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

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The Message of the East



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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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PRACTICE OF DISCIPLESHIP

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

Who is a disciple? One who has taken up the discipline of life, who does not choose the easiest path and try constantly to compromise with his loftier ideals; but one who is willing to put aside selfish ambition and gratification in order to find his way to the highest. Disciples are those who live, rather than merely theorize and talk. People call themselves disciples of Christ or of Buddha or of some other great prophet or Messiah; but unless they listen to the voice of their Ideal and follow it, they are not disciples. Religion is not an abstract principle which a man can theorize about and turn to his personal advantage; it must form his character wholly. Without character we are weak and miserable in ourselves and we bring confusion in the world. We take wrong steps and we stumble, because we are thinking all the time of our own selfish advantage.

Greatness cannot be expressed except where there is elimination of all selfishness. Education which does not accomplish this is not true education; therefore in India they hold that even those who do not take up the spiritual life should go through a primary training in discipleship. A man who has learned to be obedient does not lose in power of individual judgment. On the contrary, his opin-

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ion is of greater value because it is the product of his life. He has subdued his selfish tendencies, consequently whatever he produces is worth something. It is invariably a benefit to humanity. One who has not developed his higher powers through discipline is not able to use the opportunities which come to him; rather he turns them to his disadvantage. If a child tries to manipulate a piece of machinery before he has been taught how to handle it, he may easily put his hand in the wrong place and have it crushed. The same way is it with life. Unless we have learned its right use, we shall be crushed by it.

The path of discipleship requires obedience,—obedience to higher principles. Every one needs it. Any one who thinks that he does not need to practise obedience is a much deluded person. It would be all right if we could take care of ourselves, but we cannot. We must look to those who have superior qualities and be subservient to them until we ourselves have gained wisdom. People who are ambitious and aggressive never contribute anything towards the welfare of humanity; but those who forget themselves utterly, who want nothing for themselves, they are released from the smallness of life and pass naturally into a larger sphere of action. Without self-discipline we are so disorganized, so lacking in control that we cannot do good to any one. This was the reason why the idea of discipleship entered so profoundly into the social and religious institutions of India. Every child was sent to live with a teacher, but scholarship alone did not make one a teacher. The teacher must be a man of lofty character, who lived his precepts. This was vital. Often we tell our children not to be angry or untruthful, but our instructions fail to make an impression because they are not supported by the moral force which comes through living ourselves

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what we demand of others. This is one of the great benefits of discipleship, that we learn to govern ourselves through service and the practice of obedience.

Our main interest is to conquer ourselves; and conquest in any line means effort. We must work for it. No one ever gained a victory of any kind who was unwilling to be wakeful and active. It is the energetic type of mind which conquers in every line of life. We must not have a morbid idea of the spiritual life and imagine that it means merely going to church, reading the Bible and repeating prayers. True spirituality is intensely active. It must enter into our ordinary life and transform it to such an extent that there will be absolute accord between our principles and our living.

Man releases himself from the bondage of life when he finds his relationship with his own highest Self. But this requires a great many disciplines. The unruly tendencies which rise within us—anger, greed, jealousy, hatred—stifle our loftier nature. That is why we are filled with remorse when these waves pass. If we can learn to check them when they start to rise, we make a tremendous step forward in our evolution. How much easier it is when we begin early, instead of waiting until we have a deeply rooted habit of undisciplined thought. People say: "It is my nature to be impatient or irritable, I cannot help it." But these things are not natural to the real standard of humanity. There is no tendency we cannot curb, if we choose. We can reverse the current and make the opposite tendency just as natural. The beautiful teachings of religion,—"Love your neighbor as yourself," "Be perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect," "Do good to them that hate you": these are not mere sayings to repeat. We must do them; and a disciple is one who tries to do them.

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It does not matter to what religion he belongs; that is of very little importance, because real religion cannot be labelled by any name. It is in the life; and those who are true followers of their faith, they live it; and by becoming living examples they extend their blessings to others. First they fill their own life with blessing, then they have something to give their fellowmen. One who has conquered himself through discipline is far happier than the man who seeks happiness in self-indulgence, because his happiness does not depend upon outward circumstances. He continues to be happy whether he is blamed or praised. He knows an inward joy, a deep inner tranquillity. It is a foolish attitude of mind when we rise and fall with every passing circumstance. We find much greater satisfaction in life when we have an ideal and follow it. The strength of character we give by living a more interior life offers us far greater sustenance than either intellectual or material power. Money, name, position, all these things fade away; but even these fleeting material advantages become beneficial when they are in the hands of a master. The masters are those who are masters of themselves and remain the same under all conditions. We may insult them or flatter them, but we cannot make them shift their ground, because they are stable; and they are stable because they do not work with any selfish motive; they have a bigger standard in life.

A religion which does not bring into every human life a higher ideal is not religion no matter what it is called. People say: "I am a follower of Christ and you are an inferior man because you are not a follower of Christ"; but let them be followers of Christ, let their life be Christlike; that is the only way they can impress the truth of their religion upon another mind. Disciples are those who fol-

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low very closely, not from a long distance. Some people are thoroughly sincere. They are full of zeal, but they believe they can best serve their ideal by fighting for it; they wish to conquer by force. Real conquest, however, is only possible through the force of life and character.

There are certain principles which are inseparable from character,—humility, obedience to higher principles and vision. We cannot have faith in any ideal, any spiritual Truth, unless we have become thoroughly familiar with it by our own vision, and vision is the product of our life. If we live an orderly, tranquil, pure life, it will reflect the Truth. Truth never shines upon that heart where there is falsehood. Falsehood never really helps us. We may escape apparently from others through falsehood, but we can never escape from ourselves. If we say or do anything which is not true, it will obscure our vision. The heart must be pure and genuine to see clearly.

The practice of discipleship is very cleansing. It does not destroy or mutilate the nature; but it cleanses it of all that is non-essential and harmful to us. At times it may impose severe disciplines, but through them we grow stronger. This is its great value. In our modern life we are becoming more and more dependent on artificial help, and it is not a good sign. People have learned to depend on machines to such an extent that they would be glad if some one would invent some sort of machine to do their thinking for them. This brings degradation. It would be much better for us if we would depend less on these outer material devices and would enlarge the inner, essential part of our being. When people are given too many tools to work with, they use their mental faculties less and less. They follow a certain routine of thought and if anything unusual occurs, they are absolutely at a loss. They have

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not the power to use to the best advantage this instrument given them by God; but those who have the habit of independent thinking always find a way out.

Our life should be simplified. We are so burdened. It is not by trying to satisfy every craving which rises in us that we attain the highest happiness or perfection. We must be thoughtful and discriminating. We must begin to adjust our life. We all have a vocation. We all have something to give to the world, something to contribute to the general good. We are all children of God; we are all aiming for ultimate attainment in one form or another; and until we find the highest expression of life which flows from Eternity, we shall never be free. To find it, however, requires zeal. One of the Upanishads declares that Truth can never be attained by the weak. This does not mean physical weakness; it means moral weakness, the weakness which makes us doubt and fear and shrink from anything big. Spiritual vision is born as the product of self-discipline. We have to work for it and it is better to work for it right now. Salvation does not begin after we are dead. It is here that we taste it. It is here that freedom and joy must be realized. True disciples, whether they are followers of Christianity or Buddhism or Confucianism, always maintain a cheerful heart. The God-consecrated man is always joyous, because he is not selfish. Selfish people cannot know true happiness. Even when they have gained their desire, there is always something to mar their happiness. Mere accumulation of wealth or material advantage will never bring us satisfaction, unless at the same time we unfold our spiritual nature.

Discipleship means self-discipline. It is not that some one tells us to do this or that; but out of our own love of Truth and our sense of consecration, we set for ourselves

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a certain path to follow. Our life becomes a deeper life, a life which is not separated from the God Principle in anything. At first it may seem a tremendous task to acquire this continuous contact with the Divine. We say: "How can we who are so busy relate ourselves with an abstract spiritual principle? If we cease to protect our own interest, some one may deceive us." But those who devote themselves to their own interest do not really succeed or find lasting satisfaction. When, however, through discipline we have learned the deeper lessons of life, we are not wounded or distracted by the material world. This external world seems harsh, empty and artificial to us, because it is lacking in balance; and those who follow the spiritual path ardently and faithfully restore the balance. Then even this outer life becomes mellow and full of sweetness, full of hope and courage.

LEADINGS OF THE SPIRIT

From the Letters of Isaac Penington

(English Quaker Mystic, born 1617)

Sit down and count the cost of ploughing up thy field and of searching after the hidden treasure of pure and true wisdom, and consider seriously whether thou canst sell all for it, both inward and outward riches; that, if thou do set thy hand to the plough, thou mayest not look back after anything else, within or without, but mayest be content and satisfied with the pearl of true wisdom and life alone.

Now, if thou be truly willing in God's sight thus to do, thou must singly give up to follow the Lord in the leadings of His Spirit, out of all the ways of thy own wisdom and knowledge, out of all things wherein thou hast a life and delight out of Him. Thou must not determine what thou

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hast a life in, but the Lord must search thy heart; and He will soon show thee (if thy heart be naked and open before Him, willing to hear and learn of Him), somewhat in thy heart, somewhat in thy ways, somewhat in thy words and thoughts, which is contrary to His pure life and Spirit; and then, that must be denied and given up immediately.

If thy heart come to feel the Spirit of God, and to wait upon Him in the measure of His life, He will be tender of thee as a father of his child, and His love will be naturally breaking forth towards thee. This is the end of all His dealings with thee, to bring thee hither, to make thee fit and capable of entering and abiding here. And He hath changed and doth change thy spirit daily; though it be as the shooting up of the corn, whose growth cannot be discerned at present by the most observing eye, but it is very manifest afterwards that it hath grown.

But wait to feel the relieving measure of life, and heed not distressing thoughts, when they rise ever so strongly in thee; nay, though they have entered thee, fear them not, but be still awhile, not believing in the power which thou feelest they have over thee, and it will fall on a sudden. It is good for thy spirit and greatly to thy advantage, to be much and variously exercised by the Lord. Thou dost not know what the Lord hath already done, and what He is yet doing for thee therein. . . . O learn daily more and more to trust Him and hope in Him and not to be affrighted with any amazement, nor to be taken up with the sight of the present thing; but wait for the shutting of thy own eye upon every occasion, and for the opening of the eye of God in thee, and for the sight of things therewith, as they are from Him.

Oh! wait, hope, trust, look over that which stands between; come into His mercy! Let in the faith which open-

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eth the way of life, which will shut out the doubting and distrusting mind, and will close up the wrong eye, that letteth in reasonings and temptations, the wrong sense, and death with them. Thus mayest thou witness, in and through thy Redeemer, the abundance of His life and peace.

THE SOURCE OF POWER

By Sister Devamata

Power is not something which man can create; it is not something which he can acquire. He cannot even possess it, it must possess him. Science has discovered that there is only one force in the universe, moving in different directions. Religion too has come to recognize one Power only, impelling all life. That one Power is omnipresent and it makes itself manifest wherever there is a channel for it. It beats constantly against the closed avenues of our being. It is knocking now at the door of our heart, of our intelligence, of our physical organism. From without and from within it is seeking to take possession of us, but we beat it back; or if we open ourselves a little to it, very soon we bar its way again by the foolish pride which rises in us as we see our individual powers increasing.

Nothing so quickly checks its flow as self-consciousness. "Our best work is done, our greatest influence is exerted when we are without thought of self," Swami Vivekananda declares in his *Inspired Talks*. "All great geniuses know this. . . . Be perfectly resigned, perfectly unconcerned, then alone can you do any great work." Self-consciousness induces calculation and the habit of calculation is peculiarly hostile to largeness of life in any form. It kills all our loftier impulses. The man who stops to count the costs can never be a hero. There is no time to

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make a contract with destiny when the call to noble action sounds. The opportunity passes while we are adding and subtracting probable dangers and glories.

The heroic act appears to be a sudden and exceptional expression of power; but it is only the culmination of a continuous habit of bigness of thought. If our vision were sufficiently penetrating, we would see that the genuine hero is as heroic in each commonplace task of the day as he is at the moment of peculiar stress. It is the quality of small natures to haggle and strain over every expenditure of themselves and of their resources. They have so little, it is not easy for them to be generous; and their acute anxiety to protect their own interests makes it difficult for them to get anything from the universal Source. The petty wage-earner considers it necessary to calculate his output very carefully; and so long as we live like hirelings, demanding an exact return for every service we render God or man, we too shall be apprehensive, miserly and calculating.

This does not imply that a man should throw caution to the winds and follow every impulse which seizes upon him. Discrimination and prudence lie behind every great manifestation of power, but they are interwoven always with self-forgetfulness and surrender. The man of exalted mind discriminates in order to free his vision from petty personal refractions; while prudence for him consists in remaining close to the universal storehouse of strength and wisdom. It would seem to him the height of imprudence and unreason to sever his connection even for a moment with the central Source of supply. He knows that life, power, wisdom, happiness are universal, indivisible, unmarketable qualities. They cannot be bought or sold on any exchange. They cannot be parcelled out in small

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quantities. They are like the air of the high mountains or of the sea, one must go there to breathe it; it cannot be purchased by weight or measure at the street corner.

If we would partake of the attributes of Divinity, we must connect ourselves with the Divine. There must be some point of contact, and we establish this through our thought. The more we think of ourselves, of our personal joys and sorrows, our selfish advantage or disadvantage, the less of our mind remains with which to think on God and the less of godliness shall we enjoy. Every thought of self puts out a thought of God and every thought of God puts out a thought of self. But the God-thoughts are full of sweetness and light and subtle power; while the thoughts of self are full of fear and disappointment and discontent. God-thought expands and liberates, self-thought contracts and enslaves. Why then do we think so much about ourselves? Have we found the companionship of our ego so satisfying that we should be reluctant to exchange it for the holier, sweeter companionship of God? Whenever we have cause to feel ashamed and disgraced, is it not always because our selfish nature has gained the upper hand and betrayed us?

So long as we divide our attention, we shall be weak and undependable. Power comes only to the single-hearted. Christ has told us that the pure alone can gain access to the Divine; and purity means something more than mere cleanness of body, mind and heart. It means unmixed. If we take two perfectly pure chemical substances and put them together, the new substance produced is not pure; each of the constituent parts adulterates the other. Purity in the spiritual life, quite as much as in chemistry, demands uncompromising singleness—singleness of heart, singleness of mind, singleness of purpose.

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To attain it we must eliminate the multiplicity of interests and obligations which now entangle us. We plead our duty to society as an excuse for not doing so. How can we withdraw from our present complex mode of living without appearing selfish and unfeeling? But this social body to which we yield such servile allegiance is not a self-existent entity. It is the creation of man and would die to-morrow if groups of human beings did not sustain it. Only those serve it truly who possess sufficient force of character to be independent of it. All great men who have led the world and benefitted it, have had the courage to cast off the fetters of custom and live in accord with their own highest conviction.

The spectacular exhibitions of power we see in the world—power of wealth, of position, of popular acclaim—must not dazzle us. They appear flimsy and puerile when placed beside the silent steady flow of Divine energy manifest in the life of a saint or Saviour. Enduring power springs not from ambition or aggressive affirmation, but from the seed of patient denial. The man who cannot govern his own appetites, has not developed the principle of rulership in his nature and is unable to command anywhere. He may make a show of authority, but it wears itself out very soon. Strength, whether of muscle, of mind, or of feeling, rests always on discipline. The rigid training of the army has a deeper aim than the mere toughening of the soldiers in its ranks. It represents an enormous economy of vital energy. We squander a large measure of our force in adapting ourselves to unaccustomed conditions. Our power of endurance is so feeble that we cannot eat or sleep unless we have just the right kind of bed or food. To be a slave to creature comforts is one of the most insidious forms of slavery. It was to

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break this bondage that men began the practice of austerity. Asceticism has no merit as an end in itself, but as a means to an end it is of great value. It represents the five-finger exercises of religion, making the organism pliable and ready for higher uses.

The man who marks off his day by his meal hours and believes that one-third at least of each turn of the sun must be devoted to sleep, gains very little momentum in any undertaking. He spends his effort in getting ready to live rather than in living. Those of us who would hasten our spiritual development and increase our efficiency should begin a systematic process of hardening. We should train ourselves to be less sensitive to heat and cold, less susceptible to inconvenience and hardship. Without fortitude one cannot go far in the spiritual life. "We count them happy which endure," James writes in his general epistle. By degrees we should advance the time for rising and keep strictly to the earlier hour until it becomes natural for us. We should teach ourselves to sleep and wake easily. Gradually our body will habituate itself to less rest and will feel lighter. Nearly every one eats and sleeps too much and in consequence grows steadily heavier as he grows older. If we seem to require a large amount of food and rest, it is indicative of a habit, not of a need. We can accustom our system to make almost any demand upon us. It suffices for us to take a nap at a certain hour every day for a week to develop a new and crying necessity for more sleep. We are overpowered by drowsiness each time that hour comes round.

In the matter of food also, our taste should not be our only guide. We should choose a diet fitted to the kind of life we lead. There is no virtue in not enjoying our food, but there is great benefit in learning to enjoy that which

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will give us the maximum of energy with the minimum of waste. The athlete is very rigid about his diet; and we need to be strong much more than he, because he requires only strength of nerve and muscle, while we need strength of mind and heart as well to be able to meet bravely the rigorous tests of the spiritual path. No man ever manifests real power until he takes up the life of self-denial. The Christ method of selling all for the sake of one's purpose is the practical method for success in any direction. It tells us how we may excel, whether it is in digging a ditch or in writing a poem. We must detach ourselves from the material and physical, if we would become a channel for the spiritual.

We steep ourselves in the human and then wonder why we find it so difficult to express the Divine. It is because our processes of thought are reversed. We must learn to think of ourselves last and of God first. In painting a picture the good artist puts in his high light first and refers all his color values to that. So must it be in living. We must relate each experience to our highest point of vision, not to our work-a-day self with its petty needs and complaints. When we succeed in doing this with conviction, we can carve our way through solid rock. No obstacle will stay our course. If we can keep the Ideal uppermost in our thought at all times, we shall be carried forward by Its power; and our own strength may be expended altogether in holding firmly to It.

Connection with the Source is all that should concern us, not what we shall get out of it. If we approach It devoutly and unquestioningly, we shall be filled to the full measure of our capacity; and as our capacity increases, so will our power. That one who is in unbroken touch with God will always know what is needed to be known. He

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will render just the right service, he will speak just the right word, he will take just the right course. There will be no waste of energy anywhere, because he will have no steps to retrace, no mistakes to mend, and no wearing down of the bearings of life through friction. In all circumstances he will act in perfect conjunction with the one supreme cosmic Power.

Each of us has a special centre of activity in the universal scheme, a special place where we can be used to the best advantage. Nowhere else shall we be at ease. We may imagine that we are happier when we follow our own fitful will and shift ground according to our mood, but the ache and despair of our heart when we do it is evidence enough to convince us we are wrong. The musician who plays out of tune and off the beat finds little pleasure in his art; only when he falls into perfect rhythm with the orchestra does he catch the inspiration of the surging sound. Similarly when we set our own pitch and measure, our life will be full of clashing discords. But let our heart begin to beat in unison with God's great heart, at once a new harmony and rhythm will establish itself in our being, and such strength will rise in us that all the powers of the world will not be able to confound us.

It matters not to me what I do, or what I suffer, so long as I abide lovingly united to God's will,—that is my whole business. . . . The greatest glory we can give to God is to distrust our own strength utterly and to commit ourselves wholly to His safe-keeping.

—Brother Lawrence

Wisdom is one thing. It is to know the thought by which all things are steered through all things.

—Herakleitos. 5th century, B. C.

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THE WAY OF BIRTH IN GOD

From Hermes Trismegistus

Hermes. Withdraw into thyself, and it (the Way of Birth in God) will come; will, and it comes to pass; throw out of work the body's senses, and thy Divinity shall come to birth; purge from thyself the brutish torments—things of matter.

Tat. I have tormentors then in me, O father?

Hermes. Ay, no few, my son; nay, fearful ones and manifold.

Tat. I do not know them, father.

Hermes. Torment the first is this Not-knowing, son; the second one is Grief; the third, Intemperance; the fourth, Concupiscence; the fifth, Unrighteousness; the sixth is Avarice; the seventh, Error; the eighth is Envy; the ninth, Guile; the tenth is Anger; eleventh, Rashness; the twelfth is Malice. These are in number twelve; but under them are many more, my son; and creeping through the prison of the body they force the man that's placed within to suffer in his senses. But they depart (although not all at once) from him who hath been taken pity on by God; and this it is which constitutes the manner of Rebirth.

And now, my son, be still and solemn silence keep! Thus shall the mercy that flows on us from God not cease. Henceforth rejoice, O son, for by the Powers of God thou art being purified for the articulation of the Reason (Logos).

Gnosis of God hath come to us; and when this comes, my son, Not-knowing is cast out. Gnosis of Joy hath come to us; and on its coming, son, Sorrow will flee away to them who give it room. The Power that follows Joy do I invoke, Thy Self-control. O Power most sweet! Let

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us most gladly bid it welcome, son! How with its coming doth it chase Intemperance away!

Now fourth, on Continence I call, the Power against Desire. . . . This step, my son, is Righteousness' firm seat. For without judgment see how she hath chased Unrighteousness away. We are made righteous, son, by the departure of Unrighteousness. Power sixth I call to us,—that against Avarice, Sharing-with-all. And now that Avarice is gone, I call on Truth. And Error flees, and Truth is with us. See how (the measure of) the Good is full, my son, upon Truth's coming. For Envy hath gone from us; and unto Truth is joined the Good as well, with Life and Light. And now no more doth any torment of the Darkness venture nigh, but vanquished all have fled with whirring wings.

Thou knowest now, my son, the manner of Rebirth. . . . Who then doth by His mercy gain this Birth in God, abandoning the body's senses, knows himself to be of Light and Life and that he doth consist of these, and thus is filled with Bliss.

Tat. By God made steadfast, father, no longer with the sight my eyes afford I look on things, but with the energy the Mind doth give me through the Powers. Father, I see the All, I see myself in Mind.

Hermes. This is, my son, Rebirth—no more to look on things from body's view-point. . . .

Tat. Tell me, O father: This Body which is made up of the Powers, is it at any time dissolved?

Hermes. Hush, son. Speak not of things impossible, else wilt thou sin and the Mind's eye be quenched. The natural body which our sense perceives is far removed from this essential birth. The first must be dissolved, the last can never be; the first must die, the last death cannot

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touch. Dost thou not know thou hast been born a god, son of the One, even as I myself?

Be still, my son; hear the Praise-giving now that keeps (the soul) in tune, Hymn of Re-birth. Thus then, my son, stand in a place uncovered to the sky, facing the southern wind, about the sinking of the setting sun, and make thy worship; so in like manner too when he doth rise, with face to the east wind. Now, son, be still!

HYMN

Let every nature of the World receive the utterance of my hymn!

Open thou Earth! Let every bolt of the Abyss be drawn for me. Stir not, ye Trees!

Ye Heavens open, and ye Winds stay still; let God's deathless Sphere receive my word (Logos)!

Let us together all give praise to Him, sublime above the Heavens, of every nature Lord!

'Tis He who is the Eye of Mind; may He accept the praise of these my Powers!

Ye Powers that are within me, hymn the One and All; sing with my Will, Powers all that are within me!

O blessed Gnosis, by thee illumined, hymning through thee the Light that mind alone can see, I joy in Joy of Mind.

Sing with me praises all ye Powers!

Sing praise, my Self-control; sing thou through me, my Righteousness, the praises of the Righteous; sing thou, my Sharing-all, the praises of the All; through me sing, Truth, Truth's praises!

Sing thou, O Good, the Good! O Life and Light, from us to you our praises flow!

Father, I give Thee thanks, to Thee Thou Energy of all Powers; I give Thee thanks, O God, Thou Power of all my Energies!

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Thus cry the Powers in me. They sing Thy praise, Thou all; they do Thy Will.

The All that is in us, O Life, preserve; O Light illumine it; O God in-spirit it.

STORY OF SISTER MARIANNA

Retold by Br. Gurudas

Near a quiet little country town in Italy stood long, long ago a convent shaded by chestnut trees; and a river flowed by. Here in this old convent dwelled some good Sisters, devout women, who went out among the poor, helping where help was needed. Early and late the Sisters laboured, nursing the sick and feeding the poor. And among all these good women, Sister Marianna was the most patient. Kind and willing, never sparing herself, quietly she went about, choosing for her share the heaviest and most difficult tasks. Thus she lived always content quietly to bear the burden of others. She loved God and this made her most happy. And she was rich too, for God had given her the grace to choose not the world's deceitful riches, but the wealth one cannot lose, the wealth one takes with one when this earthly life is done.

The old and the feeble and the sickly and the heavy-hearted all knew and loved Sister Marianna. For she was always sure to appear when her presence was most needed. She carried food and warm clothes and blessing as she wended her way over mountain paths in summer heat and winter cold. And with her travelled One whom she always kept close to her heart. And He was the source of all her strength.

And Sister Marianna was happy—oh so happy!—if in her scanty hours of leisure she could enter her little white-washed cell. For there from the wall looked at her the

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dear and holy faces that she loved above all else. From an old and faded picture the Holy Infant Jesus in His Mother's arms looked at her. And her faith and spirit of devotion lent to the dear faces a beauty and glory not seen there by any one else. And often when she returned in the early morning from a lonely home where she had watched the sick by night, she would gather a few flowers with the morning dew still on them and place them on the wooden shelf before the Holy Child and His Blessed Mother. And so Sister Marianna's life was full of sunshine, for in toiling for the Lord she had found the hidden sweetness that lies stored in common things.

But the time came—poor Sister!—when her step grew heavy, as one winter day after day she climbed the steep mountain path covered by snow to a poor rough home, far away from neighbors. And her rosy cheeks grew pale as night after night she nursed the poor young mother lying there helpless in her dingy room attacked by a malicious disease. Many a night the good Sister watched and during the day she had little rest, for her heart was with the poor patient and her babe. The husband had gone to the plains to seek for work when the young wife was taken ill and now word was slow to reach him. Waiting and hoping, patient and nurse prayed for the husband's return.

Weeks went by and the young mother grew more feeble. In vain did Sister Marianna try every simple cure she knew. The doctor had given up hope and had left his last instructions. And the priest had done his last office. Sister Marianna was left alone with the mother and the child, all unaided, still to watch and think and labour with what little strength she had. Two days more the patient lay sleeping and Sister Marianna watched beside the bed, saying prayers to help the soul departing and rocking the baby in her lap. Then something stirred within her heart.

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And she spake with eyes dilated and her soul in every word, as to one she saw before her: "Thou hast been a child, my Lord! Thou hast lain as small and speechless as this infant on my knees; then, oh listen to my plea; Lord, remember for one moment what Thy Mother was to Thee! Oh, for love of Thine Own Mother, save the mother of this child!"

Then she paused and waited breathless, for she knew and felt that the Lord was there in the room listening to her passionate appeal. And she bowed her head and a strange light came in her eyes, for her soul had heard the answer that the young mother would not die.

And now night came, a lonely night. The wind and rain beat against the door and window. And Marianna, faint and weary with the strain of many days, lighted a fire on the hearth, for the poor woman she cared for would need to eat before the morning. So she prepared a dish that would strengthen the patient, a dish made of food brought from the convent. The food had to be prepared with care, and Marianna planned to do her best. But oh, she was so weary for want of sleep and rest. "Now, Lord, help me this night's labour to complete," said the Sister. And she placed the broth upon the fire, stirring it to keep it from burning. But so sleepy was the poor Sister that the spoon kept falling from her hand. Then again she would rouse herself and struggle bravely to drive off the languor. Fear filled her heart that she might faint from fatigue and no neighbors were near and the storm was raging outside. Her head ached strangely as it never did before. "Oh good Lord, only help me through the night that my eyes may not close till the mother and babe are safe."

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But her pleading was in vain. Sleep had conquered and her prayer died away in a faint murmur. She slept the sleep of the weary, unconscious of how the hours sped on. Her head reclining against the wall, the firelight flared and flickered on her pale, peaceful face. And the broth was on the fire all untended. Had the Lord not heard her prayer? So earnestly she had pleaded for just a little more strength. The Lord has many ways to answer prayers—ways that His children think not of.

A long time she sat there sleeping in front of the fire. But the fire-wood kept burning and the pot boiled gently. And when suddenly, with a sense of guilt, the Sister awoke at last, a strange and sweet vision greeted her eyes. At her feet, near the fire, stood a child watching the boiling pot and keeping the fire alive. And when the child turned his face towards her and smiled, she knew that it was the Holy Child. It was the Lord who stood before her, the Child Jesus. When her willing hands had failed, when her weary eyes were closed, He had finished all she had failed in; He had watched while she rested. Sister Marianna did not shrink or start, for her faithful heart was filled with joy. When afterwards curious lips would ask the Sister how the Child looked, all she would say was: "I knew it was He, my heart melted and you also will know when you meet Him."

With that one sweet look and smile the Child passed away from her vision. But the peace it left in her heart lasted till her dying hour. The storm had ceased and the morning star was shining through the window. When later the sun was rising and Sister Marianna looked out, softly opening the door to let in the morning breeze, she saw through the trees a moving form. It was the husband

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returning home. Leaving joy behind her in that home of many tears, Marianna returned to the convent. There was music in her heart. And gathering a few flowers on her way, she placed them lovingly on the little shelf before the Holy Mother and her Child. (From the *Prabuddha Bharata,* India)

REPORT

Since Swami Paramananda lectured, on the invitation of Miss Anna Maud Hallam, before the Convention of Applied Psychology last September in Cleveland, he has received urgent invitations to lecture all through the East and Middle West. In response to some of these he set out on November 27th. His first stop was in Rochester, where he spoke before the Club of Practical Psychology. So great was the interest shown that he was asked to hold a class on the following day before leaving for Syracuse, where he went to deliver a lecture for the Practical Psychology Club of that city. The meeting was held in the Universalist Church and every available space was filled with eager listeners, a number of whom persuaded the Swami to speak for them again the next morning before he returned to Rochester. In Rochester he gave a second lecture in the large hall of Exposition Park and at its close he was carried away to another meeting where he was kept busy until midnight answering questions. Cleveland was his next stop. His first lecture here was scheduled for the Hotel Winton; but the crowd which gathered nearly half an hour before the meeting so far exceeded the capacity of the hall engaged, that it became necessary to secure larger accommodations. Nothing spacious enough being available, some one suggested opening the lunch room. It was quickly filled and in order to be seen and heard, the Swami was forced to convert the lunch counter

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into a rostrum. On Friday morning he held a class and in the afternoon he went with Dr. E. Thayer Ward, National Secretary of the Associated Clubs of Applied Psychology, to address the Psychology Club of Youngstown. The lecture, which was preceded by a banquet, was given in the Auditorium of the Young Men's Christian Association and so numerous was the attendance that even after filling aisles, platform, and doorways, several hundred people were turned away.

Saturday Swami spoke twice in Cleveland again—before the New Life League in the afternoon and in the evening under the auspices of another Club. Sunday was a very full day. In the forenoon he addressed the Unity Study Club on "Efficacy of Silence and Prayer"; in the afternoon he spoke on "Psychology of Yoga" for Dr. Grumbine at his New Thought Church; and in the evening he delivered a final lecture at the Hotel Winton on "Law of Compensation." He left Cleveland at midnight and spent Monday morning with the members of the Vedanta Study Group in Cincinnati. Monday evening he lectured for the Psychology Club of Indianapolis and on Tuesday morning he reached St. Louis. He began his work at 3 p. m. with a class in a private drawing-room, and at 8 p. m. he delivered his principal lecture in the auditorium of the Wednesday Club. The audience was a very large one and great enthusiasm was manifested. The president of the Club announced that the public lecture would be followed by a practical concentration class at half past ten, and a number remained despite the late hour to profit by the special opportunity. The following morning the Swami held another class and he closed his visit with a second public lecture in the evening on "Upbuilding of Body and Mind." He spoke in Cincinnati on Thursday night, and on Friday returned to Boston.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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KARMA AND FATE

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

The great Aryan law-giver of ancient times, Manu, tells us that we cannot gather what we do not sow; as we plant the tree, so it will grow. The kind of seeds we sow, according to that we must reap. There is no such thing as chance in Nature. Nothing happens accidentally. Good fortune or misfortune, pleasing conditions or trials, come to us because consciously or unconsciously we attract them; we draw them into our life. They come as the reactions of our own actions. Whenever we do something ignoble, at some time we must suffer from it; not because there is a relentless Providence, whose task it is to punish us; but because our own better self has a sense of justice and until we make amends for our unworthy action, it will not allow us to feel free. A man may murder another in secret; no one may know anything about it; yet his own thought of it will haunt him until he can no longer bear it and he finds relief in confessing it. Does this not show that we cannot evade the greater forces of life? We create a moral obligation by our deeds; and however we may try to avoid it, sooner or later we are forced to pay every debt we incur. Until that is done, we cannot make the best use of new opportunities. But it is not only the fruit of our mistakes that we gather. We reap blessings also as we deserve them; and they become permanently ours because we have earned them.

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In India this great idea of Karma, which is a Sanskrit term meaning action and reaction, cause and effect, is deeply rooted. Western scientists take full account of the law of cause and effect on the physical plane, but the Indian sages claim that it operates just as truly on the higher planes. Our present life is the culmination of our past; our to-day is the result of our yesterday, and to-morrow will be the result of to-day. Our future life will be what we make it now by our thoughts and deeds and aspirations. Buddha told His disciples that man is the product of his own thought, he is made up of his thought, because thoughts are a great deal more vital than actions. Everything which happens in the physical has its counterpart in the spiritual. It exists in seed form there. Our actions therefore cannot be productive of good unless our thoughts are first brought into harmony with the spiritual forces of our being.

Some people believe that it is their fate to be born in certain surroundings and conditions, that they are powerless to change them, so it is useless to exert themselves to counteract them. This is a very erroneous notion, both from the spiritual and from the material point of view. There is no such thing as permanence in this world of impermanency. When a little misfortune comes to us then, why should we take it as a final issue in life? It has a purpose, no doubt. These passing conditions have a great deal to teach us. When a man is confronted with loss or failure, he should not regard it as a great curse, over which he must sit in a corner and brood. On the contrary, it holds a valuable lesson for him. It may be that through it he is paying off a debt, which, when paid, will free him from some binding condition.

These experiences are not so terrible as they seem to be when we accept them with shallow understanding. Make a study of the lives of great men. Through how many hard-

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ships and struggles and privations have they passed! There are certain difficult experiences in our life which quicken our inner powers much more effectively than any amount of ease and prosperity could ever do. Life means training and discipline. Those who are afraid of these never make any headway spiritually; and our physical life is governed largely by our spiritual understanding. When a man who has no comprehension of higher laws is confronted with miseries, he sees only one way of escape open to him—suicide. But does he escape from his miseries? No. Because he carries the cause of his misery in his own consciousness.

People of small understanding who take this span of existence to be all in all, cannot help but resent it when they see some one who has more than they or who succeeds where they fail. But if they could grasp the fundamental principle that nothing happens accidentally, that each one receives what he earns, they would not have such harsh, bitter feelings towards their fellowmen or towards Divine Providence. The law of Karma explains why things take place as they do in this world. A person is born deformed or blind; if we try to explain it by saying that it is God's will, we make God whimsical and arbitrary. The Indo-Aryan sages did not throw the blame on Providence; they found within the individual soul the elements which created the condition. We may not suffer the consequence of our act at once, but a record of it is graven on our own life and character; and even though we may escape from the human law, we cannot escape from the Divine law of which we are a part. That will find us out, wherever we may go, and call us to account. Thus we bring on ourselves whatever overtakes us. We reward ourselves and we punish ourselves. Therefore wise men are not overeager to seize momentary pleasures, which later on may lead to unhappiness.

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This life truly can be called a harvest field. Upon this field we sow the seeds of our daily living—good seeds or bad seeds. If we yield to our lower impulses, we block the way to spiritual things and our life will be full of misery. But if through our thoughts and actions and aspirations, day by day and little by little, we make ourselves fitting instruments for God's power to express itself, we shall work out our salvation and the salvation of humanity. A person who looks wholly to his own good, who thinks solely of his own interests, is of small mind and attains only small ends. Our good must include the good of others. Our happiness must include the happiness of others. We cannot have any happiness or peace without including those who stand next to us.

We must cultivate a bigger point of view. We must not consider immediate returns only. That is the way we are trapped. We yield to the fascination of momentary glory; and when it fades, a mark of unhappiness and resentment against our own self is left. The greatest curse is when we doubt ourselves; and nothing awakens doubt within our own soul so quickly as our failures, which are often the result of misguided zeal. We do things hastily, unthinkingly; then when the reactions come, we feel powerless to cope with them and we say it is our fate. But what we make we have the power to unmake. That is one of the great principles of the Vedic teaching. Our present life conditions, whether good or evil, are the result of finite actions, finite causes; hence they cannot be everlasting. For that reason in India they have never believed in eternal perdition. There is a passage in one of the Upanishads which says that the knower of Truth is full of bliss and free from fear. Fear is the product of the selfish instinct in man. He is afraid of endangering his own interest. It is always the lack of understanding which lies at the root of all fear and depression; but as soon as we gain a larger

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perspective, fear leaves us and in its place come trust and surrender.

We shape our destiny by our daily living. It may seem an arrogant attitude to say that a man is the maker of his own destiny; but it is not arrogance, it is understanding. Suppose that God moulds our destiny and bestows upon us this or that? There must be some reason why He bestows one thing rather than another. The reason lies in us. We provide the material out of which He makes our destiny. We cannot escape from the responsibility of our actions whichever way we turn. We cannot bribe Providence, as many believe. They think it does not matter how they cheat their fellow-beings or what kind of life they lead, so long as they maintain their connection with some church. They imagine that loyalty to a creed will give them a passport to heaven, but the only passport which will carry them to heaven is in their own hearts. It is not anything exterior. When we understand this, we refuse to take advantage of others. If we can make people, especially the more ignorant, understand that their good fortune and ill fortune are justly earned by themselves; that no one can give them something unless they deserve it; and no one can deprive them of what they have earned; they will have a different attitude towards life. They will refrain from doing harm to others, because they will understand that it will react upon their own life. We cannot have a slave without being a slave; we cannot make another unhappy without being unhappy ourselves.

We have the power to express ourselves through the best avenues; they are all open to us. A man can act just as well on the right course as on the wrong. The wrong way reacts upon him, brings a blemish on his life, mars his own happiness and that of his fellow-beings. Why not avoid these reactions by taking proper care before the seed is rooted in the soil of

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life? Some one does us an injury; indignation rises in our heart; we begin to brood over it, until it seizes upon our mind and we give way to a revengeful act; then we suffer and make others suffer. The highest course is to take precautions at the very outset. We must so order our life on the basis of higher understanding that these reactions cannot occur. There are people who wish to have all happiness and no misery, but that is not the way life runs. We cannot take the one without the other. We have to learn to maintain our balance. When we meet with good fortune, we must not become over-elated; and when we meet with ill-fortune, we must not be overwhelmed by it.

When we have the proper understanding spirit, it is not for us a question of how much we have or what we have. It is a question of what benefit we may reap from each experience of life. A great man benefits wherever he is placed. If he is placed under privations, he finds his exaltation there; if he is surrounded by riches, instead of being haughty and aggressive, he becomes the friend of the poor. He understands the law of life, so he is not carried away by outer conditions, nor does he swing to extremes. Sometimes we are not able to see why certain things come to us in this life. We do not seem to have done anything to deserve them. Perhaps the cause lies in a past life. Our present existence has not sprung from nothing. We have brought our ideas, our instincts, our good feelings and also our obstacles with us. But that does not mean that since this life is the product of Karma, its conditions are inevitable. No matter what we have brought, we can adjust and readjust and remould. Even our body may be changed by our thought and action and by the atmosphere we create within our self.

Life is like a scale. The weight of evil may be on one side, but we can counterbalance it by loving, constructive thought

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and good action. A man must become strong; and as he grows in strength, he realizes his inherent nature and ceases to weep and wail and find fault with the conditions of his life. He lifts his head and goes through every sort of condition, trusting in the Divine. Remember that no man is self-sufficient. He may have a brilliant intellect, a healthy body, many things to his advantage; but never for one moment must we imagine that we do not need the support of Divine Providence. He is a mad man who thinks he can get on without God. The more we know of life, the more we know of higher principles, the more eager we shall be to ally ourselves with Divinity. All ideas of fate and bondage vanish when we throw off the shackles of self-consciousness. As soon as we have found our connection with Divinity, our individual responsibility ends. God becomes responsible for us; and when our responsibility is in His hands, our life cannot be productive of harm. Our task is to cleanse ourselves. We should cleanse our mind, our heart, the whole sphere of our consciousness, that the great Life may shine upon us and through us.

A life of activity offers the opportunity of tremendous blessing to humanity. We wipe out our past through our actions and also we accumulate fresh causes for unhappiness. We must not be in haste. If we believe in prayer, let us pray before we act. If we have any idea of philosophy or religion, let us take that as our companion in all our tasks. Let us never leave it. It is the greatest support we can have. When we do not possess the sense of consecration, we lose our opportunities. Work is productive. It can be productive of incalculable good; also it can be productive of harm to us. It all depends upon ourselves. We have enough free will to choose our course. A man can love the good so much that he is willing to forsake all evil for it; and he can also form the habit of evil association and vulgar thoughts. Habit is a tremend-

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ous influence in our life. We can cultivate the habit of loving and doing good to others; and by thus eliminating all that is base and wiping out our past, we can mould a beautiful future. All our happiness lies in the dawn of wisdom. We do not love darkness. We never feel comfortable or happy or free when we are in darkness; therefore we should always march towards the light.

