; while others, who are attached to fleshly desires, are willing to sacrifice all that is good for their spiritual nature in order to gain momentary gratification. But Nachiketas was not like these. Although Yama put before him many temptations to test his sincerity and earnestness, he, judging them at their real value, refused them all, saying: "I have come from the mortal realm, shall I ask only for what is mortal? I desire that which is lasting, eternal." Therefore Death said to him: "I now see that thou art a sincere desirer of Truth, that thou art worthy of

the teaching. I offered thee name, fame, wealth, whatever tempts and deludes men, but thou hast proved thyself by rejecting them all."

V

Fools dwelling in ignorance, regarding themselves as wise and learned, go round and round in crooked ways, like blind men led by the blind.

VI

The Hereafter is never revealed to the child (the ignorant), being deluded by the glamour of wealth. "This visible world is (real), there is none other;" thinking thus, he comes under my sway again and again.

There are many in the world, who, although ignorant concerning the subtler things of the causal realm, yet, because they have a little book-learning or worldly knowledge, believe that they are wise and capable of guiding others. But lacking in true wisdom they themselves cannot see clearly, and therefore cannot make things clear to others. All that they say merely deepens the confusion in the minds of those who hear them. Hence they are likened to blind men leading the blind through false and devious paths. The future does not shine before such people, who, bewildered by the vanity of this world, have little power of discrimination and are easily carried away by the charm of fleeting objects. As children are tempted by toys, so they are deluded by the glamour of wealth, power, name and fame. To them these seem the only realities. Being thus attached to perishable things, they come

many times under the dominion of death. There is one part of us that must die; there is another part which never dies. When a man can identify himself with his indestructible spirit, which is one with God, then he overcomes death.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE VEDANTA CENTRE OF BOSTON

The Vedanta Centre of Boston celebrated its Fifth Anniversary on the evening of Jan. 1st, and the friends of the work gathered in such large numbers that the lecture hall scarcely sufficed to accommodate them. The exercises opened with an organ prelude, after which the Swami Paramananda delivered a short address of welcome. The Secretary then read a letter from one of the oldest and staunchest friends of the work in Boston, expressing his deep regret that he could not be present and adding: "May I be permitted to say that it gave me much pleasure to see what a large and interested audience was gathered together on Sunday last, showing that the good work was going on and getting a permanent hold among thinking people. 'First the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear' is the law of growth, which you are obeying, it appears to me." A history of the Centre was next given by one of the members. It passed in review the modest inception of the work—how the Swami Paramananda, coming to Boston at the close of 1908, had begun without any fixed headquarters, delivering lectures in a public hall, holding classes in private drawing-rooms, and going out into the surrounding towns wherever he was asked to speak or teach, sometimes conducting three meetings in one day. Courses of lectures were arranged for him in Milton, Brookline, Cam-

bridge, Waltham, and he was invited to lecture at the Lynn Public Library, where he met with warm appreciation. The following autumn he was obliged to seek a milder climate during the mid-winter season. He therefore went to Washington and while there organized a Vedanta Centre, which remained under the charge of Sister Devamata after his return to Boston in April of the same year (1910). Again back in Boston, the Swami secured the present headquarters. This at once gave to the Centre a more definite constitution. Regular Sunday Services and week-day classes were immediately begun and have continued almost without interruption ever since. In addition to the Boston work, the Swami has also from time to time given courses of lectures in Europe, thus broadening the field and creating international relations for the Centre.

One of the most encouraging features of the work, especially during the last two years, has been the rapid growth of the Publication Department. 10,000 books and pamphlets having been published during that short period, among these being two hitherto unpublished lectures by Swami Vivekananda, a volume of lectures by Swami Ramakrishnananda and a translation from the Sanskrit of the Bhagavad-Gita by Swami Paramananda. "The Path of Devotion," one of the Swami's own books, has also been translated into French and brought out in Switzerland; and the same work is soon to be printed in Gujarati, one of the dialects of the West Coast of India. Besides this, nearly 5000 books and pamphlets have gone into circulation from the Centre. The appearance of "The Message of the East" two years ago marked an important step forward. Despite its modest form, it has already found a place on the tables of over 100 of

the leading libraries of the country, each library having expressed the desire to receive it and place it on their permanent files. Following this report, the Swami spoke a few words of thanks to all those who had contributed towards the establishment and growth of the Centre by their loving service, and offered a prayer that the work, humble though it may be, might increase in power and usefulness and continue to bring blessing and help to many.

A special Hindu dish prepared by the Swami himself was then served with fruits and sweetmeats and the evening closed with an informal social gathering.

* * *

The course of six public lectures which Swami Paramananda is giving in Perkins Hall, Women's Educational and Industrial Union, began most successfully on Jan. 18. There was a large and representative audience, which listened attentively to what the Swami had to say on "The Religious Ideal for this Age." The course will continue through February and the subjects will be: "Concentration and Self-Control,' "Reincarnation and Final Emancipation," "Building of Character," "Harmony of Religions." All the meetings at the Centre will remain the same and at the regular Service on Sunday morning the Swami will give a series of Talks on the Sacred Scriptures of India.

* * *

In response to the earnest desire of the students and friends of the Washington Centre Sister Devamata has arranged to spend the month of February in Washington. While there, she will deliver a lecture every Sunday evening at 8, and hold classes on Wednesday and Friday at the same hour. Her address during her stay will be 7 Iowa Circle.

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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. III MARCH, 1914 NO. 3

Man must learn to distinguish between the real and the unreal, between the eternal and the non-eternal, between what is good for the soul and what is merely pleasing to the body. Many avenues lie open before us. Certain objects appeal to the senses, and when the mind is fickle, these carry it away; but if our discriminative faculty is awakened and guides us, we are safe, for then nothing can really delude us. Various things come in disguise and try to make us believe that they are real, that we should give them our whole-hearted devotion, but a wise man knows them at their true value. He is not deceived by outward appearances, therefore he can easily drop what is non-essential. Through the practice of discrimination, the mind becomes like a crystal. It is so clear that it reflects the right color of all things, and can at once perceive the real nature of whatever approaches it.

When discrimination is thus well established, the result is non-attachment. That which seemed so vital, so absolutely a part of us that we thought we could not live without it, falls off by itself. No violent struggle is necessary. What brings this

change? It is the purification of our vision. We see what is real and what is unreal, what is essential and what is non-essential, and the non-essential drops away naturally. This is what is meant by renunciation. It means withdrawing the mind from the unreal and focusing it on the Real. But we must not imagine that those who renounce the non-essential and devote their whole heart to things which are essential, are losing the beauty and joy of life. Do you suppose that Buddha could have given up all that people desire most unless he knew that there was something more vital? It was because he had found a higher joy, a greater beauty, which made all the wealth and luxury of his princely state appear as nothing to him. Whenever we come in touch with the Supreme Reality, when our discrimination leads us to That, all else seems insignificant. When the spirit of renunciation awakens in a man, then the things of this world can no longer content him. He feels oppressed by the fetters of unreality and imperfection and cannot rest until he finds that supreme treasure, the Light of Truth.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

If you put any purifying substance, like a piece of alum, into a vessel of muddy water, the water is purified and the impurities settle down at the bottom. *Viveka* (discrimination of the Real or God, from unreal, phenomenal appearances) and

Vairagya (non-attachment to the world) are the two purifiers of the human heart. With their help the mind of the worldly man ceases to be worldly and becomes pure. —*Sri Ramakrishna.*

For what rational cause remains any more to the man who has gained "the light inaccessable" for reverting to the good things of the world? . . He does not withdraw himself from life. But he has withdrawn his soul from passions. For it were no longer seemly that the friend of God should fall into pleasures or fears, and be occupied in the repression of passions.

—*Clement of Alexandria.*

Children (the ignorant) follow after outward pleasures and fall into the snare of wide-spread death. Wise men only, knowing the nature of what is immortal, do not look for anything stable here among things unstable.

The good is one thing, the pleasant another; these two, having different ends, chain a man. It is well with him who clings to the good; he who chooses the pleasant misses his end . . . . The wise prefers the good to the pleasant, but the fool chooses the pleasant through greed and avarice.

—*Katha-Upanishad.*

The wise man can lose nothing of whose loss he will be sensible, for he is the property of virtue alone, from whom he can never be taken away . . . The possession of all things which come from without is slippery and insecure . . . But here a man comes forward to prove that one

who is but of human birth can raise himself above human necessities, can tranquilly behold pains, losses, diseases, wounds, can bear adversity with calm and prosperity with moderation, that he can remain the same amid all varieties of fortune and think nothing to be his own save himself and himself too only as regards his better part.

—*Seneca.*

He who calls nothing his own, who is poor and free from love of the world, him I call indeed a Brahmana (a true God-seeker).

Those whose mind is well grounded in the elements of (true) knowledge, who have given up all attachment and rejoice without clinging to anything, those whose frailties have been conquered and who are full of light, are free even in this world. —*Buddha (Dhammapada).*

And everyone that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake shall receive an hundred-fold and shall inherit eternal life. —*Jesus the Christ.*

Unless too a man be disentangled from all creatures, he cannot freely attend unto divine things. For that is the reason why there are few contemplative men to be found, because few have the knowledge to withdraw themselves fully from things about to perish and from creatures.

—*Thomas à Kempis.*

UNION WITH GOD THROUGH NON-ATTACHMENT

Class Talk by Swami Ramakrishnananda

"The very mention of whose (Divine) name purifies us, and illuminates the hearts of all those who have the desire to hear the Lord; because He is always the Friend of the good." All the miseries that are to be found in the hearts of men He destroys. Miseries are always inside man and not outside. We think they are outside, but this is not the fact. If you take a log of wood, cut it, burn it, it will not mind. Why? Because it is not conscious. But take a man, insult him, hurt him, and he will feel it. Why? Because he is conscious. Where is this consciousness? Inside. And where inside? It is centered in the heart, not in the brain. A man may have his brain injured, still his consciousness continues, although his mind may be deranged; but injure the heart and at once consciousness leaves the body. This shows that the chief seat of consciousness is in the heart. Now good and evil, victory and defeat, profit and loss, only exist when we are conscious of them; that is, they exist in consciousness, therefore they must be inside.

The ordinary man of the world believes that all miseries are outside him and beyond his control. For that reason he is so miserable. But when man has no attachment for earthly things, when he realizes that behind the world there is an Almighty Power, who is all-friendly, then his mind will be directed more and more away from the world and

towards this all-powerful and all-friendly Being. He will seek out those people who will talk to him of God; and he will try to go to those places where men have realized God. These are called holy places because of the holy men who have lived there. As a man goes more and more to such places and talks more and more with such men, the love of the world will gradually leave him and he will come nearer to God.

Since, furthermore, he is a conscious being, he must work in consciousness, and through this he finds that good and evil are all inside. He sees that he is only happy because he is conscious that he is happy; and he is unhappy only because he is conscious of being unhappy; that in consciousness all evil exists, in consciousness all happiness exists; so he learns to go within himself for everything. God teaches him that if the mind can be detached from the outside world, then no evil will exist for him. Matter is the cause of all misery, of all misfortune. The less we have to do with matter, the better it is for us. As the man's mind becomes pure, he learns this lesson. God purifies his mind and he sees all within himself. He also sees himself in all beings. God with reference to His creation is finite; He is infinite as to His mind and as to His consciousness. God never sleeps. He is always conscious. So in this world we also only know different states of consciousness,—the waking state, the dream and the sound sleep state. Thus we are conscious and God is conscious; and it be-

comes evident that if we want God, we shall have to search Him out in our inner consciousness. We must always seek consciousness in consciousness. Just as we must seek a bird among birds, not among beasts; in the same way we must not search for God in unconsciousness. What is unconscious? Matter is dead and unconscious, therefore God must not be sought in matter. We must seek Him in consciousness, that is, inside our own self.

You may say that God may be found outside; but in reality the world does not exist apart from your consciousness. You may be very devoted to your father and mother, but you fall asleep and forget them. Why? Because he who knows them has gone away, the conscious self has gone away from the senses, from the mind; therefore the external world no longer exists for him. When that conscious self comes back to his senses and his mind, you remember them. Therefore you see that consciousness alone really exists for you, all else is forgotten.

The soul alone is beginningless and endless. That world which you expect to continue to exist after you leave it, exists in the universal mind, and that universal mind exists in the universal consciousness. But the small world which exists in your individual mind dies with you. There are two parallel creations, as we can show. What takes place in the universal creation may not take place in your creation. Suppose, for example, that a man has gone away to Bengal. Now in God's creation his only child dies, but he does not know

of it for fifteen days. During this time the death does not exist in his creation at all. He still thinks of his child as living, eating, playing in just the same way as when he was with it. Then the news reaches him and the moment that he hears of it the child dies in his world. This shows that there are two distinct creations. The consciousness in the universal mind, however, is the same as that behind your individual mind. They are not separate, for the infinite consciousness is one so if you can make your individual mind merge into the universal mind, then you will no longer be able to distinguish your mind from the universal mind. When a devotee or *Bhakta,* therefore wants to go to God, he does the same thing as the *Gnani,* who seeks to go behind his own consciousness to God's consciousness.

At present we live in the external world and we believe that all our happiness and misery exist there. But when we begin to search inside, we find that all things exist within ourselves; that all consciousness is there. This is what is called introspection. Introspection is searching for God within. The more we practice this, the nearer we come to God. At first a man may not understand it practically; but the moment he realizes his own nature, he will see that he is self-existent and independent of the external world. Then he will say: "I cannot have come out of matter, I am spirit. I have come out of spirit and to spirit I must go back. And where is spirit? Inside. Therefore to go to spirit I must go within." He

sees that all his environments are material, while he is spiritual; so he ceases to depend on his environment; and as he detaches himself from his environment, with it his sense of "I" and "Mine" vanishes.

Such ideas little by little destroy his attachment towards the world. Then gradually as with the sword of non-attachment all the ties of the world are cut off, he goes deeper into his own existence and finds God. At that moment his individual world disappears, he merges into God's creation and becomes one with Him. Suppose there are two fields, one higher than the other. The upper field is full of water. Now if you cut a channel, the water will flow naturally into the lower field, until the water rises to the level of the upper field. Then the surfaces are no longer two, they become like one unbroken body of water. So when the devotee goes to God and draws only inspiration from God, then God's thought flows naturally into his heart and there remains no difference between him and his Lord. For that reason Sri Ramakrishna teaches us that God and His devotee are one and the same.

God cannot be seen by all men. Being infinite, He cannot be perceived by the senses, but if the devotee merges himself in God, God's thoughts become his thoughts and he cannot commit any blunder. Then people begin to come to him for counsel, because what he says is regarded as God's word. These are called the Saints and Seers, because their mind is one with God's mind. The

moment a man becomes a little introspective and tries to go to God, God at once comes to him, purifies him of all past Karma, and makes him one with Himself. Thus the Bhagavan (Lord) and His devotee actually become one.

By associating with the holy and pure, the mind grows pure, attachment for the world decreases and attachment for God increases until the world slips off entirely. Then as oil flows from a bottle in an unbroken stream, so the whole thought flows to God without any break. All restlessness of body goes; all sense desire disappears. The mind is no longer disturbed or changed by these. It no longer concerns itself with the outside world. It becomes quiet and serene, as if the innumerable struggles of many lives had come to an end. When it thus grows calm and peaceful, when there is no wave or ripple on its quiet surface, in such a pure unruffled mind the true nature of God is seen. At that time, when a man realizes God inside himself, all fetters of the mind are broken asunder, all troubles disappear, all doubts are cleared off and man's life-long struggle ceases. But this is only possible when he is not held by any attachment to the world. When he realizes everything, he gets everything. By loving God and having non-attachment to the world all things come to him. For this reason wise men make it a point to love God above all other things, because that alone can bring peace to the mind and nothing else. They strive therefore to cultivate devotion towards God in order that they may realize Him and attain to peace.

THE LIFE OF BUDDHA

Fragment of Drama by Girish Chunder Ghosh

(Rendered from the Bengalee especially for "The Message of the East".)

Act III. Scene I.

Siddhartha or Buddha (*after seeing the old man, the diseased and the dead, he now comes upon a religious mendicant*) :— Look! Look! See the orange-colored cloth, the serene face, the water-jar. Behold that man approaching slowly. Tell me, O driver, what is this mystery?

Sarati (*the driver*) :—Casting off all desires and free from worldly ties, he wanders from door to door, living on alms. Banishing all thought of pleasure, he meditates on God in solitude. He has no desire save to worship the Supreme Lord.

Siddhartha:—Where is the Supreme Lord? Where is His abode? I have been told that the three worlds are His creation. Why then disease, sorrow and old age? Why all this misery in the world? Why death? What the offense of all creatures that they should constantly endure such misery? A father can never bear to see his children suffer. But this world is a vast ocean of suffering. Human beings have to endure unending pain. Why then does the Supreme Lord not relieve them? They are crying out in sickness and in sorrow, does this not reach Him? Or is the Lord helpless to remove their pain? There must be some mystery behind all this. The explanations of the Scriptures are vain. The authors of the Scriptures must be ignorant. If God

is all-mighty, then He is not merciful. Drive my chariot swiftly. I shall go to my father and take leave of him. Henceforth I shall wander over the earth in quest of light. If I can find a remedy for the sorrow of this world, I shall proclaim it from land to land and from man to man. My heart weeps to see all this wretchedness. No longer can I remain within palace walls. No longer can I be tied by attachment. I shall not spend my life in idleness. If in this great work my body falls, at the hour of death I shall console my mind by saying, "I have done my best."

Scene II.

The King and His Minister.

King:—This must be a trick of the gods. How else came that aged man, the diseased, the dead, that religious mendicant? The guards kept careful watch on every highway and I myself guarded the main road.

Minister:—True, Sire. It is a trick of the gods. Whence they came and whither they went, no one saw. The guards can find no trace of them. They appeared and in an instant vanished.

King:—This is all but my unhappy destiny.

(*Siddhartha enters.*)

Siddhartha:—Father, my salutation to thy feet! I have come to take leave of thee O, Father, be gracious and grant me thy consent. Laying my homage at thy feet, I would abandon my home and set out in quest of Truth.

King:—O, my beloved son, why dost thou launch this thunderbolt at me in my declining years? Look-

ing at thy lovely face, I have forgotten pain, forgotten even my beloved wife. This world no longer seems an empty place. Thou art to me as eyes to the blind, as a lamp in a dark room. I have naught else but thee in all the world. Thou art my all-in-all, my jewel, the ornament of this kingdom. Thou art the sole support of the Sakya race. Take the throne. Whatever thou hast need of, I will give thee at once. Tell me, my son, why this detachment? Why this wish to renounce all? If thou goest, tell me, by looking at whose face shall I keep life and courage in this heart? I have no other son but thee. The mere utterance of such words brings darkness all about me, and I feel the life ebbing from my heart. Hear me, dearest one! My heart will burst. Speak no more these piercing words."

Siddhartha:—Unreal is this world, the abode of disease and misery. Death pursues at every step and spreads his net on every side. Wherefore then shall I live on in fetters? Youth does not endure forever; old age attacks it. There is no fixed hour for the blow of death to fall. This world is not mine. If I do not leave it willingly, yet today or a few years hence I shall be forced to leave it. Why then shall I remain bound by attachment? If I can, I shall remove the misery of the world. O, Lord of men, place no obstacle in the way of that work. Since it is certain that the body must fall, why bring the delusion of attachment by calling me thy son? Who is whose son? For whose sake shall I remain forever enshrouded by the

gloom of ignorance? For this great work's sake, father, cast off such weakness. Bless me that my heart's desire may be fulfilled.

King:—Thou art surely made of stone. What King's son has ever renounced his home? Since thy birth thou hast never known the smallest hardship. Now, clad in beggar's rags, with begging-bowl in hand, how canst thou wander from door to door? Who will care for thee? Tell me, how can I find the heart to bid thee go? Do not kill me. Speak no more such hard words, my beloved. Without thee this kingdom will be transformed into a wilderness and the Sakya race will be destroyed. Why cause the ruin of all? Thy beloved wife, too, will be desolate. And thy new born son, who will care for him? Who will console thy foster-mother, to whom thou art dearer than a son? Without wealth, religious merit cannot be earned (through the performance of charity and sacrifices, etc.) and of the different stages of life, the householder's is said to be the highest. Why then shouldest thou renounce thy home?

Siddhartha:—Tell me, Father, what religious practice can save one from the jaws of death? What spiritual merit can protect one's youth from the robbing hands of time? By performing what sacrifice can one withstand the onslaught of disease? Who is there wise enough to show a way by which the world's misery can be cured? Who, O Sire, can check the tide of suffering? It is for this I wish to go. For the sake of all living

creatures, I would go forth in quest of Truth, through whose glory all sorrows will be removed and this world will become an abode of bliss. Then all men will live drowned in unbroken joy. I have made a vow to gain that priceless treasure or to sacrifice this body. I desire no more these fleeting pleasures. Father, who knows? Tomorrow thou mayst become sonless through death's decree. Why then dost thou not give thy consent to this noble work? Hear, O my Father! I can no longer bear the sight of all this wretchedness. I must save these suffering creatures and reveal the light of wisdom by destroying the gloom of ignorance. O, revered Sire, bid me dedicate myself to this great work.

King:—Alas, my son! I am indeed luckless. I have not beheld the face of happiness.

Siddhartha:—There is no happiness in this wretched world. That is why, O Father, I wish to go in quest of happiness. I promise that if I find that priceless jewel, I shall bring it and offer it to thee. Be enduring, for the sake of this mighty task. Father, bid me go forth in search of the Ideal, O Lord of men! Be gracious for this great work's sake.

King:—Beloved son, speak no more. My days have been spent in weeping; my days will be spent in weeping. Return today to thy pleasure-garden. Tomorrow do as thou likest.

Siddhartha:—Bless me that my heart's desire may be fulfilled.

(To be continued in subsequent numbers.)

THE GREAT DRAMATIST OF BENGAL

Girish Chunder Ghosh (the author of the play given in part above) is known in his own country as "the Shakespeare of Bengalee literature" and "the Garrick of the Bengalee stage." He was a man of towering genius, and had he chosen to render even a small part of his work into English, he would undoubtedly have enjoyed as great a triumph in the West as has been recently bestowed on another gifted poet of Bengal. He wrote in all eighty dramas, with such force and impetuousness of inspiration that some of them, even ten acts in length, were completed in two or three days, while one of the most famous was written through in a single night. India's sacred Epics and Puranams or Minor Scriptures were the chief source from which he drew material for his plays. One by one he took up the mighty spiritual heroes of the ancient land of the Aryas and made them living, pulsing realities to the people of his time. In thus stimulating a new love for the old Ideals, he became all unconsciously a great religious teacher, wielding so strong an influence that more than once a man who entered his theatre a worldling left it a *Sannyasi* (one who has renounced all to go in search of Truth). Especially was this the case after he came in contact with Sri Ramakrishna, for from that moment a deeper and more definite spiritual note sounded through all that he produced.

Having once yielded himself up to the gentle, irresistible power of this God-inspired Teacher, the agonizing doubt and lawless pleasure-seeking of many years dropped from him and he became one of his most humble and devoted disciples. The story is told that when Sri Ramakrishna said to him that all he needed to do to be saved was to repeat the Lord's name twice in the day, Girish Ghosh replied: "I am a man of the world, Bhagavan, (Revered Sir). How can I be sure that I will remember to take the Lord's name even twice in the day?" Sri Ramakrishna answered: "Then take it but once a day and all will be well with you." Again the disciple in his sincerity confessed: "Bhagavan, I do not know that I can do even so much. This world makes one easily forget." "Very well, then," Sri Ramakrishna replied, "You need do nothing. Just give yourself over to me entirely." "That I do most willingly", was Girish Ghosh's quick answer. Thenceforth he became like a child in the simplicity of his faith, while all concern for his own glory was swallowed up in his burning eagerness to proclaim the glory of his Master, and to share with his fellow men the light that had come to him. He passed away two years ago. As he was battling with the dread disease (asthma), which carried him off, he cried out: "Lord, remove this foolish clinging to the flesh." At once quietness settled down upon him, and with the words "Come let us go," he left the body.

REPORTS

We are glad to learn that the Government has undertaken to acquire for the Ramakrishna Ashrama or Home of Service at Kankhal in the Himalayas a plot of land adjoining the present hospital on which it is hoped to erect three new wards. The steady growth of this branch of the Ramakrishna Mission has been most encouraging. It began in 1901, under the direct inspiration of Swami Vivekananda as a modest relief work with only temporary quarters, and during the first 18 months of its existence it brought medical aid to 1054 patients. Now it has a house of its own, to which a new Phthisis Ward was added last year; and its most recent report, just received, shows that in the 12 months under review 9388 sick of all casts and creeds were cared for. As an adjunct to his medical work, Swami Kalyanananda, who has been tireless in his devotion to the institution from the beginning has opened a night school for poor boys, and has taken two orphans to maintain and educate.

* * *

The Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated at the Vedanta Centre of Boston on Thursday evening, Jan. 22nd. A number of friends gathered to pay their homage to the great Teacher. The exercises began with music and a silent prayer. The Swami Paramananda then rose and delivered an impressive address on the lesson of Swami Vivekananda's life. He spoke with deep feeling of his Masters all-embracing heart, which could never see suffering or distress without striving to relieve it; of his great spirit of renunciation; of his unfailing tolerance and compassion towards all men and all religions, a tolerance based on direct knowledge of the One underlying all the diversity of the world.

One of the members then spoke briefly of Swami Vivekananda, not as teacher or prophet, orator or writer, but as the elder brother of mankind. He was too humble, too full of devout reverence for his Master Sri Ramakrishna, to covet the place of leader. To him all men were his Master's children, hence his brothers, and as such he sought to love, serve and watch over them. When Sri Ramakrishna was passing away, His last words to this, His mightiest disciple, were, "Naren, take care of my boys," pointing to the younger disciples, and Swami Vivekananda had followed this parting admonition with unflinching faithfulness, extending its application to the whole human race.

In closing, Swami Paramananda told how widespread was the observance of this anniversary in India, where it was annually celebrated in hundreds of cities and villages, not merely by official exercises, but by feeding thousands of poor people, for Swami Vivekananda's religion was above all a religion of loving service. After chanting and a short meditation, the blessed fruits and sweetmeats from the altar were distributed, and the meeting came to a close.

The Birthday Anniversary was also observed at the Vedanta Centres of New York and San Francisco.

* * *

The course of six public lectures, which Swami Paramananda has just completed at Perkins Hall in the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, proved even more successful than had been anticipated. Every Sunday a large audience gathered bringing each time a certain number who were hearing of Vedanta for the first time. Among these some became so deeply impressed with the force and value of the teaching that they have

since sought to affiliate themselves with the Centre. In presenting his subject, the Swami made an especial effort to relate it to the Western point of view and make clear to his listeners that Vedanta had not come to the West as a substitute for existing forms of faith, but to offer a practical method by which each soul might attain the highest in his own chosen religious path. He layed great stress throughout on the oneness of Truth, whatever its forms of expression; and reminded his hearers that although science and mechanical invention had accomplished wonders in binding the whole external world together, the work of unification would not be complete and a true civilization reached until a spirit of universal tolerance and sympathy had made all hearts one. The religious ideal for this age, he said, must be inclusive, not exclusive; it must be based on points of union, not of divergence. It must be broad enough to embrace all phases of religious belief and all aspects of God.

* * *

The active interest and appreciation manifested during Sister Devamata's visit to Washington was a source of deep gratification to all those who had been instrumental in arranging for her coming. The attendance at all the meetings throughout the month was excellent. Not only the old students, but also new ones attended the lectures and classes regularly; and some, wishing to profit to the full by the opportunity offered, came almost daily to ask questions and receive individual help. It is now intended to reconstitute the Washington Centre as a branch of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, making its members associate members of the Boston Centre; and it is probable that a short season of classes and lectures will be given every winter in Washington.

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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. III. APRIL, 1914 No. 4

Realization of God cannot be gained haphazard. There is a regular method. You must first hear, then understand, then realize. You must know that the light is there, otherwise you may travel in the diametrically opposite direction to find it. Next you must hear from a teacher how to go to it. Then you must understand clearly what it is; and when you have understood, realization will follow. But for God to come, you must want Him and nothing else. Sri Krishna says in the Gita: "This *Maya* (outer phenomenal creation), with which I have covered myself, no one can pierce through. They only can penetrate it who take refuge at My feet." And again: "If you would gain wisdom or the knowledge of your infinite nature, you must go to one who has realized his infinite nature, serve him humbly, then set forth your doubts and you will be illumined." Destruction of ego can only be effected by humility. Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna used to say that as water flows off from high ground and collects in the low places, so the grace of God runs off from the heart puffed up with vanity and gathers in the hearts of the humble.

Above all, endue your heart with devotion and your mind will naturally turn towards God. The story is told that one day in the forest Rama and Lakshmana stopped by a clear stream to rest. There they saw a crow apparently parched with thirst, yet each time it went to the water's edge, it would turn and come back without drinking. "What a foolish crow this must be", said Lakshmana, "to be suffering from thirst here on the bank of a stream of cool water and yet not drink a single drop." "Do not judge so hastily, my brother," Rama replied. "This crow is a great devotee of God, who is constantly repeating His name. Whenever he goes down to the water to drink, he remembers that, to do so, he must for an instant cease to take the name of the Lord and he cannot do that, so again he comes back without drinking". . . . . Such is the true *Bhakta* (devotee or disciple). He never thinks of himself. He is so full of the thought of God that his own self is forgotten.

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Till the mind be purged, the affection purified, the memory naked, the understanding brightened, the will denied and set afire, the soul can never arrive at the intimate and effective union with God; and, therefore, because the spirit of God is purity itself, and light and rest, the soul (where He intends to make His abode) must have great purity, peace, attention and quiet. —*Michael de Molinos.*

DISCIPLINE AND DISCIPLESHIP

By Sister Devamata

Discipline is the condition of growth. Throughout all Nature we find it. The field is disciplined when the ploughshare furrows it, as the harrow smoothes it, when the harvest is reaped; for discipline is nothing but the shaping of crude material into more useful forms, the pruning and trimming to stimulate new life. The undisciplined or uncultivated plant is like a weed or bramble. The undisciplined animal must stay at large in the jungle. It is not safe for him to come into the habitation of man. And the human being who is not disciplined is like the bramble or the wild beast. He is not fit to be among men.

