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

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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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THE MARCH OF LIFE

By Swami Paramananda

ONWARD, ever forward in the march
of life,
My soul, onward, ever forward
March on!
Perchance the flame of thy life burns dim
Or flickers in the wind of this world.
Fear not its extinction.
Hold fast with all thy faith.
No power in gale or storm,
Nay, naught in heaven or earth,
Can rob thee of thine immortal flame.
It is assigned thee by Eternal Hand.
It is thine forever, at all times
With no beginning or end.
When thy feet are tired, rest them.
If mind is weary, refresh it.
Pause awhile in the still peace of thy
inmost cave;
Then rise again with renewed spirit of faith,
hope and courage.
Onward, ever forward in the march of life,
Ever onward, ever forward, my soul,
March on! March on!

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

There is no king like him who is king of himself.

—*St. Cadoc.*

When the fruit grows the petals drop off of themselves. So when Divinity in thee increases, the weakness of humanity in thee will vanish.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

Out of love and hatred, out of earnings, and borrowings, and lendings, and losses; out of sickness and pain; out of wooing and worshipping; out of travelling, and voting, and watching, and caring; out of disgrace and contempt, comes our tuition in the serene and beautiful laws. Let him not slur his lesson; let him learn it by heart. Let him endeavor exactly, bravely, and cheerfully, to solve the problem of that life which is set before him.—*Emerson.*

To bear what you think you cannot bear is really to bear.—*Ancient Japanese Saying.*

A vexation arises, and our expressions of impatience hinder others from taking it patiently. Disappointment, ailment, or even weather depresses us; and our look or tone of depression hinders others from maintaining a cheerful and thankful spirit. We say an unkind thing, and another is hindered in learning the holy lesson of charity that thinketh no evil. We say a provoking thing, and our sister or brother is hindered in that day's effort to be meek. How sadly, too, we may hinder without word or act! For wrong feeling is more infectious than wrong doing; especially the various phases of ill temper,—gloominess, touchiness, discontent, irritability,—do we not know how catching these are?—*F. R. Havergal.*

The Absolute Beauty is the Divine Majesty endued with the attributes of power and bounty. Every beauty and per-

fection manifested in the theatre of the various grades of beings is a ray of His perfect beauty reflected therein. It is from these rays that exalted souls have received their impress of beauty and their quality of perfection. Whosoever is wise derives his wisdom from Divine wisdom.—*Jami* (*Sufi*).

My dear Simmias, I fear that virtue is not really to be bought in this way, by bartering pleasure for pleasure, and pain for pain, and fear for fear, and the greater for the less, like coins. There is only one sterling coin for which all these things ought to be exchanged, and that is wisdom. All that is bought and sold for this and with this, whether courage, or temperance, or justice, is real: in one word true virtue cannot be without wisdom, and it matters nothing whether pleasure, and fear, and all other such things, are present or absent. But I think that the virtue which is composed of pleasures and fears bartered with one another, and severed from wisdom, is only a shadow of true virtue, and that it has no freedom, nor health, nor truth.—*Plato.*

The Yogi's ideal is freedom from nature. Conquest of nature is his standard of work. The Yogi says that all power is in the soul, and by the controlling of the mind and body one conquers nature by the power of the soul.

He is free, he is great, who turns his back upon the world, who has renounced everything, who has controlled his passion, and who thirsts for peace. One may gain political and social independence, but if he is a slave to his passions and desires, he cannot feel the pure joy of real freedom.—*Swami Vivekananda.*

Man is born upright. If he cease to be so and live, he is lucky to escape.

The highest goodness is to hold fast to the golden mean.

Waste begets self-will, thrift begets meanness; but better be mean than self-willed.

A superior man is calm and large of spirit, the vulgar are always fretting.—*Sayings of Confucius.*

Whose discrimination is stolen away by the love of power and pleasure and who are thus deeply attached therein, for such people it is impossible to obtain either firm conviction of purpose or God-consciousness.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

THREEFOLD WISDOM

From the Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad.

The threefold descendants of Prajapati,—Devas, men and Asuras—dwelt as Brahmacharins (students) with their father Prajapati. Having finished their studentship the Devas said: "Tell us something, Sir." He told them the syllable *Da.* Then he said: "Did you understand?" They said: "We did understand. You told us *'Damyata,'* Be subdued." "Yes," he said, "you have understood."

Then the men said to him: "Tell us something, Sir." He told them the same syllable *Da.* Then he said: "Did you understand?" They said: "We did understand. You told us *'Datta,'* Give." "Yes," he said, "you have understood."

Then the Asuras said to him: "Tell us something, Sir." He told them the same syllable *Da.* Then he said: "Did you understand?" They said: "We did understand. You told us *'Dayadham,'* Be merciful." "Yes", he said, "you have understood."

The divine voice of thunder repeats the same: *Da Da Da,* that is, Be subdued, Give, Be merciful. Therefore let that triad be taught, Subduing, Giving, and Mercy.

MASTERY OF SELF

By Swami Paramananda

The thirst for happiness is a common instinct in all mankind; but every one of us does not possess the secret of acquiring it, nor have we the power to retain it when it comes to us. This requires both wisdom and endurance. Perhaps for this reason the great men of all countries and ages have laid such tremendous emphasis on a life of self-discipline and self-control. Self-discipline enables us to organize and unite all our scattered forces. This necessarily increases our power for both thought and action. It is not true, though it appears to be so, that we have many isolated factors in our life. The same energy which pulsates through our heart and brain also operates our hands and feet; therefore learning to collect and control this inherent energy which now we fritter away through lack of co-ordination and co-operation would mean the greatest asset in our life.

Self-mastery is a far greater possession than the possession of all earthly goods. If we do not possess ourselves we may possess all the fine things of life and be unable to use them to any advantage. More than that, we may unconsciously strike at the very root of our life. Often in a sudden impulse of anger we destroy a finer part of ourself; in a moment we lose something that may take long to build up again. When a person is under the influence of hatred or any other violent emotion he may do something which he will always regret. If you ask him why he did it, he will say that he could not help it, that it was done before he knew it, in a flash of impulse. But why should such an impulse rise at all? It comes because we lay the foundation for it. It is not through chance that we fall under the sway of all these evils; but it is directly due to our long-standing habits of thinking and living. It is we who make it possible for these detri-

mental influences to rise in us, also it is in our power to make it impossible. If we reflect and penetrate into the depths of our being, we shall never fail to find that every event in our life is based on a just cause. If a man does something destructive to himself or to another it is because of his careless way of living and thinking. He has allowed destructive thought to over-power him; he is no longer himself. When he loses mastery of himself he may do something in a moment which may mean the undoing of all that he has done before.

In the great Indian spiritual classic, the Bhagavad-Gita, the Lord of Wisdom tells us: "Let a man raise himself by his Self, let him never lower himself; for he alone is the friend of himself, and he alone is the enemy of himself. He who has conquered himself by the Self, he is the friend of himself, but he whose self is unconquered, his self acts as his own enemy like an external foe." But who, you may ask, would knowingly be his own enemy? Whenever we start to do anything with dejected mind, or carry any evil impulse in our heart, do we not act as our own enemy? We know ethically and intellectually the bad effect these have upon our moral and physical being, and yet we stagger on carrying a load which exhausts us. How can we explain it, that an intelligent person should allow his mind to be filled with detrimental thoughts and feelings?

We become our own enemy when we are thrown out of balance by anger, hatred, grief or any intense emotion. We are for the time being obsessed by something alien. Anger is such an obsession. It is a very ugly thing in life. It disfigures a person. One who is pleasant and lovable suddenly becomes so distorted by anger that even if you try you can no longer find any trace of beauty in his face. Yet the whole of us is not obsessed. We are like two persons,—the person

who is angry and the person who is not. There is a dual principle in us. One part of us aspires for the highest, best, purest and finest; the other is earth-bound, weighted down by material concerns. Whether we want to or not, until we have gained full possession of our being, we will often go against ourselves. The Self is the friend of self for him who has conquered himself—his lower self—and one whose self is unconquered, his self acts as an enemy.

Of course we blame others. There is hardly a soul who does not blame somebody else for his misfortune, his failure. But the eye of wisdom reveals to us that instead of trying to lay the blame on others we should find the cause in our own life,—in the self. This self-adjustment and self-possession is most essential to our well-being.

In the Gita there is another passage which runs: "Lust, anger and greed, these three are the soul-destroying gates of hell. Therefore one should forsake these three." When we analyze them we find there is very little distinction between them. A greedy person longing for some object of desire with all the lust of his soul, becomes angry if he cannot have his way. Anger brings self-delusion. The cause of it and of all these things is ignorance. Sometimes we think that when we are excitable and angry we are exhibiting strength. It is the weak person who yields to these things. A weak person is more unforgiving than a strong one. I have seen it among athletes. The strongest athletes are those who can best endure insults from an inferior. He who is nervously disorganized naturally has less endurance. We cannot sever our spiritual evolution from our mental and physical. What we manifest in body and mind are the results of what we are in our spiritual consciousness. They are absolutely inseparable. Happiness is something that we have within us and if we have it there no matter what obstacles

are placed before us, we surmount them. We become truly our own friend. The Roman philosopher, Marcus Aurelius puts this very strongly,—"Be cheerful also, and seek not external help nor the tranquillity which others give. A man must stand erect, not be kept erect by others." He who possesses himself wholly may be confined in a dungeon, or he may be forced into crowds alien to his temperament, and yet he will maintain himself. In the midst of all dual conditions—heat and cold, pleasure and pain, noise and stillness, he will carry with him the realization of his higher Self.

We cannot expect, if we follow the trend of life, to have everything made smooth for us. I have great doubt in my mind whether it would be really good for any individual. We need discipline, and the discipline of life is a very wonderful one. Mastery is not for those who are always trying to shirk and shun everything that is disagreeable. If we keep on avoiding what is difficult we shall never go one step forward. It is this which awakens within us our inner faculties. That is the reason theoretical knowledge and actual experience are two different things altogether. We may know theoretically that wherever the mind dwells, according to that will be our knowledge, our strength and our success; but we have to know how to manipulate the mind, how to hold it, how to possess it. Here is where we must be practical.

We pray, we meditate, we study, we do all kinds of things which we think should give us spiritual impetus, and yet we stay still almost, or take a backward step. Why is this? A man may use high-sounding words expressing moral ideas but if he lacks in the fundamental principle of life, if he lacks in patience, forbearance, forgiveness, he will burst out into anger some day and then all his dogmas and theories will go for nothing. That is the reason religion often becomes a noxious thing to some people. We are just like a man who

is pulling on his oars but can make no headway because he has not lifted the anchor. What we have heard, what we sometimes feel instinctively to be our own, we can only make our own through experiencing it. We may know that we have a higher Self and that it is our true friend, but in its light when we actually grasp its meaning and its application, the whole aspect of our life changes. We become bigger, stronger, more enduring. Endurance is one of the greatest assets in life. Those who do not know how to endure, break down under the pressure of circumstance. They have not yet learned the real art of life and living.

Realization is born of our own experience, is inseparable from us. In an emergency, in moments of great tragedy, the man of tranquillity, of serenity, of wisdom, remains stable while another man possessed of the knowledge that all the books can give, loses his control and his balance. Why does he lose it? Because he never had it. What is ingrained in our nature we are incapable of losing. We always carry our light with us—always. Plato declares a wise man will be as happy in a state of slavery as in a state of freedom. When we have absolutely transformed ourselves there is no question of calculation: shall I be angry or not, shall I speak harshly or shall I contain myself? These thoughts do not rise because in the heart of the holy there is no room left for any darkness; no possibility left for the uprise of anger or evil.

Spirituality is not a question of calculation. We either have it or we do not have it. It is not a question of doctrines or words or theories. It is something we evolve within us and after we have evolved it others benefit by it. Our life becomes transformed. We are the same and yet we are not the same. We have the same hands and feet, but they are put to better use; we have the same mind and heart but

they are filled with greater ideas and ideals. The only way we can rise, the only way we can lift our fellow-beings, is to find a higher level of consciousness. If we have a higher standard of life, if we possess self-control, if we are masters of ourselves, we cannot help but benefit those living around us. They may become impatient with us, intolerant that we are different from them, but if we try to walk in their ways we do not benefit them. If, however, we hold fast to our own ideals, they will turn to us in moments of distress. In time of storm, anger, impatience or great grief, one who is not molested by these things becomes like a rock, others cling to him and find their consolation.

This does not mean that we must grow unfeeling like a block of wood or a stone. It is not the person who is harsh and hard that is master. Unfeeling people are often self-centred and selfish. We must not confuse these ideas. It is rather one whose consciousness has become expanded, who instead of revolving round and round with the petty feelings of self and selfishness, suddenly comes into possession of another part of his life. He is infused with divine power and naturally is incapable of doing anything on a lower level.

This does not imply that we must crush every desire that rises in our mind, it would be like covering a fire with ashes, —the fire would still be there intact. We do not free ourselves from our lower propensities by this method, but by gaining greater knowledge, by gaining greater unity within ourselves. When our thought and mind and heart, when our whole being is focused in absolute unison, then shall we find high ideals rising within us, then the things that belong to the lower levels will touch us no more. It is not by satisfying our lower desires that we shall find any lull but rather by uniting them and making them harmonious with our higher purpose.

Self-realization means that our life is connected with its root, its source. One who is master over himself, no matter where he is placed, is always the victor. Therefore self-mastery is a necessity if we would enjoy in full measure all the blessings of life. Our blessings are now often carried away by our shortcomings. Many a person after his first failure settles down and says: I am not born equipped; it is not in my nature to do this. He has not even investigated his inner nature; he is judging only from the surface. If he would go deeper he would find that he has all the inherent powers and possibilities, more than he can possibly use. Let us remember our dual nature: faltering, failing, weak and unstable on the one side and on the other: majestic, potent, invincible. Self-depreciation means that we have no faith in a higher Spirit, we have no clear concept of our higher Self. That is the reason we run ourselves down. Egotism exists as much in the life of the poor and miserable as in the life of ostentation and pride. The balanced state of mind is what we need above all else, not merely in our spiritual life but in our life of every day. No teaching gives this middle path with so much force and practical wisdom as the Vedic revelation.

Sometimes people have the foolish notion that they cannot be spiritual unless they show a certain self-abasement. But the humility which is essential to spirituality is illustrated by the fruitful tree bending its boughs in fruition. A barren tree stands stiff and gives nothing. When our life becomes fruitful it cannot help but show forth gentleness, mellowness, beneficent qualities—no more room for harshness. A life which is unproductive always finds fault with others, always strikes a harsh note somewhere. That is why we should strive to unfold these principles within. It is so easy, —the same mind which is capable of thinking evil, hateful

thoughts also has infinite capacity for good and constructive thoughts. The same mind which is unwilling to practise high ideals also has the power to practise them and benefit by them. It is all a question of turning and directing the will. The will which is tormenting us and disregarding our lofty feelings and aspirations, can also be made to do what is nearest to our hearts.

One of the most beautiful thoughts that Buddha gave to his disciples was that a well-ordered mind will do greater good to us than a friend or a father or a mother or any one from outside. People who live on other people's opinions, do they ever accomplish anything? When you do something that you know is good, is beneficial, when you do it with your whole being, with unselfish spirit, whether others see it in the same way or not, it has given you joy and a sense of uplift. If we depend on praise and recognition we are done for. When our inner life is empty we cannot help but depend on the exterior, but after our inner life is filled we care less and less for all outer conditions. We are happier because of this, we create a happier atmosphere, an atmosphere of strength.

If we start one day with an exalted attitude of mind, with courage, consecration and fearlessness, and another day with depression, doubt or dissatisfaction and observe their effect upon our life, we shall realize very quickly why it is declared that we are our own friend and our own enemy. Through depression we not only drag ourselves down but we drag others down with us. A great teacher used to say that one who is melancholy has no right to touch another person's life. Life is not meant for sadness; we should not throw our burden on another. We cannot be self-indulgent. Some indulge themselves in unhappiness; they seem to love it. You pull them out of it and again they settle down. They have formed the habit of staying in that sphere and they alone

can rescue themselves from it. All the religions, all the high ideals cannot help them from without, till they have awakened themselves from within. That is the reason why the Gita says so forcibly, raise thyself by thine own Self—never lower thyself.

Even from the stand-point of self-preservation or personal happiness, we should cultivate mastery of self, because therein lies the secret, the strength, the fulfillment. If we do not have all that we desire, let us make the best use of what we have. The greatest artists are those who depend less and less on outer conditions. They have creative genius within themselves and with little material produce the best. It is not the material which makes the artist, it is the artist himself who shapes the material. If we bear this in mind we shall cease to complain, to find fault either with ourselves or our outer conditions. Whatever comes our way, let us use it. The efforts we are making now will bring us the highest; all they need is direction and fortification. That is what self-mastery means. Self-mastery gives us such wisdom that we may always under all circumstances, depend upon our own inward strength.

INVOCATION

To Kwannon, the Merciful Deity

(From the Japanese Work "Hokkekyo")

O Thou whose eyes are clear, whose eyes are kind, whose eyes are full of pity and sweetness,—O Thou Lovely One, with thy beautiful face, with thy beautiful eyes,—

O Thou Pure One, whose luminosity is without spot, whose knowledge is without shadow,—O Thou forever shining like that Sun whose glory no power may repel,—Thou Sun-like in the course of Thy mercy, pourest Light upon the world!

THE PHILOSOPHY OF HAPPINESS

Kaibara Ekken. Seventeenth Century.

(Japanese moralist. He uses "pleasure" throughout in the sense of "happiness.")

To be spiteful, to be haughty, to speak evil of others, to rebuke their small faults, to be provoked by their careless words, and to be angry at their rudeness, is not only to deprive yourself of pleasure; but is also to betray your own littleness to the world.

Suppress anger and selfish desires; be broad-minded and think no evil of others. By this way you can keep yourself calm and happy, for there is no discord which can then jar your harmonious spirit. Men in this world do many unworthy deeds. Do your best to lead the crooked into the true path. But if they neither listen, nor repair their ways, let them alone—they are fools, and to be pitied. With such even the sages could do nothing; do not allow yourself to be tormented by the stupidity of others.

One whose heart is not here, sees and yet sees not. He may stand before a landscape radiant with beauty and charm yet sees it not. For such a one the spring has no glory, the autumn no beauty. His heart remains unmoved at the sight of moon and flowers. Sitting before the open books of the sages, he reads them not. Endeavoring to satisfy his selfish desires, he leaves the pure pleasures behind, and lives a life distressing both to himself and others. How sad it is to permit a short life to slip away in the performing of naught but despicable deeds!

The poor man who is foolish seeks pleasure and finds it not, because his heart is laden with envy and malice. The rich man who is foolish seeks pleasure in the spending of his treasure; but being idle, extravagant, and covetous, fails to

find it. Pleasure cannot be ours as long as we wander from the true path of mankind. In your heart, therefore, seek the true path, and then pleasure shall be added.

If we make our heart the fountain-head of pleasure, our eyes and ears the gates of pleasure, and keep away base desires, then our pleasure shall be plentiful; for we can become the masters of mountains, water, moon and flowers. We do not need to ask any man for them, neither to obtain them need we pay a single sen; they have no specified owner. Those who can enjoy the beauty in the Heavens above and the Earth beneath need not envy the luxury of the rich, for they are richer than the richest.

The pleasures of the vulgar pass away and bitterness remaineth instead, for they are harmful both to mind and body. But the pleasures of the wise are pure and food for the mind. From morning until night, without injury, may he enjoy them; for no one can hinder him, neither do his pleasures provoke the rebuke of the gods. He delights in the moon and the mountain, the flowers and water. With the wind he sings, while listening to the song of the birds. Simple pleasures such as these may be enjoyed by all, whether rich or poor. But the rich, because of their love for idleness and extravagance, may not obtain them so easily as do the poor.

The wise man knows contentment, because he is not covetous; he is rich in mind, though poor in worldly goods. There is an old saying, that the hearts of those who know contentment are rich: but the hearts of the foolish are poor because they know not contentment. To be content with simple things is to enjoy life. The older the man, the more content he should be in either his poverty or riches.

He who is his own friend, is a friend to all men.—*Seneca.*

Silence is a healing for all ailments.—*Jewish Proverb.*

THE MEDICINE OF WISDOM

From the Mahabharata

The body of a creature is called the car. The living principle is the driver of that car. The senses are said to be the steeds, our acts and the understanding are the traces. He who followeth after these running steeds has to come repeatedly to this world in a round of rebirths. He, however, who being self-restrained, restrains them by his understanding, hath not to come back.

The man, O King, who has restrained his senses and subdued wrath and covetousness, who is contented, and truthful in speech, succeeds in obtaining peace. The loss of kingdom, of friends and of children, O Bharata, and such as these, overtake him who is still under the influence of desire.

He that is wise should apply the medicine of intelligence to all great griefs. Indeed, obtaining the medicine of wisdom which is truly very efficacious and is almost unattainable, the man of restrained soul would kill that serious disease called sorrow.

Neither prowess, nor wealth, nor friends, nor well-wishers, can cure a man of his grief so effectually as the self-restrained soul. Self-restraint, renunciation and heedfulness are the three steeds of *Brahman.*

He who rides on the car of his soul, unto which are yoked these steeds with the aid of traces furnished by good conduct, and drives it, casting off all fear of death, proceedeth, O King, to the region of *Brahman.*

That person, O monarch, who gives unto all creatures an assurance of his harmlessness, goes to the highest regions. The fruit that one obtains by giving an assurance unto all creatures of his harmlessness cannot be obtained by a thousand sacrifices or by daily fasts.

Amongst all things there is certainly nothing dearer than self. Death is certainly disliked by all creatures, O Bharata! Therefore compassion should certainly be shown unto all.

Endued with diverse kinds of errors, entangled by the net of their own intelligence, they that are wicked and are of good vision, wander repeatedly on the earth. They, however, that are wise and endued with subtile sight, attain to a union with *Brahman.*

SURRENDER

Extract from letters of Swami Turiyananda

With love at heart and sincere prayers to the Lord, the spiritual aspirant has to wait for nothing else. The Paramatman who knows the workings of everybody's heart arranges everything favourably for him. A modest attitude is a great help to self-improvement. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "Water accumulates in a low land, while it runs off from an elevation." All virtues flock to the modest man. Modesty is a wonderfully desirable thing. Go on doing your work to the best of your ability and knowledge, and never mind for the consequences. Lay them all at the feet of the Lord. He is made of goodness and will do nothing but good.

If one sets his mind on Him, has he to be afraid of going astray? Is He not the pole-star of our life? He is the Goal, He is the means, and He is the consequences. Its beginning, middle and end,—everything is He. There is no other refuge but Him. "When you lie down, think that you are prostrating yourself to the Mother; when you sleep, think you are meditating on Her; and while taking food consider you are offering an oblation to Mother. Whatever you catch through your ears is a Mantram of the Mother, for Mother is verily the whole alphabet and in every letter She resides. In glee does Ramprasad sing that the Divine Mother is in every being; and when you roam about in the streets think

that you are circumambulating the Mother." If one bears this in mind one has no more chances to slip. She is the All. . . .

If I mistake not, you have expressed anguish at not being able to achieve anything yet in the way of realization, and have written also that your days are passing without joy. Why so? If you are really dispirited at not being able to realize God, rest assured that your auspicious moment is at hand. The more intensely you feel like that know, that the Lord's grace is approaching. But if any other desire lurking in the mind has created a sort of dullness, then try to remove it from the mind without delay, and never neglect it in the least. For know that to be the greatest obstacle in the path of spiritual realization. Always try to acquire fitness; then the Lord will be pleased and make you the recipient of all bliss.

Our chief duty is to lie in all humility at the Lord's door. If we can do that, His mercy is bound to come. Dullness of spirits will make room for surpassing joy. It would be the height of mercy on His part if He but allows me to lie submissively at His door; he who realizes this, undoubtedly receives His full grace without delay. Try to love Him with your whole mind and soul—why do you calculate your own joy or depression of spirits? Surrender yourself to Him and pray whole-heartedly that you may have the deep-rooted conviction ever alive in your heart that whatever condition He may put you in, it is for your welfare. Then everything will lead to good.

The perfect man shares the food of this earth, but the happiness of God. He does not incur trouble either from men or things. He does not join in censuring, in plotting, in toadying. Free from care he comes, and unconscious he goes; —this is the art of preserving life.—*Chuang Tzu.*

CONTEMPLATION

By Richard Rolle. Early Fourteenth Century.

(Known as the Hermit of Hampole and called the father of English mysticism.)

Contemplative life or contemplation has three parts: reading, prayer and meditation. In reading God speaks to us; in prayer we speak to God. In meditation angels come down to us and teach us that we err not; in prayer they go up and offer our prayers to God, joying in our profit; that are messengers betwixt God and us.

If it be asked what is contemplation it is hard to define. Some say that contemplative life is nought else but knowledge of things to come and hidden: or to be void of all worldly occupation: or the study of God's letters. Others say that contemplation is the free sight into the visioned truths of wisdom, lift up with full high marvel. Others say that contemplation is a free and wise insight of the soul all spread about to behold His might. Others say, and say well, that contemplation is joy in heavenly things. Others say, and say best, that contemplation is the death of fleshly desires through the joy of the mind up-raised.

To me it seems that contemplation is the joyful song of God's love taken into the mind, with the sweetness of angels' praise. This is the jubilation that is the end of perfect prayer and high devotion in this life. This is the ghostly mirth had in mind for the Everlasting Lover, with great voice out-breaking. This is the last and most perfect deed of all deeds in this life. Therefore the psalmist says: "Blest be the man who knows jubilation," in contemplation of God. Truly none alien to God can taste the sweetness of His love. But if he desires to be ever kindled with the fire of everlasting love, in patience, meekness, and gentle manners; and to be made fair with all cleanness of body and soul, and dight with ghostly ointments; he is lifted up into contemplation.

This is the manner for perfect men to keep: all worldly goods for God to despise, and yet to take of the same meat and clothing; and if this want at any time, not to murmur but to praise God; and as much as they may to refuse superfluities. The warmer a man waxes with the heat of everlasting light, the meeker shall he be in all adversities. He that is truly and not feignedly meek holds himself worthy of being despised, and neither by harm nor reproof is provoked to wrath. Wherefore lowing himself to continual meditation, it is given him to rise to the contemplation of heavenly things, and the sharpness of his mind being cleansed as the sickness of the flesh suffers, it is given him to sing sweetly and burningly with inward joys. And truly when he goes to seek any outward thing, he goes not with a proud foot, but only joying in high delights . . .

And in this truly is love perfect when man, going in the flesh, cannot be glad but in God, and wills or desires nothing but God or for God. Hereby it is shown that holiness is not in crying of the heart, or tears, or outward works, but in the sweetness of perfect charity and heavenly contemplation. Contemplative sweetness is not gotten but with full great labour; and with joy untold it is possessed. Forsooth it is not of man's merit but God's gift. And yet from the beginning to this day a man might never be ravished in contemplation of everlasting love unless he before had perfectly forsaken all the vanity of the world. Moreover he ought to be used in healthful meditation and devout prayer before he come truly to the contemplation of heavenly joys.

Contemplation is sweet and desirable labour. It gladdens the labourer, and hurts not. No man has this but in joying: not when it comes, but when it goes, he is weary. O good labour to which mortal men dress them. O noble and marvellous working that those sitting do most perfectly! It be-

hooves that he take great rest of body and mind whom the fire of the Holy Spirit truly enflames.

Nothing is more profitable, nothing merrier, than the grace of contemplation that lifts us from these low things and offers us to God. What is this grace but the beginning of joy? And what is the perfection of joy but grace confirmed? In which is kept for us a joyful happiness and happy joy, a glorious endlessness and everlasting joy; to live with the saints and dwell with angels. And that which is above all things: truly to know God; to love Him perfectly; and in the shining of His majesty to see Him and, with a wonderful song of joy and melody to praise Him endlessly.

To whom be worship and joy, with deeds of thankfulness, in the world of worlds. Amen.

LETTERS OF APPRECIATION

Since the appearance of Swami Paramananda's recent book of poems, we have received numerous appreciative letters from different sources. In order that we may share these with our friends, we are giving a few extracts from them.

Dr. John Haynes Holmes writes the Swami: "Your poems, 'Soul's Secret Door', are very beautiful. What a magic touch you Hindus have of majesty, repose and insight."

From Dr. and Mrs. Partridge, of New York, come these appreciative words: "After a first little peep, we settled ourselves to enjoy Swami's outpouring—first one reading aloud and then the other. The 'Dedication' itself is uplifting, attuning mind and heart through its simple, self-evident sincerity. As we read on and on, we were thrilled and humbled into an exalted mood. A lovely blossom, indeed, is each and every poem, with ample variety among which to make choice suited to the need of the moment! The collection as a whole

makes a wonderful garland most acceptable, we think, to Whom it is dedicated. It gives full evidence of the blissful sanctity of the mood attained when the Soul's Secret Door was opened by its author—and it inspires in the reader desire to open each for himself the same door. It must have been a treat, indeed, to hear Swami read his poems."

"I can scarcely close the 'Soul's Secret Door' long enough to tell you of my great joy in the possession of these exquisite poems. What a wonderful Christmas gift to the world." A. D., Louisville, Ky.

"I think that I was in a peculiarly receptive attitude of mind for the poems in their utter naturalness and simplicity struck home to my heart in a way that nothing I believe that I had read before had ever quite done for me. I love them all. The ones called 'Surrender' and 'Holy Waters' and also the one from which the book takes its name, I think, are my favorites. I shall prize your little book beyond measure and I thank you with all my heart for that which you have given me through it." N. M. H., Louisville, Ky.

"Swami's book came yesterday and I have found some lovely thoughts. The 'Wonder of Wonders' is one which is very beautiful, and also are 'Ego' and 'Freedom.' 'The Holy Lamp' impressed me as if it were the story of Swami's early struggle in Boston. Only a pure, lofty soul could write in such loving and sweet words, seeking to inspire us who are dwelling in more or less ignorance and darkness. I can imagine the pleasure of those privileged to hear him read the beautiful poems. They remind me of the Psalms, as they are written in somewhat of the same style. We enjoy Swami's beautiful poems and find much inspiration for thought and thankfulness to him for writing such a helpful book. It should be known from coast to coast." Mrs. E. C. Morgan, San Francisco.

"I am so very happy and grateful for your beautiful book, especially its pristine message of faith and freedom. Thank you heartily for letting me share this little volume, —fragrant as a May morning and sweet and poignant as night beneath June's moon! The poems—well I think that I like them the better because they are crowned with a simple genuineness and a frank and complete sharing of the beauty which you have caught from common, lovely 'pathway' things. For days I have been conscious of delicious lines that come back again and again to memory. Thank you indeed!" Prof. E. L. Baker, Kenyon College.