It is not the kind of action which determines our merit; it is the motive. It is the motive which regenerates every human being. Where or how we are placed is of little consequence; it is what our feeling and thought and motive are. If we are actuated by nobility of purpose, no matter how insignificant our starting point may be, it will carry us over all difficult situations to the ultimate goal of unity—unity with God and unity with humanity. All the harsh, discordant feelings which dominate our life now will drop away and we shall realize that life is a great, abundant blessing. We shall be happy that we are living, that we can serve and that we can radiate God's grace through our thoughts and actions.

PRAYER

O Lord, Who art our Guide even unto death, grant us, I pray Thee, grace to follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest. In little daily duties to which Thou callest us, bow down our wills to simple obedience, patience under pain or provocation, strict truthfulness of word and manner, humility, kindness; in great acts of duty or perfection, if Thou shouldest call us to them, uplift us to self-sacrifice, heroic courage, laying down of life for Thy truth's sake, or for a brother. Amen.

—*C. G. Rossetti.*

The best days of a man's life are those in which he renders service.

—*Abu 't Tarif.*

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THE HOUSE OF LIFE

From the Hako—A Pawnee Indian Ceremony

(Taken from a poetical rendering by Prof. Hartley Burr Alexander of Miss Alice Fletcher's Report of the Ceremony published by the Bureau of American Ethnology.)

Within the House of Life man entereth,
A little Child with slow and faltering feet:
The breathing Heaven is in his fluttering breath,
The pulse of Earth in his swift blood doth beat.

Within the House of Life man tarrieth,
As one who for a season taketh rest:
The Blue above, below the grassy Earth,—
An oriole within a wind-swept nest.

Within the House of Life man offereth
The simple tokens of his daily need,
His prayer for food and drink, in humble faith
That some dim distant Power shall give
them heed.

Then from the House of Life he hasteneth . . .
Aye, as an Eagle in his feathered mail
Battleth adown the blast with windy Death,
Speedeth the Warrior-Soul with battle-hail!

Even a journey involving thousands of miles must begin with a single step. When going to a distant place, one must ever start from where one is. So likewise when advancing on the true Path. If one goes on learning and doing without ceasing for decades, he will reach eventually to a great distance and accomplish much. If a tradesman saves a sen daily he will finally become a rich man.

—*Kaibara Ekken, (Japanese moralist).*

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REALIZATION OF THE DIVINE SELF

By Swami Vivekananda

(Notes of informal conversations)

Only in the highest state of realization can a man say truly that he is directed wholly by God's Will and is not responsible for his own actions. When your mind has been purified by work and you see that it is He Who is causing all action, then alone have you the right to speak in that way. Stop and think whether all you do in your daily life is not done with the egotistic idea that you yourself are the agent. How long do you remember that it is the Lord Who is working through you? Yet, by repeatedly reminding yourself, you will arrive at a state where the ego will disappear and in its place the Lord will come. Then you will be able to say with truth: "Thou, Lord, art directing all my actions from within." If, however, the ego occupies all the space in your heart, where is there room for the Lord? The Lord is forced to be absent.

Is God the cause of our evil impulses?

No. It is a blasphemy to think in that way. He is not inciting you to evil action. Your wrong impulses are the creation of your desire for self-gratification. If a man says that everything is done by God and then persists in wrong-doing, he brings ruin on himself. This is the origin of self-deception. Do you not feel elated after you have done a good deed? You give yourself the credit then of doing something good; you cannot help it, it is human. But how absurd to take the credit of the good act on yourself, and to lay the blame for the evil act on the Lord! This is a most dangerous idea, the effect of ill-digested Gita and Vedanta. Never hold this view. Rather say that He causes the good work to be done, while you yourself are responsible for the evil action. That will give you greater devotion and faith, and you will see His grace manifested at every step.

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The real truth is that no one has created you. You have created yourself. This is discrimination. This is Vedanta. But a man cannot understand this before he attains realization. Therefore the aspirant should begin with the dualistic standpoint, that the Lord causes the good actions while he is responsible for the evil. This is the easiest way to the purification of the mind. It is very difficult to hold monistic ideas at the outset; but the dualistic point of view gradually leads to the realization of *Advaita* or pure monism. If there is no wilful self-deception and a man sincerely believes that even the most wicked impulse also springs from the Lord, be assured that he will not continue to perform evil actions very long. All the impurities of his mind will be destroyed quickly. . . .

Within there is the lion, the eternally pure, illumined and ever free *Atman* or Divine Self; and directly one realizes Him through meditation and concentration, this world of fleeting manifestation vanishes. He is equally present in all; and the more a man practises, the more quickly will the Kundalini (the "coiled-up" power) awaken in him. When this power reaches the head, his vision will be unobstructed; he will realize the *Atman*. Some attain this early and others later. One must stick to it, determined never to let go. This is true manliness. You must keep the mind fixed on one object, like an unbroken stream of oil. The ordinary man's mind is scattered over different objects; at the time of meditation, too, the mind is apt to wander. But let thoughts arise in the mind as they will, while you sit calmly and watch them. By continuing to watch in this way the mind becomes calm and no more thought-waves rise in it. These waves represent the thought activities of the mind. Those ideas which you think very deeply, transform themselves into a subconscious current and come up to the surface again in meditation. The rise of these

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waves during meditation is an evidence that your mind is tending towards concentration.

Sometimes the mind is concentrated on a set of ideas; this is called meditation with *Vikalpa* or oscillation. When the mind becomes free from all activity, it melts into the inner Self, into that One which is the essence of infinite knowledge and itself its own support. This is what is called *Nirvikalpa* Samadhi, (free from all the seeds of activity). Meditate every day alone. Everything will open up of itself. Now the Divine Mother, the embodiment of Illumination, is sleeping within; hence you do not understand this. She is the Kundalini. When before meditating you proceed to purify the nerves, you must strike hard mentally on the Kundalini in the sacral plexus and repeat: "Arise, Mother, Arise!" One must practise these exercises with moderation. During meditation suppress the emotional side altogether. That is a great source of danger. Those who are very emotional, no doubt succeed in drawing the Kundalini up more quickly; but it is as quick to come down again; and when it comes down, it leaves the devotee in a state of utter misery.

Practise meditation and concentration with the utmost care. At the outset take such external help as will make the mind pure. Place fragrant flowers in your sanctuary and burn incense. Repeat the name of your Ideal and say "Peace be to all creatures and to the whole universe." Send loving wishes to the north, south, east, west, above, below, in all directions; then begin to meditate. During the early stages one must practise in this way. Do not skip a single day. If you have pressing work, still go through your spiritual exercises for a quarter of an hour at least. Can you reach the goal without steadfast devotion?

Always try to become absorbed in the eternally present *Atman*. If once you get the vision of the *Atman*, you get every-

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thing; and the bonds of birth and death will be broken. . . . Every one, from the worm to Brahma, will attain *Mukti* (freedom). Be possessed of *Shraddha* (faith) and *Virya* (courage), attain to the knowledge of the *Atman*, and sacrifice your life for the good of others—this is my wish and blessing.

THE TYRANNY OF DESIRE

From the Shanti-Parva of the Mahabharata

He who regards everything—joy and sorrow, honor and insult—with an equal eye; who never strives to gratify his desire for earthly possessions, who practises truthfulness of speech, who is freed from all kinds of attachment, and who has no craving for (selfish) activity, that one, O Bharata, is a happy man.

These five, the ancients say, are the means by which one acquires perfect tranquillity and emancipation. These are called Heaven. These constitute Religion. Upon these rests the highest happiness.

The person who desires happiness should renounce all attachment. The man who is without attachments and who no longer cherishes a desire to earn earthly possessions, can sleep peacefully.

Of these two,—one who attains the fruition of all his desires and one who casts off every desire: the second, who renounces all, is superior to the other who gains the fruit of his desire. No one can ever attain to the end of desire.

Forbear from every desire for action. O my soul, thou art possessed by cupidity. Adapt tranquillity by freeing thyself from all attachments. Repeatedly hast thou been deceived. How is it that still thou dost not free thyself from attachments?

O my wealth-coveting, foolish soul, when wilt thou succeed in emancipating thyself from the desire for earthly things?

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Shame on my folly. I have become thy toy. It is thus that one falls into slavery.

No one born on earth ever reached the end of desire, no one yet to be born will succeed in attaining it. Casting aside all covetous action, at last I am roused from sleep. I am now awake!

I know thee, O Desire, and all those things that are dear to thee! Seeking to satisfy thee, I shall find happiness in my (Divine) Self.

O Desire, I know thy root. Thou springest from self-will. Therefore I shall avoid self-will. Thus shalt thou be destroyed with thy roots.

The desire for earthly things can never be fraught with happiness. If acquired, great is the anxiety felt by the one who acquires them. If lost after acquisition, that is felt as death. Acquisition also is very uncertain. . . .

If I continue to be agitated by thee, O Desire, I shall be without a fixed path (by which to reach liberation). Thou, O Desire, art always the generator of thirst, of grief, of weariness and toil.

At last, after a long time, I have come to understand that the desire for earthly things is fraught with sorrow. Whatever the object, O Desire, upon which thou settest thy heart, that thou forcest me to pursue. Thou art without judgment. Thou art a fool. Thou art difficult to content. Thou canst not be gratified. Thou burnest like fire. . . .

I cast thee off, O Desire, with all the passions of my heart. Thou shalt not again dwell with me or sport with me.

I shall forgive those who slander me or speak ill of me. I shall not injure even when injured. If any one from aversion speaks harsh words of me, not heeding those words I shall speak to him friendly words. In contentment of heart and with all my senses at peace, I shall live upon what I may earn.

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I shall not contribute to the gratification of thy cravings, who art my foe. Freedom from attachment, liberation from desire, contentment, tranquillity, truthfulness, self-restraint, forgiveness and universal compassion, these are the qualities which now have come to me.

Therefore let desire, greed, thirst, miserliness, avoid me. I have chosen the path of Goodness.

Having cast off desire and greed, great is my happiness. No longer shall I yield to the impulse of covetousness. No longer shall I suffer misery like a person of uncleansed soul.

One obtains happiness according to the measure of desire he is able to cast off. Truly, he who yields himself up to desire always suffers misery.

Like a person plunging into a cool lake in the hot season, so have I now entered into Brahma, (the Divine). I have given up selfish activity. I have freed myself from grief. Pure happiness has now come to me.

The felicity that results from the gratification of desire, or that other pure felicity which one enjoys in heaven: neither of these compares even to a sixteenth part of the joy which arises when one abandons every kind of thirst.

The Duke of She asked Tsze-loo about Confucius and Tsze-loo did not answer him. The Master said: Why did you not say to him: He is simply a man who in his eager pursuit of knowledge forgets his food, who in the joy of its attainment forgets his sorrows, and who does not perceive that old age is coming on?

The Master said: The reason why the ancients did not give utterance readily to their words was that they feared lest their actions might not come up to them. . . When Tsze-loo heard anything, if he had not carried it into practice, he was only afraid lest he should hear something else.

—*Confucian Analects.*

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GENTLENESS AND CHEERFULNESS

From the Letters of St. Francis de Sales

Be steadfast, my dear child, aim at being God's servant as perfectly as possible. Be very watchful as to gentleness. I do not bid you love that which you ought to love, I know you do so; but I bid you strive to be even, patient and gentle. Control the ebullitions of your natural temperament, which is somewhat over-quick and eager. I wish I had a heavy hammer wherewith to pound away the edges of your mind, which are too sharp for your spiritual progress. I have often told you that devotion must be pursued in good faith and on a broad scale. If you do well, thank God for it; if ill, humble yourself. Do not be fearful any more and do not fret your poor conscience. You know that all you need is to seek the Lord's love and give Him yours. Do this, my dear child, and diligently cultivate gentleness and inward humility.

We always want sugar in our food, that is, we want to enjoy conscious love and kindness and their pleasantness, just as we would fain be free from all imperfections; but we must patiently bear with our nature, which is human and not angelic. I do not mean that we are to rest satisfied with our imperfections. But we ought not to be discouraged or surprised; we should learn from our failings submission, humility and mistrust of self; never despondency and sadness, much less mistrust of God's love for us. He does not love our imperfections, but He loves us in spite of them. Just as a mother grieves over her child's weakness and faultiness, yet still loves him most tenderly, so God cherishes us, notwithstanding all our frailty.

Be cheerful. Our Lord looks lovingly upon you and the weaker you are, the greater His tenderness. Do not allow your mind to dwell upon anything contrary to this. If vexatious thoughts arise, do not dally with them; turn away and look to God with a brave humility; dwell upon His infinite goodness,

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which has regard to our frail, needy humanity in all its infirmity. I cannot understand why those who have given themselves up to God and His goodness are not always cheerful, for what possible happiness can be equal to that? No accidents or imperfections which may happen ought to have power to trouble them or hinder their looking upward. Be tranquil and abide in gentleness and humility of heart.

God calls us to Him and He allows nothing to happen save what is for our real good. He knows what we are; when we come to rough places, He will always uphold us with His Fatherly hand, so that we be not hindered. But to respond to this grace we need an absolute trust in Him. Do not look forward to the changes and chances of this life in fear; rather look to them with full hope that as they arise, God, Whose you are, will deliver you out of them. He has kept you hitherto; do you but hold fast to His dear hand and He will lead you safely through all things; and when you cannot stand, He will bear you up in His arms. What need you fear, my child, remembering you are God's and that He has said: "All things work together for good to them that love Him." Do not look forward to what may happen to-morrow; the same Everlasting Father who cares for you to-day, will take care of you to-morrow and every day. Either He will shield you from suffering or He will give you unfailing strength to bear it.

Be at peace, then; put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations; and say continually: "The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart has trusted in Him and I am helped." He is not only with me, but in me and I in Him. What can a child fear surrounded by such a Father's arms? Be truly as a child. You know children do not trouble themselves with looking forward; they leave that to others and are perfectly content so long as they are near their father. Do this, my dear child, and you will be at peace.

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PARABLES

From the Hagadic Writings of Israel

Rabbi Jonathan said: "The potter does not try the vessels that have been made imperfectly, because he does not doubt that if he strikes them even once, it will break them. But he tries the fair vessels; for however many times he may strike them, they will not be broken. So he strikes them to show the purchaser how strong and good they are." Thus, God does not try the wicked but the righteous, and their trials show their virtue to the world.

Rabbi Jose bar Chanina said: "This is like unto the weaver of a fabric. The more he strikes at it and cuts at it, the more it is praised, and the more does it acquire a good name. When he knows the fabric is bad, he does not dare to cut at it even once, for fear of tearing it." Thus the Holy One, blessed be He, does not try the wicked but the righteous.

Behold this may be likened to the goodman of the house who has two heifers; one healthy and strong the other weak. On which of them will he put the yoke? Is it not upon the healthy and strong one?

There was a certain king who made a feast and invited to it all the wayfarers and strangers in his dominions; but he made a decree that every man should bring with him something to sit upon at the feast. Some brought with them beautiful and comfortable cushions, and some brought sofas to recline upon, and some brought logs of wood, and some brought stones and boulders. The king provided everything for the nourishment and entertainment of all comers, but ordered that each man should sit, at the feast, on the couch or seat that he had made or brought for himself.

Then they who were sitting on logs and stones and other uncomfortable and ugly seats, grumbled at the king and said:

"Is it to the honour of the king that we should be sitting

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here in such discomfort, on stones and bits of wood?"

And when the king heard their complaints he said to them:

"Is it not enough for you that you disgrace my palace with stones and logs, my palace that I have built and beautified at so much cost; but will you also insult me and fasten an accusation upon me? Your honour and splendour are such as you make for yourselves."

A certain king had a vineyard and he hired a great number of labourers to work in it. There was among them one labourer who worked better and more quickly than all the others and even more than was necessary. What did the king? He took him by the hand and walked about the vineyard talking with him. And at eventide all the labourers came to receive their reward, and that labourer came with them, and the king paid him for the full day.

Then the other labourers complained. They said: "Behold we have worked all the day while this one only worked two hours, and the king has given him a full day's pay!"

Then the king said: "What right have you to be envious? This one did more in his two hours of proper work than you did who toiled all the day."

The righteous are compared to the stars. For, as the stars (each one of which could burn up this whole world) shine in glory and never clash together and are never jealous of one another, but all go on in their appointed courses, dispensing light, so the righteous are at peace with each other and are glad when others shine.

It happened that a certain poor woman brought a handful of flour to the temple as an offering, and the priest looked at it with contempt and said: "What is this to bring as an offering? What is there in this to eat?" Then that priest was rebuked in a vision . . . and the Divine voice said to him: "Thou shalt not look with contempt upon her. It is as if she had offered her own life."

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THIRTEENTH ANNIVERSARY

Of The Vedanta Centre of Boston

The Vedanta Centre of Boston celebrated its thirteenth Anniversary on the evening of January fifth. The Chapel was entirely filled and every one expressed great admiration for the additions and improvements in the house. After music and a few words of welcome by Swami Paramananda, the report of the year's work was given. It ran: "The best commentary on the growth of the Centre during 1921 is to be seen in the numerous additions to the building. The enlarged entrance, the entirely new structure covering the remaining portion of the property, the raising of the rear wing another story, and the addition of a fourth story to the front of the main building practically amounted to a complete reconstruction. As a result of the various additions, the Centre now has six more bedrooms and two more baths, a large sun-parlor, four more storerooms, a number of additional storage closets, a much larger kitchen, an enlarged dining-room, a new laundry, a reconstructed furnace room with an entirely new heating system, and a spacious work-room for the use of the publication department and the mailing of the magazine. The remodelling has also necessitated the repainting and repapering of the entire house. One of the most effective changes is the building of the new entrance porch lighted by Gothic windows. This has made possible a re-arrangement of partitions inside which has increased materially the seating capacity of the Chapel. In the large main Gothic window of the porch the symbol of the Ramakrishna Mission, which appears on all the Centre's publications and stationery, has been reproduced in stained glass, and in the arched division below is inserted the Vedic text: "Truth is one, men call it by various names."

As if stimulated by the fresh setting, the work has shown a great increase in activity. The added rows of chairs in the

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Chapel are already occupied each Sunday and people keep warning us that our enlargements will prove insufficient before the season is over. The Centre has had also unusual opportunities during the past year to act as a link between East and West. Sir Rabindranath Tagore was entertained on three different occasions; and a prominent physician of Bombay, (Dr. Nair) with his entire family spent a day with us. Still other prominent visitors have come to the Centre. It has made many new friends also through "The Message of the East," as well as through the Swami's outside lectures and travels. In September he attended a large Convention of Applied Psychology in Cleveland, delivering two lectures and speaking several times informally. As the outcome of the warm interest aroused, the Swami has been besieged with invitations to lecture before the different Clubs represented at the Convention. On the last day of November he set out on a tour arranged by their National Secretary. During the twelve days it covered, he visited seven cities in four different states and delivered twenty-two lectures, sometimes speaking three times a day. The best measure of the enthusiasm and appreciation which met him everywhere is to be found in the fact that in the twelve days eighteen hundred of his books and pamphlets were sold. A number also subscribed to "The Message of the East."

Through the year the magazine has received encouraging words from many unexpected quarters: one, for instance, from a Russian refugee in Switzerland, a professor of Chinese literature, who found an early bound volume in a second hand book stall and drew from it fresh strength to bear his poverty and exile. The Message now travels each month to England, France, Germany, Switzerland, British East Africa, India, Ceylon, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, British Columbia and to many different states in this country. It was interesting to

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us also to receive Hindi translations of three of Swami Paramananda's works,—"Problem of Life and Death," "Self-Mastery" and "The Way of Peace and Blessedness." The same translator brought out the Swami's "Path of Devotion" last year.

Because of the confusion incident to building, the publication department has not been as active as usual during the last twelve months. In all, through mail orders and local sales, about seven thousand books and pamphlets have gone into circulation. But no new titles have been added to the list of publications. These figures, however, do not give the true measure of the growth of the work. Its real achievement is unseen and unmeasured. It is in the stillness of the closet, when the door is closed and some yearning heart seeks God—it is then that the fruit of the Centre's effort is garnered; and that none but God sees. Therefore our part must always be not to count costs or calculate results, but by holy thoughts and eager loving service to keep the central source of inspiration free and unclouded."

In his commentary on the report, the Swami said in part: "I came to Boston about Christmas time, 1908. I had no idea of building up a work of this size; in fact I had no plans, but I was ready and willing to do anything that came to me to do. I went where I was invited, I slept and ate wherever I happened to be; my life was wholly planless; and that is the way the Centre started. My purpose was not to proselytize or to establish a church. The message I brought, it seemed to me, had a tremendous human appeal and I gave it wherever an opportunity presented itself. At first it was not easy. There was opposition and a great deal of misunderstanding. People had an idea that the Orient was full of mystery, and they were amazed to know that India had so simple and direct a teaching to offer the world. . . . Our mission here is

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to create unity—unity of thought and unity of culture. Although the vital aim of the work is to fulfill the spiritual need of those who seek it, it has also another definite purpose,—to bring together East and West.

This little seed which has been sown here in the form of a very modest Centre, is bearing fruit in various ways. I do not consider it a big work. I have not the ambition to build up a big work in the outer sense. When a religious work grows pretentious, often the higher expression of feeling is lost. I like rather to feel that we are humble, that our bigness lies in the ideals we uphold and try to live up to. We have not always met with success, but we have tried to go forward with a steadfast spirit of devotion. And it is our prayer at the beginning of the new year that our conviction may be so fixed in our hearts that whether people look on us with suspicion or friendliness, whether they try to crush us or aid us, yet we may maintain a loving spirit of tolerance and deeper understanding. This is what the world has need of. If even a few of these who come here realize this in their hearts, that is enough. Our effort is to eliminate all feeling of harshness, discordance, doubt and suspicion of one another; to break down all boundary lines. We have never tried to organize, because it is difficult to express the highest ideals in a large organization. We stand for freedom, freedom of thought and action; that each one may realize the loftiest and best in his own way. We like to be able to do our share. It does not require a large institution to send out loving thoughts and to pray for one's fellowmen. On the contrary, it is easier to do it when our mind is less distracted by outside influences and concerns. Let the work ever remain modest and let our hearts grow big and full of feeling for others. It does not matter whether people agree or disagree with us. Ours is to love and serve. A spiritual work can be built up only by

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putting its trust in God; if He sustains us, then nothing can thwart us. Those of you who are friends of the Centre and have your heart's interest in the work, let this be your prayer for it:—that God's will may be fulfilled in every step of its journey; that we may have ever greater courage; and that we may serve all men with selfless devotion, without asking anything for ourselves."

The exercises closed with a prayer and benediction; and the rest of the evening was spent in informal social intercourse. Refreshments were served and there was music by the gifted violincellist, Miss Florence Colby, who also played at intervals during the exercises.

REPORT

Swami Paramananda spent three days of January in Rochester. On the 16th he delivered a public lecture, on the 17th he lectured before the Psychology Club and on the 18th he spoke in a private drawing room to a group of earnest students who have become specially interested in the teaching. He also held two classes during his stay. In Boston he conducted the two regular Services each Sunday and the open class on Tuesday. The special class for members was resumed on the second Thursday in the month and will continue now until the summer.

* * *

Certain volumes of "The Message of the East" are becoming rare because some numbers in the issues of these years are exhausted and no longer available for further volumes. If any one who has copies of these special numbers cares to return them to us, we shall be glad in exchange to send them any single lecture by Swami Paramananda mentioned in our list of publications. The numbers specially desired are: January 1912; May 1913; June 1914; April, May, August, November of 1915; February, May and November of 1916; March 1918; November 1919.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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HEALING OF BODY AND MIND

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

Man's life is inter-related. His physical life is so absolutely dependent on his moral and his spiritual life that unless he pay proper heed to these, he can never hope to be healthy. Whenever we violate the spiritual law and try to find a short cut to happiness, the fibre of our moral being is injured and we begin to feel pains and aches in the physical body. When these conditions continue and we do not try to remove them, a mark is made on the mind. Doubt, despair, despondency arise and these react again on the body. The only healing which can be effective then, will be one which brings a regenerating influence into the mind and restores it to its normal state.

How does spiritual healing take place? A sceptic says that it does not take place at all, it is a myth; but it could not be conceived by human minds unless it were founded to some extent at least on fact. All history is filled with accounts of such healing. We read of it in the life of Krishna, in the life of Buddha, in the life of Christ, of Lord Gouranga, of St. Francis. It is love conquering brute force. The force which is moving in the direction of evil is reversed suddenly and becomes a power for good. This is what I call conversion. A man can never be converted by violence or by mere persuasion. He can be transformed permanently only by a spiritual influx

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which is so redeeming, so life-giving, so healing, that when he comes in contact with it, he is re-made. Whenever this influence falls upon a receptive heart, it cleanses and exalts the whole nature as a natural sequence; disturbing physical conditions fall away and mental distresses vanish. This is the only real process of healing.

In India spiritual healing has never been practised as a profession, because there they know that God's power cannot be used for any material advantage or with any sense of egotism. Only when we have no ulterior motive, no thought of self, do we become direct channels for it. Our heart must be full of purity, of selfless devotion, of real love for humanity. If on the contrary we take up healing as a profession, expecting a definite return from it, the supply is cut off. Every individual has the right and the power to connect himself with the Infinite Source and be filled constantly with fresh life and understanding. In accomplishing this the mind plays a greater part than the body. We are all anxious to maintain physical health. There is not a person who is not interested in possessing it. But in order to have it, we must acquire a well-ordered mind; because our thoughts and feelings and aspirations will produce either good health or ill health in our body. You may ask, why do so many good people suffer? Suffering is not a curse; bodily illness is not necessarily a punishment. Sometimes it comes to purify and strengthen us. Therefore those who have deeper understanding strive to make the best use of illness. Bodily suffering becomes a blessing when it teaches us to transcend outer conditions and to turn to the soul within.

Each of us is a living part of the Whole, a direct descendant of Godhead; and when we become truly aware of this, it cures all our ailments. In my own life I have known of extreme cases, pronounced hopeless by physicians, which were healed by a mere touch. Yet there was no miracle about it. It was

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the transmission of a spiritual power which accomplished it. If any man can resign himself absolutely and unreservedly to the Will of God, in a moment he will be made whole, and he will be able to heal others. The healing takes place by the natural process of life. Ordinarily we seek relief through round-about ways; we seek all our consolation and help from outside; but if we can turn directly within to our own inward resources, we shall get results which will amaze us. The reservoir of life is inexhaustible. So long as we go on crying: "My strength has failed, my usefulness is gone, my faculties have lost their power to act!" we shut ourselves away from the Fountainhead. The fact that we are in that state shows that we have detached ourselves from the Source of life. A branch withers quickly when it is severed from the root, and the root of every human life is God.

If we do not believe that God is the Source of our life, in what can we believe? Can we believe in changeable mundane things and hope for perfect health or happiness through them? No. We may try to reverse the order of our life, but the Cosmic Law does not reverse its order. That is why the fundamental principle of attainment must be always: "Seek ye first the kingdom of Truth, all other things shall be added unto you." Why is it we find this so difficult to follow? Because we do not really believe in it. We may pretend loyalty to a religion, we may pretend to have lofty aspirations, we may pretend devotion to all sorts of ideals with high-sounding names, but mere pretending will not lead us anywhere. We must have real love for an Ideal in our hearts; then not only do we elevate ourselves, but we are able to bring constant benefit to the world. We see this in the lives of the Great Ones. A Buddha, a St. Francis, a man who possesses nothing, becomes a great power. He revolutionizes human society. Even material weapons drop powerless before him. In the life of Gautama Buddha

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we read that once the priests out of jealousy plotted to do away with Him and engaged some wicked men to take His life. The men came to Him with drawn swords, but they were disarmed by His gentle exalted bearing and refused to do Him harm. If our faith in the all-conquering power of love is equally genuine, we also shall be victorious over evil. But there can be no compromise. In all circumstances, whether pleasing or unpleasing, we must hold fast to our ideal of love. That love never fails to cure both mind and body. It was by this love that St. Francis conquered and transformed the hearts of the three robbers.

Once three robbers came to the monastery asking for food. Brother Angelo, knowing who they were, drove them away with harsh words. St. Francis, returning from his daily round of begging, heard of it and, sad at heart, he reproached the brother for his lack of loving-kindness. "Take thou this wallet of bread," he said, "and this flask of wine which I have begged, and seek out the robbers. Kneel before them humbly and ask their pardon for thy harshness. Beseech them in my name to offend God no longer by evil-doing. Tell them, if they will do this, that I promise to provide for their needs. Give them to eat, then return hither." Brother Angelo found the robbers, and while they were eating of St. Francis' alms, their hearts were so softened they began to be overwhelmed with remorse for their evil deeds. "Let us go to St. Francis," they said to one another, "and implore Him to save us from our many grievous sins." St. Francis received them lovingly, consoled them with many tender hopeful counsels, and they all became devout members of the Order.

We often say: "I would like to be unselfish; I would like to think noble thoughts, but it is an impossiblity for me." Why should it be an impossibility? If the mind is capable of thinking ignoble thought, it has an equal capacity for loving, con-

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structive thought. It is a question of training. Unless we train our body and mind and readjust our habits, it is useless to uphold visionary ideals, which remain mere theories for us. We should be grateful that difficulties come sometimes, because they test our sincerity. They show us whether we are standing on the solid foundation of spiritual conviction. If we are not, it is better that we find it out. Ailments come, misfortunes come; but they prove to be curses only when we fall under their sway. When we are not crushed by them, we rise up with greater strength. This conquest is the greatest thing man can hope for and it comes through the power of the Spirit. Wealth cannot buy it, or learning. Sometimes rather these hinder our efforts, because they confuse our mind and destroy the purity of our vision. If we would have either health or wisdom, we must keep to simplicity and directness in our mental and bodily habits.

The story is told that when Lord Buddha was preaching in the neighborhood of Shravasti, a man of great wealth came to him and said: "World-honored Master, forgive me that I do not prostrate before you with proper reverence; but I suffer miserably from obesity, drowsiness, excessive lethargy and other complaints, which make it impossible for me to move without pain." Buddha, observing the luxuries with which the man was surrounded, asked him: "Have you a desire to know the real cause of your unhappy state? The man assented and Buddha continued: "There are five things which produce the conditions from which you suffer:—opulent dinners, love of sleep, love of pleasure, thoughtlessness and lack of occupation. Begin to exercise control at your meals, and take upon yourself some occupation which will employ your abilities and make you useful to your fellow-men. In doing this you will prolong your life."

The rich man heard the words of the Blessed One and, hav-

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ing regained his lightness of body and buoyancy of mind, he returned to the world-honored One afoot and without attendants. "Master," he said, "you have cured my bodily ailments. I come now to seek the enlightenment of my mind." And the Blessed One said: "The worldling nourishes his body, but the wise man nourishes his soul. He who indulges in the satisfaction of his appetites works his own destruction; but he who walks in the path of self-discipline will not only gain salvation from sin, but prolong his life." This may not seem a great miracle. Buddha made only the simplest suggestions. He did not lay His hand on the man and cure him at once, although He might have done that. But such instances of sudden healing to me are not more miraculous than this one, because this has the element of rebuilding the moral fibre; and until that is accomplished, no matter how much we may try to help any one, it will not prove a lasting blessing.

One can be cured by the laying on of hands, by prayer, by transmission of spiritual force, provided the healer is pure, exalted and free from every selfish motive. Often those who are the most powerful healers are not conscious that they are healing. Nor do they wish their power to be known or recognized. Why? Because they are not willing to mix their spirit of consecration to God with the cheaper materials of self-glorification, egotism and vanity. If you are interested in healing, do it; but keep yourself out of it. Bring in God's power and all things will be made whole for you. Do not resort to trivial methods; that is, when you have a little bodily ache or pain, do not focus your thought on it in the hope of escaping from it; or when you think you need a new dress or a new hat, do not expend your precious mental energies in trying to obtain them.

Concentrating your mind to satisfy trifling desires proves always a great detriment to your higher unfoldment, and you should do your utmost by the practice of discrimination to

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avoid this mis-step. There are people who by concentrating realize their material ambitions, and they imagine that they possess superior spiritual power, but this is merely a snare, which cheats them of true attainment.

How do you know that what you obtain is good for you? Oftentimes we find that it is not beneficial for us to have a great deal of material prosperity. We may like the soft conditions of life; but they are not always wholesome for our higher nature. What we need is a mind which can stand firm in all circumstances; a mind which is brave and heroic. True heroism is born of Spirit, never of material conditions. Real strength does not come from the flesh, it comes only when flesh is connected with Spirit; then we can go through the greatest ordeal unmoved. All that we crave for we shall receive in unbounded supply, when we know how to use it for our own good and for the good of our fellowmen. We would all like to possess happiness and power, but these do not come to us because we are not big enough to take them. We must cultivate bigness and inwardness.

We cannot realize the highest happiness so long as we are thinking of ourselves only, of our own needs and gratifications. Not until the sun of wisdom shines and melts away these selfish limitations, not until then will rise from within our true power, which is inexhaustible. An unrivalled passage in the Upanishads tells us that in the vastness of infinitude alone lies the fullness of happiness for man; never in the finite. Men go on groping here and there to gratify their desires; and they often gain what they covet, but it never satisfies their deeper craving. We enter into our true state of being only when we forget ourselves; when we cease to believe that our body is given us for our gratification, that our mind and acquirements are for ourselves.

We must lose all self-consciousness in the great thought that

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we are instruments of God; we must feel that our body must be kept clean and holy as a shrine for the dwelling-place of Divinity. If we keep uppermost in our mind these higher concepts of life, we shall refrain from doing what is ignoble. Do we wish to be strong, do we wish to be happy? If we do, then we must plant the seeds of constructive thought in our hearts. We must remember constantly that no matter what happens on the physical plane, there is a dominant ruler within, the Spirit, and that Spirit can never be vanquished. When we are able to take this stand, we can overcome every obstacle.

Why do people become selfish? Why are they guilty of unworthy acts which harm others? It is because they have lost this lofty point of view. Their whole life is centred in their flesh, in sensation, in immediate bodily concerns. But let them extend their vision, let them project their thought beyond mere physical boundary lines, and a new inner consciousness will dawn in them. Their body may still have its limit, their material surroundings may continue to be disturbing; in spite of all this, they will not be moved from the state of tranquillity they have found. This is only possible when we bring spiritual consciousness into our life. When we feel that we are direct descendants of the Infinite, when this conviction is firmly established in our hearts, then are we made whole. It is the life which brings healing. It is entering into the inner realm of consciousness where we are restored naturally. When our thought is filled with Spirit, all must be well with us; because where Spirit shines unobstructed, there is life; there can be no sickness or suffering.

Thine own self-will and anxiety, thy hurry and labor, disturb thy peace and prevent Me from working in thee. Look at the little flowers in the serene summer days; they quietly open their petals and the sun shines into them with his gentle influences. So will I do for thee, if thou wilt yield thyself to Me.

—*G. Tersteegen.*

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WAY OF FREEDOM

From The Samhita

(An ancient dialogue between the Sage Astavakra and King Janaka. Rendered from the Sanskrit.)

The Sage Astavakra said: He alone dwells in unshaken calmness and bliss who perceives clearly that this ego which enjoys and suffers is not the true Self.

He alone tastes the sweetness of peace who perceives clearly that the Supreme Lord is the sole fashioner of the universe. Knowing this his cherished desires drop away one by one, his ambitions melt into nothingness, and his heart craves for naught of this world.

As time rolls on, prosperity follows adversity and adversity prosperity in inevitable sequence. Knowing this, the wise man leads a healthy contented life, free from desire and free from grief.

Life is an endless series of experiences. From the Invisible emanate the forces which create and destroy. That Power inscrutable is the dispenser of human happiness and human misery. Knowing this, the wise man works without attachment and without expectation of recompense.

Convinced that he is not the body and that he does not possess it, the wise man attains oneness with his Higher Self, and casts aside all thought of himself as the doer. Rising above his worldly self, freed from the limitations of personality, and realizing his oneness with Absolute Truth, he transcends the dual plane of good and evil and merges himself in the perfect Ideal.

He who is convinced that he is present in all, from the Creator down to the meanest creature, dwells in unmodified purity. The profound peace and joyousness of his soul are never disturbed, whether he lives in riches or in poverty.

He lives peacefully, like a shining flower of perfection, desireless and detached from the world.

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The acquisition of untold riches may bring ease, comfort and bodily enjoyment, but a blissful state of soul is impossible without complete detachment.

How can one whose heart is scorched by the burning fire of earthly desires enjoy blessedness? But when the charm of created things has lost its hold over him and the veil of ignorance has dropped from his eyes, then the man gains direct vision of Truth and becomes free from all grief and anxiety.

TRUE LOVE SEEKETH NO REWARD

By Saint Bernard. 12th Century

Not without reward is God loved, albeit He is to be loved without thought of the reward. True love cannot fail, yet neither is it a hireling; in sooth it seeketh not its own. It is affection, not a contract; it is neither gained nor gains by bargain. It affects freely and maketh free. True love is content with itself. Its reward is the possession of the object loved. For whatever thou mayest seem to love for the sake of something else, thou clearly lovest the ultimate end of thy love, not the means. Paul doth not preach the Gospel that he may eat, but eats that he may preach the Gospel; he loves, not meat, but the Gospel. True love seeketh no reward, but merits it. Reward is not offered to the lover; it is gained by him that loves, and rendered to him that perseveres. When we would dispose to things of a lower order, we invite the unwilling by promises or rewards, but not the willing. For who thinks that a man should be rewarded that he may do what he freely desires? No one, for instance, leads one that hungers to eat, or one that thirsts to drink, or a mother to give suck to the little son of her womb. Or who thinks that a man should be induced by prayer or price to hedge in his own vine, dig round his own tree, or build the structure of his own house? How. then, should the soul that loves God seek any other reward of her love save

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God? If she seeketh another, she assuredly loves that, not God.

It is natural to every one that uses reason to desire, always in proportion to his judgment and intention, the things that are greater, and to be content with nothing than which he deems what he lacks to be better. He who is clothed with a precious robe aims at one more precious; and, possessing much wealth, he envies one richer than himself. Thou mayst see men, abounding in lands and possessions, still day by day adding field to field, and with infinite greed extending their boundaries. Thou mayst see, too, those who dwell in royal houses and ample palaces, nevertheless daily joining house to house, and, with restless curiosity, building, pulling down, changing square for round. What of men uplifted by honours? Do we not see them, with insatiable ambition, straining more and more with all their might to higher things? But it is foolish and smacks of sheer madness always to desire those things which never, I say not satisfy, but even lessen the appetite; inasmuch as, whatever of such thou mayst have, thou still longest for what thou hast not, and ever restlessly pantest for what is lacking.

Thus it happens that the mind, wandering through the various false attractions of the world, is wearied, not satisfied, by running to and fro with vain labour; while whatever it hungrily swallows, it reckons little to what remains to be devoured; and ever not less anxiously desires what are lacking than gladly possesses what are present. For who may obtain all things? And although a man is not certain when he will lose with sorrow even that little which he has obtained with labour, he is nevertheless certain that he will some time lose it. If then thou wouldst fulfill thy wish, if thou wouldst take hold of that of which the possession leaves no more to be desired—what need to essay the rest too? Thou runnest through bye-paths, and shalt die long before thou attain by this circuit to thy desire.

"Better is a little to the just, than the great riches of the

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wicked;" for, indeed, as the wise man says and the fool finds, he that loveth money, shall not be satisfied with money; but they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, they shall have their fill. Righteousness is the vital and natural food of the spirit that uses reason; but money no more lessens the hunger of the mind than does wind that of the body. If, then, thou shouldst see a hungry man, with mouth opened to the wind, drawing in the air with puffed-out cheeks, as though thereby to satisfy his hunger, wouldst thou not deem him mad? So it is not less madness to think that the rational spirit is not rather puffed up than satisfied by any bodily things. For what have bodies to do with spirits? Neither can those be refreshed with spiritual things, nor these with bodily. Bless the Lord, O my soul, who satisfieth thy desire with good things. He satisfies with good, He stirs to good, He preserves in good; He prevents, sustains, fulfils. He makes thee desire, He is what thou desirest.

I said above: The cause of loving God is God. I spoke truly; for He is both the efficient and the final cause. He gives the occasion, He creates the affection, He consummates the desire. He wrought (or, rather, is what He is) that He might be loved; He is the object of hope, to be loved more blissfully, that He may not be loved in vain. His love both prepares and rewards ours. It goes before more graciously, is repaid more justly, is expected more sweetly. He is rich unto all that call upon Him; nor still hath He aught better than Himself. He gave Himself to be merited, He keeps Himself for reward, He sets forth Himself for the reflection of holy souls, He gives Himself out for the redemption of those in captivity. Thou art good, O Lord, to the soul that seeketh thee: then what to her that finds? But herein is a wondrous thing: no one can seek Thee save whoso has first found. Therefore, Thou dost will to be found that Thou mayst be sought; to be sought that Thou mayst be found.

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INSPIRATION

By Marion Forster Gilmore

They are not born of us, the songs we sing,
Although they seem of our own fashioning,
O, brother bards, for we are only reeds
That grow among the other water weeds
In Life's deep ever-onward rushing river.
God gathers us and in His Hands we quiver,
With a mysterious wild ecstasy.
That we are chosen thus through melody
To give His message to a world in need.
But it is God's own breath that, through each reed
How subtly passing, ever outward floats
In marvellous and never dying notes,
Breathing of wisdom's glorious design,
Vibrant forever with a Love Divine;—
Ay, no! those songs are born of heavenly powers,
My fellow poets,—they are not ours, not ours.

SONGS OF KABIR

O Friend! this body is His lyre;
He tightens its strings, and draws from it
the melody of God.
If the strings snap and the keys slacken,
then to dust must this instrument of dust return:
Kabir says: "None but God can evoke its melodies."