But discipline presupposes one who disciplines. Self-discipline is practically impossible in the early stages of either physical or spiritual development. As in natural science it is recognized that any object will move indefinitely along the line of least resistance unless checked or diverted by some stronger force, so man, if left to himself, revolves round and round in the same orbit. He does not rise or expand, because he does not escape from his ego, from his own small standards of measurement. He needs some propelling power from without to force him to enlarge his orbit, to climb to a higher level. Without a gardener to graft and prune, the wild flowers of the field would never be transformed into the luxuriant blossoms of our gardens. Without someone to breed and train, the untamed

horse of the forest would never become the fleet racer. And this guiding, impelling power is as essential in the world of man as in the lower kingdoms.

The one way to make a human being better is to lift him out of his self-consciousness. He can broaden only by transcending his ego, for it is this little self that shuts him in and limits him. Yet so long as we have nothing to take the place of this ego, it must possess us. We are like little children left at home alone with a rough servant. We may know that we are the sons of the house and have the right to command, but the servant can overrule us by the virtue of his greater strength until the master of the house comes and orders him to go. So this ego, although really a servant, lords it over us; and there is only one who can drive it out—that is God. But He must come to us first in some concrete form. At present our own little self is the most definite thing we know. To push it out there must be something equally definite. This is one of the weakest points in the practice of religion in the West. God is kept far off. To make Him definite or concrete is regarded as superstition. Religion also remains vague and abstract. Vedanta, on the contrary, declares that if we would attain the highest, religion and God must become as definite to us as our material life. Our spiritual education must be as systematic and precise as our secular education. We must have our school bench and teacher. We must have clearly

defined duties, fixed lessons to learn, a higher authority to bow to, a pure exalted ego to put in the place of our unpurified, unsanctified ego, someone to serve and follow.

This bending to authority in religion is regarded as offensive and dangerous by many; but the only danger in it is when the authority is not a proper one, when the teacher is not illumined and devoid of all selfish interest. For us to say that we acknowledge no authority but God is the same as for the little boy in the primary school to refuse to recognize any other authority than the chief of the department of education, whom he has never seen. It merely means that he remains self-willed and undisciplined. We cannot pass suddenly from the lowest to the highest. We cannot directly supplant the concrete by the abstract. We must move gradually up the scale from the gross to the subtle; and at every step a "mediator" between us and the Ultimate Ideal is needed,—some one to set us the fresh copy at the top of the page, some one to draw the new figure on the blackboard and give us the next theorem to demonstrate. Before we can form a true conception of Christ, we must see some one living the Christ-life. Before we can learn to define holiness, purity, consecration, we must find them embodied in some lofty character. That is what Christ meant when He said: "I am the Way". He did not mean that merely believing on Him would make a man holy. Do we not know people who have believed on Jesus for fifty years and are

as far as ever from the Christ Ideal? No, He meant: "Walk as I have walked, resist temptation as I have resisted it, rise above the world as I have risen above it, then you will attain Truth".

In our spiritual childhood, however, it is almost impossible for us to do this alone. We reach out instinctively for a tangible example to follow, for some one who will give us an effective method and teach us its application by his own life and action. The finding of the *Guru* or teacher therefore becomes the most vital concern in the soul's life, and for that reason in India it has from earliest times been made the foundation of all religious education. The great Vedic Scriptures are indeed in largest part nothing but a record of discipleship:—Nachiketas learning the Secret of Death from Yama; Indra gaining through long service the knowledge of the Self from Prajapati; Maitreyi sitting at the feet of Yajnavalkya to be taught the lesson of immortality; or still further back, the unknown Rishi or Seer giving answer in the Rig-Veda to that earnest seeker who sought him out and asked to "know that by knowing which all else can be known". Always in every line one catches the ring of the spoken word and sees the picture of the loving teacher patiently dispelling the doubt in the questioning heart of the disciple, who through years perhaps of humble service—bringing water from the stream and firewood from the jungle—has become like a son in the household. From those Vedic days the Indian method has not varied and

it is this which explains the great spiritual heights reached by the Indo-Aryans; for just as the system of apprenticeship invariably develops a high standard of excellence in the arts and crafts, so the system of discipleship as surely brings a lofty vision in the realm of spirit.

The disciple is an apprentice, learning the practice of religion through service and association. We too often imagine that taking up the spiritual life means reading many books about God, spending long hours in meditation, withdrawing from outer occupations. But, on the contrary, according to the Indian system, it means working with hands and feet, following the path of humble service. Why? To curb and quiet the ego. Unless there is silence within, God's voice cannot be heard. "Be still and know that I am God", the Bible tells us. But it is not possible for the beginner to attain this stillness all at once. He must work off his untamed energies, just as a child must work off his over-exuberance of animal spirits. He must purge his outer and inner nature by properly directed activity, as we purify our physical organism by wholesome exercise; for until he has tried out the denser part of his nature, which obscures the Divine, he cannot know the Truth.

We all have the possibility of the ultimate Truth in us. There is no one of us who has not at this very moment the Supreme God in his heart. We only exist because He is there. Our outer life goes on only because it is touching at its core that Eter-

nal Life. We have this glimmering of knowledge that guides us from day to day only because it is a part, a ray, going out from that Infinite Knowledge. We only feel these little fleeting waves of joy because for an instant we have touched, though dimly, the great divine bliss of the Eternal. That is there, existing in our hearts now. We do not have to go anywhere outside to find it. We have only to learn where to go within ourselves. At present that light is covered over by the veils of impurity which we have drawn across it. It is because we have lived in ourselves; we have worked for ourselves and for those who are related only to ourselves. We have made ourselves so entirely commensurate with this little self that we cannot imagine anything bigger and so the great Self has been obscured and forgotten. Now what we must do from day to day is to clear away the impurities which cover it. This clearing away is what we call discipline. How can it better be accomplished than by serving one who has torn the veil and seen the Self? The easiest way to knowledge always is to live with one who knows. Spend even a few weeks in the house of a naturalist and you will learn the nature and habits of every winged and crawling creature. Similarly, associate with a holy, God-enlightened soul and God-knowledge must as surely come, although perforce more slowly, since the faculties by which He may be apprehended must be unfolded.

But where can such teachers be found? you will

ask. In this busy commercial age saints and sages are not seated at every crossing. True. Yet have no doubt that the teacher and the teaching will come when you are ready. Never can you fail to know the Truth when you really hunger and thirst for it. If you do not know it today, it is because your hunger is so slight or because the hunger for worldly things is greater. You may say: "I do not hunger for them." Yes, you may not do so consciously; but the fact that you suffer when your desires are thwarted shows that you are hungering for them; the very fact that though your life seems empty, yet you do not turn to God to fill it, shows that you still want it to be filled by worldly things. Many people think that they want God, but they have not actually the least desire for *Him*. Often a man is unhappily married and he says, "Marriage is a great mistake"; but his wife dies, and in a year he marries again, which proves that what he wanted was not a life of renunciation, but a good wife. Our environment is unpleasant to us, we have many things to bear, and so we imagine that we are tired of the world and ready for higher things. But let God offer us a pleasant life, a little more money, a happy home, and we are perfectly satisfied. This shows that what we wanted was not God, or the religious life, it was a happy worldly life. So we must not deceive ourselves. We must prove that we want the Truth, and the only way we can prove it is by bearing cheerfully and bravely whatever discipline is given us, whether by the teacher or by life.

In the Chandogya-Upanishad we read of a boy, Satyakama, who went to a sage and said: "I wish to be a pupil in your house. May I come to you, Sir?" The sage, desiring to know what previous training he had received, asked: "Of what family art thou?" Satyakama replied: "I do not know, Sir, of what family I am. I asked my mother and she answered: In my youth when I had to move about much as a servant, I conceived thee. I do not know of what family thou art. I am Jabala, thou art Satyakama." And the boy added: "Therefore, Sir, I am Jabala Satyakama". He spoke with such humility, with such simplicity, with such absence of all vanity and pride that the Sage was touched and exclaimed: "No one but a true Brahmana (God-seeker) would thus speak out. Go and fetch fuel, my friend, and I shall initiate Thee. Thou hast not swerved from the Truth." Having initiated him, he gave him four hundred of his leanest, poorest cows to tend; and as the boy drove them out into the jungle, he said to himself: "I shall not return until I can bring back a thousand". So he dwelt a number of years in the forest, unmindful of loneliness or weariness or danger, intent only on serving his master with faithful devotion. One day a bull in the herd spoke to him, saying: "Satyakama, we have become a thousand. Lead us to the house of the teacher". And he added: "I will tell you one part of Brahman (Supreme Truth)". Then he gave him a first lesson. On the morrow Satyakama drove the herd home-

ward. And when they came towards the evening, "he lighted a fire, penned the cows, laid wood on the fire, and sat down behind the fire, looking to the East." Then Fire (Agni) spoke to him and taught him something more of Brahman. Thus each day at nightfall as he sat behind the fire in meditation, facing eastward, some humble creature —a swan, a diver-bird—came and revealed to him more of Truth, until when he reached the house of his teacher, the sage said to him: "Friend, you shine like one who knows Brahman. Who then has taught you?" Satyakama answered: "Not men. But, Sir, I wish that you only should teach me. For I have heard, from wise men like you, that only knowledge which is learned from an illumined teacher leads to real good." Then the sage taught him the same knowledge.

When the heart has been purified through selfless service, then God's voice will speak to us through everything and even Nature's dumb creatures will become our teachers. It is said in India that if the wife serves her husband with pure devotion and selflessness, or if the mother cares for her child with complete self-effacement, Truth will well up in her heart. Whatever Ideal we may take, if we serve it with our whole mind and soul, forgetful of self, forgetful of the world, we shall become so purged that Truth will reveal itself within us. Even the simple daily tasks in the household may be made a practice in discipleship, if done for God with prayerful humility. The complaint that we

cannot find the teacher is nothing but the unconscious admission that we are not worthy to find him. Or if we find him and cry out against any of the discipline of life that comes through him, we are not worthy to keep him. Christ, when He went up into the wilderness, bore true discipline. In those forty days He set an example of perfect discipleship. He did not think of his own comfort or bodily needs. He thought only of His Ideal, of His Father in Heaven, and when temptations came He was able to resist them. Before that He had served humbly and obscurely. It is such quiet, steady, selfless service which alone prepares us for the final victory. But service is not merely a positive thing. Negative service, the service of mute endurance for the sake of the Ideal, also purifies.

He who has felt the call of Truth in his heart turns away from no misfortune or hardship. When troubles and difficulties arise, he accepts them cheerfully, thinking: "Behold another opportunity to wipe out a little more of myself", and so he embraces with joy the greatest trial. Such is the spirit of discipleship; and only when that spirit comes does self-discipline become possible. Till then we must be like little children in school, taking our lessons from someone else. But always must we learn them for ourselves. Each human being must literally work out his own salvation, just as he must acquire his own education. The mother may prepare the food, but the child must eat it; so the teacher can only give the knowledge, the labor of

digesting and assimilating must always rest with the disciple. A great sage in India once said to me: "The work of the *Guru* or Spiritual teacher is like this: You are riding a bicycle in the wrong direction, someone comes and turns you round. You keep on pedalling just the same, but now you ride with new hope and confidence because you know you are headed towards your destination and have some one to guide you along the way".

But we must not have any selfish end in view in our practice of discipleship. We must not wish to know God that our face may shine. It will remain in darkness forever so long as we have that desire. We must not seek to know God in order even that we may be happy. The true disciple longs to know God for the sake of God. If some dearly beloved one comes to us, do we ask, "What have you brought me?" No; the coming itself is enough. The joy of the presence of the beloved, the gladness of having him there to serve and tend, is all we want. So when God comes, it must not be to make this little life of ours more beautiful; it must be that this little life may flow out and be lost in that great Divine Life. It must not be to make these little surroundings of ours more easy. It must be to make us forget where we are and what our life is. As it is said in a Sufi poem:

"He who sees his Master's face,
Will not in his prayers recall
That he is chastised at all."

When God comes, we shall not remember our

little joys and sorrows. We shall not even remember the prayer that we meant to utter when we stood in the Lord's presence. We shall only remember God. Then the time of discipline is gone and we shall taste the joy of true discipleship.

THE KATHA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda

PART II

(Continued from the February Number)

VII

He (The Self) of Whom many are not even able to hear, Whom many cannot comprehend even after hearing, wonderful is the teacher (of the Self), wonderful is he who can receive (the knowledge of Him) when taught by an able teacher.

Throughout the Vedic Scriptures it is declared that no one can impart Spiritual knowledge unless he has realization. What is meant by realization? Is it intellectual understanding only? No; it means knowledge based on direct perception. In India often the best teachers have no learning, but their character is so shining that every one learns from them merely by coming in contact with them. In one of the Scriptures we read: Under a banyan tree sat a youthful teacher and beside him an aged disciple. The mind of the disciple was full of doubts and questions, but although the teacher continued

silent, gradually every doubt vanished from the disciple's mind. What does this signify? That the conveying of spiritual teaching does not depend upon words. It is the life, the illumination, which counts. Such God-enlightened men, however, cannot easily be found; but even with such a teacher the knowledge of the Self cannot be gained unless the heart of the disciple is open and ready for the Truth. Hence Yama says both teacher and taught must be wonderful.

VIII

When taught by a man of inferior understanding, this (Self) cannot be truly known, even though frequently thought upon. There is no way (to know It) unless it is taught by another (a teacher who is Illumined), for it is subtler than the subtle and beyond argument.

IX

O dearest, This (the Self) cannot be attained by argument; It is truly known when taught by another (a wise teacher). O Nachiketas, thou hast reached It. Thou art fixed in Truth. May we ever find a questioner like thee.

Knowledge of the Atman or Self cannot be attained when it is taught by inferior men, that is, by those who themselves lack in real understanding of It and who therefore, having no definite conviction of their own, differ among themselves as to its nature and existence, regarding it variously. Only he who has been able to perceive the Self directly, through the unfoldment of his higher na-

ture, can proclaim what It actually is; and his words alone carry weight and bring illumination. It is too subtle to be reached by argument. This secret regarding the Hereafter cannot be known through reasoning or mere intellectual gymnastics. It is to be attained only in a state of consciousness where reason cannot reach. There are seekers and seekers after Truth. Some seek just to make their lives easier or to gain a little power. Others seek out of love for Truth itself. Such was Nachiketas.

X

I know that (worldly) treasure is transitory, for the unchangeable can never be obtained by things which are changeable. Hence the Nachiketas fire (sacrifice) has been performed by me with perishable things and I have attained the (apparently) eternal.

XI

O Nachiketas, thou hast seen the fulfilment of all desires, the foundation of the universe, the endless fruit of sacrificial rites, the other shore where there is no fear, that which is praiseworthy, the great and wide support, yet, being wise, thou hast renounced all with firm resolve.

The teacher, saying "I know that the imperishable cannot be attained by perishable objects", shows that no amount of observance of *Karma-Kanda,* i. e. of rituals and ceremonies, can enable one to attain that which is imperishable and eternal. The Nachiketas fire-sacrifice although it may bring results which seem eternal to mortals because of

their long duration, yet they too must come to an end and hence it cannot lead to the final goal. Then Yama praises Nachiketas because having been offered the fulfilment of all his desires, the knowledge of all heavens and heavenly pleasures, ("the foundation of the world, etc.") in short everything which tempts and bewilders ordinary mortals, he had yet renounced them all and had remained firm and fixed in Truth.

XII

The wise beholding, by means of the highest meditation on the Self, the Ancient One, who is difficult to perceive, who is lodged in the inmost recess, who is hidden in the cave of the heart, who dwells in the depth (of inner being) as God, he casts off joy and grief.

The eternal Self, the Atman, the real man, dwells in the cave of the heart of every mortal. He is called ancient because He is the origin and cause of all manifested life. He is very difficult to realize because of His subtlety; but when the mind is concentrated and turned within, then the mortal beholds the glory of the immortal Self and becomes immortal. That is the goal.

XIII

A mortal having heard and fully grasped this, and having realized (through discrimination) the subtle Self, rejoices, because he has obtained that which is the cause of (all true) joy. I think the abode (of Brahman or Truth) is open to Nachiketas.

The Scriptures give three stages in all spiritual attainment. The aspirant must first hear about the Truth from an enlightened teacher, next he must reflect upon what he has heard until he grasps it. Then by keeping his mind fixed on that, or, in other words, by the constant practice of discrimination and meditation he realizes it; and with realization comes the fulfilment of every desire, because it unites him with the source of all joy and wisdom. Having beheld this, a man learns that all sense pleasures are but fragmentary reflections of that one Supreme joy, which can be found in the true Self alone. Hence It is called the cause of all joy. Yama assures Nachiketas that there is no doubt of his realizing the Truth, because he has shown the highest discrimination as well as fixity of purpose. Therefore nothing can prevent his attainment.

XIV

Nachiketas said: That which thou seest, which is neither virtue nor vice, neither cause nor effect, neither past nor future (but beyond these), tell me That.

In reply to the words of praise spoken by Yama, the Ruler of Death, Nachiketas, the disciple, said: O Revered Teacher, if Thou art pleased with me and thinkest me worthy, then teach me that state of perfection beyond all these dualities of good and evil, pleasure and pain, action and reaction; beyond time, space and causation. These are all born of contact between senses and sense-objects, they are therefore with beginning and end, hence perishable.

I desire to know that which is beyond these, that which is undying and eternal, the essence of all being.

XV

Yama replied: That goal which all the Vedas glorify, which all austerities speak of (lead to), desiring which (people) practise Brahmacharya (life of continence, purity and service), that goal I tell thee briefly—it is OM. (AUM).

What name can man give to God? How can the Infinite be bound by any finite word? All that language can express must be finite, since it is itself finite. Yet it is very difficult for mortals to think or speak of anything without calling it by a definite name. Knowing this, the Sages gave to the Supreme the name A-U-M. What does it mean? It is that which stands behind all articulate sound, the root of all language. The first letter "A" is the mother-sound, being the natural sound given by every creature when the throat is opened, and no sound can be made without opening the throat. The last letter "M" is spoken by closing the lips, which terminates all articulation. As one carries the sound from the throat to the lips, it passes through the sound "U". These three sounds therefore cover the whole field of possible articulate sound. Their combination is called the *Akshara* or the imperishable word, the Sound-Brahman or the Word-God, because it is the ultimate name which can be given to the Supreme. Hence it must be the

word which was "in the beginning" and corresponds to the Logos of Christian theology. It is because of the all-embracing significance of this name that it is so universally used in the Vedic Scriptures to designate the Absolute or the Supreme.

XVI

This imperishable word is indeed Brahman. This Eternal Word is indeed the Supreme. He who knows this Eternal Word obtains whatever he desires.

He who through meditation on this sacred word as the symbol of the Absolute, grasps its full significance, he realizes the glory of God and obtains all desires; because God is the fulfilment of all desires.

XVII

This is the best Support, this is the Supreme Support; knowing this Support, one is glorified in the world of Brahman.

To know this Support or underlying Essence of all being means to know also one's own Divine nature and its eternal connection with the Brahman or the Supreme. Therefore, when the seeker realizes what God is, he also realizes that:—

XVIII

This Self is never born, nor does It die. It did not spring from anything, nor did anything spring from It. This Ancient One is unborn, eternal, everlasting. It is not slain even though the body is slain.

XIX

If the slayer thinks that he slays, or if the slain thinks that he is slain, both of these know not. For It slays not nor is It slain.

XX

The Self is subtler than the subtle, greater than the great; It dwells in the heart of each living being. He who is free from desire and free from grief, with mind and senses tranquil, beholds the glory of Atman (the true Self).

Although this Atman dwells in the heart of every living being, yet it is not seen by ordinary mortals because of Its subtlety. It cannot be perceived by the senses; it requires a finer spiritual sight. The heart must be pure and freed from every unworthy, selfish desire; the thought must be indrawn from all external objects; mind and body must be under control; then the whole being will be calm and tranquil and it becomes possible to perceive that effulgent Atman or Self. It is subtler than the subtle, because It is the invisible essence of every thing; and It is greater than the great because the underlying, sustaining power of the whole universe; that upon which all existence rests.

XXI

Though sitting, It travels far; though lying, It goes everywhere. Who else save me is fit to know that God, who is (both) joyful and joyless?

The Self is all-pervading, hence It is that which sits still, and that which travels, that which is active and that which is inactive. It is both station-

ary and moving and it is the basis of all forms of existence; therefore whatever exists in the universe, whether joy or joylessness, pleasure or pain, must spring from It. "He is in my heart; who is better able to make me know Him than I myself, since He is the very essence of my being?" Such should be the attitude of one who is seeking.

(To be Continued)

REPORTS

The public celebration of the birthday anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna took place at the Vedanta Centre of Boston on Thursday evening, March 5th. The Lecture Hall was crowded to the doors and the deepest interest was manifested in all that was told of the Great Teacher. Swami Paramananda, who delivered the principal address of the evening, said in brief: "Human beings love freedom above all else and whoever helps them to gain this freedom is always cherished. But while we find that among other nations the chief records are of great politicians, great reformers, great social or military leaders, in India, he who has succeeded in bringing spiritual light and freedom, whether king or peasant, receives the highest honor. Such was the one whose birth we are observing today. Although of humble Brahmin parents, illiterate and poor, he started a mighty current in India which is gradually bringing new life to the nation. I do not mean by this that he sought to destroy old India. No; he tried to revive the glory of the ancient land of the Aryans. He brought to India what India

needed. India has a wonderful literature, a wonderful philosophy and lofty religious Ideals, but what she needed was a living example, a living interpretation, and this he gave. He taught the people that their great spiritual Ideals were not mere theories handed down from the past; but actual living realities. He did not come in the garb of a brilliant scholar or leader; on the contrary he was always humble and meek. And his heart was so broad and compassionate that he never uttered a word of condemnation against any creature. He proclaimed universal tolerance not merely by words, but by his life and character. God is infinite, he said, and He has an infinite number of children. For these He has provided many different paths. Why then should we denounce anyone? If we have the right to follow our special path to God, why have not His other children the same right and privilege to follow each his own path or Ideal? His love was so great that although the doctors warned him that he could not teach so incessantly without breaking his physical constitution, he replied: "If I can save one soul, I will gladly give a hundred bodies and bear unlimited suffering". His message was not for India alone. To him this world was one great home, God was the Father and Mother of all, and all the children of the world belonged to one universal family, destined every one to reach the same ultimate Goal, whatever the creed or race or nationality. He passed away some years ago, but the current which he started, the power he set in motion, is still working. Gently, silently, like

the morning dew, which falls on the flowers and makes them burst forth into the fairest of blossoms, so Sri Ramakrishna lived and passed out, without making any effort to change any one or be recognized by anyone. But his influence has gradually spread until today in Calcutta alone between forty and fifty thousand people gather at the head monastery of the Order to do honor to his memory, while all over India earnest souls are celebrating this anniversary. His prayer was always: "Divine Mother take from me all desire for name and fame. I offer all unto Thee. Thou art All-in-All. I am only an instrument in Thy hands.. Not I, not I; but Thou." Such a Soul could not fail to leave behind a power which must have a world-wide influence; for his message can be followed by any earnest heart, whether Christian, Mohammedan, Jew or Hindu."

The day was also observed by the Vedanta Societies in New York and San Francisco.

* * *

During the month of March at the Boston Vedanta Centre the Swami Paramananda conducted two services every Sunday, besides the usual weekly classes. On Sunday morning he gave a series of Talks on the Katha-Upanishad (Secret of Death) which were followed with the closest attention by a steadily increasing number. At the afternoon Service he delivered a special course of lectures on some of India's greatest religious Lights; Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sankara, Sri Ramanuja, Sri Gouranga.

During April the weekly classes and the Sunday morning Service will continue as before; but the meeting at 4 o'clock on Sunday afternoon will be discontinued and the usual Vesper Service at 5 will be resumed.

The latest report of the flood-relief work of the Ramakrishna Mission in India states that out of the four circles in which the Government has divided the afflicted Bhagabanpur Thana, two have been placed in charge of the Mission. In the Contai and Tumluk subdivisions the amount of rice distributed in the month was about 69,000 pounds. The Honorable P. C. Lyon, after inspecting the relief work carried on by the Mission at Midnapore made a personal offering of 50 rupees, and declared in his official report that the work of the Ramakrishna Mission was being conducted with such method and judgment that the public could be assured that their contributions would be utilized to the best advantage. In two of the flood swept districts, "where cold and disease are vying with each other to aggravate the distress," the Mission has also opened medical relief stations which are proving of the greatest benefit.

* * *

A new Ramakrishna Ashrama or Hospital has also been started recently at Dacca in East Bengal under the patronage of the Nabab of Dacca, who has given a building and a sum of money for the purpose.

* * *

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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. III. MAY, 1914 No. 5

One cannot divide the rights of the universe. To talk of "right" implies limitation. It is not "right" but "responsibility". Each is responsible for the evil anywhere in the world. No one can separate himself from his brother. All that unites with the universal is virtue. All that separates is sin. You are a part of the Infinite. This is your nature. Hence you are your brother's keeper.

The first end of life is knowledge; the second end of life is happiness. Knowledge and happiness lead to freedom. But not one can attain liberty until every being (ant or dog) has liberty. Not one can be happy until all are happy. When you hurt anyone you hurt yourself, for you and your brother are one. He is indeed a Yogi (saint) who sees himself in the whole universe and the whole universe in himself. Self-sacrifice, not self-assertion, is the law of the highest universe. The world is so evil because Jesus' teaching "Resist not evil" has never been tried. Selflessness alone will solve the problem. Religion comes only with intense self-sacrifice. Desire

nothing for yourself. Do all for others. This is to live and move and have your being in God.
—*Unpublished Notes of Class Talks by Swami Vivekananda.*

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

The immortal can be reached only by continuous acts of kindliness and perfection is accomplished by compassion and charity. —*Buddha.*

Man is born for mutual assistance. You must live for another if you wish to live for yourself.
—*Seneca.*

The best days of a man's life are those in which he renders service. —*Abu't Tarif.*

These three are reckoned to constitute the highest way of the pious: A man must not offend any one, he must be charitable, and he must speak the truth always. Those great men of highest virtue who are kind on all occasions and who are filled with compassion, obtain the greatest contentment and ascend the highest path of virtue.
—*Mahabharata.*

Love every man as yourself; that is, do not wish him anything that you would not wish for yourself . . . . do not keep in your memory any word or deed he has done against you. . . and then you

will soon see what will come out of that golden rule into your life and heart. What peace! What absolute blessedness! You will be this day with Christ in Paradise. You will taste heaven upon earth. The kingdom of God is within you. He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. —*Father John of Cronstadt.*

Thou shalt not say, I will love the wise but I will hate the unwise. Thou shalt love all mankind.
—*Talmud.*

Of all noble qualities, loving compassion is the noblest. —*Laotze.*

DUTY AND SERVICE

Extract of Lecture by Swami Paramananda

Is there any common standard of duty? In studying the ethical laws of various peoples, we are led to believe that there cannot be any universal objective standard; but there is a subjective principle which underlies the moral codes of all nations. The outward form of duty changes according to our position in life. It can therefore never be defined by any fixed set of rules. That which might be a duty in one condition would not be under other circumstances. All objective duty is determined by a man's relation to his external environment, hence it must necessarily remain relative; but subjective duty concerns only man himself and his character. It has to do, not with his action, but with his mo-

tive; with a principle, not with its mode of application; therefore there can be an abstract law common to all mankind. It may be summed up thus: "That which makes a man forget his own little self for others and leads him towards his Ideal is his highest duty."

It is not possible, however, to reach this abstract subjective ideal without first following the path of immediate outer duties. We must begin by fulfilling the obligations which are nearest to us. First we must perform our duty towards our family, our community, our country; then as our heart grows in understanding and sympathy, we are gradually able to do our share of good to all living beings. But we cannot realize this great ideal and undertake the larger tasks of life until we have proved ourselves by ably performing the small ones at our hand; and no matter how insignificant or unpleasant these may seem, they are the only ones for us. As it is said in the Bhagavad-Gita: "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." Why? Because nothing can be gained by undertaking an alien duty. We must not forget that the purpose of life is evolution. All our present conditions and obligations are the result of our own past actions; and only as we meet them wisely, can we rise to higher conditions and be entrusted with greater responsibilities. We must show ourselves worthy in our present position, then when

we have earned them, greater things will be given to us. We may imagine that we could do better some other task than the one which stands before us, but if it were substituted for our present one, very soon we would find that we were not fitted for it.

In the preliminary stages of our spiritual development, we must faithfully pursue the path of duty prescribed by our life and conditions; then our nature will become so expanded that all feeling of compulsion will cease to exist and every task will seem to us a privilege. When in all our work we are actuated by love, not by a sense of obligation, then duty is transformed into service and we accomplish it spontaneously just for the joy we find in doing it. A sense of duty most often implies limitation, because it springs from a feeling of obligation; but in service we give freely. There is no calculation, no thought of coercion. The spirit of true service, however, never dawns in the heart without self-abnegation and non-attachment. If we would do for others, we must be willing to forget our own little self, our physical comforts, our individual happiness. Only as all our actions are based on the principle of working, not for results, but through love, do we learn to help others truly. A worthy lover of mankind is like a flower which gives its fragrance whether we place it on our head or trample it under our feet. His nature is to give without any regard for his own personal gain or loss.