"From the bottom of my heart I thank you for the message it contains for me. In all my search for the Truth, never have I found such inspiration as when reading and re-reading any of the poems. It truly is a message from where words cannot reach. During the reading of the poems it has come to me that as we have learned, that when the Apostle Paul came to Athens and he saw the many temples dedicated to the different gods, and one of the temples dedicated to the Unknown God, he declared to them that the same gods whom you worship ignorantly, Him I declare unto you real and a living God, and this is what I feel the poems declare unto me, a real living God." W. H. Starick, Cincinnati.

"The more I read them the better I realize how full they are of the joy of spiritual life and the delight in nature as the boundless expression of the Infinite Love and Wisdom. There are certain lines which I find especially uplifting and impress me as wonderful material for meditation." Marion Foster Gilmore, Louisville.

"The book has arrived and to say I am pleased with it does not begin to express my feeling. The poems seem to grow in power and depth of wisdom at each reading." Mr. Morrison P. Helling, of the Home of Truth, Utica, N. Y.

REPORT

On Christmas Eve, as usual, The Vedanta Centre of Boston, became a centre of glowing light, the flickering candles in its windows sending out through the night something deeper than cheer—a sense of holiness and of serene joy which found tender expression in the little window altar with its smiling Mother and Child, its ruby vigil light, its star-like tapers and its garlands. Strangers were irresistibly drawn in to the Christmas Eve Service, members came from out of town, while two friends travelled from distant points just to spend Christmas at the Centre. As a result the Chapel was filled to over-flowing and for the first time many availed themselves of the Centre's Christmas blessing. Chapel and shrine, with their soft lights and their profusion of flowers, threw a spell of silence over all hearts. There were carols before and during the Service, the members of the household singing together.

Swami Paramananda, after reading some of his yet unpublished poems, spoke in simple and loving words of the spirit of Christmas. "There are moments," said the Swami in part, "when the soul sings and these are very precious moments. The soul only sings when it has found its real joy. The significance of Christmas or similar feasts which we have in all countries among all nations, is to my mind the song of the soul, when the spirit rejoices, when it sings aloud with a sense of triumph. And why? Because in the world of gloom and despair it suddenly realizes its divine heritage, —a spark, a light, that comes from the darkness, revealing all things, relating all things and making us feel our own true worth. To me, that is the real significance of Christmas or the birth of any great Saviour." During the last meditation, the Swami's own beautiful song of Dawn, the words and music of which came to him recently at sun-rise, was sung without accompaniment, a single voice carrying the melody, and the combined voices coming in on the refrain "It is Dawn, holy Dawn." Many who had not heard it before took it for an ancient carol and for all it was indeed "The call of the Awakener" for the New Year.

THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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

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PRAYER

O THOU eternal, all-compassionate Spirit, our lack of love hinders our access to Thee.

Do Thou lift our hearts from the mire of delusion that we may rejoice in Thy Presence.

Grant that we may learn to be firm and strong and selfless in Thy service, never losing the vision that Thou art the Doer and we are only instruments in Thy hands.

Help us to surrender our little will to Thine and to be wholly consecrated to Thee.

Thou art the Giver of all strength, give us undying spiritual strength.

Thou art the Giver of all inspiration, give us high and holy inspiration.

Thou art the Giver of all light, illumine our hearts with Thy divine radiance that our darkness and ignorance may vanish.

Thou art the Giver of all blessedness, fill our life with blessing and noble aspiration.

Thou art the Giver and Thou art the Gift; grant unto us the power to receive Thy gift.

Do Thou ever protect us and guide us by Thy compassionate hand.

Make our steps steadfast and unfaltering.
Teach us how to follow Thy holy path with unwavering faith and undaunted courage;
Though many times we fail and stumble, still may we never doubt Thy loving care.
Free us from all selfishness and egotism that we may live happily, loving even those who do not bear love towards us.
Thou art our tender Mother and protecting Father,
Thou art our Friend, Companion and Spiritual Guide.
Do Thou reveal unto us Thy abiding Presence that we may learn to surrender with wholeness of devotion and fulfill Thy Will through our life and actions.
We pray unto Thee to bless and sustain us and bestow upon us Thy divine peace. —*Swami Paramananda.*

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Take refuge in Him with all thy heart; through His grace thou shalt attain Supreme Peace and the Eternal Abode.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

O Lord, give what Thou wilt, and how much Thou wilt, and when Thou wilt. Deal with me as Thou thinkest good. Set me where Thou wilt, and deal with me in all things just as Thou wilt. Behold, I am Thy servant, prepared for all things: for I desire not to live unto myself, but unto Thee; and oh, that I could do it worthily and perfectly!—*Thomas a Kempis.*

Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust.
—*Psalms.*

In the prayer of rapture man is effaced from self, so that he is not conscious of his body, nor of things outward

and inward. From these he is rapt, journeying first to his Lord, then in his Lord. If it occur to him that he is effaced from self it is a defect. The highest state is to be effaced from effacement.—*Ghazzali.*

Have I ever been restrained from what I willed? Or compelled against my will? Indeed how is this possible? I have ranged my pursuits under the direction of God. Is it His will that I should have a fever? It is my will too. Is it His will that I should pursue anything? It is my will too. Is it His will that I should obtain anything? It is my will too. Is it His will that I should be tortured? Then it is my will to be tortured. Is it His will that I should die? Then it is my will to die.—*Epictetus.*

Let us throw self aside; no more self-interest, and then God's will, unfolding every moment in everything, will console us also every moment for all that He shall do around us or within us for our discipline.—*Fenelon.*

The Tathagata teaches a complete surrender of self, but he does not teach a surrender to those powers that are evil, be they men or gods or the elements of nature. Struggle must be for all life is struggle of some kind. But he that struggles should look to it lest he struggle in the interest of self against truth and righteousness.—*Buddha.*

Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.

—*Proverbs.*

If one acquires the conviction that everything is done by God's Will, that one is only the tool in the hands of God, then is one free even in this life.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

When the mind thinks nothing, when the soul covets nothing, and the body acteth nothing that is contrary to the will of God, this is perfect sanctification.—*Anonymous.*

SURRENDER

By Swami Paramananda

In spiritual life the surrender of self-will plays a most vital part, yet this abnegation to some higher power than our own should not be confounded with self-immolation. In fact spiritual surrender is just the opposite of what is understood in the world by surrender. In material life after we have exhausted all other resources, after every effort has failed and there is nothing more left for us to do, we begin to think about surrendering to God. It is forced upon us; we have no other alternative. In spiritual life it is quite the contrary. When we feel the dawning of a new consciousness, we realize that our physical life should depend upon its spiritual Source. This awakens in us a sense of higher power within—a power so vibrant and majestic that we surrender before it with gladness of heart. It is not through a sense of helplessness or defeat that we turn to this Supreme Source, but with the realization that finite should always seek its support in the Infinite. Herein lies the fullness of our strength and our unfailing security.

Surrender is never accomplished through mental calculation. It is the spontaneous feeling of our heart. It comes when we know, when we feel, that there is nothing more trustworthy, nothing more secure, nothing more wise or more competent than the Supreme. Saintly characters do not take their destiny in their own hands. They depend rather on the will of God. They do not ask for anything even in their prayers; they accept joyfully whatever comes through the divine Will. This requires great strength, faith and spiritual insight. We cannot expect to gain this all at once. The majority of us have been brought up with a very different idea; our education, sur-

roundings and atmosphere have been the very opposite of surrender. It is our ego that is dominant. Yet even when we do not have the spirit of complete surrender, we should try as much as possible to connect ourselves with the Infinite Source.

Our egotistic sense plays a treacherous and very unhealthy part in our life. It holds out so much promise and it gives so little! In its self-importance it wants to take the place of the Lord. When we have even a little flash of spiritual wisdom we come to see how unwise it is to depend upon the mundane and the fleeting. Our understanding grows deeper and we learn to surrender, not only sometimes but at all times,—in happiness and misery, in success and failure. We strive, not to suit our own convenience, but to adjust our life to the divine order. A real lover of truth, a devotee, takes everything in this light. He would rather have poverty with the Will of God than riches without His Will. We must never lose sight of this goal.

It is a beautiful thing to be able to feel and know that we are in God's hands. Whether our life is of apparent insignificance or of great importance, it is equally in His hands. These relative matters do not count; what counts is this deeper aspect wherein we feel our spiritual existence. Love of God is not confined to any station in life; it has nothing to do with riches or with poverty; it requires sincerity, purity of heart, guilelessness, and these are every man's natural heritage. He who possesses these qualities, his life is always pointed towards God. When misfortune thwarts him, he accepts it with thanksgiving; when good fortune shines upon him, he takes it as a blessing.

Sri Ramakrishna gives the parable of a poor working

man who was also a great devotee. Every evening when his work was done his custom was to sit alone in the outer court of his house and chant the Name of the Lord. It was his only recreation and his source of re-creation. One night as he was doing this he became so absorbed in the companionship of the Holy Presence that he lost all sense of time. The hour grew late and a band of robbers who were passing seized him and forced him to carry their loot for them. As they were robbing a house, they were surrounded, but they all escaped, all except the poor devotee.

When he was brought before the judge, the whole community protested; they said that he was a holy man, incapable of doing such an act. Finally the judge questioned him and the man replied: "Through the Lord's Will I ate my supper and through the Lord's Will I was resting and through the Lord's Will I was repeating a holy chant. Through the Lord's Will it was a late hour, and through the Lord's Will some thieves were passing and seized me. Through the Lord's Will I was arrested and through the Lord's Will I have been brought before you." One who has the right feeling of surrender never forgets.

"Thy Will be done!" Many among us can easily repeat these beautiful words. It is a saying which runs through almost all religions; but it is much easier to repeat than to put into practice. At first we are afraid that we may lose our individual independent action by surrender; but when we realize the infinitude of God, it is out of fullness and gladness and great wisdom that we fasten our heart, our whole being, to that One. There was once a mystic who said: When will that blessed day come when I shall be imprisoned hand and foot, heart and mind and brain? When will that blessed hour come when I shall

wholly lose my freedom? It may seem very confusing to the average mind that any one should want to be so imprisoned to the Will of God that he no longer has any independent will of his own.

How often in the life of Christ it was asked of Him why He did not save Himself, He Who was so great. "He saved others, himself he cannot save." He never wished it otherwise. Was not His constant prayer,—Thy Will be done in all things? Is it not the prayer of all great souls,—the height of spiritual realization? It does not mean asking only for that which seems to us to be good. Our vision is not far-reaching; we often blunder. Even apparent good may prove neither good nor permanent. Therefore the devotee puts aside his self-will and prays that God's Will may work through him, through his body, his mind, his heart, his soul; and this is called surrender. There is no difference between the wise man who knows his Self to be united with God, and says "I am He; I and my Father are one"; and the other wise man who says, "Not I, not I! Let Thy Will be done in all things! Not I, but Thou!" They have both transcended the limitations of name and form and self-will and have found their refuge in that unbounded Spirit. They are both surrendered before the one omniscient Will. They voice the same experience in two different utterances. He who says, "I am He" does not mean this flesh, this little personality, but That which permeates and pervades the whole; while the other who says: "Not I! Thou art all!" has become so filled with the Presence of God that he surrenders awe-stricken before the Infinitude of Deity.

But this inner life is shut to most people,—a closed book. There are some who think that they can grasp the theme of God intellectually and prove the existence

of Divinity through a series of arguments. That is not practical in the realm of spiritual reality. On the contrary these processes often drive us further away from our goal. It is rather the inner vision that we need in order to get free from the turbulence of the world. To gain this clear vision, we must cultivate steadfast devotion to our ideal. Devotion, prayer, meditation,— these practices which are inseparable from the spiritual life are the means by which we gain it. Spiritual life should always unfold itself with freshness of feeling. We may take inspiration from all sources, but no matter wherefrom it comes, we must give it spontaneous expression through our thought, word and action.

There are people who live in only one thought:—to realize God, to express spiritual beauty through their life and consciousness. In India to-day you will find hundreds of men and women who go about without any thought for themselves because their supreme faith is fastened, not on their muscles or their material revenue, but on God. They know that whatever comes, they will be taken care of. It is most wonderful, that when a man can express this feeling of perfect surrender, no evil can come to him. He has given a death-blow to evil. It is our calculation, our lack of faith, our doubt of ourselves, and of truth which open avenues for ailments and imperfections. When we rely on the spirit of God with absolute firmness and conviction, then when the unexpected comes, even if it is not pleasing to us, it will make no difference. If our surrender is complete we shall not be thwarted or unnerved, but if it is merely a theory, we cannot help but be overthrown by every difficulty.

I know through my own experience as well as from what I have seen in the lives of holy men, that the spirit

of surrender is the greatest treasure one can procure for oneself and for humanity. We do not ask to be protected and yet we are eternally protected; we do not ask for anything for ourselves and yet the supply is so inexhaustible that it fills our life till it overflows and gives abundantly to others.

DEPENDENCE ON GOD

By St. Catherine of Siena

A soul that loves God perfectly ends by forgetting herself and all other creatures. Such a soul, seeing that of herself she is nothing, and that all her being depends on God, in Whom alone and in no creature, she finds by experience that her happiness must rest, forsakes both herself and all things, to plunge herself as it were into the love of Him, directing to Him all her works and thoughts and powers. Without Him she cares not to be, because in Him she finds all that can delight the heart, all beauty, all sweetness, all quietness and all peace. And so, the bond of love between her and God growing closer, she comes as it were to be wholly transformed in Him. And at length it comes to pass that she can love, delight, think and remember no other thing than Him only. All other creatures she loves and considers in Him, even as a man who dives and swims under the water sees and seeks nothing which is not either the water or what is contained in the water. And even if he sees anything out of the water, he sees it not properly as it is in itself, but as the likeness of it appears in the water.

All the affections and powers unite in perfect souls to produce one harmonious sound, like the chords of a musical instrument. The powers of the soul are the great chords, the senses and sentiments of the body, the smaller

ones. And when all these are used to the praise of God and in the service of our neighbour, they produce one sound like that of a harmonious organ. All the saints have touched this organ and drawn forth musical tones. The first who sounded it was a sweet and loving Word, whose humanity united to His Divinity made sweet music of the wood of the cross. And all His servants have learnt of Him as of their Master, to give forth the same music, some in one way and some in another, Divine Providence giving all instruments on which to play.

MAN IS THY LYRE

By Julia P. Dabney

Man is Thy lyre, O Lord,
Man is Thy lyre!
Sweep us with uttered word;
Strike us with fire!
Set every fine-stretched string
Vitally vibrating,
Teaching our souls to sing
As Thy word may require.
Man is Thy lyre, O God;—
Touch us with fire!

Man is Thy lyre, O Lord!
If the string slack,
Cometh no living word
Answering back.
Oh if a string shall break,
Never a song shall wake,
Only a quivering ache,
Mocked of its high desire!
Man is Thy lyre, O God;—
Grant us Thy fire!

SPIRITUAL HEROISM

By Sister Daya

Heroism is a quality that lies latent in all human hearts. There is no coward so mean as not to have felt at some time or other life leap up within him in response to the heroic. It is like a bugle call to the human soul, bidding it come out into the big, free spaces of thought and action and give itself utterly. The heroic by its very nature wipes out all petty thoughts of small self-interest, in scorn of the mean and the personal. So mighty is its power that at its touch men struggle for the privilege of sacrifice and death. It brings out in us all that is magnanimous, noble and self-forgetting.

Man cannot live without the heroic. He must have it in some form or another, though we must admit that he generally prefers to take it vicariously through books. There comes a time, however, when mere words prove powerless to satisfy the hunger which he feels, to give himself for something that is greater than himself. It is out of this restless craving that wars are often born. When life becomes heavy with matter, when physical comfort fattens into an ideal and sordid self-seeking is held up as the wisest course of action, then men grow sick at heart, they know not why, and lacking higher vision, turn to the sacrifice of war as though it were food for their starving souls.

But man, if he only knew it, does not need to turn to war for the heroic. There is a heroism so much greater than the heroism of war that the laying down of the mere physical life seems comparatively easy beside it. There is an ideal so much loftier than all other ideals that the least we dare offer it is our whole being. The spiritual life is the heroic life. Those who turn away from it and re-

vile it, those who meet it with ridicule or contempt are not big enough to understand it and not brave enough to live it. The heroism that it requires is not an emotional heroism nor is it destructive to others. It is the continual and deliberate slaying of the petty self with its brood of demands and desires. It is the doing of this not for any hope of reward, not even to gain power or illumination, but for pure love of the Divine,—the all-wonderful Spirit within.

To struggle for months and then to fail, yet not to let that failure cloud our heart, our faith or our courage, is to be heroic. To guard ceaselessly every act and every thought that the enemy, self, may not enter in and to do this as vigilantly in times of spiritual deadness as in hours of burning fervour, is to be heroic. To refuse to hear any voice but the clear voice of the Spirit even when jealousy, anger and spiteful tattle are most clamorous, is to be heroic. To give all that we have and are through endless time to the Ideal and be content to find our only reward in the giving, is to be truly heroic. "The blessing of the vision is the vision itself, there is no other." Once we have gained that vision we know there could be no other, but on the way to it come moments of such blankness that if we are not steadfast, there is danger of our casting the hope of eternity aside for some fleeting human comfort.

Non-resistance, utter surrender to the Supreme! Dare the man of the world say that these take no heroism. No heroism to strip oneself bare of everything and place oneself in the hands of a Power that one as yet knows only through faith? It requires divine heroism. Some make the attempt, but they forget that "renunciation means giving up never to take back" and when danger threatens they resist with all the force of their human will. Theirs

is not the heroic spirit. The true hero will never take himself back. Even when faith is gone he will still give from the depths of his despair.

Giving is the key-note, ungrudging giving, but this giving must not spring from impulse. It must be the expression of our attitude towards life. Be too great of spirit ever to claim anything for yourself. Offer to life more than life can possibly take. Whatever it demands of us let us reply: "Is this all that you ask? I am ready to give far greater things than this." Remember that it is the resistance of the body that makes possible the cut of the sword.

Even physical pain can be lessened by non-resistance. When pain comes, if instead of shrinking from it, we throw open all the gates of our body as though we welcomed it; if we cease opposing it with tense nerves and contracted muscles we shall find that it becomes more friendly. But this is only incidental. The heroic spirit is not seeking for itself; it sweeps us beyond self into a purer region. Many times we touch those heights and cannot hold them. Yet that is no reason for discouragement if we have the strength to keep steadily on upon our chosen path, unshaken and unshakable.

To feel the Divine Flame within is an enormous aid, but our real spiritual gain is made when that flame seems to burn low. It is then that we learn to be steadfast and unless we are steadfast in every condition, how may we be trusted? It is during the hours of darkness and lack of vision that the petty human considerations seek entrance into our consciousness. Therefore the victories we gain then are fundamental. We are impregnable at no time if we are not impregnable at all times.

In India disciples are often put through searching tests

in order to try the metal of their souls. Do they seek surrender to God? Then let them show how well they can obey their spiritual Master. Swami Vivekananda used to question his pupils when they would speak of their undying devotion to him: "Would you be willing to go into the jaws of a tiger or before the mouth of a cannon if I were to ask you?" He knew that words without acts were like empty pods and also he knew that such devotion backed by action would sweep away all obstacles to spiritual attainment.

This uncalculating, selfless spirit has animated every true Saint and Saviour. They all stand forth as heroic figures. The worldly minded are apt to think of the spiritual life as lacking in red blood, an anemic existence fit only for weaklings and women. But let them who think thus stand as did the Christ before false accusers and keep silence. A thousand little injustices will come up in every day life by which they can test their inward strength. Have they the power to refrain from self-justification? We sometimes can control great anger, intense passion, but the small things, the passing spite, the gossipy word, the foolish vanities and hypocricies, choke our soul's growth in spite of all our efforts.

Dwelling on the heroic is an enormous help in the inner life. We need the bigness of it. A man may practise all manner of austerities, may be unflinching in the discipline which he gives his physical body, he may even be a so-called teacher of men, but if he is capable of subtle insinuations, of mean jealousy, of slurring remarks about a brother, he is neither heroic nor spiritual. There is something in the petty, utterly stultifying to the human soul. Even war with all its terror and awfulness is not as detrimental to man's progress as are the small daily conten-

tions of personal life. War has given us many instances of selfless devotion, such for instance as the sacrifice of Arnold von Winkelried at the battle of Sempach. The Swiss army was being broken to pieces on a solid wall of Austrian spears when von Winkelried leaped forward, gathered in his arms as many spears as he could reach and buried them in his own breast. This caused a breach in the enemy's ranks through which the Swiss rushed to victory. Anything that has the element of bigness gives room for the stirring of Spirit but there is nothing heroic in a household squabble.

When we feel inclined to brood upon paltry wrongs, let us summon before our mind's eye these uplifting pictures. Let us think of the great Indian Saint, Sri Ramakrishna who while in meditation under the Panchabati tree consciously entered into the one great Life of the universe as it moves through countless forms, becoming so dissolved in it that afterwards he was able to share the feeling of even a tiny leaf when it was broken. As we dwell on this will there be room in our minds for small grievances? Shall we not share a faint reflection of his vision? Or let us take the Gita and stand on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, beholding through the eyes of Arjuna the supreme and infinite form of the Lord. It was Arjuna who when given the choice by Sri Krishna, the Lord, of having a great army without His presence, or of having Him, the Lord, as his charioteer and no army, chose to stand alone with the Lord.

Shall we be capable of petty demands or thoughts of self if we constantly contemplate such things? India, the very cradle of the Spirit, has raised her children on ideals like these. She has always united the heroic with the spiritual. They must be united where realization crowns

theory, where "being and becoming" is demanded of the devotee. In the Occident, religion became associated in men's minds with weakness and inefficiency only when realization was no longer demanded of its protagonists.

It is an interesting fact that almost all the great Hindu Avatars and spiritual reformers have come not from the Brahman or priestly caste, but from the Kshatriyas or rulers, who were warriors by tradition and heroes by nature. "Bravery, energy, firmness, skill and also not flying from the battle, generosity, lordliness, are the duties of Kshatriyas" says the Gita. Likewise it was true of them that they gave refuge to the wounded and protection to all who sought sanctuary with them. They were truly Aryan or noble and they awakened India again and again with the living word of the Spirit: "Arise! awake! Having reached the Great Ones gain understanding." Sri Krishna's chiding of Arjuna at the opening of the Gita, strikes the same heroic note: ''O Arjuna, whence comes upon thee in this critical moment this depression unworthy of an Aryan, disgraceful, and contrary to the attainment of Heaven? O son of Pritha, yield not to unmanliness; it does not befit thee. Casting off this mean faint-heartedness, arise, O terror of thy foes!"

It may be asked what instinct is there in the human soul that urges it on into the heroic. Surely only a fool gives everything for nothing. Why should one surrender to an abstraction even to the point of death? The answer to the first question answers them all. The instinct which leads and will lead men to the heroic Ideal is the God-instinct within us. There is but one Life manifesting through ever-shifting form. We are That; we live because of That; we love because of That; we think because of That; we breathe because of That. From It springs

our aspiration for It is the life-breath of the soul.

All we lack is realization of this oneness. Like a man fighting his way through nightmare dreams to the sunlight of morning, we struggle through this dream of separated life to an awakening beyond mind and speech. Once we have even faintly recognized our Source, we must strive and ever strive for conscious union with It. Surrender to that One is said to be the crowning glory of existence, the ultimate fulfillment of all desire. Every yearning we have ever felt for anything has been but a yearning for this ultimate Light and Life, though we knew it not, and when it fills us it will fill us utterly. At first it may seem only an abstraction but to the brave, steadfast heart it soon manifests as supreme reality, more intimate than the personal, more vast than the sky. "The blessing of the vision is the vision itself," but only he who is heroic enough to cast all his human littleness into the pure fire of renunciation, will be great enough to perceive it.

THE PURE MEN OF OLD

By Chuang-Tzu. 4th Century B.C.

He who knows what God is, and who knows what man is, has attained. Knowing what God is, he knows that he himself proceeded therefrom. Knowing what man is, he rests in the knowledge of the known, waiting for the knowledge of the unknown. Working out one's allotted span and not perishing in mid career, this is the fulness of knowledge.

But what is a pure man?—The pure men of old acted without calculation, not seeking to secure results. They laid no plans. Therefore, failing, they had no cause for regret; succeeding, no cause for congratulation. And

thus they could scale heights without fear; enter water without becoming wet; fire, without feeling hot. So far had their wisdom advanced towards Tao (the Divine).

The pure men of old slept without dreams, and waked without anxiety. They ate without discrimination, breathing deep breaths. For pure men draw breath from their uttermost depths; the vulgar from the throat only.

If men's passions are deep, their divinity is shallow. The pure men of old did not know what it was to love life or to hate death. They did not rejoice in birth, nor strive to put off dissolution. They did not forget whence it was they had sprung, neither did they seek to hasten their return thither. Cheerfully they played their allotted parts, waiting patiently for the end. This is what is called not leading the heart astray from Tao, nor letting the human seek to supplement the divine. And this is what is meant by a pure man.

Such men are in mind absolutely free; in demeanor, grave; in expression, cheerful. If it is freezing cold, it seems to them like autumn; if blazing hot, like spring. Their passions occur like the four seasons. They are in harmony with all creation, and none know the limit thereof.

The outward appearance of the pure men of old derived its charm from the store of goodness within. They seemed to be of the world around them, while proudly treading beyond its limits. They seemed to desire silence, while in truth they had dispensed with language.

If you do not permit yourself to live for yourself, then involuntarily from boredom you begin to live for others.

—*Tolstoy.*

FOURTEENTH ANNIVERSARY

Of The Vedanta Centre of Boston

On the evening of January 9th the Vedanta Centre of Boston celebrated its 14th anniversary. So swiftly do the years fly by and so vivid are the memories of the Centre's small beginnings and early struggles that it is hard for the older members to realize that it has grown to be an old and established work with a very real place in the community. In spite of a night that had turned the sidewalks into paths of ice—a cold stormy night—the Chapel was well filled. Many old friends were present as well as many new ones and not a few strangers, who then and there became friends. A rare and lovely simplicity, characteristic of all the Centre's activities, seemed to pervade the whole atmosphere, causing every one to feel spiritually at home.

Swami Paramananda spoke as usual with directness and spontaneity on the growth and the ideals of the work. First, however, he called upon Sister Daya to give a brief report of the year just passed. The Sister did not touch upon dates and figures but strove to draw a picture of the inner life which lies back of the outer life of the Centre. She said that what the world would call a good report might be a danger signal in a work of this kind; but that the members need have no fear of the material element creeping in and destroying the spiritual beauty of the Vedanta Centre. It had a safe-guard that would protect it even though it grew many times as large and that safeguard was the Swami. So long as he was the head and the heart of the work it would never lose its spiritual quality. She referred to the peculiarly rapid growth that had been made during the past year in the face of outer difficulties and problems. "But just as flowers when

bruised breathe forth a richer scent, so a soul," she said, "under the pressure of circumstance manifests its essential quality." The weight of trouble had drawn from the Swami neither despondency nor complaint, but a collection of rare poems which had sustained the household through many trying hours and had seemed, as it were, the fragrance of his spiritual being. In this way even hardships had been turned into blessings.

SWAMI PARAMANANDA'S ADDRESS

Then the Swami spoke. "This celebration" he began, "is like the birthday of an individual, but it should not be observed merely through feasting. Its aim and object is to prepare us for another year's work so that we may set forth with hearts full of prayer and humility, with clear inner conviction and with renewed consecration. When these are united within us we cannot go wrong, but when we lack these, no matter how vigorous our efforts may be, our path is fraught with danger.

When this work was first started it was a question whether or not we should organize it as every society is organized with by-laws and officers. Of course organization has its advantages. It provides a background; but also spiritually it can weaken. I wanted to experiment, to build on a spiritual basis, laying just as little importance as possible on the mechanical side. It is no easy thing to begin a new work, especially in a strange country among strange people. Out of many thousands you perhaps find one who has the courage and the conviction to stand up and acknowledge his belief. The majority are too afraid of public opinion. In these circumstances many of my friends doubted the wisdom of trying to adopt new methods; but it was my firm conviction and through divine grace it has, I think, proved successful. I hope it

may always prove so. If we have too many forms and boundary lines we become narrowed down.

A point now has been reached where the work justifies a place two or three times as large as its present home, even to accommodate the Sunday attendance. But when it comes to enlarging the work I feel reluctant. It is not limited to this place. I hope it never will be, for the Spirit to which we have consecrated our lives, is not limited. There are yearning hearts everywhere. The work has eager friends all over the United States and even abroad. I have travelled as much as 25,000 miles in one year, sometimes going twice to California and back, as well as making many trips to nearby places,—cities within a thousand miles or less. As a result of these journeys, people have been drawn here from great distances. This year there have been friends from Louisville, Washington, New York and Cincinnati. Recently a gentleman whom I met in Portland, Oregon, came over from New York City where he was visiting, just to attend our Christmas services. He returned to New York and he is with us again to-night. These things are gratifying. They mean that the Centre in a small measure is fulfilling its mission.

I have gone on quietly these years and I am perfectly willing to wait. What we are trying to do is to create an atmosphere with our life, our devotion and our spirit of service. If we had weighed and measured our success, if we had calculated how many came or stayed away, I think there would be few here now. That driving attitude for success would have made it impossible for me to endure the ordeal I went through right here in Boston. To-day we have a big place and a large number of friends. It was not

always so; but always I have had One Friend to guide me and always will I take the guidance of that Friend.

Whether the Centre grows or receives a check may we ever bear in mind that ours is to render service with the same spirit that prompted us to start this work and to carry it on. So long as we hold to the ideal of simplicity and directness, the Spirit will not fail us. No man is so great that he should ever feel superior or indifferent to his fellow-beings. If he does he is no longer great; he has barred the road to greatness. True greatness consists in the simple life. It is a motto we are striving to make our own. Only when human calculation enters in do we grow narrow and mechanical. I pray with all my heart that those who come into this work may never lose that breadth of vision.

Before closing I would like to speak of one more thing: our little monthly magazine, "The Message of The East." When I returned from India in 1911 my mind conceived the idea of sending forth a message which would strike a universal note,—the message of the East. It was started very modestly, its growth has been unostentatious, but to-day it enters its twelfth year. The eleven volumes which comprise it are a wonderful addition to any library because in them we have tried to set forth not merely the mysticism of India or the tenets of any creed or cult, but the cream, the essence, of all the great thoughts of the world, Indo-Aryan, Greek, Persian, Chinese,—all.

It has not been an easy work. Practically every magazine carries a large number of advertisements. We have never had one single advertisement except our own book list. We were warned that it was a visionary idea, that we could never make such a magazine self-supporting. But a tree is known by its fruit. In recent years "The

Message" has fully paid for itself. People are learning to value it more and more. Not long ago a gentleman spent a generous sum trying to obtain an early volume.