* * * * *

The harp gives forth murmurous music; and the
dance goes on without hands and feet.
It is played without fingers, it is heard without ears;
for He is the ear, and He is the listener.
The gate is locked, but within there is fragrance:
and there the meeting is seen of none.
The wise shall understand it.

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THE BUILDING OF CHARACTER

By Sister Devamata

The soul wears two garments,—this outer one of the gross body, and an inner one of character. The inner body contains the mind, the intellect, the moral nature and the sense of "I",—the whole of our personal identity, in short, as well as the record of our previous lives. The question is often asked: if we have lived again and again, why have we no record of it? What better record could we have than the character we wear to-day? We write our thoughts and deeds deep into our being, and every time we move or speak we betray how we have lived down the ages. No recording angel is needed.

The substratum of the character-body is memory. The slightest impression made upon the mind is graven in the memory. The chance word we hear, the headline we glimpse in the street car, the fleeting wave of impatience or resentment, even these are duly set down. Not a scratch over the surface of our thought is ever effaced absolutely, although some are so lightly traced that they can be regarded as negligible. It is the frequent repetition of an idea or a desire which imbeds it in our character and makes it a dominating principle in our action. We wonder why our good resolutions break down so easily. It is because they are undermined by our actual life. Our resolutions are theories, while the disintegrating impulses are daily habits.

Yet these habits, however firmly rooted, can be wiped out by the persistent repetition of a counteracting thought. It is attention which lends strength to our mental impressions. The entire world might be in a ferment and we would know nothing of it, if our attention were turned wholly elsewhere. We discover this in the class room when we try to teach children. If we are unable to fix their attention, the hour's lesson is lost. Our first concern in shaping our character, therefore, should

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be to withdraw our attention from all destructive, weakening impressions. The more sins we have to remember, the more we must try to forget them; otherwise we increase their hold over us. The true penitent cannot afford to repent. If he will be purged and made clean, he must forget himself and all his shortcomings and merge his thought in some lofty ideal. It is a very beneficial exercise, whenever the consciousness of our limitations threatens to overwhelm us, to read or think of some holy life which illustrates the virtues we need to acquire. There is no quicker way of cultivating them; for what we think on, that we become.

A man who wishes to build a strong character must never indulge in trivial, flimsy thought. We cannot be cowards six days in the week and expect to be heroes on the seventh. We shall be what our cumulative thought has made us. If we have not borne the little stings and pains of to-day bravely, we may be sure that we shall go down under bigger wounds a week or a month hence. It is the little things which test us; and one who would build enduringly must pay heed above all to the little things. If we are faithful in the small things of life, the Bible tells us, automatically we shall become ruler over greater things.

The cardinal qualities of compassion, fortitude, loyalty to the Ideal, spiritual courage, are all bred of patient practice in the commonplace tasks of each day. So often people complain that they have no time for serious pursuits; but it is the will which is lacking, not the time. All life is an open opportunity. It requires no more effort to think of God and His greatness than of our neighbor and his smallness. It is altogether a question of habit. You may say: "How can I think on two levels at the same moment?" The human mind always carries on two collateral lines of thought,—the line of the immediate experience and a line of self-consciousness, with a connecting zig-zag line of comparison between. Now everything which occurs re-

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minds us of ourself. Whatever we feel or perceive or think on, we refer spontaneously to the little self—its likes and dislikes, its advantage or disadvantage, its knowledge or ignorance. When we begin the training of our attention, our thought processes still remain dual, but consciousness of God takes the place of consciousness of self. All things are referred to the Ideal instead of to the ego. Only when we cultivate this new habit are we able to provide a solid foundation for our character.

Ordinarily we associate character with morality, with struggle and warfare in the name of virtue. But a character which does not extend its reach beyond the ethical almost invariably is angular, harsh and unyielding. It is lacking in all the subtler grace and loveliness which should adorn the superior life. St. Francis de Sales writes to a young wife: "You should not only be religious and love religion; you should make religion attractive, useful and agreeable to every one around. . . Let your religion be as winning to others as possible." Probably nothing has done more to discredit virtue than the stern, uncompromising, puritanic practice of it by those who make ethical achievement the final goal.

I would not minimize the essential value of morality in human progress. It is as indispensable to spiritual development as technique is to music. The exercises of choice and volition, which it sets for us, do much to increase the pliability and vigor of the inner body and prepare it for the soul's use. But ethics alone cannot offer a firm basis for character, because they deal wholly with the external, and all external things are shifting. The fundamental spiritual truths are the same the world over, but ethical laws vary from nation to nation and race to race. Each individual even is constantly repairing and readjusting his moral standards as his outlook on life broadens; whereas the spiritual knowledge he gains remains unaltered and unalterable.

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True character building is an interior process. Nothing we are at the present moment is the result of any super-imposition from the outside. All the changes which have taken place in us as we have passed from amoeba to man have come through the outpouring of our inner nature. External conditions and surroundings have furnished merely the proper occasions for this unfolding of our essential being. We have grown as the branch does,—from within our own root and stem. In every living creature perfection exists, out of sight perhaps, yet there none the less; and because perfection is stronger than imperfection, because the Infinite is stronger than the finite, that mightier Principle of life prods us on and on; but we hold back. To this holding back are due all our aches and pains and miseries. We are like rebellious children being dragged home by the mother. We are scratched and hurt because, not wishing to leave our play, we refuse to stand up and walk on our own feet in cheerful obedience.

One of the salient marks of a man of character is his willingness to co-operate with Nature. He does not find his pleasure in breaking the law, but in going with it. Only a child-mind takes delight in defying the word of command; the grown-up intelligence likes to feel the support of a superior authority. It believes that it can move more confidently and freely when it is conscious of a supreme sustaining and restraining Power. There is a certain obstinacy of self-will which is sometimes mistaken for character, but it is sure to break under stress. The pushing, assertive man is fore-ordained to defeat when he runs counter to the man of quiet resolution, who shapes his action on cosmic lines.

The very root of character is indrawnness. The strong man acts from the centre outward. He follows the rule of Nature, which preludes every forward spring by a recoil. As the arm draws back before it deals a heavy blow, so he gathers himself

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constantly to the centre of his being and attacks life from that vantage ground. The activity which begins and ends at the circumference is of necessity feeble and unproductive. In certain games, we know, a run does not count unless the player first touches base; so unless we touch the base of our life, the great Inner Principle of wisdom and strength, before each outer effort, our endeavor will be sadly ineffective. This cannot be done at random, however. There must be firmly established contact with the centre to be able to swing there quickly at the moment of need. If God remains a stranger to us, we shall forget Him in the rush of living. We must develop the habit of association with Him. This can be done only through regular practice of meditation.

The nervous unrest we feel now when we sit down and try to meditate, proves how far we have moved away from the central point of strength and stillness in us. We are like a boat with hoisted sail tugging at its moorings. We can scarcely wait to plunge into the activities of our usual round. The only way that we shall overcome this unwholesome scattered state is by setting apart certain definite hours for silent thought, and observing them with unwavering determination. It does not occur to us to skip the brushing of our teeth or the combing of our hair, however hurried we may be, and such should be our attitude towards this daily exercise of interior communion. The time devoted to it may be short, but it must be kept with rigid exactitude. Otherwise we shall falsify our values and persuade ourselves that the outer is more important than the inner.

Quietness is a salient quality of character. Lord Buddha says: "The gods even envy him whose senses have been subdued, who is free from pride and free from appetites; his thought is quiet, quiet are his word and deed, when he has obtained freedom by knowledge, when he has thus become a qui-

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et man." The feeble mind is garrulous and noisy, but the man who lives in unbroken awareness of his soul feels no impulse to boisterous argument or self-advertisement. He is confident that truth will prove itself, right will protect itself, that in due season the Divine will prevail over the human. Such a man is generous by the very logic of his nature. He has touched the Source and he knows that all the basic things of life are inexhaustible. There is more than enough for all; and however much is given, the Infinite still remains undepleted.

Forgiveness is an unknown virtue to him, because he never finds anything to forgive. Forgiveness implies a consciousness of injury; but if we were truly generous, we would excuse our neighbor's fault before it has wounded us. We would cover it over as a mother eagerly cloaks her child's wrong-doing. If we are offended, the fault lies in us; we have a sore place in our character which needs to be healed. When we are sound throughout, we take even the sharpest blow with a smile. A sense of grievance is an unfailing symptom of weakness and egotism. It is we who need to be forgiven, not the one who has hurt us.

The strong man again is habitually cheerful. Despondency is like a dry rot which eats away the supporting beams of our character. All the fears and failures which induce dejection, taken together, could not do us so much harm as dejection itself. Swami Vivekananda declares despondency to be the most insidious enemy of the spiritual life. We would not willingly breathe poisonous miasmas into our lungs, why should we any more lightly give room in our mind to the poison of despondent thought? Melancholy works slowly and heavily, hence it is not so difficult to combat as the hotter passions. When we feel it beginning to press down on us, we should meet it promptly. So far as possible we should keep actively occupied, preferably in manual labor, to stimulate our physical and moral circula-

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tion. Then, remembering that attention is the lever by which we regulate the mind, we should fix our attention on some triumphant example of bigness and buoyant heroism and hold it there, until the constructive influence of the example catches us on its current and sweeps us out of stagnant waters into the free-flowing midstream again. We learn a poor lesson from the stripes and buffetings of the saints and Saviours when we use them merely to console us for our own miseries. We derive profit from them only when we imbibe the spirit with which these spiritual heroes bore their hardships and thus learn from them to rise superior to our own.

Not by exercise of will can we make ourselves strong or important. Character is an organic growth and builds itself. Our only part in the work is to remove ourself from it. We do this by holding our thought resolutely on higher levels. "I shall lift mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help." Character draws its sustenance from the heights always. It staggers and swoons in the closed-in valley of petty material concerns. When we consecrate ourselves whole-heartedly to a noble ideal, through contact with it the deeper forces of our nature are set in motion and within us rises from day to day a new Temple for the living God. We may not know it, but others see it and the world is richer for it.

O insensate care of mortals, how faulty are those arguments that make thee downward beat thy wings.

—*Dante. Il Paradiso.*

The senses are not capable of Divine blessings; hence if thou wouldst be happy and wise, be silent and believe, suffer and have patience, be confident and walk on; it concerns thee far more to hold thy peace and to let thyself be guided by the Hand of God, than to enjoy all the goods of this world.

—*Michael de Molinos.*

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THE MAN OF SUPERIOR MIND

Teachings of Confucius

The minds of superior men trend upward, those of inferior men trend downward. The superior man keeps his eyes fixed on virtue; the common man, on earthly things.

The man who may be regarded as moving towards perfection is one who, seeing some advantage to himself, is mindful of righteousness; who, seeing danger, risks his life; and who, if bound by some covenant of long-standing, never forgets his pledge as time goes on.

Respecting Tsz-chai, the Master said that he had four of the essential qualities of the superior man:—in his own private walk he was humble-minded, in serving his superiors he was deferential, in looking after the material welfare of the people he was generously kind, and in his exaction of public service he was just.

Some one asked the Master about his attendant, a youth from the village of Keish, whether he was improving. The Master said: "I note that he seats himself in places reserved for his superiors and that when he is walking he keeps abreast with his seniors. He is not one of those who care for improvement; he wants to be a man all at once."

Superior men are modest in their words, but lavish in their deeds.

The man of superior mind is placid and composed, the small-minded man is in a constant state of perturbation.

The firm, the unflinching, the plain and simple, the slow to speak, these accomplish their duty towards their fellowmen most truly.

Not even when he eats his meals will the superior man forget what he owes his fellowmen. Even in hurried leave-takings, even in moments of greatest confusion, he keeps true to his standard of conduct.

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Be courteous in your private sphere, be serious in any task you undertake, be loyal-hearted in your intercourse with others. Even though you were to go among the savage tribes of the hills, it would not be right to neglect these duties.

The wise escape doubt; the good-hearted escape trouble; and the courageous escape fear.

Admirable indeed was the virtue of Hwuy. With a single bambu dish of rice, a single gourd dish of drink, and living in his mean narrow lane, while others could not have endured the distress, he did not allow his joy to be affected by it.

It is no light thing to endure poverty uncomplainingly and no easy thing to bear wealth without growing arrogant.

Those who keep within restraints are seldom losers.

Once the Master said: "Would that I could dispense with speech!" "Sir," said Tsz-king, "If you were never to speak, what would your pupils do?" "Does Heaven ever speak?" the Master said. "The four seasons come and go, and all creatures live and grow. Does Heaven ever speak?"

Now we see that a carpenter by learning certain things becomes a carpenter; and a pilot by learning certain things becomes a pilot. Probably, then, it is not sufficient merely to be willing to be wise and good; but it is also necessary that certain things should be learned. The philosophers say that we are first to learn that there is a God, and that His providence directs the whole; and that it is impossible to conceal from Him, not only our actions, but even our thoughts and emotions. We are next to learn what the Gods are: for such as they are found to be, such must he who would please and obey them to the utmost of his power endeavor to be. If the Deity is faithful, he too must be faithful; if free, beneficent, and exalted, he must be free, beneficent, and exalted likewise; and, in all of his words and actions, behave as an imitator of God. —*Epictetus.*

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REPORT

In all public work there is an inevitable ebb and flow, and one soon learns not to measure growth by the maximum or decline by the minimum of interest and attendance. Keeping to the mean line, however, there can be no doubt that the Vedanta Centre of Boston has entered upon a new period of growth. What a year ago was the maximum attendance at the Sunday Services has now become the minimum, while the Tuesday class has doubled in size. Many more also are eager to enter the students' class on Thursday, but this is now open only to regular members who have been attending the other meeting for some time and have acquired a certain understanding of the teaching. In addition to the regular classes and Services during February, the Centre gave an informal tea on Saturday afternoon, the tenth, in order that the students and friends of the work might have an opportunity to see the various improvements in the house beyond the entrance and Chapel. The chief point of interest was the sun parlor, which every one entered with a cry of admiration. It is built on the fourth floor over the circular tower-like corner of the house. The entire circle forming two sides of the room is made up of casement windows, through which one looks out over the park, with its winding stream, to the long line of Greek columns of the Art Museum, on up to the towering spires of the large Mission Church belonging to the Redemptionist Fathers, and still beyond to the slopes of Parker Hill, sparkling with lights at night. The sweep of the view follows the whole course of the sun, so that one sees both the sunrise and the sunset from the windows. The green wicker furniture, the prevailing tones of green in the rugs and the row of blooming plants on the window-sills, give one the impression, facing in one direction, that one is out of doors; while at a turn of the head the pale grey walls and white woodwork, the

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well-stocked book case and a bright open fire remind one that one is under shelter and safe from the weather. It is undoubtedly a rare privilege near the heart of the city to have a quiet spot so full of fresh air and sunshine as this.

Swami Paramananda spent the week of February 12th lecturing in Ohio. On the 13th he spoke for the Club of Applied Psychology in Cleveland and held a class there on the following day. Wednesday and Thursday were devoted to Akron, where again he lectured before the Psychology Club and held a class. On Friday he spoke at Canton, as the guest of the Psychology Club of that city. Over six hundred people gathered to hear him and as elsewhere great interest and enthusiasm were manifested. In order to reach Boston in time to conduct the Service on Sunday morning, he was obliged to spend the greater part of Friday night travelling in motor across icy country roads to catch the express at Cleveland; but the President of the Club was glad to make this long cold ride to Cleveland and back, considerably over one hundred miles, in order to secure for the Canton Club the privilege of hearing the Swami. There was also great demand for the literature in both Akron and Canton. It is gratifying to see how eagerly the psychology movement, which has swept the country and dotted it with clubs, links its eminently modern point of view with the age-ripened teaching of Vedanta. Impartial students are coming more and more to recognize that the root soil of the various phases of thought which have sprung up in recent years is to be found on the lofty heights of the Himalayas, where in far ancient times the Indo-Aryan sages evolved the practical science of higher development known as Yoga, and the subtlest system of metaphysics and psychology known to the world even to-day. Any touch with this older system cannot fail to impart added power to these younger movements.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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THE CREATIVE POWER OF SILENCE

By Swami Paramananda

What sleep does for our body and nervous system, silence does for our mind and spirit. All the discordant conditions in our life are greatly due to our lack of co-ordination of both physical and mental forces. Until we can learn to think and act with calm and unruffled attitude, we cannot make our life productive. The practice of silence is a very great help for acquiring evenness of mind and tranquillity of body. The silence which leads to efficiency, however, is not a negation, a state merely of sitting and doing nothing. It is experienced only when the whole being has been unified and is flowing through one channel in perfect rhythm.

The productiveness of our activity depends entirely on what we put into it and in order to put our best into each thought and action, we need to order our mind, to gather up all its scattered forces, to establish our equilibrium; and we cannot do this unless we withdraw at intervals from the haste and noise of outer occupations. That is why Yogis and those who are seeking earnestly for light look upon the practice of silence as essential to their spiritual progress. In the first place it enables us to store up a great deal of life force which now we expend unwisely in needless talking. We wear ourselves out, disturb others, and say much which might better be left un-

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said when we talk constantly. We also dull the mind and lessen its power of penetration. All spiritual vision and deeper understanding are unfolded in the hours of silent reflection. It is in the moment of silence that we hear the voice of the Infinite. When our ears are listening to the loud voices of the world, we cannot know that another voice is speaking in our heart. Therefore, those who have obtained direct vision of Truth are not inclined to make their own voice heard.

The productive life is always a silent life. When a man is creating something, he is not inclined to talk. He becomes rapt in thought and gradually through his concentrated thought he gains access to the hidden recesses of nature. He does not squander his forces by telling each little revelation as it comes to him. Sri Ramakrishna gives us the parable of the pearl oyster. It comes to the surface of the water to catch a rain drop falling at the auspicious moment when the star *Svati* is in ascendancy. Then it goes down to the bottom of the sea and remains there until the pearl is formed. The same is true of the genuine seeker after wisdom. As soon as he has found his access to God, he becomes deep and silent.

Silence is considered so necessary in India that there are great sages who become *Munis,* or silent ones. Some of them take the vow of complete silence and direct all their physical and mental forces towards spiritual illumination. Others refrain from speaking of non-essential matters. Through the observance of the vow of silence they become gifted in prophecy and power to bless others. Even the atmosphere of the place where they live is charged with a definite spiritual force. An example is given in one of our sacred books of a youthful sage, radiant with illumination, sitting in meditation under a Banyan tree. A disciple, old and weary with life's cares, approached him with mind and heart full of doubt and depression. The disciple asked many questions, but even though

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the teacher ever remained silent the doubts of the disciple were destroyed and he went away in peace. This shows us that if the Light of Truth shines within us clearly without obstruction it will reach and enlighten others.

Yet you may say, what can a silent man do? His scope of usefulness must be very limited. The greatest amount of good in the world is not done by the talker or even by the worker who is constantly busy with his hands and feet; but by the one who has found the true centre of his being. His very existence throws radiance on countless numbers of people. We may have a great desire to help others, but if we have not found the remedy for evil in our own life, even our best intentions will not do much for them. These *Munis* may not speak, but they have the burning effulgence of the spiritual light within themselves. Their life itself is an expression of Truth, and whether they speak or not, they are constantly shedding their holy influence on others.

If we would help ourselves and our fellow-beings, therefore, we must take certain hours when we can shut out the noise of the world and commune with the Infinite. The deeper themes of life we can discover only when our mind is not disturbed by worldly agitations. Even a scientist, a musician, an artist must have communion with his ideal, and this cannot be done without silence.

The practice of silence, however, does not mean merely refraining from speech. It means stilling the vital energies so that there is a cessation of all activity both inner and outer. The body must be without motion, the mind must be serene and heart tranquil. We cannot accomplish this by merely withdrawing to a secluded spot. It is an interior quality rather, although outer conditions may aid us tremendously in attaining it. But without the inner poise it is impossible to reach.

Our thoughts grow undisturbed and uninterrupted on the

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silent soil of the mind. We are able to think better and we are able to express our ideas through our outer actions more effectively. When we cultivate this we gain not only greater efficiency, but also fortify ourselves with wonderful blessing of serene attitude. People who are used to talking much, it is better for them to cultivate talking less and less, and learn to act with more quiet and composed bearing. Almost invariably we find that people who talk in excess are those who think less clearly and collectively. An idle tongue is one of the greatest curses. It not only hurts the person who is directly responsible for it, but disturbs the peace of mind of many others. Sri Chaitanya, one of India's foremost saints, taught his disciples never to take part in gossip. He said that they should not only refrain from making gossip, but never even listen to any idle talk, for by doing so they only encouraged the mischief-mongers. We cannot possibly conceive any lofty thought or lift our prayers to the Divine until our mind and heart are full of serenity.

The practice of physical silence restores our body and sense organs. The practice of mental silence refreshes our mind and quickens all our inner faculties. The power gained through it is tremendous. When we undertake anything hastily and nervously, we make mistakes and have to do it over, thus wasting our time and energies. Without deliberation and balance we can accomplish nothing worth while, and a moment of silence before each task enables us to maintain our balance. Its physical benefit is apparent at once. If we learn to bring ourselves to a state of absolute stillness, checking all unnecessary expenditure of energy, our whole body is refreshed and strengthened. This reacts on the mind and makes it alert and free. Even from the point of view of worldly advantage, therefore, it is wise to practise silence. The majority of people have a very false standard of life. They imagine that

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when two or three human beings are together, they must always entertain each other. Often nature is providing us with inspiration and we miss it, because of this foolish habit. Why should we suppose that whenever we are with others we must always talk? It means that our mind is empty. The noble mind is one that is filled from within and does not need continual diversion from without. It is not dependent or demanding. Its thought is calm and deep and still. Only as we become more and more silent will our inward life unfold.

Whenever we have conceived an idea, if we put it into words, the greater part of its strength is dissipated and its success is rendered doubtful. Is not the logic of this evident? As soon as we draw our mind away from the idea itself and begin to discuss it, we set up counter currents of thought, our mental strength is expended to combat these and little is left to carry our idea to fulfillment. If we would be successful we must conceive in the silence, work in the silence and achieve in the silence. Great things are always done silently. Whenever a life is fruitful, we shall always find that it is a silent life. If we would make our endeavor more productive, we must try never to talk unnecessarily. It is a wonderful thing to have a controlled tongue. When we have established balance at this point, we shall find that the other parts of our being will become balanced and our whole life will gain a new rhythm and illumination. In India they adopt the simple practice that before they eat, or drink, or study, or go to sleep, or undertake any business, they sit in silence for a moment and try to unite themselves with the centre of their being. When we are distracted by outer conditions or concerns, we lose our sense of proportion and we cannot do well what we have to do. As long as our physical eyes lead us to see the many, we cannot see the one; so the devotee closes his outer eyes that he may open his inner eye and with it perceive the deeper

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realities within. He closes his outer ears that he may hear the voice of the Infinite in his heart.

The practice of silence has a profound significance when we embrace the spiritual life. As only still waters reflect the perfect image, so only on the surface of the silent heart do we receive the unbroken image of Truth. Knowledge always destroys our ignorance and unrest, and we cannot increase our knowledge until we go down into the quiet recesses of our inner being. We must give ourselves a chance. There is not one who is not hungering for perfect health, for perfect peace and happiness; but these cannot come to us unless we create the right conditions for them. If we learn to live right, to think right, to make our life balanced and tranquil, we shall reap the result in a fuller expression of spiritual perfection. Now our ears do not hear the voice of the Supreme. The great teachers tell us to listen to that voice, to be guided by that voice. The ordinary man, however, says that he cannot hear the voice; it is all an imagination; but the mystic hears it, because he has made his outer being silent and has found access to the inner shrine of his soul.

When we begin to live the spiritual life, we touch a deeper note and we cease to judge from the surface. All differences are to be found only on the surface and one who lives constantly on the surface does not see the connecting link between man and man, between one soul and another; but one who has learned to live below the surface sees unity everywhere. He is not dependent on human judgments; he is not influenced by the world. He is wholly guided and protected by the Divine. In all his undertakings he is led by the hand of God. To him God is more real than any creature of flesh and blood. He walks with God; he talks with God; he lives with God. His whole being is centred in God, so that, whether he speaks or does not speak, he expresses the thought of God. He does not

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have to use words to do it. Rather he knows that the Infinite can never find full expression in finite words. Therefore in the Vedas it is said that the glory of the Supreme is beyond mind and speech.

It is the ignorant man who claims loudly that his belief is the only belief, his path the only path; but one whose vision has become expanded through a larger realization grows dumb and his silence is the most eloquent expression of Truth. Let our lips sometimes be dumb that our heart may sing the glory of the Infinite. Let us give our inner being a chance to listen to the voice which is too subtle for the physical ear to hear. If for a few moments only each day we can still the noisy energies of our mind and body and learn to practise true silence, it will create a dynamo of spiritual power and elevate our whole being to the lofty heights of a new consciousness.

Certainly, in our own little sphere, it is not the most active people to whom we owe the most. Among the common people whom we know, it is not necessarily those who are busiest, not those who, meteor-like, are ever on the rush after some visible charge and work. It is the lives, like the stars, which simply pour down on us the calm light of their bright and faithful being, up to which we look and out of which we gather the deepest calm and courage. It seems to me that there is reassurance here for many of us who seem to have no chance for active usefulness. We can do nothing for our fellow-men. But still it is good to know that we can be something for them; to know (and this we may know surely) that no man or woman of the humblest sort can really be strong, gentle, pure, and good, without the world being better for it, without somebody being helped and comforted by the very existence of that goodness.

—*Phillips Brooks.*

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PREPARATIONS FOR HIGHER LIFE

Extract by Swami Vivekananda

The first thing necessary is a quiet and peaceable life. If I have to go about the world the whole day to make a living, it is hard for me to attain to anything very high in this life. Perhaps in another life I shall be born under more propitious circumstances. But if I am earnest enough, these very circumstances will change even in this birth. Was there anything you did not get which you really wanted? It could not be. For it is the want that creates the body. It is the light that has bored the holes, as it were, in your head, called the eyes. If the light had not existed you would have no eyes. It is sound that has made the ears. The object of perception existed first, before you made the organ. In a few hundred thousand years, or earlier, we may have organs to perceive electricity and other things.

There is no desire for a peaceful mind. Desire will not come unless there is something outside to fulfill it. The outside something just bores a hole in the body, as it were, and tries to get into the mind. So, when the desire shall arise to have a peaceful, quiet life, where everything will be propitious for the development of the mind, that will come,—you may take that as my experience. It may come in thousands of lives, but it must come. Hold on to that, the desire. You cannot have the strong desire if its object is not outside for you already. Of course, you must understand, there is a difference in desire and desire. The master said: "My child, if you desire after God, God will come to you." The disciple did not understand his master fully. One day both went to bathe in a river, and the master said, "Plunge in," and the boy did so. In a moment the master was upon him, holding him down. He would not let the boy come up. When the boy struggled and was exhausted, he let him go. "Yes, my child how did you feel

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there?" "Oh, the desire for a breath of air!" "Do you have that kind of desire for God?" "No, sir." "Have that kind of desire for God and you shall have God." That, without which we cannot live, must come to us. If it did not come to us life could not go on.

If you want to be a Yogi, you must be free, and place yourself in circumstances where you are alone and free from all anxiety. He who desires a comfortable and nice life and at the same time wants to realize the Self is like the fool who, wanting to cross the river, caught hold of a crocodile mistaking it for a log of wood. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Unto him comes everything who does not care for anything. Fortune is like a flirt; she cares not for him who wants her; but she is at the feet of him who does not care for her. Money comes and showers itself upon one who does not care for it; so does fame come in abundance, until it is a trouble and a burden. They always come to the master. The slave never gets anything. The master is he who can live in spite of them, whose life does not depend upon the little, foolish things of the world. Live for an ideal, and that one ideal alone. Let it be so great, so strong, that there may be nothing else left in the mind; no place for anything else, no time for anything else.

That is the one great first step,—the real desire for the ideal. Everything comes easy after that. That, the Indian mind found out; there, in India, men go to any length to find truth. But here, in the West, the difficulty is, that everything is made so easy. It is not truth, but development, that is the great aim. The struggle is the great lesson. Mind you, the benefit in this life is struggle. It is through that we pass,—if there is any road to Heaven it is through Hell. Through Hell to Heaven is always the way. When the soul has wrestled with circum-

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stance, and has met death, a thousand times death, on the way but nothing daunted, has struggled forward again and again and yet again,—then the soul comes out as a giant and laughs at the ideal he has been struggling for, because he finds how much greater is he than the ideal. I am the end, my own self, and nothing else, for what is there to compare to my own self. Can a bag of gold be the ideal of my soul? Certainly not! My soul is the highest ideal that I have. Realizing my own real nature is the one goal of my life.

There is nothing that is absolutely evil. Our mistakes have places here. Go on! Do not look back if you think you have done something that is not right. Now, do you believe you could be what you are to-day had you not made those mistakes before? Bless your mistakes, then. They have been angels unawares. Blessed be torture! Blessed be happiness! Do not care what be your lot. Hold on to the ideal! March on! Do not look back upon little mistakes and things! In this battle-field of ours, the dust of mistakes must be raised. Those who are so thin-skinned that they cannot bear the dust, let them get out of the ranks.

So, then, this tremendous determination to struggle, a hundredfold more determination than that which you put forth to gain anything which belongs to this life, is the first great preparation. And then along with it there must be meditation. Meditation is the one thing. Meditate! The greatest thing is meditation. It is the nearest approach to spiritual life—the mind meditating. It is the one moment in our daily life that we are not at all material,—the soul thinking of itself, free from all matter,—this marvellous touch of the Soul!

Seek for the noble Pearl; it is much more precious than this whole world; it will never more depart from you: And where the Pearl is, there will your heart be also: You need not here

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ask any further after Paradise, Joy and the Heavenly Delightfulness; seek but the Pearl, and when you find that, then you find Paradise, and the Kingdom of Heaven, and you will be so taught, as being without it you cannot believe.

Jacob Behmen.

THE LIVING FLAME OF LOVE

By St. John of the Cross

O Living Flame of Love,
That woundest tenderly
My soul in its inmost depth!
As Thou art no longer grievous,
Perfect thy work, if it be Thy will,
Break the web of this sweet encounter.

O sweet burn!
O delicious wound!
O tender hand! O gentle touch!
Savouring of everlasting life,
And paying the whole debt,
By slaying Thou hast changed death into life.

O lamps of fire,
In the splendours of which
The deep caverns of sense,
Dim and dark,
With unwonted brightness
Give light and warmth together to their Beloved!

How gently and how lovingly
Thou wakest in my bosom,
Where alone Thou secretly dwellest;
And in Thy sweet breathing
Full of grace and glory,
How tenderly Thou fillest me with Thy love.

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HOLY SIMPLICITY

By Sister Daya

It is impossible to conceive of holiness apart from simplicity. Throughout the ages the lives of Eastern sage and Western saint have burned with the fires of renunciation. Always the first sign of spiritual awakening has been this desire to strip away every non-essential, to stand naked before God. Modern civilization, based as it is upon the gratification of desire, naturally repudiates renunciation as something which strikes at its very life, and yet in spite of this it has played ever and again with the idea of simplicity. Sermons are preached upon it, little books are written about it till the individual harassed by the endless complexities of life cuts out a luxury here or a necessity there, in sporadic attempts at simple living. The trouble has been that we have no real standard of simplicity. When we strive for it we know not how to begin or where to end, or even what it is that we are seeking. We look upon simplicity as a mode of life, a thing of calculation, something that we can put on or take off. That is why we never achieve it. Our simplicities are relative merely, never final. But there is a final simplicity and it is that which the mystics knew.

Centuries ago in India, Kabir, the rug-weaver sang: "In simplicity I will unite with the Simple One, my love will surge up." God, the Root of all, One without a second,—The Simple One! The heart that unfolds to that One is the simple heart; the mind that meditates upon that One is the simple mind; the life that knows union with that One is the simple life. Such was the Christ-life and the Buddha-life and the life of every Saviour no matter where it has been lived, in what age or in what land or by what name it has been called. Misunderstood by all but the few, it has cruelly suffered at the hands of imitators. Again and again have they dragged its joyous spirit of renunciation down into a harsh asceticism until

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now it is associated in many minds with pain. Especially is this so in the West where the shadow of the crucifixion lies across the mystic way. The truly illumined, having gained the Kingdom need nothing less. Fanatics, misinterpreting this, discard everything in their lives that is lovely or gracious, hoping that by thus giving up the outer they may gain the inner. They mistake barrenness for simplicity and hold themselves in this prison-house by the force of their lower wills. Acting largely from selfish fear or at best from a purely mental concept, they flee the world because they are still its slaves. Strange perversion! When even the faintest glimmering of that one indwelling life brings bliss.

"The embodied," says the Gita, "through the practice of abstinence can deaden the feelings of the senses, but longing still lingers in the heart; all longings drop off when he has seen the Supreme."

The renunciation of the Blessed is but a falling away from their lives of the unreal, a spontaneous turning towards those things which are not bent or twisted by man's will but are fresh from divine creation, as it were. They do not know they have renounced, they only know that they have found. They go singing with glad face and the heart of a child. This is what it means to become as little children. It means that we become children of God, playing with Him in His universe, possessed of all His beauty from the stars to the stones, without being owned or enslaved by anything. The true mystic goes forth as says the French poet of the child, *"Ouvrant sa jeune ame comme une fleur au monde,"*—Opening his young soul like a flower to the world. And yet to blinded eyes he will seem but a homeless wanderer upon the face of earth.

Among the followers of Christ there were great saints but none, perhaps, so radiantly simple as il Poverino, St. Francis of Assisi. His simplicity sprang from its true source and

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therefore it was full of bliss. The lady Poverty with whom he wed was not in rags, she had all nature for her wedding dress. So deep was his sense of Divine Presence that he cherished the dust beneath his feet and worshipped the flames upon the hearth. He sang of "brother sun, sister moon, brother wind, and sister water." He preached sermons to his little brethren the birds and had singing contests with the nightingale.

Once when he and Friar Masseo were travelling through the country, they came to a town and being hungry they took their begging bowls and went each by a different street, meeting later at a beautiful fountain. When Francis saw that Masseo, who was far more beautiful in body than he, had received plentifully where he Francis had received only a few mean scraps he rejoiced exceedingly and said, "O, Friar Masseo we are not worthy of so great treasure," and Friar Masseo said, "O Father, how can you speak of treasure when there is such a great poverty and lack here of everything needful. Here is neither tablecloth nor knife, nor trencher nor porringer, nor house nor table, nor man-servant nor maid-servant." And St. Francis answered: "And this is that which I esteem great treasure, where there is nothing prepared by human industry, but that which there is, is prepared by Divine Providence as may be manifestly seen in the bread which we have begged, in this beautiful table of rock and in this clear spring. Wherefore I pray with my whole heart that He make us to love the so noble treasure of holy poverty which hath God to servitor."

Every race has had its flowers of the spirit; every religion can furnish glorious examples of holiness, but above and beyond them all stands India as the true mother of the soul. Her children draw in the ideal of renunciation with their first breath and they die with the name of God upon their lips. Not oppression or want, or famine or plague has

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been able to shake their allegiance to true poverty. For this reason practically all their heroes are spiritual heroes.

Five hundred years before Christ, Prince Siddartha fled from his pleasure palaces, fled from love and luxury, from pomp and power in search of Truth. He had glimpsed, not God, but the tragic impermanence of human life, and his heart wrung with pity for the world, urged him forth to find the remedy. Not till he attained Nirvana did the Great Peace come to him, the radiant simplicity. As the Lord Buddha he returned home to his royal city of Kapilavastu, clad as a mendicant and carrying a begging bowl. When his father in a fury met him and asked him how the son of a king could so debase himself before his subjects, he replied that it was the custom of his race. "Thy race!" exclaimed his father in amaze. "Thy race counted a hundred thrones from *Maha Sammat* but no deed like this!" "Not of a mortal line, I spake," answered the Blessed One, "but of the race of Buddhas. Of these am I and what They did I do."

In the fifteenth century there swept across the face of India like a fire of love, Lord Gouranga, the Golden One, the Light of Nadia, known sometimes as the Indian Christ and the Indian St. Francis. Beautiful as few have been beautiful, brilliant, honored, the adored of countless hearts, when the madness for God seized him, he forgot everything, food and raiment, friends and comforts, and wandered stript into the wilderness at the call of the Beloved. His mere word or touch sufficed to raise a soul to the ecstacy of vision. Thousands were eager to lay their all before his holy feet, and yet when one who had been his wife, Vishnuprya, came to him and begged her share in the blessing in the shape of some little thing of his to treasure, he said: "But you see I have nothing," and she replied: "Lord, there are your sandals," and he gave them to her and she put them upon her head and worshipped them.

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Simplicity, true simplicity is a state of consciousness, not a mode of life, but few there are who can live in the midst of luxury untouched. Only to the extent that our soul is free can we do it and with most of us sooner or later, the world will enter and take possession of our soul.

"It is not life and wealth and power that enslave men" said the Buddha, "but the cleaving to life and wealth and power." It is our desires which involve us in the complex, binding us by a thousand chains of hope to the petty and the personal, the easy and the pleasurable. Not till all our desires are fused in one desire, not till all our longings are lost in one mad longing, not till our whole being flows in one undivided stream towards God, will the confusion of life fall away from us and we shall renounce not so much the things of the world as the valuation which men put upon those things.

Till then can there be no simplicity for us? We are not Saviours; we have not had the great vision; we even cling to what binds us; how then may we find peace? We can find it through the gift of ourself. The Simple One dwells always within us but our realization of His Presence will be only in proportion to our consecration. Consecration makes the heart single, and the mind one-pointed and the body full of light. It leaves no room for multitudinous desires, for all the griefs and hates and heart-aches and envies which follow in their train. There never was a great life that was not a consecrated life, never a consecrated life that was not simple. God-consecration is the supreme consecration and brings the supreme peace, but if there are some for whom that is as yet too vast, then let them fasten the forces of their being with utter devotion to some ideal. Surrender to the highest we know even though it be not the highest there is, will bring us glimpses of reality and a truer sense of values. Not until we have found something for which we are ready to die do we truly begin to

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live. We must be utterly sincere; we must be steadfast, otherwise the voices of the world will call us back. We must not hear them even, be we poet or painter, musician or scientist, or the seeker after God.

Of the poet, Emerson writes, that he must abdicate the complex life, must be content to be thought the fool and the simple one by all but a few who love and understand; "And this," says he, "shall be thy reward, the ideal shall be real to thee; and the impressions of the actual world shall fall like summer rain, copious but not troublesome to thy invulnerable essence. Thou shalt have the whole land for thy park and manor, the sea for thy bath and navigation without tax and without envy. The woods and the rivers thou shalt own, and thou shalt possess that wherein others are only tenants and boarders. Thou true landlord! Sealord! Skylord!"

All real artists know this lordship. We may possess beauty but we cannot grasp it, for it is the garment of the Simple One, the Seamless Robe of God. Simplicity is the law of its being, the restraining power without which we would have a confusion of lights, colors and sounds, purposeless and undirected as are the vagaries of an insane mind.

In statuary it is the simple mass which is the sculptor's first concern, he sees it as a whole and adds his details later. The promise of great paintings is contained in the few bold lines of the original sketches. And as with painting and sculpture, so with music. It is the single theme, the motif, which binds together the vagrant notes into a mighty symphony.

The dedicated lives of countless scientists is bringing material science itself close to the basic simplicity of God. More and more is science seeking out ultimate substance and is looking for the final secret not in the many but in the one.

The great Simplifier is at work even in the camps of complexity. What is order and system in business but a form of

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simplifying, a doing away with non-essentials? It is this which makes greater efficiency possible. Advertisers are proving the psychological appeal of simplicity. The complex could not exist were it entirely complex. It cannot draw itself utterly away from the Simple One and live.

We hear much of reform in education. We read of new methods of sense development of moral and mental discipline, but if we could give to the child through mystic suggestion a growing sense of the fundamental unity of life so that he could recognize the one Self shining at him from every pair of eyes, we would be doing more for him than all the schools and the systems. But the world does not as yet know this. It does not know that before unity can reflect itself in human relations it must be experienced as reality in the human heart and that without this inner realization brotherhood is but an empty word.

As all this is borne in upon our souls, we are amazed to see how close to us is the Simple One, how His hand is upon everything. There is nothing in this world or out of it that does not draw its being from Him. He is reflected in every drop of dew, in every shining atom. That is why if we succeed in penetrating to the infinite nature of anything, we touch Divinity. There is but one Teacher, one Saviour, one Poet, one Artist. There is no illusion that does not owe its glamour to Him, no reality that does not owe its truth to Him. He is "The Silence of secrets;" He is "The Wisdom of the wise." He binds and He makes free.

Why then should we fear to fasten our heart to Him Who is so eternally present? If desires blind our eyes let us worship Him in our desires. Does He not beckon us from every side? What life have we ourselves apart from Him? How can we forget Him even for a moment?

When such remembrance comes, when such surrender, the

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Simple One Himself will break our chains, it is His promise: "I am the Origin of all, everything evolves from Me. Knowing this the wise worship Me with loving ecstacy. To these ever steadfast devotees, I give that Yoga of wisdom by which they come unto Me. Out of pure compassion for them I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy the darkness born of ignorance, by the effulgent light of wisdom.