The story is told of a Holy Man in India who, going one day to a well to drink, found a scorpion struggling in the water. The sight touched his loving heart and lifting the poor creature from the well, he pressed it against his breast to warm and revive it. But no sooner had the scorpion regained its strength than it stung him. The saint placed it gently on the ground and in a moment it fell back into the well. Forgetting that it had done him any injury, again he rescued it and held it against his heart, but the scorpion stung him as before. Still a third time he drew it from the water and gave it the same loving care, wholly unmindful of the harm done to himself. He had reached a state of consciousness where he had realized the ideal preached by Buddha and Christ of loving even his enemies, for all self-love had merged into the great love which embraces all living creatures.

The first quickening in the spiritual life is marked by the awakening of feeling for others. As we read in the Gita: "He who looks upon pleasure and pain everywhere with the same regard as when it is applied to himself, that one is highest"; because this signifies the broadening of the whole nature. As long as our interests remain confined within the circle of our little self, all struggle for higher attainment is in vain, for our position is like that of the man who pulls on his oars without lifting his anchor. That is why all the ethical and spiritual teachings of the world unanimously proclaim the necessity of cultivating selflessness

through the practice of charity and compassion. When we serve for the sake of serving, when we love for the joy of loving, when we act without selfish motive, we become ideal characters. Those who are sincere, pure-hearted, true lovers of their fellow men never hurt any one by thought, word or deed. According to the Vedic teaching: "Doing good to others is the only virtue, injuring another is the only vice". He who hurts no living creature by his thoughts, his words or his actions is indeed a saint and a true representative of religion, whether or not he ever enters a place of worship.

Every act of our life can be done in such a way as to uplift us or to drag us down. It is not what we do, but how we do it that determines the merit of each action. Therefore we must learn to live and work with humility, non-attachment, sympathy and selfless love. When all these are combined in our efforts to serve God and our fellow-beings, then alone we are serving truly. And such service is the highest aim of human life.

He who hates no creature and is friendly and compassionate to all, who is free from attachment and egotism and forgiving; he who is the same to friend and foe and also in honor and dishonor, such a devoted soul is dear to Me.

—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

THE LIFE OF BUDDHA

Fragment of Drama by Girish Chunder Ghosh

Rendered from the Bengalee especially for "The Message of the East"
Continued from March number

Act IV. Scene I

Siddhartha or Buddha (*seated under a tree in the forest*) :—My head whirls; it may be that this body is about to fall. Still the Truth is unattained; the suffering of mankind has not been removed. But so long as life lingers in this body, I must go on searching for the Truth. The flower blossoms with fragrance in its heart and after scattering its fragrance, it withers. Has it any fear of death? Yon towering tree swaying its head in joy as if holding converse with the sky, it too, as I watch it, seems to have no fear of death. The tree shall be my teacher. Heat, cold, wind, rain—it has learned to endure them all; ever the same, never forgetful of its duty. Why then should I forget my task? Let me once more plunge in meditation. Having abandoned all attachment, why cling unto this life?

(*Heavenly maidens enter and sing*)

Lo, my vina, dearly beloved!
Who on the vina can music make?
He who loves it the strings can wake
To melody sweet, as nectar is sweet,
To hundred-fold beauty, to beauty complete.
But Oh! when slackened the strings grow mute.
Over-tightened and breaks the lute.

Strain not the tender strings lest they break.
Deeply he joys in the murmuring strings,
Deep in his heart the music sings
Of him who knoweth this secret well.
But whoso rudely the vina strains,
Alas, his vina silent remains,
Silent, silent remains.

(*As they sing, they disappear*)

Siddhartha:—Sweet music! The singers are my teachers. As thirsting after pleasure is poisonous, so also is torturing the flesh. By neither can one reach the Truth. I shall take the middle path. That is the eternal Dharma (law). If I do not preserve this body, how can I seek the highest? Attachment for the body must be given up; but preservation of the body is essential. I have lived in luxury, I have practised severe austerity, but neither has brought me the desired end. Now let me see what the middle path may bring.

(*He walks and seats himself beneath another tree. Sujata enters bearing a plate of rice and accompanied by her friend Purna.*)

Sujata (*to Purna*):—Look, dear! It is as if the forest god had come in human form to fulfill my desire. Who can that radiant person be seated under yonder tree in deepest meditation? Seven years ago I made a vow that if I obtained a husband after my heart's desire and bore a son, on full moon day year after year I would offer this dish of sweetened rice and milk. This desire has

been fulfilled. That is why perhaps this Deity has come in human form to receive my worship. (*To Siddhartha*) Lord! Accept my humble offering. Bless me that my husband and my son may abide in safety.

Siddhartha:—May your prayer be granted.

(*Sujata and Purna go out*)

* * *

(*Siddhartha enters from one side, the Shepherd from the other*)

Siddhartha:—Tell me, O traveller, whither art thou going in such haste? Wherefore is thy face so sad? Why dost thou not rest beneath the shadow of this tree, for see, thy brow and limbs are wet and weary. Alas! Stop, stop! Speak! Wherefore these tears streaming from thine eyes?

Shepherd:—Why didst thou call me back, Sire? "Stop, stop!" Wouldst thou give thy head for mine? I did not stop even to drink enough to quench my thirst.

Siddhartha:—Why, my friend? What has befallen thee?

Shepherd:—Dost thou not know the king's command? I am a poor fellow. I make my living by these goats. But I must give them all up to the king. If I can deliver them before nightfall, then all will be well. If not, my head must go. Look at the size of these goats—almost like buffalos! When all these are gone, how shall I make my living? That's what I am thinking.

Siddhartha:—But, my good man, what is thy offense?

Shepherd:—No offense except that a great sacrifice is to be performed in the king's house.

Siddhartha:—He will of course pay thee?

Shepherd:—Ha! Pay? If he saves my head! Dost thou know him—the kind of king he is? A king of robbers! If I do not bring the goats, he will burn my village. Without the sacrifice of one hundred thousand goats, his religious feast will not be complete.

Siddhartha:—One hundred thousand lives! Come, my good man; I shall restrain the king. He will not take thy goats.

Shepherd:—What country dost thou come from? Thou dost not know our king.

Siddhartha:—Thou needst have no fear. Come.

Shepherd:—Ah! Sire! Who art thou? Thy sweet words soothe my heart.

Scene II

The Temple of King Bimbasara. The Image of the Goddess Kali. King Bimbasara, his minister and two Brahmin priests.

Messenger (*entering*):—Your Majesty! A strange shepherd is approaching with a herd of goats. And, Oh! what a radiant being! All the people of the town, beholding his wondrous beauty, are following after him.

Priest:—Such a great sacrifice! Many people will be coming and going! Let us begin the sacrifice.

(*Siddhartha enters.*)

Siddhartha:—Hail to thee, King.

Bimbasara (*to himself*):—Who is this? (*to Siddhartha*) Who art thou?

Siddhartha:—I am a beggar.

Bimbasara:—Very good. Let the sacrifice be over, then thou shalt be given alms.

Siddhartha:—I will not receive alms after the earth has been soaked with sacrificial blood. Thou art performing a great sacrifice. Do not refuse a beggar.

Bimbasara:—Minister, tell the treasurer to give him a little gold.

Siddhartha:—My behest is to the king. What can the treasurer give me? I have not come for any other alms than this—grant unto me the lives of these poor animals which stand here ready for the sacrifice.

Bimbasara:—Art thou mad? I am performing this sacrifice that I may obtain a son. I see that thou are dressed like a *Sannyasi* (religious mendicant). Why then dost thou utter such unholy words? Thou art an ascetic, therefore I forgive thee. Had another come thus at this moment, I should have killed him. Go. Sit there quietly and watch the worship of the goddess.

Siddhartha:—Desiring a son, thou art worshipping the Mother of the universe. Why dost thou then kill myriads of creatures? Mother of the universe, all are her children, even the smallest insect. Behold! In mute appeal these goats are lifting up their heads. O King, if thou dost not show mercy

unto them, how canst thou obtain the mercy of the Lord? He who is cruel, the gods are cruel to him. O Lord of men! Why wouldst thou drench the earth by such cruel slaughter? The King's duty is to protect the weak. Weak are these goats. Alas! Alas! Devoid of speech! Else they would cry to thee in piteous tones: "We die. Save us, O Lord of men." King! Living beings, harming one another, sink in an ocean of dire misery. By doing injury no one can earn merit. Can one please God by killing? Sire, be assured of this—no greater sin is there in this world than harming any creature. O Ruler, thou hast no power to give life, why then dost thou take life? The pain of other hearts, try to feel it in thine own. Behold these speechless, helpless goats. They are as anxious for their lives as mortals. They feel the pain of the knife's thrust just as human beings feel it; but they know not how to voice their pain. To earn merit by killing such poor creatures is not possible. Thou art intelligent, realize this in thy heart. But if without sacrifice the goddess will not be appeased, then sacrifice me. For twelve years I have practised severe austerity. If thereby I have earned merit, that I give unto thee, O King, that thou mayst obtain a son. If thou art sonless because of sin which thou hast incurred, willingly I take that sin on me. Take my life, O King, and grant life to all these helpless goats. O Lord of men, this will bring thee blessing; thou shalt obtain a son and escape the crime of killing. Of my own free will

I lay my body on the altar for thy sacrifice, hence it can be no sin for thee. Grant, grant this prayer of an ascetic. O King, do not stain mother earth with blood. For selfish ends kill not countless creatures. Where is the slayer? Slay me for the King's sacrifice.

Bimbasara:—Great One! Ignorant am I. Forgive me by reason of thy virtue. Thy words of wisdom have unveiled my eyes and now I see that there is no greater sin than killing. Thou art the Teacher of the world. Give me shelter at thy feet. I have no more longing for a son. I desire no more a kingdom. I would leave my home and go with Thee to serve Thy feet. Who art Thou? Make Thyself known. I feel Thou art no common man. Do not conceal Thyself from me. O Holy One, make Thyself known.

Siddhartha:—Listen, O King. Beholding the misery of mankind, I have come out in quest of Truth. A king's only son and possessor of vast wealth, I left behind a wife who was as life itself to me. Bless me that my heart's desire may be fulfilled and that I may remove the misery of mankind. O King, mayst thou live in safety! I must go my way.

Bimbasara:—Lord! I shall follow Thee. If Thou dost forsake me, I shall die.

Siddhartha:—O King! Heed my word. Why wouldst thou give up thy kingdom? With love do thou protect thy subjects. If my life is fruitful, if I obtain the rare jewel (of Truth), I promise thee

I shall bring that jewel to thee. Behold, King, time is flying. I can stay no longer.

Bimbasara (*to his Minister*) :—Spread throughout my kingdom the command that no one shall injure any creature. Distribute wealth from out my treasure house. There is no better way to please the Lord than this. My delusion has been destroyed by this Holy Person. Henceforth in my kingdom all sacrifice shall be performed without shedding blood.

REPORTS

Recent letters from India inform us that at the celebration of Sri Ramakrishna's Birthday Anniversary last March between 70 and 80 thousand people came to the head Monastery of the Ramakrishna Mission near Calcutta to do honor to the memory of the Great Teacher. Boats plied up and down the Ganges from 7.30 in the morning until long after sunset carrying the crowds and the greatest enthusiasm prevailed throughout the day. Differences of caste and creed were entirely forgotten and people from all walks in life mingled freely together.

From somewhat tardy reports from India of the celebration of the fifty-second Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda we also learn that more than 25,000 poor people were fed at the different Centres of the Ramakrishna Mission to honor the day. In the districts of the Flood Relief Work carried on by the Mission 3000 poor were given a

feast in one Centre and 1000 in another, besides a special feast for 200 children; while at Almora food and 100 blankets were distributed to the inmates of the local Leper Asylum. The Anniversary was observed in many new places; among these was Bombay, where two large meetings were held. There were also celebrations at Benares, Colombo, Rangoon and Singapore, in Tanjore and Madras, Mysore and the Punjab. In fact, there was scarcely a province of India where there was not something done to mark the day.

At the Monastery of the Mission in Bangalore, the brother of the Maharajah of Mysore was the chief speaker of the occasion. He delivered an eloquent address, saying in part: "We are living in an age of reason. Awakening India subjects her religion to this critical test and desires the eternal truths propounded in the Vedas to be given to her in their pristine purity. Such an establishment of *Dharma* (religion), based upon the eternal truths of the Vedas, has been given by Sri Ramakrishna. We have but to hear of his life to see what a comprehensive grasp of the eternal truths of religion he held, which made him realize God and the Kingdom of Heaven in each religion. If Sri Ramakrishna did this for the world, what has Swami Vivekananda done for it? He was the great apostle of this teaching to the world. The Swami advocated a practical Vedanta, a Vedanta making for a new National Spirit, a spirit of public service, wherein the subjective vision of the One should be trans-

formed into the objective service of the many. Therefore, while in the West one finds him uttering the philosophy of the Vedanta, urging the Western world to meditation, in the East one finds him urging the people to action, to cultivate the spirit of public service, the spirit of social unity and the spirit of social reform whose method is to be a growth from within. He said that our religion properly understood and practised was sound and unassailable and most conducive to human progress. He saw like Akbar, the great Mogul Emperor, no difficulty in Christians, Mussalmans and Hindus alike following their Ideal according to their traditions, historical growth and inherited inclinations; worshipping the same God, though under different names; and living side by side, striving for righteousness, purity and noble living under the same influence of high ideals and creating a new India. Inside the Hindu fold he removed every barrier separating caste and creed by proclaiming the common unity of the Vedic Ideals underlying the apparently divergent practices obtaining from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. Every nerve-fibre of his being tingled with sympathy for the poor and down-trodden; and his large-hearted Soul overflowed with an all-consuming love for India, a renovated and rejuvenated India, which will purge itself of all its long-standing ills and stand out like a lion among the nations of the world, giving culture and religion to all lands, proclaiming humanity, fraternity and peace, and voic-

ing forth the power of divinity in humanity."

At Benares Prof. Shyamacharan Dey, at the close of an inspiring address on the life of Swami Vivekananda, paid the following tribute to the Ramakrishna Mission: "The service of the poor has always been placed by the Mission in the fore-front of its programme of work. To alleviate the suffering of the poor, Homes of Service or Hospitals have been established in various towns of India under the auspices of the Mission. An Orphanage and an Industrial School with an experimental farm attached to it have been established at Bhabda in the Murshidabad district. The Ramakrishna Mission has done yeoman's service in combating pestilence, famine, and the disasters wrought by earthquakes and floods. Its work has secured to it the approbation of the Government and the admiration and confidence of the public. The philanthropic work of the Mission has been increasing year after year, and he would be a bold man who could set a limit to its sphere of usefulness."

* * *

The Fourth Annual Report of the Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Trichinopoly in Southern India contains a gratifying record of progress during the year 1913. The Society maintains a Reading Room of its own and arranges frequent public lectures on religious subjects. It has also started a free Sanskrit School, where instruction is given gratuitously by an able pundit.

Five festivals were celebrated through the year, at which 700 poor people were fed and 36 cripples were clothed. The Society is at present collecting funds to erect permanent headquarters.

We have received word from Palkonda in the Vizagapatam District, India, of the opening of a Poor House, built by the Sri Ramakrishna Tatwa Somaj, an energetic Society founded four years ago for the purpose of feeding and clothing the needy. The dedication exercises began with an imposing procession in which all the officials and leading citizens of the locality took part. At the meeting which followed a prominent government officer presided, and a brief history of the Association was given. At the present time its members undertake to feed weekly some 40 disabled poor and to supply them with proper clothes. Besides this they assemble together every evening to study and discuss the writings of Swami Vivekananda and other great religious teachers.

* * *

The work of the Ramakrishna Mission in Southern India is manifesting great activity. Under the energetic guidance of Swami Sharvananda, who has lately been placed in charge of the Monastery in Madras, six new Centres have recently been established—at Palghat, Calicut and other important points—and still others are soon to be started.

* * *

The Vedanta Centre of Boston hopes to move to its permanent headquarters, No. 1 Queensberry St., about the middle of May. There will be no interruption in the regular meetings, which will continue as usual throughout the month.

At the Sunday morning Services during April lectures were given on "Control of Body and Mind," "Life After Death", "Right Discrimination", "Value of Meditation". Easter Sunday was marked by an especially large attendance both in the morning and in the afternoon.

The following significant statement was made by Prof. Brown of Cambridge, England, in reply to the question why Christian Missions were not meeting with greater success in the East:

"The answer, to my mind, is as plain as the sun at mid-day. Western Christianity, save in the rarest cases is more Western than Christian, more racial than religious; and by dallying with doctrines plainly incompatible with the obvious meaning of its Founder's words, such as the theories of 'racial supremacy,' 'imperial destiny,' 'survival of the fittest,' and the like, grows steadily more, rather than less material. Did Christ belong to a dominant race, or even to a European or white race? . . . . . The dark-skinned races to whom the Christian missionaries go are not fools, and have no object in practising that curious self-deception wherewith so many excellent and well-meaning European and American Christians blind themselves to the obvious fact that they attach much more importance to race than to religion; they clearly see the inconsistency of those who, while professing to believe that the God they worship incarnated Himself in the form of an Asiatic man—for this is what it comes to—do nevertheless habitually and almost instinctively express, both in speech and action, contempt for the 'natives' of Asia."

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Swami Paramananda, known to the Madras public through his six years residence at the Ramakrishna Math here, and also as the author of various works, including a recent scholarly translation of the Bhagavad - Gita has just published a new book, "The Way of Peace and Blessedness". It has the same dynamic ring as his earlier work. "The Path of Devotion," now in its third edition; and no one can read it without feeling a fresh stirring of courage and hope. . . . The English is remarkably clear, fluent and graceful. There are six chapters in all and each one is full of strength and inspiration both for the outer and the inner life. INDIAN REVIEW, Madras.

Its simple and beautiful idealism makes it specially valuable as a book of meditation and as a guide not only to those who are suffering from the care of the world, but also to those who have surfeited themselves with a study of the hidden side of things. —O. E. LIBRARY CRITIC, Washington.

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VEDANTA MONTHLY

The Message of the East



JUNE 1914

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Regular meetings held at the

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SUNDAY

SERVICE WITH LECTURE - - - - - - 11 A. M.

VESPER SERVICE - - - - - - - 5 P. M.

Public cordially invited.

Subjects of Lectures announced in the Church notices of the Transcript, Herald and Record of Saturday.

TUESDAY

TALKS ON THE BHAGAVAD-GITA - - - - 8 P. M.

Open to all

THURSDAY

STUDENTS CLASS - - - - - - - 8 P. M.

For Members Only

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The Reading-Room and Library will be open every afternoon from 3 to 5, except on Sunday.

Books and pamphlets on Indian Philosophy and Religion are for sale at the Centre.

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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.
"Ligh shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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THE PROBLEM UNIVERSAL

Lecture by Swami Saradananda

(Continued from January number)

"Verily, out of Bliss has this universe evolved, and being evolved it lives in Bliss and in Bliss does it go back and is absorbed, know Brahman to be Bliss." This is the conclusion of the Vedas. It follows from this that the knowledge and happiness that we find within ourselves are the conditioned manifestations of the Infinite Knowledge and Bliss. But because they are coming to us through the conditions of time, space and causation, we can see but little of that Infinite Knowledge and get only a partial and often distorted view of it.

Now let us come to the second question: How has it come out? Evolution forms the backbone of the Hindu Religion. Evolution is there through and through in the doctrines of the Vedas. The great philosopher and the father of Indian Pyschology, Kapila, discovered it, and in his system, which is called the Sankhya philosophy, we find the origin and the process of the growth of the universe explained through evolution. The process of cosmic evolution as known and taught by

the scientists of the day, agrees in main with that of the Sankhya system, though of course there is a want of detail in the latter. But there is a great difference between the scientists of the present day and the philosophers of India. The latter hold that if evolution is true, involution must also be equally true; and does not science tend to prove it through her own methods? No force can proceed in a direct line, but comes round and completes the circle, if it does not meet with any resistance on the way and is given sufficient time for it. All force comes round to the place from which it started; and is not that a proof of the fact that if evolution is true, involution must be true, too? If the world has come out of a Permanent Substance, it is sure to go back into It in the long run. This wave of evolution and involution is going on from all eternity, and there is no beginning of this process. How is it possible, you may ask, that there should be no beginning of creation? The question itself involves a big fallacy, for it implies that you want to know the beginning of the cause which has produced this universe; for if the cause is there from all eternity, the effect must have been synchronous with it; and if the effect had a real beginning, the cause had a beginning too. We all know that this universe is relative. We see all these motions and changes in everything here; indeed, constant change or motion is the law of it. Is not time itself a relative thing? What is time but a relative idea that comes to us through the changes that are going on in our minds;

so the idea of space, too, comes in that way relatively. No one can say that the ideas of time and space are absolute, however much they may be ingrained in us. Everyone knows and all philosophers agree that the little child has no idea of distance at all. If we place a red thing before it, it will first put its hand in its own eyes, and then farther and farther away as the idea of distance unfolds through experience from its struggles to get at the thing. Therefore, to find an answer to this question—at what time precisely creation began—we shall have to go beyond time and know that which is beyond time, hence absolute, and that is not possible for human reason.

What is God then? We have seen how the Hindu Sages emphatically declare that the Absolute Essence of Existence can be realized by man when he transcends the limits of time, space and causation. But so long as he is under these limitations, he cannot have a full view of It; he gets only a fragmentary glimpse; and this partial vision of the Absolute is what is to be understood by God. Let us illustrate this by an example. We see the sun above. Science tells us that the sun is many million times larger than the earth we inhabit, and yet we see the sun there as a bright little disc. Do we see the real sun or not? The answer will be that we do and do not. How is that possible? We see the real sun, but not as it really is, in shape, size and nature. Now let us imagine that we are travelling by a rail-

way train or a balloon towards the luminary. With every step in advance, our vision of the sun is changed; we see it larger and brighter. The light and the heat go on increasing as we come nearer to it; then finally when we reach our destination, we see the sun as it is. Therefore, what we saw from the earth was both true and untrue. It was the vision of the real sun, and it was not; that is, it was not the full view of the sun, but a partial one. So is the case with the idea of God. In whatever physical and mental plane man may be placed, he can never lose sight entirely of the vision of the Self, the Witness within, in Whom he is living and moving and having his being. Just as we are seeing the one real sun all the time, so we are feeling the existence of that Eternal, Unchangeable Ocean of Knowledge and Bliss within us, however much the vision may be dimmed or distorted by our surrounding conditions. Wherever we may have been placed through the process of evolution, we have been trying to approach it all the time.

As we evolve higher and higher, our ideas of God also go on developing and becoming greater and greater; and it is in this way that all the various ideas of God have come into existence in this world. Believe me, all these ideas of God are not false, neither are they all suited to one particular mind at the same time; but they will be found to suit different minds in their different stages of growth and development. Vedanta teaches that the idea of a

God immanent in nature and creation is but a partial manifestation of Him. This is Iswara, whose body is this wonderful universe, and whose mind is the sum total of all minds. Do we not find the same idea in the world of thought to-day in the West? Can that idea be possibly grasped by an African savage? Certainly not. He has his own ideas and becomes a fetichist or an animist or polytheist according to his own development. He worships his ancestors, and through the constant push of the ever-flowing current of evolution, his religious instinct expands, and he comes to recognize other gods presiding over the various functions of nature. Finally, as his mind develops and his perception grows keener, he comes to the ideas of monotheism and monism. Why does the Vedantist have not a single word of reproach or abuse for any idea of God, however crude it might be, though he himself worships the One Iswara immanent in nature? Because he is the greatest believer in God and knows that it will never do to force any one idea of the Deity on all, irrespective of individual development; and so he wants to keep intact all the different ideas of God grown through different ages and suited to different states of the human mind. He will never say that the highest idea of God will never be reached by even the lowest man on earth. Everyone is sure to come to it in time. Let him worship, therefore, according to his present beliefs. Let him have his idea and do you hold to your own. Let us all bear in mind that there

is an ever-guiding hand in this universe, a beneficent power which is leading each one of us higher and higher; so that, in the long run, no one will be kept back from the highest stage of development. All the higher ideas of God which have come to any one of us will be the property of all. They will all evolve from out their own real Self, which is the Deity Itself.

The principal point which the Vedantist urges is that all knowledge is within us. It can never be outside of us. But there are barriers which prevent its coming out; and what does education mean but the removal of these barriers? How could you make a child grasp an idea? Only by removing the obstructions that are in its way and the idea will come out and manifest itself. This has been the basis of the modern educational system. Examine the kindergarten method and the different systems which have been discovered lately, and you will find that this is the case. They are not trying to hammer into the child's brain any idea, but they are all the time teaching it the use of its own powers and the knowledge is coming out of itself. You can do nothing else but this. Therefore, it is very true that all knowledge and power are within and not without us. The only thing required is to build up our will to bring them out. They may be brought out by different means, but constant longing alone must be the condition of all these means. They can come out by controlling the mind and by the conservation of energy, which

is the one principle common to all the systems of Yoga. We all know the law of hydrostatics; that if there are eight holes in a bladder and the bladder is full of water, and if you stop seven of them, the water will come out through the remaining one with the combined force of eight. Yoga in a few words is nothing else but the stoppage of the flow of the mental energy through more than one desired channel. Earnest and heartfelt prayers, too, will bring the powers of the soul out. For what can be stronger than the prayers of a devoted mind?

Another point which the Vedantist wishes to urge on us is this—that man struggles not from error to truth, but that he has been proceeding all the time from lower to higher truths, and all these are like so many steps of the ladder of evolution by which he is rising up to the highest. The lower truths, like the lower steps, may not be necessary for one who has risen a good way, but they are unavoidably necessary for those who are still down below. Thus flows the course of evolution, and man rises by catching hold of truth after truth and ideal after ideal, till at last he reaches the end. We have no idea of absolute truth at present. Truth, as it appears to us, is relative; hence we find its gradations from lower to higher and from higher to the highest; and blessed is he who recognizes this fact. His toleration and sympathy and active help to others know no bounds. India alone of all places recognized this truth from pre-historic times, and it is also an historical fact that there

has not been a single religious persecution in this land of toleration. It is here that monism attained its highest stage; and from this land this sublime truth has been and still will be spread all round.

"He is the All and the Over-all. He is the relative and yet He far transcends the relative." The whole universe forms the body of God, the infinite mind is His mind, and in His absolute nature He is the essence of the soul of all beings. He is the God immanent in nature, working in and through all these physical and mental forces, and yet He transcends all. This is, in brief, the idea of God as conceived by the Vedantist. Now comes the idea of man. If man is a part of that Highest Self, that Absolute Being that forms the basis of this universe, what difference is there between God and man? The difference is this: God is almighty, the sum total of all minds forms His mind; whereas man has but a limited mind which forms, as it were, one single eddy in the infinite ocean of mind, and hence he knows but little, and his power is limited. But when he will recognize his real nature, he will be one with the Infinite Deity. The essence of all beings and the essence of God are one and the same. The difference is in the degree of manifestation. The Creator transcends all the limits of time, space and causation which bind the little mind of man. But man will attain to that absolute state as soon as he will feel himself one with Him. This has been proved again and again in the lives of all the great teachers of the different religions.

A beautiful illustration of man's thus gaining the God-consciousness comes in one of the Upanishads, of which I shall give you a free rendering. Two birds having beautiful plumage are sitting on this tree of life—the one above sitting majestic in its own glory and not caring to taste the sweet and bitter fruits of the tree; while the other down below is always tasting the sweet and bitter fruits thereof. As the lower one gets the bitter taste of certain fruits, it becomes disgusted and looks up at the bright vision above and proceeds towards it, overpowered by its glorious light. But the alluring fruits entice it again before it has proceeded far on its journey, and it goes on tasting the fruits as before. Again it gets the taste of a bitter fruit, and in its disgust looks up and is charmed by the sweet vision above. Again it gives up and proceeds on its way. Disgusted and charmed, forgetting and remembering, it thus draws nearer and nearer to the upper bird; when it is close enough, lo! the whole vision changes and it finds itself one with the upper bird. It sees itself glorious and effulgent and the lower bird appears to be but its own shadow. Thus in the two verses of the Upanishad is shown the process of development of the finite individuality of man into the Infinite Self of God —the Oneness, as it has been termed, with God.

The question arises: Is it not Pantheism, what we have been preaching? What if it is Pantheism, if by it I feel the existence of God nearer than by the so-called Theism or any other Ism? There are

different stages of Pantheism. There is one stage of Pantheism which is nothing else but materialism. It teaches that God has changed into this material universe, and everything that we find here is a part of God, and there is no other God except this manifested universe. This is not the Pantheism of the Vedanta. The Vedanta wants man to become identified with the Infinite Love or God and to make him forget his little self entirely. Is this Pantheism? The materialistic Pantheism is not at all a suitable name for the religion of the Vedanta; you might express it better by the word Hypertheism or Supertheism, or something higher than Theism. The God of the so-called Theism is outside this world. Vedanta leads us a step higher and proclaims the immanency of God in and through all this creation and process of evolution, and so we might better term it Hypertheism, Supertheism or Monism. Let us not cast truth away because it has been labelled with the bad name of Pantheism; but let us be humble votaries at the shrine of Truth, wherever it may be found, be it in the Vedas, or in the Bible of the Christians, or in the brilliant researches of Modern Science.

Of the four questions, we have considered the answers of two,—"Whence?" and "How?" The other two remain—"What?" and "Why?" What is this universe for? And the answer comes clear: To take each and every one to the highest point of evolution—that is the end of the universe. To evolve life and consciousness even in the lowest

particle and take it to the highest, the superconscious existence, where man will find no more barriers to his knowledge—barriers which his material body and mind are constantly manufacturing—that is the end of the universe. But why has the Creator projected this universe out of Himself? Necessity He has none, or if He has any, would it not mean a certain imperfection in Him? Nobody can answer this "Why." But this question, too, involves a fallacy. Man has been asking this "Why" from time immemorial. In old times, when his power of thought was immature, he had to satisfy himself by bringing out those crude theories of creation which are to be found in the mythologies of the world. Later on, when his power grew, he put the same question thus: How has the conditioned come from the unconditioned; or how has the unlimited become the limited? We have been forgetting over and over again that in order to find the answer to this we shall have to go beyond and transcend all relativity; because you will find it in the Absolute and nowhere else. Vedanta explains this question from two positions. The one is the standpoint of relativity and the other that of the Absolute entity or the standpoint of God Himself. From the standpoint of relativity there might be a necessity of Theology; but from the standpoint of God, the answer is that there is no universe in our sense of the word. And why? Because God finds Himself to be all these things and knows that He is yourself, myself and everybody else's self, but

knows them not as separate entities. He knows that He it is Himself alone who is manifesting and playing, and there is none else separate from Him, and therefore He cannot be said to be conscious of creation as a separate thing from Himself. Thus arises the doctrine the *Vivartavada* of the Vedanta, which later on, misunderstood and misinterpreted, gave birth to the crude illusory theory of the universe, as we find it in the translations of our Scriptures by Western scholars. The truth is, the Vedanta tries to give no explanation from the Absolute standpoint except that the world is a spontaneous outflow of the Deity, a play of love of the Infinite with Himself.