You must realize that our workers, none of them, are paid anything for their efforts. It is a labor of love. In India, the Ramakrishna Mission of which this work is a part, has various lines of activity, not merely teaching but relief work of all kinds. At the call of distress whether from flood, famine or plague, the Mission brothers and their assistants go voluntarily to render service because they love to serve. Love for love's sake; service for the sake of service, this is the inspiration of our work. We have been asked what we get out of it. What we get out of it is incalculable; the results cannot be measured. Should we spoil them by seeking a small material return? Can we calculate the influence the work is exerting to-day among people? May it always be that way,—"Noiseless dew-drops falling on unopened flower-buds, not conscious of their heavenly heritage,"—so that those connected with the work may grow stronger, more courageous, more unselfish, more wholly consecrated. In our human relationships we do not often gain outer recognition, but if we can keep our inner fire clear and glowing, then whether we are thrown among friends or in the midst of strangers we shall find a bond of fellowship just from the fact that we are human beings, born of the one common Divine stock."

Interwoven with the various activities of the evening was lovely music from cello, violin and organ, contributed by three talented friends of the Centre. Light refreshments were served after which the guests went reluctantly home. Even then the celebration continued, for at midnight, by special invitation, Mr. Walter Hampden, the

great Shakespearean actor, with Mrs. Hampden and other prominent members of the company walked from the theatre to the Centre in a driving snow and stayed till two o'clock in the morning.

REPORT

On January 14th immediately after the Sunday morning service, Swami Paramananda left for the middle west on a short lecture tour, his first trip away from Boston since last March. Cincinnati, Louisville and Dayton were the only cities he was able to visit. This gave the Swami ample time to speak at least twice in each place and yet be back in Boston for the following Sunday. Louisville was particularly warm in its welcome, but everywhere he met with deep and sincere appreciation. One new feature was added to his program,—the reading of his poems at the morning class following the evening address.

In Cincinnati the Swami's coming gladdened the hearts of the small group of faithful workers who truly constitute an outpost of the Boston Centre. For long months they have held together with unshakable faith and fervour, thus proving their steadfastness. Six of the devoted students even followed the Swami to Dayton in order to be present at his evening lecture before the Dayton Psychology Club. This necessitated their leaving Cincinnati in the afternoon immediately after the close of business and returning from Dayton before dawn so as to be back home for the opening of business in the morning. Of the blessing this brought to them all, one of the young men writes: "I can still hear the lingering accents of Swami's voice, giving us his blessing and pouring forth those sacred poems. 'Forward, ever onward, my soul, march on!' Surely he has opened my Soul's Secret Door. As our train sped along the next morning I felt as though I was leaving hallowed ground."

THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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

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KINGDOM OF PURE THOUGHT

By Swami Paramananda

OUR thoughts lift us up to vision's lofty heights,
Where we stand upright and strong
As if out of evil's ominous reach.
Then again our own thoughts,
Blinding our mind by false persuasion,
Lead us downward to a narrower sphere,
Enchaining us to a world of endless conflict.
Here we struggle, carrying heavy loads,
And our dejected hearts bend down with broken faith.
Greed, ambition, self-love and pride
Drag us on through this mire of ignorance.
Help us! Help us! we cry in agony of soul.
Give us again our lost kingdom of pure thought;
Restore unto us our peace.
We ask no more for the vanities of this world.
Master of Fate!
O Lord of Light!
Save us! Save us!
With helpless heart we pray unto Thee!

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Have faith in God. Therefore, I say unto you what things soever ye desire when ye pray believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them.—*Jesus the Christ.*

The heart of love and faith spreads, as it were, a beneficent shade from the world of men to the world of gods.

Therefore, O Bhikkhus, be full of faith, modesty in heart, afraid of sin, anxious to learn, strong in energy, active in mind and full of wisdom.—*Buddha.*

We sleep in peace in the arms of God when we yield ourselves up to His providence, in a delightful consciousness of His tender mercies; no more restless uncertainties, no more anxious desires, no more impatience at the place we are in; for it is God who has put us there, and who holds us in His arms. Can we be unsafe where He has placed us?—*Fenelon.*

He who has not faith in others, shall find no faith in them.—*Laotze.*

He who can resign himself to the will of the Lord with simple faith and guileless devotion, attains unto Him without delay. He who has faith has all, and he who lacks faith lacks all.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

He who believes in God is not careful for the morrow, but labors joyfully and with a great heart. "For He giveth His beloved, as in sleep." They must work and watch, yet never be careful or anxious; but commit all to Him, and live in serene tranquillity; with a quiet heart, as one who sleeps safely and quietly.—*Martin Luther.*

Man consists of his faith. He is verily what his faith is.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

CONSTRUCTIVE POWER OF FAITH

By Swami Paramananda

What economic value faith exerts upon our life! Our modern life so bent on practical utility will have no share in visions and uncertain speculation. So must we not set aside the doctrine of faith as an ornament of by-gone age? Yet in spite of all this barricade of material logic, the soul of man invariably turns its ear to the echo of the distant past,—"Verily I say unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place: and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." It leaves very little room for speculation. "Nothing shall be impossible unto you" is very definitely stated. Faith is a dynamic and a constructive force in our life. Through the exertion of this divine gift men have wrought miracles in every age and in every country. We may scoff at the very mention of faith and try to discard it from our highly civilized modern life, but in no way do we shake this eternal foundation of truth save to impoverish our individual life.

Perhaps one strong reason for our disinclination towards faith is that it cannot stand the test of science. Faith and rationalism are not opposed to each other. In fact they supplement each other. The faculty of pure reasoning leads us to knowledge and knowledge gives us faith. Perhaps if we put belief, reason, knowledge and faith together, we have the complete picture of mental phenomena. How our mind, as it were, climbs from belief to reason and through reason to knowledge, and from knowledge to ultimate faith. Perhaps we can make it clearer by relating it to our every day experience. Sometimes we gain information through a trustworthy source and we say we believe it and are willing to make further

investigation in the matter. But if the same information is given by an untrustworthy person and if it seems unreasonable, we drop it and no further inquiry is made. So first we believe because of the trustworthy source; then we exert our reasoning faculty; we strive and inquire, and as the result of this we gain true knowledge of the subject. Then we can stand up and say, I have absolute faith in this. If this is true in our material life, how much more true it must be in the spiritual realm. For when we come upon the threshold of what science designates as unknowable phenomena, what better means can we have than to place our trust in that part of our being which does not come within the evidence of our physical senses.

From the crudest concept of religion to its purest and loftiest expression, tremendous emphasis has always been laid upon faith. Throughout the ages we find numberless instances of miracles perfomed through the power of faith. Are not miracles the working out of higher laws on the spiritual plane? The man of consecration who depends primarily on God, and knows that he is sustained by the Will of God, can perform that which may seem impossible or supernatural because he has united himself with the basic power of the universe. The skeptic, however, looks upon these happenings as brain hallucinations because he confuses faith with a morbid idea of non-action and argues that it is not for this age,—that we cannot live by faith alone. No teaching, however lofty it may appear, however much it may appeal to the aesthetic or intellectual sense, can hold man's regard for long unless it has a practical basis. Faith has found its fulfillment in the lives of the world's greatest men.

We are all creatures of faith. It is not that any of us fundamentally lack faith, but we all place our faith dif-

ferently; and a great deal of our variance springs from this cause. Our devotion to higher ideals of life, or lack of it, is directly due to where we place our trust. We are not attached to materiality through accident. It is because our inherent nature believes it to be of paramount importance. Our mind and heart will naturally follow their accustomed ways in spite of all our codes and creeds. We prove it especially in the hour of emergency. For instance, when a person is ill he calls a physician because he has faith in the power of the physician to cure him. Whenever we are in need of human assistance we call on those who can fulfill our requirements, because we have faith in them. Similarly there are souls who have unquestioning faith in God, and naturally in their hour of need they call on Him and receive their assistance from that divine Source. Faith in the Divine, however, can never be imitated. It must be natural, spontaneous and genuine.

We may ask, what is the philosophy of faith? It is most simple, but subtle. For this reason how often the worldly wise pass by its gate unaware of its benevolent power! That is why we find great men telling us again and again, unless we become like little children we cannot enter this holy kingdom of faith. But all our philosophic reasoning and genuine search will always lead us to the ultimate conclusion that the why and wherefore of our being is contained in the great Cause.

There is a great difference between faith and what people call belief. Belief is superficial and is most easily shaken, but faith makes us strong and steadfast. We cannot have faith in God unless we know that He exists. We cannot have faith in the immortality of our soul unless we have an inner conviction of immortality. Faith

is not an abstract indefinite sentiment to be put away on a shelf. At the outset it is necessary for us to exert our intellectual faculties to the utmost, but there are things we cannot grasp by reason only,—things which belong to the Infinite, and to these we can find our access more naturally through childlike simplicity and trust. A great teacher once said to a disciple who was inclined to tear things apart intellectually: "My son, do you think you can measure the Infinite with a tape measure?"

Divinity is ever present in every heart, but through our critical attitude and doubting mind we often deprive ourselves of Its beneficent Presence. Sri Ramakrishna used to say one finds God very directly and simply through faith, but intellectual arguments only drive Him further and further away. How often Christ said: "As ye believe, so will it be." A man of faith constructs something beautiful even in the midst of chaos, while he of doubting mind always destroys even that which has been created for his happiness. A doubting mind is a diseased mind. We are able neither to receive a blessing nor retain it so long as our mind is full of doubt and despair. Humanity finds its best expression in those who place their utmost trust in God and remain firm under all the varying circumstances of life. In this age of materiality it is most inspiring to see a man who is willing to face any difficulty, to lay down his life for the sake of his ideal. The skeptical man of the world will not believe in the conquering power of such a life. He wishes to accomplish everything at once. He has neither the spiritual insight nor the patience to wait, and he who will not wait for the cosmic law to work out, always perishes.

The man who is full of faith in the Divine does not work for self-gratification. He has a larger point of view.

He works for humanity. How could it be otherwise with one who has become part of God's plan? He has learned to offer himself in perfect faith and no matter in what circumstances he is placed, he never forgets that his life belongs only to that One. The man who stands on this rock of truth is unshakable. He is no longer connected with the small and the personal; he has connected himself with the cosmic force; he has set his faith right and because of that has become invincible. But placing our faith in God does not mean that we are going to eliminate all our troubles and tribulations. That is not so. On the contrary, our test may be greater than that of others. We should be very glad to have hardships placed upon us so that we may prove our faith. People who lack faith are, as a rule, always faint-hearted. Whenever a difficulty comes or too much is demanded of them, they give way because they have no trust in the infinite, inexhaustible reservoir of life.

Faith has a three-fold aspect. When we limit our concept of life to this little span of existence, we cannot help but doubt ourselves, doubt humanity and doubt God. These three go together. A man who has no faith in his own divine heritage cannot have faith in God; and a man who has no faith either in God or in himself certainly cannot have faith in humanity. Doubt throws the whole world into a state of turmoil. It destroys the moral fibre of humanity as well as the entire social fabric. Men grow suspicious of each other and this suspicion is not limited to a community or a country, it becomes a world-wide disease resulting in war, intolerance and all kinds of hideous conditions. The starting place for all this is the individual heart. Doubt is like a little germ which gets lodged in the heart and infects the whole being.

The degradation of the individual begins when he loses faith in the power of God and no longer believes that he has any access to Divinity. As soon as man allows himself to believe that he is not of God he cannot help but doubt himself. As he doubts himself, he lowers his standard and becomes incapable of doing anything good or noble. The Shepherd of Hermes tells us: "Turn unto the Lord with all thy heart and ask of him without doubting and Thou shalt know the mercy of the Lord; how that He will not forsake thee, but will fulfill the request of thy soul. For God is not as men mindful of the injuries He has received; but He forgets injuries and has compassion upon His creature. Wherefore purify thy heart from doubting and put on faith and trust in God; and thou shalt receive all that thou shalt ask. But if thou shouldst chance to ask somewhat and not immediately receive it, yet do not therefore doubt because thou has not presently received the petition of thy soul."

We must have faith. Faith in what, you may ask. In the nearest thing we can find. Is our life so devoid of good that we have nothing in which we can place our trust? There is a divine spark in humanity and the man of faith finds it; not only does he find it but with his faith he inspires even the skeptical and the doubting. That is one of the greatest services the master-spirits render to the world. By their own faith they awaken the faith of humanity. They trust even the wicked who come in contact with them and they overwhelm them by their child-like, simple and unquestioning trust. Such souls exert a constructive influence not only upon individuals but upon a whole community. Faith regenerates. There is no limit to the power of the human soul. A man who thinks himself the most sinful of all sinners, fallen without hope, rises to

his feet again when a wise and loving heart comes and rekindles in him the divine spark. No matter what he has done, no matter how deep has been his sin, he is redeemed.

You sometimes say, how can I believe when I have failed so many times? Do not doubt yourself. Do not be conscious only of the material aspect of your life; go deeper, to the Root, to the Source. Are we not part of the Cosmic universe? No matter how small or insignificant we may seem at times,—we are always connected with the great whole. That should be the starting point for our thought and action. As we think, so we become. If we begin by thinking we are sinners, born in iniquity, we shall very quickly become so. If we think that human beings cannot be trusted, because they are evilly constituted, we do injustice to humanity. But when people cheat us, rob us, maltreat us, how can we place our faith in them? There is a place in every heart upon which we can absolutely depend. We must try to find that. No matter how degraded a person may be, there is still within him the divine spark. If we fail to call that out, we have failed in our duty towards ourselves and towards our fellow-men. It may seem a difficult task. It is. It is no ordinary task. It is not for the person who is impatient for results and wants everything for himself. It is for those who have ideals and are ready to live and die for them.

We must learn to go deep down in our soul. As soon as we have found our centre of being, the whole aspect of of life changes. The person we doubted before, we now trust. The persons we shrank from, we now want to draw close to, for we find the same heart beating in their breasts as in our own. This discovery binds us to them with a bond of love. Do not lose your faith in humanity. The

spark of Divinity is everywhere. It may not always be shining on the surface. But never doubt, because by doubting we hinder ourselves and we also hinder others. No matter how many times we may be deceived we must make our faith more unshakable. Have faith in your spiritual being; believe in your divine heritage; remind yourself constantly that you are a child of God, that your life is not a matter of chance or accident, but that you have come directly from that one unchanging Source. This is a good way to lay our foundation.

Faith is a marvellous gift. It gives us direct access to Divinity. Contrary forces may come and try to make us disbelieve, but we have felt and we have known. When we feel and know, we do not doubt. We should gather up all our efforts in order to reach that point in our spiritual evolution. One direct glimpse of our ideal will convince us. All the great personages in sacred history were men of tremendous faith in their spiritual power, in their divine heritage. Nothing could tempt them because what they had was infinitely finer than anything any one could give. They would not exchange their treasure for any material possession. It is said of Mohammed that his uncle tried to dissuade him from his religious ardor, as it was making him unpopular among the people. He offered him a large sum of money if he would keep quiet about his faith. This was Mohammed's answer: "If you gave me the sun in one hand and the moon in the other, I should not give it up." A stream can never go backward. When that stream of faith once begins to flow, it washes us clean of alien matter.

The more we know of the vastness, the infinitude of God, the greater grows our humility. There are certain principles which go with the spiritual life: faith, humility

and steadfast devotion. This devotion is not sentimentality; it is a definite glowing feeling that arises spontaneously from one's own inner depths. Without it we lose much of the beauty of life. There is no happiness for the man of doubting mind either in this world or the next, because we carry to the next world only the things we have set our heart on here. If our heart is set on the small and ephemeral, if petty ideas overwhelm us, we carry those with us. Therefore we must begin to make a spiritual foundation right from the beginning.

When a man says "I can't", it is because he is depending too much on his physical strength and his mental calibre, and does not take into consideration that higher power which sustains and directs him. Self-reliance and faith are not opposed. When we combine these two ideas we are invincible. God is ever seeking our co-operation and we must ever seek the aid and co-operation of God, no matter what task we undertake. When we place our trust in the Divine we can surmount all dangers and even death cannot thwart us.

One who knows definitely the majesty of his own soul and his alliance with Divinity never loses his courage or his faith. There are people who condemn a religion or philosophy without knowing anything about it, or even taking the trouble to investigate it. They think themselves very clever. On the contrary, they are destructive to themselves and to their fellow-beings. The Katha Upanishad says of these: "Fools dwelling in ignorance, yet imagining themselves wise and learned, go round and round in crooked ways, like the blind leading the blind." Such people again and again fall under the sway of disease, death and affliction. A simple trustful nature carries us smoothly over the sea of life, but when we be-

gin to dispute the why and wherefore of things we are overwhelmed. Once a man wanted to cross a river and a sage gave him an amulet and told him that it would carry him across the water safely. The man started with it and was surprised to see that he was able to walk over the water; but when he reached the middle of the river, curiosity entered his mind and he opened it to see what it was. He found only the name of the Lord Rama written on it and thought, "Is that all!" As soon as he lost his faith, he sank down.

Let us be silent and full of faith so that we can hear God's voice. This turbulent mind of ours plays havoc with us. It has power to create and also to destroy. It is one of the most potent instruments we have. We can so train it that it will be free from suspicion and doubt, full of trust in the Divine; or we can make it so unruly that it tears everything to pieces, even the most beautiful. We find people in the world who create an atmosphere of destruction behind them and before them and all about them. They not only have no peace in their own hearts, but they destroy the peace of others. For this reason Sri Krishna says with such dynamic force: "Cutting asunder with the sword of wisdom this doubt of Self, born of ignorance, lying in the heart, take refuge in Yoga of wisdom and arise!" It is good counsel for all of us. There are moments when we lose courage. The haze of doubt enshrouds our high vision and we feel downcast. But let us always carry in our heart the precious light of faith. At first it may seem very small, a little flickering candle light; but it will suffice, it will grow in volume, in power, if only we know how to nurture it. That is all we need to do.

Every one of us cannot become a master, but we can

place ourselves with unflinching faith directly under the guiding hand of God; but not with calculation as to how much we are going to get out of it. Those who ask nothing for themselves are the richest. They have abundance to give in the way of love, life and strength, because they are not beggars. Do not let us be beggars. When we know that the Infinite is our heritage, as our faith increases in that, the less we feel oppressed by material circumstances. The heart of the mystic always knows this and cries: "Oh! faith, faith; oh! marvellous virtue, which illumines the spirit of man and leads him to the knowledge of his Creator. Oh! virtue altogether lovely, so little known, and still less practised, yet which, once known, is so glorious, so full of unspeakable blessing."

SUMMUM BONUM

By Louise Imogen Guiney

Waiting on Him who knows us and our need,
Most need have we to dare not, nor desire,
But as He giveth, softly to suspire
Against His gift with no inglorious greed,
For this is joy, though still our joys recede;
And, as in octaves of a noble lyre,
To move our minds with His, and clearer, higher,
Sound forth our fate: for this is strength indeed.

Thanks to His love let earth and man dispense
In smoke of worship when the heart is stillest,
A praying more than prayer: "Great good have I,
Till it be greater good to lay it by;
Nor can I lose peace, power, permanence,
For these smile on me from the thing Thou willest!"

TRUST THYSELF

By Ralph Waldo Emerson

There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better for worse as his portion; that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till. The power which resides in him is new in nature, and none but he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know until he has tried. Not for nothing one face, one character, one fact, makes much impression on him, and another none. This sculpture in the memory is not without pre-established harmony. The eye was placed where one ray should fall, that it might testify of that particular ray. We but half express ourselves, and are ashamed of that divine idea which each of us represents. It may be safely trusted as proportionate and of good issues, so it be faithfully imparted, but God will not have his work made manifest by cowards. A man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best; but what he has said or done otherwise shall give him no peace.

Trust thyself; every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events. Great men have always done so, and confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being. And we are now men, and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny; and not minors and invalids in a protected corner,

not cowards fleeing before a revolution, but guides, redeemers and benefactors, obeying the Almighty effort and advancing on chaos and the dark.

SEEK THE HIGHEST

By Swami Vivekananda

Let your souls ascend day and night like an "unbroken string" unto the feet of the Beloved, whose throne is in your own hearts, and let the rest take care of themselves, that is the body and everything else. Life is evanescent, a fleeting dream; youth and beauty fade;—say day and night, "Thou art my father, my mother, my husband, my love, my lord, my God—I want nothing but Thee, nothing but Thee. Nothing but Thee, nothing but Thee. Thou in me, I in Thee; I am Thou, Thou art me." Wealth goes, beauty vanishes, life flies, powers fly—but the Lord abideth forever, love abideth forever. If there is glory in keeping the machine in good trim, it is more glorious to withhold the soul from suffering with the body—that is the only demonstration of your being "not matter," by letting matter alone.

Stick to God. Who cares what comes to the body or to anything else! Through the terrors of evil, say,—my God, my love! Through the pangs of death, say,—my God, my love! Through all the evils under the sun. say, —my God, my love! Thou art here, I see Thee. Thou art with me, I feel Thee. I am Thine, take me. I am not the world's, but Thine; leave not then me. Do not go for glass beads leaving the mine of diamonds! This life is a great chance. What, seekest thou the pleasures of the world!—He is the foundation of all bliss. Seek for the highest, aim at the highest and you shall reach the highest.

LET THY SOUL BE AT PEACE

From Letters of St. Francis de Sales

Nothing can really disturb us save self-love and self-esteem. If we have no tenderness of heart, no taste or sentiment for prayer, no inward sweetness in meditation, we begin directly to be downcast:—if we find it difficult to do right, if hindrances come between us and our good intentions, we grow anxious and eager to thrust them aside. And self-love is one cause of our troubles, self-esteem is another. Why are we so astonished, disturbed, impatient when we commit some fault? Doubtless because we thought that we were good, steadfast, firm; and finding that it is quite otherwise, we are vexed and put out; whereas, if we realized what we are, so far from marvelling because we fall, we should rather marvel how we ever stand upright! But we like nothing save what is pleasant, and we do not like to be brought face to face with our own weakness and worthlessness.

Keep your soul in an attitude of heartfelt trust in God, and the more you are encompassed with troubles and infirmities, hope the more steadfastly in Him. Be very humble; but let it be a generous, restful humility. Be very faithful in serving our Master, but let your service be child-like and loving, free from all that is harsh and repelling. Strive to maintain a holy gladness, which may shine forth in your words and actions, and be attractive to those around you, leading them to glorify God—our only aim.

He who makes God the object of all his intentions and does what he can, has no reason to torment himself, or to be disturbed or fearful. God is not terrible to those who love Him. He is satisfied with a little, for He knows so well that we have not much to give. Remember, too, that our Lord is called the Prince of Peace in Holy Scripture,

and that wheresoever He is Lord alone, He keeps all things in peace. True, before peace, He sometimes requires war; dividing the heart and soul from affections to which they cling; such as excessive self-love, self-confidence, complacency, and the like. And when He tears us from these cherished passions, He seems to be scarifying the very heart, and we can hardly help resisting a process which is so painful. But even such resistance is not devoid of peace, if, however overwhelmed, we still strive to unite our will to that of our Lord, nailing it to His Cross, and working steadily on in our appointed course—even as He resigned His Will to His Father's. Surely it well befits the Prince of Peace to be at peace amidst war, and to possess sweetness amid all bitterness. Learn, then, that while we think we have lost our peace amid troubles, it is not really so, if we are renouncing ourselves and clinging to God's good pleasure, obeying Him in our daily duties. Learn, too, that we must suffer pain while God tears off the "old man" in order to put on the "new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Nor need we be disturbed, or imagine ourselves displeasing to God, therefore. Be sure that all restless, excited thoughts do not come from God, the Prince of Peace, but are temptations of the enemy, to be rejected and banished.

Strive everywhere and in all things to be at peace. If trouble comes from within or without, receive it peacefully. If joy comes, receive it peacefully, without excitement. If we must needs fly from evil, let us do it calmly, without agitation, or we may stumble and fall in our haste. Let us do good peacefully, or our hurry will lead us into sundry faults. Even repentance is a work that should be carried on peacefully.

MORALITY AND RELIGION

By Swami Ramakrishnananda

Essentially there is no difference between morality and religion. An immoral religious man is as impossible to imagine as a triangular circle. Religion consists in the renunciation of sensual pleasures, so does also morality; morality raises a man from the kingdom of animals to the kingdom of God, and religion takes him by the hand and leads him into that kingdom and brings him face to face with God. Morality is the active side of religion. Its existence is in practice and not in theory. Man's higher religion consists in meditation and enjoyment of God when once he is admitted into that higher plane of morality. Morality is the gate-keeper of the kingdom of heaven and higher religion is a guide in that kingdom to lead the man to God, who is the one eternal Truth and Bliss combined together.

The path of morality is an uphill path and therefore not so easy to travel. It requires an effort on the part of the traveller. It is easy to get angry, but it is difficult to restrain anger; it is easy to curse, but it is difficult to bless him who despitefully curses you. It is easy to love friends, but it is difficult to pray for the well-being of one's own enemy. But we must always remember that there can be no royal road to moral perfection, as there is no royal road to geometry. To realize that highest end we must struggle hard and always pray to God to help us. Says Jesus, "Ask and it shall be given you, seek and you shall find, knock and it must follow that the gate of the kingdom of heaven shall be opened to you." Heaven helps those who help themselves. The Father in heaven is always watching our works here with interest and when He sees one of His children sincerely laboring to gain a certain

end and not finding it, which always demands a little more strength from Him, He stretches forth His helping hand and enables His child to reach his ideal. Such being the case, why should we lose heart, knowing that we have an ever-merciful and almighty Father always beside us to help us out of all difficulties and give us whatever we want?

Faith in God is the surest and easiest means to make you great and good and morally perfect. "A fool hath said in his heart there is no God," says the Bible. "I had rather believe all the fables in the Legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind," says Bacon. Although Bacon, because he was a Christian, could not believe in all the fables of the Alcoran, as a Mohammedan should do, yet he could not bring himself down to believe that this universal frame was without a mind. God appeared to him to be so self-evident. Looking at the creation, no sane man can bring himself to believe that there is no creator behind it. So if God is a reality, and if that God is all-merciful and everywhere, is it not a matter of great advantage to us to achieve whatever is noble and high and great, since the ever-smiling and ever-helping God is ready to help us whenever we want? When I do a certain difficult action in the presence of one who can easily do that and will readily help me to do it, if I only ask him, I never get disheartened at seeing the difficulty of the work, but rather try my best to do the work myself without asking the help of my superior. I find a certain energy and alacrity in doing that difficult piece of business instead of getting disheartened and being doubtful of my success. Such is the case with the man who has faith in God, who lives and moves and has his being in God, who knows God to be his nearest and dearest Friend.

IMPREGNABLE SECURITY

By Epictetus

Our wall is secure, we have provisions for a very long time, and every other preparation. These are what render a city fortified and impregnable, but nothing but its principles render the human soul so. For what wall is so strong, what body so impenetrable, or what possession so unalienable, or what dignity so secured against stratagems? All things else, everywhere else, are mortal, easily reduced; and whoever in any degree fixes his mind upon them, must necessarily be subject to perturbation, despair, terrors, lamentations, disappointed desires, and incurred aversions.

And will we not fortify then the only place of security that is granted us, and, withdrawing ourselves from what is mortal and servile, diligently improve what is immortal and by nature free? Do we not remember that no one either hurts or benefits another; but the principle, which we hold concerning everything, doth it? It is this that hurts us; this that overturns us. Here is the fight, the sedition, the war.

Now, the very nature of every one is to pursue good, to avoid evil, to esteem him as an enemy and betrayer who deprives us of the one, and involves us in the other, though he be a brother, or a son, or father. For nothing is more nearly related to us than good. So that if good and evil consist in externals, there is no affection between father and son, brother and brother; but all is everywhere full of enemies, betrayers, sycophants. But if a right choice be the only good, and a wrong one the only evil, what further room is there for quarrelling, for reviling? About what? About what is nothing to us? Against whom? Against the ignorant, against the unhappy, against those

who are deceived in things of the greatest importance?

Mindful of this, Socrates lived in his own house, patiently bearing a furious wife, a senseless son. For what were the effects of her fury? The throwing as much water as she pleased on his head, the trampling a cake under her feet. "And what is this to me, if I think such things nothing to me? This very point is my business, and neither a tyrant nor a master shall restrain my will; nor multitudes, though I am a single person; nor one ever so strong, though I am ever so weak. For this is given by God to every one, free from restraint."

These principles make friendship in families, concord in cities, peace in nations. They make a person grateful to God, everywhere in good spirits about externals as belonging to others, as of no value. But we, alas! are able indeed to write and read these things, and to praise them when they are read; but very far from being convinced by them.

BOOK REVIEW

"Dissertation on Painting" by Babu Mohendra Nath Dutt, published by Seva Series Publishing Home, Calcutta, India.

The treatment of the subject is quite out of the ordinary. The author shows a wide grasp of the subject, and this is due to his travels abroad for many years and his ability to assimilate the art and ideals of other nations of the world. In the chapter on "What is Painting" is revealed the author's aim and tendency towards spiritual transcendentalism. We quote passages for the benefit of our readers.

"Painting is an attempt to represent or reproduce a picture of the mind through colour and lines or by certain

suggestives. In the mind we have the picture, we visualise the ideas in a glaring form; we stop short, compose our nerves and try to reach a calmness, a dignified attitude and sober state of the mind. We select a few materials—the colour and the lines and attempt to represent through this symbology what is passing inside the mind. The one is the ideal, the other is the representation. In this stage the painter actually remains in a state of conscious trance. He tries his utmost through these suggestive representations to bring down the ideal within the observing faculty of persons or to raise up the mind of the observer to the level and high pitch of his ideal. . . . This sort of representing the ideal is really the highest stage of meditation. The divinity is attempted to be expressed through suggestive hints either by symbology or lines and colours. . . .

"When in the deep state of identification, the inner and outer layers of the mind become separated, the outer layers or the changeable portion of the mind becomes identified with the observed object and the constant or the unchangeable part of the mind remains calm as an observer. The one part plays out the observation—Lila, while the other is the calm unchangeable one—Nitya. But what is beyond Nitya and Lila we cannot affirm,—it is the Avaktyam, the unspeakable state. All that the painter does is that he bifurcates himself into his dual self, either from the real or projected self. In the first state the mind of the painter and the corporeal form stand apart making the observed object as a separate entity. . . .

"The mind makes introspection and retrospection—the inward and the outward courses. The outward coating or his corporeal form slowly fades away. He forgets his own body and limbs and deep meditation comes in. The

more he can make himself incorporeal, the better he can understand the other thing—the suggestive; and as the notion of observation rises higher and higher from the corporeal to the incorporeal, the suggestive and his gross corporeal stages drop off and in the highest stage the presence of the substratum of one becomes identified with the substratum of the other. In this highest stage the painter sees the object, visualises it, but cannot move his body—a state of conscious trance is reached, the divinity or Prana of the object then reveals and slowly as he comes back to his corporeal form and gradually comes down to his separate bodily existence he brings back with him the reminiscence or the notion of the ideal and tries to draw out a few lines and marks to make a suggestive of the idea which he has visualised. It is through this constant state of meditation of making oneself incorporeal and coming up to the higher stage of the mind that many painters in the later days of their life turn out to be saints; for meditation of divinity must pass through all the psychological stages which the painter is undergoing. The real painter must be pure in mind and pure in body and saintly in his behaviour that he might reveal the pith and marrow of the idea. Painting might be called a system of philosophy written out by symbols and colours. . . .