NATURE OF TRUE PRAYER

By Girolamo Savonarola

He who prays to God ought to address Him as if He were present, for He is everywhere, in every place, in every man, and especially in the souls of the just. Seek Him not therefore on the earth, or in heaven, or elsewhere—seek for Him in your own hearts; do as did the prophet who says, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak." In prayer, a man may be attending to the words, and this is a thing of a wholly material nature; he may be attending to the sense of the words, and this is rather study than prayer; and lastly, his whole thoughts may be directed to God, and this alone is true prayer. It is unnecessary to be considering either sentences or language,—the mind must be elevated above self, and must be wholly absorbed in the thought of God. Arrived at this state, the true believer forgets the world and its wants, he has attained almost a foreshadow of celestial happiness. To this state of elevation the ignorant may arrive as easily as the learned. It even frequently happens that he who repeats a psalm without understanding its words utters a much more holy prayer than the learned man who can explain its meaning. Words in fact are not indispensable to an act of prayer; when a man is truly rapt in the spirit, an uttered prayer becomes rather an impediment, and ought to yield to that which is wholly mental. Thus it will be seen how great a mistake

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those commit who prescribe a fixed number of prayers. God does not delight in a multitude of words, but in a fervent spirit.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

Excerpt of Address by Swami Paramananda

(Delivered at Commemorative Birthday Service)

It is said in India that when the lotus blossoms it no longer needs to invite the bees, they come of their own accord and partake of its sweetness. The life of Sri Ramakrishna was like that. It was gentle, it was not filled with adventure or with incidents which we call great and glorious; it was more like the perfume of a flower, but it drew to him people from all over the world, and even the most learned were like little children when they came before him.

Some of you, perhaps, do not know very much about Sri Ramakrishna. He was born of humble parentage; his education amounted to almost nothing, that is his secular education, but right from the beginning he had a yearning to gain something higher, more satisfying, from a source that could not be questioned.

He entered the life of the priesthood and as he went through the outer forms of worship a madness seized him to know for himself the truth of what lay behind them, to have absolute contact with God. In his searching he became utterly forgetful of his own physical life, he suffered and he strove, but he came out victorious with this tremendous vision: that there is but one Deity. Men conceive Him differently, worship Him differently, but He is the final goal of every path. Because of this realization he was able to meet all men on their own ground, to see the self-same ideal manifesting through all. This idea of universal tolerance is not new. I do not think any of the great teachers or saviours bring anything new.

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They bring a fulfillment of the old. In Vedic conception we find it again and again repeated that there is but one God, one Deity, and all the different ideals are manifestations of that One. But Sri Ramakrishna became a living interpretation of it. He realized it and constantly lived it. His teaching is so simple that even a child can understand it; it is like a fresh spring just bubbling with new life.

India is noted for cults and sects and the people from many different sects came to Sri Ramakrishna. There was always welcome in his heart for every truth-seeker. Even Mohammedans came and thought he was one of their prophets. Christians and members of the Brahmo-Samaj gathered around him and remained spellbound in his presence. One of the Brahmo leaders said that all he had read about Jesus of Nazareth, of Buddha, of Lord Gouranga, and of the other great saints, he saw fulfilled in the life of this simple, aspiring devotee. But Sri Ramakrishna would not accept any worship. He always shrank from any show of reverence towards him, because his attitude was that God was all, he was nothing but a mouth-piece. He never regarded himself as a grown-up person. He called his Deity Divine Mother and he was always Her little child. Whatever he said, whatever act he performed, he would always first have communion with Her.

In the Occident you observe the birthdays of your political leaders, your war heroes. In India they observe the birthdays of their spiritual heroes no matter how humble these were in the worldly sense. In the same way Sri Ramakrishna's birth-day has become a sacred day. Because he did not believe in caste or creed, when his birthday is celebrated at the head monastery of the Ramakrishna Mission on the banks of the Ganges, nearly fifty thousand people of all creeds and castes and nationalities gather there to do him homage. There is no special ceremony, but all day long a spontaneous outburst of

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feeling. People form in groups and sing their devotional songs; they bring portraits of this great prophet and make other demonstrations. Then they are all fed. In India feeding a lot of people is a gigantic undertaking because of their caste feeling, but here it melts away before the gentle power of this wonderful character. Countless poor are fed on this day throughout India. Help is given to the helpless, and all this is done with humble spirit of service, for the devotees feel that when they render service to the destitute and suffering children of God, they pay their highest tribute to Sri Ramakrishna, who was an embodiment of love and humility. Service is the dominating spirit of the Ramakrishna Mission, and out of this spirit have grown many and varied activities quite different from what we understand by charitable institutions. *Seva Ashramas,* they are called, or Homes of Service. I think it is a very much sweeter name than hospitals and dispensaries. Homes of Service, where thousands and thousands of people are helped every year. If they are sick, they are given medical help; if they are homeless, they are given a home. Wherever there is famine or fire or flood, always Mission workers go and give voluntary aid. Sri Ramakrishna considered himself the servant of all and his followers, inspired by his lofty example, freely give themselves, because they love, because they see God under every form and serve Him in the form of the lowly, in the form of the poor, in the form of the helpless.

Thus we see how one who really manifests the spirit of God can live in a remote village or even in a mountain cave and become a beneficent power not only for his own community, but for humanity. That is the sum total of the blessing we find in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. He came gently, he lived humbly but he has left behind him a mighty influence for love, for tolerance, and for universality.

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REPORT

During the month of March Swami Paramananda again responded to lecture calls from the middle west. He left Boston on the 5th of March for Cincinnati and spoke there on the night of the 6th before a large and appreciative audience. The following morning, Tuesday, he held a class at the Hotel Gibson, and that same evening gave an address at Dayton, Ohio, for the Dayton Club of Practical Psychology. On Wednesday morning, the 8th, he conducted a study class at the New Thought Temple. In the evening eight hundred people gathered to hear him in the Auditorium of the Chamber of Commerce in Columbus, Ohio. This resulted in a series of interviews the next day, lasting without intermission from 9 a. m. to 6 p. m., and leaving the Swami just time to prepare for a public lecture at 7:45 that night. This concluded his first tour.

The 19th saw the Swami Paramananda once more on his way, this time for Memphis, Tennessee, stopping en route, however, at Cincinnati, where on the night of the 20th he addressed a large meeting at the Unity Centre Auditorium, and on the afternoon of the 21st gave a practical class lesson to about seventy-five students. On the 22nd he reached Memphis and that night spoke at the Goodwin Institute on "The Conquest of Fear" to an audience of about one thousand. Thursday morning, March 23rd, at eleven, there was a study class conducted by the Swami at the Hotel Gayoso. "Concentration and Right Thinking" was his subject for the evening when another large public meeting was held at the Goodwin Institute. He had still two more meetings in Memphis and eight engagements to fill in other cities when he was called home by an unexpected development at the Boston Centre. It was with the deepest regret that the Swami was forced to cancel his obligations and disappoint those who had gone to

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much trouble and expense in preparation for his coming. He hopes at some future time to be able to make it up to them.

In addition to these two tours, the Swami accepted an invitation from the Applied Psychology Club of Providence, Rhode Island, to speak there on March 14th. The meeting was held at the Church of the Mediator, and there were about eight hundred people present. Providence being only a short run from Boston, the Swami was able to go and return the same evening.

On the 26th of February, at the request of Dr. Wm. Norman Guthrie, the Swami Paramananda spoke in New York City at St. Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie. His subject was "Sri Ramakrishna, Prophet of Universal Tolerance," and the occasion, a religious celebration in honor of India. As the Swami's visits to New York are rather infrequent, this gave him a chance to renew his connection with many old friends.

* * * *

During Swami Paramananda's last trip to New York he had the pleasure of visiting the new home of the Vedanta Society there. The New York Society was one of the first works established in this country by Swami Vivekananda. Its work for the last several years has been carried on in rented quarters, but through the earnest and steadfast efforts of Swami Bodhananda, the present head of the Society, it has now secured a permanent home. This will undoubtedly prove a great impetus to the Vedanta work in New York.

* * * *

The Vedanta Society of San Francisco has just published an attractive booklet, "The Inner Consciousness, How to Awaken and Direct It," by Swami Prakashananda. It is written clearly and simply, an excellent little book which puts a big subject within the mental grasp of the ordinary reader. It is now many years since the establishment of the San Francisco Society. Its growth has been steady, and under Swami Prakashananda's wise guidance it is not only extending the influence of Vedanta, but is ever becoming more firmly rooted in the hearts of its members.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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THE REDEEMING POWER OF LOVE

Love is not a theory, or a speculation, nor is it a form of study or investigation. It is the supreme feeling of the human heart made divine by its radiance. Love is all. It permeates all things. When we unite ourselves with the spirit of love, we include all that we can think of and that we are incapable of thinking, for it is the greatest force in cosmic life and universe. It is life itself; it flows through all, unites all, expressing through the highest and the lowest. Its impelling power is greater than any power the human mind has ever conceived. It heals all our inharmonies and ailments. It gives our mind freedom without which it can have neither happiness, peace nor repose.

Let us think of every one our mind can encompass with a heart full of love, compassion and tenderness, and feel the greatness of Divinity manifesting through all living beings. Let us abandon selfishness and pride for they are detriments to the expression of true love. They make us narrow. They make us bound. They make us forfeit our right to Divinity and partake of what is vulgar and material.

Let us strive with inward fervor and strength of will to free ourselves from the bonds of egotism and selfishness that we may taste at least in some measure the nectar of love, which is the Supreme Himself. In this realization we are made whole and made one with Him from Whom we have descended.

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THE VALUE OF FOOD IN SPIRITUAL UNFOLDMENT

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

The value of food is not limited merely to our physical well-being. It is true that food builds up our body and strengthens our muscles, but also at the same time it produces in us certain definite characteristics. If we are keen enough to analyze different human beings, their stature, countenance, expression and general disposition and relate these to their habits of life, especially their mode of eating, we shall be astonished to find what a vital part food plays in their destiny. In the Upanishad it is declared, "All creatures are produced from food; they live by food and in the end they return to food." Of course this implies only the physical constitution of man, but we naturally have to deal first with the physical before we can find our access into spiritual realities.

Our body is the most immediate and imminent reality to us at the present time and in order to make this vehicle efficient, healthful and fitting for our spiritual advancement, we must take utmost care of everything which contributes towards its well-being. The primary object in partaking of food is to draw nourishment to sustain our physical body and our nervous system, and to quicken our thinking faculty. In order to accomplish this effectively we must use discernment, for every kind of food has not the power to bring this about. Therefore we must necessarily discriminate carefully in regard to what we eat. Food has the power to produce in us distinct qualities. According to Indo-Aryan conception, our bodies are composed of three different elements which they call the *Gunas* or qualities: *Sattwa,* the quality of fineness, lightness and intelligence; *Rajas,* that which gives rise to ambition and excessive zeal; and *Tamas* which overpowers one with lethargy, inertia, indiscrimination and ignorance. We all have these qualities in varying proportion. They prevail in us making us feel some-

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times dull, sometimes restless and then again full of peace. Because of this also we see such great variety in human temperament.

In the Gita, Sri Krishna gives a very definite description of the three types of people in whom these three *Gunas* or qualities are dominant and shows how they even crave different kinds of food, for foods are also of three-fold nature and are liked by each of these according to the *Guna* which predominates. Likewise they have a tendency to produce similar effect in those who partake of them. "The foods," says the Gita, "which increase life-force, energy, strength, health, joy and cheerfulness, and which are savory, soothing, substantial and agreeable, are liked by the *Sattwica* nature. The *Rajasica* nature likes foods which are bitter, sour, saline, overhot, pungent, dry, burning, and which produce pain, grief and disease. That which is stale, insipid, putrid, cooked over night, even leavings or unclean food is liked by the *Tamasica* nature." We can sum up the idea of these three qualities in our modern and more accustomed language as matter, energy, and intelligence. The Sanskrit word *Tamas* is typical of dense matter and is identified with heaviness and flesh; *Rajas* typifies energy and action, often lacking in proper sense of moderation, resulting in restlessness and uncontrolled passions, while *Sattwa* represents higher intelligence and spiritual attributes of gentleness, self-control, poise and wisdom.

In India the first marked change in a man when he takes up the spiritual life is a complete readjustment in his outer mode of living because he cannot expect to have a higher power of perception until he has purified his bodily instrument. Nothing plays so great a part towards this end as diet. In one of the Upanishads it is proclaimed: "Through pure food *Sattwa* element becomes purified." The idea of pure food, however, varies among different peoples. According to Indian

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Scriptures there are three causes which make food impure: *Jati-dosha,* inherently impure, such as onion, garlic, red meat and all forms of gross food which produce *Tamas*—heaviness and inertia in the system; *Nimitta-dosha,* impurity caused by presence of alien objects such as dirt, hair, insects, etc. Through the presence of such objects the food becomes unclean and unsuitable for eating. The third defect arises through evil contact. This is called *Ashraya-dosha,* when touched by wicked persons, or when food is cooked by an unclean and impure hand. It is comparatively easy to avoid the first two, but the third one is difficult to control. How can we be responsible for our cook's evil temper and bad habits? It is true that this is a very difficult problem, but perhaps by making ourselves more spiritual and gentle we can set a higher standard and eventually reform the cook.

These are, however, more or less technical ideas of food. The most important and spiritual idea that saturates almost all religious scriptures of the world, especially those of India, is of non-killing. "Cause injury to none." This of course includes not only humanity, but all forms of life. From the early dawn of the Vedic revelation to the more modern scriptures of India, everywhere it is given with dynamic insistence, "one who desires to attain beatitude let him abstain from animal food," for no cruel person can ever attain a high degree of refinement, either physically or morally. We must remember the question of food is not merely what we throw into our system, but the effect it produces. Through our own keen observation, we know that certain kinds of food and drink produce heaviness in us. After partaking of such things we feel unfit in a short time either for any energetic physical activity or for clear thinking. Then again there are things which create restlessness of both body and mind, because certain foods contain elements which can heat our blood and disorganize our whole

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nervous system. Then there is a kind of food which is by quality energizing, and at the same time soothing, producing a lightness of feeling in the body and invigorating our mental faculties. Although we may find a distinct type of food which has marked value, yet without proper discrimination and sense of moderation we can easily produce ill effect even from the finest regime, and this is often seen in the case of over-zealous, hasty adaptation of vegetarianism.

To-day the superior merit of non-meat diet is almost conclusively proved by eminent dieticians and men of science. My feeling is that we derive a great deal of benefit in regard to diet through other people's observations and their suggestions, but we must always apply these principles according to our individual need because it is almost impossible to have any set rule of diet for the entire humanity. In the first place people are not all constituted alike, and in the second place the climates, environments and occupations have a great deal to do with our physical need. Therefore, we have to use our common sense even when we are applying the most elevating ideal of non-meat-eating. I never advise any one to make a radical change in diet. For instance, people who all their life have been used to flesh food in a large measure should not give it up suddenly, but should by degrees reduce it and also find proper substitute for it.

Many meat-eaters have the notion that if they give up their accustomed habit, they cannot find proper nourishment any other way. This is an erroneous idea because grains, nuts, fruits and vegetables contain just as much nutriment, only perhaps they do not possess as much stimulus. Dr. Haig, one of the great authorities on diet, says: "It follows, also, that quite an exaggerated and erroneous estimate has been formed of the power of meat to produce force, because its stimulating effect has been mistaken for power and the depression which follows

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has either been overlooked or later has been counteracted by alcohol, tobacco, and other more harmful stimulants; but the man who gets his albumen from a less stimulating source, having no early stimulation has also not subsequent depression, and so probably never feels the want of any alcohol at all. Hence it comes about that those who take alcohol or tobacco on a flesh diet, generally very soon give it up when they give up flesh, having no craving for any stimulant." Diet is in great measure a question of habit. An average person becomes a slave to his habit and shrinks from any change.

The idea of abstaining from meat-eating was not only prevalent among the Hindus and Buddhists, but it was strongly advocated by the ancient Greek philosophers, such as Pythagoras, Plato, etc. Pythagoras laid great emphasis on pure and abstemious diet, and it is supposed that he gathered his inspiration largely as he came in contact with the Oriental nations and their culture. Apart from all religious sentiment the great virtue of non-meat diet is effectively demonstrated by some of the recent scientific experiments, putting people under different regimes, such as strictly meat diet, meat and vegetable diet, and purely vegetable diet; and in all athletic contests such as running, walking, etc., the non-meat-eaters have always proved their greater endurance and ability.

It is not true that we cannot have adequate strength unless we partake of animal food, because some of the strongest people are among the vegetarians. Indian Sikh soldiers are a glowing example of this—stalwart and possessing remarkable physical strength, valor and endurance. We also read in Rollins' Ancient History: "In the most heroic days of the Grecian army, their food was the plain and simple produce of the soil. The immortal Spartans of Thermopylae were, from infancy, nourished by the plainest and coarsest vegetable aliment; and the Roman army in the period of their greatest valor

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and most gigantic achievements subsisted on plain and coarse vegetable food. When the public games of ancient Greece—for the exercise of muscular power and activity in wrestling, boxing, running, etc.,—were first instituted, the athletae, in accordance with the common dietetic habits of the people, were trained entirely on vegetable food."

Another important factor in non-meat diet is the agility and flexibility that are produced in the body. Sometime ago a very interesting article appeared in regard to the mode of living of the Russian dancers who created such wide-spread sensation by their remarkable agility and suppleness, and it was found that they were all without any exception strict vegetarians. Indian Yogis who observe rigid diet, subsisting mostly on roots and fruits, sometimes even renouncing all cooked food, acquire superhuman power of mastery over flesh, proving their endurance in heat and cold and absolute control over all physical propensities and appetites.

Prof. Wiener of Harvard University tells us that "looking at vegetarianism in the light of comparative anatomy, it is self-evident that man was designed to be a vegetarian and nothing else. Quadrupeds are divided into classes according to their foods and with the single exception of man, no animal as a class has ever varied from the design of nature. These classes are: the carnivorous, or flesh-eating, the fruit-eating, the grass-eating, and the omnivorous. Each of these classes has distinctive organs adaptable to the digestion of the kinds of food it eats and to no other kinds. Man has artificially become an omnivorous animal in spite of the fact that anatomically he is a fruit-eating animal." One of the most obvious facts in regard to this is that the teeth of the flesh-eating animals are fashioned very differently from ours and frugivorous creatures. History shows that non-meat-eaters are as a rule peace loving people because they are finely organized physi-

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cally, and have different mental caliber. Food has the power to produce these effects among nations. People who live mostly on flesh food are more susceptible to violent emotions such as jealousy, anger and hatred. This is noticeable even among animals. You may go to a menagerie and verify this fact. Tigers, wolves and hyenas which are fed exclusively on meat and blood, see how restless they are,—nervous and ferocious, creating most unquiet atmosphere about them and emitting a very foul odor. Then you may watch the elephant. He is an herbivorous animal, yet he excells others in strength and intelligence and is always gentle and calm.

It is strange that the majority of people who are so easily upset at the sight of blood and mangled flesh never stop to think that the meat they eat is directly connected with such unpleasantness. For instance every one shrinks from a butcher because he is regarded as unclean and cruel and yet when it comes to non-meat-eating, people are prejudiced against it. I have known cases where these unpleasant phases shocked their aesthetic sense so violently that they were cured of their hankering for meat. Once we were passing by a slaughter-house and the foul odor which emanated from it was so strong that we all enquired of each other wherefrom it was coming. When we discovered the cause of it a little child who was with us asked what the slaughter-house was for and when she found out that animals were killed there and that beef was animal, she was so horrified and saddened by it that she refused to eat meat again.

I do not hold that unless one becomes a complete vegetarian there is no salvation. If that were so, certain grass-eating animals would surpass us. There are people who live a very austere life, refraining from meat and all other forms of physical indulgence, and yet who exhibit feelings of arrogance, conceit and hatefulness towards others, especially those who do

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not follow their rule of living. If through pure diet we fail to develop gentler feelings for our fellow-beings, we have missed the aim of non-killing, and are attaching more importance to the merely mechanical side of diet than to kindness, lovingness, tolerance and compassion. Even a lofty ideal can thus be dragged down by those who follow only its outer form.

It is most unfortunate that when children refuse to partake of flesh food, because it is repulsive to them, parents should force them to eat such things, thereby destroying their finer faculties. This is often done with good intention because parents worry for fear their children may be under-nourished, but they never consider the matter from a higher and more spiritual point of view. A child does not refuse certain foods without proper reason, and if only we are able to handle the situation with delicacy of feeling and greater wisdom, it would give the inherent nature a chance to manifest a higher type of manhood and womanhood.

Once a prominent clergyman told me that he was a vegetarian not for any religious or ethical reason, but because he found that without meat his mind worked better. Often people say they cannot think, they feel so heavy and dull and the mind does not work. Nine times out of ten this is caused by over-eating quite as much as by wrong diet. Greed takes the upper hand, and what is the result. We take in more than our system can assimilate and then we suffer. The result may not come at once, but ultimately we suffer both physically and spiritually, for greed is a great barrier to higher attainment. The main object of food is to make the body stronger, but if we take too much of even the most nourishing food, it weakens us and draws on our reserve force. People suffer not nearly so much from under-eating, as they do from over-eating. Nourishment is not a question of quantity, but of choosing the food which our system can most quickly and completely assimilate.

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There is no written book that can control our appetite. Our greed and gluttony no one can check. We must always avoid both over-eating and under-eating. Our own system must be the judge and by degrees we must learn to develop this sense of just proportion. There is an excellent saying in India,—"Eat according to your own taste and dress according to the taste of others." If you do not dress according to other people's liking, you may make a caricature of yourself, but in eating you cannot follow somebody else's view because no one knows either your appetite or your capacity. But this is certain that if we can avoid over-eating, our body will feel light, our mind will feel light, and all our faculties will be at their best.

The idea of the consecration of food also plays a very vital part in the upbuilding of our spiritual nature, because this body is the holy temple of God, and only that which is suitable to God should be offered unto it. This is not an old-fashioned sanctimonious idea, but it contains a very deep spiritual principle, for when we eat food without the sense of consecration, merely to gratify our physical appetite, it will produce a very different effect than when we take it with a sense of dedication. In the Bhagavad-Gita, Sri Krishna gives this warning: "He who enjoys the objects given by the gods, without first offering to them, he is indeed a thief. The righteous, eating the remnants of *Yajna* (spiritual sacrifice) become free from all sins, but the unrighteous, who cook for themselves, eat sin and live in sensuality." Does not the Supreme Being bestow on us all our blessings? Why should we not then show our sense of recognition and humble gratitude? These ideals form the basis of all spiritual observances, such as asking a blessing, saying grace or prayer. The custom of fasting and prayer which exists in many of the religions is not without a just cause. It is good for us to fast once in a while even from the physical

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standpoint, because it is most cleansing. It absolutely washes out the interior and then we enjoy our food more and assimilate it better. But if we add prayer and meditation to it we naturally obtain greater benefit.

Some people are interested in vegetarian diet purely for the upbuilding of health, and that is an excellent hypothesis because as we become healthier physically, our inner faculties have greater opportunity for quickening and we have much better chance for spiritual advancement. If we carefully avoid all eccentricities and going to extremes, we can derive great benefit through wholesome diet, for clean food produces purity of body and mind, and through purified body and mind the power of Truth shines forth unceasingly.

Harmlessness as the first flower; restraint of the wandering senses as a flower; compassion for all beings as a flower; forbearance or forgiveness as a most special flower; knowledge or wisdom unto salvation as a flower; penance or self-restraint as a flower; meditation as a flower; and truthfulness as a flower; these eight as flowers shall prove acceptable to the Omnipresent.—Prapanna Parijata.

Who knows if love and its beatitude, clear manifestation as it is of the universal harmony of things, is not the best demonstration of a fatherly and understanding God, just as it is the shortest road by which to reach Him? Love is a faith, and one faith leads to another. And this faith is happiness, light, and force. Only by it does a man enter into the series of the living, the awakened, the happy, the redeemed,—of those true men who know the value of existence and who labour for the glory of God and of the Truth. Perhaps it is through love that I shall find my way back to faith, to religion, to energy,

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to concentration. . . . Believe, then, in a fatherly Providence and dare to love.—Amiel.

MERIT OF NON-INJURY

Laws of Manu

He who injures animals that are not injurious from a wish to give himself pleasure, adds nothing to his own happiness, living or dead.

While he who gives no creature willingly the pain of confinement or death, but seeks the good of all sentient beings, enjoys bliss without end.

He who injures no animated creature, shall attain without hardship whatever he thinks of, whatever he strives for, whatever he fixes his mind on.

Flesh-meat cannot be procured without injury to animals and the slaughter of animals obstructs the path to beatitude; from flesh-meat, therefore, let man abstain.

Attentively considering the formation of bodies and the death or confinement of embodied spirits, let him abstain from eating flesh-meat of any kind.

The man who forsakes not the law and eats not flesh-meat like a blood-thirsty demon, shall attain good-will in this world and shall not be afflicted with maladies.

He who consents to the death of an animal; he who kills it; he who dissects it; he who buys it; he who sells it; he who dresses it; he who serves it up; and he who makes it his food; these are eight principles in the slaughter.

Not a mortal exists more sinful than he who, without an oblation to the manes or the gods, desires to enlarge his own flesh with the flesh of another creature.

By subsisting on pure fruit and on roots, and by eating such grains as are eaten by hermits, a man reaps not so high a reward as by carefully abstaining from animal food.

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PYTHAGORAS AND PYTHAGOREAN DISCIPLINE

By Sister Daya

Self-discipline is the basis for achievement. Body, mind, heart,—all must be tuned up if a man is to manifest something more than the ordinary in any walk of life. And if this is true in secular occupation, it is preeminently true in spiritual endeavour where the whole human instrument has to be sublimated and prepared to receive and handle the infinitely subtle forces of the spirit. Because of this, spiritual aspirants everywhere have always approached the mysteries of God by the path of self-discipline. The heart of this discipline is never contained in a formula, but there are certain fundamental requirements which may be recorded and it is just such a record as this that has been handed down to us from the school of Pythagoras at Crotona in Italy. Our chief testimony as to the life and work of Pythagoras comes from Diogenes Laertius, Iamblicus and Porphyry. M. Dacier, a Frenchman, gives us the essence of these writings in a quaint little volume published in the early part of the 18th century. The extracts which I will quote are from him and from Iamblicus.

Towards the XLVII Olympiad or about the year 570 B. C., a merchant from the Island of Samos, Mnemarchus by name, "a few days after his marriage, went with his wife to Delphos, there to sell some goods during the feast; for he was a graver by trade and dealt in rings and other trinkets. During his stay there, he received an oracle from Apollo, who told him that if he embarked for Syria the voyage would be very pleasant and fortunate to him, and that his wife would there bring forth a son who should be renowned for beauty and wisdom, and whose life would be useful to all posterity. After so plain an oracle, Mnemarchus failed not to go into Syria. But first he changed the name of his wife, and instead of Parthenis, called her Pythais, in remembrance of this oracle of Apollo,

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who was surnamed *the Pythian.* At Sidon, Parthenis or Pythais, was brought to bed of a son, who was called Pythagoras because he had been foretold by this oracle of Apollo. Mnemarchus being come back to Samos, expended the greatest part of the money he had got in his voyage, in building a temple to Apollo, and took care to breed up his son answerably to the great hopes he had conceived of him."

Even as a youth, we are told, the young Pythagoras was god-like in nature and in appearance so that he was "reverenced by the multitude as one under the influence of divine inspiration." His fame spread abroad to neighboring cities and everywhere he was celebrated as the *long-haired Samian.* The most illustrious of philosophers gave him welcome, men such as Thales at Miletus, and Bias at Priene, so that he could even then have announced himself as a philosopher and teacher, had he so desired. But nearly forty years of preparation still lay ahead of him and it was not till his fifty-sixth year that he felt himself ready to take up his great work. In that long interval he travelled extensively, delving into the sacred mysteries of many peoples.

Under Thales he learned among other things the art of conservation of time and "for the sake of this," writes Iamblicus, "he entirely abstained from wine and animal food, and still prior to these from voracity, and confined himself to such nutriment as was slender and easy of digestion. In consequence of this, his sleep was short, his soul vigilant and pure, and his body confirmed in a state of perfect and invariable health." Having been urged by Thales to go to Egypt, he embarked from Phoenicia on a chance ship that touched its coasts and it is written of him that he remained silent during the entire voyage and for two nights and three days sat in the same unmoved state without food or drink or sleep. The sailors who had plotted to seize him and sell him as a slave were completely

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conquered by his deific appearance and actions so that "they concluded that a divine daemon had in reality passed over with them from Syria into Egypt. Hence speaking both to Pythagoras and to each other with greater decorum and gentleness than before they . . . . at length happily landed on the Egyptian coast."

For twenty-two years he remained in Egypt where he underwent without flinching the terrific disciplines with which the Egyptian priests jealously guarded their secrets, "and was initiated, not in a superficial or casual manner, in all the mysteries of the gods." He was finally brought by the soldiers of Cambyses as a captive to Babylon where he had opportunity to study under the Magi and perfect himself in mathematics, music and other disciplines. After twelve years with them he returned home to the island of Samos. His own people received him with reverence but did not respond to his philosophic instruction as they should, and because of this and other considerations, he left Greece and went into Italy, ultimately arriving at the noble city of Crotona where he soon had a following of at least six hundred philosopher disciples and thousands of other disciples known as auditors or *acusmatici.*

All of these associated under him in a community which for its magnitude resembled a city and was known as Magna Graecia. There they dwelt together in unbroken concord, owning everything in common, and receiving laws and mandates from Pythagoras as they would receive them from a god. Indeed he was considered by many to be Apollo himself and it is recorded of him that he could subdue even wild animals by his voice for it is said that he "detained the Daunian bear which had most severely injured the inhabitants, and that having gently stroked it with his hand for a long time, fed it with maize and acorns, and compelled it by an oath no longer to touch any living thing." He ordained that his disciples should

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show justice not only to men but to animals, especially those of similar nature to themselves and "commanded them to consider these as their familiars and friends, so as neither to injure, nor slay, nor eat any one of them." Savage animals he corrected and instructed through words and deeds rather than by punishment.

But not merely for the sake of mercy and justice did Pythagoras forbid certain meats to his disciples. "Each kind of food that is introduced into the body, becomes the cause of a certain peculiar disposition. Hence it requires great wisdom to be able to know and perceive what kind and what quantity of food ought to be used." For this reason not only was almost all animal food prohibited, but also those foods calculated to produce intemperance and mental sluggishness. He held that "nutriment greatly contributes to the best discipline, when it is properly used and in an orderly manner. Universally, therefore, he rejected all such food as is flatulant and the cause of perturbation, but he approved of the nutriment contrary to this. Hence likewise he thought that millet was a plant adapted to nutrition. But he altogether rejected such food as is foreign to the gods; because it withdraws us from familiarity with the gods. He likewise exhorted them to abstain from such things as are an impediment to prophecy, or to the habit of temperance or of virtue. And lastly he rejected all such things as are adverse to sanctity, and which obscure and disturb the other purities of the soul."

It was the effort of the Pythagoreans to keep their bodies always in the same condition and without variation as regards weight. "In a similar manner also with respect to the mind they were careful that they might not be at one time cheerful, and at another sad, but that they might be mildly joyful with uniformity. . . . . If at any time they were in a rage or oppressed with sorrow or anything else of this kind, they sepa-

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rated themselves from the rest of their associates, and each by himself alone, endeavoured to digest and heal the passion. This also is said of the Pythagoreans, that no one of them when angry, either punished a servant or admonished a free man, but each of them waited till his mind was restored to its former tranquil condition. They accomplished this waiting by employing silence and quiet."

By means of music Pythagoras was wont to heal the body and to banish unclean passions of the soul. He used appropriate melodies to turn aside anger, envy, jealousy, hate and to induce that gentleness and elegance of manner for which the Pythagoreans were noted. "When his disciples were retiring to sleep," writes Iamblicus, "he purified the reasoning power from the perturbations of the day by certain odes and peculiar songs and thus procured for them tranquil sleep and few and good dreams. When they rose from bed he again liberated them from the torpor and heaviness of sleep by songs of another kind." They always arose before sunrise and after arranging their beds in an immaculate manner were not supposed to lie down upon them again during the day. Sleep at noon was especially prohibited.

After arising "they walked alone in secluded and charming spots where there were temples and groves," for Pythagoras held that "there was nothing more prejudicial to the tranquillity of the soul than to go early in the morning into company, and plunge one's self into the hurry of affairs, e'er by the help of music, or meditation and of prayer, we have calmed and composed our mind, and brought it into the state and harmony that is most becoming and most worthy of man." A little later he assembled with them in the Temple, after which "they used a little exercise for the sake of their health and then din'd on a little bread and honey without wine; when dinner was over, they minded the publick or their private affairs, and when they

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had dispatched their business they took a walk as in the morning, bath'd themselves, and supp'd before sun-set, (never more than ten assembling together for this purpose). Their supper was generally some bread, some herbs, a small pittance of the victims of the sacrifice, seldom any fish, (which for certain reasons was not useful to them) and a little wine. At the end of the meal they made the libation, which was followed by some good lecture, that the oldest at the table, as President, made the youngest perform. The lecture over, they made another libation, and the President dismissed the assembly, giving them as a task to meditate on some symbol of their Master."

In the Pythagorean school there were, however, many different grades of disciples and to each was allotted his own peculiar discipline. Thus the contemplatives were forbidden the use of all animal food and all wine; nor were they permitted to sacrifice animals to the gods nor to injure them in any way. Pythagoras himself lived after this manner but "he permitted others whose life was not entirely purified, sacred and philosophic, to eat of certain animals; and for these he appointed a definite time of abstinence. The following apothegm was always employed by him in every place,— . . that we should avoid and amputate by fire and sword, and all various contrivances, from the body, disease; from the soul, ignorance; from the belly, luxury; from a city, sedition; from a house, discord; and at the same time, from all things, immoderation."

Small marvel that disciples crowded to a man such as this but he did not admit them lightly into his confidence. "First he considered their physiognomy, and from thence drew probable tokens of their inclinations; he observed their discourse, their laughter, their gait; he informed himself of their conduct, of their trades and occupations, and examined with great care to what they were most addicted." After having made these

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observations concerning them, he neglected them for three years in order to test their stability and true love of learning. "If he had reason to be satisfied with their perseverance, he admitted them into his noviceship which was indeed very severe. . . . Pythagoras at first enjoined his disciples a five years' silence, during which they were only to hear, without daring to start the least question, or propose the least doubt. These five years' silence were sometimes reduced to two, in behalf of those he found to have any extraordinary qualifications. While this probation lasted these disciples were called *Hearers;* and when they were thought to be sufficiently instructed in this so difficult a science of Hearing and being silent, they were permitted to speak, to propose their doubts, and to write down what they heard; and then they were called *Initiated in the Sciences.*

But what deserves our observation, from this silence they often proceeded more expert and more learned than they generally do from the schools. . . . So true is it that silence is the ready way to instruction. Long before Pythagoras, King Numa, knowing the advantage of silence, commanded the Romans, particularly to honor one of the muses, under the name of the *Silent Muse,* thereby to recommend silence to them. . . . When Pythagoras had set at liberty the tongues of his disciples, he gave them not leave to speak without bounds and without measure; for he often said to them, 'You ought either to hold your peace, or to say things more worth than silence. Choose rather to throw a stone at random than an idle or useless word. And say not a little in many words but much in a few.'" If any of the disciples tired of the life and desired to forsake it, all his personal fortune was returned to him from the common fund with generous increase, and his fellow disciples raised a tomb to him and considered him as dead.

"As dyers previously purify garments," comments Iambli-

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cus, "and then fix in the colors with which they wish them to be imbued, in order that the dye may not be washed away . . . . after the same manner also that divine man prepared the souls of those that were lovers of philosophy, so that they might not deceive him in any of those beautiful and good qualities which he hoped they would possess." As a result his disciples chose rather to lay down their lives than to transgress his mandates. "This also is a beautiful circumstance, that they referred everything to Pythagoras, and called it by his name, and that they did not ascribe to themselves the glory of their own inventions, except very rarely. But all the purifying disciplines in the world could not have produced Crotona without the living presence of Pythagoras. It took more than a good and great man to do what he did. It took one with the Divine quality, capable of inspiring such love and devotion in the hearts of his followers that everything else was forgotten in that. They were united in him and through him. For them he was the ideal made real, in whose sublime atmosphere all warring thoughts must perish. Because of this the final disruption of the colony was due not to inner dissension but to the blind malice of a powerful man who had been refused admittance into the school. He pursued the Pythagoreans with implacable hatred till but few were left alive, and he hounded Pythagoras from city to city till he finally died of starvation, so it is held by some, in the Temple of the Muses whither he had fled for refuge. The recorded life of Pythagoras is overlaid with much of the miraculous, but no miracle can be greater than the miracle of his successful colony at Crotona which retained to the end its harmony and lofty ideals, becoming a mighty tradition of all that is noble and beautiful in Grecian life and thought.

Friend, I learn as long as I live.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

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KINDLINESS, COMPASSION AND SOBRIETY

By Jan van Ruysbroeck

(Flemish Priest and Mystic. 13th Century.)

By gentleness and kindness, charity is kept quick and fruitful in man, for a heart full of kindness is like a lamp full of precious oil; for the oil of mercy enlightens the erring sinner with good example, and with words and works of comfort it anoints and heals those whose hearts are wounded or grieved or perplexed. And it is a fire and a light for those who dwell in the virtues, in the fire of charity; and neither jealousy nor envy can perturb it.

Out of kindliness springs compassion, which is a fellow-feeling with all men; for none can share the griefs of all, save him who is kind. From this compassion springs generosity; for none can be generous in a supernatural way, with faithfulness and good-will towards all, save him who has a pitiful heart —though a man may often show generosity to a particular person without charity and without supernatural generosity.

By generosity of heart all other virtues are increased, and all the powers of the soul are adorned; for the generous man is always blithe in spirit and untroubled of heart, and he flows forth with desire, and in his works of virtue, to all men in common. Whosoever is generous, and loves not earthly goods, how poor soever he be, he is like God: for all that he has in himself, and all that he feels, flow forth and are given away. And in this way he has cast out the fourth mortal sin, which is covetousness or avarice. Of all such Christ says: Blessed are the merciful.

Out of this generosity there spring a supernatural zeal and diligence in all virtues and all that is seemly. This zeal makes a man grow in reason and prudence, and practise the virtues, both of soul and of body, in righteousness. Through this supernatural zeal all the powers of the soul are laid open to God,

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and are made ready for all virtues. And the conscience rejoices, and the grace of God is increased; the virtues are practised with joy and gladness, and the outward works are adorned.

From this zeal there spring temperance and sobriety, both inward and outward; for none can possess the right measure of sobriety save him who is greatly zealous and diligent to keep his soul and body in righteousness. Sobriety divides the higher powers from the animal powers; it saves a man from intemperance and from excess. Sobriety wishes neither to taste, nor to know, those things which are forbidden.

A man should keep his senses in sobriety and should restrain the animal powers by means of the reason; so that the lusts of the flesh do not enter too far into the savouring of food and of drink; but he should eat and drink as the sick take their physic, because it is needful to support his strength, that he may serve God therewith. This is sobriety of body. He should also observe method and moderation in doing and in leaving undone, in words and in works, in silence and in speaking, in food and in drink, according to the custom of Holy Church, and after the example of the saints.

By inward and ghostly temperance and sobriety a man preserves firmness and constancy of faith, purity of intelligence, that tranquillity of reason necessary to the comprehension of truth, an impulse towards all virtues according to the will of God, peace of heart, and serenity of conscience. And herewith he possesses an enduring peace, in God and in himself.

And by temperance and sobriety of the outward bodily senses, a man often preserves the health and the soundness of his natural body, the dignity of his outward life, and a good reputation. And thus he lives in peace with himself and with his neighbors; for by his temperance and sobriety he draws to

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himself and pleases all men of good-will. And thus he casts out the sixth mortal sin, which is intemperance, greed or gluttony. Of all such Christ says: Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.

LIGHT WITHOUT MEASURE

By Jacopone da Todi

(A Franciscan Monk of 14th Century)

Love beyond telling, Good unimagined, Light without measure, shine now in my heart.

Vast, ineffable Light!
Great Sun—and undiscovered
Save by the lone souls darkly led
Through night's obscurity.

Mock'd by a rush his sight,
Who, "Lo 'tis here" doth certain call,
And claims to measure all
Its height and mystery.

This know I only, night
Is day resplendent; but no strength
Have I to prove its breadth and length,
Its shining verity. . . .

In midst of this great vast
Abyss, thou findest never more
Or landing-place or shore,
Or any path or clue.

Self has forgot its past.
Thou art—but say, what meaneth "thou"?—
Reborn and all transformed now,
And clad in raiment new.

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IN MEMORIAM

A cablegram from India brings the sad news that Swami Brahmananda, the President of the Ramakrishna Mission, breathed his last on the eleventh day of this April.

After Sri Ramakrishna left the world, when the Mission was first organized by Swami Vivekananda, the choice of a head inevitably fell upon Swami Brahmananda, the specially beloved of Sri Ramakrishna who always looked upon him as his spiritual son. Later when the illustrious founder, Swami Vivekananda passed away, the Mission was able to sustain the blow received, because of Swami Brahmananda's great and illumined presence; for his presence was a constant blessing to those who worked under him and to the thousands who came to him from all parts of the world. He was neither lecturer nor preacher, but like the Northern star, fixed and immovable, shone with a steady radiance upon all who looked to him for light. He was indeed a pillar of the Mission and his passing is for it an irreparable loss. He will be mourned everywhere by those who love and reverence him throughout India and around the world.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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DIVINE GIVER.

By Swami Paramananda

O Thou unasked, unceasing Giver,
Thou hast given me Thy endless blessing,
Thou hast drawn me close to Thy heart.
Thy bounty runs through my life to over-flowing;
Yea, tender Lord, by Thy magic charm
Thou hast driven away all my past wretchedness.
Can we with all our might offer Thee
Aught worthy in Thy blessed sight?
Can we ever make our heart so free
Of mundane stain that Thy light of love
May shine and glow unceasingly?
Thou art ever merciful to the lowly,
We bring Thee our humble hearts;
No merit have we save our faith
In Thy infinite compassion.
Do Thou make of us Thy tools
That at all hours, in work and play,
We may revolve in Thy safe-keeping.