From the relative point of view there is every necessity of creation as we have seen before, and this relativity will remain true so long as there is this relative vision. The necessity of creation from the human standpoint is to lead man higher and higher till at length he brings out all the powers that are hidden within him, which all of us are going to do some day or other. Let me now conclude with a prayer from the Vedas: "May our mind and speech act in harmony with that Highest Truth. Do Thou, Oh Self-effulgent Light, reveal Thyself to us! May the senses bring and retain day and night the higher light which has been revealed through the Scriptures. I shall speak what I know to be true, and may that truth protect and perfect him who speaks as well as him who hears. Peace, Peace, Peace!"

THE KATHA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda

PART II.

(Continued from April number)

XXII.

The wise who knows the Self seated bodiless within perishable bodies, great and all-pervading, does not grieve.

When a wise man, through the practice of discrimination has seen clearly the distinction between body and soul, he knows that his true Self is not the body, though it dwells in the body. Thus being fixed on the Indestructible, All-pervading Brahman and no longer bound by bodily limitations, he surmounts all fear of death or loss, and is not moved even by the greatest sorrow.

XXIII.

This Self cannot be attained by (mere) 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.

We may imagine that by much study we can find out God; but gathering information does not mean acquiring knowledge. Merely hearing constantly about a thing and gaining an intellectual comprehension of it, does not mean attaining true knowledge of it. Knowledge only comes through direct perception and direct perception of God is possible for those alone who are pure in heart and

spiritually awakened. Although he is alike to all beings and His mercy is on all, yet the impure and worldly-minded do not get the blessing, because they do not know how to open their heart to it. He who longs for God, him the Lord chooses and to him alone can He reveal His true nature.

XXIV.

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 this Atman (Self) even by knowledge.

Yama, having first described what the Atman is, now tells us how to attain It. A man must try to subdue his lower nature and gain control over the body and senses. He must conquer the impure, selfish desires which now disturb the serenity of his mind, that it may grow calm and peaceful. In other words, he must live the life and develop all spiritual qualities, otherwise mere intellectual knowledge cannot help him.

XXV.

Who then can know where is this mighty Self? He (that Self) to whom the Brahmanas and Kshatriyas are but food and death itself a condiment.

This text proclaims the glory and majesty of the Supreme. The *Brahmanas* stand for spiritual strength, the *Kshatriyas* for physical strength, yet both are overpowered by His mightiness. Life and death alike are food for Him. As the light of the great Sun swallows up all the lesser lights of the

universe, similarly all worlds are lost in the effulgence of that Eternal, Omnipresent Being.

Part III.

I.

There are two who enjoy the fruits of their good deeds in the world, having entered into the cave of the heart, seated (there) on the highest summit. The knowers of Brahman (Truth) call them shadow and light. So also (they are called) by householders who perform five fire sacrifices or three Nachiketas fire sacrifices.

Here "the two" signify the higher Self and the lower self, dwelling in the innermost cave of the heart. The Seers of Truth (wise men) as well as householders, who perform fire sacrifices (or follow the path of rituals and outer forms) with the hope of enjoying the fruits of their good deeds, both proclaim that, in their nature, the Higher Self is like the light and the lower self like its reflection. When the Truth shines clearly in the heart of the knower, then he surmounts his apparent duality and becomes convinced that there is but One, and that all outer manifestations are nothing but reflections or projections of that One.

II.

May we be able to learn that Nachiketas fire sacrifice which is a bridge for those who perform sacrifice. May we also know the One Who is the highest imperishable Brahman (Truth) for those who desire to cross over to the other shore which is beyond fear.

The significance of this text is: May we acquire the knowledge of Brahman (the Supreme) in both manifested and unmanifested form. He is manifested as the Lord of Sacrifice for those who follow *Karma-Kanda* or the path of sacrifice and grants all their desires. He is also the unmanifested, eternal, universal Supreme Being, for those who, desiring to go beyond all duality and limitation, follow *Jnana-Kanda* or the path of wisdom. This "other shore" is said to be beyond fear, because being the realm of immortality, disease, death and all that which mortals fear, ceases to exist there.

III.

Know the Atman or Self as the Lord of the chariot, and the body as the chariot. Know also the intellect to be the driver and mind the reins.

IV.

The senses are called the horses; the objects which they perceive are the roads; when the Self, the senses and mind are united, that the wise call the enjoyer.

In the third chapter Yama, the Teacher, defines what part of our being dies and what part is deathless, what is mortal and what is immortal. But the *Atman,* the Higher Self, Brahman or the Absolute Truth, is so entirely beyond human conception that it is impossible to give a direct definition of it. How can we define or even think of that Subtle Self, the Real Existence of this universe, which is unthinkable, limitless, formless, infinite? We may

be told about It again and again, yet we cannot picture It. ´ Only through similies can some idea of It be conveyed. That is the reason why all the great Teachers of the world have given out Truth in the form of parables. So here the Ruler of Death represents the *Atman* or Self as the Lord or owner of this chariot of the body. The intellect or discriminative faculty is the driver, who controls these wild horses of the senses by holding firmly the reins of the mind. The roads over which these horses travel are made up of all the external objects which attract or repel the senses: thus the sense of smelling follows the path of sweet odors; the sense of seeing, the way of beautiful sights; so each sense, unless restrained by the discriminative faculty, seeks to go out towards its special objects. When the*Atman* is combined with mind and senses it is called the intelligent enjoyer, because it is the one who wills, feels, perceives, does everything.

V.

He who is without discrimination and whose mind is always uncontrolled, his senses are unmanageable like the vicious horses of a driver.

VI.

But he who is full of discrimination and whose mind is always controlled, his senses are manageable like the good horses of a driver.

The man whose intellect is not discriminative and who fails to distinguish right from wrong, the real from the unreal, is carried away by his sense

passions and desires just as a driver is carried away by vicious horses, over which he has lost control. But he who clearly distinguishes what is good from what is merely pleasant, and controls all his outgoing forces from running after apparent momentary pleasures, his senses obey and serve him as good horses obey their driver.

VII.

He who does not possess discrimination, whose mind is uncontrolled and always impure, he does not reach that goal, but falls again into Samsara (realm of birth and death).

VIII.

But he who possesses right discrimination, whose mind is under control and always pure, he reaches that goal from which he is not born again.

That man who comes under the sway of the senses and of fleshly desires is unclean, because it is by the thought of spirit, of *Atman* or the Higher Self, that one remains clean and pure. In India, whenever anyone touches a dead body, he considers himself polluted and must bathe. The significance of this is that life is the purifier, and whenever one comes in contact with a thing that is dead and perishable, he becomes unclean. In the same way, when our mind dwells on matter and material things which decay and die, it becomes unclean. So long as our thoughts are identified with such perishable objects, desire for them will drag us down again and again to this plane of birth and rebirth. Until we discover what we are, what our

aim is, why and for what we exist, we rise and fall on the waves of Karma, which we ourselves create. But he whose mind is in subjection, whose understanding is unfolded, whose thoughts are always pure, he reaches that goal from which there is no return.

IX.

The man who has a discriminative intellect as the driver, and a controlled mind for the reins, reaches the end of the journey, the highest place of Vishnu (the All-pervading and Unchangeable One).

A driver must first have a knowledge of the road—which is the right way and which the wrong; this is discrimination. Then he must understand how to control his horses and how to handle the reins. If the horses are uncontrolled, vicious, and unbroken, they may drag him into the ditch and kill him. But he who has firm control over his horses, he drives safely everywhere. Similarly, in this great journey of life, what we need above all else is a discriminative intellect and a subjugated mind, not a mind which wanders and acts under impulse, but a mind which is balanced, well-subdued by our higher discriminative faculty, and senses which are disciplined like well-trained horses. When all our forces thus work in unity and harmony, then alone can we hope to reach the goal of life, that highest abode of the Changeless One, of Brahman (the Absolute Truth).

(To be continued)

DEDICATION SERVICE

With the dedication of its new home on the evening of May 21st, the Vedanta Centre of Boston entered upon a new period in its activities. Five hundred invitations had been issued for the occasion, and although the seating capacity was much greater than in the old quarters, every available space was filled even beyond the entrance doors, and some went away discouraged. Palms and flowers, the offerings of loving friends, stood everywhere, and while the guests were being seated the organ was played continuously. The Swami entered soon after eight and opened the exercises with prayer and chanting, after which he delivered the following address of welcome:

"In the Name of the Supreme Being of the Universe, Whom we invoke by different names, I welcome all friends and guests to this Home, which is dedicated to that All-loving, Universal Spirit. This altar stands here to represent a non-sectarian conception of Deity and the ideal of love, of universal sympathy and tolerance which is so wonderfully set forth in the teachings of the great Vedic Seers, who lived in India ages ago. The Sanskrit inscription on the altar means 'Truth or God is one, men call Him by various names.' This is quoted from one of the most ancient Scriptures of the Indo-Aryans. God, the Supreme Being, the Father and Mother of all creatures, is One. Although we perceive Him under differing manifestations, He is ever the same, Limitless and Unchangeable. That Unfathomable, That Infinite One, Whose children we are, cannot be labelled by any one name or represented by any one form. All religions, all forms of worship are but different paths leading to Him.

"This chapel is not established as a substitute for Christian creeds; that would be contrary to the

spirit of the Vedas and Vedanta, for the keynote of the teaching is: 'By whatsoever path men seek Me, even so do I reach them. All men are struggling along paths which ultimately lead to Me.' (Bhagavad Gita.) True religion never works by destructive methods. This we specially observe in the study of Indian History. Nowhere do we find any effort to proselytize. Although Buddhistic missionaries went out from India to foreign countries to spread the Truth, they never tried to force others to give up their own religion; their idea was to lend a helping hand, to serve as servants of the Lord and to love all men as brothers. My hearty desire and prayer to the God of the Universe is that we may realize this lofty spirit of religion and radiate that spirit in our life; for religion is not a matter of doctrine or dogma, it is a question of living.

"Holding the lofty ideal of unity, harmony and all-embracing love, we now dedicate this altar as a glowing symbol of the Divine, to remind us of our relation to God and our duty to our fellow-men, that we may live and grow in spirit as worthy children of the Supreme. God is the God of all; all are His children, and His light shines upon all. Every human being possesses Godhood intrinsically; and the religion of Vedanta seeks to show each one how to manifest this potential Divinity, so that he may realize fullness of life, and thus bring help and blessing to all who come near him.

"We have with us this evening many distinguished guests, and therefore I do not wish to take too much time. I now have the pleasure of presenting one who is already known to most of you, our honored guest, Prof. Lanman."

Professor Lanman (Professor of Sanskrit at Harvard University) then spoke briefly but impressively of the need of a broader point of view

in the West. Referring once more to the inscription on the altar, he reminded his listeners that the true God can be but one, although each may give to Him his own name; and he said that from various sources he had heard how truly this universal ideal was upheld in the work of the Vedanta Centre. Prof. Lanman closed by repeating in Sanskrit the verse from the Kena-Upanishad: "It is known by him by whom it is not known (because beyond thought). He by whom It is thought, knows It not. It is unknown to those who know and known to those who do not know."

The Swami then called upon Mrs. Adams, who made a deep impression by the sincerity and earnestness of her words. "I am glad," she said, "of this opportunity to tell a little of what the Vedanta Centre has been to me, and why I see fit to supplement attendance at my own inherited church with visits to this other branch of Oriental worship. For of course, all religions have had their birth in the Orient and all at their source have recognized the unity that some of us are in danger of forgetting. Our Christian Leader laid special emphasis on the oneness of all life, and it is for no lack of appreciation of His teaching or of gratitude for its service to me that I come to this Centre. Indeed I should not find Vedanta so helpful if the teachers of it did not reverence Jesus of Nazareth and quote not only from His sayings but from those of all spiritual leaders. I avail myself of the help of the Vedanta teaching as well as of Christian preaching because I need all the help I can get. These are strenuous times for everyone, but I think the strain on women is most severe. We American women are going through a period of readjustment, a transition stage that demands all we have and more, too. Our little crafts are not yet adjusted to the rough weather

which we will meet for the next ten years, and some of us may go on the rocks if we do not carry a spare anchor to throw out to windward.

"Perhaps I can suggest why I regard the Vedanta Centre as one of my spare anchors. Suppose one were riding on a noisy, crowded elevated train, being jolted and jerked here and there, whirled past houses and poles until one grows dizzy, twitched around curves until one has lost all sense of direction, then supposing the train stops with a jar, and one gets out and walks and walks till one reaches the foot of a hill. One climbs the hill and finally at the top stands under the tall pines and looks back at the busy city below. Does one not draw a deep breath of relief and relaxation? Such is my feeling when after a busy day I come into the quiet home of Vedanta. From that pine-crowned hill I look on the miniature trains threading their way through the streets and on the tiny chimneys sending out little clouds of smoke, and it all takes its place as good in the great scheme of things. Even the dots of human beings jostling and pushing each other in their hurry, appear to me just what they are—God's children seeking hither and yon for unity; and, to quote Mrs. Browning: 'I smiled to think God's greatness flows around our incompleteness; 'round our restlessness, His Rest.' A great peace and a great love enter my heart then, not the peace of inactivity or a love to be sentimentalized over and tucked away, but a peace and love to be used in the workaday world. I go back to my everyday duties with renewed love for man, but also—and what is more important to us Westerners—with renewed confidence in the wisdom and goodness of the One Doer. I go not as a soldier to fight an enemy, but as an agent of love working with others for that unification which is, I believe, consciously

or unconsciously the desire at the root of every heart. Such a high hill of refuge have I often found in the teaching so simply and lovingly given out at the Vedanta Centre. Is it any wonder that many busy workers slip away to it occasionally and think of it always with gratitude and joy?"

Professor Adams (of Harvard) followed and told with friendly directness and simplicity of the pleasure he always felt in coming to the Centre because of the spirit of loving-kindness he never failed to find there. He had been brought up, he said, in a non-sectarian atmosphere. It was his father's custom to go now to one church, now to another; and, when asked why he did this, he invariably replied that it was because he gained some special benefit from each one. After such early training, Professor Adams continued, it was easy for him to appreciate the broad note of tolerance which sounded through all the Swami's teaching, and he regretted that his busy life kept him from coming to the Centre as frequently as he would wish.

Mr. Arthur Burnham, introduced as one of the oldest friends of the work, was the next speaker: "Something over twenty years ago," he began, "our interest in the Orient was aroused by the testimony of the Rev. Phillips Brooks to the good life and the wise teachings of the Eastern peoples. He said, 'I have recently returned from a visit to the Orient. What I saw there of the people—their simple trustfulness and desire to be helpful to their fellowmen—convinced me that we must remodel and reconstruct our philosophy and our religion, so as to act in harmony with the Oriental thought and life.' This led me to watch with interest the birth and growth of the Vedanta under the guidance and care of Swami Paramananda during four years past; and tonight it gives me great pleasure to be present

at the opening of this fine chapel as a new Vedanta Centre which—located in the Fenway—is well adapted to its work.

Sister Devamata then gave a brief account of the Vedanta work both in India and America. She told something of the beauty and lofty simplicity of the life of the Founder of the present movement, Sri Ramakrishna, and showed how from the quiet Temple on the Ganges near Calcutta, where He passed His days, there had radiated a power of spiritual renewal and practical reconstruction, which was gradually changing the face of all India and extending its influence even to the West. She passed in rapid review the many hospitals, schools, monasteries and Reading-Rooms, the Orphanage, Industrial School, training farm and various branches of Relief work carried on by the Sri Ramakrishna Mission, of which the Vedanta Centres in this country form a part; and explained, that as telegraphy, although it had dispensed with wires, must still have receiving stations, so these Centres were established to transmit and make definite the currents of sympathy and truer understanding, which must pass between East and West before the world could live out a new chapter in the history of its civilization. The inception of the Boston Centre dated from 1909, when Swami Paramananda, coming to Boston on a visit, decided to remain and teach here. During the first year Sunday lectures were given in a public hall and numerous classes were arranged by interested students both in the city and in the suburbs. A winter in Washington, made necessary by the Swami's health, and the starting of a Centre there interrupted the course of the Boston work, which, however, was resumed in April, 1910, in St. Botolph St., where the Centre found excellent quarters. For four years Services and Classes were

held there steadily. The Swami, during this interval, delivered lectures in various European cities, but during his absence the meetings continued. The field of the Centre's usefulness, it was shown, was not confined to the work of the lecture hall and class room; for through its publication department it was covering a much vaster area. Within three years it had published some 10,000 books and pamphlets and put into circulation one-half that number. It had also started a monthly periodical which was receiving recognition from 140 of the leading libraries of the country as well as from many individual readers in various parts of the world.

The Swami, in his closing remarks, emphasized the fact that the tributes just paid belonged not to him but to all the workers who by their faithful and devoted service had made the Centre what it was. He thanked the speakers for their many expressions of friendly appreciation and goodwill; and he also extended his hearty thanks to all those who had had a share in the making of the new home, first of all to the architect and then to the workmen for the loving interest they had shown in carrying out their tasks. He then called upon all to join him in a silent prayer for the welfare of the work, after which he chanted the benediction.

The guests were then invited to partake of refreshments, chief among which being a Hindu dish of sweetened rice prepared by the Swami himself. Everyone expressed warm admiration for the new home and for the spirit of harmony which pervaded the dedication service. Many lingered on, reluctant to end what had been for all the workers an evening of deep gratification, and midnight was approaching when the last guests left the house.

* * *

The new home of the Vedanta Centre of Boston is situated on the edge of the Fenway, overlooking

the winding waterways of this serpentine park with its picturesque bridges and abundant shrubbery. The house, standing between two corners, has a free outlook to the east, south and west, with the longest frontage (95 ft.) to the south. The Centre has its entrance at No. 1 Queensberry St. It contains an entrance hall and office, a library, a public chapel, a Shrine or private chapel, and the living quarters for the Swami and men workers. The decoration of the two chapels was designed by Mr. Ralph Flint, an artist of rare gifts as well as a devoted member of the work, and their beauty has called forth loud praise from all sides. The beams of the vaulted ceiling and the high wainscoating in the Shrine are of dark oak with walls of dull gold, forming a fitting background for the altar, also of oak, delicately carved with touches of gold, and a reredos in three panels divided by slender columns, carved and finished in antique gold, with a lotus and leaves resting on the arch of each panel and in relief on the central panel the Vedic Symbol of the Supreme and Absolute Being, OM (the symbol for that which in Christian Theology is known as the Logos or Word).

The public chapel, where the Services and classes are held, has a lower wainscoating and woodwork also of dark oak, with walls of a warm grey tone. A platform extends across the inner end, having on one side high double doors leading to the Shrine, which remain open at the Sunday Services. On the other side is the entrance for the Swami, whose chair stands to the left of the altar, which is raised on a second step and is of simpler design than that of the inner chapel, having a low reredos capped by gilded lotus buds, and across the front the Sanskrit text *Ekam Sat Vipra Bahuddha Vadanti* (Truth is one, men call It by various names). On the altar stand two ancient temple candlesticks of great

beauty, the gift of one of the members. Two feet in height, they represent lotuses, the stems and leaves in bronze, the lotus buds and bases in dull-toned cloisonnee. An incense burner of like design stands between. Above the altar is a large symbol, which is declared to be Mr. Flint's crowning achievement, being wholly executed by himself. It consists of a round panel, 2 feet 6 inches in diameter with a narrow carved border edging the concentric circles of lotus petals in relief and crossed by fine gilded rays; at the center, in high relief, a large OM of burnished gold. The background is so wonderfully layed over with silver and colored that it looks like rich enamel work. Behind it hangs an ancient piece of embroidery.

The organ is built into a niche on the left wall and across the entire end of the chapel are panelled oak doors, 10 feet high, which fold back on themselves in such a way as to make the Library and Chapel practically one when greater space is needed. The woodwork and walls of the Library are like those of the chapel. Along one side are book-cases over which hangs a copy of Andrea del Sarto's "Ascension of the Virgin," by Mr. Flint. On the other wall is a large open fireplace and a broad triple window. The Vedanta Community House, where the Sisters and Women Workers live, has its entrance round the corner at 41 Audubon Road.

The first Sunday Service at the new House brought out a large attendance. The Swami spoke on "The Mission of Vedânta," giving a clear and convincing exposition of the fundamental principles of the teaching. His subject the following Sunday was "The Secret of Work." On Friday, the 29th of May, he was also one of the speakers at the annual convention of the Free Religious Association.

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The Message of the East



AUGUST 1914

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Swami Paramananda, known to the Madras public through his six years residence at the Ramakrishna Math here, and also as the author of various works, including a recent scholarly translation of the Bhagavad-Gita has just published a new book, "The Way of Peace and Blessedness". It has the same dynamic ring as his earlier work, "The Path of Devotion," now in its third edition; and no one can read it without feeling a fresh stirring of courage and hope. . . . The English is remarkably clear, fluent and graceful. There are six chapters in all and each one is full of strength and inspiration both for the outer and the inner life. INDIAN REVIEW, Madras.

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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. III. AUGUST, 1914 No. 8

Adopt adequate means for the end you seek to attain. You cannot get butter by crying yourself hoarse, saying "There is butter in the milk." If you wish to make butter, turn the milk into curds and churn it well and then you will get butter. So if you long to see God, practise spiritual *Sadham* (devotional exercises); and then you will see Him. What is the good of merely crying "O God, O God"?

A thief enters a dark room and feels one by one the various articles therein. He lays his hand first on a table and, saying "Not this", passes on. He comes in contact with some other object—a chair, perhaps—and again saying "Not this", he continues his search; until, leaving behind article after article, he lays his hand on the box containing the treasure. Then he exclaims "It is here", and his search ends. Such is the search after God.

If a single dive into the sea does not bring to you the pearl, do not conclude that the sea is without pearls. Dive again and again and you will surely be rewarded in the end. So if your first attempt to see God proves fruitless, do not lose

heart. Persevere in the attempt and you are sure to obtain the Divine Grace at last.

—*From the Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna.*

THE SEARCH AFTER TRUTH.

Class Talk by Swami Paramananda.

It has been declared that without knowing the Truth all study of the Scriptures, all bodily efforts are in vain; and when one has known Truth, all study of books is useless. A man may have studied and collected many facts, but that does not mean that he has knowledge. He may be able to talk about these facts and repeat them, but they are not really his, until he has perceived the Truth which underlies them; and when he has known That, he has no need of these. Those who seek Truth must remember that it is not necessary to read many books. Often it happens that because we have gathered a certain amount of information, we take the position of knowers and try to instruct others; but we do not really know and we only delude ourselves and those whom we try to teach.

There is no such danger, however, when we have a genuine thirst after Truth. Many talk about it and assume a thirst for it, but very few really desire to know. Therefore the Lord says in the Gita: "Among thousands of human beings, scarcely one strives for perfection; and among the thousands of faithful strivers after perfection, scarcely one knows Me in truth." Why is this?

Because, in the first place, there are very few who seek Truth for the sake of itself. We see people who have not the slightest real desire for higher things, but when they meet with sorrow, perhaps their mind gets a little turning towards God; then when their grief is passed, it falls back. Again, among those who do strive, very few have the perseverance to persist to the end. Those, however, who really strive and persevere, they are sure to succeed.

Sri Ramakrishna tells the story of two peasants, one a farmer by birth, the other a merchant, who, failing in his business, had taken up farming. He tilled the soil like the other, but the first year it did not rain, and, discouraged, he returned to his trade; while the born farmer went to his field just the same every day, although for twelve years there was continuous drought. Similarly, there are born devotees. They cannot help loving Truth; and no matter how great the difficulties in their way, they go on and on until they realize it. This does not mean, however, that if we are not born with such tendencies, we cannot attain Truth. What one has been able to accomplish, all can accomplish. The genuine seekers are those who find for themselves methods for spiritual realization, not those who merely get by heart the sayings and teachings of others. They make their own sayings and teachings. Those who only write commentaries on books do not create, but those who discover Truth for themselves, they have the power to create. We

cannot create until we know things for ourselves.

This knowledge, however, does not come, until we have intense desire for it in our hearts. Only when we beg to be allowed to see, then alone God takes us in and gives us the vision of Himself. It was when Arjuna implored the Lord, saying; "If Thou thinkest me able (worthy) to see that (Godly Form), then show me Thine Infinite Self", that He revealed Himself. "But with these eyes of thine" the Lord declared, "thou canst not see Me, therefore I give thee Divine Sight". That Divine Sight comes to each one of us when we have really searched, and sincere searching is sure to bring it. Every one, however, is not fit to receive the Truth. Therefore we must prepare ourselves. We all want to be great, we all want to have power, we all want to enjoy freedom, but these will not come to us until we know the great Cosmic Power that stands behind this universe. In order to know That, in order to be in accord with That, we have to purify ourselves. First we must understand all the forces which manifest through us and make our senses, mind and body act. This body can be used for our highest happiness, for our greatest good. The forces which work through it, if properly directed, can make us godly and a blessing to others. And these same forces can also make us hideous. For this reason has it been said that heaven and hell are within ourselves.

The wise declare that it is foolish for man to talk of higher problems until he has dealt with

his own small limitations. We only deserve higher things, when we have proved ourselves worthy of the things already in our possession. Therefore they teach us to make the best use of the forces now at our command. They say: "Never show yourself weak," "Never let anything govern you." And what is the greatest source of strength in life? Purity. One who practises purity even in mere bodily cleanliness, finds he cannot go below a certain plane. We have formed certain habits and we think we have not the power to overcome them and that makes us feel helpless; but those who know say that we have the power to overcome everything. Everything can be conquered by strength. In one of the Upanishads it is asked: "*Who* can attain Self-knowledge?" And the answer is: "He who has a body that is strong, a *mind* and will that are firm, and a heart that is spotless". For others it is difficult. If we follow *one* road and expect results which are to be attained only along another road, we make ourselves *ridi*culous. So if we live one kind of life and expect to get the spiritual blessing which comes only *rom* a different kind of life, we delude ourselves.

There are two things necessary to practise in our daily living, if we would gain the vision of Truth. These are self-control and purity—purity of action, purity of thought and purity of word. The nature of purity is to illumine; while impure acts or impure thoughts cloud the mind and we do not see anything clearly. Without self-control, also,

nothing can be accomplished. Whenever we are practising a lofty ideal, we may feel very much exalted by it; but unless we can control our mind and senses, this exaltation will go; we cannot hold it. Whenever our emotions are not controlled, it robs us of all our power and dignity. What is the best way to acquire self-control? If we have a fixed Ideal in our mind, it is very easy to practise control by beginning to think of That. Or if a wave of anger rises, we can set a contrary wave in motion and that will overcome the wave of anger. We must always try to bring a counteracting influence in the mind. But the main thing is to be watchful. Anger, impatience, hatred, all these are like thieves. Thieves never enter a house where there is a light. They go only where they are sure that every one is asleep. So these thieves of anger, lust, hatred only enter our hearts when we are asleep. Therefore we must always remain awake.

Through purity and self-control we gain tranquility and the tranquil mind soon becomes firmly established in Truth. Purity implies concentration, for purity means singleness. A substance is pure only when it is unmixed. A pure heart is a heart that is unflinching, that is single in its purpose. A pure mind is one that has become one-pointed. Whenever a mind is controlled by a fixed object, it is concentrated and that mind alone is pure. With such a mind only can we behold Truth. The most necessary thing, therefore, is to purify ourselves, and the first two steps in Yoga (the

science of spiritual development) teach us that this is accomplished by the practice of non-killing, truthfulness, cleanliness, non-stealing, continence, by contentment, mortification, study of the Scriptures and self-surrender to God. These are essential. Just as when we wish to visit a holy place, we naturally feel that we cannot go there without washing and making ourselves clean; similarly, when we take up the spiritual life, we must feel the same need to practise cleanliness both in our outer and our inner life. When we do not keep ourselves and our surroundings clean, we catch disease; so just for the sake of our physical health we must keep the body clean. In the same way, we must observe both external and internal cleanliness for the sake of our spiritual health. We must also be contented, for contentment will keep the mind clean.

Then comes mortification. This is not really the correct word. What is meant is subduing, breaking in the horses of the senses, so that they will not jump here and there and try to get away from us. When this is practised, the senses become calm and friendly. They no longer try to find our weak moments and subdue us. Non-killing is not injuring any living being. When we practise this, our heart grows gentle, full of love and compassion, and we can feel for others. It also naturally leads one to become a vegetarian, yet non-killing does not merely mean being a vegetarian, not taking life. It means not thinking an

unkind thought, not speaking an unkind word; and if we faithfully practise this, we shall find that the mind will become illumined. Truthfulness is being genuine and truthful in every act, every thought, every word; and through this our words will gain such power that they must fulfill themselves. Study of Holy Books is also very helpful.