"To exhibit subtleness of the mind, an earnest longing to know more of the ideal and to be identified with it are the mental stages of the painter. Hence saintly soul is the only fit person to be a great painter. What is devotion to a religious man, what is philosophy to a thinker, the very same is the ideal of a painter. Calmness, gravity and majestic demeanour with full amount of devotion must be developed in a person before he becomes a great painter. Hence great painters in their after life turn out to be saints."

REPORT

The birthday of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated at the Vedanta Centre of Boston on the evening of Sunday, February 25th, at eight o'clock. There was a large attendance. The Swami's address was on the life of this great Saint and was greatly appreciated. He spoke of His daily living, of His character; of His connection with the Temple where for so many years He worshipped God in the form of the Divine Mother. He told how, although He was unlettered, He could expound the deepest philosophy; and although He was born a Hindu Brahmin with all the rigidity of caste and religion that that implies, He realized God through the various paths of Christian, Mohammedan, dualist, monist, etc., and proclaimed from personal experience the fundamental fact that "Truth is One, men call It by various names." He was sought after by people of all castes and religions to solve their problems and answer their questions.

The Swami said: "The life of a holy person is doubly blessed because he not only brings blessing to himself, but to countless others. A holy life is like a spiritual flower bringing into the world a perfume which is so subtle and potent it permeates everywhere. Here was a poor man who lived in India, died in India, without wanting His name to be recognized, without asserting Himself in any way, and to-day He has become a world figure. He never claimed anything for Himself. He never even said He had any power. We often read in great classics and mystical literature that when people touch the Source, the Fountainhead, nothing is lacking in their lives; and it was this we find illustrated in the life of Sri Ramakrishna."

Following the address an offering was made for the poor of India. Later refreshments were served.

THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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

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LIFE HEREAFTER

By Swami Paramananda

"The curtains of yesterday drop down, the curtains of to-morrow roll up; but yesterday and to-morrow both are. Believe what thou findest written in the sanctuaries of man's soul, even as all thinkers, in all ages, have devoutly read it there."—(*Carlyle.*) If we let our life here be covered by the veil of unknowing, then the same veil will inevitably cover our sight after death. Life hereafter is not enshrouded with so much mystery as we imagine. The skeptical man will say, as he has always said, that there is no conclusive proof of an after life, that it is wholly a matter of speculation. We are not fair when we ask for a material proof where matter does not exist. If we want spiritual proof, then we must awaken that part in us which transcends matter. It is indeed the Spirit that gives us the power to see, but if we limit our vision to the physical, if we judge everything from the viewpoint of material experience, then we can never come to any definite understanding in regard to the higher realms of life.

In spite of all our advancement in scientific realms, there are people even to-day who try to uphold the idea that before this life there was nothing, that we have been created out of nothing. Both science and philosophy, however, are in one accord, that it is impossible for something to come out of nothing. Yet

man, because he is not able to see clearly in the realm of spiritual existence, often accepts and clings to that which is illogical rather than investigate and try to awaken within himself the seeing faculty. "There is no existence for the unreal and the real can never be non-existent. Know That to be indestructible by which all this is pervaded. No one is ever able to destroy that Immutable. These bodies are perishable, but the dwellers in these bodies are eternal, indestructible and imperishable. The soul is never born, nor does it die, nor once having been does it go into non-being. The soul is unborn, eternal, changeless. The dweller in the body of every man is ever indestructible. Therefore thou shouldst not grieve over any creature." What a wonderful picture this is which the Bhagavad-Gita gives of the majesty of the soul. It is the heritage of every man. If we believe in it, it will bring us definite and conclusive proof of our immortal life here and will remove all doubt in regard to our life hereafter.

In this world we are so busy trying to eliminate evil. We seek to make people better, to bring greater happiness into their lives; but what will bring them greater happiness? What will give them the power to counteract evil? It is life always which overcomes death. If we want to overcome disease and affliction, let us fill ourselves with life. The voice of Truth always tells us that we are already filled with the essence of life. Know it and discard all that is not life. We rise to great heights when we know more of this inner life and when we cease to identify ourselves with our physical body and our material surroundings, and direct our thoughts to that which is beyond, which underlies our life and is the background of every living being.

But there is always the other point of view reminding us constantly that we must not risk our happiness and prosperity by looking for something which is indefinite and not tangible.

This snare of the soul, entangling the individual with the notion "let us eat, drink and be merry" while the opportunities last, is probably one of the most difficult obstacles to surmount and the outcome of this attitude is always disastrous. It blindfolds our higher vision and limits us to a narrower sphere of immediate physical life and desire. As long as man adheres to this viewpoint, he cannot free his mind from evil propensities. If a man does not believe in continued existence and progress, what will prevent him from gratifying his selfish desires by wrong means? But when the higher understanding fills our heart, we realize that our action here invariably paves the road for our life hereafter. Usually people imagine that there is a recording angel keeping record of our good and evil deeds, but we are our own recording angel. Even the things that we do in the dark, no one else may see or know them, but we are fully aware of them. They leave their imprint so vividly upon our thoughts that when we want to forget them, we are not able to. If we have harmed some one, if we have cheated or robbed some one, the thought of it haunts us. It deprives us of our freedom. It prevents our happiness. This law of just compensation which governs our life here will also control our destiny in the after-life.

Life hereafter is not a visionary dream. We need not think that whatever we may do here or however we may live, we shall all go to heaven after death. If heaven is a place full of beauty, divine atmosphere and peace, then it stands to reason that we must fit ourselves for it. We must earn the right to take our place there. One who does not try to unite himself with heavenly things through his life and action here will find himself entirely out of place in heaven. We see this verified in our every-day life. If we are given an opportunity to come in contact with something which is beyond us and which our mind cannot grasp, we are unable to take any interest in that. Simi-

larly heaven will not prove a real haven of rest and peace for those who have not within themselves the right attitude. We must try to cultivate our taste for higher things now in this life if we expect to enjoy them after the life here. This world is a training school and in this training school any one who shrinks or shuns and thinks that he may bribe Divinity and escape his misdeeds is much mistaken.

There is no arbitrary power which is holding its rod of threat over us, but we punish ourselves. No one can deprive us of our blessings as much as we can deprive ourselves. Life gives us opportunities; and it is in this life, through its blessings and by well-directed and constructive action, that we build our bridge which takes us across to the other shore. If we live in doubt and darkness now, when the time comes for us to leave the body, in that moment of pain which often accompanies ordinary death, we shall have only darkness to carry with us, but if a man fills his consciousness with the light of understanding, then not only does that light not fail him at the hour of death, but it does not fail him at any time. Death loses all its horror, for the light always brightens our path. What a marvellous idea the Gita gives of this death concerning which the world feels such mystery and melancholy:—"As man casts off worn-out garments and puts on others which are new, similarly the embodied soul, casting off worn-out bodies, enters into others which are new." We are all eager for greater opportunities; but only as our bodies and minds evolve can we make use of such opportunities.

From very ancient times the Indo-Aryans have known that this gross body of ours is not all; there is another, a subtler body, less destructible than this physical body and more potent, composed of mind, intellect and the sense of ego. It is just like a sheath which holds the soul. After death the soul of the individual still continues to live in this body along with all that

he has accumulated, both good and bad. He must carry this with him until he has reaped the full harvest. He it was who did the sowing, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, and he it is who must do the reaping. Every individual has the power to make his own choice. This life is a harvest-field. The man who is industrious, who ploughs his field in the right season, who sows his seed and watches over it, can look upon the fruit of his labor with a sense of satisfaction. Do not think that we can have a rich harvest by accident. There is no such thing as accident in the cosmic universe. A man does not accidentally receive a blessing. Even if he did, he would not know how to retain it. When out of charity we give to the undeserving, we find that somehow or other they manage to come back to their original poverty.

Our defective mentality, our bondage, our distorted vision,—these are the natural products of our thoughts and deeds. Thoughts and actions cause our bondage, also they free us. We cannot afford to take a negligent attitude. We all need a spiritual background. We need a bigger, more lasting faith in ourselves. Without this man can never progress. It is with this that we rise; it is with this that we face all our difficulties. It has infinite healing! A man who really believes that his soul is immortal and indestructible, he rises above his physical ailments. You may say all these ideas of the soul and its immortality are nothing but imagination. There are good imaginations and bad ones. It is better to imagine lofty things; it is better to cling to high ideals, because in this way we enrich ourselves. What we think, that we become. Our whole future life depends on what we are doing now. We are either building a bridge which will take us across, or we are breaking it down.

There are some people who are rebellious when they see injustice in the world. But this injustice is man's own creation.

He brings it upon himself. Also he can redeem himself. No power can hamper us if we lift up our head and have this bigger point of view. There is a law working; and when we learn to work in perfect harmony and rhythm with that law, nothing can thwart us; if we try to go against it, we defeat ourselves. We cannot break the law, we only break ourselves. What is the consequence when a man foolishly tries to go against a locomotive? He is crushed; but if he knows how to utilize its power he can derive benefit through it. The same is true of our life. When we learn to join our forces harmoniously with this irresistible machine of life, it works for our upbuilding. If we try to oppose it, we cannot avoid the consequences.

Out of our ignorance we think we can find a short cut to happiness, but at every turn we are shown that there is no such short cut. What is ours will come to us; if it does not come to-day it will come to-morrow. Have you not faith in to-morrow? If you have faith in to-morrow, then you must have faith in life hereafter, because it means that. This life is to-day and what comes after is to-morrow; and to-day and to-morrow will always remain incomplete unless we also add yesterday; because what we are to-day is the product of yesterday, and to-morrow we can look forward to if we are putting everything to right use to-day. This may seem like a poetic picture, but it is not. If we put to right use our efforts, our energies, our thoughts, with clear vision to-day, I do not think that our efforts will fail to bring us a brighter to-morrow. We do not take a chance with our life here. A man who is very keen for success from the business point of view does not take any chances; he stores up his bank account and makes all kinds of provision for his life in the future. A wise man also makes provision for life hereafter. This does not necessitate our neglecting this life. On the contrary, if we take the proper care

of this life, if we utilize every blessing in the right way, with understanding, with steadfast devotion to our ideals, we shall build up our future even unconsciously.

When we know our real self we cannot stoop down below our level. It is only when we do not know our real worth, when we feel oppressed by the material situation, that we take to all kinds of unworthy devices because of our weakness. When we know our power, these evil means never occur to us; we never turn to them, nor can they find any access to our heart. So the light of the soul should fill our mind and our heart, our brain and our body. It is by that we live; but when we live without knowing that it is this power that sustains us, we do not make full use of our life. The conscious possession of one's eternal and immortal nature is the greatest possession.

We may think these are not practical ideas. They are practical ideas. They are so very practical that we cannot live without them. As we begin to think of these things, as we begin to put them into our life, even though the whole world may not understand, it will not matter. The world should not be our standard; we should make the standard for the world, even if we have to stand alone. But we shall not have to stand alone long because people are hungry for these truths. They may not always know it, but they are seeking; even when they blunder, it is because they are seeking. But we cannot give anything to those who are hungry until we have found the right food of the Spirit. Spiritual life is not following some creed, it is evolving the consciousness of Spirit within us, and that does not come accidentally. What we think, what we believe, what we work for, that we evolve; and if we evolve this consciousness of Spirit now before we are separated from this physical body, we shall carry it with us. The light will always go before us and when we walk by that light we shall not find any darkness either in this life or in the life hereafter.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Some look upon It (Soul) with wonder, some speak about It with wonder, some hear about It with wonder and yet others, even after hearing about It, know It not. The dweller in the body of everyone is ever indestructible; therefore, O Bharata, thou shouldst not grieve over any creature.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

There are two kinds of existence, the one visible, the other invisible. And the invisible is unchanging, while the visible is always changing.—*Plato.*

The truly spiritual see Spirit as Spirit, not as matter. It is Spirit that makes nature move, it is the reality in nature, so action is in nature, not in the Spirit. Spirit is always the same, changeless, eternal. Spirit and matter are in reality the same, but Spirit, as such, never becomes matter, and matter, as such, never becomes Spirit.—*Swami Vivekananda.*

We cannot describe the natural history of the soul, but we know that it is divine. I cannot tell if these wonderful qualities which house to-day in this mortal frame shall ever reassemble in equal activity in a similar frame . . . but this one thing I know, that these qualities did not now begin to exist, cannot be sick with my sickness, nor buried in my grave.—*Emerson.*

The holy oracles always represent Paradise as our native country, and our present life as an exile. How can we be said to have been banished from a place in which we never were? This argument alone would suffice to convince us of pre-existence.—*Chevalier Ramsay. Early 18th century.*

And thou son, who through thy mortal weight shalt again return below.—*Dante.*

Call with devotion upon His Hallowed Name and the mountain of your sins will disappear, just as a mountain of

cotton will burn up and vanish if it but catches one spark of fire.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

Spring redeems winter's devastation. Crucifixion finds its crowning in resurrection. What may seem tragic in our life at one time has its counterpart in another expression of the same life. It we can learn to wait our turn with ungrudging patience and watchful vigil, we shall find to our amazement how the long and short days of summer and winter are but pleasant pastimes for our soul, to renew and refresh her. Does not nature hold vividly before us the picture of restoration?—*Swami Paramananda.*

THE WORLD

By Jalaluddin Rumi

The lovers of the All are not the lovers of the part.
He who loves the part falls short of the All.
When the part loves the part
Too soon its loved object flits away into the All.
He stands forlorn among strangers
His arm becomes palsied and he dies.
The creature flies to the Creator and he is left behind.
The rose-odour flies to the rose and the thorn is left behind.
Like the fool who sees the sunshine
Gleam on the wall and becomes thunder-struck at the sight;
He loves the wall, for he saith, "Here is the true brightness."
He knows not that it is but the reflection of the sun;
And when the sunbeam returns thither whence it came
He sees the dark wall standing alone in its place;
While he himself remains afar from his desires
With a lost purpose and an empty aim and a weary foot.

THE SOUL

From Hermes Trismegistus.

(Egyptian Teaching. Date Unknown.)

The soul is, then, incorporal essence; for if it should have body, it would no longer have the power of being self-maintained. For every body needeth being; it needeth also ordered life as well.

For every thing that comes to birth change also must succeed. For that which doth become becomes in size; for in becoming it hath increase. Again, for every thing that doth increase decrease succeedeth; and on decrease destruction.

It is the soul that doth supply this intellectual life. It is called living through the life and rational through the intellect and mortal through the body.

Soul is, accordingly, a thing incorporal, possessing in itself the power of freedom from all change.

For how would it be possible to talk about an intellectual living thing, if that there were no living essence to furnish intellectual life?

Soul then is essence containing its own end within itself; in its beginning taking to itself the way of life allotted it by Fate, it draws also unto itself a reason like to matter, possessing "heart" and "appetite."

"Heart" too is matter; if it doth make its state accordant with the soul's intelligence, it then becometh courage, and is not led away by cowardice. And "appetite" is matter too; if it doth make its state accord with the soul's rational power, it then becometh temperance and is not moved by pleasure, for reasoning fills up the "appetite's" deficiency.

And when both these are harmonized and equalized, and both are made subordinate to the soul's rational power, justice is born. For that their state of equilibrium doth take away the "heart's" excess and equalizes the deficiency of "appetite."

The source of these, however, is the penetrating essence of all thought, its self by its own self, working in its own reason as its rule. It is the essence that doth lead and guide as ruler; its reason is as 'twere its counsellor, who thinks about all things.

The reason of the essence, then, is gnosis (knowledge) of those reasonings which furnish the irrational part with reasoning's conjecturing,—a faint thing as compared with reasoning itself, but reasoning as compared with the irrational, as echo unto voice and moonlight to the sun.

And "heart" and "appetite" are harmonized upon a rational plan; they pull the one against the other, and so they learn to know in their own selves a circular intent.

The kinds of souls are three:—divine, human and irrational.

Now the divine is that of its divine body, in which there is the making active of itself. For it is moved in it and moves itself.

For when it is set free from mortal lives, it separates itself from the irrational portions of itself, departs unto the godlike body, and as 'tis in perpetual motion, is moved in its own self with the same motion as the universe.

The human kind has also something of the godlike body, but it has joined to it as well the parts irrational,—the appetite and heart.

These latter also are immortal, in that they happen also in themselves to be activities; but they are the activities of mortal bodies.

Wherefore, they are removed far from the godlike portion of the soul, when it is in its godlike body; but when this enters in a mortal frame, they also cling to it and by the presence of these elements it keeps on being a human soul.

But that of the irrationals consist of heart and appetite. And for this cause these lives are also called irrational, through deprivation of the reason of the soul.

RECONSTRUCTION

By K. F. Sherwood

As we look about us to-day and consider the sad state into which the world seems to be plunged, let us regard also the many helps that are coming to us, among the most evident of which are the new methods of healing. There are many and they are good, so far as they effect cure. Looking into the practice of medicine, which is the conservative method, we will find that while now it treats matter with matter, "in the beginning it was not so". Long ago when disease was considered to come from the gods, to the gods also they looked for healing and the priests were the physicians. To-day it is so among the American Indians. The Medicine-man is also a kind of priest. Aesculapius is one of the first recorded by history who could be called a physician. He was called the inventor of the art of healing. Down to the time of Hippocrates some kind of magnetic sleep was induced in the patient in which he revealed his own condition; or if this failed, a state of ecstasy or trance was induced in the priest in which he revealed the method of cure.

Hippocrates (B. C. 460) was called the father of rational medicine, and it was he who brought the art of healing into the realm of science. He originated the idea of the healing power of nature which is recognized until now, but he regarded it as a spiritual principle. As the treatment of disease became more of a science, they began to make a distinction between the soul and body. In Plato's Phaedo we get the teaching of Socrates in regard to this most beautifully brought out—this distinction between soul and body with supremacy given to the soul. About the beginning of the Christian era there was a revival of the Platonic idea of a Pueuma or spirit and a medical school was founded under the name of Pneumatists whose practice was based on this principle.

W. F. Evans in his valuable book "Soul and Body" men-

tions these facts. Also he says that "after the subsidence of the Pneumatists the spiritual idea of health and disease seems to have been lost sight of in the practice of medicine," the system of Claudius Galen taking its place in the second century A. D. It was purely materialistic, but reigned supreme for 1300 years when it was disputed by Paracelsus. Evans says again, "Why in writing the history of medicine the theory and practice of Jesus the Christ is left out, it is difficult to conceive. Whatever view we take of Him, as either man or God, He was certainly the Great Physician of soul and body; and the principle on which His practice was based deserved the profoundest consideration and study. And it is certain that He employed no chemical remedies. His method of cure was psychical and not material."

The Psychical Research Society go on seeking for proof and discovering fraud, but even the miracles of Jesus are now being explained and by churchmen on a psychological basis. That which we call matter or materialization has been shown by one professor of Electro Therapeutics to be but a collection into form of particles attracted from, shall we say the air or the ether or something in which we live and move, and held in place by that more subtle form or vibration which exists on another plane which we call spirit and which is more subtle and more potent. There is a spiritual side to everything. Any material may be good in itself, but given an imperfect form according to the mind or ideal held in mind by the sculptor or painter or architect. It is in this formative laboratory that our work must be done—our work of making good and healthy bodies which are so necessary as instruments to work with.

The body by the most ancient schools of philosophy was considered as nothing—not to be considered—a no-thing, and that is what is being discerned and taught to-day by some of the new schools, and which continue despite contradiction and ridi-

cule. As in the old story of the healing of the blind man—"Whereas I was blind now I see"—many are saying who know not the cause, but note the difference in themselves, and many are trying to discover the cause and teach others that they "may sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon them." We hear the word "re-education" from some of these new teachers and healers—"reconstruction of ideas" might be a better term. They are taking their stand in connection with the more subtle body where the real trouble lies—the spiritual body—or mind body, and they are showing that fear of one kind or another is responsible for bodily ailments and faith, that "substance of the thing hoped for"—that reality out of which the new form is really made—that combination of thought and feeling which underlies the new form and supports it is a constructive force; that denial of the old idea helps to decompose it and a reconstruction takes place in the mind or subtle body and eventually that of the gross body follows the pattern.

In this new method there is every variety of treatment leading by gradual steps to the most ideal, which without knowing it has for a background that highest of all philosophies, the Monism of the Indo-Aryan. Spirit is all and I am that, says the monist. All that we cognize by the senses is unreal—Maya—no existence of itself. Of this unreal world our bodies are a part. We know them only through or by the same senses with which we contact the whole external world and at first we say this is "I." Even those senses are not body. We identify ourselves with it and fall into delusion, the great teachers tell us, but we must say "no, this is not I. I am one with the Father, the great creative Principle. I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute." Where is there any room for inharmony or disease in that realm of perfection? If we could but realize this if only for a few moments at a time our outer bodies would fall into line and express the same perfection, un-

less we at the same time are clinging to false ideas that exist in our subconsciousness and which will express themselves by the same law. This is the Sun of Righteousness which rises with healing in His wings, a real and lasting healing both for the body and the soul, not a temporary healing of the body only, but a reconstruction that is lasting, that while it is not all that could be done, yet it starts us in the right path from which we must take care not to fall away. Our bodies exist in us, not we in our bodies; that is, our conception of what our bodies are is in our mind, and our mind is greater than can be confined in this body. A part of our consciousness is there, but only a part and a small part. As we grow in this thought and live by it and act upon it we may one day expand our consciousness until we really know what we are and that we are one with all that is. Till then let us not be deceived. Let us see through this outward appearance to the real which is within. As St. Paul said, "Now we see through a glass darkly, then face to face. Now we know in part, then shall we know as we are known." This has been thought to refer to after the death of the body, but why wait? We live in that Spirit world now, but our eyes are holden. There is no doubt about it except for those who always live in doubt. Christ said, "If one rose from the dead ye would not believe." That is as true to-day as then. Human nature is the same. Only those who have faith, that "evidence of things not seen" that wish to believe, that combination of hope of the mind and desire of the heart built on some knowledge of the great possibilities of life, only they get what they are looking for.

Doubt is death. Faith is constructive and as a power of thought can reconstruct on the plane where life really is according to the pattern held in mind. This is what Coue means by the imagination, the imaging faculty which makes the pattern, and he says, "Mark those three important words—'in every

way,' and what does that mean? It means in *every* way." Does he not subtly suggest that it is in soul as well as body that we are to get better and better? "He that hath ears to hear let him hear." Has he not pointed us to the principle which underlies healing whenever it occurs, not only healing but disease? We are constantly making an auto-suggestion and affirming something in regard to ourselves, usually on the external plane, and the result of some feeling or sensation from which we draw wrong conclusions. At such times we should remember that we are primarily mind functioning in a form that we call body. Let us get if we can a new idea of body. It is very important. It will be to us exactly as we think it. Some one has said, "The body does not feel—we feel—the body vibrates." There is evidently something external to what we know as ourselves and we get our idea of it from sensations received in our sensorium. That sensorium exists in our mind body, not the material body, and from those sensations we form our idea of body.

Some one will say, "But how do you know?" Suppose we do not know. That which we have thought we knew has not been a complete success. Let us try something new even if only an hypothesis. Let us make it "X", our unknown quantity, and work out our problem until we find the real meaning of "X." Then perhaps we will know and by experience which is the only sure way. But we must have faith, which is the "substance of the thing hoped for." That is necessary. That faith can be cultivated by placing it first on something that we can perceive as true, no matter how small. It will grow by exercise according to the law of growth. In the face of all that we see around us that is discouraging, we can surely find something of the opposite in which we can have faith, and thus reconstruct our ideas in every line getting a better understanding that will lead us to right activity of mind and body and get-

ting rid of false notions that are holding us from a state of real health keeping the thought that we are spirits not bodies. This will be a real springtime for us, a renewal of life and we can better appreciate what is meant by the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings. But we must remember the promise is to "you who fear or think upon my name."

TRANQUILLITY OF SPIRIT

Spiritual Maxims of St. John of the Cross

Live in this world as if God and your soul only were in it; that your heart may be a captive to no earthly thing.

Do not weary yourself to no purpose, nor seek spiritual joy and sweetness, unless it be by denying yourself in that which you aim at.

Be interiorly detached from all things, and do not set your affection upon any temporal things, and your soul will gather in a harvest of blessings beyond its comprehension.

The goods of God, which are beyond all measure, can be contained only in an empty and solitary heart.

So far as it lies in your power, refuse nothing asked of you, though you may have need of it yourself.

He will never attain to perfection who will not labour to be satisfied with this: that all his natural and spiritual desires should be satisfied in the absence of everything which is not God. This is most necessary for abiding peace and tranquillity of spirit.

Let your soul be always ordered by a desire not for that which is easy, but for that which is most difficult; not for that which is most pleasant, but for that which is most unpleasant; not for that which is elevated and precious, but for that which is vile and despised; not for great things, but for little things; not to seek for anything, but to seek for nothing; not for that

which is best, but for that which is worst; desiring to enter, for the love of Jesus, upon detachment, emptiness, and poverty in everything in this world.

If you will cleanse your soul of strange possessions and desires, you will understand all things spiritually; and if you will restrain yourself from setting your heart upon them, you will rejoice truly in them, and understand them certainly.

All people will be your servants, and all things will minister to you, if only you will forget them and yourself.

You will never have to do with necessities greater than those to which you made your heart yield itself; for the poor in spirit are most happy and joyous in a state of privation; and he who has set his heart upon no thing, finds fullness everywhere.

The poor in spirit give generously all they have, and their pleasure consists in being thus deprived of everything for God's sake, and out of love to their neighbour, ordering all things by the law of this virtue.

Poverty of spirit looks to the substance of devotion solely, and making use only of what is sufficient for it, is weary of the multiplicity and curiosity of visible means.

A soul withdrawn from exterior things, detached from its own will, even in divine things, will not be raised by prosperity nor subdued by adversity.

The poor that are naked shall be clothed: and the soul that will strip itself of all its desires, likings, and dislikings, God will clothe with His own purity, His own joy, and His own will.

The love of God in a pure and simple soul, detached from every desire, is frequently in act.

Restrain your desires, and you will find that which your heart longs for: how can you tell that your desire is according to the will of God?

Not only do temporal goods, the delights and the tastes of

sense, hinder and thwart the way of God, but spiritual delights and consolations also, if sought for, or clung to eagerly, disturb the way of virtue.

WORKING FOR THE LORD

From Letter of Swami Turiyananda

Man is but the instrument and the Lord is the manipulator of it. Blessed is he through whom He gets His work done. Every one has to work in this world, no one can avoid working; but one who works for selfish ends, work, instead of liberating him, adds fresh bondage. The intelligent man works for the Lord, breaks through the fetters of work, and enjoys the bliss of *Mukti* (liberation). Not I, but He; He is the agent: this knowledge severs all bonds. And this is the eternal truth. The notion that I am the doer is merely a delusion. It is difficult to trace what the ego is. If we carefully analyze the ego, it ultimately melts in Him. Our identification with the body, mind and intellect, etc., is merely a delusion created by nescience; they do not survive till the end. Analysis puts an end to them all. They all go, and there only remains the One Reality from whom all things proceed, in whom they rest, and into whom they merge at the end.

That Reality is the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, the Witness of the ego-consciousness; and again, It is the omnipresent Lord who is creating, preserving and destroying the universe, yet is untouched by it all. This machine of a universe rests in Him and is working through His power. The ever playful Lord is watching His play and enjoying it. He only unto whom He unfolds this secret understands it, while others cannot understand it even though they hear of it. They consider themselves apart from Him and fall under delusion. This is His Maya. This Maya vanishes if one works surrendering himself unto Him. The doer then understands that he

is not the doer, but only an instrument. This is what is called inaction in the midst of action. This is realizing oneself as not doing anything—this is liberation in this life.

It is with a view to enjoy the bliss of this liberation in life that the soul takes up a body; otherwise it goes against reason that the eternally free soul can ever be born for the purpose of enjoying sense-pleasures. The ultimate goal of human life is the realization of one's being above the body-idea, even though possessed of this body. Realizing this, man attains the consummation of his life. Our sincere prayer to the Lord is that we may through His grace attain to that bliss of liberation in this life in this very birth; that this life may be our last life, that is to say, that we may not have to take up another body for the fulfillment of any selfish ends; that He may give us in this very life the conviction, the realization that our life is for Him and for nothing else. May the Lord be propitious to us!

ALTAR-FLOWER

By Swami Paramananda

Altar-flower, I have watched thee with deepest
wonderment.
Thou fragrant beauty of delicate loveliness,
Thou hast given thine all.
Now thou art fading.
Art thou dead?
Nay, thou art risen to thy glory;
Thou art ascended!
Thy immortal soul of sweet perfume
Hath risen to the throne of thy Lord.
Thou art no more separate from Him.
Thy humble heart hath taught me a holy secret,—
Yea, thou hast given thine all.

REVIEWS

SOUL'S SECRET DOOR

(We give here below the exact copy of review by Sam. T. Clover which appeared on February 10th, 1923, under the heading of "Cream of Current Poetry" in "Saturday Night," leading weekly of the Pacific Coast.)

To those specialized readers in touch with the publications issued from the Vedanta Centre, at Boston, the works of Swami Paramananda are well known for their beautiful simplicity, their sincerity and fine spiritual quality. These attributes are so markedly evident in his latest book of poems, the "Soul's Secret Door," that they should make appeal to a far wider circle, to a humanity which rises above all creeds and denominations, finding in these outpourings of a soul a reflection of unspoken self-communion as earnest as they are divinely fresh, simple, yet profound.

Not from the mind in daily contact with the money-changers, the barterers of commerce could such ecstatic poems emanate. Of necessity, they are from within, apart, introspective and adorational. This singleness of purpose thus evinced is the resultant of years of segregated living, thinking and sanctification. If, at times, we question the self-immurement of the ascetic, the value of such intense devotions to a sin-tossed world, in outpourings such as these is revealed their worth to mute souls physically, as well as mentally, unable to express their heart longings.

It is not a revengeful or jealous God before whom Swami Paramananda prostrates himself, as "Worship" discloses:

> "Wouldst thou worship the High, the Holy?
> Then strip thyself of this garment of self and put on
> a fresh vestment of humility.
> Why art thou fearful and trembling?
> He is not a God of revenge.
> Cast off thy false belief and let Him fill thee anew.

Contrast this creed with that sung with such acclaim by our progenitors who lustily shouted, while their women-folk, doubtless, trembled:

God the omnipotent, mighty avenger,
Watching invisible, judging unheard.