This little invocation is humbly and reverently dedicated to the sacred and beloved memory of Swami Brahmananda, the late president of the Ramakrishna Mission.

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THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

I have now come to a stage of realization in which I see that God is walking in every human form and manifesting Himself alike through the sage and the sinner, the virtuous and the vicious. Therefore when I meet different people I say to myself: "God in the form of the saint, God in the form of the sinner, God in the form of the righteous, God in the form of the unrighteous."—*Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna.*

Renounce injustice and violence; never utter harsh words that wound the heart. Be generous whatever happens, O soul of my soul; let thy tongue outrage no one! To wound thy brother to the heart is the worst of sins, the greatest of all iniquities. Labor with ardor to raise up those who have fallen; wouldst thou desire to overthrow the throne of the Lord?—*The Counsels of Nabi Efendi.*

Let this truth be present to thee in the excitement of anger, that to be moved by passion is not manly, but that mildness and gentleness, as they are more agreeable to human nature, so also are they more manly; and he who possesses these qualities possesses strength, nerves, and courage, and not the man who is subject to fits of passion and discontent.—*Marcus Aurelius.*

Soft speech acts like water on the fire of wrath. Do not the soldiers on the battle-field wear armour consisting of a hundred folds of silk? O friend! be humble when thou dealest with a fierce foe, for gentleness will blunt the sharpest sword.—*Bustan of Sadi.*

He whose mind is not agitated in calamities and who has no longing for pleasure, free from attachment, fear and anger, he indeed is said to be a saint of steady wisdom.

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He who is free from all attachment and neither rejoices on receiving good nor is vexed on receiving evil, his wisdom is well-established.—*Teachings of Sri Krishna.*

I have heard that he who possesses the secret of life, when travelling abroad, will not flee from rhinoceros or tiger; when entering a hostile camp, he will not equip himself with sword or buckler. The rhinoceros finds in him no place to insert its horn; the tiger has no where to fasten its claw; the soldier has no where to thrust his blade. And why? Because he has no spot where death can enter.—*Sayings of Lao-Tzu.*

Invent not evil reports, neither do ye repeat them. Carp not, but look for the good sides of your fellow-beings,—that you may with sincerity defend them against their enemies.

Waste not the time with gossip, but speak to the purpose or keep silence. Covet not, nor envy, but rejoice at the fortune of other people.

Cleanse your heart of malice and cherish no hatred, not even against your enemies; but embrace all living beings with kindness.—*Teachings of Gautama Buddha.*

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven.

For He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?

And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so?

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.—*Teachings of Jesus the Christ.*

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POWER OF LOVE AND NON-RESISTANCE.

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

"Let a man overcome anger by love, let him overcome evil by good; for hatred does not cease by hatred at any time; hatred ceases by love; this is an old rule." This admonition of Gautama Buddha is not peculiar to Buddhism only as he himself says that it is an old rule. Prior to the rise of Buddhism the same principle stands out throughout the Vedic revelations of the ancient Indo-Aryans. Glowing examples of all-conquering love, forgiveness of enemies, and super-human endurance of adversities are ever exemplified in the lives of the holy rishis and saints of India.

Jesus the Christ taught His disciples not to follow the idea of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. "Resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek turn to him the other also, and if any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." Christ proved it, Buddha proved it, St. Francis and other saints and mystics throughout the ages have proved it by their lives. You can also prove it,—that through love man has power to conquer all. Non-resistance was the very foundation of early Christianity and her saints and martyrs drew their sole inspiration from this supreme teaching and bore bravely all the trials and tribulations that their enemies imposed upon them. All the great world teachers have laid special emphasis on the power of love and non-resistance, and yet to-day there are very few who really believe this to be a practical theme. This has naturally caused great conflict in the minds of men. They ask how can they accept a teaching unless it is practical. Some try to explain by saying that it is not practical for this age. Why should not a profound spiritual teaching be practical for all ages? It is practical, but it does not seem so to a person who is impatient for an immediate return, who wants gratification of his desires at once.

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It makes very little difference whether we call ourselves Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, or by any other name, if we do not believe absolutely in the fundamental essential points of our faith, if we are not strong enough to follow and prove to ourselves the practical value of our spiritual conviction, we have not entered into the realm of true religion. We may use big-sounding words, we may have many doctrines and dogmas, we may set out to conquer other people and convert them, but we have not converted ourselves to the true faith. Conversion is not accomplished through violence. If we want to impress any one with our great mission we must do so by our superior love, by our superior character, forgiveness and nobility. This is the only practical way.

On the material plane things move very rapidly—just come and go. One who has focussed his whole life and interest on the physical and whose mind is absolutely overpowered with bodily consciousness is not willing to wait patiently for the working out of spiritual laws. If a person strikes him he thinks the only way he can take revenge is to strike back—a natural impulse. If a person treats him hatefully, in order to get even with him he feels that he must hate in return, perhaps with stronger hatred; a person takes advantage of him and he thinks he must also take equal or even greater advantage. Thus the whole scheme of life is on a superficial and perverted basis and has no connection whatsoever with spiritual ideals. A man may think he is very strong because he is yielding to his anger, is striking back forcibly, but he is really weak because he has not the power to control his lower propensities. The true hero who follows the path of God demonstrates his control over anger, over hatred, so much so that he will refuse even to hear ill of his enemies. A great Sufi mystic tells us, "I have heard that the heroes in the path of God will not distress the hearts even of their enemies. How canst thou

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attain this dignified station who art at strife and warfare with thy friends?" Non-resistance of evil is never found practical by a moral coward. It requires spiritual strength to stand on this higher and loftier sphere of life and remain unbaffled even in the midst of the most adverse circumstances.

There are two factors in our life: one the physical, "the eating, drinking, sleeping man," as Emerson calls it, and the other, a deeper and more profound being within. When we are overwhelmed with the consciousness of the eating, drinking, sleeping man we cannot connect ourselves with anything bigger. We think our whole life is circumscribed by this little span of existence, and unless we take advantage of every moment and look after our own interest it will be lost. It is for this reason that we are so impatient. We are impatient to gain something, impatient to revenge whenever any harm is done to us, but this way we defeat our true aim.

To hate another does more harm to one's self than to the person against whom hatred is directed. This is true even on the ordinary plane. A person who broods with revengeful spirit injures himself physically as well as morally. He may become sick and his whole system poisoned, while mentally he is not able to do so much because he has shattered a certain amount of his moral fibre. And how ignoble one feels when one yields to these lower propensities. You may say that they come in a moment. In a moment they come, but these moments are the result of all other moments spent idly, thoughtlessly, or with thoughts that are ignoble. A very simple logical statement is given in almost all the great Scriptures of the world,—that as a man thinketh, so is he. If he turns his mind towards good things he becomes good; if he lifts his mind to holy things his life becomes holy. And yet strangely enough man reverses this order at every step. The things which are hateful, degrading and harmful, such thoughts absorb his mind and in-

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terest more often, more persistently than the things that make for nobility, strength and upliftment. As man goes deeper within his nature he cannot find any satisfaction in living this way. Then is the beginning of his spiritual life. In order to gain our access to higher realities, in order to become truly helpful to humanity, we must find our way to these deeper aspects of life.

People often say: but what can the individual do when even the great organizations fail to apply non-resistance successfully? Therein lies the whole secret. Individuals bring the great power. The individual silently living the life of consecration creates a power within himself. He it is who sets a great spiritual victory in motion by his own achievement. It is through individuals that the destiny of human life is moulded. Here and there you find instances of a man refusing to strike back. At first you think he is a fool because others will take advantage of him, but in the deeper spiritual sense no one can take advantage of him, no one can really rob him. Material things may be taken away from him, but no one can take from him his dignity. There is great joy in endurance. A man may find actual happiness and exaltation in enduring injury, discomforts and all manner of afflictions from his enemies. There is great benefit for every soul that bravely meets these ordeals. Our characters are formed by such sublime experiences. We must learn to direct life's latent forces in such a manner that things which are proving evil now may become of infinite good. When love governs our life and becomes a ruling passion, when no other motive but this actuates our entire thought and action, then no harm can befall us or any one else through us.

It is the motive that counts. Non-resistance is not what we merely do with our hands and feet. It depends mostly upon our motive. While we never need harm any one physically, or

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otherwise, while we must always hold loving thoughts, sometimes the appearance of resistance may be necessary, especially in connection with the ignorant. Non-resistance is not a question of mere passive and morbid forbearance. Sometimes it may become necessary to make a show of resistance in order to prevent a foolish man from doing a greater wrong. This is seen in the lives of great men who often express righteous indignation. For instance, some one comes and speaks ill of your friends, or tries to blaspheme a holy character. If we morbidly listen to such people we not only desecrate our ears, but also we do them harm, because we encourage their evil ways. This we can prevent without entering into a dispute or quarrel. For instance, we can easily withdraw ourselves from such company silently, or can speak with such decisiveness as to avoid all possibility of a quarrel. We are always justified in making a show of resistance in order to prevent a greater evil, provided our heart does not bear any malice.

Our great Master, Sri Ramakrishna, gives a vivid parable illustrating this. Once a venomous snake dwelt in a certain place which no one dared approach for fear of being bitten. One day a holy man was passing that way and the boys warned him of the venomous serpent. But he of tranquil heart had no fear and when the snake approached him it lost all its wrath, being overcome by the gentleness of the holy man. The sage admonished it for its evil conduct and asked it to harm no more. The snake was chastened by this experience and tried to lead a life of non-injury, but in a short time the neighboring children took notice of the sudden change in it and thought that it had lost its venom. They pelted it with stones and whirled it ruthlessly by its tail. It was in a miserable state, but fortunately the sage returned that way and asked it the reason for its sad plight. The snake replied, "Holy sir, following your advice I do not injure any more, but the children

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not knowing my motive tried to harm me." Then the sage rebuked it. "I only asked thee not to bite, why didst thou not hiss to protect thyself from the ignorant children?" This is a fine distinction between hissing and striking. One may make a show of resistance and yet keep his heart free from the contamination of wrath and hatred. Living in the world and having to meet as we do with all kinds of perplexing situations, complete non-resistance may not seem possible and practical in our every day life, especially for the average layman. But certainly every one of us can cultivate absence of anger, absence of calumny, absence of hatred. By doing so we may prepare for ourselves and for our fellow-beings a better and more glorified humanity.

Love is a tremendous force. If we are not impatient it will work at every turn, but do not always begin by looking for results. To-day you have held a loving thought towards some one and to-morrow you are trying to see if it has brought the full measure you expected. Expect nothing and your return will be greater. Love because you believe in love, because it is the greatest ideal to follow and when your whole heart and soul and mind are consecrated it will become a mighty power in your life. First we may begin loving only the people with whom we live, and who are related to us and who are pleasing to us; then we may succeed in extending our love to cover an entire community, then a country, then the whole of humanity. A flower when it blossoms gives its fragrance to all regardless of personalities. The same way there are characters so pure, so lofty, so free from all selfish thought that they give because they feel God's bounty within them; there is no fear that they may lose, there is no calculation that they may be poverty-stricken because they are giving a little too much. They feel an endless, inexhaustible reservoir welling up from within. Such people can love freely; love even their enemies and they

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conquer them. There are many instances in the lives of holy men who vanquished brute forces by no other means than the power of gentle love and holy humility.

In India often the holy men live in the jungle unprotected and surrounded by tigers, snakes, lions, and all kinds of ferocious animals, but they have no thought of self. They have no idea of harming, nor have they any sense of fear because they believe absolutely in God and they remain in His safekeeping. In consequence these animals come to them and forget their ferocious nature. We can find this even in connection with birds and little squirrels in the park. They understand your motive and according to that they react towards you. But these things are not accomplished by mere theory. Non-resistance is a power we evolve through our own life. Love is not just in words. It is a power which we possess and demonstrate. Some say, I want power and if the power of love conquers I will give it a chance. It is not merely a question of giving it a chance, setting a limited time, trying it for a few hours or a few days. We cannot do these things in such cut and dried half-hearted way.

There is a little parable about a man who thought he had absolute surrender to the will of God. One day when he was molested by an enemy he said, "O Lord Thy Will be done, I surrender myself wholly to Thy Will," and kept on repeating this; but as his enemy still did not let him go, he began to feel a little anxious and doubtful as to whether the Lord was coming to his rescue and so started to defend himself. Now, according to the story, the Lord was coming to save him, but as he took the matter in his own hand, it was no longer necessary. How often we find this true in our own life.

Love is also healing. It not only heals the bodily wounds, but it heals especially the moral wounds which cannot be reached by any other means. For instance when a man is mor-

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ally injured and falls into the path of evil the world looks down on him and makes him conscious of his sinfulness and degradation. This only accentuates his hopelessness and helplessness. But sometimes a child's unquestioning love redeems him and transforms him, while all other efforts to reform him may prove fruitless. How often in life even a kind and loving word performs a miracle for one who is crushed by life's weight. It seems to bring new courage, new hope, and gives a fresh start, because it is actuated by love. Love is the greatest cure. It succeeds when all else fails. But do not look for immediate results; they may come now, they may come eons later.

Love for love's sake is the noblest motto. Sri Krishna taught this in India,—that we should love for the sake of loving, and not bring a spirit of bargaining into it—that we want something in return—but because love is the redeeming power in life. This was the supreme secret in the lives of the great Saviours. They asked nothing for themselves. They had no ulterior motive; they had no axe to grind; they had no fear, and their love was unbounded. It was not merely directed to the people who were good, it was also for the miserable, the wretched, for all are from the same source. We love freely when this consciousness dawns in our heart,—that God abides within us just as He abides in all. When a man is aware of this he becomes irresistable, he no longer needs to resist evil; evil melts away before him just as the ice melts before the sun.

Spiritual life expresses itself through our daily actions, thoughts and feelings. We cannot afford to take chances with our spiritual life. No one becomes a saint suddenly. It is through the sum total of all that we think, all that we aspire for. But unless our motive is pure and consecrated, our actions will be empty and devoid of any meaning. Therefore at every moment we should direct ourselves wholly with a sense of consecration so that however small and insignificant our life

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may seem, we may place it unreservedly in God's hand, that He may use it and find it worthy to scatter His blessings of love.

The secret of non-resistance is this,—that one who does not think for himself and is only filled with the thought of God and his fellow-beings is protected by God and His creatures. "Those who worship Me and meditate on Me without any other thought, to these ever steadfast devotees I secure safety and supply all their needs." One whose holy life and love resemble infinitude, no one can ever harm. Can you hit the sky? Try. It only hurts you. The sky is an example of the characters who practise non-resistance. No evil can reach them, because they have transcended in their consciousness the material plane of anger, jealousy, hatred and malice. It is only when we overcome these evils by love that we find the practicality of non-resistance and are made impregnable by its mighty power.

OVERCOMING DIFFICULTIES

Selection from Mahabharata

Yudhisthira said,—"Creatures are seen to be afflicted by diverse causes and almost continually. Tell me, O grandsire, in what way can one overcome all those difficulties!" Bhishma said,—"They that never practise deceit, they whose behaviour is restrained by salutary restrictions, and they that control all worldly desires, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that do not speak when addressed in evil language, they that do not injure others when injured themselves, they that give but do not take, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that always give hospitable shelter to guests, they that do not indulge in malice, they that are constantly engaged in the study of the Vedas, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. Those persons who, conversant with duties, adopt that behaviour towards parents which they should, they that abstain from sleeping during the day, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that do

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not commit any kind of sin in thought, word, and deed, they that never injure any creature, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that always speak truth in this world even when life is at stake, and that are examplars for all creatures to imitate, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They whose acts never deceive, whose words are always agreeable, and whose wealth is always well spent, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that have checked all the qualities that appertain to passion and darkness, are possessed of high souls, and practise the qualities that are called good, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They of whom no creature stands in fear and those that do not fear any creature themselves, they that look upon all creatures as their own self, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. Those that are good, that are never inspired with grief at the sight of other people's prosperity, and that abstain from all kinds of ignoble behaviour, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that bow to all the gods, that listen to the doctrines of all creeds, that have faith, and that are endued with tranquil souls, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that do not desire honor for themselves, that give honor unto others, that bow down unto those that deserve their worship, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that restrain their own wrath and pacify the wrath of others, and that never get angry with any creature, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that abstain, from their birth, from honey and meat and intoxicating drinks, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that eat for only supporting life, that seek the companionship of women for the sake only of offspring, and that open their lips for only speaking what is true, succeed in overcoming all difficulties. They that worship with devotion that Supreme Lord of all creatures, that origin and destruction of the universe, succeed in overcoming all difficulties."

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RESIST NOT EVIL

By Count Lyof N. Tolstoi

Jesus said, simply and clearly, that the law of resistance to evil by violence, which has been made the basis of society, is false, and contrary to man's nature; and he gave another basis, that of non-resistance to evil, a law which, according to his doctrine, would deliver man from wrong. "You believe" (he says in substance) "that your laws, which resort to violence, correct evil; not at all; they only augment it. For thousands of years you have tried to destroy evil by evil, and you have not destroyed it; you have only augmented it. Do as I command you, follow my example, and you will know that my doctrine is true." Not only in words, but by his acts, by his death, did Jesus propound his doctrine, "resist not evil."

Believers listen to all this. They hear it in their churches, persuaded that the words are divine; they worship Jesus as God, and then they say: "All this is admirable, but it is impossible; as society is now organized, it would derange our whole existence, and we should be obliged to give up the customs that are so dear to us. We believe it all, but only in this sense: That it is the ideal towards which humanity ought to move; the ideal which is to be attained by prayer, and by believing in the sacraments, in the redemption, and in the resurrection of the dead."

"Resist not evil." They are very simple, these words; but they are, nevertheless, the expression of a law divine and human. If there has been in history a progressive movement for the suppression of evil, it is due to the men who understood the doctrine of Jesus—who endured evil, and resisted not evil by violence. The advance of humanity towards righteousness is due, not to the tyrants, but to the martyrs. As fire cannot extinguish fire, so evil cannot suppress evil. Good alone, confronting evil and resisting its contagion, can over-

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come evil. And in the inner world of the human soul, the law is as absolute as was even the law of Galileo, more absolute, more clear, more immutable. Men may turn aside from it, they may hide its truth from others; but the progress of humanity towards righteousness can only be attained in this way. Every step must be guided by the command, "resist not evil." A disciple of Jesus may say now, with greater assurance than did Galileo, in spite of misfortunes and threats: "And yet it is not violence, but good, that overcomes evil." If the progress is slow, it is because the doctrine of Jesus (which, through its clearness, simplicity, and wisdom, appeals so inevitably to human nature), because the doctrine of Jesus has been cunningly concealed from the majority of mankind under an entirely different doctrine falsely called by his name.

SONGS OF KABIR

Behold what wonderful rest is in the Supreme Spirit! and he enjoys it, who makes himself meet for it.

Held by the cords of love, the swing of the Ocean of Joy sways to and fro; and a mighty sound breaks forth in song.

See what a lotus blooms there without water! and Kabir says "My heart's bee drinks its nectar."

What a wonderful lotus it is, that blooms at the heart of the spinning wheel of the universe! Only a few pure souls know of its true delight.

* * * * *

The flute of the Infinite is played without ceasing, and its sound is love:

When love renounces all limits, it reaches truth.

How widely the fragrance spreads! It has no end, nothing stands in its way.

The form of this melody is bright like a million suns: incomparably sounds the vina, the vina of the notes of truth.

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PAY HOMAGE TO TRUTH

Extract by Swami Vivekananda

In these days we have to measure everything by utility,—by how many pounds, shillings and pence it represents. What right has a person to ask that truth should be judged by the standard of utility or money? Suppose there is no utility, will it be less true? Utility is not the test of truth. Nevertheless, there is the highest utility in this. Happiness we see is what every one is seeking for, but the majority seek it in things which are evanescent and not real. No happiness was ever found in the senses. There never was a person who found happiness in the senses or in enjoyment of the senses. Happiness is only found in the Spirit.

Therefore the highest utility for mankind is to find this happiness in the Spirit. The next point is that ignorance is the great mother of all misery, and the fundamental ignorance is to think that the Infinite weeps and cries, that He is finite. This is the basis of all ignorance, that we the immortal, the ever pure, the perfect Spirit, think that we are little minds, that we are little bodies; it is the mother of all selfishness. As soon as I think that I am a little body, I want to preserve it, to protect it, to keep it nice, at the expense of other bodies, then you and I become separate. As soon as this idea of separation comes, it opens the door to all mischief and leads to all misery. This is the utility, that if a very small fractional part of human beings living to-day can put aside the idea of selfishness, narrowness and littleness, this earth will become a paradise to-morrow; but with machines and improvements of material knowledge only, it will never be. These only increase misery, as oil poured on fire increases the flame all the more. Without the knowledge of the Spirit, all material knowledge is only adding fuel to fire, only giving into the hands of selfish man one more instrument to take what belongs to others, to live upon

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the life of others, instead of giving up his life for them.

Is it practical? is another question. Can it be practised in modern society? Truth does not pay homage to any society, ancient or modern. Society has to pay homage to truth, or die. Societies should be moulded upon truth, and truth has not to adjust itself to society. If such a noble truth as unselfishness cannot be practised in society, it is better for a man to give up society and go into the forest. That is the daring man. There are two sorts of courage. One is the courage of facing the cannon, and the other is the courage of spiritual conviction. In the Mutiny of 1857, there was a Swami, a very great soul. A Mahomedan mutineer stabbed him severely. The Hindu mutineers caught and brought the man to the Swami, offering to kill him. But the Swami looked up calmly and said: "My brother, thou art He, thou art He!" and expired.

What good is it to talk of the strength of your muscles, of the superiority of your Western institutions, if you cannot make Truth square with your society, if you cannot build up a society into which the highest truth will fit? What is the good of this boastful talk about your grandeur and greatness, if you stand up and say, "This courage is not practical." Is nothing practical, but pounds, shillings, and pence? If so, why boast of your society? That society is the greatest, where the highest truths become practical. That is my opinion, and if society is not fit for the highest truths, make it so, and the sooner, the better. Stand up, men and women, in this spirit, dare to believe in the Truth, dare to practise the Truth! The world requires a few hundred bold men and women. Practise that boldness which dares know the truth, which dares show the truth in life, which does not quake before death, nay, welcomes death, makes a man know that he is the Spirit, that, in the whole universe nothing can kill him. Then you will be free. Then you will know your real Soul!

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LIVE PEACEABLY

By Thomas a Kempis

Keep thyself first in peace, and then shalt thou be able to pacify others. A peaceable man doth more good than he that is well learned. A passionate man turneth even good into evil, and easily believeth evil. A good peaceable man turneth all things to good. He that is well in peace, is not suspicious of any. But he that is discontented and troubled, is tossed with divers suspicions: he is neither quiet himself, nor suffereth others to be quiet. He often speaketh that which he ought not to speak; and omitteth that which were more expedient for him to do.

First, therefore, have a careful zeal over thyself, and then thou mayest justly be zealous also towards thy neighbour. It were more just that thou shouldest accuse thyself, and excuse thy brother. If thou wilt be borne withal, bear also with another.

Behold, how far off thou art yet from true charity and humility, which knoweth not how to be angry with any, or to be moved with indignation, but only against its own self. It is no great matter to associate with the good and gentle; for this is naturally pleasing to all, and every one willingly enjoyeth peace, and loveth those best that agree with him. But to be able to live peaceably with hard and perverse or undisciplined persons is a great grace, and an exceedingly commendable and manly deed.

There are some that neither are in peace themselves nor leave others to be in peace: They are troublesome to themselves. And there are that keep themselves in peace and study to bring others unto peace.

Nevertheless, our whole peace in this miserable life consisteth rather in humble sufferance than in not feeling adversities. Whoso knoweth best how to suffer will keep the greatest peace.

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VICTORY OF LOVE

An incident from the life of Lord Gouranga, the Light of Nadia.

Compassion is an attribute of every real spiritual teacher, but there are some great beings who seem the very incarnation of love. Thus it is written of the Indian saint, Lord Gouranga, the Light of Nadia, that he had within his heart such burning love for all creatures, such tender mercy, that he would grieve more bitterly over some wayward soul than a mother would over a lost child. Even to hear of a man's misdeeds caused him intense anguish. On finding himself face to face with the evil-doer the tears would stream from his eyes and so heart-rending was the sight of his divine grief that the man would fall prostrate before him crying, "Lord, Lord do not weep I can bear to suffer hell, but I cannot bear to see the anguish of your heart for my unworthy self. Henceforth I shall try to deserve thy blessing."

Once when Lord Gouranga was wandering in South India he heard of a most cruel and rapacious robber chief, who was terrorizing the whole countryside. He sought him out instantly, going alone to his stronghold. The chief greeted his holy visitor in amazement. "What! a saint here in the midst of robbers?" he asked, and the Lord replied: "I come to pay my homage to you who are also a saint." "I, a saint?" exclaimed the chief. "I am only a robber!" "That may be," said the Lord, "but I see a gem of divine love shining within you which will make of you a saint." These simple and fervent words went straight to the heart of the robber. For the first time in his life he heard some one speak to him with real love and trust. It roused in him a new feeling. He became aware of his higher nature and realized that there was good in him. The tears of repentance came. Flinging away his sword he offered himself at the Lord's feet and followed him humbly for the rest of his life as his disciple.

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BUDDHA THE COMPASSIONATE

(Dramatic adaptation of "The Light of Asia" by Georgina Jones Walton, now known as Sister Daya.)

SWAN SCENE

(Gardens of King Sudhodana's Palace. King and Viswamitra, his prime minister.)

King.—Oft in the hunt
The prince will pause and let the deer pass free
Or yield a half-won race because his steed
Fetches a painful breath.
Viswamitra.—Our Sakya lords
Are wont to show forth kindness and calm ways.
(Enter Sidhartha—afterwards known as the Buddha—and Devadatta.)
Devadatta.—We'll bag some royal game to-day, a deer
Or two,—perchance a swan—Come cousin!
Sidhartha.—Nay!
I have no heart in this, I cannot slay
In idle sport. *(He throws himself down).*
King.—Viswamitra, did you mark him then?
It is that gentle trend which troubles me.
Viswamitra.—He is but resting, King.
King.—But this is something more, a brooding fate—
Thou dost remember when my son was born
Asita spoke, and the dream-readers told,—
That there would come a day when he must choose
Between two widely differing paths, one path
The way of glory and of kings, and one
The path whereon the beggars walk. I fear
Sidhartha dreams about this lesser path.
Viswamitra.—In all his life our prince hath never seen
A beggar; can he choose a thing he knows not of?
King.—He must not choose it, nay it shall not be!

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Sidhartha, dearer than my own heart's blood,
To tread this sad and lowly path of pain,
Gaining who knows what good when all is lost
Worth keeping; when he could be if he would,
A king of universal dominance
Trampling the neck of all his enemies,—
A king of kings,—(*Enter Sidhartha bearing swan*)
Look now, what does he there?
Viswamitra.—He bears a bird.
Sidhartha.—O, it was cruel to wound thee so, fair swan;
That arrow point must be most stinging sharp.
(*Enter Attendant*)
Attendant.—Thy pardon, noble sir, my prince has shot
A swan which fell among the bushes there
He bids me pray you send it—will you send?
Sidhartha.—Nay! I will not. Were the bird dead
To send it to the slayer might be well
But the swan lives; Devadatta hath but killed
The God-like speed which throbbed in this white wing.
(*Devadatta has entered quietly.*)
Devadatta.—Has he indeed, my cousin? The wild thing
Living or dead is his who fetched it down
'Twas no man's in the clouds, but fall'n 'tis mine,
Give me my prize!
Sidhartha.—Thou shalt not have the bird.
King.—What is the reason for this loud dispute?
Devadatta.—This swan! I shot it, Sire; it must be mine!
He speaks of killing but the God-like speed!
What Sakya Lord can find a reason there?
Sidhartha.—If life be aught, the saviour of a life
Owns more the living thing than he can own who
Sought to slay. I claim the living bird.
King.—(Sternly) Sidhartha, 'tis well to be kind-hearted,

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But this goes too far and smacks
Of woman's weakness. (*To Devadatta*)
Boy, the bird is thine.
Sidhartha.—(Gently) My father, it sought refuge here with me.
King.—Wilt thou oppose my will?
Sidhartha.—Forgive me, Sire, I must.
Viswamitra.—Undutiful!
King.—Dost thou forget it is thy father speaks?
Viswamitra.—Also thy King!
Sidhartha.—My father, thou art a King
Of the great warrior caste—the Kshatrya—
Whose law it is to shield all wounded things
I am a Kshatrya, and I shield this bird.
Devadatta.—(Snatching at bird) Thou feeble soft heart—'tis a subterfuge.
(*Sidhartha repels Devadatta and keeps the bird*)
King.—Leave us Sidhartha!
Devadatta go!
And shame on both of you!
Devadatta.—It is not just
It makes a mock of all our Sakya sports.
(*Devadatta glares at Sidhartha and exits. Sidhartha walks quietly away.*)
King.—How may we lure him from these brooding thoughts
And turn his stubborn will to kinglier things
Than wounded cygnets?
Viswamitra.—Maharaja, love
Will cure these thin distempers; weave the spell
Of woman's wiles about his idle heart.
Find him soft wives and pretty playfellows.
King.—It shall be so! Command a festival
Where the realm's maids shall be competitors

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In grace,—The prince shall give the prizes
To the fair—There's surely one whose beauty's lure
Shall win him to the joy he knows not of
So may we choose for love with love's own eyes
And cheat his Highness into happiness.

(*King and Viswamitra exeunt*)

(*Sidhartha kneels by pool and washes the bird's wound*)

Sidhartha.—Poor hunted thing of the wild forest
Am I the only one who grieves for thee?
Hark how the thickets rustle with small life
Of lizard, bee, beetle and creeping things
Pleased at the spring. Yet lizard feeds on ant
And snake on him, and kite on both. It is
A rage to live which makes all living strife;
My heart is heavy with this world's dumb woe.

REPORT

Good Friday this year had special significance for the Vedanta Household in Boston. The day before, word came from India of the passing of a very holy personage, Swami Brahmananda, beloved president of the Ramakrishna Mission. Therefore it was with deep feeling that they observed Good Friday by fasting and prayer before the Sanctuary. Perhaps because of this the public Service at five o'clock was peculiarly impressive.

Swami Paramananda spoke on the true meaning of the crucifixion. Many were present and all seemed aware of an unusual depth and tenderness in Swami's message. Owing to lack of space, this address could not appear previously in the magazine, but it is hoped that at least a portion of it will be printed in some later issue.

Eastertide was celebrated at the Vedanta Centre with spirit of holy joy. Both Shrine and Chapel were fragrant with lovely spring blossoms. Glorious red tulips in the Shrine win-

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dow caught the morning sunlight in their cups and glowed with the splendor of the Holy Grail.

Swami Paramananda spoke upon "Reincarnation and Resurrection." "Resurrection", he said, "was not just from the grave. Even here in this life we can raise ourselves from the burial ground of matter, and after that even the last enemy, death, loses its power over us. That is the significance of the spring awakening. The feast of resurrection reminds us that we must not sleep in ignorance, buried in material consciousness and overwhelmed with the thought that we are only of the flesh. On the contrary, it should remind us anew with greater clearness that our real life is of eternity. It is knowledge of the Infinite that helps us to rise from the bondage of the finite. That is the spiritual interpretation of the resurrection of the soul from the body."

At the close of the Service the Swami made an important announcement which may have far-reaching effect on the work. Holding in his hand a small piece of paper, he said that contrary to his usual custom he was going to refer to an urgent business matter. The paper, he said, was a cheque, an Easter offering from a friend who gave it with the hope that it might prove a nest egg for the new Temple. He explained further that in spite of the extensive enlargements recently completed, the Centre had already outgrown its present quarters. Sunday after Sunday, this season, the Chapel had been crowded to the utmost, making plans for the future imperative. How soon the Temple materializes depends entirely on the co-operation of friends and members. In the meantime, Swami begged the congregation to be patient and not mind the inconvenience of being crowded. Inspired by the Swami's announcement one of the members has created a beautiful minature temple with carved columns and gold-tipped dome. This stands in the entrance hall, a constant reminder to all who come of the growing needs of the work.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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REINCARNATION AND IMMORTALITY

By Swami Paramananda

Continued existence of the soul after the death of the corporeal body opens before us a field of endless speculation. As far back as we are able to go, penetrating the dimness of the remote past in every country and in every age, the theme of the soul has been of the most absorbing interest to all thinking minds. Concept of soul's immortal nature is not peculiar to any particular religion or philosophy, but it forms the corner-stone of all religions and philosophies. Even physical science is ever in pursuit to solve the question of soul on a plausible scientific basis. We are at once inclined to ask why this age-long problem has not been solved conclusively by the great minds of the wise, and then again if it has not been solved for so long, is it not futile for us to venture it at all? It is one of the ideas that we are incapable of putting aside, for our living here, surrounded by other lives, constantly brings before us the problem of soul and its destiny. Whether our vocation is material, intellectual, scientific, philosophic or religious, we are confronted afresh at every turn of life with the problem of the soul.

"These bodies are perishable, but the dwellers in these bodies are eternal, indestructible and impenetrable. No one is ever able to destroy the immutable soul." This ancient saying of the

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Bhagavad-Gita gives us a picture of our subtle and incorporeal life. If this is true, then we cannot help but ask, "What happens to the soul after death?" "How do we exist?" The Indo-Aryan concept is that the destruction of the gross body in no way impairs the subtle body composed of mind, intelligence, and ego. This subtle body of the soul continues its existence and carries with it all its accumulated experiences of mortal life.

In recent years the efforts of the psychical research work to prove scientifically the survival of the soul after the bodily death has been of great importance. One of the main difficulties in proving the existence of the soul is that soul is not a by-product like all other created things of the phenomenal universe. Therefore, it becomes an almost impossible task to demonstrate it by mechanical means. Our investigations in this realm cannot be wholly successful unless we are willing to join our rationalism with the intrinsic spiritual instinct latent in us. Of course on this point there are many who are extremely credulous as to whether we can rely on the perceptions which are not demonstrable to the physical senses. The study of the soul, however, is frought with endless difficulties unless we are willing to ally our unseen and imperceptible inner faculties with our visible life.

Immortality of the soul is the basic principle upon which all religions and philosophies, both ancient and modern, stand and must always stand. There are two ideas which are immediately connected with the soul's immortal nature, and they are pre-existence and reincarnation. We cannot believe in future existence of the soul unless we are willing to take account of its previous existence. It is strange to observe how many people who are so ready to accept the doctrine of immortality as continued life after death are strongly opposed to the idea of life before birth; but rationally we cannot accept future life unless

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we are willing to admit life in the past, for our future life proves that our present life will be its pre-existence.

It is impossible to explain the intricacies of our present existence without taking account of what has gone before. When we see suffering imposed upon an innocent babe without any apparent reason, or an honest person deprived of his blessings, we rise up with indignation and scorn for such incredible injustice. But in the cosmic universe there is no anarchy or chance happening. There are of course orthodox views which hold that these things are due to the will of an almighty, omnipotent Providence, but such explanations seldom give us any consolation or throw any light on truth. For why should an all-just and all-merciful Being impose on His children suffering? Even a kind father is more merciful to his children. How can One, then, Who is the embodiment of all-love be cruel to His children? In order to find true explanation, we must look into the depth of life itself, for therein lies the index of every detailed work of our present physical existence.

Here we shall be inclined to be skeptical saying, if we existed before, why is it we do not remember our past? This seeming potent argument against pre-existence and reincarnation is really a very frail objection, for how little we can depend on our memory. Sometimes we do not remember what has chanced yesterday or the day before, while there are people who have a genius for remembering details of their lives even during infancy, nay, even prior to their infancy back into a former life. Merely non-recollection of parts of our life does not disprove our existence. For instance, we cannot say that our soul did not exist in our infancy because we cannot recall that period of our life. There is, however, a great blessing in this forgetfulness, for sometimes our past recollections prove to be most fatal to our progress. They hang over us like dark clouds overshadowing our destiny. Therefore, this veil is a

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great mercy of Divine Providence causing us to forget, and helping us to start afresh with each new life.

Another valuable idea which is connected with the soul and its destiny is that of evolution. And evolution pre-supposes pre-existence; that is, something cannot be evolved out of nothing. Our present life is evolved from another form of life, but it is certain that it did not spring up out of nothing. In India the theme of evolution was not limited merely to the physical aspect of life; it was inter-related with the intrinsic spiritual essence, without which no life is possible and no evolution is practical. For instance, there may be perfectly good soil and you may water the soil faithfully, but that will not produce a harvest. In same manner there may be abundance of material substance which is essential for creation, but without the co-ordination and co-operation of the Spirit no creation is possible. Inert matter can never move of itself, nor can it ever evolve to any grandeur without the aid of the spiritual essence. The soul of a saint has evolved not suddenly, but through experience. The mind of a genius has also reached its present state after having travelled through many roads of success and failure. Evolution is not limited to the mineral kingdom, or vegetable kingdom, or animal kingdom, or merely to human heights. It continues until ultimate perfection is reached, and this is not possible in a short duration of time. However much we may strive, one little span of existence proves insufficient to fulfill our high aspirations, and in order that we may complete our course and that we may reach our highest ideal, we are given opportunities afresh, and reincarnation of the soul gives these opportunities for the soul's evolution.

Reincarnation is not as is supposed by many hasty thinkers, a pagan doctrine; it has its roots in the very foundation of the spiritual world. It explains the incongruity of life in light of reason. It offers us consolation in the deepest sense. It

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makes clear that our disadvantages and our sufferings are not imposed upon us by an arbitrary hand, but are the fulfillment of just laws. Also it teaches us that our lost opportunities are not taken away from us forever. We are given new chances that we may learn, that we may evolve, that we may set free our soul from the bondage of ignorance, and every time we are born into the flesh we bring with us added knowledge, added power from our previous life. Nothing of real value is ever lost, nor our misdeeds, our cruel and treacherous acts, forgotten until we have atoned for them. It is not that some being is keeping account of our thoughts and deeds, but we ourselves keep a complete record of even the things we do in the dark and the thoughts that we entertain secretly in our heart, and we reap the sum total of these thoughts and deeds in our every embodiment. We obtain our body, mind, brain, senses, our gifts, our merits and demerits,—all—in accordance with our deserts. As we evolve spiritually we obtain higher and higher opportunities for our self-expression. Even our body and senses evolve greater powers of purity, subtlety and keener perception, for evolution takes place in every department of our life. There is organic evolution, mental evolution and spiritual evolution.

Here some may think, why is it not possible to explain all the intricate problems of life through the law of heredity, for children inherit their qualities from their parents. To a certain extent this may be proved true, but often we are unable to associate their gifts with parents or grandparents. Children may resemble their parents in a great many ways, physically, mentally, and in some of their habits, but often-times we are unable to relate them in their deeper instincts. For instance, we are frequently puzzled to find an explanation for a child genius, a born musician, or an artist. When we begin to investigate we find that neither in his father, mother, nor in

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his grandparents, can we trace any of his qualities, and yet it is not through accident that he is born of those parents and placed in that environment. There are soul connections which are not apparent on the surface, for there is the law of attraction. Like attracts like. Our setting is given to us according to what is best for our evolution, and sometimes our adverse circumstances we have to accept because we have deserved them by our misdirected thoughts and deeds. How often we feel great indignation that an innocent soul should be born of criminal parents, but if we can look deeply into that soul and its heritage, we shall find that it is the past which links it to its present condition and surroundings.

The theme of metempsychosis or transmigration is very grossly misunderstood and misinterpreted. It is at once connected with rebirth in animal forms. We are not compelled to return in animal bodies, or in any kind of bodies. We create our chain of circumstance by our own thoughts and deeds which hold us bound to certain moral retribution. This does not necessarily mean punishment, but it implies that we must fulfill our unfulfilled desires, we must complete our uncompleted tasks, and in order to accomplish this we are given what is most suitable to such ends, and also what we are most deserving of. It is not necessary for a wicked and cruel person to be born in the animal kingdom, but there are many who exhibit animal instincts in their thoughts and deeds, even though they wear the human garb. There may be extreme instances when the soul degenerates itself to a lower plane of existence through its vile inhuman conduct, but that is only a temporary state in its evolution to give it an opportunity to learn certain lessons before it can continue its onward march in the course of evolution.

Reincarnation is not purely an Indian doctrine—Hindu and Buddhistic—but it permeates almost all the great religions of

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the world. Nor is it opposed to the teaching of Christ, although many are inclined to think so. It was believed by the early church fathers as one of the most potent themes of life, and even in the life of Christ we find traces which strongly suggest its ascendancy at that time. "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" asks the Christ. "And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets."

Our salvation is not in any way dependent upon our belief or disbelief in reincarnation, but it is a great help to find a rational and logical explanation of life and all its happenings so that we may work with conviction, so that we may direct our forces fortified by the power of Truth, and thus not only upbuild our own life and destiny, but lend our helping hand to our fellow-pilgrims who are struggling along, carrying their cross and weight of life. In order to be able to do this successfully we must not always turn the eye of our intelligence to outer life, but we must form the habit of contemplation, for it is in the light of spiritual meditation that these deeper mysteries of the soul are made clear to us, and once we see and feel its reality, we are made impregnable to the influence of materialism and doubt. If we can only remember that our life here is not an accident, a mere chance, but for a definite mission, ordained to us by the Supreme Power, and that as we are consciously and constantly able to ally ourselves with that Power, then are we freed from the rounds of birth and death, disease and calamity, and thus our soul shall attain its final beatitude.