Even a little practice of these preparatory steps will give us courage to go on. Until we have practised, we cannot help being sceptical and we ask, what is the use of these things? When we have practised, we see the use and we gain confidence. But our faith and our trust in Truth increase only according to the nourishment we give to our spiritual nature. There are two different natures in us which are like two different bodies. The physical body can be nourished by food and exercise, but that does not mean that we are growing stronger; for if we always nourish this flesh and try to sustain our physical nature only, then the other nature grows weaker and weaker, because it receives no nourishment. The food which we get through sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell, only sustains the body and the spiritual man becomes less and less living. When one nature is fostered exclusively, the other dies. But a balance can be maintained. Both can be fostered. The teaching of Yoga always gives us this wonderful lesson,—to acquire balance. Our heart, our mind, our intellect and our body must be kept in perfect balance, then everything will become possible. Nor

is it necessary to retire from the world to do this. No. The Great Seers tell us that just where we are, if we use all the forces God has given us, we shall cross over the whole ocean of ignorance and attain the Highest Truth.

Live a new life. Let not the surface of your heart be disturbed by the thought of your imperfections. Keep your Ideal there; little by little that will purify you and your imperfections will drop off. When things on the spiritual plane become a reality to you, then nothing will be able to shake your faith. So, practise devotion; have faith; whatever you do, do it with whole heart and soul and you will surely gain the Truth.

So long as a man clingeth unto the elements and fragments of this world (and above all to himself), and holdeth converse with them, and maketh great account of them, he is deceived and blinded, and perceiveth what is good no further than as it is most convenient and pleasant to himself and profitable to his own ends. These he holdeth to be the highest good and loveth above all. Thus he never cometh to the truth.

—*Theologia Germanica.*

Truth is the correct comprehension of all things; it is the permanent and everlasting, the real in all existence, the bliss of righteousness. . . . . Righteousness is the place in which Truth dwells, and here in the souls of mankind aspiring after righteousness, there is ample space for a rich and ever richer revelation of Truth. —*Gospel of Buddha.*

LIFE OF BUDDHA.

Fragment of Drama by Girish Chunder Ghosh.

Rendered from the Bengalee especially for "The Message of the East"

(Continued from May Number.)

ACT IV. SCENE III.

(*Siddartha seated under a tree. A woman enters.*)

Woman:—Father, there seems no hope for my son.

Siddartha:—Who art thou, my good woman, and what is thy need?

Woman:—Father, hast thou forgotten thy daughter? I came pleading for the restoration of my dead son's life and thou didst tell me to bring a sesamon seed.

Siddartha:—My child, hast thou brought a sesamon seed from a place where death has had no access?

Woman:—Far have I searched, but there is no such place. From house to house and from cottage to cottage I have asked, but have found not one home where death has not entered.

Siddartha:—Why, then, dost thou wish for the life of thy dead son? Know, my good woman, Time is mighty. Not one can escape from the hands of death. That which all living beings endure, that which none can resist, Mother, why mourn because of that? Endurance is the only remedy in sorrow. There is no other way.

Woman:—Father, following thy counsel, I shall bind my heart about with fortitude. But not only for my son have I come; I came also to see thee.

Yet my son was the delight of my eyes.

(*The woman goes out.*)

Siddartha:—"Ah me, Ah me!" Such lamentations are heard in every house. When will come the day in which I shall be able to dispense the great cure to every living creature? Are all my strivings to be in vain? Hope whispers in my heart, "That cannot be". No; I shall not give place to doubt. By the light of wisdom I shall dispel the gloom of sorrow. I will not give up, so long as life endures.

(*Exit.*)

SCENE IV.

Siddartha (*seated under the Bo tree*):—Today the whole universe seems to resound with bliss. It is as if all creatures were shouting together: "This day the world's misery will be removed". Water, earth, sky, air, all are singing in great joy: "The light of wisdom is about to shine on earth." The strains of music that fall upon my ear are unfamiliar and my mind seems no longer in this mortal world. Where am I? What am I? I am forgetting everything. My heart is reaching out beyond this body into the three worlds. I cannot understand this new sense of awakening. It may be, I shall enter into *Samadhi* (deep meditation) and arise not from this seat until wisdom is attained.

(*Mara the tempter enters.*)

Mara (*to himself*):—All my hopes and all my happiness seem ended. The wretch has again lost

himself in meditation. Alas! What shall I do? Will his ear listen to my voice? (*Aloud*) My dear, thou art son of a king. It pierces my heart to see thee in this state. For whose sake art thou meditating here beneath the tree? Go. Return home. Thy wife is desolate, drowned in misery day and night. Thy father is almost dead. Thy mother writhes in grief. That thing which does not exist, why vainly seek for that? A flower growing in the sky, which no one has ever seen, why seek for such a thing?

Siddartha:—Away! Away! Thou deluding shadow, tempt me not. There, there shines the radiant light of wisdom. With my mind's eye I behold it. I shall gain it and place it in my heart. Ah! Wondrous light! Pure light!

(*Doubt enters.*)

Doubt:—If you want wisdom, is this the way? I do not understand such delusion. For twelve years you have striven, have you gained anything? Have you found your heart's desire?

Siddartha:—Go hence, thou Doubt. Never again shalt thou shake my heart.

Doubt (*running away*):—Who is there? Help! Help! I die! I die!

(*Superstition comes.*)

Superstition:—Look! Look! What a fool he is! Overthrowing all the natural laws of life, setting aside the injunctions of the Scriptures, there he sits meditating to discover a new path. By this great offense he will be ruined. He does not re-

gard God, Brahmän, or Guru (Teacher). Through such egotism never will he attain salvation.

Siddartha:—Away, away, thou who dwellest in darkness! Go! Here is no place for thee.

(*Enter Desire, the God of Lust, and Rati, his wife. They sing*:)

On the blossom is swinging a bee,
My heart in the South wind stirs quiveringly,
The spring bird sings: "Coohoo, coohoo",
O friend, my heart burns hot for you;
Together at play are the lark and the moon,
Oh, where is the loved one—my heart is aswoon.

Rati (*assuming the form of Gopa, Siddartha's wife*):—Alas! Lord of my life, protect me! The fire of longing consumes me. We lived heart against heart, lips against lips, playing always in sweet converse like two birds in a tree. Alas! How hast thou forgotten such heavenly pleasure? Come, Companion of my life! I shall place thee on my heart. Look! All the flowers are drunk with fragrance, the spring breeze is blowing, the birds are singing. Come let us drink deep of the madness of love. Wrapped in each others' embrace, let us forget the three worlds.

Siddartha:—Away! Get thee hence, unchaste creature! As my beloved wife thou hast come, therefore I shall not curse thee. But the seeker of wisdom is never deluded by shadows.

All together (*running away*):—Oh! Oh! Why did we come! A burning fire consumes us.

* * * *

Siddartha:—What is this? Like water-bubbles, worlds by hundreds and hundreds float on the infinite expanse! Luminous and ever more luminous they grow! Who can number them? How many myriads of vast worlds are whirling round and round, guarded by heavenly effulgent sentinels. Different worlds, yet under the one law! How wonderful this law! Light bursts forth from darkness! Inanimate gradually becomes animate! Gross forms melt into ether, and again out of ether the gross is born. Death becomes living and again life is swallowed up by death! A mighty force destroying and rebuilding! Always the same force, acting without increase or decrease. Come to my heart, O Truth! Take possession of me. Go! Go, mortal eyes; no longer have I need of thy narrow vision. (*Through the power of Yoga he rises in the air*). This is Truth! Sorrow, like a shadow, is the companion of life. It cannot be avoided so long as one lives. Birth brings death, this is inevitable. Hatred or love, happiness or misery, all are but varying states of mind. So long as the inner eye is unopened, so long as these changing things appear not like deceptions, so long this dream of pain and pleasure will persist. He who knows this deception caused by ignorance, he ceases to cling to life. The five elements, uniting, create the idea of ego; out of the idea of ego rises the thirst of desire; and pain is the offspring of this thirst. However much one may drink to quench it, still it remains unsated. As the flame

leaps higher when the oblation is poured on it, so desire for pleasure, ambition, greed for wealth, name and fame are like pouring the oblation of butter on the fire of desire. Wise men strive to remove this thirst. With fortitude they reap pleasure or pain as the fruits of their Karma (past deeds). Through abstinence they conquer the senses, and in time this destroys their Karma. When the bonds of Karma are broken, purity claims them as her own. Thus they transcend all limitation and ignorance fades like a dream. This incomparable state, coveted by the gods even—freedom from decay and death—to this jewel of Nirvana they attain. I have found it! I have found it! From the ancient Enlightened Ones I am descended. No name have I! Nor birthplace! No caste, creed or color! Light of wisdom! Everywhere the light of wisdom! No more darkness!

(*A band of heavenly singers enters and sings.*)

Men:—Earth, water, ether, sun and air, sing in deep melody.

Maidens:—Arise! Flower, creeper, beasts and birds, sing with new life.

Together:—Today is a blissful feast!

Men:—Evil dreams are gone. Night is ended. The sun of wisdom has risen and smiles upon the earth.

Maidens:—For the sake of the poor and lowly, He became poor and lowly, living alone under a tree.

Men:—Ever intoxicated with a lofty ideal and giving eternal Truth.

Maidens:—Oh! Lark of my life, be lost by drinking the nectar of His feet.

Together:—Today is a blissful feast.

ACT V.—SCENE I.

(*In the Forest. Siddartha and Kashyapa enter.*)

Kashyapa:—Where art thou going, traveller, in this home of cruel and lawless robbers? Go back, else thou wilt lose thy life. They regard me as an ascetic, hence they do not take my life; but I have no power to save thee. Seeing thy beautiful, radiant form and the mark of royal lineage on thee, thy garment seems merely a disguise. What can I say more? That it is a disguise I am sure, for the marks on thy body show me that thou art a king's son. Thy dress is strange indeed, for no order wears a dress like this.

Siddartha:—Good Sir, after much labor I have gained a priceless treasure. The robbers wander in quest of earthly riches and commit countless crimes. I shall remove their sin by bestowing upon them my priceless treasure.

Kashyapa:—Thou hast come to give a treasure to the robbers?

Siddartha:—King or peasant, poor or wicked, on all shall I bestow this treasure. To whomsoever I may see, I shall give it. For this I wander from land to land.

Kashyapa (*to himself*):—Is he mad? (*Aloud*)

Why dost thou not give this treasure unto me?

Robbers (*from without*):—Come, come, catch him. Bind him. He has money.

(*Robbers enter.*)

Siddartha:—My sons, I am coming of my own accord. What need to bind me? Yet, if you desire it, then bind me. I have naught against it. But fulfil my heart's desire, my sons, and take the treasure I have brought you.

Robbers:—Where? Give it. Where is thy treasure?

Siddartha:—To give the jewel of wisdom, for that I am come. Take this treasure, all who have need. It dispels the night of ignorance. It frees the heart from all delusion. Behold! Human beings running here and there in search of happiness; yet, think, who is truly happy in this world? Some imagine there is happiness in wealth, some in a woman's face. Ignorance ever leads them on in vain quest of happiness. But where is happiness? In the end, all enter the jaws of death. Wealth, position, beloved wife, naught escapes. Why then toil on in vain? Wherefore gather riches? Why live like wild beasts in the forest? Every second time is stealing your life away. Why do you strive so tirelessly only to earn despair? The wheel of time is ever revolving. Tell me, who is whose? Creatures floating in the sea of misery! Yet the deluded mind, forsaking the eternal treasure, seeks to gratify sense desire. How long will your sight be blinded? Open your eyes and be-

hold the eternal treasure. Give up the non-eternal. (*To one of the robbers*) Under the sway of *Maya* how much dost thou endure! Why burn night and day in the fire of desire? Never can this thirst be quenched. The fruits of Karma will ever greater grow. (*To all*) Ever must you turn on sorrow's wheel. Come to this new kingdom, where peace eternal reigns. There no fear of death, disease, or sorrow. Ever blissful! No temptation! There the insect jealously does not sting. Nor does ambition drown one in the sea of misery. There, in the midst of highest joy and heavenly light, one attains eternal life.

Robbers:—What! What does he say? Does he know some spell? Has he any power? I seem unable to walk. What dost thou say, Sire? There is no death? Is there any fear of prison?

Siddartha:—A free soul! Where is fear for him? No bondage, no anxiety, all is bliss. An ever-blissful home. That is the realm of eternal happiness. All desires fulfilled! Unbroken peace reigns in the heart.

Robber:—My Lord! I take shelter at thy feet. Save me from this great fear. Day and night, asleep, awake, I am frightened by every footfall. The rustling of the leaves makes my heart tremble. The prison ever dances before my eyes. Every moment royal sentence rises before me. My Lord! Save me from all this terror! (*To his companions*) Unbind these men! No more let cruelty and hatred exist among us.

Siddartha:—Receive, receive new Sight. Behold! Sound, touch, sight, taste, smell, all playing! Foolish egotistic mind! It thinks all is done by it. Maddened by sense desire, it commits hundreds of sinful acts and suffers the fruits of its own deeds. Be not deluded, no longer be deluded by the senses. Be not drunk with desire of pleasure. Thou shalt obtain unbroken bliss. "Non-killing is the highest virtue." Hold this in thy heart. No one then will injure thee. Give up doubt. Make thy heart a shrine of purity. Then all mortal fear will vanish.

Robber:—My lord! My lord! I am thy servant. Thy grace has saved me from the ocean of despair.

REPORTS

The following letter has recently been received from an earnest student of Vedanta in Geneva;

"It is with great pleasure that I send you a short report of Swami Paramananda's visit to Geneva, where he arrived from Paris on the evening of June 30th. The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of July the Swami gave three afternoon Talks and held two evening meetings, which were regularly attended by a deeply interested audience numbering about 40 people. Some children always came to the afternoon meetings. The peace and harmony which reigned at every gathering seemed to grow intenser each time the Swami came among us, and we are most deeply grateful for the illuminating teaching of Vedanta, which satisfies both heart and brain and gives joy in the performance of daily

duties. Between the meetings the Swami's time was much taken up by interviews and visits from enquirers. He left for Gryon on July 4th and we are looking forward to a longer visit from him later, when regular lectures and study groups will be organized."

* * *

At the Vedanta Centre of Boston all the regular meetings continued without interruption through July and were well attended. A number of strangers came and expressed deep interest in the teaching. The subjects at the Sunday lectures were: "The Message of Vedanta", "Sleep and Samadhi", "Evil and Its Remedy", and "The Power of Non-Resistance". During August the Thursday Class and the Monday Afternoon Reception will be discontinued, but the Sunday Morning Service and the Tuesday Evening Class will be held as usual.

* * *

We extend a hearty welcome to the new monthly magazine started by the monastery of the Ramakrishna Mission at Madras. Two numbers have appeared and the spirit and energy manifest in them justify the name chosen—The "Vedanta Kesari" or "Lion of Vedanta". They contain a variety of interesting and instructive reading-matter and we have no doubt that the new publication will become one of the strong organs of the Mission. (Subscription, $1.00 a year.)

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The Message of the East



SEPTEMBER 1914

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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. III. SEPTEMBER, 1914 NO. 9

Until our meditative nature is awakened, we cannot perform any task ably. The unmeditative mind is fickle and unsteady, it sees nothing clearly and mistakes are inevitable. It is not easy for one who has not gained understanding of his higher nature to live and do his work with calmness and efficiency; but he who has this understanding will never be disturbed. Even a great sorrow cannot overwhelm him. Therefore it is said that true strength and happiness come to that one alone whose heart is tranquil and firmly established in the knowledge of the Divine; but this knowledge cannot be acquired without the practice of concentration and meditation. To become meditative, however, it is not necesary to retire from the world or to give up all duties and activities. We have only to perform each act with intelligence, composure, perseverance and steadfastness. We must make our senses work under us, instead of serving them like slaves. We must not be driven about by the uncontrolled forces of our nature, but must gain complete mastery over them through right thinking and through contemplation.

When our mind has learned to rest in the Supreme; when we have awakened to the consciousness of union with Him; when it becomes second nature to us to feel God with us in all our acts, in all our thoughts, in all our life; when our whole heart, soul and body are consecrated to Him and become instruments in His hands—that is the highest goal. The man who attains this is free. Nothing can touch him, nothing can bind him. Now we are running hither and thither after little fragments of happiness; but when we have laid hold upon That which is to be found only within ourselves, we have found the remedy for all our ills and imperfections.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

In the course of meditation one needs to be merged in the Lord. If one floats on the surface, one cannot hope to reach the precious stones lying at the bottom. . . . Very few realize that the end of human life is to see God.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

The One, better than intellect, from whom all things flow, and to whom they all ultimately tend, is the Good. The Universe belongs to the Deity, and He will not neglect what is His own. . . The end and aim of all things should be to attain to the First Good. —*Plato.*

They (work, love and play) all leave us rudderless and unsatisfied without prayer. They can attain creative power only in Worship, which—

inchoate or full-formed—is the source of all originality, because it sends us to our origin. The harder we work and play and the more intensely we devote ourselves to whomever and whatever we love, the more pressing is our need for orienting, recommitting, refreshing ourselves in an appeal to God. For worship is the conscious love of the Spirit of the Universe, and we need it regularly like food and sleep.

—*Richard Cabot.*

Those whose hearts are in a state of repose give forth a divine radiance, by the light of which they see themselves as they are. And only by cultivating such repose can man attain to the constant. Those who are constant are sought after by men and assisted by God. —*Chuang Tzu.*

First is a speaking of God in the essence of the soul, for here God alone dwelleth and also alone speaketh. But God speaketh therein when the soul setteth aside all that is created, bringeth her power to silence, and hath a vision into the groundwork of her pure essence. In this pure and silent soul now God the Father speaketh, and she heareth His voice. —*John Tauler.*

After having subdued by sleep all that belongs to the body, he, not asleep himself, looks down upon the sleeping senses. . . In that state the person is self-illuminated. And when (it is said that) there (in sleep) he does not see, yet he is seeing, though he does not see (with the eyes). For (the power of) sight is inseparable from the

seer, because it cannot perish. But there is then no second, nothing else different from him that he could see. An ocean is that one (inner) seer, without any duality: he dwells in Brahman (the Supreme). This is his highest goal, this is his highest success, this is his highest world, this is his highest bliss. All other creatures live on a small portion of this bliss.

—*Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad.*

SLEEP AND SAMADHI

Lecture by Sister Devamata

Sleep is not merely a physiological fact. It is something more than a simple state of inactivity, a time of passive forgetting. It has a deep spiritual significance and value. When, for reasons which cannot be discerned on this plane of consciousness, the individual soul came out from the Absolute, and plunging down into matter, began its weary ascent up from the protoplasmic cell back to the Absolute again, the all-loving, all-watchful Divine Mother knew that unless once at least in the twenty-four hours that striving soul touched the Supreme Soul, it could not live and go on its journey; so she laid upon it the blessing and obligation of sleep. Sleep is the call of the Mother to each child to come home from toil or play and rest close to Her Divine heart, until it is recharged with life and ready to take up again its task of unfoldment. It is Nature's chief restorative, the refuge she offers to every creature.

We see this pre-eminently among the lower animals. When they are weak or suffering, do they not always creep away into some hidden spot and go to sleep? They do not know why, but a dumb brute instinct tells them that they must hurry back and touch anew the source of their life. Among human beings, too, the great majority demand long periods of rest. How often do we hear people declare: "I cannot keep well and do my work unless I have eight or nine hours of sleep." But what they really feel the need of is not sleep, but the results of sleep,—the replenishing of their vital energies and they have not discovered that this can also be accomplished in other ways. The actual question for us is not: How much do we need to sleep; but, How can we reach the main reservoir of strength as well in waking as in sleeping? Or in other words: How can we learn to do consciously and voluntarily that which so long through sleep we have been doing involuntarily and unconsciously?

What happens when we fall asleep? The first thing is, we forget our body and bodily conditions. A man may be racked with pain, he may be beset with great anxiety or affliction, but he drops asleep and the hurt is gone. And we who stand facing the stress and difficulties of our complex life, can we not learn to do this at our will? If sleep or some drug can do it for us, why not find the way to do it for ourselves? This is the lesson which the Vedas teach when they tell man

to detach himself from his body. These nerves may quiver with pain or pleasure, but why identify ourselves with them? Rather look at them and say: "This is only a fleeting sensation in the body, but I am no more the body now than when I am asleep. Therefore, at this moment, let me fall asleep to this bodily condition and awaken to the mind, like a man who goes to sleep and dreams. As he may forget he is a pauper and in dream become a king, so I will create a new mind-world; and when the body brings a weak or painful thought, I will counteract it by a thought of strength, of cheerfulness and courage."

But suppose all dreams cease, what follows then? A deeper sleep. The restless activities of the dream-realm vanish, the whole mind grows still and man enjoys perfect rest. Why not try to reach that state in our hours of waking by detaching ourselves also from the changing mind? Let us watch its play of moods and say: "It is true, foolish mind, you have these little waves of anger, these waves of worry and distress; you feel out of sympathy, you criticise and condemn, but you are only a small part of me. Why should I, who am the greater, go your foolish way? No, I will choose a wiser path, a path of calmness, a path of steadiness, of such unwavering trust in a Supreme Guiding Power that I shall remain unshaken even when you are disturbed and falter." If we can thus cultivate the habit of standing like a witness, looking upon the ever-shifting panorama

of the mind as upon so many moving pictures, soon its troubled surface will grow quiet and we shall pass into a state of conscious dreamless sleep. Then, as in sound sleep, this outer shell which is born and dies, which gains and loses, which suffers and enjoys, will be forgotten. But are we gone? Is it a death-like state, a state of annihilation? Each one can answer for himself. When a man has been in sound sleep and awakes, is he not rëanimated? Could that be, if he had touched death? Life does not come from death. Is his mind clear? Then thought has not been annihilated; for clearer vision comes from thinking, not from mental blankness. Has he new hope and courage, as man always has when he rises from refreshing sleep? Then he has not returned from a region of dull hopelessness. The condition of sound sleep, then, cannot mean a suspension of activity, a blotting out of consciousness, but the passing into a subtler form of activity and thought, a withdrawing from the outer to the inner, from the many to the One, from the manifested to the Power that manifests. And only because man has touched that Power seated in his heart does he come back recharged with life and energy.

But when the individual ceases to be a detached part and becomes one with the Whole, when his entire organism seems unified and all the warring forces flow in one homogeneous current, what is that state? It is the state of *Samadhi* or super-

consciousness. And by the loving provision of the Divine Mother we attain this state unknowingly once at least in every day, when we sleep soundly. It is the state of new life; without it we are dull and heavy. It is the state of new joy; without it we are sad and soul-weary. It is the state of new light; without it we grow blind and fall. And is it not then the state which every man must work for? It cannot be left a matter of chance; it is something which he should hold within his grasp at every moment. No human being can for one instant afford to be disconnected from his Source. If you knew that here was the only pure water in the universe, would you leave it? No; you would build your house beside it and you would call out to others to join you, until a city would spring up around you. If you had been told that in one spot only was there pure air and everywhere else was death, would you not always keep the road open to that place and never wander far enough away not to be able to return! Similarly, if you believe that there is one Source of life, one Source of knowledge, one Source of bliss, should you not discover for yourself the road to It and the way to travel that road? That is why the great Vedic Rishis constantly call to every man: "Go within. Find your true nature, the Divine Essence of your being. Identify yourself with That, for until That is found, danger threatens you on every side."

Be not content to sleep eight or nine hours out

of the twenty-four, but sleep every moment the sleep which means contact with the Source. Let all your life be a waking in the sound sleep state and a sleep in the hours of waking. Let the thread of your consciousness bind you unceasingly to the Centre. But, you will say, surely there is a difference between sound sleep and *Samadhi;* otherwise, why are not all men illumined when they wake? A great teacher in India once defined the difference to me thus: A man when he falls asleep, is like one who backs into a room; his face is turned towards the door and his back to all that is in the room; therefore he sees only what is outside and nothing inside the room. The man who goes into *Samadhi,* on the contrary, is like one who enters face forward; he sees everything in the room and what is left behind is not visible to him. So it is with us. We go into the state of sleep always with our senses pointed outward to the world. We drop asleep thinking of our worldly griefs and worldly needs, of all the things which concern this little outer man; and when we wake, our thoughts are still pointed in that direction and we have no consciousness of the place where we have been. Yet we have been there just the same and have had the benefit so far as we could without seeing it. The proof is that we come back refreshed. When, however, a man goes into *Samadhi,* he goes with the whole soul quivering for God. Every fibre of his being is turned Godward, his inner eye is strained to perceive Him; so he quickly loses sight

of what is left behind and sees only what is there. Which one gains the greater good from his visit to that room? Which one is able to bring back the richer store of new strength and power? There can be no doubt as to the answer. We have only to look at the contrasting lives of the sense-bound worldling and the God-illumined prophet to divine it.

That which we have been doing like dumb animals, is it not time for us to begin to do as wise men? The whole lesson has been set before us. We need not search the Scriptures for it, or go to a mountain cave to learn it. We have only to study what we do once at least in every turn of the sun. There the lesson is written out clearly for us and we have been repeating it all the while automatically and without understanding. Now the time has come for us to repeat it intelligently and at our will. But we cannot master the whole of it at once. We must begin gradually. Let us first try to detach ourselves from the tyranny of this body. As we drop our physical ills and discomforts at the hour of sleep, so let us learn to drop them out of our waking consciousness. At present we add to their power and reality by constantly dwelling on them; whereas, if we kept our attention fixed less on our bodily states, many of them would pass unperceived. Also the body would be stronger, for constant thought turned on it wears and weakens it. It needs to be left to itself, as children do. Give it necessary simple care and then

forget it. Do not always be a body. Sometimes be a soul, or even a thinking mind.

This does not mean, however, dwelling in the memory or imagination. A wholesome mental life does not consist in constantly feeding on one's own experience and opinions, or on those of others, but in passing beyond the petty personal plane to larger problems and forming habits of original thought. Everyone can do this who has the desire and determination to go to the origin of things. The value of memory is much over-rated. Remembering too often clogs the mind with useless material and becomes a serious obstacle to concentration. It makes man retrospective rather than introspective. The enlightened man has no need of memory. It is necessary only to the little man. He is like a poverty-stricken housewife, who saves every small bit of cloth for some future garment; or like one who lives far from the spring and must store his water in rows of pails. It is because we do not keep in contact with the Source that we attach such importance to collecting facts and experiences. Let us touch That and we have just the knowledge we need at every moment without the aid of memory.

There is in the world one Supreme Consciousness. As that Universal Consciousness trickles down through the narrow channels of the senses, we call it sense-perception; as it runs in broader stream through the mind, we call it thought; when it flows through the intellect, we call it reason or

discrimination; as it pours in spontaneous current through the heart, we call it moral beauty; but when it passes through no one limiting channel, but manifests itself pure, undivided, single, then it is *Samadhi* or the state of complete illumination. When this is reached, light floods the whole organism and every faculty attains its highest efficiency. Then alone is man's education complete. Every living being is travelling towards that goal, but each one of us may by our choice make the journey a long or short one. We may linger content and sense-bound in the dim cave of this body, we may grope our way about in the deluding twilight of the mind, or push on into the clearer light of intellect or reason, but never shall we stand in the full daylight until we develop our superconscious faculties. With those only can we see "face to face." Nor need we fear that we shall then belittle or neglect this outer physical shell. Do we find the master-workman throwing away his tools? As his skill increases, does he not discover new possibilities of usefulness in each one? So will it be when we become master-workmen of this life. Far from despising this instrument of the body, mind and senses, we shall for the first time understand its true use and worth.

When we thus come into conscious possession of our whole being and learn to live in unbroken contact with our Source, we shall find within us an inexhaustible store of refreshment. We shall be like a man with an unlimited bank account. The

poor man carries all his earnings in his pocket, but the multi-millionaire can afford to go about with only a few cents on his person, because he knows that he may always draw upon his bank. So will it be with us. When we have established a conscious connection with that Divine Power within, we shall never lack for anything. If a perplexing problem confronts us, we shall have just the wisdom necessary to solve it. Is there an unexpected call upon our strength? We shall have more than enough for the occasion. Does some one turn to us in trouble or perplexity? By a look we can pierce to the core of his heart and understand his need better than he himself.

Such is the power for help and blessing latent in each of us. Have we the right then to go on in heaviness and darkness, asleep although we believe ourselves awake? No, let us rouse ourselves from this little sleep and begin to master the secret of that larger sleep. You may say: "I have not the time." Then leave your daylight hours as they are and begin merely with your hours of rest. Take five minutes night and morning from your bodily sleep and spend it in spiritual practice. If before you lose consciousness at night, you can fix your mind on higher thoughts, all your sleep will be like a meditation and your whole system will be renewed not only physically but spiritually. Then when you wake, do not throw away the real benefit of your sleep by at once loosening your hold on the inner and seizing the outer. Rather tighten your grasp, by directing your first waking

thoughts toward the Supreme Fountainhead of all life and consciously uniting every part of your being with Him. Make it a rule never to let your worldly concerns enter your mind until you have filled it full of God by prayer and meditation. At the close of a few days take another five minutes from your rest, then another, until without perceiving it, you will have transmuted at least one hour of sleep into an hour of meditation.

Through such simple practice the entire organism will become refined and purified, a sense of lightness will replace the heaviness which now so often overpowers us, and we shall suffer less from fatigue. Also the mind and nerves will be quieter, each task will be done with less strain and friction; there will be in consequence less waste of energy and the system will no longer demand so many hours of rest. We find this among those who have attained a high spiritual development. While others sleep, they meditate; yet they show no signs of wakeful weariness. More than all else, a new world will open before us—a world of spiritual joy and beauty. And as by our higher vision we begin to discern the God within all things, we shall feel that those around us who live unconscious of that Presence are really sleeping, while only those truly wake who walk with all their superconscious faculties alert; for as the Bhagavad-Gita says: "That which is night to all men, therein the self-subjugated remains awake; and in that where all beings wake, that is night for the Knower of Self."

THE KATHA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda

PART III

(Continued from June Number)

X

Beyond the senses are the objects, beyond the objects is the mind, beyond the mind is the intellect, beyond the intellect is the great Atman (Self).

XI

Beyond the Great is the Unmanifested; beyond the Unmanifested is the Purusha (the True Self); beyond the Purusha there is nothing. That is the end, that is the final goal.