Neither a God of wrath nor yet a God of terror is the one whose shrine is behind the secret door of this poet, but a tender Lord, whose magic charm has dissipated past wretchedness, who is ever merciful to the lowly, to paraphrase from the "Unceasing Giver." It will be at once asserted by the orthodox-minded that the poet's God is in nowise more attractive, more gracious than the one so beautifully expressed in that sweet old hymn, "Dennis":

How gentle God's commands
How kind His precepts are.

Which is, of course, true and gives point to the further reflection that these poems contain the seed of all beliefs, hence will be as precious manna to the hungry soul. What could be more sympathetic in treatment than "Silence," beginning:

Hush! This is the hour of silence
When soul seeks its refreshment.

or, "Be Thou Patient," with its fine poise and vision:

Brother, thy load is heavy and thou art weary;
But One who has placed the load upon thy head will
also give thee strength to carry it.

"Harvest," "Ecstacy," "Restoration" and "Surrender" are exquisite psalms of spiritual light, for that is what these poems of the Swami's suggest. One last quatrain must be permitted from, "My Sleep is Ended":

The resonance of Thy voice roused me
Who was slumbering in idle dreams.
My waking was only for a moment,
But Thou hast wrought a strange miracle within my
soul.
Now even in sleep I find something in me always
awake and watching.
That which Thou hast roused in me can sleep no more.

As companion on the bedside table to Thomas à Kepmis' "Imitation of Christ," to Amiel's Journal and the New Testament may be safely recommended the "Soul's Secret Door" for those meditatively and devoutly inclined.

THE EASTERN BUDDHIST

"The Eastern Buddhist," issued by The Eastern Buddhist Society, Kyoto, Japan, is devoted to the study of Mahayana Buddhism. We are happy to note that since the first publication of this magazine in May, 1921, it has published many scholarly articles in its various issues on what is Mahayana Buddhism, Zen Buddhism, Shin-Shu Buddhism, and also the development of Buddhism in India. It shows the literary and religious activities among the Buddhist scholars in Japan. Such a publication is not only helpful as religious literature, but it is specially valuable in the field of broader education and comparative study. We heartily welcome this magazine and wish it all possible success. We quote from one of the articles:

"What is Mahayana Buddhism? Why do we have more than one Buddhism? Why should Buddhism be divided into Northern and Southern, or Mahayana and Hinayana? We might ask as well, Why is Christianity divided? For in Christianity do we not find the Roman Catholic Church, the Greek Church, and the Protestant Church with all its different sects? Yet all of these different branches and sects assert Christ as the mainspring of their religious life and claim to interpret the spirit of their faith and to derive from Christ's teachings the basis of their tenets of belief. It is exactly the same in Buddhism. Just as Christianity has changed according to the different periods of time and peoples with whom it has come in contact, so has the primitive Buddhism received new developments as different minds reflected and studied the Buddhist teachings. All these sects and schools of Buddhism, however, claim the Buddha as their inspiration and believe that in their teaching and presentation the spirit of the Buddha is reflected and that the kernel of thought is developed but not radically changed.

"When the Buddha was alive, he preached for many long

years, but like Christ he wrote nothing himself, and his sermons and discourses were not written down until one hundred years after his death. The monks of the Southern school who wrote in Pali soon began to emphasize the ethical teaching of the Buddha and did not develop the metaphysical and speculative elements.

"Later when Buddhism was brought to China and later still to Japan, the teaching was still further developed into what we may call Eastern Buddhism. There are certain differences in these schools of Buddhism, but there are also a great many points of similarity, and as mentioned before they all claim that the great Buddha Shakyamuni himself was the inspirer of their doctrine, and to represent the spirit of the Buddha's teaching, if not always the letter of what is sometimes called primitive Buddhism."

REPORT

During the first three Sundays of March it was necessary for Swami Paramananda to be absent from Boston, but the usual services at the Chapel of the Vedanta Centre were conducted by one of his assistants. During this short interval Swami visited Utica, Syracuse, Buffalo, Cincinnati and Los Angeles. All his lectures were warmly received. On every occasion he was urged to read from his new book of poems, "Soul's Secret Door." They met with deep appreciation everywhere; but special enthusiasm was shown for the poems of his unpublished second volume, from which he also read and which will soon go to press. While in Los Angeles Swami lectured in Hollywood and Altadena, as well as in Los Angeles, but his visit was chiefly directed towards procuring a suitable Peace Retreat as an extension of his work in Boston. A remarkable piece of property in the arms of the Sierra Madre mountains covering 135 acres was secured. It is declared to be one of the most beautiful spots in southern California. A detailed account of it will be given in the next number of the Message.

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 POWER OF MEDITATION

By Swami Paramananda

Whenever we are in trouble physically, or distressed mentally, we seek for help in the outside world, but very seldom we think that there is already within us the most potent and infallible remedy. Meditation opens to us such a source of remedy. It has a decided healing power both over body and mind, but unfortunately the majority of people regard it as a negative state, entirely aloof from our every-day, active life. But it is not so. It is the greatest creative force within us. Consciously and unconsciously we all make use of it. There are certain thoughts which have a hold upon us; we cannot get away from their influence; but whether our meditation is voluntary or involuntary our mind always takes the imprint of our thoughts. Whenever we are able to keep our mind connected for any length of time with something beautiful and restful, we feel refreshed. A tired person coming in contact with nature becomes rested just by looking at the trees, the flowers and the birds. It is not that he has actually taken anything away from nature. Nature still stands intact, but the thought has lifted him from his tired bodily conditions and restored him.

People are always striving to avoid physical and ner-

vous reactions, but it is very difficult to get away from them. Whenever we act, no matter what the action is, it brings reaction and not always a pleasing one. Unless we know how to control this constant action and reaction which is taking place, we must feel the wear and tear of life. How often we hear it said, "I am a complete wreck; I have worked so hard, I have no energy left." It is not by refraining from action that we restore our energy and maintain our health. True healthfulness is something to be found from within. If the mind is diseased, sooner or later the body will feel it, but nature is inevitably healing in its effect and will reconstruct if left unhindered. Whenever we have a cut or a burn, if we rub it, it becomes worse. A physician will tell you to leave it alone, not to touch it; he will even bandage it up so you will not irritate it. If your eyes are inflamed your natural tendency is to rub them; but the more you do so, the more inflamed they become. Nature works the same way in our mental ailments. The more we dwell on these things, the more acute they grow; but when we are able to forget them, we are restored.

Whenever we are tired or disturbed, instead of allowing our mind to be full of agitation, if we withdraw it entirely from the source of disturbance, we shall not only have a sense of refreshment, but by disconnecting ourselves in this way from our trouble we shall gain a more correct view of it and be able to find the remedy for it. This is a general principle and not merely to be applied to physical ailments. These ailments are after all not so important as we think. Let us take this question up very frankly. Here in the Occident, especially since the rise of certain modern movements, healing has played

a tremendous part. There are some people who hold that unless a person has good health he does not amount to anything; that illness is a great curse. In India there is quite another attitude. There, when a person has a little fever or headache or some other physical ailment, it is not held that he has fallen from grace or that a curse has fallen upon him. On the contrary, it is felt that to be able to meet these conditions with absolute equilibrium, without being afflicted, is a great achievement. If we are able to keep our balance in all circumstances, no matter what comes, affliction will not appear to be affliction, because we shall have a consciousness and a power by which we can cope with everything. Is not that much better than merely trying to follow the path of affirmation? To deny pain when you feel it is a very good practice; but to keep on denying it, if it continues, is to be slightly lacking in a sense of true value.

Body and soul each has its own place in our life, and if we can keep these two separate in our mind, often we can make our adjustment. Whenever something happens on the physical plane we should not take it as an inevitable finality. Spirit can always transcend bodily limitations. That is one of the great thoughts of the Indo-Aryan school of philosophy. This does not mean that there are no healing methods in India. Healing is one of the most essential elements in her spiritual evolution. It is an accepted thing that one who has risen to a great spiritual height can dispel ignorance, the cause of all illness, by his touch, his word, his very presence. Whenever there is light, there can be no darkness. Healing is accomplished in that way, but another element is introduced in order that people may help themselves instead of depending on others, and that is the element of meditation.

When we are in physical or mental trouble, it is well to forget it sometimes. In the world, when we have any perplexing problem we say: "I want to think it over, I want to sleep on it." In other words we wish to reflect, to find a clear light before we give our decision. That is exactly what meditation means. The body requires a certain amount of inward recreation which the mind can give. Body and mind, when united, find balance, a sense of rest within. Retired from all worldly disturbance they both grow stronger. Whether we are in public life or following some line of spiritual study, we cannot do without these times of retirement. The nervous disorders of modern life are due not so much to our intensity of action as to our lack of understanding, the wrong direction of our energy. We must have balance, and meditation gives us that balance. Without it we cannot maintain our health, our happiness or our peace of mind. One person in a household who maintains his balance becomes a great power. He helps even unconsciously. In this day it is hard for us to believe that any one can instruct without speaking. We believe more in noise than in silence; that is our misfortune. We miss the subtler, the finer, the more beautiful part of life when we merely follow the noisy trend of the world.

In India it has been proved by practice that those who live in rhythm, who have a sense of inner values, are naturally possessed of a meditative mind. They go through life without showing any strain. Sometimes they live many years without wrinkles or any sign of old age. For what causes wrinkles? Wrong meditation; that is, a continual dwelling on anxieties and worries. We may feel that we have very good reason to be anxious, to worry; but have we ever gained anything through it except marred

physical health, disturbed mental peace and an atmosphere of unrest, which others feel? Meditation is the means by which we can control both body and mind and keep them turned in the right direction, so that even when we have reason for disturbance we can quickly adjust and detach ourselves. This is most refreshing. When we are very tired and feel that we have almost come to the breaking point, it is an excellent practice to take a deep breath and close our eyes for a few moments. But it does not do any good to go through these outer forms if our mind is wandering somewhere. If, however, the mind at the same time can be fixed on a beautiful thought, then both body and mind will feel revived.

It never does us any good to dwell on our ills and ailments, either physical or mental. But great help comes by being able to rise above them. Do not think that we can always do this through mental calculation. We may understand our philosophy perfectly in theory, but the practical application is quite a different thing. If, however, we can apply it practically, we not only rid ourselves of our troubles, we create an atmosphere of peace even in the midst of unrest. There lies the value of noble lives, of people who do not merely theorize, but who live their ideals and radiate them. We can all do the same, but we must do it very quietly. We are more successful when we are quiet about it. On this one point there is a great difference between the Oriental and the Occidental point of view. When an Easterner conceives an idea he goes into retirement. "How selfish!" you may say; "he should come forth and preach it to the world." But he wants first to gain direct and absolute knowledge of it. He is not content to take a truth because he has heard it from some one else. He wishes to verify it and make it his

own, so first he meditates upon it and then he acts.

Most people act first and think afterwards. It is a dangerous thing to do. We cannot reverse the order in this way in our daily life and expect something heavenly. That is not possible. Keep your inner and your outer life in unison. When these two are flowing in one current without any cross currents, then indeed we have reached a great height. We should strive to do this so that we may maintain rhythm and harmony within ourselves, and never contradict ourselves. How often you remark: "I did not intend to say that." But if you did not intend to say it and yet your mouth uttered it, that is a terrible defeat. It means you have not the meditative habit by which you can completely adjust your life.

Every particle of our body can be brought so absolutely into rhythm that nothing can go out of harmony. You may say that is not possible in this world of chaos. It seems hopeless; we have many obstacles, but that makes it all the more necessary for us to have this inward practice. We do it in our mind, on the street car, walking along a crowded thoroughfare, on the railroad train wherever we may be. No one should be able to disturb our thoughts, no one should have any control over our minds, but in order that our mind may be absolutely master of the situation, we need to form the habit of meditation,—meditation on the beautiful, meditation on the true. We should ally ourselves as often as we can and as constantly with the Unbounded and the Infinite. In the Upanishads we are taught that in That which is infinite and unbounded lies happiness, real strength and the fulfillment of life. When we are able to look up to That, not only sometimes but always, we live happily. Can we have any real fullness of life if we are separated from the very

root of our existence? Have you ever seen a flower or a branch of a tree survive when it is severed from the root? It is not possible. Meditation teaches us how we may keep ourselves united with the Source of our life. This is our heritage. No one should ever regard himself as so sinful, so degraded and so benighted as not to have access to this Source. It is through our mental distortion that we think we have drifted from the Source, that we are weak, impure and selfish, that we have nothing. We have everything. We are the descendants of the infinite, all-beautiful, all-living Spirit. The more we can form the habit of thinking of this, the greater will grow our inward power. Then we can easily cope with all the little things of life. At no moment shall we feel at a loss. At no moment shall we feel that we have to rob any one or cheat another to gain our happiness, because we ourselves shall have so much that it will not only suffice for our own life, but we will be able to share it with others gladly and abundantly.

PRAYER AND MEDITATION

By Katharine F. Sherwood

In prayer, O Lord, my thoughts to Thee ascend.
In prayer, O Lord, my knee to Thee I bend.
In meditation, Lord, my thought I stay
That I may hear Thy voice and know Thy way.

In prayer, O Lord, I am a thing apart,
Though worshipping with all the mind and heart.
In meditation, Lord, the self is gone.
Conscious of Thee alone, the two are one.

WALK WHILE YE HAVE LIGHT

From Spiritual Letters of Fenelon. 17th Century

The Greatness and Goodness of God should be a frequent subject of your meditation; but you should not try to meditate without taking some special words, in order to fix your mind, which has been little accustomed to abide calmly in God's Presence; you will otherwise only lose your time without strengthening your heart. You should always have a definite, plain, simple subject, on which you should reflect simply. Ask chiefly to be drawn to God through the affections, for it is not by intellectual processes or arguments that He wins souls; it is by the quickening of the heart and the humbling of the spirit. Do not hope to attain to a point in which your meditations will be free from distraction,—it is not possible; but try rather to make use of your distractions by bearing them with humble patience, never being discouraged. Every time you find them out, turn yourself quietly to God again. Anxiety concerning your distractions is the worst distraction of all.

I would have you always on your guard against haughtiness, self-trust, over-decision in speech. Be gentle and humble in heart, by which I mean that your gentle manner should spring from real humility; harshness and want of consideration always come from pride, and he who would grow milder must learn to humble himself from the bottom of his heart. A humble heart is always kind and pliable at bottom, even when the outside is rough owing to a naturally brusque manner. Watch, pray, labour, bear with yourself without self-flattery. Let your reading and prayer tend to enlighten you as to your faults, to correct them, and to overcome your natural disposition through God's help.

Only a word, dear son, to urge candour more and more upon you, and that you avoid self-seeking, which is the cause of most of your troubles and faults. The simpler you are, the more docile and pliable you will be; and to be this effectually you should be so towards all who find fault with you out of charity. It is very acceptable in God's sight when one is always willing to be blamed, despised, corrected.

Be kindly, without pride or imperiousness, censoriousness, disdain, fastidiousness, or any other token of self-conceit. Be true and frank in spite of yourself. Be steadfast in thwarting your vanity and the sensitiveness of self-love directly that God points them out to you. "Walk while ye have light, that ye may be the children of light." I pray that God may make you gentle, lowly, and childlike.

MIRACLE OF FAITH

Parable by Sri Ramakrishna

A milk-maid used to supply milk to a Brahmin priest living on the other side of the river. Owing to the irregularities of boat service, she could not supply it punctually every day. Once being rebuked for her lateness, the poor woman said, "What can I do, Sir? I start early from my house but have to wait a long time at the river bank for the boatman and the passengers." The priest said, "Woman! they cross the ocean of life by uttering the name of God and canst thou not cross this little river?" The simple-hearted woman became very glad at heart on finding this easy means of crossing the river. From the next day the milk was supplied early in the morning and the milk-maid was also happy, as she saved her fare. One day the priest said to the woman, "How is it that you are no longer late now?" She said, "I cross the river by utter-

ing the name of the Lord as you told me to do, and don't stand in need of the boatman." The priest could not believe this and said, "Canst thou show me how thou crossest the river?" The woman took him with her and began to walk over the water. Looking behind, the woman saw his sad plight and said, "How is this, Sir, thou art uttering the name of the Deity with thy mouth, but at the same time with thy hands thou art trying to keep thy clothes untouched by water? Thou dost not fully rely on the Diety." Entire resignation and absolute faith in God are at the root of all miraculous deeds.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.—*Micah VII, 8.*

We cannot describe the natural history of the soul, but we know that it is divine. I cannot tell if these wonderful qualities which house to-day in this mortal frame shall ever reassemble in equal activity in a similar frame, but this one thing I know, that these qualities did not now begin to exist, cannot be sick with my sickness, nor buried in my grave. —*Emerson.*

The body is our enemy, and yet is our friend. Which of you can bear the sight of misery, and which of you cannot do so when you see it only as a painting? Because it is unreal, we do not identify ourselves with it; we know it only as a painting; it cannot bless us; it cannot hurt us. The most terrible misery painted upon a piece of canvas, we may even enjoy; we praise the technique of the artist; we wonder at his marvellous genius, even though the scene he paints is most horrible. That is the secret: that non-attachment. Be the Witness.

—*Swami Vivekananda.*

GOD AND THE GODS

Compiled by Sister Daya with an extensive excerpt from Egyptian Monotheism by Robert Hillyer, which appeared in "The Freeman," February 14th, 1923.

Polytheism, as it is understood in the Occident, is very different from the Oriental concept of it. The Western mind cannot reconcile a worship of the gods with recognition of one sole Diety. For it there is God and there is His creation; but for the more philosophic Eastern mind, nothing exists outside of Divine Consciousness. Thus the universe for the Eastern is a living universe, vibrant with Divinity, while for the Western it is at worst a chemical compound and at best a kingdom over which God reigns. The general concept in the Occident is that animals, plants, minerals,—all are created for the use of man.

"Fire is sacred," cries the Hindu, "It is the material counterpart of spiritual flame which burns up the dross in our natures. It purifies everything without itself becoming impure!" All the elements are for him living forces, worthy of reverence. They bring Deity closer to man. The Absolute Being is too removed from the human mind by reason of Its infinitude, but the manifested God,—the Divine Mother, may be worshipped and known through any one of Her countless aspects. Thus she is adored under myriad forms and names, just as She Herself enters the human heart through many avenues, but always there is but the One Supreme Mother of the Universe, supporting all, underlying all, and this even the most ignorant worshipper understands. Superstition there may be, ignorance there undoubtedly is, but also there is a basic wisdom which is never utterly over-laid.

There are in India uncompromising Monists who sweep aside all manifestation as illusion and proclaim their identity with the One. "I am He; I am He!" they declare, "I

know neither birth nor death; I am beyond heat and cold; beyond pleasure and pain! I am that unchanging One!" Sri Sankaracharya was such a reformer and there have been many others who reproclaimed to their countrymen the ultimate reach of all worship.

Ancient Egypt likewise had her God and her gods, but so strong was tradition in Egypt, supported as it was by the power of the initiated priests and kings, that there was little chance for the monistic reformer. For this reason the sublime basic truth of the One Deity was probably withheld from the masses. In the XVIII Dynasty, however, there arose a mighty reformer with the spiritual power to proclaim an unwavering monism, and the temporal power to enforce it. He overthrew the temples, the priests and the worship of the gods, and gave to the many the Knowledge which had been reserved for the few. This was Amenhotep IV, later known as Khu en Aten or Ikhnaten father to King Tut-ankh-Amen, whose tomb so lately has been opened up in the Valley of Kings.

A recent article in The Freeman, by Robert Hillyer on Egyptian Monotheism, throws so much light on the subject of polytheism in general, that we take pleasure in reprinting the following extracts from it.

"The Chapters of 'Coming Forth by Day,' commonly known as the Egyptian Book of the Dead, incorporate every detail of the old religion, from the worship of surviving tribal gods to the sublime concept which King Khu en Aten (Amenhotep IV) taught to his people. For such a conservative and devout race, the excision of any symbol or sacred name from the liturgy would have been unendurable sacrilege. About 3500 B. C., when the first chapter of 'Coming Forth by Day' was set down by the scribes, many of the symbols were already so ancient that the men who

wrote them were ignorant of their significance. Yet all were retained, for all were holy to the traditional-minded people of the Nile. Thus, the accumulated ramifications of four thousand years, embodying the cults of old local gods, gods taken over from foreign nations, and various primitive beliefs, almost obscure that inner faith which remained immutable through all the years in the hidden places of the temple.

"To understand that inner faith, one must unravel the single thread which runs in golden continuity through the shadowy mass of exterior symbolism. The Egyptian pantheon, with all its complications, is simple enough in principle. At the head stand the nine great divinities: Ra, the Sun, who signifies the One God; Shu and Tefnet, who came forth from the mouth of Ra, and who, in turn, begat the earth-god Seb and the sky-goddess Nout, whose children were Osiris, Isis, Set and Nephthys. Now obviously these separate divinities, however real they may have been to the people, held for the priests a significance which is easy to follow. The Nine, as well as the less important group of gods, were simply different aspects of the One God. Ra is the self-created life-principle from whom proceed the male and the female, or powers of reproduction (Shu and Tefnet). From the twofold law of reproduction comes forth the material Cosmos, Seb, the Earth, and Nout, the Sky, and out of them springs human divinity: Osiris, who became mortal that he might redeem mortality; Set, his brother and adversary, who brought about the Passion of Osiris; Isis, the wife of Osiris, who by her occult powers raised him from the dead and became the mother of resurrection, and Nephthys, wife of Set, who aided Isis and comforted her. Although Set slew Osiris, he is in no manner to be considered the Egyptian Satan or Evil One; he,

too, was a god and played a necessary part in an encounter which cannot be judged by the moral laws of humanity. In other words, Set the Destroyer is as worthy of worship as Osiris the Creator, since without death there can be no resurrection from matter. To these Nine Gods we must add the generation of the younger Horus and a host of other deities. It is clear that each of these gods is merely a single attribute of the One, a child of the life-principle. Furthermore, the various gods and goddesses frequently merge into one another, change names and characteristics and sybmols. Thus, Ra is the Young Man Horus when he arises in the East; when he sets in the West, he is the Old Man Tem. Nout and Hathor share the sky and exchange identities.

"The Chapters of 'Coming Forth by Day' provide verbal proof of this doctrine, which no hair-splitting can set aside, since the words are unequivocal. Beside numerous references to the One and the One God, there are many more explicit statements, from which I quote the following:

> It is Tem . . . or, as others say, it is Ra.
> I am Yesterday. I am To-day. Yesterday is Osiris and To-day is Ra.
> O One, Mighty One, of myriad forms and aspects.
> O Thou glorious Being, thou who art dowered with all sovereignty!
> O thou Eternal, thou Only One.

"The reader must not conclude from this that the Egyptian laity was convincedly monotheistic; such was not the case. But amid all the apparent confusion of the system, there was an ordered unity which the initiates knew well. The best analogy is found in the Roman Catholic Church, with its tripartite One manifested through the myriad forms of archangels, angels and saints; each an individual, yet each a part of the mystical body of Christ. The Roman Catholic laity may be prone to emphasize the mani-

festations, and to single out for particular veneration the Virgin Mother or some less conspicuous saint, with the effect, perhaps, of removing the Godhead to a more remote shrine. This partakes of the nature of a refined polytheism. Indeed, the loveliest and most profound experiences of humanity have always induced a turning aside from the straight road of the One, who is too nebulous and awful for intimate contemplation, and have lured the spiritual traveller into the chapel of some less divine but more human luminary.

"From a review of these facts, one is led to believe that the monotheistic revolt of King Khu en Aten was less a break with tradition than a revelation of secret doctrine to the vulgar gaze. This remarkable personage, with his strangely sensuous yet mystical face, was of that elect company who cannot endure the existence of darkness, and desire to let their light shine before men. Therefore, he attempted his grand reformation, and flashed the full dawn of spiritual revelation on a people whose eyes, accustomed to the shadows, were only dazzled and blinded by the glare. He put away the Many and publicly acknowledged the One, whom he worshipped under the symbol of Aten, the Sun Disk; and changed his own name from Amenhotep—Servant of Amen—to Khu en Aten—Glory of the Disk. In a country where priests of various deities form a large and powerful element in the population, such a change is not lightly suggested or easily accomplished. Although Khu en Aten put away the many gods and their priesthoods, he was worn out by the struggle. He breathed life into his religion, his own life; and as the religion waxed in spiritual strength. he waned in physical well-being, and, after a reign of about twelve years, he died. The immense hostility which he conquered only at the cost of his own

life sprang from three sources: the conservative and devout temper of his subjects, the fury of priests deprived of their benefices, and, finally, the horror of all the initiates at this frank avowal of doctrines which were the secret of the inner courts of the Temple. After his death, the old cults swept back into power under King Tut-ankh-Amen. His monuments and his name were effaced. He was darkly referred to as the criminal and the Heretic, but his criminal heresy consisted merely in this: that he attempted to teach real orthodoxy to his people. The beautiful hymns that he wrote contain no more 'heresy' than the earlier hymns to the Sun, unless we consider as heretical the omission of the pantheistic catalogue and genealogy. For the traditional hymns to the Sun contain the apostrophe 'O Thou Eternal! Thou Perfect. Thou Only One!' The religion of Khu en Aten was simply an amplification of that apostrophe.

"This king remains, then, not the originator of monotheism, but the teacher of a recognized doctrine to a people unprepared for it. If anything, the courage and beauty of his nature are shown to be even more majestic from this point of view. Had he invented the faith, he would have been little more than a fanatical innovator; as it is, he was an isolated crusader striving to give unto the meanest of his subjects the same sublime vision which was vouchsafed to a privileged minority of intelligent or ordained individuals. Time defeated him; his system collapsed and the old polytheistic beliefs were re-established. But it should not be forgotten that this polytheism was nothing more than the external aspect of a religion which acknowledged the One God, and, with that faith as its essential power, held sway over the most important part of the ancient world for more than four thousand years."

HYMN TO ATEN

By King Khu en Aten

Splendour of Aten, Thy dawning is beautiful in the horizon of heaven, O living Aten! Beginning of life!
When Thou risest in the eastern horizon of heaven, Thou fillest every land with Thy beauty;
For Thou art beautiful, great, glittering, high over the earth;
Thy rays they encompass the lands; even all Thou hast made.
Thou bindest them by Thy love.
Though Thou art afar, Thy rays are on earth;
Though Thou art on high; Thy footprints are the day.
Bright is the earth when Thou risest in the horizon, when Thou shinest as Aten by day.
The darkness is banished, when Thou sendest forth Thy rays.
The two lands (Egypt) are in daily festivity, awake and standing upon their feet for Thou hast raised them up.
Their limbs bathed, they take their clothing; their arms uplifted in adoration to Thy dawning.
Then in all the world they do their work.
All cattle rest upon their herbage,
All trees and plants flourish,
The birds flutter in their marshes, their wings uplifted in adoration to Thee.
All the sheep dance upon their feet, all winged things fly,
They live when Thou hast shone upon them.
The barques sail up-stream and down-stream alike.
Every high-way is open because Thou hast dawned.
The fish in the river leap up before Thee, and Thy rays are in the midst of the great sea.
Thou art He who createst the man-child in woman,

Who makest seed in man, who giveth life to the son in the body of his mother, who soothest him that he may not weep, a nurse even in the womb.

Who giveth breath to animate every one that He maketh,

When he cometh forth from the body on the day of his birth Thou openest his mouth in speech,
Thou suppliest his necessities.

When the chicklet crieth in the egg-shell, Thou givest him breath therein to preserve him alive,

When Thou has perfected him that he may pierce the egg,

He cometh forth from the egg to chirp with all his might;

He runneth about upon his two feet, when he hath come forth therefrom.

How manifold are all Thy works! They are hidden from before us O Thou sole God,

Whose powers no other possesseth! Thou didst create the earth according to Thy desire while Thou wast alone.

Thou makest the beauty of form through Thyself alone.

Thou art in my heart; there is no other that knoweth Thee save Thy son Ikhnaten.

Thou hast made him wise in Thy designs and in Thy might.

By Thee man liveth, and his eyes look upon Thy beauty until Thou settest.

All labour is laid aside when Thou settest in the west.

Since Thou didst establish the earth, Thou hast raised it for Thy son, Who came forth from Thy limbs,

The king living in truth, the Lord of the two lands, Nefer-khepru Re-wan-Re. The son of Re, living in truth, Lord of diadems Ikhnaten, whose life is long;

(And for) the great royal wife, his beloved, Mistress of the Two Lands Nefer-Nefru Aten, Nofretete, living and flourishing forever and ever.

ANANDA ASHRAMA

Sunday, April 29th, marked the beginning of a new phase in the work of The Vedanta Centre of Boston. On the afternoon of that day, under the blue sky of California, Swami Paramananda opened his new Peace Retreat—Ananda Ashrama—with a lovely and impressive service, held out of doors among the trees and flowers in God's great temple of the hills.

So quickly has this new development come about that many are as yet not fully aware of it, nor do they know that it is but the sudden flowering of a dream that the Swami has held in his heart for years. Within the past eighteen months the growth of the Boston Centre has been phenomenal. Sunday after Sunday the Chapel has been filled to overflowing. It has been apparent to every one that some change would have to be made. It was the parting of the ways. Either it was necessary to move the Centre into larger quarters and build up a more institutionalized city work, or to relieve the pressure on the Boston work by expansion in another direction. The city proves a splendid field for spiritual work; there are countless yearning hearts in Boston for whom the Centre has been a place of refreshment and peace. The Swami prays that it may always be so. The Boston Centre will be maintained. But there are certain aspects of the spiritual life which cannot find full expression in the atmosphere of a city. In India the quiet of the forest was always sought by the spiritual teacher and his pupils. Nature draws man's thoughts inevitably to God, and is in itself the mightiest of teachers. With this in mind Swami Paramananda came across the continent about two months ago. Friends had already been searching the southern California hills for a place which would meet his requirements, but without

success. Their report to him was full of discouragement. A little over a week after his arrival, however, he was led as though by a divine Hand to one of nature's sanctuaries, in the Sierra Madre or Mother Mountains, placed high like a platform or altar five hundred feet above the valley of La Crescenta, and twenty-two hundred feet above the sea. Ten minutes after standing on the edge of this great plateau gazing through the misty gap of the Verdugo hills across the valley to where beyond lay the Pacific, he turned and said, "This is the place I have been seeking!" In every way it seemed a gift of God, set aside and held inviolate for this purpose.