The curtains of yesterday drop down, the curtains of to-morrow roll up; but yesterday and to-morrow both *are*. Pierce through the time-element, glance into the Eternal. Believe what thou findest written in the sanctuaries of man's soul, even as all thinkers, in all ages, have devoutly read it there.

—*Thomas Carlyle.*

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UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

We must infer our destiny from the preparation. We are driven by instinct to hive innumerable experiences which are of no visible value, and we may revolve through many lives before we shall assimilate or exhaust them.—*Emerson.*

Man is not a product of the world of sense and the end of his existence can never be attained in that world. . . . All death in nature is birth, and precisely in dying the sublimation of life appears most conspicuous. There is no death-bringing principle in nature, for nature is only life throughout. Not death kills; but the non-living life which is hidden behind the old, begins and unfolds itself. Death and birth are only the struggles of life with itself to manifest itself in ever more transfigured form, more like itself.—*Fichte.*

Birth is not a beginning; death is not an end.—*Chuang Tzu.*

Those who, in the season of prosperity experience pain and grief, suffer them on account of their words or deeds in a former body, for which the Most Just now punisheth them.
—*Zoroaster.*

Do ye not remember that all pure spirits who are in conformity with the divine dispensation, live on in the loveliest of heavenly places, and in course of time they are again sent down to inhabit sinless bodies, but the souls of those who have committed self-destruction are doomed to a region in the darkness of the underworld?—*Josephus.*

It was in India and among the Aryas that the doctrine of the pre-existence, the immortality, and the individuality of the soul first arose. Recent researches in Egypt have failed to show any trace of the doctrines of an independent and individual soul existing before and after the earthly phase of existence. Some of the Mysteries were no doubt in possession of this idea, but in those it has been traced to India.—*Swami Vivekananda.*

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HISTORY OF REINCARNATION

By Sister Daya

The idea of reincarnation or rebirth is not associated with any one race or epoch, it is coincident with the history of human reason. Of this ancient concept James Freeman Clarke writes in his "Ten Great Religions,"—"It" (reincarnation) "was taught by three great religions, that of Egypt, of Brahmanism, and of Buddhism; by Pythagoras, Empedocles, and Plato among Greek philosophers; by the Neo-Platonists, the Jewish Kabala, and the Arab philosophers; by Origen and other church fathers; by the Gnostics, the Manichaeans, the Druids; and in recent times by Fourier and others."

Let us go as far back as possible in human tradition and discover if we can the earliest mention of this theory of spiritual evolution. Although there are many discussions as to the priority of this Bible or that, it is safe to assume that the Vedas of India are sufficiently ancient to be ranked among the first of holy books. At any rate they are the oldest Aryan heritage that we have. The date of the Vedas is given as about 2000 B. C. These Scriptures consist chiefly of childlike hymns in worship of nature. They are songs of praise almost entirely—but they are vibrant with the sense of endless manifesting life and consciousness, which later developed into the grand and more organized concept of the soul's round of births and deaths as it is set forth in the Upanishads, the Bhagavad-Gita, and in practically all the great Indian epics and Scriptures. In fact reincarnation is the very warp and woof of Hindu life, socially, philosophically and spiritually. As the oldest sacred books refer all their knowledge to a teaching infinitely more remote, it is fair to assume that it was an ancient idea with the Vedic Rishis.

Egypt comes next in our consideration. Herodotus states that "the Egyptians are the first who propounded the theory

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that the human soul is imperishable and that where the body of any one dies it enters into some other creature that may be ready to receive it, and that when it has gone the round of all created forms on land, in water and in air, then it once more enters a human body born for it; and that this cycle of existence for the soul takes place in three thousand years." He likewise says that "some of the Greeks adopted this opinion, some earlier, others later, as if it were their own." Egypt undoubtedly must have had a very profound philosophy to have held such minds as that of Pythagoras for instance, who spent many years in Egypt delving into her deepest mysteries. But to-day we lack the key which would unlock for us these mysteries so jealously guarded by her priests. As a result her religion appears to us confused and often grotesque, while her idea of rebirth through animal and other forms seems a perversion of the pure Indo-Aryan concept. The true wisdom of Egypt is often conveyed to us by the Greeks who came under its influence, notably Pythagoras. He likewise seemed to teach the descent of the soul into the bodies of beasts. But this is declared by some of his later followers to be merely symbolic.

Plato's great name has always been associated with the idea of rebirth. Aristotle also makes reference to it. Nemesius emphatically declared that all the Greeks who believed in immortality believed also in reincarnation. Greece was constantly in touch with Oriental thought and receptive to its influence. Thus Neo-Platonism which arose around the first century and was contemporary with the Alexandrian Gnostics, sought to combine the doctrines of Pythagoras, Plato and Buddhism. Ammonius Saccas, Plotinus and Porphyry in the third century, Iamblichus in the fourth, Hierocles and Proclus in the fifth and Damascius in the sixth were among the great Neo-Platonists, who helped establish the idea of reincarnation in the West. The Alexandrian Gnostics likewise taught it. They sought to

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furnish young Christianity with an adequate philosophy and echoes of their influence sound through the Fourth Gospel. Christianity was most powerfully affected by these ancient ideas. Especially did reincarnation cause her disquietude. It was too reminiscent of the pagan world. Origen and many of the early church fathers held to it. Origen's master, Clemens Alexandrinus taught it as a divine tradition, authorized by St. Paul himself. Ruffinus in his letter to Anastasius says that "This opinion was common among the primitive fathers." Heretical sects such as the Manichaeans, were rife with it and handed it down to medieaval times where it was perpetuated in the teachings of the Bogomiles, Paulicians, Priscillians, and many others. Mr. Walker in his book on "Reincarnation" states that "It was an essential part of church philosophy for many centuries in the rank and file of Christian thought." Its prevalence can be gauged by the fact that at the Council of Constantinople about 550 A. D. the Church pronounced it Anathema.

That there must have been a strong Hebrew influence upholding it is more than likely although it does not seem to be included in the Old Testament. Some of the Apocryphal books refer to it as does the Talmud and the Kabala. The Jewish Therapeutae of Egypt and the Essenes of Palestine from whom some claim Christ received His early teaching, were imbued with it. There is nothing in the New Testament opposed to it and certain statements of the Christ Himself more than implied it, showing it to be a prevailing tenet of the day. There is little question that Persian thought added its stream of influence to those streams flowing in from Greece, Egypt and India. The Magi, so intimately connected with the birth of Christianity, brought it as one of their gifts.

But because of church bigotry on the one hand and materialism on the other, the Christian West seems to have dropped the

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idea of the soul's evolution, without which its much vaunted physical evolution is an empty husk. But this is only "officially speaking." It would take many pages to recount the utterances of occidental thinkers, upholding the idea of rebirth. Italy of the middle ages had her voices which proclaimed it. Giordano Bruno's for example. Many sects and societies secretly held it. The troubadours and mimes are thought by many to have conveyed under romantic imagery the most profound truths of the human soul.

The German philosophers gave it their serious attention: Schopenhauer, Lessing, Hegel, Leibnitz, Herder, and Fichte the younger. Richard Wagner long had it in mind to write a great opera around the theme of Buddhism, while the Scandinavian mythology from which the legends of "The Ring" are derived included metempsychosis or reincarnation. Jacob Boehme, Swedenborg, Paracelsus and other great mystics adhered to it. The Cambridge Platonists, conspicuously Henry More, spoke for it. It captivated Fourier and Leroux. Poets and fiction writers have used it as a theme and many refer to their belief in it. Even in the modern church it has had its defenders. Bishops in England and Ireland have not hesitated to promulgate it. Especially since modern means of transportation have brought about closer contact with the Orient, has this age-old conception renewed its hold on our imaginations. It has been recently calculated that among the orthodox movements in this country, such as Theosophy, New Thought, etc., there are at least 12,000,000 followers, and of these very many hold to the idea of reincarnation. In fact in the world to-day the majority of the human race believe in it. All the countries which have welcomed Buddhism, such as Ceylon, Burma, Java, China, Japan, Tibet, Central Asia, Siberia and even Swedish Lapland, come under its influence. The primitive heart and the philosophic mind find equal satisfaction in it. It encircles

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the world and has left its traces everywhere. It is making belief in immortality again possible for the skeptical West. As the materialistic philosopher Hume states in his essay on "The Immortality of the Soul," "The soul, therefore, if immortal existed before our birth, and if the former existence noways concerns us, neither will the latter * * * Metempsychosis is therefore, the only system of this kind that philosophy can hearken to."

THE REBIRTH OF KATSUGORO

From "Gleanings from Buddha-Fields" by Lafcadio Hearn.

(The following story is an exact translation by Mr. Lafcadio Hearn of an old Japanese manuscript. The writer of the story, Matsudaira Kwanzan Dono, Daimyo, or lord of a province, states in a letter to a Buddhist Priest, that it is an accurate account of the rebirth given as he heard it from the lips of the boy's grandmother. Mr. Amenomari, a friend of Mr. Hearn's, discovered the manuscript in the library of Count Sasaki of Tokyo. It was very much signed and sealed and contained besides the account here given, several letters and depositions all attesting the genuineness of the story.)

Some time in the eleventh month of the past year, when Katsugoro was playing in the rice-field with his elder sister, Fusa, he asked her,—"Elder Sister, where did you come from before you were born into our household?" Fusa answered him: "How can I know what happened to me before I was born?" Katsugoro looked surprised and exclaimed: "Then you cannot remember anything that happened before you were born?" "Do you remember?" asked Fusa. "Indeed I do," replied Katsugoro, "I used to be the son of Kyubei San of Hodokubo, and my name was then Tozo—do you not know all that?" "Ah!" said Fusa, "I shall tell father and mother about it." But Katsugoro at once began to cry, and said: "Please do not tell!" * * * Fusa made answer, after a little while: "Well,

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this time I shall not tell. But the next time that you do anything naughty, then I will tell."

After that day whenever a dispute arose between the two, the sister would threaten the brother, saying, "Very well, then—I shall tell that thing to father and mother." At these words the boy would always yield. This happened many times; and the parents one day overheard Fusa make her threat. Thinking Katsugoro must have been doing something wrong, they desired to know what the matter was, and Fusa, being questioned, told them the truth. Then Genzo and his wife, and Tsuya, the grandmother of Katsugoro, thought it a very strange thing. They called Katsugoro, therefore; and tried, first by coaxing, and then by threatening, to make him tell what he had meant by those words. After hesitation, Katsugoro said: "I will tell you everything. I used to be the son of Kyubei San of Hodokubo, and the name of my mother then was O-Shidzu San. When I was five years old, Kyubei San died; and there came in his place a man called Hanshiro San, who loved me very much. But in the following year, when I was six years old, I died of smallpox. In the third year after that I entered mother's honorable womb, and was born again." The parents and the grandmother of the boy wondered greatly at hearing this; and they decided to make all possible inquiry as to the man called Hanshiro of Hodokubo. But as they all had to work very hard every day to earn a living, and so could spare but little time for any other matter, they could not at once carry out their intention.

Now Sei, the mother of Katsugoro, had nightly to suckle her little daughter Tsune, and Katsugoro therefore slept with his grandmother, Tsuya. Sometimes he used to talk to her in bed; and one night when he was in a very confiding mood, she persuaded him to tell her what happened at the time when he had died. Then he said: "Until I was four years old I

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used to remember everything; but since then I have become more and more forgetful; * * * but I still remember that I died of smallpox; I remember that I was put into a jar; I remember that I was buried on a hill. There was a hole made in the ground; and the people let the jar drop into that hole. It fell *pon!*—I remember that sound well. Then, somehow, I returned to the house, and I stopped on my own pillow there. In a short time some old man,—looking like a grandfather—came and took me away. I do not know who or what he was. As I walked I went through empty air as if flying. I remember it was neither night or day as we went; it was always like sunset-time. I did not feel either warm or cold or hungry. We went very far, I think; but still I could hear always, faintly, the voices of people talking at home; and the sound of *Nembutsu* being said for me. * * * I remember also that when the people at home set offerings of hot *botamochi* before the household shrine, I inhaled the vapor of the offerings. * * * *

After that I only remember that the old man led me by some roundabout way to this place—I remember we passed the road beyond the village. Then we came here, and he pointed to this house, and said to me: "Now you must be reborn; for it is three years since you died. You are to be reborn in that house. The person who will become your grandmother is very kind; so it will be well for you to be conceived and born there." After saying this the old man went away. I remained a little time under the Kaki-tree before the entrance of this house. Then I was going to enter when I heard talking inside; some one said that because father was now earning so little, mother would have to go to service in Yedo. I thought, "I will not go into that house;" and I stopped three days in the garden. On the third day it was decided that, after all, mother would not have to go to Yedo. The same night I passed into the house through a knot-hole in the sliding-shutters;—and after that I

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stayed for three days beside the *kamado.* (The cooking place in a Japanese kitchen, L. H.). Then I entered mother's honorable womb. * * * I remember that I was born without any pain at all."

The grandmother told Genzo and his wife what Katsugoro had related to her; and after that the boy would often say to them; "I want to go to Hodokubo. Please let me make a visit to the tomb of Kyubei San." Tsuya went with Katsugoro to Hodokubo; and when they entered the village she pointed to the nearer dwellings and asked the boy, "Which house is it?—Is it this house or that one?" "No, answered Katsugoro,—it is further on—much further,"—and he hurried before her. Reaching a certain dwelling at last, he cried, "This is the house!"—and ran in, without waiting for his grandmother. Tsuya followed him in and asked the people there what was the name of the owner of the house. "Hanshiro," one of them answered. She asked the name of Hanshiro's wife. "Shidzu," was the reply. Then she asked whether there had ever been a son called Tozo born in that house. "Yes," was the answer; "but that boy died thirteen years ago when he was six years old."

Then for the first time Tsuya was convinced that Katsugoro had spoken the truth; and she could not help shedding tears. She related to the people of the house all that Katsugoro had told her about his remembrance of his former birth. Then Hanshiro and his wife wondered greatly. They caressed Katsugoro and wept; and they remarked that he was much handsomer now than he had been as Tozo before dying at the age of six. In the meantime, Katsugoro was looking all about; and seeing the roof of a tobacco shop opposite to the house of Hanshiro, he pointed to it and said: "That used not to be there." And he also said,—"The tree yonder used not to be there." All this was true. So from the minds of Hanshiro and his wife every doubt departed.

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GLORIFYING PAIN AND ADVERSITY

By Swami Paramananda

(Excerpt of address given on Good Friday at the Chapel of the Vedanta Centre, Boston.)

There are certain great fundamental lessons in life which are true not only once, but at all times. Crucifixion—the significance of Good Friday—is such a lesson. Many people bear a cross because it is thrust upon them, but only the few master spirits of the world know how to take a cross and make it a symbol of spirituality. Pain is a wonderful thing in life, a mighty blessing if it does not sink deep down to our root and distort our vision. Crucifixion can kill one, can destroy one physically, morally and spiritually, and also it has the power to make one immortal. That is the symbolic meaning of this celebration. It is what we find in the lives of great saviours—in the life of Christ—a glorifying of pain, a glorifying of adversity, bitter opposition met without force, without supplication even. When the disciples and friends of the Christ wanted to protect Him you all know His attitude: What need have I of protection from the human? Can I not pray to the Heavenly Father?

We are here in this world for no ordinary purpose. There is deep significance in life, and it is not the man who merely seeks to escape from adverse circumstance who attains the high and the glorious, but rather he who suffers all and yet remains above it, who when pain comes is not crushed by it, but transcends it. It seems that there must be another life within this life. There is—the life of the spirit, but we fail to reach it because of our ignorance, prejudice, superstition and lack of feeling. The only way we find our access to it is by opening our hearts simply with faith, with feeling, with love. Love does conquer everything. It is the only glorifying essence in our existence. We can bear any amount of pain through love; we can surmount any degree of opposition through love; its

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victory is everywhere. It is only those who are spiritually blind who fail to perceive its significance, its magnitude, its undying quality. This is one of the fundamental virtues and without it no one can become a true follower of any religion. For it was not only Christ who brought us a living example of this, but the Christ-Spirits throughout history. If we would follow them we must do as they did.

It is not enough on Good Friday merely to pray or fast or go through certain ritualism, although this has its uplifting effect. There is a deeper significance and it is in the living of it. I do not mean that we should invite a cross in order to be tormented. There is no need for that. Life itself offers us constant, unlimited opportunities to prove our spiritual worth. Do we not meet almost every day with something that is unendurable, something that is unjust, something that arouses within us the feeling of antagonism, hatred or anger? These are the feelings that we must overcome through the glowing example of the crucifixion. As these experiences come to us, these trials and tribulations, let us prove our strength by trying to conquer them not by force, not by scheming, not by shrewdness or unkind thoughts, but by love. Is not that the way of the Christ? Christ had no enemies. He exalted His life and the Spirit of God by refusing to recognize enmity.

Now can we pray with our whole heart for those who do not belong to us? It is an excellent practice for Good Friday. By doing it we help ourselves infinitely more than we help others. It is easy to love people who love us and feel towards us as we would like to have them feel, but to pray for those who do not feel kindly towards us is not so easy. The greatest gift that man can bring to himself and to his fellow-beings is the spirit of forgiveness—love conquering all, always. It is this which gives the key to Christ's character. He suffered all and yet caused suffering to none. Did He not again and

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again implore His disciples to love one another as He loved them? It was almost His last appeal to them and even though they afterwards forgot and denied Him there was never anything in His heart for them but forgiveness and love. Surrender was the dominant factor in His life—Thy Will be done in life, in death, in torment and in glory, under all circumstances. Why can we not feel this? We are too faint-hearted. Why are we so faint-hearted? Because we do not believe in the Spirit. We believe more in the flesh and there is always fear when we believe in the flesh too much. When we cling to it, foster it and try to make it the exclusive concern of our life we cannot help but suffer. Every man and woman, every soul should strive to transcend the flesh by the Spirit, by thinking of the Spirit, by clinging to It, by learning to love It.

Religion is very wonderful when it becomes living,—wonderful for the individual who lives it and wonderful for those who see it lived. It becomes a glowing factor in our life. All the mysteries, all the vagueness vanish and we see light everywhere. We see light in our own life, we see the same light above and below and all about us, and that is the Spirit of God. When that enters into us we do not need to fear. If we have much to bear we know that the more we have to endure, the greater the opportunity to prove our spiritual wisdom. When we have achieved that spiritual light and love, whatsoever we touch in life is glorified. The Spirit is so dominant in us that in spite of all the things that are wrong and detrimental we can stand up with undaunted courage. That is why wise men pray that they may have little in the world so that they may never forget the most vital thing of life. The mother of Arjuna, the hero of the Bhagavad-Gita, was a great devotee, a very wonderful character in Indian history. She prayed to the Lord not just for her own safety and the safety of her children, but that He might not fail to send her trying circumstances. "Test

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me," she prayed, "place me in difficulties so that I may never forget Thee." People generally pray when they are in trouble so that they may be rescued, but a wise soul does not desire that kind of rescue; what he wants is to be given greater understanding that he may glorify the spirit of God.

That is to me the significance of this day. It is not to mourn. Rather is it for us to mourn when we fail to take up our burden and bear our cross with a valiant heart. The great Saviours of the world would rather be crucified and tormented and misunderstood than fail to uphold that which is true. If we can feel this, then have we found real religion in our soul; then have we found a rock upon which we can stand,—the stability which the sages and wise men speak of,—an island of security which no wind can reach, no storm or element disturb. You may ask, why then did Christ weep? Perhaps His heart was especially heavy for the world which was so ignorant, for the world which was so dense that it could not accept anything so delicate, so exquisite, so highly organized. It was that, perhaps, which saddened Him more than anything else. It is not the personal loss or suffering which grieves the great soul. Rather is it when his life, his motive, his love fail to reach the hearts of men. That is why we should always pray for a heart that is true and open, so that the Spirit may enter into it in such a way as to exalt us and glorify us and strengthen us, that we may never forget that our supreme duty is to serve and to love and even when needful to lay down our life with undaunted courage and absolute faith in the Supreme. This is what gives the true foundation for the spiritual life. That is the example that Christ set for us in the crucifixion.

Let us in this hour when our hearts should rise to higher things try to lift our inmost prayers to that One Who alone can fulfill our desires. O Lord, Thou art ever present in our hearts; Thou art ever near; it is only through our ignorance

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that we fail to hear Thy voice, to feel Thy presence. Do Thou, All-compassionate Being, destroy our ignorance, our delusion, that we may learn to take all experiences, sweet and bitter, with the same feeling and with a spirit of thanksgiving, for Thou art the Giver and Thou art the Gift—all things come from Thee. Make us true children, free from all egotism and self-seeking, that every hour, in every condition, we may humbly look up to Thee. Thou art the strength and Thou art the Strength-Giver. Give us strength that may never fail us. Oh Thou All-seeing, Thou knowest our failings and shortcomings; make us fervent, make us true, that ever with undaunted courage and unwavering faith we may serve Thee and Thy children. May the Infinite Spirit, Who manifests Himself in Christ and through all the great Saviours of the world, bestow upon us His loving and abiding protection and keep us ever in peace.

FIRE OF DIVINE LOVE

By Swami Paramananda

Thy flame of love touched my garment.
I was startled and affrighted
Lest all my possessions and cherished hopes
Be burned to nothingness.
I fled for fear of life, but Thy unquenchable fire
Ever followed me.
With troubled heart and misgiving
I opened my eyes only to find
That Thy bright and blazing flame
Was not of destruction.
It burned, yet destroyed it naught.
Oh, Thou effulgent spark,
I fear Thee no more,—I love Thy presence;
My soul delights in Thy presence;
Thy presence is my supreme joy!

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TWELFTH ANNUAL DINNER

The June activities of the Vedanta Centre of Boston swung chiefly around the 12th annual dinner given by Swami Paramananda to his friends and students upon the evening of June 15th. This is a peculiarly happy occasion for the Swami as it affords him opportunity to pour out his warm spirit of welcome upon many faithful hearts. Considering as he does that an offering made to his guests is the same as an offering made to God, he lovingly prepares every dish with his own hands. To cook for over a hundred people is no light task. During the day of the dinner, hour after hour, the Swami stood and stirred huge cooking pots, creating new variations of such favorites as *Bhuni Khichuri, Curry Unity in Variety, Paramannam,* etc., etc. In referring to these preparations, in his little after dinner speech, the Swami said that when he saw the great quantity of greens arranged and waiting to be cooked, he felt as if he had come across a nice little vegetable garden which he hoped was now in its proper place.

As usual the library was transformed into a banquet hall with two long tables connected at the upper end by a transverse table where the Swami sat. In the entrance hall, recently enlarged, was space for two extra tables where late comers were placed. June is the month for flowers but this June the floral offerings were more than usually profuse and beautiful. Back of the Swami's seat hung an orange silk Indian *Chadar,* against which was outlined the delicate tracery of green leaves with glorious white peonies in the foreground. Peonies pink and peonies white, laurel, roses and other blooms softened the austere beauty of the rooms with their warm glow and radiant coloring. The whole house was sweet with their fragrance.

After the actual dining was over the Swami called on various speakers. Mr. John Orth, the noted musician, proposed Swami's health at which all the guests rose. Following him

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Miss Beresford, Miss Shepherd and Prof. Perrin of the Boston University, expressed their gratitude to the Centre. There were guests who had come for this occasion from Louisville, Ky.; Cincinnati, Ohio; Rochester, N. Y.; New York City, and from other places nearer Boston. Mrs. Macherlein, of Rochester, and Mr. Murray, of Cincinnati, both responded to the Swami's greeting with warm words of appreciation. The youngest speaker of the evening was little Miss Burton who gave two poetic recitations. One of the Swami's oldest friends, Dr. Allen, who has just returned from a trip around the world, spoke with deep feeling of the Ramakrishna Mission in India and of the indelible impression made upon him by his visit to its *Seva Ashramas* or Homes of Service in Benares and Calcutta. He told of the warmth of hospitality extended to him, the efficiency of the service rendered to all who had need, and above all of the spirit of love, the true Christ spirit, which he felt active in the work and in all the workers of this great Mission, of which the Vedanta Centre is a branch.

Mr. Ennis, a Boston member, touched a deep spiritual note in his simple and sincere tribute to the Swami and his work. Mr. Ennis said in part: "For some years I was privileged to be a minister in the radical church—the Unitarian—and I was thinking as Swami spoke, if only I could do what he does I would go back to the pulpit. I can't tell you what he does because it does not need to be put into words. The nearest I can approach it is by the one word feeling. Since I came here something has taken place in me. I am working—I am a roofer—I am not thinking, but oh, how rich is that one thing—that feeling—I can't express it! Feeling of what? Sympathy does not say it. Perhaps the Swami has encompassed the meaning in the beautiful word which so often falls from his lips—unity—unity of everything. These flowers here, how much they are my friends; even the hum of the fan—the light

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here in the candles—the beautiful flavors in our food; what is it? Why unity. The chair under my hand with sharp edges and dark color—that solid surface, how beautiful! You feel related to it. Is that pantheism? If it is, then I want more. We belong nowhere; we belong everywhere. It is this feeling that the Swami gives us,—this feeling that makes people want to be what down deep in their hearts they must recognize that sometime they are going to be."

These yearly dinners like all other established customs of the Boston Centre, are the result of spontaneous growth. They were never planned. The very first gathering was in 1910, in the city of Washington, when the Swami drew thirty-five of his friends around him to celebrate Christmastide. When he returned to Boston he gave a similar entertainment for his Boston students and inevitably the "Swami's dinner" grew into its present proportions. People travel sometimes thousands of miles to be present, for it is far more than a physical feast and the food the Swami prepares is not merely material. Many nationalities come and are made conscious only of their spiritual kinship. This was especially notable during the great war when guests from various warring nations sat down together and did not even remember to forget their differences because under the fusing influence of the Swami's universal spirit, they had for the moment, no differences to forget. The President of the Browning Society who was present, pointed out the deep significance of this fact and remarked that over the Vedanta Centre was flying the white flag of peace.

REPORT

The Vedanta Centre of Boston will hold its Services as usual during the summer months and Swami Paramananda will remain in Boston to conduct them. Owing to the length and heat of the day at this season, the hour of the Sunday Vesper Service has been changed from five in the afternoon to eight in the evening.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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INSPIRATION

By Swami Paramananda

Inspiration, Thy coming is like the falling of
noiseless dewdrops on unopened flowerbuds,
not conscious of their heavenly heritage.
Thou divine Magician,
Transformer and Transmitter of beauty,
Thou dost change all earth's harsh notes into
heaven's unspeakable sweetness.
At Thy touch a broken reed sounds divine
harmony,
And mortal voice sings immortal song.
When all is covered by the blank sheet of
darkness and naught is seen,
Thou enterest unaware with Thy all-filling
light,
Transforming gloom into brightness.
The touch of Thy holy hand is my sole
adornment.
A glance from Thy smiling eyes hath poured
upon me a shower of countless blossoms.
Now I gather these scattered flowers day
and night with ecstatic joy,
For they bear the blessing of Thy divine
fragrance.

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Thou art the enchantment of song,
Rhapsody of rhyme,
Intoxication of ecstacy!
Thou art the might of the mighty,
Sanctity of the saint,
Melody of the musician!
Thou all-glorious Spirit of transcendent loveliness,
In awe and dumb wonderment
I adore Thee!

THE RAMPARTS OF WISDOM

Excerpt from Dialogues of Seneca

Will there be no one who will try to do an injury to the wise man? Yes, some one will try, but the injury will not reach him; for he is separated from the contact of his inferiors by so wide a distance that no evil impulse can retain its power of harm until it reaches him. Even when powerful men, raised to positions of high authority, and strong in the obedience of their dependents, strive to injure him, all their darts fall as far short of his wisdom as those which are shot upwards by bow-strings or catapults, which, although they rise so high as to pass out of sight, yet fall back again without reaching the heavens.

Wisdom leaves no room for evil; to it, the only evil is baseness, which cannot enter into the place already occupied by virtue and honour. If, therefore, there can be no injury without evil, and no evil without baseness, and baseness cannot find any place with a man who is already filled with honour, it follows that no injury can reach the wise man; for if injury be the endurance of some evil, and the wise man can endure no evil, it follows that no injury takes effect upon the wise man. All injury implies a making less of that which it affects, and no one can sustain an injury without some loss either of

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his dignity, or of some part of his body, or of some of the things external to ourselves; but the wise man can lose nothing. He has invested everything in himself, has entrusted nothing to fortune, has his property in safety, and is content with virtue, which does not need casual accessories, and therefore can neither be increased or diminished; for virtue, as having attained to the highest position, has no room for addition to herself, and fortune can take nothing away save what she gave. Now fortune does not give virtue; therefore she does not take it away. Virtue is free, inviolable, not to be moved, not to be shaken, and so hardened against misfortunes that she cannot be bent, let alone overcome by them. She looks unfalteringly on while tortures are being prepared for her; she makes no change of countenance, whether misery or pleasure be offered to her. The wise man therefore can lose nothing of whose loss he will be sensible, for he is the property of virtue alone, from whom he never can be taken away. He enjoys all other things at the good pleasure of fortune; but who is grieved at the loss of what is not his own? If injury can hurt none of those things which are the peculiar property of the wise man, because while his virtue is safe they are safe, then it is impossible that an injury should be done to a wise man.

Consequently, no one can do either harm or good to the wise man, because divine things neither want help nor are capable of being hurt; and the wise man is near, indeed very near to the gods, being like a god in every respect save that he is mortal. As he presses forward and makes his way towards the life that is sublime, well-ordered, without fear, proceeding in a regular and harmonious course, tranquil, beneficent, made for the good of mankind, useful both to itself and to others, he will neither long nor weep for anything that is grovelling.

See then, Serenus, that the perfect man, full of human and divine virtues, can lose nothing; his goods are surrounded by

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strong and impassable walls. You cannot compare them with the walls of Babylon, which Alexander entered, nor the fortifications of Carthage and Numantia, won by one of the same hand, nor the Capitol and citadel of Rome, which are branded with the marks of the victors' insults; the ramparts which protect the wise man are safe from fire and hostile invasion; they afford no passage; they are lofty, impregnable, divine.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Four kinds of virtuous men worship Me; the distressed, the seeker of knowledge, the seeker of material prosperity and the wise. Among them the wise, ever steadfast, devoted to the One (to Me) excels; for I am supremely dear to the wise and he is dear to Me. Noble are all these, but I regard the wise as my very Self; for with soul ever steadfast, he is established in Me alone as his supreme goal.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established: and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches. A wise man is strong: yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength.—*Proverbs.*

A wise and just man could be as happy in a state of slavery as in a state of freedom.—*Plato.*

Tsze-Kung asked saying: "On what ground did Kung-wan get that title of *Wan* (accomplished)?" The master said: "He was of an active nature and yet fond of learning, and he was not ashamed to ask and learn of his inferiors. On these grounds he has been styled *Wan.*—*Confucian Analect.*

The Deva asked: "Now I have only one doubt to be solved; pray, clear it away: What is it fire can neither burn, nor

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moisture corrode, nor wind crush down, but is able to reform the whole world?"

The Blessed One replied: "Blessing! Neither fire, nor moisture, nor wind can destroy the blessing of a good deed, and it will reform the whole world."—*Gospel of Buddha.*

How should you be a lamp when you yield no light to what is close beside you?—*Akhlaq-i-Jalali* (*Sufi*).

We need only obey. There is guidance for each of us and by lowly listening we shall hear the right word.—*Emerson.*

Strive to see God in all things without exception, and acquiesce in His will with absolute submission. Do everything for God, uniting yourself to Him by a mere upward glance, or by the overflowing of your heart towards Him. Never be in a hurry; do everything quietly and in a calm spirit. Do not lose your inward peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset. Commend all to God, and then lie still and be at rest in His bosom. Whatever happens, abide steadfast in a determination to cling simply to God, trusting to His eternal love for you; and if you find that you have wandered forth from this shelter, recall your heart quietly and simply. Maintain a holy simplicity of mind, and do not smother yourself with a host of cares, wishes, or longings, under any pretext.—*St. Francis de Sales.*

The man immersed in worldliness cannot attain Divine wisdom. Does the muddy water ever reflect the sun or any surrounding object?

As the troubled surface of the water does not reflect the full moon perfectly but in broken images, so the mind disturbed by worldly desires and passions does not fully reflect the light of God.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

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SPIRITUAL MEDIUMSHIP

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

The idea of mediumship is generally associated with spiritualism or with what is known as spiritualistic mediums who are supposed to be in touch with the departed and are capable of conveying their messages. But in reality the term mediumship has a much wider significance. It is perhaps through a peculiar trend of circumstance that we are inclined to connect this idea entirely with seances, trances, etc., but this is only a narrow and one-sided concept. Mediumship to my mind means simply instrumentality. Whenever any force, idea or thought is conveyed, whatever conveys it becomes the conveying medium. It means becoming a channel through which a power may flow unobstructed. We can become an instrument through which God Himself may express His highest and sublimest love, truth and potentiality, and also we may make ourselves a vehicle for evil forces. It all depends upon the fitness of our instrument and this implies both mind and body.

In one sense we are all mediums because we are always conveying to the world through our physical and mental vehicle what we are capable of transmitting. So do we consciously and unconsciously radiate our inherent nature which is continuously under process of composition through our cherished ideas and ideals. As air is the conductor for odors both good and noxious, similarly the mind is our most potent and efficient medium for both higher and lower influences. But even the physical body plays a tremendous part. According to its fineness, according to its purity, according to its clearness it becomes either fit or unfit for higher expression. Every one of us can become a conveying medium for spiritual forces. If we live in right rhythm, with a sense of holy consecration and love of Truth, in course of time we become so absolutely in tune with higher powers that both knowingly and unknowingly we transmit them to others.

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There are spiritual personages and saintly characters who perpetually feel a definite connection with the Source of being. Plotinus defines this type by saying: "Perhaps we ought not to speak of vision; it is rather another mode of seeing; an ecstasy and simplification, an abandonment of oneself, a desire for immediate contact, a stability, a deep intention to unite oneself with what is to be seen in the sanctuary. . . . Such is the life of the gods, and of god-like and blessed men; a liberation from all earthly bonds, a life that takes no pleasure in earthly things, a flight of the alone to the Alone. In knowing God, the Spirit knows also itself. . . . to see is to become oneself the thing seen. . . . True being knows no gaps, no developments, no progress, no extension, no before or after. The One is everywhere and nowhere. Even here, a wise life is the most truly grand and beautiful thing. And yet here we see but dimly. Yonder, the vision is clear. For it gives to the seer the faculty of seeing, and the power for the higher life; the power, by living more intensely, to see better and to become what he sees."

Not only are these great souls conscious of this alliance with the Supreme Intelligence but they have made themselves over wholly to that Power,—body, mind and soul. They possess wisdom and are possessed by wisdom. They possess God and are possessed by God. But this possession by the Holy Spirit is entirely different from obsession, for one is the outcome of pure and holy living, and the other is caused very often by morbid and melancholy brooding and unclean, abnormal habits of living. For this reason we are required to live in the right rhythm. If we think unkind thoughts, if we live ignoble lives we make ourselves susceptible to evil influences and the only power to which we can open ourselves will be detrimental,—not the power of the good, not the power of the holy.

At the present time there is great interest in this phase of

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psychic phenomena. People have gone mad over the idea of spirit communication through the means of seances, ouija board, automatic writing, etc. It is quite possible to come in contact with the departed as it does not require any degree of spiritual development. Some people are so constituted that they can easily make themselves receptive for psychic messages. Often these experiences instead of proving beneficial are rather disastrous. Merely departing from this physical life does not necessarily give one access to higher knowledge and power, and if therefore we in our over-credulous zeal connect ourselves with an undesirable spirit, it can be a very great hindrance to our higher development. If a man was not noble while on earth, if he did not have access to truth, if he was bound by ignorance and selfishness, do you suppose that he can suddenly become a saint, a master, a free spirit, that he can at once gain entrance to the eternal storehouse of wisdom? If he told untruth in life he will probably do likewise after death.

People sometimes drift into these things through idle curiosity. They think,—how lovely to be able to communicate with the departed! It would be very wonderful if we could communicate with some lofty soul who could give us transcendental knowledge and free us from our bondage; but through idle curiosity we make ourselves morbid and come in contact with spirits who are not pure, whose motives are not free and unselfish, and thus we may become obsessed by a power which we cannot control. There was once a poor man who conceived the idea that if he could only get command over some spirit or ghost all his miseries would cease. So he went about with eager expectancy to find some one who could give him such control. One day he came upon a certain wise sage. The poor man implored and besieged him saying, "Sire, help me to find a ghost." The sage tried to dissuade him from this foolish notion, but he was determined. Finally the wise man gave him

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a magic word and told him that if he repeated it a certain number of times he would gain his heart's desire, but also he warned him of its peril.

The man went his way and repeated the magic word. At once a giant-like form appeared saying, "I am conquered by your magic; now you must keep me constantly busy else I'll kill you." Then the man said, "Cut down this forest." It was done. He asked the ghost to build him a palace; that was also instantly done. He asked for money; the money was there. But when the ghost demanded more work the man began to be frightened as he was not able to cope with his rapidity. So he ran in haste to the sage and sought his protection. He was trembling with fear as he saw the dreadful figure approaching him. The sage out of compassion showed him a dog with a curly tail and said: "Give him that curly tail to straighten out." The ghost carefully worked on it, but no sooner did he let go than it curled up again. Once more he tried; again it curled. Finally utterly exhausted he begged the man to release him from the magic charm. Unfortunately we do not all possess the readiness of wit to find the curly tail when the undesirable complications arise. We pray with our whole heart for our desires to be fulfilled, but very often the fulfillment of desires brings unexpected and unhappy results which we are not always able to avoid.

Perhaps you have lost dear ones—a son, a brother, a father, or a mother. Naturally you want to get in touch with them, but how do you know it is good for them? How do you know it is good for you? They have their work there as much as they had here. If you love them, then you must be willing to leave them free. We interfere with God's laws when we assert our own will in regard to these things and the result is not wholesome. The only kind of mediumship that is wholesome for us individually and collectively is the mediumship that

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comes from opening ourselves to such influence as will make us more wise, more true, more pure, more conscious of the spiritual realities. We can do this quite naturally by living in accordance with higher laws. It is not by any artificial means that we become spiritual mediums; it is by purifying ourselves. No book or formula can give this to us; no creed or dogma can give it. It is by losing ourselves that we find it. We acquire it through complete self-abandonment.

Meditation plays a tremendous part. No evil spirit can take possession of us when we are fortified by lofty thought, by spiritual prayers, by a consciousness which is pure, definite and dynamic. When we have made of ourselves a channel through which God's power can flow constantly, then we are fortified without any calculation even. Let your light shine. Why do you make it so dim? Why do you cover it? You say, I have no light. Of course you have the light of the soul burning within you; you have the light of God within yourself. To deny it is to deny God, to deny your own life and true happiness.

We do not begin to use our natural heritage—the power of the Spirit—all that is embedded in us. Many people are unconscious of possessing it, but we can become conscious possessors of that great power, that light and life which is ours, ours because we are part of it—the Infinite. We are all His children. It is a very sweet, natural and normal consciousness for us to carry. Whatever religion we may be indentified with, this is the fundamental fact, that we are children of God. If we can face this fact in our actions and thoughts, in all our modes of living, then no evil can creep into our life and we shall be incapable of doing anything harmful. We find some people becoming so pure that they have supernormal sight; they see more than the average person. An intellectual man sees more than a man who is engrossed in the physical. He

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has developed his mind, he knows how to use his brain and to scheme, yet the spiritually minded man without all these efforts sees far more clearly because of his greater power of penetration.

Physical happiness comes and goes, prosperity comes and goes; praise and blame revolve; we cannot have one without the other, but the wise do not rise and fall with all these small temporary waves of life; they have fastened their heart to something that is eternal. Sometimes it is better for us that we still these outer activities at certain intervals during our daily round. It is needful not merely from the spiritual point of view, but even from the physical. A person who is over-active sooner or later becomes nervous. He loses all his control; he accomplishes less and less and eventually he becomes a wreck. But that is not the case with one who has given himself spiritually. He who does not depend wholly on the material aspect of life naturally has greater resources to draw from. These are lessons we must learn; we must not blind ourselves to higher realities.

Every one of us would like to have a spiritual guide, a guardian angel to watch over us and protect us. These ideas are not mere fancies; there is profound truth behind them. We can have a guardian angel and also we can be haunted by an evil spirit, and we open ourselves either to the one or to the other. There are some people who become like living and moving receiving stations for high and spiritual communion. They consciously and definitely ally themselves with the Divine Source. The mystics, for instance, wipe out all self-consciousness, all littleness, all pettiness. They refuse to raise their own voice so that the voice of the Infinite may speak through them. One of our great teachers, Sri Ramakrishna, who lived in the latter part of the 19th century, was a remarkable example of this. He made himself so completely a mouth-piece

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that whenever he spoke it was with the full consciousness that it was his Divine Mother (as he termed the Deity) speaking through him. He completely wiped out the idea of "I, me and mine". He never took any praise to himself when people came and offered him worship. He was always aware that he was only a little child completely dependent on his Mother, incapable of doing anything himself, but as the Divine Mother guided him, so would he act. Words of wisdom poured out of him, yet he had no book-learning whatsoever. His channel was so clear that at every moment of his existence he was directly connected with the Fountain-head and whatever flowed through him was peculiarly full of blessing and upliftment.

Such utterances are very different from the average talking and teaching, because what comes directly from the Fountain-head is soothing, refreshing, enlightening. The only way we can make ourselves a channel for the supreme Power is by purifying and cleansing ourselves inwardly. One may cleanse one's body with soap and water; one may rub and scrub and make the outer life shining, but the inner can be made fitting for spiritual manifestation only by living,—living the Truth. You say: What is Truth? You do not need any definition of Truth; no one needs it, because we are part of it, it is that which we possess, that which we know absolutely. If we want to accomplish anything we should seek our alliance with that, we should have conscious union with that.