In these two verses the Teacher shows the process of discrimination, by which one attains knowledge of the subtle Self. Beginning with the sense-organs, he leads up to the less and less gross, until he reaches that which is subtlest of all, the True Self of man. The senses are dependent on sense-objects, because without these the senses would have no utility. The mind, in turn, is superior to sense-objects, because unless these objects can appeal to the mind, they cannot influence the senses. Over the mind the determinative faculty exercises power; this determinative faculty is governed by the *Jivatman* or individual Self; beyond this Self is the Great Unmanifested Nature (*Prakriti* or creative force), and above this is the *Purusha* or Supreme Self. Than this there is nothing higher. That is the goal, the Supreme Abode of Peace and

Bliss. One who has found this, has found everything.

All great Teachers, therefore, declare to man: "Know Thy Self." "Thou art that which thou art seeking." That Treasure for which thou art searching is within; or, as Christ said: "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." This is the watchword of all the sages. Man must go beyond his lower self. If he wishes to gain a vision of the True Self or God, he must first control his grosser, outgoing forces. The ordinary man, like the animal, finds the greatest pleasure in the gratification of his sensual appetites. As he rises from the brute plane of bodily enjoyment to the higher plane of mind, his discriminative faculty awakens and he begins to perceive and delight in subtler things,—books, science, invention, art. Then the mind, growing still finer, learns to find its joy in spiritual pursuits. When, through the thought of spirit or God, his intellectual perceptions become purified, he obtains a vision of the Supreme and finds completeness of life.

XII

This Atman (Self), hidden in all beings, does not shine forth, but It is seen by subtle Seers through keen and subtle intellect.

It may be asked: "If It dwells in all living beings, why do we not see It?" Because the ordinary man's vision is too dull and distracted. It is only visible to those whose intellect has been purified by constant thought on the Supreme and

whose sight therefore has become refined and sharpened. This keenness of vision comes only when all our forces have been made one-pointed through steadfast practice of concentration and meditation.

XIII

A wise man should control speech by mind, mind by intellect, intellect by the great Jivatman (individual Self) and that by the Peaceful One, the Paramatman (Supreme Self).

Here Yama gives a practical lesson in the method to be followed if one wishes to realize the Supreme. First a man must control his outgoing senses by the mind. That is, he must practise discrimination and not waste his energies on non-essential things. Having indrawn his sense-powers, he must next collect his entire mind, which is scattered here and there, and indraw it into the depths of the heart. This is always the process to be followed in the practice of meditation. The mind must be collected from senses and sense-objects and attached to the intelligent, illumined *Atman* which dwells within; and when the whole heart and soul are focussed upon that *Atman,* then one becomes illumined.

XIV

Arise! Awake! Having reached the Great Ones (Illumined Teachers), gain understanding. The path is as sharp as a razor, insurmountable and difficult to pass over, so the wise declare.

The sages call to us: Awake from the slumber of ignorance, which makes you think you are a man, dependent on mortal things, that you are subject to disease and death and all imperfections. From that dream awake and arise. Go and find out those who know about the Self, because only those who have had direct perception of It can tell truly what It is. This Knowledge is not a matter of book learning, it is based on experience. Therefore seek out those who know, receive their instruction and blessing, and follow them faithfully. The sages declare the path to be as sharp as the blade of a razor; therefore one needs watchfulness, faithfulness, steadfastness and strength. No sleepy person, no dull, lazy, lifeless person, can attain that *Atman,* which is within. One must be strong, wakeful and determined.

XV

Knowing That (the Atman) which is soundless, touchless, formless, undecaying; also tasteless, eternal and odorless; beginningless, endless, beyond the unmanifested and everlasting, (knowing That) man escapes from the mouth of death.

Yama here gives a definition of the essence of our being known as the *Atman* or True Self. Because of Its extreme subtlety, It cannot be heard or felt or smelled or tasted like any ordinary object. It never dies, It has no beginning or end. It is unchangeable, indestructible, everlasting. Realizing That, man escapes from death and at-

tains immortality. Thus the Teacher has gradually led Nachiketas to a point where he can reveal to him the secret of death. The boy had thought that there was a place where he could stay and become immortal. But Yama shows him that immortality is not gained as long as man clings to name and form and relative ideas of life. It is when he has risen above all limitations, when his thoughts have been purified, when his vision has become so subtle and keen that it can behold the glory of the *Atman* that dwells within; then alone he is safe from the mouth of death. For what dies? Form. That which has birth, dies. Therefore the man of form, name and all that our senses perceive, dies; but not that which dwells within. Although inconceivably subtle, the sages have always made an effort through similies and analogies to give some idea of this inner Self or the God within. They have described It as beyond mind and speech, too subtle for ordinary perception, yet they have tried to put every one on the path, in order that through contemplation each might reach the goal and be convinced of the nature of the Soul or *Atman.*

XVI

The intelligent man, who has heard and repeated the ancient story of Nachiketas, told by Death, is glorified in the world of Brahman.

XVII

He who with devotion recites this highest secret before an assembly of Brahmins (pious men) or

at the time of Shraddha (funeral ceremonies), gains everlasting reward, he gains everlasting reward.

PART IV

I

The Self-existent (Lord) created the senses outgoing; for this reason man sees the external (world) but not the inner Atman (Self). Some wise men, however, desiring immortality, with eyes (senses) turned away (from the external) see the Great Self within.

In the last chapter the Ruler of Death gave instructions regarding the nature and glory of the Self. Now he shows the reason why the Self is not seen by the majority. It is because man's mind is constantly drawn outward through the channels of his senses and this prevents his seeing the inner Self (*Pratyagatman*); but now and then someone, wiser than others, seeking to escape from the misery of this world, withdraws his mind from external objects and goes within, where he attains the vision of the undying Self.

II

Children (the indiscriminative) pursue external objects of desire; (thus) they fall into the wide-spread snare of death. But the wise, knowing the nature of immortality, do not seek the permanent among fleeting objects.

Those who are ignorant like children, and who have no power to distinguish between the Real and the unreal, the fleeting and the permanent, set their

hearts on the changeable things of this world and hence cannot escape from misery and disappointment. To these death must seem a reality, because they identify themselves with that which is born and dies. But the wise, who have perceived the true nature of things. are no longer deluded by the passing charm of the phenomenal world and do not seek for permanent happiness among its fleeting enjoyments.

III

That by which one knows form, taste, smell, sound, touch and conjugal enjoyment, by That also one knows whatever remains to be known. This verily is That (which thou hast asked to know).

IV

That by which a mortal perceives both in dream and in waking, by knowing that Great All-pervading Atman (Self), the wise man grieves no more.

In these verses the teacher tries to make plain that the *Atman* is not easily perceived owing to Its great subtlety; yet all knowledge as well as all sense perception in every state of consciousness—sleeping, dreaming or waking—is possible only because the Self exists. There can be no knowledge or perception independent of the Self. Wise men, aware of this, identify themselves with the Supreme, Omnipresent Spirit, and thus transcend the realm of grief.

REPORTS

We are glad to be able to announce that Swami Paramananda, head of the Vedanta Centre of

Boston, has returned safely from Europe. When the war broke out, he was visiting friends at Gryon-sur-Bex in Switzerland. The mobilization of the Swiss army had such an immediate effect on the life even of that retired mountain spot, that almost at once practically all the shops were closed and it became necessary as early as August 1st to travel to Lausanne, two hours distant by train, for provisions. On August 6th the Swami decided to go to Geneva in order to procure a passport and make an effort to move northward. Having delivered courses of lectures there last season and also this year, his many friends persuaded him to take up the work again, and during the fortnight that he was waiting to secure train accommodation to Paris, he held a number of classes and gave two public lectures, which were remarkably well attended. Among those who showed special interest in the teaching was Mr. Sublet, a prominent Protestant minister of Geneva, who gained the Swami's consent to translate into French a number of the Swami's works and publish them in his well-known religious journal, "L'Essor."

Finally on August 19th the Swami was able to set out for Paris, accompanied by one of his friends, who made the journey especially to protect him, returning at once to Switzerland. The usual time of ten hours between Geneva and Paris stretched out to thirty, and three changes were necessary. At one place they were forced to spend over five hours in the middle of the night out in the open under trees and on the ground, as no one was allowed to remain in the station while the military trains were passing. At the Hotel Normandy in Paris they found only a few women in charge; the food was of the plainest and everything was on a martial basis. Looking over the

paper, the Swami learned that a French boat was sailing on the 22nd from Havre. He hurried to the steamship office the following morning and was informed that a single first-class cabin had just been given up and was available; but they refused to take his traveller's checks and he had not enough ready money to pay for it. They consented, however, to hold it until noon. In the meantime the Swami, with the help of the friend with him, was able to make up the amount and secure the passage, paying only the ordinary rate. The ride to Havre again took a whole night instead of three hours, and the train was crowded to suffocation, as was the ship also, many even travelling in the steerage. The Swami reached Boston late on August 30th. He will at once assume charge of the work at the Boston Centre.

During September only the Sunday morning service will be held. The Swami will conduct this and deliver the usual lecture. All other meetings will be discontinued. The steady interest shown throughout the summer in the work, not only by the members, but also by the many strangers who came to the meetings, seems to bear out the promise of the spring,—that with the removal of the Centre to its permanent home, a new period of growth and more extended usefulness was begun. There can be no doubt that the public has gained added confidence and is awaking more and more to the value and need of the teaching.

* * *

We have just received the annual report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama at Brindaban. It was established seven years ago to minister to the needs of poor pilgrims who come in such large numbers to that holy place, by providing them with food, medicine, and nursing. The first year

the number cared for was 26 indoor and 275 outdoor patients. During the past year the numbers have risen to 260 indoor and 30,903 outdoor patients. Besides these a smaller number were helped with food and medicine in their own quarters. There could be no more striking proof of the usefulness of the institution. So far the work has been carried on in the outer buildings of a temple, temporarily loaned for that purpose; but they are wholly inadequate and unsuited to the needs of the hospital and it is earnestly hoped that before long, through the generosity of the public, proper quarters may be erected.

* * *

It is gratifying to learn that all of Sister Nivedita's scattered writings are to be gathered into book form and made available to the reading public. The first volume thus prepared, under the title "Studies from an Eastern Home," gives unconnected but interesting glimpses into Indian life. With an understanding touch, sure and sympathetic, she reveals some of the beauty and deep faith manifest in the religious festivals and pilgrimages, as well as in the daily life of the Hindu woman. She says, "The whole of Hinduism is one long sanctification of the common life." And then again, "The holiness of nature is the fundamental thought of Hindu civilization." There are lovely pictures of the Indian villages through which she passed on her northern pilgrimage. Leaving for a space the religious life, she also writes of sociological problems,—the jute industry, the famines and the social demoralization resulting from them. In one sketch the horrors of the plague are touched on; and then, in a few vivid lines, she draws a picture of the wonderful love existing between the Hindu mother and son.

BY SWAMI PARAMANANDA

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Swami Paramananda, known to the Madras public through his six years residence at the Ramakrishna Math here, and also as the author of various works, including a recent scholarly translation of the Bhagavad - Gita has just published a new book, "The Way of Peace and Blessedness". It has the same dynamic ring as his earlier work, "The Path of Devotion," now in its third edition; and no one can read it without feeling a fresh stirring of courage and hope. . . . The English is remarkably clear, fluent and graceful. There are six chapters in all and each one is full of strength and inspiration both for the outer and the inner life. INDIAN REVIEW, Madras.

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VEDANTA MONTHLY

The Message of the East



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" *11th*	*Life after Death.*
" *18th*	*Concentration and Meditation.*
" *25th*	*Faith and Devotion.*
November 1st	*Fearlessness.*
" *8th*	*Discrimination and Wisdom.*
" *15th*	*Law of Karma.*
" *22nd*	*Self-Mastery.*
" *29th*	*Tolerance and Universality.*
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" *13th*	*Zoroaster and His Teaching.*
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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. III. OCTOBER, 1914 NO. 10

This world is not for cowards. Do not try to fly. Look not for success or failure. Join yourself to the perfectly unselfish will and work on. Know that the mind which is born to succeed joins itself to a determined will and perseveres. You have the right to work, but do not become so degenerate as to look for results. Work incessantly, but see something behind the work. Even good deeds can bind a man in great bondage. Therefore be not bound by good deeds or by desire for name and fame. Those who know this secret pass beyond this round of birth and death and become immortal.

The ordinary *Sannyasi* (one who has renounced) gives up the world, goes out and thinks of God. The real *Sannyasi* lives in the world, but is not of it. Those who deny themselves, live in the forest and chew the cud of unsatisfied desires, are not true renouncers. Live in the midst of the battle of life. Anyone can keep calm in a cave or when asleep. Stand in the whirl and madness of action

and reach the Centre. If you have found the Centre, you cannot be moved.

Unpublished notes of Class Talks by Swami Vivekananda.

SELF-HELP AND SELF-SURRENDER

By Swami Paramananda

Self-Help and Self-Surrender are the cardinal teachings of all religions and philosophies. Man is persistently told on the one hand that he must "raise himself by his Self, let him never lower himself, for he alone is his own friend and he alone is his own enemy"; while on the other hand he is taught with equal insistence that he should never rely on his individual strength, but should trust wholly to God. How are we to reconcile these two apparently contradictory ideas? How can we be self-helping and at the same time surrender ourselves wholly to the Supreme? Yet we find these two ideas preached in all Scriptures by all Teachers; so although they may seem diametrically opposite, there must be some relation, some basis of harmony between them.

There are different grades in the notion of the individual ego. Our first conception of I-ness comes through birth and environment. We are born in a certain family, with a certain name and position, and we measure our whole importance by these; but as we grow in understanding, we learn

to identify ourselves less and less with our outer condition and nature. Then we discover that there are finer forces than the merely physical upon which we can depend. When in ordinary human existence a man says "I am the doer", that sense of I-ness arises from his identification of himself with the body. He is conscious that he has strong muscles, that he has a certain amount of power; but this strength, being entirely confined to the physical plane, is necessarily limited. He may not realize this as long as he has a healthy body and can accomplish whatever he wishes through his bodily energies, but sooner or later he must come to recognize that the power manifested through the physical is too insufficient to carry him very far. This naturally leads him to seek something higher and greater upon which he can safely lean.

Thus in all the various stages of progression, we shall carry the same idea of ego, only with different understanding. The ego which binds us to the body and bodily conditions is called the unripe ego and this brings misery and misfortune; but the ripe ego, which springs from our higher nature, liberates us. It is this ego which leads us to surrender ourselves wholly to God. Of course self-surrender does not mean that we have to abandon all duties and activities. On the contrary, it is through consecrated action, through constant practice of the Ideal, that we become purified and are able to see the hand of the Divine in everything. But as long as we believe that we are the doers, we

must help ourselves. So long as we feel that the whole responsibility lies in our hands, we must make every possible effort. It is useless to suppose that we can give up all idea of ego at once and be conscious that God is working through us. We do not see God working. We are talking, we are performing our tasks, we have hands and feet, we possess strength. As long as we hold to these notions, we must act for ourselves. We cannot do otherwise. But if in all our actions we practise discrimination, that will in time unfold our true nature and enable us to perceive the real source of our power. When we become conscious of that mighty Cause of all things, then we cannot but yield ourselves up to His guidance. Thus self-help will lead to self-surrender.

The more clearly we see God working everywhere, the more easily we shall be able to resign ourselves to Him. It is very difficult for ignorant people to practise self-surrender, because they have not consciously experienced the existence of a Cosmic Power. They do not know that there is such a thing. They must first test their own powers. They must prove through the use of all their energies, physical and mental, whether they themselves are the real doers or whether they are governed by some superior force. They must learn through the practice of discrimination what part of their being is matter and what part is God; then when they have come to perceive the difference between soul and body, spirit and matter, the

dying and the undying, they will surely cling to that which is deathless, for who does not cling to life, who will not naturally look for help and protection to That which is most mighty? It is not an easy thing to surrender ourselves absolutely to God. We must first understand something of His Divine Nature and Power; otherwise, if we pretend to practise self-surrender, without really believing that God is the only Doer and that all happens through His will, our words and actions will always be inconsistent. There is a parable of a Brahman who once killed a cow. Killing for a Brahman, whose life is supposed to be dedicated to God and to the practice of non-injury and love for all creatures, is a terrible crime. When the Brahman was accused of killing the cow, he declared: "I did not do it. Indra (the Lord of the Senses) is responsible, not I." To show him his error, God, assuming human form, entered his garden and began to praise its beauty and the skill of his gardener. The Brahman replied with pride: "Oh, no, I myself have done everything; come and I will show you the different parts of my garden." As he led his visitor about, he kept explaining: "See, I planted these trees and shrubs, I laid out these paths, I made these flower beds". Every other word was "I". The Lord listened patiently for some time; then he exclaimed: "You have done all these things; only for killing the cow the poor Lord was responsible."

That is too often our position. We may say:

"Thy will, not mine", but we feel in our heart of hearts that we are the real doers. If a harsh word is spoken, we feel hurt and grow angry; or if we are praised, we become elated. But this is not the case with one who knows that everything happens through God's will. He is always the same, in happiness, in misery, in praise or blame. He accepts all things with even-mindedness. He does not lose his balance, he does not curse life when things go wrong; because he recognizes that God is the Doer and that whatever comes from Him must be a blessing. Surrendering to God makes a man so mighty, so fearless, that nothing in life or death can disturb his serenity. Such faith in the Supreme is the basis of true self-reliance. With such faith one can accomplish the most impossible things. As Christ said: "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 to you." Such is the power of faith. When we have realized the Divine nature within us, what can shake us? As long, however, as we identify ourselves with name, form and physical limitations, our power must be limited and therefore our vision of Truth, our knowledge of God must also be veiled; because darkness and light cannot co-exist and the sense of "I" is the greatest darkness which can cover the soul. The sages indeed have declared that there is no enemy greater or more potent than the ego.

As long as we identify ourselves with this ego or our lower nature, we can never transcend delusion and ignorance. Therefore we must subdue our lower self by surrendering it to the Higher Self. Let that Higher Self, or the God within, take the lead in everything. The true devotee says: "Not I, not I, but Thou, I am nothing. What can I accomplish? The sooner I can resign myself to Thy will, the better." The *Jnani* or philosopher declares: "I am not this body. I am not the senses. I am none of these things. I am He. I am that which is formless, deathless, eternal, unchangeable." One is the dualistic point of view, the other the monistic; but both lead to the same end. Christ expressed the two phases in different stages of his spiritual consciousness. When he said: "Not my will but Thine be done"; "Thou art my Father, my Lord, I am Thy son, Thy servant"; His attitude was that of a devotee. When on the other hand he declared "I and my Father are one", He expressed the monistic attitude of a follower of the path of wisdom or *Jnanam*. In one phase we look upon God as a separate existence. He is the Creator and Preserver, the Real Father, and we surrender to Him, recognizing the limitation of our lower self. In the other phase we rise above the plane of the lower self and realize our identity with the Supreme. In either case, whether we see that Truth within ourselves or outside ourselves, we transcend human imperfection.

When we are convinced that God is the only

Doer, the only Guide, that all the power which we possess comes from Him and that we are merely instruments in His hand, we attain freedom even in this life and nothing can overthrow us. But the ego is very deluding. It is said that even the gods are deceived and fall under its sway. In one of the Upanishads the story is told that once the Devas (Bright Ones) achieved a great victory, and being filled with pride, they proclaimed: "This victory is ours. We ourselves have achieved it". and each one boasted of his power. Suddenly they perceived a mysterious form. Brahman, the Doer of all things, appeared before them; but they did not know what it was that they saw, so one by one they were sent to find out. First the Fire-God approached the mysterious form, who asked him what power he possessed. "I have the power to burn the whole universe." "Then try to burn this straw" the Lord said, but he could not. Then came the Wind-God and Brahman asked him what power he possessed. "I can blow this entire universe away." "Then blow this straw which I place before you." He tried but could not. At last Indra, the head of the gods, went; and as he approached nearer, he realized that the mysterious form was none other than Brahman, the Supreme Lord Himself, to Whom all glory and praise belong, that to Him alone was due their victory and not to themselves.

Surrender to God is the greatest sign of wisdom. The ignorant man, who clings to this ego, must

suffer constantly. The man who surrenders himself to God as the Doer of all things, he alone finds peace. Through his life, through his actions, he becomes blessed and brings blessing to others; for he no longer acts through selfishness or ignorance, but he becomes a direct instrument in the hands of God, and all his doings are filled with Divine Love and Wisdom.

BENGALI HYMN

(Translated especially for "The Message of the East.")

What joy can there be in my life, O Thou Merciful Lord,
If the bee of my soul is not forever lost in the Lotus of Thy Feet?
Of what use countless wealth,
If Thou, most precious of all Treasures, art not watchfully guarded?
I care not even to look on the tender face of my child,
If in that sweet, moon-like face I behold not Thy lovely image.
What avails the light of the moon?
For me it is darkness, if through that rising moon the light of Thy love does not shine.
Even the chaste wife's pure devotion seems impure,
If that love-jewel is not set with the gem of Thy love Divine.
Like the stinging bite of a viper
Is doubt of Thee, born of delusion.
What more can I say, O Lord?
This will I say: Thou art the priceless Jewel of my heart, the Abode of Infinite Bliss.

THE GREAT LIGHT OF NADIA

At the moment when Europe was convulsed by the Reformation, a new fire of religious fervor was also sweeping over India, lighted by a mighty Spiritual Teacher known as Lord Gaurunga (the Golden-bodied) or Sri Krishna-Chaitanya (the God-Awakener). He was born at Nadia in Bengal in 1486, just three years later than Martin Luther at Eisleben. Nadia, on the Ganges about seventy miles north of Calcutta, was at that time a noted seat of learning. The whole population, men and women, old and young, it would appear from the numerous historic records left, was given over to the pursuit of knowledge. "Thousands every day came to the city from all parts of India, some to begin and some to complete their education", so an eye-witness declares, "and thousands left every day after having obtained their diplomas". In every street were several *Toles* or colleges, some of which counted their students by tens of hundreds. These thronged the river banks and public squares, passing their time in long and intricate discussions, much as did the university world in scholastic France at the time of Guillaume de Champeaux and Abelard.

Great scholars even conquered wealth and property by force of intellect. The story is told of the "world-conquering" Keshava of Kashmir, who came to Nadia in triumphal pomp with numerous attendants, tents, elephants and horses, having already vanquished every professor in every learned

city of India. On his arrival he launched the proud challenge that if any scholar could defeat him, he would forfeit all his property to Nadia; but should he be victorious, then the town must pay him a large indemnity. Although Lord Gaurunga or Nimai, as he was then called, was still only a boy of 18, he had already attained such eminence as a professor that his college was among the most important in the city and he was regarded as a teacher of unequalled power. He had also written a profound commentary on the Nyaya philosophy, but finding one day that it threatened to displace the life work of an older scholar, Raghunath, who had long striven for preëminence in the Nyaya and was heart-broken at the thought of so astute a rival, Nimai threw his commentary into the river. He seemed wholly devoid of the ambition that rent the hearts of his fellow-professors. He taught because boys and even men of years came to learn of him; and although he exacted rigid discipline in the class room, once the lessons over, he romped and played like the youngest of his scholars.

One moonlight night, as he sat on the river bank surrounded by his pupils, the great Keshava passed and growing interested in Nimai's literary discussions, he joined the group. "You are Nimai Pundit, I understand", he began. "I am glad to make your acquaintance, for I have heard that despite your youth, you have attained great proficiency in Grammar and Philology". Nimai, bowing low, re-

plied modestly: "I am only a young student, while you are a conqueror in the field of learning. Compared with you I am nothing. But since you are a poet of world-wide reputation, will you not recite to us a description of the Ganges that our sins may be washed away?" Keshava, flattered by the request, at once composed with great skill and easy self-assurance one hundred Sanskrit couplets in praise of the holy river, reciting them amid loud ejaculations of surprise and admiration. Nimai's pupils feared for him a complete eclipse; he alone sat listening with gentle unconcern. When Keshava had finished, he made reference to a couplet in the middle, repeating it with perfect accuracy. Keshava exclaimed at his ability to remember so well after only once hearing, to which Nimai replied quietly: "If Saraswati (the goddess of learning) can give to one the power to compose such a poem, She can bestow as well on another the power to remember it." Then one by one he took up the verses and pointed out the subtle defects in each, until the proud Savant, confounded, left the place in anger. Some hours after, however, he sought out Nimai in his home and fell at his feet in humble supplication, declaring that in a vision God had revealed to him Nimai's Divine Nature and he came begging to become the least of his disciples. What transpired no one knows, but the next day the arrogant Keshava distributed his vast wealth to the poor of Nadia, put on the orange robe of the ascetic and disappeared from the sight of men.

Such empty triumphs of mere intellect, however, meant little to Nimai. A mightier force was stirring in his heart, which at last carried him on a pilgrimage to Gaya, a spot hallowed by close association with Sri Krishna. On his return it was impossible for him to take up again the dry routine of the class room. Each day he went to his *Tole* determined to explain the profundities of Sanskrit Grammar, but instead he spent the whole school session talking of God and the joys of devotion. At first his pupils heard him with delight; then some, fearing lest they might fail in obtaining their diplomas, reluctantly withdrew to other colleges; while others, casting aside all desire for learning, joined the ever-growing stream of devotees who began to gather round their Master. Saints and scholars, profligates and scoffers, all fell under the spell of his Divine charm. Sometimes a single word, a touch, a loving embrace would transform a jeering worldling into the lowliest of disciples. Hundreds on hundreds came, swept, it is said, by such fervor of devotion that worldly ambitions and occupations were forgotten and whole days and nights were spent in sacred singing, dancing and prayer. Nimai, or Gaurunga, never preached. He taught wholly by example, living as a humble worshipper and thus showing others how to worship God. "Take the name of *Hari* (He who draws all men unto Him), and you will be saved", were his constant words.

He never claimed honor for himself and would protest when others stooped to touch his feet or show him reverence.

On occasions, however, it is recorded, he drew aside the human veil that masked his God-like nature and let the Divine shine forth in its full glory. At such moments, so the records tell us, the room and even the whole house became filled with a subtle light and fragrance, while such a flood of love and sweetness poured from him that those about him felt drunk with joy. Such a transfiguration took place one day at the home of Sreebas. The devotees, beholding his transcendent beauty and plunged "in a sea of happiness", one historian writes, hurried to bring some offering to lay before him in token of their love; but whatever they brought him, Sri Gouranga returned to them a like gift. Did some one offer him a garland? From about his own neck he would take another, laden with the holy sweetness of his person, and place it on the shoulders of the devotee. So likewise with every gift, to teach man that whatever he may offer in humble devotion to the Lord, that gift God in His yearning love will return multiplied a hundredfold.

Thus one by one Sri Gouranga called all those present, both men and women, and bestowed on each some special blessing. Only Mukunda, a chosen follower, was left weeping outside the door. He could hear the Lord's voice and perceive all that was transpiring within, yet the Lord did not

bid him enter. At last, unable to bear it longer, he called to Sreebas: "Do not intercede for me. Only ask the Lord to tell me, if such is His Divine pleasure, whether He will ever allow me to see Him." Sri Gouranga gave answer: "Mukunda, thou shalt certainly see me, but after ten million births". Hearing this, Mukunda rose and began to dance, repeating over and over in delight: "I shall see Him, I shall see Him. He has promised it". So engrossed was he in his joy that he did not hear the Lord call: "Mukunda, come". His friends, however, ran to tell him and when they brought him, the Lord embraced him tenderly, saying: "Forgive me, Mukunda, I desired to test thy faith and make thee an example of true devotion to the world. Although I denied thee every favor and made thee the least of all, still thou hast remained steadfast in thy love and trust, rejoicing at the thought that even after ten million births thou wouldst see Me. Truly there are few devotees like unto thee."

It was some time after this that Nimai, now twenty-four years of age, made a journey to the ascetic Keshava Bharati to be initiated as a *Sannyasi* or monk. At first the ascetic was unwilling to fulfill his desire, exclaiming: "I have never seen a being like you. You look more tender than a flower. You could never bear the rigid discipline of our Order. Besides you have no need to enter any religious order. You are already greater than all men." As Nimai stood talking with Keshava

Bharati, a great crowd had gathered and the monk, pointing to it, said: "See how these mere bystanders weep at the thought that one so young and beautiful should wish to renounce the world." But Nimai, turning, said to them: "Why do you weep? If you love me, wish me joy, for tomorrow I shall be released from the bondage of worldliness. Bless me, fathers and mothers." The report had gone abroad that one more a god than man was about to take *Sannyas* and on the morrow, it is told, thousands gathered to assist at his initiation. His face "shone with ecstacy," we read in one record of the time, and the vast crowd of men and women that surrounded him looked upon him spellbound. When the barber was called to shave his head, a cry of protest went up from the throng and the barber, unwilling to touch the soft glossy hair, withdrew his shears; but Nimai by gentle coaxing overcame his reluctance. So also with Keshava Bharati, who at last with faltering hands gave him the orange-colored cloth, proclaiming: "You were Nimai Pundit, henceforth you are Krishna-Chaitanya". Then the devotees fell at his feet crying: "Master, Teacher, Swami, save us".

Nimai now took up his residence in the Sacred City of Puri, where stands the famous Temple of Jagannath. Here he came in close contact with Vasudeva Servabhauma, a noted master of the Nyaya Philosophy and one of the two foremost Vedic scholars of the period. At first he received the young *Sannyasi* as his pupil and strove to check his wild and unscholarly habit of singing

and dancing in praise of God, by daily reading and expounding to him certain Vedic texts. Chaitanya sat and listened in submissive silence. One day the Savant remarked: "Krishna-Chaitanya, I have been reading the Vedas to you these six days. How is it that you offer no comments?" Chaitanya replied: "You commanded me to listen and I have obeyed." "That is true, but I expected you to make some comment and thus let me know whether you understood me or not," rejoined Servabhauma. "I cannot make any comment for I do not understand a syllable of what you say", was Nimai's answer. "Not a syllable? Then why do you not ask me to explain? What is it you do not understand?" "The text is clear enough", Chaitanya answered simply. "It is only your explanation that confuses my mind." Then he began in his own way to expound the Vedas, and as Servabhauma followed him, anger and jealousy melted into wonder. "He is more than a Savant, he is a master, far greater in every way than I", he thought. On and on Chaitanya went, taking verse after verse, until the noted scholar, overpowered by the brilliant and profound rendering of his pupil, fell at Chaitanya's feet, crying out: "Pardon me, I treated you as an inferior, unaware that you had no equal among the sons of men".