The first public Service was held four days after the Swami's second return from Boston. Nothing could have been simpler. People were notified by post card and through local papers. Hurried arrangements were made to meet those who came by trolley or bus and to motor them up the mile and a half of road which rises by a steep grade to the Ashrama. Benches were made and folding chairs borrowed for the purpose of seating those who might come. The platform upon which the Swami stood was of grass. Locust trees in full blossom, masses of yellow broom, white syringa, wild sage, and the lupin made the air fragrant around him. Those who have been to the Centre in Boston are familiar with the great round symbol of the Word which hangs above the altar. Over the Swami's head on this Sunday afternoon, hung the symbol of the Word, Its truest symbol, the flaming sun. Behind him, as in a Greek amphitheatre, rose the hills, level after level, softly veiled and shadowed, forming an almost perfect triangle between two arms of which lay the natural platform upon which stands the house.

From three o'clock on, the motors began to climb up

from the valley and it was after four when they ceased coming and the Swami felt that he could begin. While waiting, the people formed into groups and wandered through the shaded paths or sat under the trees. There was no tedium in the delay for all nature was alive and glistening. When all were assembled every seat was taken. Old friends were there, but there were many who came in touch with the work for the first time. Some were drawn by curiosity, some by association and some by deep spiritual hunger. Beautiful and profound as the Swami's words have seemed to his listeners in Boston and in other places, even more simple and beautiful did they there on the natural altar of Ananda Ashrama. Little lizards ran up the limbs of the tree above the Swami's head and shyly made their way over the grass at his feet, birds hopped trustingly near and humming birds flashed through the air. The Swami spoke as always of that great unity which underlies all diversity, of that One Infinite which man can no more partition off than he can partition off the infinite sky. His Sanskrit prayers had a new majesty, heard out of doors with the undertone of nature, and his peace chant mingled with the peace of the hills and seemed to flow forth over the world below. All felt the speel of it and lingered till the long shadows told the lateness of the hour and the three crescent-shaped ranges turned amethyst with the evening haze. The lights of the cities, Glendale, Los Angeles and even San Pedro were already twinkling, when the last guest had gone. It could not have been a lovlier or more propitious beginning.

Much has already been done with the property by Mr. Fusenot, a French gentleman with artistic taste, who planned and developed it; but much remains to be done. A charming red-tiled house gives accommodation to the

workers already there, but when others come, there will have to be further construction. Then, of course, there is to be a Temple and this, the Swami hopes, all the workers will aid in building, so that it may be a real temple raised by loving hands to the glory of God, as were so many of the great temples and cathedrals of old. Mountain springs provide deliciously pure water, but much of this goes to waste, causing a shortage in the time of irrigation. One of the first activities will be the enlarging of two dams in the canyon above the plateau. This not only will conserve the water but will form two lovely miniature lakes around the edges of which will grow the Indian lotus. As one friend said, who came to the Ashrama, "You have a lifetime of work before you, spiritual and material." But in all the development that will take place, the charming wildness of the place will be maintained in order that it may ever have the nature of a true Ashrama or Retreat. Placed as it is in the National Forest Reserve, it will be safe from the intrusion of the city. It is rare indeed to find a spot which combines so perfectly the quality of remoteness and accessibility, for Ananda Ashrama is only sixteen miles from Los Angeles and the journey can easily be made by automobile in forty-five minutes. It is only eight miles from Pasadena, six miles from Glendale and four miles from the Flint Ridge Country Club. Those who come to the Sunday afternoon Service by street car are met by the Ashrama automobiles between three and four o'clock at the end of the Glendale-Montrose car line.

The Swami will divide his time between California, Boston and other cities, but even during his absence there will be Sunday afternoon Services. It is hoped that the Ashrama will soon become a place of pilgrimage, the goal for many a yearning soul from all over the world.

REPORT

On the evening of April 2nd, Swami Paramananda held a reception at The Vedanta Centre of Boston, for the purpose of announcing to friends and students the recent purchase of land at La Crescenta, California, to be used as an Ashrama or Peace Retreat. He made it clear that this is to be but an extension of the Boston work,—a home where the workers can express certain ideas and ideals under more favorable climatic conditions than in New England. "You cannot imagine out door life in zero weather," said the Swami. "We shall create out there a place where a community of workers can live and express their talents along different lines,—music, art, industry. It will not be limited to religion, although that will be the soul of it. Silent living. People who dare live and wait patiently, whether the world gives any recognition to them or not. This home is going to be created for that purpose. It is not a sudden change. For some time I have felt the need of a different line of action. Life is to be put on a simplier basis. It does not mean giving up any thing; it means only expansion. We are going into something bigger."

The Swami called upon Mr. Charles Larkin who had accompanied him from California to give a description of the new property and of the finding of it. Mr. Larkin by means of maps which he had himself made, showed how La Crescenta lay in relation to Los Angeles and Pasadena. The spirit of Ananda Ashrama he said, was expressed in Dr. Van Dyke's "God of the Open Air."

"Thou who hast made thy dwelling fair
With flowers below, above with starry lights
And set thine altars everywhere,—
On mountain heights,

In woodlands dim with many a dream,
In valleys bright with springs,
And on the curving capes of every stream:
Thou who hast taken to thyself the wings
Of morning, to abide
Upon the secret places of the sea,
And on far islands, where the tide
Visits the beauty of untrodden shores,
Waiting for worshippers to come to thee
In thy great out-of-doors!
To thee I turn, to thee I make my prayer,
God of the open air."

Deep interest was shown by all in the Swami's announcement and a surprising number declared their readiness to follow him west and take up a new life in California. A description of the Ashrama is given in this number.

* * * *

During Swami Paramananda's absence from Boston the regular Services at The Chapel of the Vedanta Centre were ably conducted by one of his assistants, Miss Katharine F. Sherwood, who has been closely associated with the work ever since the establishment of the work in Boston in 1909. All the Services were well attended and Miss Sherwood's earnest and clear presentation was found peculiarly helpful by everyone. Her talks on "Reconstruction," "Religion and Modern Life," "Christianity," "Practical Vedanta" and "Personality" were especially appreciated, and we hope to publish some of these from time to time in the coming issues of the Message. The Swami expects to remain in Boston through the entire month of June and possibly the first two Sundays of July.

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 VEIL OF UNKNOWING

By Swami Paramananda

IT is not death that robs our life,
Nor is it the dark of night that bars
our inward sight;
Nay, it is the Veil of Unknowing.
Behold how the sky of our fair heart is
darkened by the rising mist of
jealousy and anger, suspicion
and doubt.
These powers of blackness by their
quick alliance, form this Veil
of Unknowing.
Shall we not keep the sky of our heart
clear and fair like the polished
mirror, to reflect the truer
image of our inmost soul?
One speck of this doubting dust lodged on
our heart, draws another and yet
another
Till no longer our vision is true.
We pray unto thee, Thou Destroyer of darkness.
Help us to keep our heart pure, clear and
free from this Veil of Unknowing.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Loud speech, profusion of words, and possessing the skillfulness in expounding Scriptures are merely for the enjoyment of the learned. They do not lead to liberation.

—*Sankaracharaya.*

Silence is a healing for all ailments. Silence is good for the wise; how much more so for the foolish. All my days I have grown up amongst the wise, and I have found naught of better service than silence.

—*Ancient Jewish Proverb.*

The repose of the sage is not what the world calls repose. His repose is the result of his mental attitude. All creation could not disturb his equilibrium; hence his repose. When water is still, it is like a mirror, reflecting the beard and the eyebrows. It gives the accuracy of the water-level, and the philosopher makes it his model. And if water thus derives lucidity from stillness, how much more the faculties of the mind! The mind of the sage, being in repose, becomes the mirror of the universe, the speculum of all creation. —*Chaung Tzu.*

Keep thine own sentiments and faith to thyself. Do not talk about them abroad, otherwise thou wilt be a great loser.

Keep thyself aloof at the time of thy devotions from those who scoff at them and those who ridicule piety and the pious.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

When thou prayest enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father, which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore

like unto them, for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him.—*Jesus the Christ.*

Silence is the heart of all things; sound the fluttering of its pulse,

Which the fever and the spasm of the universe convulse.

Every sound that breaks the silence only makes it more profound,

Like a crash of deafening thunder in the sweet, blue stillness drowned;

Let thy soul walk softly in thee, as a saint in heaven unshod,

For to be alone with silence, is to be alone with God."

—*Beyond the Sunrise.*

With understanding held by firmness, and mind established in the Self, let him thus by degrees attain tranquillity; let him not think of anything else. Wheresoever the restless and unsteady mind may wander away, let him withdraw it from there and bring it under the control of the Self alone. He whose passions are quieted and mind perfectly tranquil, who has become one with Brahman, being freed from all impurities, to such a Yogi comes supreme bliss.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

What if the wicked nature, which is as a sea casting out mire and dirt, rage against thee? There is a river, a sweet, still, flowing river, the streams whereof will make glad thy heart. And learn but in quietness and stillness to retire to the Lord, and wait upon Him; in Whom thou shalt feel peace and joy, in the midst of thy troubles from the cruel and vexatious spirit of this world.

—*Isaac Penington.*

SILENCE AND CO-ORDINATION

By Swami Paramananda

A seed in the womb of mother earth lies in silence absorbing nourishment and other natural blessings until its expanded soul bursts forth into blossom. The spirit of genius, nurtured in the bosom of quiet contemplation, awaits patiently its appointed hour of awakening. Silence, the great unseen power, the miracle of life, works upon our character with strange contrast, at times overwhelming us with its oppressive stillness, and again it falls upon our heart as a shower of refreshing rain-drops on a sultry summer day. How often silence acts as a tonic, invigorating and reviving our dull spirit. Then again its effect upon us is like that of a narcotic, putting our life's energies into a state of morbid sleep. All great forces of nature work in contrast.

In the world of religion and philosophy the practice of silence plays a most vital part. It creates an atmosphere and enables the seeker to find access to an inner sanctuary entirely hidden from the restless and turbulent material world. Whenever we are listening to fine music if someone speaks or makes a noise we are distracted, and jarred by it, and often we lose the subtle beauty of the music. Similarly in spiritual study if our attention is diverted we receive little or no benefit. That is the reason why the idea of complete silence before a spiritual study is strongly advocated by many of the great schools of thought. We can easily see its technical reason, how it aids us in the act of concentration, but its more profound significance is the unfoldment of our higher nature. Even to-day, we find many of the places of worship maintain rigid silence to create an atmosphere so needful for spiritual devotion and prayer. We can never hear the language of

the soul if our ears are filled with the loud noises of the world. One of the Sufi mystics expresses the import of this beautifully. "Be silent that the Lord Who gave thee language may speak, for as He fashioned a door and lock, He has also made a key. . . . I am silent. Speak Thou, O Soul of Soul of Soul."

All the mystic teachers and illumined sages emanate a peculiar atmosphere of calm and quiet dignity. In India some of the great seers completely refrain from speech and yet they exert a most potent influence upon the lives of their followers. One of the first forms of spiritual discipline the neophytes have to undergo is the practice of silence. They never speak before their teachers unless they are asked to do so. What is the most direct blessing they receive through it? It makes their mind receptive and whatever it receives it can easily assimilate. The necessity of this is felt even in our secular education. Unless the mind is receptive any amount of time expended in study is of very little avail. It is interesting to note how Madame Montessori in her system of education advocates this idea of silence. In India its value was felt from time immemorial and was widely practised from child-education to the advanced study of Vedic revelation. This mode of living and thinking, however, is quite out of fashion with our modern life and habit. There are some who even feel a strong aversion to it and this is because they confuse the idea of silence with dullness and inaction.

The aim of silence is not to free our mind from thought and assume a state of emptiness and passivity. On the contrary silence becomes a definite factor for our efficient and concentrated thought. Silence means co-ordination of our body, our mind, and all our faculties to such an extent that every particle moves in one rhythm. In this state all

our aspirations and ideals work in harmony, so much so that there is no friction. You can verify this in connection with machinery; that which avoids friction most makes the least noise and endures the longest. In the world of life and all forms of activity, we find this to be true. The life that moves without inharmony and friction is the most efficient life. A man whose mind is well-ordered and whose whole system is well-organized is always finding something of interest within himself. He does not offer his opinion to others because he has found something within. He has become quiet, and through his balance of mind and attitude he is always discovering an inner interest. That is what the Indo-Aryans recognized as the most essential factor in all forms of study. No one can study successfully unless he has the power of concentration and co-ordination, and this power cannot be achieved unless we come to an attitude of silence. A silent being is a very restful being. Even in a household we find a person who is calm and composed and thoughtful radiates a powerful influence. Nervously disorganized people find a great source of rest through him.

One of the most interesting phenomena that takes place in connection with the practice of silence is that the mind evolves creative genius. For instance when a person who is used to intense activity and outer diversion for his pastime and pleasure is suddenly thrown on his inner resources, if he is not thwarted by it, his mind will have a peculiar reaction and he will discover his own inner reserve and originality. This also is true in connection with children's education. If we do not try to keep their minds altogether occupied with artificial toys and noisy games, they will work and invent newer ones, and this quickening of the inner faculties is the gist of true education. We

think better when our mind is not weighted down by matter. We see more clearly when our eyes are focussed on a single objective and nothing is more efficacious towards this end than the practice of silence.

All wise people realize that the deeper part of our nature can only be expressed effectively when our outer being is still. That is why so often they retire from the crowd. They are not keen to offer their opinions. They think deeply and act quietly. We often misunderstand this type of people who are not constantly active like ourselves. We imagine that their lives are wasteful because they are not constantly engaged in outer occupation, but we can never measure the good that radiates from a calm and contemplative spirit. It is not in India alone that they have this view that a person does not have to talk in order to impart his teaching, but it is shared by many of the mystics and seers of the world. In one of the great Indian classics an illustration is given of a pupil approaching a teacher with his mind filled with doubt and ignorance. Although he asked many questions the teacher remained silent, but the disciple's doubts cleared away even as he sat in his presence. A parallel instance is given by Plato. "I will tell you, Socrates," says Aristides, "a thing incredible but nevertheless true, I made a great proficiency when I associated with you, even if I was only in the same house, though not in the same room; but more so when I was in the same room; and much more when I looked at you. But I made by far the greatest proficiency when I sat near you and touched you."

We have to have certain fundamental virtues before we can make any headway with our spiritual life. If our mind is filled with noble thoughts we do not find ourselves lonely and unprotected at any time. The average

person is lonely whenever there is no one to entertain him or talk with him, but a person who has entered into his spiritual depth, even in a small measure, is very glad to find an opportunity when he can be alone, communing with his inner Self. We should all learn to be alone with ourselves. People imagine that they cannot be happy unless they are constantly in the company of others. Then again some think that they must get away from everything and everybody in order to have their peace of mind. However, we are never alone even though we may enter a mountain cave if we are tormented by our own ignorance and selfishness. You may wonder what I mean by silence if it is not getting away from the crowd, if it is not breaking away from the noisy part of life. It does not mean that. It requires something more than running away from people. You may enter the forest's untravelled depths and yet you may not find any quiet if your own mind is noisy, if your own attitude is distracted, or if you have not the harmony within your own self. These are the things which we have to cultivate and it is better for us to cultivate them before we fall into the entanglement of life.

We cannot go into this world and expect to find everything just the way we should like it. There are disappointments and unexpected happenings, but in spite of all these upheavals we can carry ourselves safely and with poise if we have acquired the silent attitude of mind and habit. You may believe intellectually that it is a wrong thing to be angry, it is a wrong thing to be impatient, it is a wrong thing to speak harshly; but the words come unexpectedly, and before you realize it you have spoken unkindly. We can order our mind in such rhythm and connect our life with

higher forces that these calamities will never befall us.

The great secret of success is that we work with our whole being, and we cannot do this without being absolutely still and concentrated. These are the simple facts of life, but not so easy to accomplish. We cannot expect somebody else to do it for us. There are many people who would like to have others think for them. Even the greatest mind cannot think for another. We are never going to gain our heart's satisfaction, or our highest wisdom, in that way. Another mind and another brain cannot think out our problem, because it does not know the entire situation. We cannot give a true picture to any one no matter how much we may try. There is, however, a way of finding our own solution, and that is when we learn to enter within our own depth.

It is not so much work that wears us out. Sometimes lack of work may do it. It is not knowing how to direct ourselves; it is not knowing how to find that attitude of collectiveness and poise. When we are equipped with these qualities we always have greater power of penetration. Intellectually we may grasp the value of these things, but that is only the ethical aspect of it. It is the most dynamic, most practical and most valuable thing when we have applied it in our life, and that is where we find the fruition. A person who is nervous ceases to be nervous; a person who is physically weak and disorganized, gradually becomes calm, and a person who is dull, without any power of magnetism or attraction, suddenly blossoms and has a certain amount of light. Now this comes from within, and for that reason it has a far-reaching effect. There are many people who can talk and preach and make a noise, but nothing superficial can bring us satisfaction. It is by living quietly and earnestly that we evolve the true

spiritual insight which enables us to find our intrinsic value from an inner depth.

Great ideas and ideals are always before us. Everybody hears them, but when a genuine soul hears an idea he takes it; he says, I must know more about it. He thinks, reflects and meditates. He goes into his very inmost depth, and then he brings it to fruition. However, it does not come to a man who is in haste and wants it all at once. That is one of our greatest calamities. The things we acquire by long, steadfast, devoted effort are the things which last and bring into our life great richness. Therefore we must abandon as soon as we can this idea of haste and wanting results at once. The deep things do not come suddenly. Let us be patient,—patient with ourselves. We may recognize many defects in our nature. No matter how much blemish we may have within ourselves, or how much disorder, it can all be removed. Go on working silently. If you do not succeed at once, put more energy and force into it. One who is willing to wait, the very attitude saves him and enables him to surmount the insurmountable difficulties, and one who is impatient, he loses his opportunities. Therefore silence and patience go together. It has a wonderful creative power. Make a study of the lives of the great men. They conceive an idea; they do not go out and shout it before the world, but they think silently and work quietly until they realize their ideal.

If we can form the habit of devoting a certain time for silent relaxation, it will have a very definite beneficial effect upon both our physical and moral being. When in course of our daily round of duties we find ourselves growing physically tired or mentally tense, if we can take an attitude of relaxation and co-ordinate our thoughts,

discarding all feelings of vexation and unrest, we will feel restored and refreshed. It will even enable us to do our work better. How often people go to bed after their day's labor and they do not rest. The next morning they wake up feeling very weary, without any freshness or sense of rest. What is the cause of it? They were not working at night. No, but they were worrying about their work. They took their work, all their worries and anxieties to bed with them. That is not the way to order our life. There is time for work, there is time for recreation and rest, and silence is the best rest giver. There is nothing which can rest us more quickly than the attitude of silence, and every one has the right to it. When everything is still, when our thoughts are quieted down and our entire nervous system is in order, when we have naught against any one and our mind is calm and poised, then in the inner depth of stillness we find something which is so ennobling and restful that others even feel it.

"How sweet is the sound of silence! How tender is its touch! How fragrant is its breathing! How lovely is its form! O be still yet awhile that my soul may see and feel, hear and touch its own in this realm of peace divine." There are delicate things in our life, most potent and most vibrant, but we miss them because we lack in delicacy of feeling. When we are distracted by the visible material glamour of life we miss our mark, but in that hour of silent co-ordination, when all our faculties are in perfect tune, we realize that we are part of the cosmic Life. It is in this hour we find the fullness of our life, for then our little life has become united with the great Life, and our little mind with the cosmic Mind. Only at such moments when the finite and Infinite are so commingled does our mind stand apart with speechless silence and unspoken wonder.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SILENCE

(Experience in the use of prayer without words by small groups including both Quakers and Anglicans.)

First began the stilling of mind and soul. The very activity of the brain may make a man a bad listener, and listening was our goal. The intellect needs to learn how to be still, no less than the body, if it is to concentrate all its powers. This bringing of the mind away from its distractions and restlessness to a single and sustained attention to God is the crux of the whole matter.

The recollection of God under some aspect of His boundless immensity—His greatness, His awful sanctity, His enfolding Being, His Presence in the soul of man;—these are the kind of cosmic thoughts, in themselves casting upon the mind the hush and still wonder which is the avenue to contemplation.

"God's greatness lies around our incompleteness,
Round our restlessness His Rest."

Here too, it is useful to have in mind some quick word of recall, by which the wandering of thought can be instantly, and as often as needed brought back to the central purpose—the word "God", not spoken, but sounding in the mind. This preparation may take long. It is worth persisting in until it has gained its end, until mind and soul are silent unto God.

Thus we pass to the centre of our silence. The will is at its highest activity. As an insect poised in the air, seemingly motionless, with wings in such rapid motion that they are invisible, is all the while sustained by its resistance to the air, so the will in this listening is not passive. It holds fast to its rest in God by sustained resistance to all that would drag it down or invade its silence. This is very far from making the mind a blank.

It is the filling of the mind with God to the exclusion of all else. Not in words, nor visions, nor signs, did we look for the communications of God. Thoughts rising spontaneously, movements and stirrings welling up from the depths of the soul, the inner glory of God hidden in the soul of man, emerging, filling the Temple, none of these word images conveys what can be conveyed. Only we knew God, and we knew that we knew Him.

THE LOST SON

Parable by Buddha

A certain householder's son went away into a far country, and while the father was accumulating immense wealth the son became wretchedly poor. Seeking for food and shelter, the son chanced to come to his father's door, not knowing who dwelt within. But the father beheld him and ordered his servants to call him. The son, however, observing the magnificence of the palace, thought: "Perhaps this rich man suspects me to be a thief and will throw me into prison." So he fled without seeing the master of the house.

Then the father dispatched messengers to overtake his son and bring him back, despite his loud lamentations. But the servants were admonished to deal tenderly with the young man and to give him employment as a helper on the estate. The youth was well satisfied with his position and labored diligently. This so pleased the father that he promoted him to higher and higher duties.

After many years had passed, he summoned his son, called together all his servants, and made known the secret to them. The son, overjoyed to find his father, took his rightful place in the household, and became a dutiful son.

Thus it is that only when the mind is made ready for higher truths, can it receive and understand their value.

INFLUENCE OF MIND UPON MIND

By W. F. Evans

(Excerpt from Esoteric Christianity)

All true education is a spiritual development. Spiritual knowledge is imparted, not by verbal discourse merely, but by the silent influence of mind upon mind. It is a principle that has always been recognized in the world, that one mind, by the influence of its silent sphere, can lift another mind to a higher intellectual level. This has always been a method of instruction practised by the Hindu adepts in teaching the neophyte the principles of their occult philosophy. The *chela*, or scholar, is subjected to the psychological influence of the *guru*, or teacher, who aims to impart to him knowledge through the Universal Mind. The disciple waits upon the master in a spirit of emptiness, and the intellectual sphere of the teacher's mind fills the vacuum. This is a method of education and of acquiring spiritual knowledge entirely unrecognized in our Western systems of instruction, but has long been known in the Orient, and was practised by Jesus, and belongs to Christianity.

The spirit of man searches out all things; yea, the deep things of God. It is the spring of all inspiration and revelation. As our individual spirit has a voice, so has the Universal Spirit, in whom we are included. Let us turn the inward ear towards the "speaking silence" to receive the soundless word, "the deep and calm revealing." If with a sincere desire to know the truth, and live the truth, and use it for the good of mankind, and not from a mere idle curiosity or for the sake of gain, we are found listening at the door of the temple of wisdom and the "halls of learning," the door will be unlocked and thrown open to us,

and we may enter in and read the records of the hidden wisdom, which God appointed before the ages for our glorification. It is only in the deep silence of the soul that God speaks. Silence is the bosom of the Infinite Life, and contains the indelible record of all the truth that ever entered the mind of man.

MAN THE IMAGE-MAKER

By Sister Daya

Is it true, as we are so often told, that we all have the equipment for achievement if we will but use it? When a master-spirit assures us with dynamic force that he possesses no special endowment or faculty that we do not possess; but that he has merely learned how to employ and direct forces and faculties common to all mankind, way deep in our heart we are inclined to be skeptical. How well we feel we know ourselves,—our limited mental powers, our fluctuating purpose, our confined outlook upon life. We say we have not the genius and are content to place the burden of our failure upon what we assume to be an inherent lack.

But we are using or misusing every passing minute a faculty that lies at the very root of genius. Let no one say he lacks equipment who possesses the image-making faculty, and every one does possess it for without it man could not be a rational being. In the depths of our consciousness lies our workshop where we are ceaselessly engaged in building mental moulds into which our character and our life will be poured. With this in mind, let us look within and understand why our character is ill-proportioned and full of distortions, why our life seems to be so chaotic and purposeless. Are our mental pictures balanced, sustained, clear and vivid? Or are they vague

and changing like a never-ending freak "movie" throwing confused shadows on the screen of our mind?

No man in any age has ever brought anything into being that has not first been but a mental image. This applies both to the inner and to the outer life. In order to make this more vivid let us contemplate the man-made world around us. From its most gigantic structure to its finest and most intricate invention, from the painting on the walls of a palace to the design on a birthday cake there is nothing man has made that was not first a thing of the imagination. We can infer from this fact alone, the supremacy of Spirit over matter. Strange indeed if the mind that has given birth to the civilizations of the earth was itself only a material reflex.

This is the process: First a mental image is formed, then according to the persistency, the intensity and the clearness with which we can hold it, it is precipitated, as it were, into matter. There is nothing that cannot be achieved through this power of imagination. The secret of its use comprises the mystery of every system of spiritual or of occult development. It is the key to heaven and likewise to hell. No one ever yet yielded to outer temptation who did not first yield to his own mental picture of it. No one ever grew into sainthood who had not long contemplated in imagination the beauty and blessedness of selflessness and renunciation. Into the holy image he builds himself slowly and imperceptibly. That is why such a point has always been made in India of living with the Holy. One cannot be in the company of great souls without being mentally possessed by their greatness. They become a dominant picture in the mind that draws us up to its own likeness. When that image would fade, the living presence of the original revivifies and strengthens it. A

mental habit becomes established which after a time acts as a man's guardian angel, reasserting itself at critical moments.

Most of us now have the habit of chaotic thought; our imagination seldom reaches the dignity of a creative force but confines itself to idle day-dreaming which is neither distinct nor sustained enough to produce anything but its own shifting likeness. Watch the faces of passers-by on the city street and read the record of the imagination. How many are vital, striking, purposeful, illumined? How many are lighted by noble thoughts or selfless striving? What record is written on your face to the observer? What thoughts are you carrying with you as you pass along the street? Are you building petty images around your own petty self and its interests? Are you busy exalting your ego in some little play of the imagination? If you are, then strive to stop doing so. It may not be easy. There may be an enormous inertia to overcome, perhaps mental habits of life-times. It may take life-times to build new habits to take the place of the old, but that should be no discouragement. The joy is in the doing. It can be the most wonderful game in the world, this game of self-reconstruction. There need be no struggle against the old habit; all that you need do is to begin to turn your mind towards that which represents the highest Ideal in your life. Learn to love it more and more, reach ever higher and higher; it will supplant the old tendencies. They will fall away like dry leaves. A great teacher from India once said, "Renunciation comes from fullness." When our heart and mind are full of the beautiful constructive images there will be no room left for the old.

Why not begin this divine task to-day? It will have to be done some day. To the one who has entered the richer

world of pure imagination, the average mental picture gallery seems unbearably dull and lifeless. Such a one wonders how people can go on year after year living in such a dead world. As your Ideal grows, as your imagination reaches out beyond the selfish interests, life grows into a radiant delightful experience, thrilling, absorbing, blissful. Begin now! Never mind how weak your imagination, how feeble the Ideal. Yearn for something greater and the little paltry image-making faculty will gradually build you pictures that will exalt your soul and make you into a noble human being.

The average mind is merely futile but there is also the illegitimate use of the imagination,—the building of mental pictures destructive to oneself and others,—the seeds of crime and disaster. Then there are the lesser perversions, imaginary worries, sickness and woe, built up in the mind and dwelt upon till an atmosphere is formed that is a veritable culture-bed for trouble.

You may ask, is not imagination often but a vision of the unreal? A sort of "fool's gold"? Do not people experience many things inwardly that have no foundation in fact? What is fact and what is fancy? Is it really possible for us to conceive of anything that is outside of existence? We may make strange distortions, combine and recombine, but does not nature the same? It is a matter of very real fact that imagination,—pure, legitimate imagination,—may be the open door through which we reach something greater than fact,—reality. So long as we dwell in the realm of self our imagination will often deceive us, lead us by false trails; but when we give it wings to soar outside of self into the divine realm, it will bring back to us immortal pictures which will be the matrix for our spiritual being. This is pure imagination.

As we stand on the threshold of the inner life, devoid as yet of realization, we could not advance but for the images we make of our Ideal. We must have something tangible into which we can build ourselves. Our body, our mind, our character will by a divine law, follow our imagination. Well did the great Hindu teachers of old know the value of the image as a focussing point for the Ideal. Some of the mightiest of their seers gained illumination through the reality with which they were able to imbue a symbol. The very atoms of our body fall into place along our mental lines of cleavage if we have the one-pointedness needful to hold the picture. Outer symbols aid enormously in this one-pointed concentration. Herein lies the reason for idols and idol-worship. So-called idol-worship springs from a spiritual science which like many sciences can produce life or death.

Most of us could not approach the formless Spirit without the aid of form. We must make Spirit real, tangible, living; or we shall never realize it. Sri Krishna in the Gita very definitely states that the formless path is almost impossible for the embodied to attain. Picture your divine Ideal; place your heart upon it; make it your darling, your companion, your mother, your father,—anything you please to make it; but make it real. It will be real. It is real, more real than you can as yet possibly conceive and it will fill with its reality any form you are capable of building, will lead you by that form to itself.

As you draw your Ideal close, you will love it and as you love it you will lose yourself in it and when you lose yourself God rushes in. Meditate upon God as an infinite divine Essence forever out of reach and you will keep on meditating till the end of time with little or no result. Meditate upon God as a living presence in the heart in

Whom you confide, Whom you can serve, at Whose feet you can consecrate yourself, and never again will you think of yourself as an isolated fragment of consciousness, such bliss will fill you, such a sense of completion and peace. All barriers will fall away; all littleness will be forgotten; only will there exist that eternal Being filling and expanding the heart with Itself.

We wait and wait for some formula, some magic word, some initiation to do for us what we must do for ourselves. There is a magic word,—earnestness. The Buddha tells us that earnestness is the path of life and heedlessness is the path of death. Be earnest and nothing will resist you, but be earnest for great ends. Why should we speak of the lesser uses of the imagination. The man of vital imagination will be the creator and producer in any line that he undertakes; but these words are being written for those who having once seen the vision of the Highest can never again direct their God-given faculties to anything less than Its realization.

Man's destiny lies within the scope of his imagination from the little ego-filled dreams of childhood to the mature vision of the Infinite. Linked to the imagination is the will. Some modern psychologists exalt the imagination over the will. But we must discriminate, we must decide what the mind shall dwell upon, what type of picture it shall form and this involves an act of will. In its turn, the picture will lure the will on to more sustained endeavor. When we begin to analyze human psychology we enter a confused realm and are removed a thousand miles from the utter simplicity of Divine realization. Let us rather, like children with a wonderful picture book, be content to rest in the arms of the eternal Divine Mother, trusting Her to turn the pages and tell us the story.