The aim of religion is to bring spiritual reality into our daily life, to make us better instruments, better children of Divinity. This is not accomplished by belonging to a special creed, but rather by belonging to our intrinsic divine nature, because there we find absolute unity, the fullness of love, the fullness of life and the fullness of wisdom. When we descend from there we fall into confusion and division. We hear so many voices and these voices differ; but when we go to the Fountain-head we

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find but one great Power permeating all, radiating all, sustaining all,—and that is our Ideal.

One way or another we are all seeking. It is a splendid thing that people have convincing proof in regard to the existence of the soul; but it does not interest me very much because I do not think the soul requires any proof. I do not need any proof from a medium to convince me of its existence; you do not need it either. There is a sight within you which will show you if you are but willing to open it in your hour of silence, in your hour of purity, in your hour of prayer. You do not need any book, or any preacher or any medium to prove to you that you are a child of God. The only thing you need is to come into direct contact with your spiritual being. That which you know indistinctly, vaguely; that which you carry within yourself without having full possession of it,—to know that definitely, to carry it definitely, is the fulfillment of life. When people come into a heritage without being aware they have inherited a fortune, it does not do them much good. The same way if we do not know our spiritual heritage, if we do not know that we are direct possessors of the Infinite, we go on weeping through life. We blind-fold ourselves and we think that we are petty and small and puny. That is the reason for all suspicion and misery. It is only when we can make ourselves direct channels of Divinity that we find unending power. Power flows through our body and through our mind,—all our faculties become quickened.

In India instead of believing in a personal devil they believe that the personal devil is already with you in the form of ego. If you begin to draw a picture of it you will see the resemblance. It is egotism that makes us intolerant, that rouses in us anger. It is the egotistic man, the man who is unjust, unloving, ugly, who causes war, who creates hideous conditions through his selfishness. When we banish the ego and establish

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our definite alliance with God-head, then we live truly in a heavenly atmosphere. These are the things of the real spiritual world. We find its fulfillment in our mortal world. After we have made our contact with the Spirit, after we have made ourselves susceptible to the Spirit, open, so that it may flow through us, our material life is filled with its radiance and we do not lack for anything.

There is one question that will come. What can we do to rescue ourselves from wrong conditions? Often a person says, I am haunted by an evil influence; what can I do? Shall I fight it? Your angel, your guardian angel, will fight for you. All you need to do is to keep close to the light of the Spirit. Whenever you are aware of any defects in your nature, you can pray or meditate. If you are crushed by them, ignore them; if you find it very difficult to ignore them, ignore them more, and the best way you can ignore them is by filling yourself with wholesome thoughts,—thoughts of cheerfulness. You say, how can I make myself cheerful? As soon as you know you are a child of God it fills your whole heart with cheerfulness and radiance. As long as you feel you are a lost soul, it throws you into the abyss of despair. It is not the light of the sun that makes your day bright; it is the definite sense that you are near that infinite Power, that that Power is within you, that you have made yourself so clean and pure and fitting that it always accompanies you.

Our heart is like a mirror. Sometimes it becomes so covered with dirt and dust and all the things we accumulate on the outside that whatever it reflects is distorted. When we have cleansed it, when we have so polished it that there is not a blemish or a speck of dust anywhere, then we have a clear reflection of Truth, and that is the true spiritual mediumship. The Truth shines forth from within so clearly, so definitely that we have no more room left for doubt. And we are able

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to convince others, not so much by what we may say, but by the radiance of our own life, for our life becomes the commentary of what we have found. This is my concept of spiritual mediumship, and it is a very beneficent thing to possess. A man may possess it silently, but he becomes a great power and his elevating influence is not limited to his immediate surroundings. It extends far beyond to his community, to his country, to all humanity.

WORKINGS OF THE SPIRIT

From the Letters of Isaac Penington

English Quaker Mystic. 17th Century.

O my friends and brethren in the pure life! be faithful to the Lord in returning to Him all the incomes of His Spirit; follow on in every drawing of His love, while any of the virtue of it lasts upon your spirits. Walk with Him all the day long, and wait for Him all the night season. And, in case of erring from Him, or sinning grievously against Him, be not discouraged; for He is a God of mercies, and delighteth in pardoning and forgiving much and very often. What tender mother can be more ready to forgive and embrace the child that appears broken and afflicted with her sore displeasure!

It is a wonderful thing to witness the power of God reaching to the heart and demonstrating to the soul the pure way to life, as in His sight and presence. Surely, he that partakes of this is therein favored by the Lord and ought diligently to wait for the giving up to the leadings of His Holy Spirit in everything; that so he may travel through all that is contrary to the Lord, into that nature and spirit which is of Him.

And be not careful after the flesh, but trust the Lord. What though thou art weak, and little; though thou meet with those that are wise and knowing, and almost every way able to reason

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thee down; what though thou hast not wherewith to answer; yet thou knowest and hast the feeling of God's pure Truth in spirit, with a desire to have the life of it brought forth in thee, and so, to witness the change and renewings which are by His power.

O dear heart! herein thou art accepted of the Lord, and here His tender love and care will be over thee, and His mercy will daily reach to thee. Yea, thou shalt so feel the Lord to help His babe against the strength of the mighty, in the seasons of His good pleasure, as shall exceedingly turn to His praise; and so, thou shalt experience, that whom God preserves, all the gates of hell shall not be able to prevail against.

Therefore, look not out at men, or at the words and wisdom of men; but keep where thou hast felt the Lord visit thee, that He may visit thee yet again and again, every day, and be teaching thee further and further the way to his dwelling-place, and be drawing thee thither, where is righteousness, life, rest and peace forever.

The Lord keep open that heavenly eye in His children and servants, which looks over this world with the affairs and concerns thereof, to that which is immortal and invisible; where our life is hid from others, though made manifest in and felt by us from the living spring which quickens, nourisheth and refresheth.

If thou come to know God's Spirit and to receive it and feel it work in thee, and its pure light shine from the fountain and spring of life, thou wilt have a quicker sense and discerning therefrom, than can arise either from words written, or from thoughts; that is, the Lord will show thee the way whereof thou doubtest, quicker than a thought can arise in thee; and the Lord will show thee evil, in a pure sense of the new nature, quicker than thou canst think or consider of anything.

O my Friend, look not out at what stands in the way; what

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if it look dreadfully as a lion, is not the Lord stronger than the mountains of prey? but look in, where the law of life is written, and the will of the Lord revealed, that thou mayest know what is the Lord's will concerning thee.

And learn but in quietness and stillness to retire to the Lord, and wait upon Him; in whom thou shalt find peace and joy, in the midst of thy trouble from the cruel and vexatious spirit of this world. So, wait to know thy work and service to the Lord every day, in thy place and station; and the Lord make thee faithful therein, and thou wilt want neither help, support, nor comfort.

Flesh should be silent before Him. Alas! what room is there for His Spirit and power, when there is such a multitude of thoughts and workings and reasonings, such a noise of flesh in many hearts and spirits. Happy is he who feels flesh silent, who comes to an end of his own willing and running, though that is a time of great distress, when the full mind is emptied and brought low; but, He that shows mercy is near, and the day of mercy is not far off to that soul. The Lord raise up that in thee, which is of Him; and so guide and order thy heart, that it may long and cry after Him, and be heard and satisfied by Him.

KNOWLEDGE

By St. Cadoc. 6th Century.

Without knowledge no power
Without knowledge no wisdom
Without knowledge no freedom
Without knowledge no beauty
Without knowledge no nobleness
Without knowledge no victory
Without knowledge no honor
Without knowledge no God
The best of attitudes is humility.

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ATTAINMENT OF POWERS

By Swami Ramakrishnananda

The Scriptures say that as long as man cares for powers he can never attain salvation. Evolution means rolling out; that is the inner powers become more and more manifest. Man is made in the image of God; he possesses all the powers of God, only in a miniature form. Development means getting more and more—increasing our power. But say we have at the end of this year ten times more power than we have now; at the end of two years one hundred times more, and so on until we may have a million times more power than at the present time, still the quantity is limited and a limited or finite quantity, however great, compared to infinity, is infinitesimally small or zero. So by the development of powers we can never hope to attain to God; for powers must always remain finite while God is infinite.

Can there be any conception that is not based on the experience of the senses? No. Every finite conception pre-supposes sense perception and for that reason they are all deceiving and false. Truth is the only reality. It is the only real thing of which all other things are qualities. All things are based on this one Truth; but it is not possible to conceive the Truth, for it itself is the conceiver. All these conceptions are mere reflections of the Truth; but because they have that little reflecting light of Truth in them, we take them to be true. We can never *know* Truth, but we can *be* Truth; for the finite can never know the infinite. However, we can no doubt have some intellectual perception of what Truth is; if that were not the case, why should we be so eager to know it? To a simple mind Truth is much more conceivable and forcible than to a mind which has been given a definite shape by much reading and study.

Only a man can do a man's work and only God can do God's

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work. It is foolish for us to suppose that we can work for God. We can only be channels through which He does His work. What can we do for Him when He is all-perfect? We cannot help God. It is He Who is doing everything. It is He Who makes the baby weak, but it is also He Who gives a loving mother to care for it. So whenever He creates a need, He also creates the means to satisfy it. Work means self-amelioration. The ordinary work we do chiefly benefits ourselves, and Swami Vivekananda was right when he said that the receiver should stand and permit, the giver should kneel down and give thanks that the needy man has given him an opportunity to unfold himself. This is no exaggeration. It is literally true, for what happens when you do good to another? You actually expand your own heart and grow more unselfish. But suppose there were no needy people then to help, what would happen? You would become a selfish brute.

We are all fallen from our Divine state and we need to serve others in order to lift ourselves up out of this degeneration; so we should be grateful to those whom we help for making it possible through service to raise ourselves out of this degraded state. That is the chief good that comes out of all we do for others. We make ourselves strong. We must not, however, waste any time in grieving over our shortcomings and failures. The idea that we have committed a sin is one which we should never dwell upon. The only sin is to call a man a sinner. Remember always that by our real nature we are pure, we are perfect, we are Divine. A man may mistake a rope for a snake, but any amount of imagination will not turn the rope into a snake. So we may think that we have committed a sin, but nothing can ever change our real, pure, divine nature. That remains always the same and we are always that.

This was the peculiarity of our Master, Sri Ramakrishna.

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He never told us that anything was wrong. On the contrary He knew there was nothing wrong in these enjoyments of the world, but by tasting them He felt sure that His children would come to realize their worthlessness and then be satisfied only with higher enjoyments. He was not merely the protector of the good. He also was the protector of all the wrong-doers. He tolerated all sides. He was literally too pure to see iniquity. He only wanted all His children to be happy; and if one of us came with the least shadow on his face, He could not bear it and He would at once scold us.

We are like the bird on the tree about which the Upanishads tell us. The tree is full of hundreds of luscious fruits and the bird, seeing one, thinks: "Oh! if I could only taste that one, I am sure it would give me pleasure"; so he goes nearer and although he may have to thrust his head through thorns, still he takes a bite out of the fruit; but alas! he finds it very bitter. So with perhaps twenty or thirty fruits, until he is almost discouraged and is about to give up. Then he happens to taste one that is sweet. This gives him new expectation and again he starts out searching for another sweet fruit, perhaps tasting ten or twelve bitter ones before he finds one sweet one. Only when no more taste sweet to him is he ready to give up.

How has evil come into the world? A man comes to sell sugar candy—a sugar man, sugar mango, sugar doll. A little boy looks at them and says, please father buy me that bird because I believe the bird will taste sweeter, but in reality all are the same. In the same way man looks at the world and says this is good and this is bad, but as a matter of fact it is all made out of the same substance. One must get everything from inside or from Nature. Nature is God's book and blessed is the man who knows how to read it. There is a vast difference between man-made books and God-made books. The first tell only relative facts and the second tell the absolute Truth.

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If we would know the Truth therefore, we must go directly to the book of Nature. God is the only existence that is real and all other existences are unrealities, behind which God exists as the reality.

PASSING OF A GREAT SOUL

Once again the hand of death has been laid upon the Ramakrishna Mission, and again it has summoned one of the most dearly beloved. On July 21st, only four months after the loss of the Swami Brahmananda, first President of the Mission, Swami Turiyananda, another disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, entered into Mahasamadhi,—the final supreme vision,—as the passing of an illumined soul is called.

The fragrance of a holy life cannot be conveyed by words, the best we can do is to indicate the facts of that life that they may hint at the spirit within. When Sri Ramakrishna gave up his physical body, he left behind him an ardent group of youthful Sannyasins or monks, young men absolutely consecrated to the ideals of renunciation and service as laid down to them by their divine Master, and all on fire to spread them abroad among men. Swami Turiyananda was one of this little company of disciples. He labored with them, endured with them and gloried with them when the great Mission of Ramakrishna was only a seed in their hearts, and he lived to see its tender healing touch laid upon the heart of the Motherland and its benign influence reach the farthest shores of the world. He was by nature endowed with the "divine properties", a rare combination of devotion and wisdom balanced by action. Indeed Sri Ramakrishna said of him at their first meeting that he was "a yogi of the type described in the Gita".

He accompanied Swami Vivekananda to the West on his second trip to America, and was left in charge of the newly established Vedanta work in San Francisco. No one could

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have been better fitted than he to lay its spiritual foundations. And they were laid so quietly and unobtrusively. Perhaps his most potent influence radiated not so much from the head-quarters in San Francisco as from the retreat in the hills where he spent many months surrounded by earnest and devoted hearts. These students built for him with their own hands a small log house and around this clustered their tents. Even the furniture was hand-made, being constructed out of packing boxes and barrels. The life both outer and inner was one of absolute simplicity and suggested the forest life of the early Aryan teacher and his pupils. It was the majestic calm of nature sanctified by a holy presence. None who lived there with the Swami can ever forget it. Many souls in the West are still vibrant with his influence and to this day his name is spoken with deep feeling even by those who made but a passing contact with him.

On returning to India he was greeted with the news that his adored brother sannyasin, Swami Vivekananda had been drawn back into the Master's heart. The thought that he would never see him again in this life struck very deep and in his sacred grief he went for a time into retirement. All the remainder of his life was spent in India and for the last five years he lived in the holy city of Benares. It was there that he died. His final release was not unexpected for his body had been gradually breaking, but none save the Swami himself knew that the end was so near. On hearing that Swami Brahmananda had gone, he predicted his own departure in about three months. Soon afterwards a physical trouble developed which made his words come true. Five days before the end he said: "Five days more shall I remain with you." And again on the night before, "To-morrow is the last day."

An American lady, a pupil of Swami Vivekananda writes: "I stopped off at Benares twenty-four hours to see dear Swami

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Turiyananda. Alas, he died on July 21st and was like Swami Brahmananda, triumphant to the end. His bed was surrounded by loving disciples. About thirty monks had come to Benares on account of his serious illness, for to the Hindu to be at the death of a great Sadhu or Saint, is a blessing, and relays of these monks were privileged to wait upon and serve him day and night. As soon as I arrived I saw and talked to him. Such a welcome was alone worth coming for to India! Then the next day before I left, early in the morning, he sent for me. He seemed like a lion, conquering, fearless. Rousing himself from the pain he seemed to forget it and his body."

It is thus great souls bless even in dying, for true holiness can so sanctify pain and disaster as to make them seem the rarest gifts of life. Some of this blessing is conveyed to us in these lines from Swami Saradananda, Secretary of the Mission. He says: "His physical suffering was terrible for a whole month, for it was impossible to find a comfortable position to rest the body. But never have we seen anything like the way he bore all that, not only with patience and calmness but withal with joy! He would forget all his sufferings as soon as any one would speak of the Master or the Swami Vivekananda and he was heard sometimes to say, 'Who is suffering? Do I care for the body and its ailments!' On the morning of the last day he told Swami Akhandananda 'A good and blessed morning, we are Divine Mother's and the Mother is ours!' Calling all by his bedside a little before he passed away, in the afternoon he made them repeat the words 'Brahman (Absolute Being) is true, the world too is true, life, (prana) is established in truth.' Then the Swami Akhandananda chanted 'Brahman is Truth, Knowledge and Infinitude—Brahman is supreme Knowledge and Bliss' and the great soul passed away chanting those supreme words:" "No sign of pain or anguish on his face, it was filled with heavenly bliss."

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REPORT

For over a year now Swami Paramananda, head of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, has given his time almost exclusively to the Boston work. He has made no extended trips either to California or abroad and has seldom been absent over a Sunday, even when on lecture tour in the Middle-West last Fall and Winter. For the past seven months he has not been away at all. As a result of his continued presence, the work in Boston has shown a marked increase. All through the quiet summer months the attendance at both the Sunday Services and at the Tuesday evening classes has been uninterruptedly large. During August, perhaps the deadest month in the year, the Chapel was always crowded, even upon holidays such as Labor Day when thousands leave the city. An unusual number of visitors have come from all parts of the country, often making special pilgrimage to the Centre, thereby strengthening its lines of connection with Cincinnati, Louisville, Rochester, Cleveland, Washington, D. C., and the states of New Hampshire and New York.

A new and lovely feature has been introduced into the Sunday evening Service,—the reading by Swami Paramananda of his own poems which are now in the hands of the printer and will be out in book form by the first of November. This has drawn many people Sunday after Sunday who would not miss the rare privilege of hearing the Swami's voice in these poems.

In the latter part of September a long cherished dream of the Centre came into actual being. A printing press was installed and was put into immediate and successful operation, turning out the month's lecture announcement for the Sunday Services and weekly classes. Although publication has always been a vital part of the Centre's activities, up to this time the technical work connected with it has been done outside.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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HOW TO CULTIVATE JOYOUSNESS

By Swami Paramananda

One of the most beautiful names man has ever given to the Supreme is Anandam—Bliss. The Vedic sages in India from the early days of their spiritual revelation defined the one absolute Being by a three-fold name, Sat-chit-anandam, which means Absolute Existence, Absolute Knowledge and Absolute Bliss. When man reaches his Source he obtains these three aspects of Divinity which make for complete happiness, complete wisdom and complete security in life. For in the Absolute there is no death or fear of death; in the Absolute there is no error or ignorance, for the power of evil cannot prevail against It. In the Absolute there is unbounded life and fullness of joy.

We are all directly or indirectly aiming for this one end,—to gain unbroken happiness. We may not always admit this, but if we sum up our entire philosophy, our devotion to life and its activities, we shall find that in one way or another we are reaching out for that which promises happiness. Some try to acquire happiness by unjust means, but all their efforts bring only contrary reactions. A thief robs, a murderer kills in thirst for happiness, but their misguided zeal brings upon their soul only gloom and bitterness. It seems strange that we aim for one end and obtain another. It is because we do not utilize

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the God-given power of discernment. We cannot afford to pursue the wake of every selfish impulse for soon we discover that self-love is the cause of all our bondage, and self-seeking lies at the root of all our misery, and only as we learn to discard these from our heart is it filled with the unfailing light of Truth and unending bliss.

If God is Bliss, then His children must have full share in it and must always radiate that blissfulness, and if they fail to radiate it, then there must be something wrong, some condition that obstructs its free manifestation. When a person allows himself to fall under the sway of worries, depression and sadness, he loses his grasp on this fundamental principle of life. He believes more in his physical reality than he believes in the power of Truth; in fact instead of depending on the all-ness and all-pervading power of the Infinite he depends on his own limited strength of bodily life, and as a natural result of this limited consciousness he soon gets into a great tangle and not being able to liberate himself from this, he settles down into a morbid sense of failure and becomes a prey to all kinds of anxious thoughts.

Through the ages we find that the followers of a certain type of religion form the habit of an unwholesome sadness; they think they must not have any sense of buoyancy or gladness of heart, especially when they enter a place of worship. But a child of God should always have a heavenly smile upon his face. However, we cannot wear this smile unless we cultivate that joyousness within. This means that we have to go deep down to the very foundation of life. Also such joy is contagious. If we possess it we can impart it; if we have it not, pretending gives nothing to us or to any one else. A person may smile and that smile may scorn another. It must be whole-hearted, it must be from within, and this smile of joy from within is our birthright and we can all manifest it.

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There are some people who say, how can we be happy when this world is merged in misery? Why should you be unhappy and add to the burden of the world? Did you ever remove any one's unhappiness when merely out of sympathy you began to weep with him. If you possess the true spirit of joy, then alone can you lift the veil of despair from another.

A great principle of the Indian philosophic system is that one should always practise contentment and cheerfulness of heart, for without it the spiritual path is very arduous and one is easily discouraged. You may ask how can we be content when we have so little, we could be satisfied if we had a fortune. It is not a question of fortune or of misfortune. There are some people who are never contented. If they have a little they are discontented, if they have more they are still discontented. They always find some reason to be unhappy. This is a very serious disease of the mind; also it is infectious. They breathe an unhappy morbid atmosphere and they fill the radius of their life with unhappiness so that others feel it. You know what a tremendous drag it is in a household when one of the members is always melancholy and depressed. There is nothing one can do to help him but he can help himself.

It is the same mind which reflects both happiness and unhappiness; it is the same mind which recognizes bondage and freedom. By the power of that God-given heritage we are able to rise, to lift up our head and also by means of it we can drag ourselves down to the very depths. There is great value therefore in cultivating a sense of joyousness, of lightness of heart. It helps one physically, it helps one mentally and morally, and it lays the foundation for our spiritual life. It is not anything we can buy. Is is something that we earn. Good deeds earn one happiness and good deeds we can perform just as readily as we perform bad deeds. An unselfish act brings one happiness at the time and also it leaves the flavor of happi-

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ness; the fragrance of it lingers long after the act, but it must come from within one's own soul.

There is a beautiful little incident in connection with the Buddha's life. Once when he was wandering as a mendicant he came to a house. A servant was cutting the grass in the meadows nearby. When the servant saw this holy figure approaching he knew that he came for alms, so he ran to the house and begged for his share of the food. It was given. Returning to the Buddha he offered it all to him without thinking of himself, and the Buddha blessed him. The daughter of the household, witnessing his act said, "That is well done, Amabhara thou hast earned merit." "Indeed," the man replied, "I feel full of happiness because of it." When the master of the house heard of this he said: "Won't you share your merit with me?" The servant went to the Buddha and asked: "May I share my bliss with my master?" In reply the Buddha told him a parable. He said: "Once there was a village with hundreds of houses but with only one light. All the villagers came and lighted their lamps and torches from it, but although that one light gave birth to many lights and made the village brighter, it was none the poorer. Give thy merit then to another. Thou mayest give without losing." Amabhara returned to his master and said to him: "I gladly share my merit with you." His master offered him a sum of money in return but Amabhara replied, "Not so, my lord, if I accept your money it would be selling my share. Bliss cannot be sold."

Those who have found their joy of God within are not reluctant to share with others. It is only those who have not found their inherent treasure who rob and cheat and plan and scheme that they may have for themselves; but they never find anything because that is not the way to happiness. How often we see a man of untold wealth in such depths of misery that sometimes he commits suicide. It is not money that makes for

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happiness, not material possession, but the quality of mind. A person may be buoyant, happy, exalted, full of usefulness to his community and yet have nothing, while another who has much and can easily lend a hand to his fellow-beings does not, but thinks he ought to have more and is filled with dissatisfaction. We do not have to make a study of philosophy or religion to understand this; we see it every day before our very eyes, and yet we do not learn because we are led by the thirst for the external. It does not give us what we really seek, but nevertheless every individual is seeking, is reaching out, nor can he stop until he finds his life's ideal.

If we have found access to that light which can illumine our heart, which can destroy our darkness and heaviness, then we give, just like that parable. Others may come and light their torch and their candle and their lamp, and yet we lose nothing by it. Even though we may perceive many things, even though we may use high-sounding words of charity and giving, our gift is very meagre. We are always calculating what we may get from it. But a lover of God, a knower of Truth, he does not calculate because he has reached the inexhaustible Source. God is Bliss. When a man finds Him all his miseries vanish, and until he has found Him he cannot get away from misery. When we approach that light, darkness departs, because the nature of light is to dispel darkness. The same way when we reach the universal Spirit—the heart of Truth—all our burdens fall away.

You say, how may we attain this? We have to attain it gradually. We have allowed our mind to become saturated with all kinds of worldly thoughts and feelings, selfish thoughts and desires. If we once more want to implant something high and holy, we must do so with patience and perseverance. Whenever any one, even in a small measure, finds that he has within himself something higher, greater and more satisfying

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than all that the outside world can give him, will he not then be freed from all feverish unrest and grow quiet and serene-hearted? Will he not add to his own happiness and to the happiness of his household, his friends, and his fellow-beings? There are those who even in the midst of storm and turbulence, maintain their equilibrium. This cheerfulness is not mere pretence. They have found the right value of life because they no longer live on the surface. People who live altogether on the surface have ups and downs. It is unfortunate that we depend so wholly on the exterior. Our outer life and experience would be far more rich and effective if we always tried to draw from our spiritual resources.

This life gives us countless avenues through which we can earn our happiness and share it with our fellow-beings, and also it has perplexities and complexities by which we may mar our happiness, yet all we do when misfortune comes is to blame others and say,—I would be happy, I would have great power, I would be successful if only other people did not interfere with me. Spiritual joy is unconditioned; it is not dependent on any one, on what others may say or do. No one has any power to mar our inner happiness once we have found it. There is no one who has any access to it. In fact we should not allow any one to have access. It is the place of Divinity. The altars and sanctuaries which the religions have evolved according to their different concepts are but the outer forms and symbols of that which every one should carry within himself. Each living being should have an altar in his heart where he can see the face of the Divine,—a secluded corner which no turbulence can reach. You say, how can we do this when we are so busy? We have to think of our bread and butter, our families, our obligations. No one is asking you to refrain from thinking of these things. You may think of them, but it will bring a sense of satisfaction into your life and you will

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look after your duties with greater efficiency if you have the higher guidance. There is no mortal who is self-sufficient, but this does not mean that a person is always dependent on others. One must find joy within. There are certain people who always have to draw on somebody else for their recreation, their happiness, their strength. They cannot be left alone one single moment; they feel weighted by life. We must never allow ourselves to fall into a state in which we are not capable of taking care of ourselves. We should be glad when circumstances offer us opportunities for aloneness, that we may reflect silently deep down within our own soul and cultivate the love of high ideals.

We can be a blessing and also we can be a curse to ourselves and to others. It is not what a man says, but what he is. If he has that great love in his heart, if he has that sense of rest and recreation within, which can only come with spiritual upliftment, he radiates it just like a flower which gives its fragrance regardless of who receives it. Such a person, whether he is travelling or at home, walking or sitting, talking or silent, is imparting something vital and valuable to those around him. His very being, his very expression inspires one, electrifies one with hope, inspiration and courage. Another person who has shut his door to these blessings, finds much unhappiness in his own soul and he invariably and involuntarily thrusts his gloom and his burden upon others. These are facts we have to cope with in every day existence and real spiritual teaching is to help us lift the burden from our daily life. As we learn to do this we build a heaven for ourselves, and as we always share our possessions, we find that we are also building a heaven for others. Therefore no matter what our vocation is, no matter how we are placed, we must try to lift up our head, not with aggressiveness and arrogance but with a sense of spiritual dependence.

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Behind us there is the Infinite; before us there is the Infinite; all about us there is the Infinite and we live, move and have our being in that Infinite Life. We cannot trust in the Divine and be faint-hearted at the same time. The nature of misfortune is to crush, but the spiritually minded transform calamity into blessing and find their exaltation in crucifixion, danger and difficulty. They have found the secret of life. It is not the opportunities we have but how we utilize them,—the secret lies in that. If we have found our access to Divinity, then our whole life must testify to it. In the commonest word that we may utter, in the most ordinary task that we perform,—everywhere do we carry that great Spirit with us because He is present everywhere from the atom to the Infinite. He is the Light, the Source of all happiness and when we do not have happiness it means that we do not possess Him consciously. One of the attributes of all spiritual teachers is their great joyousness, their cheerfulness under all circumstances. "The Knower of Truth is ever fearless and is ever full of bliss" say the Upanishads. The Knower of Truth is indeed full of bliss and free from all fear, not an aggressive fearlessness, but a fearlessness which is undaunted because there is no selfishness behind it. There is absolute trust in the Divine.

When we have found our home in Truth we have a true home to which we can welcome all, our friends and fellow-beings, and we can relieve them from their sadness and gloom. When we live in the higher life we can always adjust lower conditions. In the morning when we rise our day need not appear gloomy because the sun is not shining on the horizon, but if we are not able to find our spiritual connection, then indeed is it a gloomy day. If we learn to carry that unfailing light always with us on all occasions, we shall never fail to find abundant life and joy.

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UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Man is born in this world with two tendencies,—the tendency towards liberation and the tendency towards world and bondage. When born, both tendencies are in equilibrium like the scales of a balance. The world soon places its enjoyments and pleasures on one scale, and the spirit its attractions on the other. If the mind chooses the world, the worldly scale becomes heavy and gravitates towards the earth. But if it chooses the spirit, the spiritual scale rises towards God.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

If thou didst but know the pleasure of abandoning pleasure thou wouldst never more talk about the pleasures of sense.—*The Dabistan.*

Let the oxen work merrily; let the men work merrily; let the plough move on merrily. Fasten the traces merrily, ply the goad merrily.

Let the ploughshares turn up the sod merrily, let the men follow the oxen merrily. May Parjanya moisten the earth with sweet rains. O Soma bestow on us happiness.—*Rig-Veda—Hymn dedicated to the Lord of the Field.*

I, Lord, went wandering like a strayed sheep, seeking Thee with anxious reasoning without, whilst Thou wast within me; I wearied myself much in looking for Thee without, and yet Thou hast Thy habitation within me, if I long and breathe after Thee. I went round the streets and places of the city of this world, seeking Thee, and found Thee not; because in vain I sought without for Him who was within myself.—*St. Austin.*

If you do not wish for His Kingdom, don't pray for it. But if you do, you must do more than pray for it; you must work for it.—*John Ruskin.*

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Remember that you are an actor in a drama, of such a kind as the author pleases to make it. If short, of a short one; if long, of a long one. If it be His pleasure, you should act a poor man, a cripple, a governor, or a private person, see that you act it naturally. For this is your business, to act well the character assigned you; to choose it is another's.

If you ever happen to turn your attention to externals, so as to wish to please any one, be assured that you have ruined your scheme of life. Be contented then in everything with being a philosopher; and if you wish to be thought so likewise by any one, appear so to yourself, and it will suffice you.—*Epictetus.*

We can't choose happiness either for ourselves or for another; we can't tell where that will lie. We can only choose whether we will indulge ourselves in the present moment, or whether we will renounce that, for the sake of obeying the Divine voice within us, for the sake of being true to all the motives that sanctify our lives. I know this belief is hard; it has slipped away from me again and again; but I have felt that if I let it go forever, I should have no light through the darkness of this life.—*George Eliot.*

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

The enjoyments which are born through contact with sense-objects are ever generators of misery; they are with beginning and end. The wise do not seek pleasure in them.

He whose joy is within, whose pleasure is within, and whose light is within, that Yogi, being well-established in Brahman, attains to absolute freedom.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

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CONVERSE WITH GOD

By Fenelon. 17th Century.

You do not yet know the attractive, happy side of religion. You see what it takes away, but you do not see what it gives: you exaggerate its sacrifices without perceiving its consolations. No indeed, it leaves no void in the heart; it will only draw you to that which you will learn to prefer to all that has so long enthralled you. If the world never exacted anything but what your heart could accept lovingly, would it not be a better master than it is? But God will take heed for you, wait for you, prepare you, give you the will before He asks you to act. He loves you better than you know how to love yourself. He pursues you in mercy, and disturbs your heart in order to conquer it.

What does He ask of you, save to be happy? Have you not realized that one is happy in loving Him? Have you not felt that there is no other real happiness, whatever excitement may be found in sensual pleasures, apart from Him? Be cheerful, as one who has found his real treasure and has no further need of anything. Take the day as it comes, without anxiety; each day, as our Lord tells us, will "take care for the things of itself." Each day brings its own grace and help as well as its troubles and temptations. Talk freely with God; be simple as a child with Him. The more your will is dead to all the vain longings and unholy pleasures of the world, the more you will be alive to that innocent, childlike happiness which is far beyond the most gorgeous scenes vainly devised by the great ones of this world for their satisfaction. How weary and bored they are, poor people, amid their splendour! You will laugh at their folly, miscalled wisdom, in your true wisdom, which asks naught save God, and can enter in all simplicity into the joy of the Holy Spirit.

A man becomes lifeless and without heart directly that he is

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without the indescribable something which sustains, upholds, renews him hour by hour. All that which the mad lovers of this world say in their frenzy is literally true after a fashion. To be without love is not to live, and to love feebly is rather waste than growth. God made us to live through Him and His love. We were born to be fed and consumed by that love, like as a torch is wasted while it gives forth light. This is the blessed flame of life which God has kindled in the bottom of our heart; all other life is mere death. We must love.

What will you love? This body of clay which fetters our reason, and subjects the soul to present sickness and approaching death? What then? Will you love nothing? Will you drag on a lifeless existence rather than love God Who loves you, Who seeks your love, and would have you to be wholly His, only that He may give Himself wholly to you? Do you fear that you should lack aught, possessing such a treasure? Do you not believe that the Infinite God can fill and satisfy your heart? Put not your trust in yourself or in anything created; it is all a mere nothing, which can never satisfy the heart of man, made as it is for God. But never mistrust Him Who contains every good thing in Himself, in order to bring you forcibly back to Himself.

Make it your habit to speak with God, not of the set thoughts you work out, but of the warm feelings with which your heart is filled. If you feel His Presence, and are kindled by His love, tell Him so; thank Him for drawing a soul so unworthy of His love. At such times of sensible sweetness you will find no difficulty in pouring out your heart. But what, you will ask, are you to say in seasons of dryness, coldness and weariness? Still say what rises in your heart. Tell God that you cannot feel His love, that you are empty and cold, that He wearies you, that His Presence does not move you, that you would fain leave Him for the idlest pleasures, that you will

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never be easy till you are far from Him and full of self. Tell Him all that you know is wrong in you. Do you ask what to say to Him? Is this not subject-matter for plenty to say? While you are telling Him your troubles you are praying Him to cure them.

There is no need to say much to God. One often does not talk much to a friend whom one is delighted to see; one enjoys looking at him, and one says some few words which are purely matter of feeling. The mind has little or nothing to do with it; one says the same thing over and over again. One does not so much seek interchange of thought as rest and communion of heart with one's friend. Even so it should be with God, Who vouchsafes to be our tenderest, most cordial, most familiar Friend. . . But with respect to God, a word, a sigh, a thought, a feeling, says all. Nor is it needful to be always in a state of excitement and emotion; often a very dry, bare, insipid, lifeless goodwill may be most acceptable in God's sight. After all, we must be content to offer Him His own gifts: a kindled heart, if He kindles it; or a heart faithful and steadfast amid dryness, when He denies it warmth and sensible sweetness.

ECSTASY

By St. John of the Cross

Rapt in oblivion, the soul
Doth in a single moment learn
More than the busy brain and sense,
With all their toil, could ever learn.

Mirrored within its God, it views
To-day, to-morrow, and the past,
And faith sees here in time the things
That through eternity shall last.

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CONTENTMENT

Reflections of Marcus Aurelius

Wilt thou then, my soul, never be good and simple and one and naked, more manifest than the body which surrounds thee? Wilt thou never enjoy an affectionate and contented disposition? Wilt thou never be full and without a want of any kind, longing for nothing more, nor desiring anything, either animate or inanimate, for the enjoyment of pleasures? Nor yet desiring time wherein thou shalt have longer enjoyment, or place, or pleasant climate, or society of men with whom thou mayst live in harmony? But wilt thou be satisfied with thy present condition and pleased with all that is about thee; and wilt thou convince thyself that thou hast everything and that it comes from the gods; that everything is well for thee and will be well, whatever shall please them and whatever they shall give for the conservation of the perfect living being, the good and just and beautiful, which generates and holds together all things? Wilt thou never be such that thou shalt so dwell in community with gods and men as neither to find fault with them at all, nor to be condemned by them?

Whether the universe is atoms or Nature, let this first be established, that I am a part of the whole which is governed by Nature; next, I am in a manner intimately related to the parts which are the same kind with myself. For remembering this, inasmuch as I am a part, I shall be discontented with none of the things which are assigned to me out of the whole; for nothing is injurious to the part if it is for the advantage of the whole. For the whole contains nothing which is not for its advantage; and all natures indeed have this common principle; but the nature of the universe has this principle besides, that it cannot be compelled even by any external cause to generate anything harmful to itself. By remembering, then, that I am a part of such a whole, I shall be content with everything that happens.

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LIMITING ADJUNCT OF MIND

Extract from Conversation by Swami Vivekananda

Man is man because qualified by the limiting adjunct of mind. With the mind he has to understand and grasp everything and therefore whatever he thinks must be limited by the mind. To argue from the analogy of his own personality, the personality of *Ishvara* (God) is the natural way of man. Man can only think of his ideal as a human being. When buffeted by sorrows in this world of disease and death, he is driven to desperation and helplessness; then he longs for a refuge, relying on whom he may feel safe. But where is that refuge to be found? The Self-existent, omnipresent *Atman* is the only Refuge.

At first man does not see this. He comes to know it when discrimination and dispassion arise in the course of meditation and spiritual practice. But in whatever way one may progress on the path of spirituality, one is unconsciously awakening the *Brahman* (the Supreme) within him. The means, however, may be different in different cases. Those who have faith in the Personal God, have to perform spiritual practices, relying on and holding to that idea. If there is sincerity, from that will come the awakening of the lion of *Brahman* within. *Brahmajnana* (knowledge of *Brahman*) is the one goal of *Jivas* (individual souls); the various ideas regarding it are the various paths to it. Although the real nature of *Jiva* is the *Brahman*, still so long as he has identification with the qualifying adjunct of mind he suffers from doubts and difficulties, pleasure and pain. But every one, from the *Brahma* (the Creator) to a blade of grass, is advancing towards the realization of his real nature. Obtaining human birth, when the desire for freedom becomes very strong and is combined with the grace of a person of realization, then man's desire for *Atmajnana* (self-knowledge) becomes very powerful; otherwise the mind of men, given to

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desire for wealth and lust, never inclines that way. He who has the desire in his mind to attain wealth, fame, and to be bound up within the narrow circle of life, how will the search for the knowledge of *Brahman* arise in him? He who is prepared to renounce all, who is calm, steady, balanced and awake to Reality in this strong current of duality—good and bad, happiness and misery—such a man endeavours to attain to Self-knowledge. He alone by the might of his own power tears asunder the net of the world and breaking the barriers of Maya, emerges like a mighty lion.

Always ponder that this body is only an inert instrument. The self-existent *Purusha* within is your real nature. The adjunct of mind is His first and subtle covering, this body is His gross covering. The unbroken, changeless, self-effulgent *Purusha* is lying hidden under these veils; for this reason your real nature is unknown to you. The mind now directed towards the senses has to be turned within. The body is gross; it dies and dissolves in the five elements. The bundle of *Samskaras* or mental impressions which make up the mind does not die soon. It remains for sometime in seed-form and then sprouts and grows into a tree; then obtaining a physical body, it goes round the wheel of birth and death until Self-knowledge arises. Therefore do I say that by meditation and practice and by the power of philosophical discrimination plunge this mind in the ocean of Absolute Existence and Bliss.

Will you sit and wait for this? At once set to work digging the channel which will convey the waters of spirituality to your life. Sri Ramakrishna used to urge the giving up of all lukewarmness, as in such thoughts that religion will come gradually and there is no hurry for it. When real thirst has come, can a man sit idle? Does he not run about searching for water? Because your thirst for spirituality has not come, therefore you are sitting idle. The desire for knowledge has not become

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strong; for that reason you are living absorbed in the little thoughts of household life. The end and the means are all in your own hands, I can only stimulate your desire for knowledge

DIVINE COMMUNION

From the Maxims of Brother Lawrence

What offering is there more acceptable to God than thus throughout the day to quit the things of outward sense, and to withdraw to worship Him within the secret places of the soul? Besides by so doing we destroy the love of self, which can subsist only among the things of sense, and of which these times of quiet retirement with God rids us well-nigh unconsciously.

In very truth we can render to God no greater or more signal proofs of our trust and faithfulness, than by thus turning from things created to find our joy, though for a single moment, in the Creator. Yet, think not that I counsel you to disregard completely and for ever the outward things that are around us. That is impossible. Prudence, the mother of the virtues, must be your guide. Yet, I am confident, it is a common error among religious persons, to neglect this practice of ceasing for a time that, which they are engaged upon, to worship God in the depth of their soul, and to enjoy the peace of brief communion with Him.

Great would be our surprise, if we but knew what converse the soul holds at these times with God, who seems to so delight in this communion, that to the soul, which would fain abide ever with Him, He bestows favours past numbering; and as if He dreaded lest the soul should turn again to things of earth, He provides for it abundantly, so that the soul finds in faith a nourishment divine, a joy that has no measure, beyond its utmost thought and desires; and this without a single effort on its part but simple consent.

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THE CONQUERING SWAN

Rendered from the Mahabharata

There lived on the other side of the ocean a Vaisya possessed of wealth and grain and a good heart. He had many sons whom he loved and he was kind to all creatures. These well-behaved young children of the Vaisya were accustomed to give the remains of their food to a crow that lived in the neighbourhood, so that he fared well on curds and milk and sugared milk with rice and honey and butter. Thus fed, he grew arrogant and came to look down upon all birds that were equal to him and even upon those that were his superiors.