Chaitanya now announced his desire to make a pilgrimage to the South; and taking with him Govinda, a faithful follower, he set out, repeating as he walked with arms upraised in worship: "My Lord, take care of me! My Lord, take care of me". Wherever he wandered—through wild jungles and dense forests or over sun-baked roads—this cry was ever on his lips. "If he happened to

meet a man as he walked along, he would say to him, 'Repeat the name of Hari'. Drawn by his irresistible charm, the stranger would turn and follow him, repeating the name of God. Then after a time the Lord would embrace him. At once he would be filled with a holy power which enabled him to transmit the same blessing to others. Then the Lord would bid him go home and proclaim devotion for God to all his village. Thus thousands who never saw the Lord were saved." It was in this way that Sri Chaitanya embraced the leper Vasudeva. Vasudeva was a good man. His long suffering had chastened his heart. Hearing that a great *Sannyasi,* who was perhaps the Lord Himself, had come to the temple of Kurma, near which he lived, he seized his staff and hurried to the temple. He arrived a half hour too late. The Lord had gone, and overcome with sorrow and disappointment, the leper fainted, calling out: "Lord, hast Thou forsaken me?" Sri Chaitanya, although two miles away, heard his cry. He stopped a moment as if to listen; then retracing his steps, he ran at full speed to the temple and lifting the body of the leper, he held it close in his embrace, unmindful of the foul sores that covered it. When Vasudeva awoke, he found himself sound and well. "What hast Thou done, Lord?" he exclaimed. "I came not to be healed. I came to see Thy lotus feet. My loathsome disease taught me humility and I had hopes of reaching God. But a sound body and perfect health will again generate pride and vanity in my mind." "No, my son," Chaitanya replied, "the Lord has chosen you as His own because of your unparalleled humility and your charity even towards the meanest insect."

While journeying, Lord Gouranga heard that in the forest of Choranandee was a dreaded robber-

chief named Naoroji and at once he plunged into the jungle to seek him. When he reached his hiding place, Naoroji came with drawn sword to meet him and asked what right had he, a holy man, to penetrate into the retreat of robbers. The Lord raised his head and gazed so long and tenderly at him that the robber grew restless and ill at ease. Then the Lord replied: "You call yourself a robber, but I see in you a great devotee." "Are you sincere in what you say?" "Quite sincere." "Do you mean to say," Naoroji asked again, "that if now I give up my evil life and surrender unconditionally at the Lord's feet, He will accept me?" "Beyond a doubt." The robber-chief murmured to himself: "I am already sixty and have no one to provide for. Day by day the hour of death is approaching. How foolish have I been." Tears poured down his cheeks. It seemed as if the holy man before him was drawing out his very soul. At last throwing away his sword, he called his men and said to them: "I can no longer lead you. You must choose another chief or break up the band. I have resolved to follow this holy man." The Lord rose to depart and Naoroji started to go with him, but the Lord checked him. "Oh, I see. I still wear my chieftain's dress," the robber said. Tearing it in shreds, he wrapped a piece of cloth about his loins and asked: "Now, my Lord may I go with you?" The Lord made no answer and thenceforth Naoroji followed him as his shadow.

Sri Chaitanya travelled rapidly through the South. Everywhere people caught the infection of his fervor and began with new zeal to serve the Lord. No one could resist the intensity of his devotion. A Raja of Travencore, coming one day in search of him, it is recorded, found him seated leaning against a tree with eyes closed, while tears

of joy streamed down his cheeks. The Raja begged him to sojourn in his palace, but he blessed him and passed on his way. As at Nadia, kings, *Sannyasis,* learned men and lawless highwaymen, all fell under his sway and became ardent devotees. He had an especial love for children, who flocked about him in great numbers. At the end of two years he returned to Puri, having kindled a new spiritual life throughout the whole of Southern India. The good news spread even to Nadia that the Lord had come, and hundreds of his earliest disciples, led by Adwaita and Sreebas, set out on foot and after a three or four weeks' journey, full of untold hardship, at last reached Puri. For four months they stayed with Chaitanya and the days passed in one unbroken feast of joy and worship. Then the Lord sent them home, saying: "You are householders, therefore you must perform your duties and maintain those who are dependent on you." The following year the *Bhaktas* (devotees), hundreds in number, again came to Puri. This time the women disciples also begged to come and husbands brought their wives and sons their mothers. Sivananda Sen, an ardent follower of Sri Chaitanya, bore all the expense of the pilgrimage; and every year he performed this same pious duty, paying the cost of the journey for all those who desired to see the Lord. It was also to Sivananda's son, the author of several Sanskrit works, that we are indebted for valuable records of Lord Gouranga's Life.

Nityananda was the closest of all Sri Chaitanya's disciples. One day the Lord called him and said: "You must go to Bengal". Nityananda cried out: "Leave you? Never! The body cannot live without the soul and you are my soul." But the Lord replied: "Bengal must be saved. You alone are

able to accomplish this difficult task. Because you love me, you do not wish to go away; but we are not in this world to please ourselves. Our hardest work lies in Bengal, where the leaders are learned and profoundly intellectual." "But it breaks my heart to leave you", Nityananda protested weeping. The Lord embraced him and said with inexpressible tenderness: "When you suffer in my absence, remember that I too am suffering for you." Then he continued: "Learned men are not so easily conquered by the display of intellectual powers. Appeal to their hearts and show them that there is something else in man besides his intellect. I have the profoundest pity for these intellectual men; please take special care of them. But save all without exception. Make no distinction between high and low, wise and ignorant, pious and worldly. Dispense your blessings to all alike. The greater the sinner, the greater his claim upon you. You will encounter much opposition, but you will overcome it all by love." So Nityananda was sent to Bengal with twelve others. Obeying his Master's admonitions, he neither preached, nor argued, nor expounded the Scriptures; he merely wandered from place to place with hundreds of followers, proclaiming the advent of a Saviour and calling on all men to take the name of God and be saved. He seemed mad with joy; and that joy, overflowing his heart, drowned others in its flood. The more hardened the sinner, the greater was Nityananda's compassion. Few could resist his appeal and thousands received his message.

While Nityananda was thus carrying out the task set him by his Master, Lord Gouranga himself came to Bengal. Landing at Panihati, near Calcutta, he proceeded to Nadia, and all along the way crowds so vast surrounded him that it was impossible to count their numbers. He spent seven

days at Kulia on the bank of the Ganges opposite his birthplace, then crossing the river and landing at his own bathing-Ghat, he walked once more to the threshold of his mother's house. A throng of people followed him in silence, remembering as they looked at this grave, majestic figure, the gay and learned youth, Nimai Pundit, who had once lived among them. This was his last visit to Nadia. He returned to Puri and at the early age of 32 passed from this earth.

REPORTS

Swami Paramananda began the new season's work at The Vedanta Centre of Boston on Sept. 20th and the following schedule of meetings has been announced for the winter: Sunday morning at 11 Service with Lecture and at 4 P.M. Vesper Service with Short Address; Tuesday at 8 P.M. a public Class-Lecture on the Bhagavad-Gita, and Thursday at the same hour the regular Students Class, in which Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms will be the text book. A Special Course on "Practical Spiritual Living" will be given on Monday afternoon at 3, which non-members can attend by arranging with the Secretary; and the Swami will hold his usual Monday reception immediately after, from 4 to 5:30. The Saturdav afternoon receptions at the Community House will also continue. These have already proved of great value in bringing the friends of the Centre into closer personal touch with the work. The new season opens with great promise. Although the attendance remained exceptionally large throughout the summer and there was at no moment a flagging of interest, during the month of September there was a steady increase in numbers, bringing up the average far beyond what it has been at this time

in previous years. The subjects for the Sunday Lectures during October will be: "Spiritual Culture the Crying Need of This Age," "Life after Death," "Concentration and Meditation," "Faith and Devotion."

The Centre celebrated the "Feast of the Divine Mother" on Tuesday evening, Sept. 29th, and a large number of friends assisted at the Service. Music, meditation, the chanting of Sanskrit prayers, and an address by the Swami filled the first part of the evening; then fruits, sweetmeats, and "paramannam" (a Hindu dish prepared by the Swami) were served, after which some time was spent in informal social intercourse. The Swami in his address explained that this was one of the greatest religious feasts of India, resembling the Christmas-tide of the West. For three days, especially in Bengal, there is rejoicing in every household, presents are exchanged, and the time is devided between worship and happy feasting. On the last day even enemies forgive and embrace one another as children of one Universal Mother and a new year is begun. Although here in the West, the Swami added, people may not accept this special form of the Feast, the spirit of it should be common to all nations. All should remember that they belong to one world-family, over which the Divine Mother presides, and that only in honoring Motherhood everywhere and living in love and peace with all men could we prove ourselves worthy children of the one God.

* * *

The following letter, delayed owing to the great irregularity of the foreign mails, reached us only a short time ago: "The war, causing disaster to so many, brought us the blessing of Swami Paramananda's presence. Detained in Geneva for

over a week, the Swami filled his time of waiting with daily meetings, besides receiving various visitors who sought his help and advice. Two afternoon Talks were given in town and five evening meetings were held in the quiet country place where the Swami was staying. All the meetings were regularly attended by an ever increasing number of people, whose appreciation and interest were manifested in various ways, one being the faithfulness of their attendance in spite of frequent bad weather and the considerable distance they had to cover. It seemed as if each meeting were more beautiful than the one before, and the closing meditation class held on Aug. 17th appeared to excel all preceding ones in power and reality. An interesting feature was the variety of nationality represented by the attendance, Dutch, English, Americans and Russians being there, as well as Swiss, the ages varying between 80 and 5. The Swami left us today, taking with him our love and gratitude for the light he brings and leaves with us. Now we hope to keep it burning and tend it faithfully till he comes again."

* * *

From California we have received the following Report: Swami Prakashananda recently made a very successful lecture tour of six weeks through Oregon and the State of Washington. Beginning at the Public Library of Portland, he gave in all eight lectures in that city, an equal number before various organizations in Tacoma and two at Everett. He also spent a week at Seattle, while at Eugene he was invited to lecture before the University of Oregon. Everywhere he met with great appreciation. The Swami has now established himself in San Francisco, where he is holding regular meetings.

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The Message of the East



NOVEMBER 1914

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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. III. NOVEMBER, 1914. No. 11.

Sri Ramakrishna tells the story of a man who, desiring to light the fire on his hearth at nightfall, took his lantern and went from door to door seeking a burning brand. Everywhere he asked in vain, until at last he stopped before the threshold of a neighbor, who, wiser than the rest, looked at him wonderingly and said: "Foolish man, why are you begging a brand from me? Do you not see that in your own hand you have a light? Go home and kindle your fire with that." This is the message of Vedanta. It does not say: "You are in darkness, I will give you light." Or: "Your light is dim and dying, that which I bring you is strong and bright; blow out yours and take mine." On the contrary, it proclaims to every living being: "In your own heart burns the only light that can truly lighten you. By that alone can you kindle the fire of wisdom which will burn off all impurities and reveal the God within."

Every page of the Vedic Scriptures, in unparalleled variety of form and figure, reiterates this one supreme lesson. Truth can have no geographical or racial limitations. As a Galileo in Italy, a Euclid in Egypt, an Archimedes in Greece, or an

Aryabhatta in India may discover a fundamental axiom in mathematics; so also the final vision of all things is possible to every mind that has the determination to strive for it, no matter what the creed or country. Ultimate attainment is not dependent on the acceptance of any personality or specific form of faith. Man must seek within and out of the depths of his own inner being evolve his creed; or, as Christ has taught, "work out his own salvation". The various religions are so many methods to achieve this end; and since every constitution differs from every other, only that can be a universal religion or method which is capable of endless modification. Therefore it must be untrammeled by dogma or doctrine and commensurate with creation itself in scope. Such is the broad base upon which the great Himalayan Seers of the Vedas have reared their teaching. In it, as Max Muller declares, every phase of religion, from the lowest to the highest, finds a place. According to its comprehensive classification, all are only so many branches of a gigantic educational system, each fitted to the special needs of some soul and leading to the one common goal of supreme enlightenment or God-vision.

As one sun illumines all this world, similarly He who dwells in the body illumines all bodies. The Supreme Lord abides in all beings equally; (He is) undying in the dying; He who sees (thus) sees truly. —*Teachings of Sri Krishna.*

THOUGHTS ON VEDANTA

By Swami Saradananda

Much has been said regarding the supremacy of the system of philosophy and religion revealed to the sages of India in bygone prehistoric times and known to us as the Vedanta. As affording a basis for reconciliation of all the contradictory and hostile systems of thought, by pointing to the one goal to which they have all been tending; as supplying a proper and reasonable solution of human life and its activities and of the good and bad motives of conduct that move the individual as well as the social and the national life in the world, and that have been equally beneficial, through harmony or friction, for the uplifting of humanity; and as upholding hopes of the highest enlightenment and expression of power for sinner and saint alike, through the mighty and irresistible processes of evolution, it has for centuries been commanding the respect of sincere and thoughtful men all over the world and will continue to do so for ages to come. The great exponents of Western pessimistic and optimistic thought, Schopenhauer and Emerson, have both of them showered praises on this system of Indian thought; and have acknowledged their indebtedness for the spiritual growth, the enlightenment, peace and solace that have been brought by it and through it into their respective lives, moving in such opposite lines. Interested bodies may say what they please in their misdirected zeal for orthodoxy, but the glaring search-

lights of the antiquarian, the philologist and students of the world's history, have proved again and again the fact that our world is one homogeneous whole and different nations and philosophies and religions, however independent and separate they may think themselves, are all related to one another for their respective growth and development, and are all indebted for some vital part or other to Indian civilization and Indian thought. System after system of philosophic and religious thought has arisen from this eternal fountain-head of wisdom and spirituality and has shed its blessings on the many, voicing the one message of concord and agreement. The claims of the spirit are recognized. "Man is not really what he seems to be. Infinite possibilities lie within him, as well as the power and the resources to bring them out. Deep in the heart of the infinite love and knowledge is his eternal abode, and never has he really lost the effulgent glory of his own absolute nature." . . . .

Out from the heart of the Indian Scriptures flowed the religion of the Zend, which, arranged and expressed with added power by Zarathustra, gave such a stimulus to Christianity, by supplying the latter with many of its cardinal principles of sin, atonement and devotion through love. Out of it again "in the long-drawn aisles of time" came forth Buddhism, a beautiful child full of sympathy and love and service to all, that sent its messages of peace and love even to Asia Minor, where a few hundreds of years after the mighty

"man of sorrows" repeated them in almost the same words, while teaching in the mountains of the holy land. Testimonies are not wanting in this direction and innumerable instances can be brought forward from the pages of history. But it is sufficient for our purpose here to see the power and vitality which the religious thought of India possessed of old, and the stimulus it afforded to the many great religious movements of the world. Has it died out at the present day? Has it become "a bewildering festering pool of ignorance and superstition," as some of our contemporaries in and outside our country have been advised to call it, forgetting in their hasty and one-sided zeal the debt of gratitude and fellowship which they owe to Indian spiritual thought? Are there no mainsprings of life and conduct for guiding and regulating the individual society and nation, to be found in the system of Vedanta? Our little paper is to discuss this vital question touching the Indian religious life; and to throw some hints and suggestions to help bring in the light that has been dawning on the horizon of India. Infinite possibilities lie imbedded in the teachings of the sages of old; and the more we turn towards them with uplifted gaze and consider them in their practical bearings, for the guidance and regulation of the conduct of the individual, the clearer becomes the vision of the future glory of the country. For societies and nations are but aggregates of different individual units; and a system of religion and philosophy

which has the power of directing the conduct of those units to higher and higher ends, cannot but help to ennoble and uplift the social and national standard.

In studying the religious history of the world, the one fact that becomes most obvious to the mind of the student is that all the great religions have begun with pessimism and painted the life of man on this side of the grave in dark colors. It is natural and easy for a man to take to this dark view of life, considering the thousand and one difficulties that beset his path in his travel through this vale of sorrow and tears, the thousand and one hopes that are crushed to pieces even from his childhood, and the many disappointments that crowd on his heels in this "two days' existence". The unrequited love, the faithlessness of many, the hard struggle and competition, the wicked in power, misery, disease and pain—all serve their quota in making him take refuge in this cynical view of human existence. "Turn your eyes away from this life and its miseries and strive to gain that life beyond the grave, where happiness reigns supreme and all inequalities of human conditions are smoothed down by a divine and loving hand"—thus say the Scriptures of the nations. Call after call goes out to bring man to this higher existence; and the life here and that hereafter are viewed as two entirely different things, so that man must give up the one in order to find the other. Examine the ethics of Buddhism, of Christianity, of the Koran

and the Avesta in the light of the lives and the teachings of their founders and of the first upholders of the respective faiths, and you will find this common strain of pessimism running through them all.

Pessimism, having thus given an aberrant vision of the world and human existence, brought forth the doctrine of suppression of the powers that lead man towards this life and its ill-afforded happiness. "Kill the flesh by all means;" "Death to the old man, who casts a longing look at this side of existence;" "The body is a festering mass of corruption, turn thou away from it"—all these ideas became the motive power of religion. Different means of torturing the body by starvation and decimation came to light and were regarded as so many means of salvation. Alas for human ignorance! Little did man dream that though the body should not be allowed to master the mind and the Self, yet it was the only instrument in his hands to attain to higher enlightenment and should therefore be taken care of to a certain extent. . . Religion sounded a different note altogether in the hands of Sri Krishna and the Yogis, who boldly asserted that not killing the flesh, but controlling and keeping it within proper bounds, will help man to realize the highest end; and that such was the meaning of the Vedas. "Control the activities of the senses from going into lower channels; waste not your energies by unnecessary privations, but regulate your food, your sleep and every other

affair of life and be pure in thought, word and deed"—thus say the Gita and Patanjali in loud tone. But the death-knell of pessimism was sounded by the discovery of progress through evolution by Kapila. It was weak at first and a mere theory; but it slowly but surely gathered strength and gained ground, till modern science came to its help and support with all the panoply of objective methods of proof. The wonderful discovery that force and matter are both indestructible; that both of these on examination afford infinite suggestions of being the modifications of one common substance; that the sum total of energy in the universe is always the same, whether it remains in *the* kinetic or potential form; that different forces are correlated and interchangeable; and that nature is uniform throughout her work and always working with the same materials in the same way on the different planes of existence, the physical, the mental and the spiritual—all this has helped us understand and express that old doctrine of Kapila better and with added power, and has given a new stimulus to religion all over the world.

Many a religion has had to change its tone, in adapting itself to this new light of science and reason; and many are lagging behind with faltering steps, unable to adapt and assimilate these innovations. Had we ever to do that? Had we ever to give up the one cardinal principle of the religion of the Vedas, the *dharma* that has been founded on the rock of evolution? Thanks to the sages of old,

though a little mortar here or cement there may have fallen down under the bombardment of science, the frame work of the hallowed structure proved strong enough to bear the brunt of the fight; and it required but little effort and concession to make peace and coöperate with the enemy. True science is never an enemy to true religion; its wars in all ages have been with ignorance and superstition and bigotry. . . . Is there no future possibility for that religion, which has been teaching the homogeneity of the universe from the earliest dawn of history, and the infinite progress of each unit in it through evolution, functioning on all planes of being and placing the motive power of it (that evolution) in the Self within? Can there be no vitality in the Scripture that teaches that the soul is beyond all creed, color and sex and that the highest enlightenment may be gained by all alike? Turn to the pages of the Vedas and you will find that revelation and vision transcending the senses have come both to men and women alike. Be strong, say the Vedas; depend upon your innate strength; let neither happiness nor misery turn you away from the pursuit of the highest ideal; take easily the changes that life brings every moment, recognizing that you have brought them upon yourself, and remember that you have the power of changing them again; above all, move in coöperation with nature, within and without, knowing that the God within you is ever giving powerful support. Thus alone can man transmute all his

energies to the highest ends and develop his present limited consciousness to the unlimited supra-conscious existence.

THE KATHA UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda.

PART IV.

(Continued from September Number)

V

He who knows this Atman, the living soul, the honey-eater (the perceiver and enjoyer of objects), ever near, as the lord of past and future, fears no more. This verily is That.

He indeed is blessed who can feel that this Self, who perceives objects and reaps the good and evil fruits of his actions, is one with that vast omnipresent Ruling Principle of the universe, the Controller of past, present and future. Thus knowing his true identity, he fears no more.

VI

He who sees Him seated in the five elements, born of Tapas (fire of Brahman), born before water, Who, having entered the cave of the heart, abides therein—this verily is That.

This verse indicates that He, the Great Self, is the cause of all created objects. According to the Vedas, His first manifestation was Brahma, the Personal God or Creator, born of the fire of wisdom. He existed before the evolution of the five elements, earth, water, fire, air and ether, hence

"born before water." He is the Self dwelling in the heart of all creatures. "This is what thou art seeking, O Nachiketas."

VII

(He who knows) Aditi, who rises with Prana (the Life Principle), existent in all the Devas (senses); who, having entered into the heart, abides there and who was born from the elements—this verily is That.

This verse is very obscure and seems like an interpolated amplification of the preceding verse.

VIII

The all-seeing fire which exists hidden in fire-wood, as the foetus is well-guarded in the womb by the mother, (that fire) which is to be worshipped day after day by watchful seekers (after wisdom), as well as by followers of Karma-Kanda (the path of rituals and external observances)—this verily is That.

Fire is called "all-seeing" because it illumines everything. Also as wisdom destroys all ignorance and imperfection, so it consumes all material objects. Therefore it is regarded as the symbol of wisdom and is cherished by all earnest seekers, whether they follow the path of meditation or the path of sacrifice.

IX

From whence the sun rises and whither it sets, upon That all the Devas (senses) depend. No one goes beyond That. This verily is That.

The Life-Principle is the source and goal of all

creation. Things rise from It and return to It. Each one of our sense activities must depend on It, because without It there would be no object to perceive and no power of perception.

X

What is here (in the visible world), that is there (in the invisible); he who sees difference (between visible and invisible) goes from death to death.

XI

By mind alone this (supreme knowledge) is to be obtained. There is no difference whatever (between visible and invisible). He who sees difference here (between these) goes from death to death.

In the sight of true wisdom, there is no difference between the creator and the created. Modern science has come to recognize that cause and effect must be of similar nature; hence there cannot be any difference between visible and invisible, manifested and unmanifested. But he who fails to see this, being engrossed in the visible only, goes from death to death, because all forms have beginning and end. The essence which dwells within is alone unchangeable and imperishable. This knowledge of the oneness of visible and invisible, however, cannot be acquired through sense-perception. It can only be obtained by the purified mind.

XII

The Purusha (Self), of the size of a thumb, resides in the middle of the body as the Lord of

the past and the future, (he who knows Him) grieves no more. This verily is That.

The seat of the Purusha or Self is said to be the heart, hence "It resides in the middle of the body." Although it is limitless and all-pervading, yet in relation to Its abiding place It is represented as limited in extension, "the size of a thumb," which refers really to the heart, often described as a lotus bud, which in size and shape may be likened to a thumb. As light is everywhere, yet we see it focussed in a lamp and believe it to be only there; similarly, although the life-current flows everywhere in the body, the heart is regarded as peculiarly its seat.

XIII

That Purusha, of the size of a thumb, is like a flame without smoke, Lord of the past and the future, He is the same today and tomorrow. This verily is That.

In this verse the teacher first defines the effulgent nature of the soul, whose light is pure like a flame without smoke. He now answers the question put by Nachiketas as to what happens after death, by declaring that no real change takes place, because the soul is ever the same.

XIV

As rain water, (falling) on the mountain top, runs down over the rocks on all sides; similarly, he who sees difference (between the invisible essence and visible forms) runs after them.

XV

O Gotama (Nachiketas), as pure water poured into pure water becomes the same (one with it), so also is it with the Self of an illumined Knower. (He becomes one with the Supreme).

Part V.

I.

The city of the Unborn, whose knowledge is unchanging, has eleven gates. Thinking on Him (Brahman), man grieves no more: and being freed (from ignorance), he attains liberation. This verily is That.

This human body is called a city with eleven gates, where the eternal unborn spirit dwells. These gates are the two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, the mouth, the navel, the two lower apertures, and the imperceptible opening at the top of the head. The Self or *Atman* holds the position of King or Ruler in this city; and being above the modifications of birth, death and all human imperfections, He is not affected by the changes of the physical organism. As the intelligent man through constant thought and meditation realizes the splendor of this Supreme Spirit, he becomes free from that part of his nature which grieves and suffers and thus attains liberation.

II.

He (Brahman) is the sun, dwelling in the bright heaven; He is the air dwelling in space; He is the fire burning on the altar; He is the guest dwelling in the house. He dwells in man, He dwells in those

greater than man. He dwells in sacrifice. He dwells in the ether. He is all that is born in water, all that is born in earth, all that is born of sacrifice, all that is born on mountains. He is the True and the Great.

This verse sets forth the all-pervading nature of the Self, which is not confined to one city or body, but is present in all forms of existence.

III.

He (Brahman) who sends the in-coming Prana (life-breath) upward and casts the out-going breath downward, seated in the centre (the heart) as the adorable Atman, Him all the devas (senses) worship.

IV.

When this Atman seated in the body goes out (from the body), what remains then? This verily is That.

V.

No mortal lives by the in-coming breath (Prana) or by the out-going breath (Apana), but he lives by another on which these two depend.

VI.

O Gautama (Nachiketas), I shall declare unto thee the secret of the eternal Brahman and what happens to the Self (soul) after death.

VII.

Some Jivas (individual souls) enter wombs to be embodied, others go into immovable forms, according to their deeds and knowledge.

This text shows the application of the law of

cause and effect to all forms of life. The thoughts and actions of the present life determine the future birth and environment.

VIII.

This Self who remains awake while all sleep, who grants all desires, That is pure, That is Brahman, That alone is said to be immortal. On That all the worlds rest. None goes beyond That. This verily is That.

IX.

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.

X.

As air, though one, having entered the world, becomes various according to where it enters, so does the Atman within all living beings, though one, become various according to what it enters. It also exists outside.

By using these similes of fire and air, the teacher tries to show Nachiketas the subtle quality of the Great Self, who, although one and formless like air and fire, yet assumes different shapes according to the form in which it dwells. But, being all-pervading and unlimited, it cannot be confined to these forms; therefore it is said that It also exists outside of all forms.

XI.

As the sun, the eye of the world, is not defiled

by external impurities seen by the eyes, thus the one inner Self of all living beings is not defiled by the misery of the world, being outside it.

The sun is called the eye of the world because it reveals all objects. As the sun may shine on the most impure object yet remain uncontaminated by it, so the Divine Self within is not touched by the impurity or suffering of the physical form in which it dwells, for that Self is beyond all bodily limitations.

XII.

There is one Ruler, the Self of all living beings, who makes the one form manifold, the wise who perceive Him seated within their Self, to them belongs eternal bliss, not to others.

XIII.

Eternal among the changing, Consciousness of the conscious, who though one fulfils the desires of many, the wise who perceive Him seated within their Self, to them belongs eternal peace, not to others.

XIV.

They (the wise) perceive that indescribable highest bliss, saying "This is That". How am I to know It? Does It shine (by Its own light) or does It shine (by reflected light)?

XV.

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.

PANTHEISM AND THE VEDANTA

By J. J. Goodwin

Almost nine out of every ten students of philosophy in Western countries, who examine into the religion propounded through the Upanishads and expounded by Sankaracharya, Ramanuja and others, give up the search after a time, expressing themselves fully convinced that the Vedanta Philosophy is Pantheistic; and probably at least eight out of the nine who reach that conclusion honestly believe what they say. And yet in reality such is by no means the truth. The Vedanta holds that while the idea of a God separate from man, regarded as an object of veneration and love, is not a contradiction of the real Truth, yet it represents want of ability to perceive that Truth in its reality, and says that the highest Truth is reached when we are able to see one only, not God and nature, but God and God alone.

Pantheism is also monistic, in that it says there is not a God and a nature; but Pantheism says that the unity is reached when we see God as nature,—nature as it appears to us. The whole difference lies in the use of one word. Where the Pantheist sees nature *as* God, and worships the Sun, or the Moon, or that part of nature which appeals to him as the highest and grandest expression of that God-nature, the Vedantist sees God *in* nature. He sees that nature, by itself, cannot exist one moment. He sees further that the assertion of an independent Infinite and a dependent

universe contains a grave contradiction, for that finite universe will itself limit the Infinite. It is insufficient to say that God, being Infinite, holds in His hand this power of self-limitation, for that would introduce into the Infinite two irreconcilable elements—an unconditioned element (if that were possible) and a conditioned element. Consequently God cannot be nature; or to put it more clearly, nature cannot express God. But by withdrawing within ourselves and from nature, that which we saw as nature we see anew as God; we are enabled to look through the veil which we ourselves have cast over the reality, and the veil disappearing reveals the God within. The subject, which has foolishly tried to objectify itself, withdraws that objectification within itself again and sees the Eternal subject alone, free and unconditioned by the limitations and imaginary qualifications with which the mind had surrounded it and dimmed its beauty. When we see nature, we do not see God; and when we see God, we do not see nature; because the very idea of seeing nature is projection of the subject (God); and the subject, regarded in itself and in its own light, has none of the imperfections and differentiations which we have imposed upon it in the process of objectification. Tennyson very beautifully expressed the idea thus:

"The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills
and the plains—
Are not these, O soul, the Vision of Him who
reigns?

Is not the Vision He? tho' He be not that which
He seems?
Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live
in dreams?"