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL MAN

By Emanuel Swedenborg.

It is not contrary to rationality and liberty to compel oneself. It has been shown already that man has an internal and an external of thought, and that these are distinct as prior and posterior, or as higher and lower; and that because they are so distinct, they can act separately and can act conjointly. They act separately when a man from the external of his thought says and does in one way while he interiorly thinks and wills in another; and they act conjointly when a man says and does as he interiorly thinks and wills; this is common with the sincere, the other with the insincere. Now since the mind's internal and external are thus distinct, the internal may even fight with the external, and by combat force it to consent. Combat exists when man thinks that evils are sins and therefore wishes to desist from them; for when he desists, the door is opened; and when it is opened, the lusts of evil that occupied the internal of thought are cast out by the Lord and affections of good are implanted in place of them. This is done in the internal of thought. But as the enjoyments of the lusts of evil which occupy the external of thought cannot be cast out at the same time, therefore combat exists between the internal and the external of thought. The internal wishes to cast out those enjoyments because they are enjoyments of evil and not in concord with the affections of good in which the internal now is; and, in place of the enjoyments of evil, it wishes to introduce enjoyments of good which are in concord; the enjoyments of good are what are called the goods of charity. From this contrariety arises combat, which if it becomes severe is called temptation. Now as a man is man from the internal of his thought, for this is

man's very spirit, it is evident that a man compels himself when he compels the external of his thought to consent, or to receive the enjoyments of his affections, which are goods of charity.

When, therefore, the internal conquers, as it does when the internal has reduced the external to consent and compliance, then the Lord gives man liberty itself and rationality itself; for then man is withdrawn by the Lord from infernal freedom, which in itself is slavery, and is brought into heavenly freedom, which in itself is real freedom, and there is given him fellowship with the angels.

AN EAST INDIAN POET

(Book Review—by Anna Blanche McGill, Louisville Evening Post.)

Rabindranath Tagore is doubtless more widely known than his fellow-countryman. His books reveal more nuance of perception and thought, perhaps more power. But in this book by Paramananda we find a certain freshness of poetic charm, a sincerity and spontaneity of expression, more pleasing than the more elaborated effusions of the older poet. Here we catch fewer echoes of The Song of Solomon and other familiar writings; we are aware of a poet and mystic making a forthright personal record of aspiration and emotion.

The volume is divided into groups of communings, Songs of Nature, and a Hymn of Adoration. Though patently Oriental in tropes and atmosphere, the lines speak the universal language of the mystical and poetical who, in spite of the insistent claims of old mortality, are addicted to spreading wings of aspiration toward a "diviner ether, a purer air," toward the Spirit of Perfection that inspires "the might of the mighty, sanctity of the saint, melody of the musician."

In the poet's constant awareness of a spiritual Presence, there is an occasional suggestion of Francis Thompson's "Hound of Heaven" and the Psalm, "Though I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea." The East Indian's phrases run: "Seeking for my soul's freedom, I have wandered far. . . . In vain have I sought my liberation apart from Thee. . . . Henceforth I am Thy Captive."

Ardor and simplicity are among the notes that charm throughout the volume. These characteristic words have a familiar ring to Western readers: "Tell me, O, Thou wondrous Being, why dost Thou choose the lowly hearts? Is it to make them bright with thy footprints?" Agreeably different, on the whole, from the vague yearnings, the steep transcendent climbs up which some of the Easterners lead is the author's concrete and condensed phrasing.

The vitality of perception and response to beauty in the Nature poems may surprise those who consider the Hindus merely passive and renunciatory. Particularly pleasing the lines to the "Spirit of Rose: teach me more of thy subtle and wondrous ways of love; I am thy ignorant brother, stranger to this new world of thine."

The poet writes flexible and fluent English. His form is rhythmic verse, sometimes flowing into rhythmic prose, but nearly always with a poetic content.

REPORT

Whether we know it or not, our blessings are increased whenever we share them with others. The Boston Centre is finding this true in the extension of the work to the Pacific Coast. Never before has there been such a spontaneous blossoming of responsiveness and appreciation. This was especially marked in the glow of joyous welcome that awaited Swami Paramananda's home coming a few

weeks ago. All through his absence there was a united and sustained interest at all the public Services. On the first Sunday after his return this culminated into an attendance that crowded the Chapel and the adjoining hall to full capacity. There was a silent welcome of keen anticipation and radiance as the Swami opened the Service and gave his powerful and inspiring message. The subject of his address was most fittingly, "The Higher Consciousness." At the close of the hour he was received with many warm expressions of joy and eager questions as to the latest developments of the work in California. A great number are contemplating visits to the new Ashrama for spiritual recreation and inspiration and so prove conclusively that "Ananda Ashrama" is filling a need already felt by many.

* * * *

As various addresses of the Swami are published in "The Message of the East" from month to month, it gives us a sense of sharing with our readers the Sunday Services held in the tranquil and inspiring atmosphere of the Chapel. We wish that in a similiar way we might share with all the fragrant beauty of the floral offerings. Through the devotion of many this has grown into a vital feature of the day's Service. Wild and cultivated flowers come from friends not only in Boston, but many outlying towns. New Hampshire contributes generously, nor are Cincinnati and Rochester too distant to have a share, and California has sent her orange blossoms more than once to mingle their fragrance with the incense of the Sanctuary. Gradually and spontaneously a moment's silent pause at the door of the Sanctuary has become to many an indispensable part of the worship. In their effortless fragrance and beauty these altar flowers become concrete symbols and expressions of many unspoken prayers.—*G. P.*

THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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

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MY LIFE'S FULFILLMENT

By Swami Paramananda

MY life's broken harmony is restored,
The unfinished song is now complete
Since I have found my place at Thy
sacred Feet.

Thy beckoning hath saved me from
falling into the snare of deception.
Contact with Thy holy being hath
refilled my ebbing life;

Verily Thou art my life's fulfillment.
The cause of my joy and sorrow, laughter
and grief;
My soul's sunshine and heart's
rain-cloud.

I have nothing apart from Thee;
I am nothing apart from Thee;
I want nothing other than Thee.
Wilt Thou not stay with me who am so
dependent on Thee?
Wilt Thou not take me who have no
other than Thee?

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? —*Malachi.*

In whatever manner men worship Me in the same manner do I fulfill their prayers. My path men follow in every way. —*Bhagavad-Gita.*

We are all children of Heaven, and therefore should love one another, as Heaven loves us all.

—*Kaibara Ekken.*

Next to faith in God, the chief duty of man is to treat his fellow men with gentleness and courtesy.

—*Arabian Wisdom.*

The Being who remains awake while all sleep, who grants all desires, That is pure, That is Brahman, That alone is said to be immortal. As fire, though one, having entered the world, becomes various according to what it burns, so does the *Atman* (Self) within all living beings, though one, become various according to what it enters. It also exists outside. As air, though one, having entered the world, becomes various according to what it enters, so does the *Atman* within all living beings, though one, become various according to what it enters. It also exists outside. —*Katha Upanishad.*

It is not to Israel alone that God has spoken and revealed His will; nor even only to recognized prophets, whether in Israel or among the nations. But to all who have His work to do He speaks, much or little, clearly or in parables and visions, according to their needs and according to their fitness to hear and understand.

—*Wisdom of Israel.*

Is God the God of the Jews only? Is He not the God of the nations also? Yea, of the nations also.

—*Romans* 3:29.

God is one, but many are His aspects. As one master of the house appears in various relations, being father to one, brother to another, and husband to a third, so one Lord is called in various ways according to the particular aspect in which He appears to His devotee.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to Him.—*Acts* 10:35.

Men are members each of many,
The self-same stuff in all as any.
When fortune wrings a single limb,
Others sympathize with him.
How shouldst thou to man pertain
Who carest not for others' pain?—*Sadi.*

All this, whatsoever exists in the universe, should be covered by the Lord. He who sees all beings in the Self and the Self in all beings, he never turns away from the Self. He who perceives all beings as the Self, for him how can there be delusion or grief, when he sees this oneness everywhere? —*Isa Upanishad.*

The Tao of Heaven has no favourites. It gives to all good men without distinction.—*Laotzu.*

Wretch, will you not bear with your own brother, who hath God for his father, as being a son from the same stock, and of the same high descent? But if you chance to be placed in some superior station, will you presently set yourself up for a tyrant? Will you not remember what you are, and over whom you bear rule? That they are by nature your relations, your brothers: that they are the offspring of God?—*Epictetus.*

PRACTICAL RELIGION AND COMPARATIVE STUDY

By Swami Paramananda

Our object in surveying the world of religion and making a comparative study of it is not in any way to prove the supremacy of one over another, but to find a sympathetic chord which may serve as a common synthesis for all. When the great Parliament of Religions was convened in 1893 in connection with the Columbian Exposition held in Chicago, it met with no small opposition from the eminent dignitaries of the orthodox churches, and even from the prominent laymen. Some thought it was a sacrilege to admit that there was any true religion other than Christianity. After much discussion and opposition, when this great ideal of bringing diversified religions together became an actual fact, even then many devout Christians candidly believed that it was going to prove once for all the supremacy of Christianity over all other existing faiths, but its effect was quite the contrary. It proved that noble ideas and ideals were not exclusive to any country or nation, but were present among all peoples of the earth.

Since the latter part of the nineteenth century the comparative study of religion has been somewhat in vogue. Independent thinkers and learned men and women of all nations are now strongly advocating it; but, alas, in the major portion of literature which deals with comparative study, we cannot help but find a decided biased attitude. Some one starts with the idea of proving the exclusive superiority of his faith and compares it with other religious ideas and ideals with this special aim in view. We cannot expect any fairness in this method of dealing with the subject. Seeing through a biased mind is precisely like looking through the colored glass. We cannot judge

another if our mind is already prejudiced, and it is no small problem to overcome our prejudices, no matter what our ethical theories are in regard to virtue, universal tolerance and seeing good in others. With the rare exception of the few master-spirits of the world, it is difficult to find among mankind people who are free from prejudices and personal motives.

"Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven." This saying of Jesus the Christ to my mind gives the key to the problem. It is not the dogmatic religion that ennobles us or widens our vision, but it is the practical religion,—"doing the will of the Father." Herein lies the whole secret. A man may proclaim charity in a loud tone, but if he lacks charity in his heart, what avails? A religion comes to us with a claim of universal love and brotherhood of mankind, but if it manifests aggression and bitterness towards those who do not follow its tenets, what lasting effect will it have upon our mind?

We may pretend and play hypocrites in the world of commerce, in the field of science and politics, but in the realm of religion it is an utter impossibility. Some people acclaim their supremacy because of the great antiquity their religion possesses; others for its being ultra-modern; but the vitality and truth of its thought are not proved by either of these means. The earnest soul invariably cries out for its practical value, and the practical value is found not in the crust of dogma, but in the living flame of life itself. What proves that we are living? It is life's motion that testifies our existence, and if we possess high ideals they must be equally evidenced through our life's activities. A person who possesses a great treasure and

keeps it hidden, it neither profits him nor another. If you have a bright light, come out with it, let others see it and profit by it; but if you do not have it in your real and practical life, the theory of light is of little use either to yourself or to your fellow-beings.

This is my concept of practical religion which makes a great ideal living and real by looking upon which others may find strength, inspiration, joy and peace. When we view the world of religion from this angle, it at once takes a universal aspect. Whether this ideal is realized through the study of Jewish Kaballa, Sacred Book of the Babylonians, Egyptian Secret Codes, Greek Mythology, Chinese Wisdom, Vedic Revelation, or through the Christian Bible, is of small consequence. Men are brothers only when they realize consciously that they have a common Father. Before this realization dawns in the individual heart, no amount of theories of brotherhood will make him charitably inclined to another. "First seek ye the kingdom of Truth, all other things shall be added unto you." "Know thyself that thou mayst know all else." These are the true and fundamental thoughts of the spiritual world. If we do not abide by them and follow their saving diction, we are but led by the crooked paths of whims and self-will, although we may claim our alliance with high and lofty religions of the world. Our alliance must be from within and primarily with the One Infinite Source, Who knows no division or fraction, but is ever the same to all His creatures.

For myself I am certain that the good of human life cannot lie in the possession of things which for one man to possess is for the rest to lose, but rather in things which all can possess alike.—*B. Spinoza.*

AKBAR'S DREAM

By Alfred Lord Tennyson

Akbar was one of the noblest souls in history. He was a great Mogul emperor who lived in India during the latter part of the sixteenth century. The policy of his government was especially marked by his religious tolerance. We quote below the inscription written by Abul Fazl, Akbar's chief friend and adviser, for a Temple in Kashmir; and also a few passages from "Akbar's Dream" by Tennyson.

O God in every temple I see people that see Thee, and in every language I hear spoken, people praise Thee. Polytheism and Islam feel after Thee. Each religion says, "Thou art one, without equal." If it be a mosque people murmur the holy prayer, and if it be a Christian Church, people ring the bell from love to Thee. Sometimes I frequent the Christian cloister, and sometimes the mosque. But it is Thou Whom I search from temple to temple.

He knows Himself, men nor themselves nor Him,
For every splinter'd fraction of a sect
Will clamour "I am on the Perfect Way,
All else is to perdition."

Shall the rose
Cry to the lotus "No flower thou"? the palm
Call to the cypress "I alone am fair"?
The mango spurn the melon at his foot?
"Mine is the one fruit Allah made for man."
Look how the living pulse of Allah beats
Thro' all His world. If every single star
Should shriek its claim "I only am in heaven"
Why that were such sphere-music as the Greek
Had hardly dream'd of. There is light in all,
And light, with more or less of shade, in all
Man-modes of worship.

I dream'd
That stone by stone I rear'd a sacred fane,
A temple, neither Pagod, Mosque, nor Church,
But loftier, simpler, always open-door'd
To every breath from heaven, and Truth and Peace
And Love and Justice came and dwelt therein.

VALUE OF MANY-SIDED DEVELOPMENT

By Swami Vivekananda

We want to become harmonious beings, with the psychical, spiritual, intellectual and active side of our nature equally developed. Nations and individuals typify one of these sides or types and cannot understand more than that one. They get so built up into one ideal that they cannot see any other. The ideal is really that we should become many-sided. Indeed the cause of the misery of the world is that we are so one-sided that we cannot sympathize with each other. Consider a man looking at the sun from beneath the earth, up the shaft of a mine; he sees one aspect of the sun. Then another man sees the sun from the earth's level, another through mist and fog, another from the mountain top. To each the sun has a different appearance. So there are many appearances, but in reality there is only one sun. There is diversity of vision, but one object, and that is the sun.

Each man, according to his nature, has a peculiar tendency and takes to certain ideals and a certain path by which to reach them. But the goal is always the same to all. We must be as broad as the skies, as deep as the ocean; we must have the zeal of the fanatic, the depth of the mystic, and the width of the agnostic. The word "toleration" has acquired an unpleasant association with the conceited man who thinking himself in a high position looks

down on his fellow-creatures with pity. This is a horrible state of mind. We are all travelling the same way, towards the same goal, but by different paths made by the necessities of the case to suit diverse minds. We must become many-sided; indeed we must become Protean in character, so as not to tolerate but to do what is much more difficult, to sympathize, to enter into the other's path, and feel with him in his aspirations and seeking after God. There are two elements in every religion—a positive and a negative. In Christianity, for instance, when you speak of the incarnation of the Trinity, of salvation through Jesus Christ, I am with you. I say, "Very good, that I also hold true;" but when you go on to say, "There is no other true religion, there is no other revelation of God," then I say, "Stop I cannot go with you when you shut out, when you deny." Every religion has a message to deliver, something to teach man, but when it begins to protest, when it tries to disturb others, then it takes up a negative and therefore a dangerous position, and does not know where to begin or where to end. Every force completes a circuit. The force we call man starts from the infinite God and must return to Him. This return to God must be accomplished in one of two ways,—either by slowly drifting back, going to nature, or by our own inward power, which causes us to stop on our course, which would if left alone carry us in a circuit back to God, and violently turn round and find God, as it were, by a short cut. This is what the Yogi does.

I have said that every man must choose his Ideal which is in accord with his nature. This Ideal is man's *Ishtam.* You must keep it sacred, and when you worship God, worship according to your *Ishtam.* How are we to find out the particular method? It is very difficult, but as you persevere in your worship it will come of itself.

THE RETRIBUTION OF SELFISHNESS

A Popular Russian Legend as told by Prince Serge Wolkonsky

There was an old woman who for many centuries suffered tortures in the flames of hell, for she had been a great sinner during her earthly life. One day she saw far away in the distance an angel taking his flight through the blue skies; and with the whole strength of her voice she called to him. The call must have been desperate, for the angel stopped in his flight, and coming down to her asked her what she wanted.

"When you reach the throne of God," she said, "tell him that a miserable creature has suffered more than she can bear, and that she asks the Lord to be delivered from these tortures." The angel promised to do so and flew away. When he had transmitted the message God said: "Ask her whether she has done any good to any one during her life." The old woman strained her memory in search of a good action during her sinful past, and all at once: "I've got one," she joyfully exclaimed, "one day I gave a carrot to a hungry beggar."

The angel reported the answer. "Take a carrot," said God to the angel, "and stretch it out to her. Let her grasp it, and if the plant is strong enough to draw her out from hell she shall be saved." This the angel did. The poor old woman clung to the carrot. The angel began to pull, and lo! she began to rise! But when her body was half out of the flames she felt a weight at her feet. Another sinner was clinging to her. She kicked, but it did not help. The sinner would not let go his hold, and the angel, continuing to pull, was lifting them both. But, lo! another sinner clung to them, and then a third, and more and always more—a chain of miserable creatures hung at the old woman's feet. The

angel never ceased pulling. It did not seem to be any heavier than the small carrot could support, and they all were lifted in the air. But the old woman suddenly took fright. Too many people were availing themselves of her last chance of salvation, and kicking and pushing those who were clinging to her, she exclaimed: "Leave me alone; hands off; the carrot is mine." No sooner had she pronounced this word "mine" than the tiny stem broke, and they all fell back to hell, and forever.

INDIA AND HER THOUGHT

I

Brahmanism is one of the oldest religions of the world. It was flourishing in India at a period before history was written. It was coeval with the religion of Egypt in the time of Abraham, and perhaps at a still earlier date. But of its earliest form and extent we know nothing, except from the sacred poems of the Hindus called the Vedas, written in Sanskrit probably fifteen hundred years before Christ,—for even the date of the earliest of the Vedas is unknown. Fifty years ago we could not have understood the ancient religions of India. But Sir William Jones in the latter part of the last century, a man of immense erudition and genius for the acquisition of languages, at that time an English judge in India, prepared the way for the study of Sanskrit, the literary language of ancient India, by the translation and publication of the laws of Manu. He was followed in his labors by the Schlegels of Germany, and by numerous scholars and missionaries. Within fifty years this ancient and beautiful language has been so perseveringly studied that we know something of the people by whom it was once spoken,—even as Egyptologists have revealed some-

thing of ancient Egypt by interpreting the hieroglyphics; and Chaldaean investigators have found stores of knowledge in the Babylonian bricks.

The Sanskrit, as now interpreted, reveals to us the meaning of those poems called Vedas, by which we are enabled to understand the early laws and religion of the Hindus. It is poetry, not history, which makes this revelation, for the Hindus have no history farther back than five or six hundred years before Christ. It is from Homer and Hesiod that we get an idea of the gods of Greece, not from Herodotus or Xenophon.—*From "Beacon Lights of History" by John Lord.*

II

If one rushes through India one may indeed depart with little liking for India's swarming millions. But it is hard for me to conceive how one can stay any time among them without finding them a truly lovable people and without imbibing genuine respect and admiration for the simple dignity of their lives, the quiet courtesy of their manners, their uncomplaining endurance of hardships, their unbounded hospitality, and the feeling for spiritual values which, in spite of gross superstitions, is unmistakable in the Indian atmosphere. These things—or rather the memory of them—strike one, perhaps, most forcibly after his return from the East to the familiar sights and sounds of Western civilization. For my part, at any rate, in the rush of our city streets and the complacent satisfaction of our beer-gardens and our moving-picture shows, and amid the descriptions of war and hate and horror that fill every day's reports from Europe, I find myself thinking of the banks of the Ganges and the silent monasteries of Burma; just as I shall tell myself, in the midst of the snows and piercing winds which our coming New England

winter is already preparing for us, that the Irrawaddy is still pursuing its course to the sea between groves of flowering trees and banks crowned with golden pagodas, and that the roses are still blooming in Benares.

—From "India and Its Faiths" by James Bissett Pratt.

III

As I draw near to discern the elements of the Oriental consciousness, I find among them those that produce on me impressions of sublimity. Not without reflection do I use that term "sublimity." It is one of the noblest of words. The august word "sublimity," like one of your own Himalayan mountain peaks, rises on the field of English speech into the upper air of truth; its summit crowned with light, its base lost in the haze of distance. It signifies that which strikes the mind with a sense of grandeur or power. The invariable condition of the emotion of sublimity is vastness, power or intensity in the objects, material or moral, that produce it. I believe that in the Occidental consciousness as well as in the Oriental consciousness these are elements of sublimity. It is not my province to deal with the former in these lectures, but the time will come, I trust, when some mind, stronger and more skilled than my own, shall undertake in India an unprejudiced analysis of qualities in the consciousness of the West, which, when rightly understood, when seen in their ultimate relations to the soul, when studied in the spirit of love, may be declared, in the high court of India's most critical opinion, not unworthy to be called sublime.

From that ancient and most complex psychological mystery, which I have called the Oriental consciousness, I select four elements, each of which produces upon my Western powers of apprehension the impression of sublimity. They are these: The Contemplative Life; The

Presence of the Unseen; Aspiration Toward Ultimate Being; The Sanctions of the Past. —*From "Christ and the Eastern Soul" by Rev. Charles Cuthbert Hall.*

IV

India is not, as you may imagine, a distant, strange, or at the very utmost, a curious country. India for the future belongs to Europe, it has its place in the Indo-European world, it has its place in our own history, and in what is the very life of history, the history of the human mind.

You know how some of the best talent and the noblest genius of our age has been devoted to the study of the development of the outward or material world, the growth of the earth, the first appearance of living cells, their combination and differentiation, leading up to the beginning of organic life, and its steady progress from the lowest to the highest stages. Is there not an inward and intellectual world also which has to be studied in its historical development, from the first appearance of predicative and demonstrative roots, their combination and differentiation, leading up to the beginning of rational thought in its steady progress from the lowest to the highest stages? And in that study of the history of the human mind, in that study of ourselves, of our true selves, India occupies a place second to no other country. Whatever sphere of the human mind you may select for your special study, whether it be language, or religion, or mythology, or philosophy, whether it be laws or customs, primative art or primitive science, everywhere, you have to go to India, whether you like it or not, because some of the most valuable and most instructive materials in the history of man are treasured up in India, and in India only.

—*From "India: What Can It Teach Us?" by Max Muller.*

THE NEED OF COMPARATIVE STUDY

By Sir Monier Monier-Williams

It appears to me high time that all thoughtful Christians should reconsider their position, and—to use the phraseology of our modern physicists—readjust themselves to their altered environments. The sacred books of Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Islam, are now at length becoming accessible to all and the Christians can no longer neglect the duty of studying their contents. All the inhabitants of the world are being rapidly drawn together; Paul's grand saying—that God has made all nations of men of one blood—is being brought home to us more forcibly every day. Surely, then, we are bound to follow the example of Paul, who, speaking to the Gentiles, instead of denouncing them as "heathen," appealed to them as "very God-fearing" and even quoted a passage from one of their own poets in support of a Christian truth; and who directed Christians not to shut their eyes to anything true, honest, just, pure, lovely, or of good report, wherever it might be found, and exhorted them, that if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, they were to think on these things. Surely it is time we ceased to speak and act as if truth among Gentiles and truth among Christians were two wholly different things. Surely we ought to acknowledge and accept with gratitude whatever is true and noble in the Hindu character, or Hindu writings, while we reflect with shame on our own shortcomings under far greater advantages. Nor ought we to forget the words of Peter, when we label Brahmans, Buddists, Parsis, Muslims, and Fetish worshippers with the common label heathen. Peter, when addressing Gentiles, assured them that God had taught him not to call any man common or unclean; and declared that God was no respecter of persons, but

that in every nation he that feared Him and worked righteousness was accepted by Him. It is becoming more and more a duty for all the nations of the world to study each other; to inquire into and compare each other's systems of belief; to avoid expressions of contempt in speaking of the sincere and earnest adherents of any creed; and to search diligently whether the principles and doctrines which guide their own faith and conduct rest on truth or not.

NOBILITY OF GENEROSITY

Counsels of Nabi Efendi to his son Aboul Khair

(Turkish Philosopher and Poet. 17th Century.)

O thou who dost enumerate carefully the advantages of success, and dost consider the spectacle of refusals and welcomes, throw not a look of indifference on thy neighbor! Turn with interest to the unfortunate. Observe the rights of thy neighbors with justice; let the expression of thy countenance wound no one. Be not so parsimonious with thy food that thou canst not share it with others. Provide for their needs as much as possible. Let all the weak take refuge in the shadows of thy generosity! Do not entertain sentiments of hate and enmity against any one; do not acquire the habit of tumult and agitation. Beware of anger, rage, and revenge; show to no one a countenance furrowed with discontent.

Live on good terms with all the world and be always of an equable disposition. Do not annoy thy inferiors, nor impose upon them the constraint of cold formalities. Let not the expression of thy countenance grieve any one; captivate every one with thy good nature. Let no one be a victim of thy injustice, never return evil for evil. Be not a burden on thy friends, do not make thyself in-

supportable by thy bad disposition. Let no soul be in anguish for thee; rather labor to elevate those who are desperate. Bring no lawsuit against ony one, that God may preserve thee in turn from litigants. Do not compromise thy honor in this world and in the next for strange interests. Be neither guardian, counsellor, nor trustee.

Fly the domain of chicanery; do not rush into profitless agitation with lowered head. He who enters into quarrelling and strife with others brings down upon himself trouble and anxiety. Never follow the road of disputes and strife, for they provoke the flames of hatred! Raise not a finger to do evil: let one of thy hands be always busy in doing good. Carry not thy complaints to the door of the prince; refer to God's tribunal him who hath wronged thee. However great be thy weakness and impotence, will the Lord therefore be less zealous for thy defence? Resigned and modest, be without care and without anxiety.

Never reply harshly; when thou speakest to any one let it be with sweet courtesy. Reproach no one face to face with his hidden faults; lend to his discourse a friendly ear. Never expose the ignorance of any one. Why cover with confusion a creature of God? Renounce injustice and violence; never utter harsh words that wound the heart. Be generous, whatever happens, O soul of my soul; let thy tongue outrage no one! To wound thy brother to the heart is the worst of sins, the greatest of all iniquities. Labor with ardor to raise up those who have fallen; wouldst thou desire to overthrow the throne of the Lord? Avoid reproaching others for their blindness in sin, and declaring thyself free from stain. O soul of thy father, know well; when thou dost accuse thy brother, thou dost render thyself guilty.

WHO ART THOU LORD?

By Katharine F. Sherwood

Fain would I give myself to Thee
And worship at Thy Sacred Shrine.
A craving in my hungry heart
Upreaches toward the things divine.
Love moves me, and I long to lose
myself in adoration blessed—
But who art Thou? How shall I know
if Thou canst hear the words confessed?
Art Thou a Being far from me
With heart and body, soul and mind?
Or art Thou Energy Itself
The Cause of earth and humankind?
Art Thou the Spirit of this earth,
Art Thou the Power that moves my speech?
Art Thou the Light behind the sun?
Art Thou the Life within the life?
The Force that makes all nature one?
Art Thou the Spirit of this earth
The all-pervading Essence of each part?
Art Thou the Breath that makes us live?
Art Thou the Life-beat of each heart?
If this be true and Thou art Essence,
Breath and Life
Thou art no longer far from me
In truth my very Self Thou art
and greater far
Than I have ever thought myself to be.
If Thou art all and yet in me a part,
Then I am one with Thee, O thought sublime.
Thou art my Self—I live because of Thee
And knowing this I am divine.
Then what to worship? Where to bend the knee?

If Thou my Self the Essence art?
It is the little "self" the "I" I see
That bows before the greater part.
So vast the thought—I cannot hold it quite
At first so real, it vanishes like mist—
I reach the summit but I fall again
I cannot keep the place I wished.
Around I see so many forms
And every form a name attends,
If I would make Thee real to me
Then name and form must serve that end.
And though Thou art my Self in very truth
I call Thee Father—Brother—Friend—
For by such names I bring to me
The closest feeling, and the knee I bend.
I ask for help—for courage and for peace
And know that Thou wilt give them me.
For art Thou not my very Self
And anxious for my good to be?
And when in meditation I
Can rise above the things I see,
And lost in contemplation high
Become absorbed and one with Thee,
Detain me, Lord: infill me quite
With Thy full life, and let me know
    my oneness so complete,
That when I touch the earth again
I may not lose the blessing, but can meet
The daily life with calm and blissful heart
And unto others of my kind the same
    eternal bliss impart.
So is my question answered. Not again
I need to ask, Lord Who art Thou?
But finding, following, trusting, leaning,
Worship I may and gladly do I bow.

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL DINNER

There is no occasion in the whole round of the year's activities more joyous than that of the annual dinner. We all refer to it as the Swami's dinner for it is literally that. He plans for it, he prepares it and also serves it, and those who have the privilege of assisting him in this are blessed in seeing what joy each task can afford when work is not distinguished from worship. The Swami's guests are frank in their anticipation of his dinner, for many inquired beforehand when it is to be so that they might arrange their plans accordingly. Each year the joy seems to grow as the number of guests increases. This year there were about a hundred, the limit being due to lack of space alone. In his welcoming speech Swami Paramananda expressed his intention of having out-of-door dinners in California where he might entertain on a much larger scale. Already there are many in Boston who hope themselves to witness such an event.

Those of our number who are at Ananda Ashrama sent their greetings by wire announcing that they too would keep feast time with us, and that on the date of the dinner (June 14th) the first building of cottages was to begin and a new garden to be ploughed. Their message was signed "Ashrama Pioneers" a name of which they may well be proud.

The dinner, as usual, was served in the library and chapel thrown together, the long tables extending into the hall. The screen behind the Swami's chair at the head table was banked with flowers, also the bookcases, the mantle and the organ were completely covered with them. For beauty nothing surpassed the golden sunshine and chaste outline of the day lilies; peonies contributed mass and fra-

grance, while an unusual abundance of sweet syringa added delicacy and perfume. Against this profuse background of green and flowers, the white linen of the tables with the tall candles and dainty vases of flowers looked very beautiful.