Now it chanced that certain swans of cheerful heart and great speed came to that side of the ocean. The Vaisya boys beholding them, urged on the crow. "O ranger of the skies," they cried, "thou art superior to all winged creatures!" Hearing these ignorant words the crow, swollen with conceit and folly, believed them. Proud of the refuse upon which he fed, he alighted in the midst of those kingly birds of tireless wing and challenged their leader to compete in flight. The assembled swans began to laugh and one replied, "We are swans, having our abode on the holy lake Manasa in the eternal snows. We traverse the whole earth and none can out-distance us. Being as thou art, only a crow, how canst thou, O fool, challenge a swan? Tell us, O crow, how shalt thou fly with us?"

The boastful crow, repeatedly finding fault with the words of the swan, at last gave this answer: "I shall without doubt fly, displaying a hundred and one different motions,—rising up and swooping down and whirling around and coursing straight and proceeding gently and performing diverse courses up and down in a slanting direction. I shall presently rise into the sky. Point out duly, ye swans, by which of these motions I shall course with you through supportless space." "O thou of red eyes," answered the swan, "fly thou in any kind of manner

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that thou likest. I shall, however, fly according to that one motion known to all birds, for I do not, O crow, know any other."

Then those two, the swan and the crow, rose into the sky, challenging each other. They began to soar and alight repeatedly, coming down and rising up from tree-tops and the surface of the earth till the crows were filled with great joy and began to caw loudly. The swans also laughed in mockery, uttering many remarks disagreeable to the crows. The swan, however, with that one kind of slow movement with which he was familiar, began to traverse the skies and for a moment seemed to yield to the crow. "The swan is falling behind!" screamed the crows. At this, the soaring swan flew westward with great velocity towards the ocean. Then fear entered the heart of the crow. He became almost senseless when he saw no island or trees whereon to perch when he grew tired. For what is a crow to the ocean? Its waters are as limitless as space.

The swan, having in a moment covered a great distance, looked back at the crow, and though able to leave him far behind, would not do so. Out of compassion he waited for him. Completely exhausted by his flight, the crow struggled to come up to the swan, who desirous of rescuing him asked, "Why dost thou repeatedly touch the water with thy wings and beak? What is the name of this new kind of flight that thou art practising?" Sinking with fatigue the crow made answer: "We are only crows. We wander hither and thither crying *caw, caw!* O swan, I see no limit to this watery expanse. Without thy aid I am surely lost,—save me!"

Seeing him at the point of death the swan spoke with pitiful heart: "Thou that wouldst fly in a hundred different courses, thou that art superior to me,—alas, why then art thou tired and fallen on the waters?" With his *caw, caw!* ever growing

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feebler, drenched by the waves, repulsive to look at and trembling with fear, the weeping crow replied: "Proud of the leavings on which I fed, I regarded myself as thy equal and looked down upon all other birds. I now, however, place my life-breath in thy hands. Take me, O swan, to the shores of some island and I will cast off all pride and arrogance. Never again will I scorn another." Without a word, the swan took the crow upon his snowy back and quickly carried him to that island from which they had flown. Placing him on dry land he comforted him and then, fleet as the mind, soared into those lofty regions which were his home. But the crow, conquered by the swan, henceforth lived near the earth, a life of humility and peace.

PRAYER OF THE CHILD-SAINT DHRUVA

Translated from the Sanskrit of the Vishnu-Purana

O God, I am only a little boy, how can I sing Thy glory, Whom even the great sages, learned in the eternal Vedas, have not been able to know fully? My heart is filled with devotion to Thee, O Sovereign Lord! Do Thou grant me such understanding that I may be able to lay my humble praise and adoration at Thy Feet.

Thou abidest in all, Thou art all. Thou assumest all forms. All are from Thee. Thou art the Soul of all. Glory unto Thee, Lord of all beings.

As Thou art the Soul of all, the Lord of all, the Origin of all, what can I say unto Thee Who knowest already the innermost thoughts of my mind, since Thou abidest in the heart of every living being?

Thou knowest all creatures and their desires; Thou, Who art the Soul of their soul, the Lord of creation.

O Supreme Ruler of the universe, by Thy Grace has my prayer been heard of Thee. Fully hast Thou blessed me, since Thou hast revealed Thyself unto me. All Glory be unto Thee, Eternal Lord of all.

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SONGS OF NATURE

By Swami Paramananda

(Reprinted from "Soul's Secret Door")

Coming of the Morn

How lovely and fragrant is the coming of the morn!
How tenderly it wakens the Lord of day to His dawn!
How sweetly it sings its heralding!
How quietly it opens the mansion of its King!
How gently it rouses the flowers from their night's repose!
My soul delights at the coming of the morn;
My heart sings at the approach of dawn.

Awake Brother

The tree-tops are glistening with beaming smile as they are lightly touched by rays of the rising sun.
They rose early to bathe in the pool of sweet dew-drops,
And awaited eagerly to pay homage to their Lord.
Now they are greeting all the early risers with refreshed spirit of joy.
O awake, brother! Linger thou no more!
Come and see this newness and freshness of love, life and joy!

Happy Chorus

A choir of sweet voices awoke me from my dreaming.
It was the hymn of praise of the birds
To Sun, the Lord of Light.
They sang their heart's thanksgiving
For their night's rest and safe-keeping.

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SOUL'S SECRET DOOR

Review by K. F. Sherwood

When we heard that the Nobel prize had been awarded to Rabindranath Tagore, a native of that far away land, India, the Western world awoke to a new idea. The poems were widely read and appreciated and when later "The Songs of Kabir" came to our notice we opened our eyes and wondered. Now we have a new volume of exquisite verse from the hand also of a Hindu, one in our very midst,—Swami Paramananda, the head of The Vedanta Centre, which he established in Boston in 1908 for the spread of Vedic ideals and which has grown to proportions undreamed of at that time. The poetic tendency of the Swami's lectures and writings has been frequently remarked upon, but this outpouring of deep devotional verse is something which has come within the last six months. The present volume—"Soul's Secret Door"—just published, containing seventy-two poems worthy to be ranked with the best of its predecessors, was completed within the short interval of ten weeks.

When one reads these poems the direct appeal to one's own deeper nature and the uplift that comes with the reading are a proof of the inspirational quality of the verses themselves. Following the modern form—the *vers libre*—discarding the obligation to rhyme considered necessary in previous periods, it links the present with the distant past when great thought in devotional lines gave us epics and lyrics which time has never dimmed.

To speak of special numbers in the present volume is difficult. Each one sounds a peculiar note and the variety of the subjects is almost equal to the number of poems, while through them all is the undercurrent of deep understanding which unites them. When we read "Wouldst Thou dwell in this house of mine, O Thou King of the great universe?" how our hearts

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expand! And then how the words, "Brother, thy load is heavy and thou art weary," and all that follows puts us in touch with our fellow-beings and the suffering of the world, while in "Soul's Physician" when we read, "My life's wounds are healed at Thy touch" we feel a peculiarly human sympathy. How gently we are rebuked when told "Do not touch the altar flowers with unwashed hands," a rebuke to our lack of reverence, but given only with the remedy "Bathe thyself in the water of life, The earth water cannot cleanse thy stain."

In that exhortation to the ego to depart, "Come thou no more into this house of mine, Nor do thou bring thy companions" there is no uncertain language, while in "the Cave of My Heart" and in "My Lowly Cottage," The Wondrous Lover who is to take its place is offered a retreat and a dwelling. In contrast to these, a differentiation rather, we have the Nature Songs, putting us in touch with the beauty around us, the trees, the flowers, day-time and night. What more exquisite than the words "How lovely and fragrant is the coming of the morn!" and in the "Spirit of Rose": "Thy sweet perfume hath spoken to my soul its language of love." In the "Welcoming Host" we feel the true spirit of the mighty tree: "Motionless tree, speaking its welcome with a living tongue to the tired birds at nightfall, offering them shelter." One of the most beautiful in the collection is "Thy Holy Lamp." It is a complete picture of the life of a spiritual teacher and one can see him standing patiently waiting to have his teaching recognized. How one pities him when he says: "My heart grew anxious and I called aloud." Knowing the value of the holy lamp which he holds, again he says: "O unhappy fate that leads the weary travellers from light to dark." Not a word too much; no verbiage; each poem is complete in its idea and form and expression, a second reading giving one a deeper sense of its meaning than the first.

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The most lofty heights are reached perhaps in the "Dedication" and "Inspiration". In the former we have the spirit of consecration of the author when he says, "To Thee Whose holy hand kindled my heart with this fire of love, I consecrate my soul's outpouring," and in the latter, "The Hymn of Adoration" is voiced complete comprehension of what inspiration is: "Thou art the enchantment of song, Rhapsody of rhyme, Intoxication of ecstasy!"

In all there is that spirit of universality, neither East nor West, neither Hindu nor Christian, neither "Jew nor Greek", but an outpouring of that which underlies them all and which all are seeking. So we have a volume of seventy-two poems rich in ideas, clothed in perfect language and uplifting to the soul. Surely such poems come from no other source than that whence comes all true inspiration. The world of letters has had an addition that is really valuable, which is not only a gem of literature, but contains a message for many hearts.

RELIEF WORK IN BENGAL

Inspiring reports of the relief work of the Ramakrishna Mission have reached us. A letter from one of the workers gives a vivid picture of its activities during a recent flood in Eastern Bengal: "The distress of flooded areas cannot be described; homeless, helpless, moneyless, foodless are the villagers! They have lost their everything. Many of them are suffering now with fever and other maladies so you can imagine their distress. The Ramakrishna Mission has opened six or seven relief centres. They are rebuilding the houses and supplying the inhabitants of the afflicted area with rice, clothes, money and all other necessaries." The Mission workers not infrequently swim through the flood to carry aid to those who are cut off by the waters. According to a recent traveller from India, in every disaster they are the first to come and the last to go. Any contributions sent to the Vedanta Centre of Boston will be thankfully received.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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CHRISTMAS REFLECTION

At this holy season as I reflect on the import and significance of the Christmas feast, my mind pictures the Christ of the East, the incarnate spirit of love and wisdom radiating divine majesty in human flesh, a messenger of unfailing light shedding its beneficence upon all, withholding its blessing from none. It is this universal spirit of Divinity who loves without hate. Can we not for a moment forget our differences of belief and creed and other small affairs of human life and think of that One who loves without hate? Can we not by reflecting on the great examples of divine compassion forgive our transgressors? Before we are swept by the outer feasting of Christmas, let us bring to the holy Christ-child our first offering of a pure, loving and gladdened heart.—*Paramananda.*

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UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Sacrifice to this or sacrifice to that god, each god is but His manifestation, for He is all gods.

Lord of the Universe, glory to Thee! Thou art the Self of all, Thou art the maker of all, the enjoyer of all; Thou art all life, and the lord of all pleasure and joy. Glory to Thee, the tranquil, the deeply hidden, the incomprehensible, the immeasurable, without beginning and without end.—*Upanishads*

O Truth who art Eternity! And Love who art Truth! And Eternity who art Love! Thou art my God, to Thee do I sigh night and day. When I first knew Thee, Thou liftedst me up, that I might see there was somewhat for me to see, and that I was not yet such as to see. And Thou streaming forth Thy beams of light upon me most strongly, didst beat back the weakness of my sight, and I trembled with love and awe.—*St. Augustine.*

God is a kind Father. He sets us all in the places where He wishes us to be employed; and that employment is truly "our Father's business." He chooses work for every creature which will be delightful to them, if they do it simply and humbly. He gives us always strength enough, and sense enough, for what He wants us to do; if we either tire ourselves or puzzle ourselves, it is our own fault. And we may always be sure, whatever we are doing, that we cannot be pleasing Him, if we are not happy ourselves.—*Ruskin.*

To whatever worlds He carries our souls when they shall pass out of these imprisoning bodies, in those worlds these souls of ours shall find themselves part of the same great Temple; for it belongs not to this earth alone. There can be no end of the universe where God is, to which that growing Temple does not reach,—the Temple of a creation to be

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wrought at last into a perfect utterance of God by a perfect obedience to God.—*Phillips Brooks.*

In whatever way men worship Me, in the same way I fulfill their desires. In every way men follow My path.

Fill thy mind with Me, be thou My devotee, worship Me and bow down to Me; thus, steadfastly uniting thy heart with Me alone and regarding Me as thy Supreme Goal, thou shalt come unto Me.

I am the Origin of all, everything evolves from Me. Knowing this, the wise worship Me with loving ecstasy.

With their heart fixed on Me, with their life absorbed in Me, mutually enlightening one another, and perpetually singing My glory, they are contented and rejoiced.

Out of pure compassion for them, I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy the darkness born of ignorance, by the effulgent light of wisdom.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.—*Jesus the Christ.*

To love and serve all men is to delight in God.—*Mencius.*

I am a man, and nothing that concerns human beings is indifferent to me.—*Terence.*

The universe is but one great city, full of beloved ones, divine and human, by nature endeared to each other.—*Epictetus.*

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CHRIST OF THE EAST

By Swami Paramananda

As we stand on the watch-tower of life and observe the up-grade and down-grade of human destiny, we are at once struck forcibly what an impelling power religion holds over human life and what influence it exerts on civilization. On one hand nothing is more potent than religion to unite human lives, and on the other hand nothing has greater power to divide the human family into separate groups. What is the cause of this dual aspect of religion? Religion itself, in its wide sense, is not dual. Its aim and objective are always the same, but our acceptance and application of what we call our particular religion creates endless diversity. It is due to this multiplicity of non-essentials that we are separated into so many distinct groups. It will not be necessary for me to seek far to illustrate this, for here in Christendom there are ample examples to be found through its varied expression of Christian denominations. Do they all follow the path of Christ? They all claim to do so. Yet keen observation and scrutiny will show us that they have little connection with one another except in name.

Ritual and dogma do not make religion, though religion sometimes finds these useful in its practical application. And yet what grip dogma has upon most religious creeds. Perhaps it is due to this that we find greater division than unity even in the same religion. When one wants to learn of Christ one's natural inclination is to go to the institution which bears His name. But how difficult it is! Some represent Christ as a militant aggressor, some as a social reformer, some as an intolerant leader, and still others, according to their special prejudice. There arises even a greater difficulty when we try to find a point of contact between the personality of Jesus of Nazareth and those who claim to represent Him. So if we are earnestly seeking to solve this problem, we have no small difficulties to overcome.

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Let me draw before you a picture of the Christ as He is conceived in the soul of the East. The mind of the Easterns conceive Him as a messenger of light. They clothe Him with robe of gentleness, bearing majestic by divine right; they picture Him as the incarnate Spirit of love and divine loveliness,—lowly of heart, mighty of Spirit, Brother, Friend and Saviour of man! You may say these very attributes are also applied by the Christians. What is the difference? There is one very great and vital difference. Orthodox Christianity exalts Christ to the exclusion of all other divine manifestations, while the Eastern soul receives Him as the cosmic Light, blending its harmony with both past and present. Whichever concept we hold will have a marked influence upon our life and destiny. For the one invariably works for the destruction of what is not its own and the other for the preservation and assimilation of what may not seem at first sight to be its own. The one holds to the dogmatic Christ, the creed-bound Christ of organization and institution; the other looks to that Christ Who is the Soul of Divinity, Who cannot be partitioned off any more than we can partition off the infinite sky. If the East feels any rebellion, it is against dogmatic Christianity.

If you were to ask me, are you a Christian? I should say no. If you were to ask me, are you a Buddhist? I should again say no, and yet I can say sincerely from my heart that I am a devout follower of both these ideals, and to me there is no difference between them. All great faiths are the expression of the one great cosmic Spirit coming down to man to show him his relationship with the Divine. The difficulty comes when we fail to bring these ideals into our life, then we can see nothing but differences. We even destroy each other in the name of God. Is this religion? Is it the theme of any religion that man should strike man, should destroy man, should create enemies and disturb the balance of the universe?

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There was a time when people believed that if the whole world were converted to one religion, it would be saved. There are still those who believe that the salvation of the world depends on its being converted to Christianity. But the last war has proved it to be otherwise. Was it fought by the Christians in their religious zeal against the non-Christians? No, it was Christian brothers, for the most part, cutting each other's throats, and Christian minds scheming by diabolical means to annihilate one another. And what does it mean? That it is not the sectarian acceptance of any faith, no matter how lofty, that is going to bring saving grace to the world. It would be wonderful if all people could be converted to the lofty and beautiful teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of the Orient, the lowly, prayerful, devoted, yearning Christ Who seeks divine grace above all other things, Who shows man that his first and foremost duty is to find God, to live for God, and to make God a living presence in his life.

This is not to give you a picture of another Christ. It is not to prove to you that Christ went to India for a period of time and studied there. God forbid! These things are of very little importance. Wisdom is never confined to any corner of the world, although it is true that the Orient has become symbolic of religion. Great Saviours and Seers have risen from the East. It is natural that they should because the Eastern heart yearns primarily for spirituality.

In India if a man comes with a message hundreds of people will eagerly listen to him. If however he teaches love and exhibits hatred in his actions, if he preaches brotherhood and condemns with bitterness those who do not agree with him, at once they will say, if your religion is true why do you not practise it? Prove your faith by your life and we will die for it. It is here the Eastern heart beats. It is here that we find the great difference between life and creed. A man who has

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touched the heart of God has touched the universal heart. He is no longer capable of being petty, small and fanatical, of being jealous or hateful. In India there is a parable that if base metal is brought in contact with the philosopher's stone, it is transformed into gold and is no longer base. Even a sword brought in contact with that stone is at once transformed so that it can no more harm any one. The same is true of us.

Suppose we believe that we have a higher ideal than another? Are we going to conquer him by inferior means, by fighting him? Can we force him to change his ideal? The only way we can influence him is by our superior quality. In this way true religion becomes the most dominant factor in evolution. It does not go with gun and sword to destroy. By the means of destruction we never can do any good. If we have something, let us prove it by our life. What does Christ teach? He teaches love—love which overcomes hatred, not the love that sometimes loves and again hates, but the love which overrules all afflictions, all dualities and becomes the ideal. Is this ideal merely for those who profess Christianity? No, it is a world ideal. There are people in India who have never come in contact with the Christian teaching, but who exemplify it in their lives. God's spirit is cosmic, universal. It is the common heritage of humanity. One becomes a good Christian not by clinging to an especial creed, but by living. Living the life is the basis of all religions.

Can man ever say that his God is infinite and then limit Him? Could it please his Deity for him to turn away from any one, to shun any one, to condemn any one? Would there be room in his heart after that for Divine love? Would his prayers be acceptable to God? How often Christ told His disciples to go and make peace with their brethren before placing their gifts on the altar. Though we may have the biggest church conceivable, though our altar may be glittering with

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gold and diamonds, our offering will not be acceptable to God if we have in our hearts aught against any one.

There was a little cartoon which appeared some years ago in Florence, Italy. The import of it was that Christ came into the world to-day and naturally went to His own churches, churches which bore His name, which claimed to be founded upon His teaching. He entered them but the people were so engaged with ostentation that they had no time for the lowly Christ; he was unable to draw their attention because they were too busy with what they called Christianity and its propagation. Then He went into the streets but the people were too occupied with their own affairs to have time for Christ. Even the poor people were so absorbed in their poverty that they were not looking for religion. So the lowly Christ went weeping and walking through the wilderness.

Can we say Christianity is a failure? Some one once remarked that it had not yet been tried. It is not that we should find fault with any religion. We can never realize the ideals of any faith in its externals. The heart of every religion is vibrant with life, but we have to reach that heart; then do we find that it is always the self-same Truth flowing through different channels. India has never yet rejected a Divine Incarnation and the reason is this: in the Bhagavad-Gita, one of her most holy and ancient Scriptures, the Lord declares: "Whenever and wherever virtue declines and vice prevails then I embody Myself. For the protection of the good and for the destruction of the evil and for the re-establishment of religion, I am born from age to age." The Lord's promise is not confined to India, or to any particular place or locality. All are His children. This God of the Vedic conception is universal and infinite. He has only one heart and in that heart there is love for all.

This Vedic ideal of God saturates the whole of India's prac-

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tical life. As soon as we begin to live our ideal a strange transformation takes place: our heart grows quieter and more understanding. We become incapable of doing anything ignoble. The example of the bee is given in India. The bee makes a great noise until he has found the heart of the flower. Once he has tasted the honey, he is quiet. The same way it is with all the intolerance and sectarian wars that are going on in the world,—it is because man has not touched the heart of religion. We never find the great spiritual teachers coming with aggressive spirit to convert the world. They live gently; their appeal is very lowly and tender. But how often zealous followers distort their message of love and gentleness. We always make a mockery of our ideal unless we live it.

Non-resistance of evil, one of the vital themes of Christ's teachings, can only be proved by our life. It is beautifully exemplified in the story of the Indian religious mendicant who was set upon and beaten by an ignorant man. He fell to the ground unconscious and lay there till his brothers from the monastery came and picked him up. They took him home and nursed him and as he was returning to consciousness one of them asked: "My brother, who is caring for you?" and he replied: "Verily, the same one who beat me." It was that feeling of oneness, that refusal to recognize any but the One which animated him. Indian conception does not admit two forces, one God and the other devil. There is only one infinite, all-abiding Spirit Who dwells within the hearts of all. When we worship Him, love Him, and draw close to Him, then do we find the fulfillment of life and its great realization dawns within us. When the sun shines, the darkness vanishes; when the light of Spirit dawns within us, the bondage of materiality breaks.

The life of the world can be enriched by the life of the individual. We either bring a discordant note or we bring a

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note of harmony into this great universe by our life. We do not have to become a preacher to spread the great Gospel of Truth, but we have to live, and as we live we create an atmosphere. A person feels exalted or he feels depressed on coming near us. Unconsciously we can hurt others and also unconsciously we can do them good. That is the Christ example. Let a man live, let his light shine so that his Father in Heaven may be glorified through him. We should not act with any other motive. We should not pray to God merely because we are in despair. That is not the highest flight of religion. When we really feel hungry for it, thirsty for it, when we feel suffocated by materiality, then we naturally want to breathe in the open, and that is the aspiration of the soul. We become spiritual because we are hungry for spiritual things. As a man thinks so is he. If we hunger for the spiritual, it makes no difference where we live, we shall find the radiance,—the light that shines from Christ and from Buddha and from all the other Saviours.

It is only through superior living that we make converts. Not by argument or logic or any other material power do we conquer human hearts, but always through gentleness. Our love, our spirituality radiates. That is my conception of Christ. He brings inspiration because He comes from God. He lives in God. He makes no compromise. He lives the life. That is His appeal. It not only brings benediction upon a few but upon all, because what is good for the individual is good for the whole, and we cannot progress unless we are equally concerned in the welfare of our fellow-beings. There is no selfish happiness. That is the supreme example in the lives of all great teachers. Christ brings the message of love and it must be realized through love. If we are able to love so much that we recognize no hatred at all in our hearts, then we shall indeed feel the Christ heart within us, we shall truly be-

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come a glowing example of that ideal. Even without word of mouth we shall be able to fulfill our mission. What have we to give to the world with words unless our thoughts are the product of spiritual realization? As we are dragged into the whirl of outer life and scatter our forces we become more and more impoverished spiritually. That is the great lack of to-day. We have all the things that are outer, but we need the inner.

We should not change our faith; we do not need to change it because each faith is part of the one great faith. Every church, every creed, every religion, has at its heart the glowing light of spiritual reality. The Indian Banyan tree is a very wonderful example of the spiritual life. It keeps on spreading and spreading till it becomes a mighty forest. The same way it is in the cosmic universe. There is only one God, one religion, but it has many aspects. Should we destroy any one of these because we are incapable of understanding it? In realizing the heart of religion, the spirit of it, we give a deathblow to all fanaticism and pettiness.

We should never lose faith either in Divinity or in humanity. Faith is a precious light and we should never be without it. It helps us to walk safely through the darkest hour of life. When we place our faith in Him Who is the Source of All; when our mind and heart are filled with the consciousness that we are children of the One, should we not be capable of doing greater good to our own kinsmen? For when we realize our divine heritage, our common Parent, we are invariably related to each other as we are related to Him, and this becomes the practical basis for true and ideal brotherhood.

We are by nature inclined to love mankind. Take away love and benevolence, and you take away all the joy of life. Men are born for the sake of men, that they may mutually benefit one another.—*Cicero.*

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THE DIVINE PROMISE

From the Buddhist Psalms of Shinran Shonin

(Japanese Apostle of Buddhism. 12th Century.)

Only to Him who is above all things is known the glory of the Land of Peace. Wide as the sky and boundless is it spread forth.

Whoso believeth in the power of the Divine Promise shall verily be at one with the holy Essence, even as the turbid stream is clear and pure within the ocean depth when they have flowed together.

The heavenly spirits and those souls freed from illusion, they who are born in the land of purity from the wisdom deep as the ocean of the Divine Promise, differ not the one from the other in their powers. Pure are they as the air is pure.

He whose heart is great and who shall attain unto the true enlightenment is he also that desireth the salvation of all living, and verily the true faith given of that Blessed One is salvation.

The single heart perceiveth the true faith, and so doing is strong and clear as the diamond, and this strength is the wisdom of the supreme that strengtheneth us.

By the merit of His Infinite Light, when we attain unto that faith divine and omnipotent, the ice of illusion shall melt into the water of perfect wisdom.

No other way is there of attaining unto the Perfect Enlightenment save only by birth into the Land of Gladness, and therefore have all the Enlightened Ones exhorted men that they should receive the Doctrine of the Kingdom Purity.

There is no way unto the Kingdom of Gladness save only by attaining unto the true faith through that Holy Name, the very Jewel of Wonder.

When the new birth through the clearness of the Divine Promise is attained in the Eternal Kingdom, it is not like unto

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the birth of this world; then is there no inferiority even in those that in this world were sinners, for they have entered into Paradise.

Unto us hath our Father given those two spiritual gifts. Of these the first is the Virtue whereby we attain unto His Kingdom, and the second is the Virtue whereby having so attained we return into this world for the Salvation of men.

The One true freedom is the Highest, and the Absolute is perfect freedom. And when we attain unto that freedom, for us shall desire and doubt vanish away.

When every man is beloved of us, even as the son of our own body, there is the Universal Mind made perfect in us.

UNVEIL THY SOUL

By C. Christians

In the silence of prayer an inner voice spoke: My child, give up all selfish desires. Look not for thy personal benefit. Think only of the Lord and His work. Do not perform thy duties to gain the praise and good will of others; but perform them for the sake of Him. Make thy thought His thought; thy word His word; thy deed His deed. Do thou the Will of the Lord at all times, for He abideth within all and speaketh through all. Thou wilt neither err nor lose power through surrender to Him, but thou wilt find glory in Him. Envy not those who have blessings which thou sharest not in. It is His Will thou shouldst not have them now.

Trust in Him, go to Him, confide in Him thy heart's yearning for His contact. Do not despair when thy prayers are as dead. Have faith! Pure and earnest supplications are never lost nor does the Lord fail to hear. Through gentle love and holy obedience unveil thy soul that the Blessed Lord may reveal Himself in Thee.

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CHILD CHRIST AND CHILD KRISHNA

By Sister Daya

There are two main ways by which the heart of man has ever approached the Divine. One way is that of supplication, soul-hunger, need. We draw near to holy feet in order to receive their blessing, to gather strength and peace from their contact, to find an abiding place and a safe refuge. In supreme worship our heart goes out to That which can so infinitely bestow and our life seems a small thing to give in return. Always on this Path we are the yearning, helpless children, receiving aid and blessing from the Father-Mother God.

The other way is just the reverse. God becomes to us the essence of all that is tender, defenceless and appealing. The sweetness of babyhood, the fragrance of young flowers, the helplessness of every tiny thing is wrapped up for us in the form of some infant Saviour. Our one thought is to cherish and to protect, to give our very life-blood if necessary, in order to make the way smooth for the little feet, to keep all wounds from the trusting heart; to enfold the precious life with our last vestige, if need be, of love and strength, that it may never be bruised by our thoughts or stabbed by our actions. Though we may call it the baby Christ or the baby Krishna, deep down in our souls we know that it is the seed of all beauty, of all love, and of all joy, sowed by God in the hearts of men.

Of these two paths the most selfless and the most joyous is the last. We do not come because of need, we are drawn by pure love. Life becomes a marvellous play in which we sport blissfully with the Divine Child and all unconsciously are lifted up to His Divinity. The mother-love in all hearts, in the hearts of men and women alike, is here given its ultimate expression. The human relation of parent and child is but a faint reflection of this supreme relationship. Nothing is omitted; even the mischief that makes the human child ador-

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able is enacted in this holy play and our hearts are ensnared by the divine naughtiness of the little Lord. He delights in bewildering His devotees by sudden flashes of infinite power and then, before the mind has grasped the wonder, to reassume His smiling, dimpled aspect. He is a teaze and a darling and a play-fellow, bewitchingly beautiful, yielding to all, yet forever elusive. The hearts that would follow Him must be girded with delicious mirth and utter self-forgetfulness.

There is hardly a religion in the world that has not its sacred play-room. Peeping from behind the stately figures of the World-Teachers are the smiling faces of Their baby counterparts,—the wistful Christ-child, the grave little Buddha, lovely and laughing Gopalam or Krishna. Even from ancient Egypt comes the picture of the little Horus looking up into the eyes of Mother Isis,—"Queen of Heaven", "Star of the Sea", "Immaculate Virgin".

But among them all, baby Krishna and baby Christ stand out supreme. In India the pranks which Gopalam played thousands of years ago in the forests of Vrindavana, still enthrall the hearts of His people. They recount with glee how He stole the milk and curds from the neighbouring villagers (out of pure mischief, for His foster-father was king of the shepherds) and fed them to His friends, the monkeys and the birds. When His mother sought to tie the little hands in punishment, she could not find a cord long enough to go around the small wrists though she pieced the lengths together endlessly. Finally Gopalam out of pity for her efforts, removed the spell and then the first short cord easily served the purpose. When He was very tiny, her darling was into everything. Poor mother Yashoda could not find time to do her work, make her butter and cheese and attend to her household duties. So she tethered that bad little Krishna by a long rope securely fastened to an old cart-wheel, and went about her affairs with a peace-

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ful heart, just as mothers do to-day. But that baby, so the people hold, was God, and He dragged the cart-wheel after Him as if it were a pebble. Finally it caught between two great trees. One little gentle pull and down they came crashing to the ground, at the same time releasing two souls who had been imprisoned there thousands of years by a magical spell. Hearing the noise, mother Yashoda came on the run, only to find her baby unhurt and smiling innocently just as though He had done nothing.

These tales are dear to the Hindu heart and it has treasured them through the ages. In India, tiny charms are sold of baby Krishna, round and dimpled, sucking His big toe, even as we of the West depict our Christ babe in its mother's arms. Krishna with flute in hand and peacock feathers on His head, romping all the days through with His comrades, the little shepherds and shepherdesses, is still a living concept to India's millions. The call of His flute would draw His playmates from any distance, for it was the call of His love, the call of the Divine to the human. He was their King and they would each take the place He assigned them. They had mad games of hide and seek when they would search for Him distractedly, the flute mocking them from a hundred places at once. All nature adored Him, so the legend goes. "Even the grazing animals had a special love for the Lord, and lowed happily whenever He caressed them or came near, gathering about Him in a ring to listen whenever, standing with feet crossed beneath the beautiful *Kodumbha* tree, He played upon his flute. Some say, indeed, that at such moments the lotus-buds lying on the Jumna waters opened and the river itself bent out of its straight course."

Over the child-hood life of Jesus hangs a veil of silence. Yet there are legends of Him, sprung from what far source who can say. Just as Yashoda looking into the mouth of the

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infant Krishna, beheld the universe, so did Mary perceive by many wonders that her little Son was infinite in His being. Like Sri Krishna He was greatly beloved by His simple neighbours and always had many play-fellows of His own age. He too, was sometimes naughty and full of mischief, but His mischief ever proved a blessing.

"On a certain day also, when the Lord Jesus was playing with the boys and running about, he passed by a dyer's shop whose name was Salem. And there were in his shop many pieces of cloth belonging to the people of that city, which they designed to dye of several colours. Then the Lord Jesus going into the dyer's shop took all the cloths and threw them into the furnace. When Salem came home and found all the cloths spoiled he began to make a great noise and chide the Lord Jesus, saying, 'What hast thou done to me, O thou son of Mary? Thou hast injured both me and my neighbours, they all desired their cloths of a proper colour, but thou hast come and spoiled them all.' The Lord Jesus replied, 'I will change the colour of every cloth to what colour thou desirest.' And then he presently began to take the cloths out of the furnace, and they were all dyed of those same colours which the dyer desired." For this reason, even unto this day, such shops in Persia are called "Christ Shops."

The supremacy of Jesus was never questioned by his comrades. "In the month Adar, Jesus gathered together the boys, and ranked them as though he had been a king. For they spread their garments on the ground for Him to sit on; and having made a crown of flowers, put it upon His head, and stood on His right and left as the guards of a king; and if any one happened to pass by, they took him by force and said, Come hither and worship the king that you may have a prosperous journey."

Once the boys hid from Him and Jesus hunting for them

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asked some women where they were. They replied they knew not. "Who are those ye see in the furnace?" asked Jesus who knew they were there. And they answered, "Kids of three years old." Then Jesus cried out aloud and said, "Come out hither, O ye kids, to your Shepherd!" And presently the boys came forth like kids and leaped about Him. The women trembling besought Him to restore the boys to their former state. Then Jesus said, "Come hither, O boys, that we may go and play," and immediately in the presence of these women, the kids were changed and returned into the shape of boys.

This is strangely reminiscent of an incident in the life of Sri Krishna. All His comrades and their cattle were thrown into an enchanted sleep and locked in a cave. Not being able to find them, the Lord created duplicates of them from His own being, so that the parents never realized that it was not their own who returned to them that night. They even loved them with a more intense love than they had ever felt for them before. After a year, the spell was lifted and the children restored without any one being the wiser.

Again and again both Christ and Krishna performed miracles of healing. Some of the play-mates of Krishna were stung by a serpent and He "casting upon them an eye of divine mercy, they immediately arose". Once Christ healed James, the son of Joseph, from the bite of a viper, by blowing on the wound and at another time He caused a snake to come and draw forth its poison from a boy, after which the snake burst asunder and the boy recovered. Of Christ and Krishna also it is told that they caused death by their displeasure. But to the Lord where is the difference between life and death. They are equally part of His play and His blessing flows through both alike. Thus the soul of a great serpent-demon which Krishna slew, is said to have attained the regions of the Blest, "for the touch of the Lord ever brought salvation

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even though to the body He might mete out death".

To the Hindus every legend of Krishna is precious, but to the Christian peoples these tales of the boyhood of Christ are little known and less believed since they are not included in the authorized Gospels. One picture contains it all for them: the Christ baby in the manger, the arms of Mary around Him, the cattle looking down on Him, light all about Him and the Star over His head. This to the West has become the symbol of nascent spiritual life, of all that is unresisting, pure and eternal. The truly devout behold the new-born Christ as ever blessing with His tiny hands, ever placing Himself at the mercy of mankind. In truth, there are not two Christs, the Child and the Saviour. There is only one,—the holy babe who lay in the manger and who hung upon the Cross. Human beings may change but the Divine Incarnations are changeless and carry with Them through the years the undying enchantment of youth.

Gopalam or Christ-Child, what matter the name! Once we take Him as our own, not in fancy but in fact; once we feel His living presence within us and without, all harshness, all heaviness, all weariness will fall away from us. As we eat with Him and play with Him and live with Him, never again will our arms be empty or our hearts sad. For He will fill them utterly and forever with His ineffable sweetness, and He will satisfy our life's greatest need,—the need to love, to worship and to give.

HIDDEN CHRIST

By Jalaluddin Rumi

In each human spirit is a Christ concealed,
To be helped or hindered, to be hurt or healed;
If from any human soul you lift the veil
You will find a Christ there hidden without fail.

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SELF-LOVE AND GOD-LOVE

By St. Francis de Sales

We forget how the saints tell us that we ought daily to begin anew our endeavours after perfection; if we did remember this we should not be so surprised at finding so much that is wretched and needs correction in ourselves. The work is never done; we must perpetually begin afresh, and always begin heartily afresh. What we have done so far is good, but what we are going to begin will be better; and when that is finished we will begin again better still, and so on, until we leave this world altogether, to begin another life, which will know no end, inasmuch as there can be nothing better. So we must not begin to weep because we find things going wrong with us, but we must rouse up fresh courage to go on anew, never stopping to look back; and where it is necessary to cut off superfluities, we must remember that "the word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow."

Self-love often dazzles us, and it is very difficult to see ourselves fairly. Therefore it is that the great apostle exclaims, "Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." Self-love may be mortified, but it never dies within us; from time to time, and on sundry occasions, it puts forth fresh shoots, which prove that though cut down, it is not rooted up. This is why we do not find the satisfaction that we ought to have in seeing others do well; we do not altogether rejoice in good works which are not to be found in ourselves, whereas we greatly admire all that is our own, and that because we love ourselves so exceedingly. But if we had a perfect charity, which causes us to be of one heart and soul with our neighbor, we should rejoice unfeignedly in whatever of his is good and perfect. Self is forever seeking self, self-

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will and self-love; but if we were perfect in the love of God, we should prefer to obey, because in obedience there is more of God and less of self.

We must never be surprised to find self-love alive within ourselves; it is ever there. At times it sleeps like a crafty fox, but then suddenly it dashes out anew. We must keep a steady watch over it, and be always on the defensive, though gently and patiently. If sometimes self-love wounds us, and we are forced to unsay what we have said, to disown what it has made us do, we shall be partly cured.

A TRIBUTE

By Katherine F. Sherwood

(Written after reading the poems of Swami Paramananda.)

Whence comes this feeling in my heart—
my heart so long quiet and dead?
My whole body vibrates with emotion;
I feel uplifted from the dead level of cities
and books and thoughts.
It is the singing of a new bard—
Bard or bird, which is it?
Straight from heart to heart comes the song,
and oneness gives the thrill.

O Bird of Spring, sing on!
Tell me yet more from out the recess of thy
heart
Where lies that blissful store.
Sing from those fields
Where man has never been;
From tree-tops tall
Which eye has never seen;

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Sing with that voice
More rare than earthly bird,
Sing yet a theme
That man has never heard,—
Music that thrills
And words beyond compare
Waking our hearts
To feel that God is there!
Sing on sweet Bird
Nor stay thy rapturous song.
Be free, and warble
All the daylight long
Songs of the dawn
Or evening's silent close;
Songs of the heart
To quiet all our woes.
Oh may we listen with attentive mind
And take such blessing which is hard to find!
Sing on, Sweet Bird!

REPORT

It is difficult to convey in the words of a report the living spirit of joyous hospitality which was vibrant in the home of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, on the evening of November 9th. Officially speaking, it was a reception, given for the purpose of introducing to friends and the friends of friends, Swami Paramananda's first volume of poems, "Soul's Secret Door", just out upon that day. But in reality it was far more than that, it was thanksgiving and rejoicing for the precious gift that had come to us in these poems of mystical exaltation, —come, so the Swami feels, not from him but from the one divine Source and given to him merely in trust for others.

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This feeling of holy giving went into every detail of preparation. The rooms looked as though October herself had been invited in, for they were bright with autumn leaves and golden crysanthemums. These were arranged with special profusion at the end of the Chapel in front of the platform, climbing up in amber and ruby colored masses to a beautiful drooping fern set high on a concealed column, which formed, as it were, the crown of some strange tropical tree outlined against the flaming sunset tints of a silk Indian chuddar, used as a background.

Very many came; every space was filled. More than a few were utter strangers to the Centre, unfamiliar with the Swami and his work. Yet in spite of this, the quiet was profound when the Swami began to read. As he stood before the flower-garlanded book-shelf, someone remarked that it seemed like a door-way through which he had just stepped, and another suggested that it was the "Soul's Secret Door". One lovely poem after another he gave, the deep attention and appreciation of his listeners drawing them forth. At the end came a surprise: a real song of dawn with music as well as words by the Swami, who sang it without any accompaniment, quite spontaneously, the members of the household adding their voices in an intermittent refrain. This brought a dear and close friend of the Centre, Miss Katherine Sherwood, to her feet with some lovely verses written by her in tribute to the Swami after reading his poems. The repeated line,—"Sing on, sweet bird!" seemed a peculiarly fitting close to the Swami's song.

Sister Devamata then spoke a few words in deep appreciation of "Soul's Secret Door". The poems, she said, had seemed to her like flashes of light from behind grey clouds, carrying her through many long hours of pain. Rythm, she said, had always had great power over the minds of men from

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the time of the ancient Hymalayan sages down to the present day. As the poems were read to her, the lyrical beauty of the lines seized upon her mind. Soon she found herself meditating in them, thinking in them, praying in them. They had the peculiar power of remaining with her after one reading, showing that they came from a Source beyond memory, from that realm in which one does not remember but in which one *knows*. They were Scriptural in quality. She added that the Swami's inspiration had not been intermittent, often as many as five or six poems coming in one day.

While refreshments were being served, the Swami was kept busy autographing copies of his book for many eager friends. Even those at a distance were represented, a wire having been received from eight or nine of the Swami's students in Cincinnati, ordering between them 109 copies of "Soul's Secret Door". This small group feels especially close to the Boston work, several of them having visited the Centre this past summer and heard the poems from the Swami's lips, before the book was published.

On the 13th of November the Swami spoke by invitation before the Brookline Teachers' Association, at the Brookline Public Library. His subject was "The Value of Relaxation and Concentration". A member of the Association writes: "Great interest was shown by the unusually large attendance, nearly the entire membership being represented and, what was not customary with them, staying till the end. The Swami's address was filled with inspiration and helpful suggestions. As one absorbed listener remarked, "What practical help he has given us! Where can we hear more from this speaker?" There were similar words of deep appreciation from all sides. At the request of the President, the Swami closed his address with a few selections from his poems.

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