True, indeed, it is that we do live in dreams; but while we are in them, we cannot afford to ignore a certain amount of reality in them. The very fact that we speak of getting out of the dream shows us this. Still no man is content to remain always a dreamer, and there must come a time to everyone when the utter uselessness of the things of sense vexes his mind and he tries to get out, to wake from his dream. When we have unthinkingly made attempt after attempt to express God, represented as the ideal and perfect good, in a nature which exists only by reason of the continual fight between good and evil, dissatisfaction begins and we commence the search for a way out. Some are able to realize freedom by repudiation of bondage, but this requires infinite strength and is far beyond the capabilities of most men and women. Others seek a slower, but perhaps safer and equally sure method, by making their natures pure and free from both good and evil, and so becoming more a reflection of their God-ideal; and for this gradual manifestation of the reality, devotion is the best means, a devotion which is so pure itself and so free from unworthy motives, that its very intensity brings the subject and the object, the lover and the Beloved into closer and closer com-

munion, until the one cannot be distinguished from the other.

But even this devotion has its stages. Thought can only be expressed in symbol; we cannot possibly think without giving name and form to that thought, and thus symbols arise, and it matters little whether that symbol be internal or external. Here again there has been a great deal of misapprehension as to the real significance of the Vedic religion. The man who personalizes his Ideal in his own mind, cannot see that the man who worships that Ideal in a symbol of wood or stone or external nature, is doing just as he himself is doing,—worshipping not nature or the image, but the qualities and attributes which he mentally attaches to it. Image worship is as completely misunderstood when it is regarded as Pantheism, as is the idea of the Divinity of man held by monists; and generally the greatest objections are raised by those who are themselves most attached to an Ideal to which they have given form and thus reduced it to symbology. There is room for much more liberality in these matters than we find at present. We need to realize that we are much nearer to our Ideal, much nearer to God, when we can really practise at every moment of our lives universal love, than when we limit that love to this form and that form, to this person and that person, nay, worse, to this method of reaching the Ideal and that method. If God is infinite, the universal is certainly nearer to Him than the particular details

of the universal; and it is through the Universal, and the Universal brought into our every-day life through love, that we shall eventually be ourselves of the same nature with the Ideal.

THE WARRIOR IN ANCIENT INDIA

War without the passions of war is a phenomenon which it has been possible to witness only in ancient India. The belligerent camps at Kurukshetra used to receive every night after the day's tremendous fighting mutual guests from the enemies. The Gita eliminated from the mind of Arjuna not only all misgivings about the war but also its passions. The sympathies of the toughest warrior among the Kauravas—a warrior who mowed down thousands every day on the battle-field—were on the side of the Pandavas (their enemies). War to be pursued as a duty imposed, with a mind free from passions, is an ideal not unfamiliar to the sons of India.

What is the ancient ideal of a *Kshattriya* (warrior) in India? A correct reply to this question presupposes a careful examination of the origin of the *Kshattriya* class. The earliest Vedic society was composed only of *Brahmanas,* that is, persons whose sole occupation in life was the practice of the Vedic religion. But in time it was found out by this spiritual society that it was necessary to organize temporal power within itself to protect its religious pursuits from the depredations of non-Vedic races. Mighty warriors, therefore, began to be brought under the spiritual ministrations of the

Rishis (Seers of Truth or Spiritual Leaders), who extended to them the right of Vedic culture and sacrifices and admitted them into the society. So out of this recognition of a warrior class as a part of the primitive society formed by the *Rishis* rose the *Kshattriyas* of ancient India; and this recognition had for its fundamental condition the temporal protection which the *Kshattriyas* as such had to exercise over the Vedic religious pursuits of the society. This protection was the essential function of the Aryan *Kshattriya* or warrior, and determined, as the underlying principle, the form and trend of his life, its pursuits and glories. Ancient tradition shows that Aryan kings considered it to be their highest duty and glory to be of service to the *Rishis* in putting down the enemies of their religious pursuits. This union of the *Rishi* with the *Kshattriya* clearly explains how the Vedic culture could spread itself almost all over India once at least in every *Yuga* or epoch of ancient history. The forest hermitages of the *Rishis* were the vanguards and pioneers of that culture; and wherever refractory non-Aryan warriors molested these hermitages, the Aryan *Kshattriya* kings were brought into service by the *Rishis* to subdue them, the next step being their gradual Aryanisation. The training of these *Kshattriyas* again in ancient times was pre-eminently a sort of spiritual training such as could originate only with the *Rishis*. So a *Kshattriya* is not simply a brave warrior according to our modern ideas about him; he is a man of emi-

nent spirituality with his whole life regulated by the supreme duty of protecting the Vedic religion.

—*Prabuddha Bharata.*

* * *

The Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Students Home at Madras has just reached us. The institution has now completed its ninth year and it is gratifying to read that although a more spacious building was secured during the current year, it has already been outgrown. The Home is able indeed to consider scarcely one-fifth of the applications received. As the report states: "The cry of the day is for education and those who cannot pay for it are the ones who need it most, because upon it depends their future well-being. When we see from the many appealing letters which reach us (often from orphans) how many in the villages of the Mofussil are hungering for an opportunity to read in some school or college and are held back by their poverty, we feel that too much cannot be done to enlarge the scope of our institution." Board, lodging, clothes, and the cost of tuition are supplied, and the boys are allowed to attend any school or college in Madras. Many former members have obtained excellent positions—one is an assistant in Wesley College, another is a sub-Assistant Inspector of schools, and a third is Tutor at Pachiappa's College; while among those now at the Home, it is encouraging to note that during the year a number won prizes or scholarships.

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Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
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VOL. III. DECEMBER, 1914 NO. 12

It is true that I am one from head to foot, but here I am called eyes, here I am called ears, here I am called feet; and although I am one self, that which the feet can do, the eyes cannot do; what the eyes can do, the ears cannot do; what the ears can do, the nose cannot do. Therefore, being one, yet I am many. It is one self that is manifesting itself as eyes, as nose, as feet or hands. There is one self at the centre and all these are emanating from that centre as radii. Similarly, although God is one, still He is manifesting Himself in many forms. From the outside standpoint He is many; from the inside standpoint He is one, which has ramified Himself into many. From the standpoint of the circumference, the radii are many; from the standpoint of the centre there is but one. Thus God is appearing both as one and many. Often when a man looks at one object, it seems to him to be several; and when one thus appears to be many, it means a deranged vision. So from the standpoint of Truth there is one; from the standpoint of falsehood or *Maya,* there are many. A rope lies in the road and one man mistakes it for a snake, another for a wisp of hay,

a third for something else. The object remains one and the same; the ideas about it may be innumerable. In the same way God is one, but the ideas about Him are many.

—*Familiar Teachings by Swami Ramakrishnananda.*

DIVINE INCARNATION

By Swami Paramananda

God is infinite, His power is infinite, His manifestations therefore also must be infinite. How can man limit the Infinite by finite form? How can he ever stamp by one name That which is nameless and limitless? The Lord declares in the Bhagavad-Gita that "Wherever and whenever there is need of re-establishing true religion, then I come";—not "I" as a personal, finite being, but as the Supreme Spirit. The Divine manifests Himself to fulfill the needs of all mankind. "Mankind" means the universe, and whatever is given to bless the universe is for all. It is not confined to one group of people, one nation, one community or one creed. Truth is universal and all paths to Truth lead to the same Truth. He is one without a second, but His manifestations are many. Such is the conception of Vedanta regarding Divine Incarnation.

Inclusiveness is the key-note of the Teaching. It is true that God was manifested in the form of Jesus the Christ. He also manifested Himself in the form of Gautama Buddha. Krishna was another incarnation of the same Supreme Deity.

Whenever men fall asleep regarding spiritual things, when they are overpowered by materialism, then someone must come and set before them another standard of life. Mere words cannot help. We can read about many wonderful truths in the Bibles of the world,—that man is infinite in power, immortal, above birth and death, that the soul is a part of God; but are we always able to believe in these truths? We cannot, until we are shown, until we find some visible proof on which to base our conviction. If we accept merely on hearsay, our faith is easily shaken; but if we see one who lives and radiates these truths, then we can no longer doubt. And such a One is called a Divine Incarnation. In one sense we are all incarnations of Spirit; we all have the germ of the Divine within us. The fact that we live and move and have consciousness means that we possess some part of God; but we are only ordinary incarnations, while those others are Divine Incarnations, because they manifest Divinity in full measure.

We accept things as they are presented to us, not always having the power to prove them for ourselves, and this is how religion becomes a tradition. Our fathers and forefathers belonged to a church or creed or denomination and we take that as our religion. That, however, is not the true spirit of religion. True religion means individual investigation and more than individual investigation. It means individual proof. The soul must be satisfied. But who will show us how to

do this? The great Seers. Call them by any name you choose,—prophets, saints, Sons of God or Divine Incarnations; worship or honor them as you like; but they stand as brilliant lights, dispelling all the darkness of ignorance and showing us clearly what is Truth and what is untruth. In all countries we find the same idea of Messiahs and Prophets. In every Scripture we read that people are looking for someone to come and point out the way; and this pointing the way is the mission of every great Incarnation.

He does not come in pomp as a King, as a tyrant, forcing others to believe in Him. No, He simply comes as a humble servant of God to show mankind the spiritual path. He dedicates His life as a living offering on the altar of humanity; and those who are pure in heart can accept and assimilate His teaching; and they alone are blessed. Others, who can not see, rise in opposition because they are asleep and their sleep is disturbed. Whenever a man is dreaming or in slumber, if you stir him, he becomes annoyed with you; and that is exactly the case with the world. When a Divine Incarnation comes, He comes to proclaim Truth, Truth so profound, so gigantic that the world does not understand and cries out: "This man has come to do us harm; he is going to disturb our happiness and spoil our comfort. Let us torture him, let us kill him." But not all. There are a few who have been looking for a light, and it is easy for them to recognize Him. As we find when

Christ was born, a few wise men knew and rejoiced that One had come to bless the world; for what can be a greater blessing than a Light which leads to God, a Light which destroys all illusion and imperfection?

We hear constantly about charity, love, brotherhood, yet how can we believe in them? People talk of love, but we see the opposite; they talk of tolerance and we see intolerance everywhere. How can we believe until someone comes and proves these things through his life? Therefore we find that those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness eagerly yearn for a sign; and this comes in the form of a man, perhaps lowly, perhaps very different from what one would call great from a worldly point of view, but who fulfills the law in himself. He proves that religion is being and becoming. Is it wrong then for us to take these Incarnations as our guides, our leaders, when we have not the power to find out the path for ourselves? No. That is the surest way of attaining the Truth.

We need something which is not beyond us. We want something which we can comprehend. If someone comes to us with a message, he must be able to speak so that we can understand; otherwise he may have wonderful truths to give us, but it will be all in vain. So a Divine Incarnation, although he descends from the Absolute, yet because he is like man, man can feel his reality, man can see his face, man can hear his voice, man can

follow his footsteps; for he sees that here is a being who appears like him, but who has overcome human imperfections and weakness. The idea of Divine Incarnation, therefore, is that God descends to the human plane, incarnates in the form of man, undertakes that which is for man to undertake, and thus following the path of mankind, He shows each one how he can move Godward and manifest the Highest. He is divine enough to be in touch with God and human enough to be in touch with man; therefore He is called a mediator, a mouthpiece, a connecting link through which man feels united with the Divine. When man strives alone, when he exerts his own reason, he falls so far short of that Unfathomable Mystery that often he gives up in despair. "What is the use of discussing these philosophical problems about the Soul, about God? We cannot prove them." This is the general conclusion of human minds, but not when we see a visible proof, if we are ready to see. But there must be purity of heart, there must be openness of mind, the soul must be hungry and thirsty; then we are able to recognize the Divine Light and we can follow.

Religion must become a part of our being; we must feel that it fills our life, that it satisfies our soul. When thus the spiritual realm becomes a reality, we grow strong in understanding, in power, in love. It transforms our whole being and uplifts us to a plane of consciousness where doubt and the darkness of ignorance have no access. But

this has to be done through practice. We must feel, see, and not merely theorize. No one has ever become great by having faith in a theory. What we want is tangible proof. How can we be satisfied if a thing has been proved by someone else? How can we know that the things of the Spirit are true until we see for ourselves? A Divine Incarnation rouses man to seek for this proof. He does not proclaim, "What I say, believe"; but he tells man that he also can know for himself, for he has the same latent power which he can manifest. He comes as a friend, as a comforter, giving to all who suffer or grieve this message of hope: "O children of Immortal Bliss! We have found the Kingdom of Heaven. Know that ye are children of that Realm. There is no imperfection, no limitation, no sin or sorrow for you. The ideas of limitation which you hold are only fleeting and arise from your partial consciousness of life. In reality you are part of the Supreme." Thus they stir the individual mind. Mankind must be inspired, must be awakened by the message and life of a Divine Incarnation.

The purpose of the Divine Incarnation, however, is not merely to manifest glory and power. Although he is a direct descendant of the Almighty, yet he comes especially to show that He is a brother of man; that if He is a son of God, so are all sons of God; all are children of the same Father, and as such it is their birthright to rise above limitation and reach the Highest. "Be ye

perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect." This is what Christ constantly taught His disciples with the greatest emphasis. It is also the message of every Teacher and Scripture. Wherever we turn our eyes in our search for Truth, we shall find that this is the key-note of religion; and when we know how to live up to it, we are on the right path. Only then do we honor Him whom we regard as our Ideal.

It is not by words of praise that we prove our devotion to our Saviour, but by doing His will and becoming that which He wants us to be. It does not matter how we differ from one another in our outer modes of worship; as long as we are true to this essential factor of religion, we are bound to find a common basis of harmony among all forms of faith. "In whatever way men worship Me, in that way I reach them. All men follow paths which ultimately lead to Me." This is the conclusion of the Teaching of the Vedanta. Each one of us must worship his Ideal as he sees and comprehends Him; but we must remember that others, who apparently may be following different roads, are just as much in the right as we and will eventually reach the same goal. We must never raise our voice in condemnation of any sincere worshipper of God. Tolerance and peace, sympathy, not denunciation, with these lofty virtues in our hearts, if we strive to worship the Truth, we shall attain the Highest and fulfill the mission of human life.

WORDS OF THE GREAT TEACHERS

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.

He whose heart is unattached to external pleasures of the senses realizes the happiness that is in the Self; being united with Brahman (the Supreme) by meditation, he attains to eternal bliss.

He who can withstand the impulse of lust and anger even here (in this life), before he is separated from the body, he is steadfast and truly a happy man.

He whose joy is within, whose pleasure is within, and whose light is within, that saint, being well-established in Brahman (the Supreme), attains to absolute freedom.

—*Sri Krishna.* (*About* 1400 *B. C.*)

* * *

Turn not away from the three best things: right thoughts, right words, right deeds.

Holiness is good, it is the best of all good. Holiness is happiness. Happiness is due to him who is best in holiness. The will of the Lord is the law of holiness.

Do not acquire the riches of the material world at the cost of the spiritual world. For he who destroys the spiritual world to obtain the riches of

the material world shall possess neither the Celestial Light nor the Paradise of Ahura Mazda.

—*Zoroaster.* (*About* 1000 *B. C.*)

* * *

All things in Nature work silently. They come into being and possess nothing. They fulfil their functions and make no claim.

Follow diligently the Way in your own heart, but make no display of it to the world.

Keep behind and you shall be put in front; keep out and you shall be kept in.

He that humbles himself shall be preserved entire. He that bends shall be made straight. He that is empty shall be filled. He that is worn out shall be renewed. He who has little shall succeed. He who has much shall go astray.

The Sage embraces Unity and is a model for all under Heaven. He is free from self-display, therefore he shines forth; from self-assertion, therefore he is distinguished; from self-glorification, therefore he has merit; from self-exaltation, therefore he rises superior to all. Inasmuch as he does not strive, there is no one in the world who can strive with him.

He who is great must make simplicity his base. He who is high must make lowliness his foundation.

—*Laotze.* (604 *B. C.*)

* * *

Happy is he who has overcome all selfishness; happy is he who has attained peace; happy is he who has found the Truth.

Have faith in the Truth, although you may not be able to comprehend it, although you may suppose its sweetness to be bitter, although you may shrink from it at first. Trust in the Truth. Have faith in the Truth and live it.

Struggle there must be, for all life is a struggle. But he who struggles should look to it lest he struggle in the interest of self against Truth and righteousness.

He who struggles in the interest of self, so that he himself may be great or powerful or rich or famous, will have no reward; but he who struggles for righteousness and Truth will have great reward, for even his defeat will be a victory.

Great is a successful general, but he who has conquered self is the greater victor.

The doctrine of the conquest of self is taught not to destroy the souls of men, but to preserve them. He who has conquered self is more fit to live, to be successful, and to gain victories than he who is the slave of self. Struggle then courageously and fight your battles vigorously, but be a soldier of Truth.

—*Buddha.* (*About* 555 *B. C.*)

* * *

Moral virtue consists in being able everywhere to exercise these five qualities: self-respect, magnanimity, sincerity, earnestness and benevolence. The higher type of man seeks all that he wants within himself; the inferior man seeks all that he wants from others. The nobler sort of man is

exacting of himself, the common man is exacting of others.

Tzu King asked, "Is there any one maxim which should govern one's whole life?" And the Master answered: "What you do not wish done to yourself, do not do to others." . . . "Possess good qualities yourself, then you may expect them from others. Before you can blame others, you must be free from fault yourself. The perfect man loves all men."

—*Confucius.* (551 *B. C.*)

* * *

Not everyone 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.

For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

And everyone that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

—*Jesus the Christ.*

* * *

'I am indeed Brahman, without difference, with-

out change, and of the nature of reality, knowledge and bliss. I am not, therefore, the body which is unreal.' This is what the wise call knowledge.

'I am without change, without form, without blemish and without decay. I am not, therefore, the body which is unreal.' This is what the wise call knowledge.

'I am without attribute, without action, eternal, eternally free, and imperishable. I am not, therefore, the body which is unreal.' This is what the wise call knowledge.

'I am stainless, without motion, without end, pure, and devoid of old age and death. I am not, therefore, the body which is unreal.' This is what the wise call knowledge.

—*Sri Sankaracharya.* (*8th Century, A. D.*)

THE TRUE SPIRIT OF RELIGION

Extract by Swami Vivekananda

When each man stands and says: "My prophet is the only true prophet," he is not correct; he knows not the alpha of religion. Religion is neither talk, nor theory, nor intellectual consent. It is realization in the heart of our hearts, it is touching God, it is feeling, realizing that "I am a spirit" in relation with the Universal Spirit and all its great manifestations. If you have really entered the house of the Father, how can you have seen His children and not know them? And if you do not recognize them, you have not entered the

house of the Father. The mother recognizes her child in any dress and knows him however disguised. Recognize all the great, spiritual men and women in every age and country, and see that they are not really at variance with one another. Wherever there has been actual religion,—this touch of the Divine, the soul coming into direct contact with the Divine, there has always been a broadening of the mind which enables it to see the light everywhere.

Side by side with the modern theory of evolution, there is another thing: atavism. There is a tendency in us to revert to old ideas in religion. Let us think something new, even if it be wrong. It is better to do that. Why should you not try to hit the mark? We become wiser through failures. Time is infinite. Look at the wall. Did the wall ever tell a lie? It is always the wall. It is better to do something; never mind even if it proves to be wrong; it is better than doing nothing. Think some thought; it matters not whether you are right or wrong. But think something! Because my forefathers did not think this way, shall I sit down quietly and gradually lose my sense of feeling and my own thinking faculties? I may as well be dead! And what is life worth if we have no living ideas, no convictions of our own about religion? There is some hope for the Atheists, because though they differ from others, they think for themselves. The people who never think anything for themselves, are not yet born into the

world of religion; they have a mere jelly-fish existence. They will not think; they do not care for religion. But the disbeliever, the atheist, cares; and he is struggling. So think something! Struggle Godward! Never mind if you fail, never mind if you get hold of a queer theory. If you are afraid to be called queer, keep it in your own mind; you need not go and preach it to others. But do something! Struggle Godward! Light must come. If a man feeds me every day of my life, in the long run I shall lose the use of my hands. Spiritual death is the result of following each other like a flock of sheep. Death is the result of inaction. Be active! And wherever there is activity, there must be difference. Difference is the sauce of life; it is the beauty, it is the art of everything. It is variety that is the source of life, the sign of life. Why should we be afraid of it?

Now we are coming to a position to understand about the Prophets. We see that the historical evidence is that where there has been any real thinking, any real love for God, the soul has grown Godwards and has got as it were a glimpse now and then; has come into direct perception, even if only for a second, even if once in its life. Immediately "All doubts vanish forever, and all the crookedness of the heart is made straight, and all bondages vanish, and the results of action and Karma fly; for He is seen who is the nearest of the near and the farthest of the far." That is religion; that is all of religion; the rest is mere theory.

KATHA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda

(Concluded from November Number)

PART VI.

I.

This ancient Aswattha tree has its root above and branches below. That (root) is pure, That is Brahman, That alone is called immortal. All the worlds rest in That. None goes beyond That. This verily is That.

This verse indicates the origin of the tree of creation (the *Samsâra-vriksha*), which is rooted above in Brahman (the Supreme) and sends its branches downward into the phenomenal world. Heat and cold, pleasure and pain, birth and death, and all the shifting conditions of the mortal realm—these are the branches; but the origin of the tree, the Brahman, is eternally pure, unchanging, free and deathless. From the highest angelic form to the minutest atom, all have their origin in Him. He is the foundation of the universe. There is nothing beyond Him.

II.

Whatever there is in the universe is evolved from Prâna (Brahman) and vibrates in Prâna. That (Brahman) is a mighty terror, like an upraised thunderbolt. They who know That (the Brahman) become immortal.

III.

From fear of Him the fire burns, from fear of

Him the sun shines. From fear of Him Indra (one who gives rain) and Vayu (air) and Death, the fifth, speed forth.

Just as the body cannot live or act without the soul; similarly, nothing in the created world can exist independent of Brahman (the Supreme), Who is the basis of all existence. His position is like that of a king whom all must obey; hence it is said that sun, moon, wind, rain, do His bidding. He is called an "up-raised thunderbolt," not because He is an arbitrary, wrathful Ruler, but because He is the One Supreme Power, Whose will is the law of the universe.

IV.

If a man is not able to know Brahman before the falling of the body, then he becomes embodied again in the created worlds.

If a man acquires knowledge of the Supreme before his soul is separated from the body, he is liberated; but so long as he fails to attain such knowledge, then he must take other bodies and return again and again to this realm of birth and death, until through varied experience he realizes the nature of the Supreme Spirit and his relation to Him.

V.

As in a mirror, so within oneself is Brahman seen; as in a dream, so (is He seen) in the world of the fathers (departed spirits); as in water, so (is He seen) in the world of the Gandharvas (the

angelic realm). *As light and shadow, so* (*is He seen*) *in the world of Brahmâ* (*the Creator*).

When by means of a purified understanding one beholds God within, the image is distinct as in a polished mirror; but when one tries to perceive Him by other means, then He grows vague and indistinct as images seen in dream or in water. One cannot have a clear vision of the Supreme by attaining to the various realms known as heavens, where one reaps the fruit of his good deeds. It is only by developing one's highest consciousness here in this life that perfect God-vision can be attained.

VI.

Knowing that the senses are distinct (*from the Atman*) *and their rising and setting separate* (*from the Atman*), *a wise man grieves no more.*

A wise man never confounds the *Atman* which is birthless and deathless with that which has beginning and end. Therefore when he sees his senses and his physical organism waxing and waning, he knows that his Real Self within is never affected by these outer changes, so he remains unmoved.

VII.

Beyond the senses is the mind, beyond the mind is the intellect, higher than intellect is the Great Atman (*Self*), *higher than the Atman is the Unmanifested.*

VIII.

Beyond the Unmanifested is the all-pervading

and imperceptible Self. By knowing Him, the mortal is liberated and attains immortality.

This division of the individual nature into senses, mind, intellect, self-consciousness, the creative force and the Absolute Self is fully explained in the commentary of verse XI., Part III.

IX.

His form is not to be seen. No one can see Him with the eye; He is perceived by the heart, by the purified intellect and by the meditative mind. They who know this become immortal.

Brahman being formless, cannot be discerned by the senses; hence all knowledge of Him must be acquired by our higher, subtler faculties of heart, intellect and mind, which are developed only through meditation.

X.

When the five organs of perception become still, together with the mind, and the intellect ceases to move, that is called the highest state.

The teacher now shows *Nachiketas* the process by which the transcendental vision can be attained. The out-going senses,—seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, tasting—the restless mind and the intellect, all must be indrawn and quieted. The state of equilibrium thus attained is called the highest state, because all the physical and mental forces become united and focussed, thus giving one the power of supersensuous vision.

XI.

This firm holding back of the senses is what is

known as Yoga. Then one becomes watchful, for Yoga comes and goes.

Yoga literally means to join or to unite the lower self with the Higher Self, the object with the subject, God with the worshipper. In order to gain this union, however, one must first disunite oneself from all that distracts the physical, mental and intellectual forces; so the outgoing perceptions must be indrawn and detached from the external world. When this is accomplished through constant practice of concentration and meditation, the union takes place of its own accord. But it may be lost again, unless one is watchful.

XII.

He cannot be attained by speech, by mind or by the eye. How can That (Supreme) be realized except by him who says "He is"?

XIII.

He should be realized as "He is" and also as the reality of both (visible and invisible). He who knows Him as "He is," to him alone is the real Truth revealed.

This supersensuous vision cannot be gained by man's ordinary faculties. By mind, eye, or speech the manifested attributes of the Divine can be apprehended; but only one who has acquired the supersensuous sight can directly perceive God's existence and declare definitely that "He is," that He alone exists in both the visible and the invisible world.

XIV.

When all desires dwelling in the heart cease, then the mortal becomes immortal and attains Brahman here (in this life).

XV.

When here all the ties of the heart are cut asunder, then the mortal becomes immortal. Such is the teaching.

XVI.

There are a hundred and one nerves of the heart. One of them penetrates the centre of the head. Going upward through it one attains immortality. The other (hundred nerve-courses) lead, in departing, to different worlds.

The nervous system of the body provides the channels through which the mind travels; the direction in which it moves is determined by its desires and tendencies. When the mind becomes pure and desireless, it takes the upward course and at the time of departing passes out through the imperceptible opening at the crown of the head; but as long as it remains full of desires, its course is downward towards the realms or worlds where those desires can be satisfied.

XVII.

The Purusha, the inner Self, of the size of a thumb, is ever seated in the heart of all living beings. With perseverance man should draw Him out from his body as one draws the inner stock from a blade of grass. One should know Him (the Self) as pure and deathless, as pure and deathless.

As has been explained in Part IV., verse XII., the Inner Self, although unlimited, is described as "the size of a thumb" because of its abiding place in the heart, often likened to a lotus-bud which is similar to a thumb in size and shape. Through the process of steadfast discrimination, one should learn to differentiate the soul from the body, just as one separates the pith from the reed.

XIX.

Thus Nachiketas, having acquired this wisdom taught by the Ruler of Death, together with all the rules of Yoga, became free from imperfection and death and attained Brahman (the Supreme). So it will be with another who also knows the nature of the Self.

May He (the Supreme Being) protect us both. May He be pleased with us. May we acquire strength. May our study bring us illumination. May there be no discord among us.

OM! Peace! Peace! Peace!

REPORTS

Swami Paramananda delivered a lecture on "The Spiritual Culture of India" before the Theosophical Society of Boston on Sunday evening, Nov. 1st. The hall was well filled and the audience listened with close attention, asking a number of questions at the end. The Swami in introducing his subject, said: "Unity in diversity is the law of creation. We cannot understand the plan of the universe until we comprehend the place which each race and nation takes in it; for each has a special mission

to fulfill. Of the four great ancient races which peopled Egypt, Babylon, China and India, the first three have left us records chiefly of wars and dynasties; in India, on the contrary, the records are all of spiritual rulers and conquests. It was not that India did not have a great and glorious secular history; but her vital interest was in spiritual matters; hence her effort was to perpetuate her achievements in this higher realm. Even her kings and warriors were trained by the *Rishis* or Seers of Truth to covet as their greatest victory the subjugation of their lower nature; and to measure strength, not by muscle and sinew, but by insight and knowledge of the Divine. Their duty was not to gratify personal ambition by seeking to extend their kingdom, but to protect the weak, to keep order, and to fight for every righteous cause. In all matters of importance, they sought the guidance of the illumined Sages; and thus it was that while elsewhere we see the state choosing its religion, in India religion formed the state. Indian Philosophy showed man that he was not rich because he possessed earthly things, but because he had an immortal soul; and since to know this was held up as the highest end of life, the chief energy of the nation was devoted to spiritual pursuits."

* * *

A letter containing the following account of the work in Geneva has been received: "Since Oct. 12th we have begun regular weekly meetings at 4.30 P. M. They are regularly attended by fifteen

of us and sometimes there are over twenty. We begin by some minutes of silence and one of the prayers or salutations; next we read from "The Way of Peace and Blessedness" one time and "Raja Yoga" the other week; then close with a prayer and quiet. Several members of the group have declared that these meetings already mean more to them than any thing else in their lives." Before leaving Geneva Swami Paramananda organized this study class, to hold together those most deeply interested in the Vedanta teaching.

* * *

At the Vedanta Centre of Boston, the Services and Classes have continued as usual. Special appreciation has been manifested for the new class on Monday afternoon and the attendance at this and all the meetings has been excellent during November. In December Swami Paramananda will give a course of lectures on the Great Saviours. All the Services and Classes will remain the same through the month.

SPECIAL NOTICE

The present number closes the third volume of "The Message of the East." We beg to thank our readers for their appreciation and encouragement. "The Message" sets out on its fourth year with the earnest hope that it may prove of even greater usefulness than in the past and through the co-operation of its friends reach a still larger number. It will be deeply appreciated if the subscribers will renew their subscriptions before the new year begins.

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