The guests began arriving about seven and by seven thirty all were seated. Dainty menu cards printed on tinted Japanese paper only aroused the curiosity of the guests, for who could tell what "Begooni Crisp" "Curry Chamatkar" or "Salad Surprise of Chana" meant? Each one of the nine courses on the menu appeared like a product from wonderland. To many it was a revelation of what a vegetarian dinner might be, while one guest spoke of it as "poetic cooking" an expression which truly described it. At the close of the dinner all the little glasses were filled with a specially refreshing drink which the Swami had created. Before drinking an opportunity was given for toasts when one of the faithful members, Miss Agnes Raymond, surprised us all by making a toast in the form of an acrostic, the initial letters spelling down the Swami's name and the whole expressing a rare tribute of devotion and appreciation of what the Swami's life in our midst has meant to us. Deep feeling mingled with gladness as Swami, raising his glass, said "To you all" and every one rising joined him in this fitting expression of a common bond of spirit. A special toast was made for Ananda Ashrama and all its pioneers present and future. When all were again seated the Swami called for speeches. Mr. C. C. Nelson, Mr. Joseph Mahoney and Mr. Ennis spoke spontaneously expressing in different ways the practical value and help they found in the teaching. There was no formality but simply a free expression of the fullness of their heart. Mrs. Joseph Mahoney, well known as a writer under the name of Bangs Burgess, and an ardent California enthus-

iast, gave a beautiful description of a trip she took through the main canyons of that State and especially made vivid the beauty and grandeur of the rare yucca blossoms which many devoutly call "candles of the Lord." She read several nature poems, some of them original, descriptive of various aspects of beauty. We quote here one of Mrs. Mahoney's poems written in appreciation after the dinner.

TO SWAMI PARAMANANDA

Midst eager, loud, contending throng,
Untouched by evil thought
Nor dwarfed by craft or guile or greed;
A radiant soul of all compassing love,
Sage of an age-long wisdom,
Master of earthly lore,
Serene and humble,
Meek, unvexed, unswerved,
He goes his way of duty
With the simple sweetness of a child.

Miss K. F. Sherwood and Dr. Gerda v. B. Perry brought out the dramatic effect of one of the Swami's unpublished poems called "Sun and Twilight" by rendering it in dialogue form. The Swami was called upon several times to make comments or answer questions. When it was time to close the evening, flowers were distributed to all the guests and so ended a happy occasion which will ever abide in our memory.

REVIEW

We cannot resist sharing with our readers the following unusual review which appeared in the May issue of the Vedanta Kesari, India. It is different from the ordinary review and is more like a commentary. We take pleasure, therefore, in reproducing it as it appeared, but giving only portions of the poems and omitting entirely the "Hymn of Adoration" which appeared in the October, 1922, issue of the "Message of the East."

Those who have read the prose works of the author of "The Path of Devotion," have felt a peculiar fascination in them. A book of poems such as the one that is presented now has been long expected. As the outpourings of a devotional soul, the seventy-two poems contained in the "Soul's Secret Door" have in them the power of communicating to the reader's heart the painless pain of longing for the Lord.

Whither lies the source of poesy? The reed pipe when touched by the lips of the Divine Cowherd of Brindaban

showers forth strains of soul-stirring melody. Thus doth the Lord's whisper fill the heart of the devotee with unending song:

Thy whisper hath filled my soul with an unending song.
In noise and stillness, in crowd and alone, Thy
gentle tone is always in my ear.

The Lord Himself is the Mysterious Guide to the unknown land of eternal bliss.

Come hither, O friend, I shall tell thee the secret
of this unknown land.
Let us shut the outer gates and the inner doors.
Have no fear or doubt, for the strange Guide to
this unknown land is marvellous wise.
He knoweth our unacted acts, nay, even our unformed
thoughts, our life's pulsation and every heart-
string in His grasp.

Complete self-surrender to the Lord brings to the devotee a feeling of utmost safety. "Not I, my Beloved Lord, but Thou Who knowest what is good for me" is the burden of the devotee's song.

It is best that Thou dost hold my hand and lead me
where'er Thou deemest.
I shall follow Thee now with unfaltering faith.

The mystery of Divine Grace is expressed in the following poem which lends the title to the collection.

I seek no more for I have found Him, not by seeking,—
He came to me when I was not looking,
Opening my soul's secret door.
Friend, how can I tell thee of this strange mystery?
He is seen unsought only through this, the soul's
secret door.

The "Hymn of Adoration" the closing poem of the collection is a poetic gem and exhibits the artless art of the saintly poet.

Every one of the poems has a charm of its own and it is not possible to do justice to the work by commenting upon it in a general way or by quoting stray poems. We can only say that the "Soul's Secret Door" makes a distinct addition to devotional literature and that the country which has given birth to Jayadev, Kabir, Tulsidas, Tukraram, Ram Prasad, Thiyagaraja and Gnana Sambhanda continues to be the birth-place of saintly poets who by the charm of their song could lead the wayward soul Godwards.

REPORT

The friends and members of The Vedanta Centre of Boston extended a very warm and loving welcome to Swami Prakashananda of the San Francisco Hindu Temple when he was entertained here on his return from his recent visit to India. During the week of his stay at the Centre, Swami Paramananda asked him to conduct the regular Tuesday evening class and also made special arrangements for the Sunday evening Service at which Swami Prakashananda addressed a much larger and more representative Boston audience. His subject was "Divine Inspiration" and his message was received with marked interest and appreciation.

Two younger members of the Ramakrishna Mission, Swami Raghavananda and Swami Prabhavananda, arrived with Swami Prakashananda from India to assist respectively in the work now being carried on in New York and San Francisco. Naturally it is with deepest and most cordial feeling that we bid welcome and Godspeed especially to the new Swamis.

* * * *

During Swami Paramananda's absence from Ananda Ashrama the Sunday Services were faithfully carried on by Sister Daya. It is hoped that during the next few months a great deal will be accomplished in organizing this new phase of the work. Swami Paramananda will personally conduct the public open air services held every Sunday afternoon at 3:30 beginning with July the 15th. His addresses will be on Practical and Productive Religion.

The Ashrama will be open to visitors certain days. Those who desire any special information in regard to the California work please address:

ANANDA ASHRAMA
LA CRESCENTA, LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.
Published monthly except in August and September

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DIVINE MOTHER HEART

By Swami Paramananda

GREAT MOTHER HEART, how tender
art Thou!
Thy love, transcending all mine iniquities,
Pours upon my life its benign sweetness.
How oft my imperfect nature lies mortified
and ashamed in Thy protecting bosom,
overwhelmed by Thy unfathomed tenderness!
Who art Thou that givest this endless bounty
to me, meritless and ignorant?

Divine Mother Heart, proof of Thy unceasing
care I find in every turn of life.
With many arms dost Thou shield me;
With many hearts dost Thou love me;
With many minds dost Thou guide me to the
road of safety.

Forget I may at times when dark clouds
gather;
But to have seen Thy face of love
And known what is not known, save when
Thou dost lift the veil,
Is joy forever and crowning glory of life!

Written August 19, 1923
Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta, California

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

It is the mind that makes one wise or ignorant, bound or emancipated. One is holy because of his mind, one is wicked because of his mind, one is a sinner because of his mind, and it is the mind that makes one virtuous. So he whose mind is always fixed on God requires no other practices, devotion, or spiritual exercises.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, think on these things.—*St. Paul.*

By inaction one can become the centre of thought, the focus of responsibility, the arbiter of wisdom. Full allowance must be made for others, while remaining unmoved one's self. There must be a thorough compliance with divine principles, without any manifestation thereof. All of which may be summed up in the one word, tranquillity. For the perfect man employs his mind as a mirror. It grasps nothing; it refuses nothing. It receives, but does not keep. And thus he can triumph over matter, without injury to himself.—*Chuang Tzu.*

As he thinketh in his heart, so is he. Apply thine heart unto instructions and thine ears to the words of knowledge.
—*Proverbs.*

Thou art but an atom, He the great whole; but if for a few days thou meditate with care on the whole, thou becomest one with it.—*Jami.*

Make yourself nests of pleasant thoughts. None of us yet know, for none of us have been taught in early youth, what fairy palaces we may build of beautiful thought—proof against all adversity. Bright fancies, satisfied memories, noble

histories, faithful sayings, treasure-houses of precious and restful thoughts, which care cannot disturb, nor pain make gloomy, nor poverty take away from us,—houses built without hands, for our souls to live in.—*John Ruskin.*

Twice blessed be the man that reflects long before he acts! One that reflects long before he acts is certainly possessed of great intelligence. Such a man never offends in respect of any act.—*Mahabharata.*

A man sins in thought when he thinks aught against God, if he occupies his heart not with the praise and loving of God, but suffers it to be abstracted or stirred with divers thoughts, and to go void in the world.—*Richard Rolle.*

To overcome sorrow and win happiness men wander in vain, for they have not sanctified their thought, the mysterious essence of holiness. Then I must keep my thought well governed and well guarded; what need is there of any vows save the vow to guard the thought?—*Santi-Deva.*

A rush of thoughts is the only conceivable prosperity that can come to us. Fine clothes, equipages, villa, park, social consideration, cannot cover up real poverty and insignificance, from my own eyes or from others like mine. Thoughts let us into realities. Neither miracle nor magic nor any religious tradition, not the immortality of the private soul is incredible, after we have experienced an insight, a thought. I think it comes to some men but once in their life, sometimes a religious impulse, sometimes an intellectual insight. But what we want is consecutiveness.—*Emerson.*

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

PSYCHOLOGY OF THOUGHT

By Swami Paramananda

"Thoughts are things." This simple sentiment so often expressed by us has far greater significance than we usually attach to it. Our thoughts become concrete things in our life. Thoughts produce actions and actions produce like reactions. Thus all our happiness and unhappiness, success and failure and the endless multiplicity of moods and feelings are but fruits and flowers from the tree of life, first existing in the seed form of thought.

In the Dhammapada we read: "All that we are is the result of what we have thought; it is founded on our thoughts; it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage. All that we are is the result of what we have thought; it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him like a shadow that never leaves him." The whole psychology of thought phenomena can be summed up in these two ideas. We, as a rule, do not observe the subtle cause but deal largely with the effect. For instance, we observe a flower in blossom or a plant that is withered, but neither blossoming nor withering is through chance. The causes often are hidden due to their abstract quality and subtlety, but they are never separated from all the effects that are produced in the phenomenal world. If we ever experience any happiness there is a very definite reason for it. Likewise whenever we experience unhappiness there is also a definite reason for that. We are all keenly interested in doing things that will earn happiness and safeguard our well-being, but these we cannot earn merely through the action of our hands without first creating the foundation of right thought. In fact there can-

not be any true standard for right living without the basic principle of right thinking.

People whose outer life is intensely active are inclined to misunderstand the significance of such a theme and may imagine that giving too much eminence to thought is apt to lead to morbidity. But this is only due to surface observation. Thought does not necessarily mean inaction. On the contrary, thought generates action both in the mind and in the body. This can be easily verified by every individual. Whenever we are engaged in concentrated thought, it immediately produces a certain vibration which results in making the body tense or mobile. Sometimes our thoughts cause us to feel dull, heavy, melancholy; again they generate such tremendous force that we feel we are not touching the ground. When we are walking, if the mind is charged with some powerful thought, it carries the body; unconsciously we walk faster. The weight of the body is lifted by the velocity of thought. These are not fancies, they are actual facts, but often they go unobserved and that is why we lay greater stress on action than on thought. If we are not able to understand the fundamental value of right thinking, then all our high ideals will be of little avail. No one can create great things merely with his hands or his material assets. He must be sustained by noble thoughts.

Thought is most potent in moulding our destiny. But do not imagine that all we have to do is to sit and think and everything will come to us. That will bring us nothing; it is inconsistent. If a man is animated by lofty thoughts and high aspirations, what is the most immediate thing for him to do? He seeks to express them; he strives to make them real. Thought and action are inseparable and they must always be inseparable just as a tree and its root. You cannot conceive of a tree living and flowering if severed from

its root. So is it with our life and all its multiplicity of thoughts and feelings.

Every man who turns his attention inward sooner or later must realize that there is no such thing as accident. It is only the man of limited understanding, the man who does not see beyond the scope of the phenomenal, who says: It happened by chance; I did it in a moment of impulse. All that we do is the result of certain lines of thought. Not very long ago there was an article in a magazine, a discussion in regard to a criminal case: a judge had sentenced a youth of seventeen. Many thought he should have shown more mercy. They argued that the boy was ignorant, that he had acted on impulse. The judge cross-questioned this youth and found that it was not at all a momentary impulse, that for months he had brooded deliberately over this idea of robbing a bank. The idea came to him first as a simple thought, then it ground into his very being, became part of his life, and when the outer opportunity offered, he fell. Our happiness is not through chance, and our unhappiness is not through chance. It is better to understand this from the very beginning because it will help us to eliminate unrest from our own minds and to free the minds of others. When we live only on the surface of life, then we feel the unrest in ourselves and in the world, and only when we see things from the surface, do we say it was an accident. There is always a deep underlying cause. Chance is the notion of idle people; they are constantly looking for miracles and miracles never come to them. Miracles come only to those who are awakened, who are pure and exalted in spirit. They alone can perceive what the world calls miracles.

When things go wrong with us, when we allow ourselves to be mentally disturbed, we find many excuses. We explain that it was because of other people,—their thoughts, their

influence upon us, their actions. "He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me," we complain; but when we realize that nothing can really have any disturbing or harmful effect upon us, once we are purified within, then all idea of complaining falls away from us. If we hold hateful, unkind thoughts, unhappiness will never cease for us, hatred will never cease. Happiness has nothing to do with how much we have or how little; it does not depend on where we are placed or in what circumstances. Material conditions do not secure for us our peace. It is entirely the quality of mind. The small mind sees the limited; the big mind sees the unlimited. The vision of limitation is our own creation and the vision of the unlimited is a quality of our unfoldment. We have heard this many times and we may have to hear it many more times, because we do not always hear with the inner ear. Our inner life does not always respond to these sayings. It is a question of unfoldment, and unfoldment of our real nature is not possible save from within. Outer things we can have done for us by others, but the inner things we must do for ourselves. In modern life we forget this; we like to have people think things out for us. But there is no one who can think for us and make us wise. It is a very great tragedy when we are overcome by such spiritual lethargy.

There are certain invariable laws. There is the law of compensation. It is very definitely stated: "If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage." But compensation does not mean merely reward and punishment. It means that everything which comes to us, good, evil, and mixed, comes only because we ourselves have made it possible. We sow the seeds by our own thoughts.

"He who lives looking for pleasure only, his senses un-

controlled, immoderate in his food, idle and weak, *Mara,* the tempter, will certainly overthrow him, as the wind throws down a weak tree." What is this tempter? Here is a point of dogma. Some people believe in a personal devil. The devil does exist, but in the individual himself. In India they call it the ego. "There is no enemy so potent, so hostile, so difficult to conquer as the ego." We may have all the blessings the world can give, but if the ego is rampant we shall know neither rest nor happiness. Ego always demands. If we have little, it wants more. If we have more, it wants everything. It sets us on fire. Ambition is like that. It consumes us. We can have no chance for peace or stability so long as we follow these lower propensities. And how do they first get their hold on us? Through our thoughts. We have the power to transform our life by changing our mode of thinking. In the Upanishads, one of the most ancient Scriptures of India, this is given very simply and directly: "Mind alone is the cause of man's bondage, and mind alone is the cause of his liberation."

We are born with certain tendencies, with a natural spirit of nobility, or the reverse. When we say we inherit it from our parents, we give a very unsatisfactory explanation. The individual himself sowed the seeds of good or evil in the soil of his life—not this small span of life necessarily. There is a connecting link with other existences. Our life did not begin with this physical body. Our whole evolution and freedom do not depend upon these few short years of living. Our book of destiny will never be complete nor shall we be able to read one complete line of it, until we connect the present existence with what has gone before. Then we shall see even more fully than we do now that if a man thinks kind thoughts and performs kind acts, if his intentions are pure, happiness will follow him like a shadow and it will never

leave him. You may deny this. You may say that the good suffer; they are often cheated and robbed and they meet with calamity. That is true, but they never suffer as do the ignorant. Whatever we earn by our own merit, that no one can take from us. We see this at every turn. A noble soul may be deprived of many of the blessings of this material existence. His enemies may torment him, but they cannot touch what is his birthright, they cannot rob him of his peace. A man who commits a crime through brooding evil thought, tries to escape from pain but he cannot. Where do we feel pain most? In the mind. We cannot do something harmful to another without suffering. That is the reason the Bible teaches—love thy neighbor as thyself. Why should one love one's neighbor as one's self? In the Vedic Upanishad the wise sage tells his disciple: My son, verily thou art thine own neighbor. From the point of view of soul we cannot rob some one without robbing ourselves. We rob our own dignity, we rob our own peace, we rob the finer things in our life. We cannot harm some one without harming ourselves. We cannot cheat the greater law, and a wise person not only never wants to evade the law, he wishes to benefit by it.

Thought is a power—a power for good and a power for evil. If we do not direct the mind through the proper channels of kindness, wisdom, love and all things that are constructive, it will find other avenues that will be perhaps destructive. Here is our responsibility. You may say everything is done through Divine Will, why should we then have responsibility? If we have reached that point of surrender and vision where we can perceive the Divine Will, then we are rid of responsibility; but there are very few of us who can say sincerely that we abide by the Divine Will, that we have no individual desires. So long as we have desires, so long as we have ambition, so long as we have the play of any

of these emotions, we must direct them through the right channels.

Every intelligent human being knows the law of life: As a man thinks, so is he. It is the supreme secret. To possess the knowledge of it gives the greatest power. But if we know it only superficially it does not benefit us. How few there are who are able to apply it! We all know that if we surround ourselves with thoughts of love and purity, they safeguard us, they build a tremendous barricade of protection around us, and yet in spite of our mental grasp of this, when some one has offended us or injured us, we allow these incidents to absorb all our thoughts. If we let our mind be filled with evil thoughts and sordid feelings, if we allow it to be clouded by envy, jealousy and anger, can we expect to find peace? The more we brood, the more our mind becomes colored with our brooding. It gradually poisons our whole being. Yet the same mind which feels itself incapable of anything good or lofty can become potent, victorious, its own liberator. Sometimes we become hypnotized by the idea of weakness and inability. No one can help us so long as we allow ourselves to remain under that influence. Its antidote is to have the counteracting idea—I am strong. Even though we cannot say it with conviction, if we are in earnest, if our spirit is desirous of throwing off the weakness, we shall find that gradually like the sun it will dispell all the dark clouds and bring us strength. Sometimes this is called affirmation. It creates an opportunity for the mind to make its contact with that which is all-powerful. Not by dwelling on weakness do we get rid of weakness. It is rather by dwelling on strength that we become strong. It is by dwelling on light that we conquer darkness; it is by dwelling on wisdom that we overcome ignorance.

No one can give us salvation. You may say, it is not so.

If we follow religion we shall be saved. But following religion means living religion. It is not by professing creeds or attaching importance to rituals that we become spiritual. It is when our life and our belief correspond, when there is no inconsistency—mind and mouth working together, thought and action running harmoniously. That is the whole psychology of existence. To-day, particularly in America, people have become interested in what they call Practical Psychology. It is indeed most practical; but do not for a moment think that true psychology of thought can be lowered to the plane of petty desires, that it can be used to satisfy the longing for a new hat or a new coat, or that by sitting down and concentrating one can acquire prosperity or some such small end. No! True psychology brings an expanded consciousness. We testify to our faith by our actions, by our very being. You may ask, are we capable of this? We are as capable of it as of something small and insignificant. The same amount of energy we expend in idle talk, in imagining things which never come to a focus, if concentrated and directed, would give us power to accomplish mighty things.

Every thought becomes a reality—kind thoughts and unkind thoughts. This should not carry with it any idea of doom even to the selfish and ignorant. We can redeem ourselves no matter where we stand or how we stand. We can remould our life to a great extent. Some may think it is an egotistic notion, that a man should take the responsibility of moulding his life. If he thinks that he alone does it, if he does not take account of a higher Power, it will be egotistic and he is bound to fail. But he cannot be egotistic if his motive is pure, if his heart is kind, if he has a sense of consecration. These feelings will lead him to the higher Ideal.

Self-dejection is the greatest enemy we can possibly have.

Man should remember that he has the spark of Divinity within himself. Whatever may be his philosophy or religion makes no difference. There is no one who does not have a faith, call it what he will. Let him cling to that; let him fasten his whole being to that and he will be inspired to redeem himself. The power of inspiration is within us and we must awaken it. The man who is hungry and thirsty for happiness will find it if he creates a foundation of pure thoughts and noble ideals. If we have that foundation within us, even though we are condemned and ridiculed by the whole world, we shall walk in safety. If we have it not, the whole world may befriend us and yet we shall feel unhappy. Pain follows him who acts with selfish purpose. Happiness follows him who acts with pure motive. These two eternal principles are ever before us, simple, direct, scientific, logical and true.

We need people of character more than men of action. It is very dangerous to enter into this arena of activity without meditative thought. A man plunges into the field of action without co-ordinated thought, and what is the result? He does things which have to be undone. This means waste and waste means not only loss of time and energy, but moral dejection. Therefore we must think first, deep down within our own being, and to our thought add spiritual reflection. There is no human being so depraved that he cannot look up to his Creator. This process of keeping our channel clear and free so that we may have unbroken access to the Highest is the sum and substance of religion. All other things are side issues.

Love brings love. Kindness brings kind feelings. If we are capable of sending love from our hearts, should we not then gather good results from the tree of life? If we approach some one with kindness and meet with no response,

let us not be discouraged or faint-hearted. There is no haste in the spiritual world. Eternity is before us and behind us and all about us. When our heart is thus pregnant with lofty thoughts we shall reap the rich fruition of true spiritual blessing.

HOLY ART THOU

Hermes Trismegistus

Holy art Thou, O God, the universal Father.

Holy art Thou, O God, whose Will perfects itself by means of its own powers.

Holy art Thou, O God, who willeth to be known and art known by Thine own.

Holy art Thou, who didst by Word make to consist the things that are.

Holy art Thou, of whom all-nature hath been made an image.

Holy art Thou, whose form nature hath never made.

Holy art Thou, more powerful than all power.

Holy art Thou, transcending all pre-eminence.

Holy Thou art, Thou better than all praise.

Accept my reason's offerings pure, from soul and heart for aye stretched up to Thee, O Thou unutterable, unspeakable, whose Name naught but the silence can express.

Give ear to me who pray that I may ne'er of Knowledge fail, which is our common being's nature; and fill me with Thy power, and with this grace of Thine, that I may give the Light to those in ignorance of the race, my brethren, and Thy sons.

For this cause I believe, and I bear witness; I go to Life and Light. Blessed art Thou, O Father. Thy man would holy be as Thou art holy, e'en as Thou gavest him Thy full authority to be.

UTILITY OF THOUGHT

From Marcus Aurelius Antoninus

Do not waste the remainder of thy life in thoughts about others, when thou dost not refer thy thoughts to some object of common utility. For thou losest the opportunity of doing something else when thou hast such thoughts as these,—What is such a person doing, and why, and what is he saying, and what is he thinking of, and what is he contriving, and whatever else of the kind makes us wander away from the observation of our own ruling power. We ought then to check in the series of our thoughts everything that is without a purpose and useless, but most of all the over-curious feeling and the malignant; and a man should use himself to think of those things only about which if one should suddenly ask, What hast thou now in thy thoughts? with perfect openness thou mightest immediately answer, this or that; so that from thy words it should be plain that everything in thee is simple and benevolent, and such as befits a social animal, and one that cares not for thoughts about pleasure or sensual enjoyments at all, nor has any rivalry or envy and suspicion, or anything else for which thou wouldst blush if thou shouldst say that thou hadst it in thy mind.

The man who is such, and no longer delays being among the number of the best, is like a priest and minister of the gods, using too the deity which is planted within him, which makes the man uncontaminated by pleasure, unharmed by any pain, untouched by any insult, feeling no wrong, a fighter in the noblest fight, one who cannot be overpowered by any passion, dyed deep with justice, accepting with all his soul everything which happens and is assigned to him as his portion; and not often, nor yet without great necessity and for the general interest, imagining what another says, or does, or thinks. For it is only what belongs to himself that he

makes the matter of his activity; and he constantly thinks of that which is allotted to himself out of the sum total of things, and he makes his own acts fair, and he is persuaded that his own portion is good. For the lot which is assigned to each man is carried along with him and carries him along with it. And he remembers also that every rational animal is his kinsman, and that to care for all men is according to man's nature; and a man should hold on to the opinion not of all, but of those only who confessedly live according to nature. But as to those who live not so, he always bears in mind what kind of men they are both at home and from home, both by night and by day, and what they are, and with what men they live an impure life. Accordingly, he does not value at all the praise which comes from such men, since they are not even satisfied with themselves.

O SOUL OF MINE

By Jacopone da Todi

O Soul of mine, how noble wert thou made!
Be not afraid,
Nor deem thy nature low;
Thou art not so,
High is thy birth, and lordly thine estate.

So high and in such honour wert thou born,
Thy nature's morn
Awaked in gentlehood.
Ponder the grace and beauty thou hast worn,
So shalt thou scorn all else with fortitude.
Naught here is good,—no creature fair enough;
No earthly stuff deserves thy heart's desire;
God is thy Sire,
To Him be consecrate.

MATTER, MIND AND SELF

Brahmavadin

We have now seen that Sankara, in his analysis of matter and mind, arrives at a principle of unity, unknown and unknowable, which he calls *Sat* and *Chit,* from the objective and subjective standpoints respectively. These are nothing but "the matter in itself" and "the mind in itself" of some of our modern metaphysicians. For instance, both Kant and Hamilton, though from methods different from those of Sankara, have arrived at conclusions exactly the same. Hamilton says that the secondary properties of matter are only the mental effects produced by the action of certain modifications of the primary on the organism, whereas the primary qualities are perceived as they are in bodies. Still, what we know of matter is only through its primary qualities; and the matter in itself apart from the primary qualities remains unknown and unknowable. In the same way he seems to think that what we know of mind is only its modifications as made known to us through consciousness. But what it is in itself, apart from those modifications, we do not and cannot know. But Sankara goes further and says that there are no two distinct entities as "matter in itself" and "mind in itself." They are one and the same substance or being, which manifests itself as the knower with all his faculties on the one hand, and the known as limited by attributes on the other.

The doctrine of Herbert Spencer, that the Absolute is unknown and unknowable, and that what we know is only phenomenal, approaches more nearly the conclusion of Sankara than that of any other modern agnostic philosopher. Spencer regards both mind and matter as parallel manifestations of the Absolute; rather he takes matter as the primary manifestation, and mind only as a secondary one, as it always

implies material conditions to manifest its activities. But Sankara, consistently with his Absolute Idealism, looks upon mind as the primary manifestation and matter as only a mode of mind.

The analysis of the totality of existences, according to Sankara, thus leads us to two factors, mutually contrasted by permanence and change; the permanent Reality or God, that underlies all phenomena on the one hand, and the changing universe of phenomena on the other. The two co-exist and cannot be confounded one with the other. God is the one unchanging universal plane in which the whole drama of the cosmic process is enacted. The one is not the cause of the other; for the Absolute Being unchangeable can in no way be connected with an effect which implies change. Nor can we regard them as two independent realities which constitute the totality of things, because the one is Absolute, the other relative; the one is Infinite, the other finite. The European Pantheists agree with the school of Sankara that God is the only substance, the only reality, that underlies the changing appearances of all finite things and persons. But by making God co-substantial and co-extensive with the finite universe they fall into the absurdity of supposing that the Absolute Reality is at once finite and infinite, the substance and the mode, undifferentiated and determined in necessary forms. This error is removed by Sankara and his school by their doctrine of *Maya,* according to which the universal process is no reality but an illusion superimposed on the absolute and infinite existence by the thinker (the ego) who is himself a fictitious self-limitation of the Absolute.

This principle of illusion is supposed to be at the very root of our knowledge of things, and cannot, therefore, be demonstrated by any process of perception or logical inference, in both of which it is involved. But its existence can be

proved by sort of analogical reasoning from an illusory experience in perception. We sometimes mistake, in our perceptive experience, a rope for a serpent; mother of pearl for silver. Just in the same way it is, according to this monism, that we superimpose our mental creations on the Absolute and call them phenomena. Therefore, man's highest goal, or what is called the attainment of liberation (*Moksha*), involves the complete realization of the illusory nature of the cosmos, and the absolute unity behind all phenomena in *Brahman*. To this end he must, by a sort of ecstatic trance, rid himself of all the illusory appearances of the world; nay, even of his thought emotions and volitions. He must keep his mind completely insensible to all external impressions. All mental modifications, whether determined from within or without, ought to be avoided; so that the self may abide in its essential nature of absolute unity.

This is what the monistic philosophers call absorption into God-head, or the merging of the individual in the universal soul. To this state we approach every day in deep sleep. In sleep, the self exists in its real unity, untrammeled by the illusory phenomena of both internal and external experiences. The only difference between this and the state of *Kaivalya* (abiding in the self) is that, in sleep, illusion exists in a potential condition and takes us back to the world of phenomena on waking; whereas, in the other, the illusion becomes completely extinct, and the self is left in its essential state of absolute unity, or the all in all.

Heed not distressing thoughts when they rise ever so strongly in thee; nay, though they have entered thee, fear them not, but be still awhile, not believing in the power which thou feelest they have over thee, and it will fall on a sudden.

—*I. Penington.*

KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE OF TRUTH

By Swami Vivekananda

The might of the universe is within you. "Why weepest thou, my friend? There is neither birth nor death for thee. Why weepest thou? There is no disease nor misery for thee, but thou art like the infinite sky; clouds of various colors come over it, play for a moment, then vanish. But the sky is ever the same eternal blue." Why do we see wickedness? There was a stump of a tree, and in the dark, a thief came that way and said, "That is a policeman." A young man waiting for his beloved saw it and thought that it was his sweetheart. A child who had been told ghost stories took it for a ghost and began to shriek. But all the time it was the stump of a tree. We see the world as we are. Suppose there is a baby in a room with a bag of gold on the table and a thief comes and steals the gold. Would the baby know it was stolen? That which we have inside, we see outside. The baby has no thief inside and sees no thief outside. So with all knowledge.

Do not talk of the wickedness of the world and all its sins. Weep that you are bound to see wickedness yet. Weep that you are bound to see sin everywhere, and if you want to help the world do not condemn it. Do not weaken it more. For what is sin and what is misery, and what are all these but the results of weakness? The world is made weaker and weaker every day by such teachings. Men are taught from childhood that they are weak and sinners. Teach them that they are all glorious children of immortality, even those who are the weakest in manifestation. Let positive, strong, helpful thought enter into their brains from very childhood. Lay yourselves open to these thoughts and not to weakening and paralyzing ones. Say to your minds "I am He, I am He." Let it ring day and night in your minds like a song,

and at the point of death declare: "I am He." That is the Truth; the infinite strength of the world is yours. Drive out the superstition that has covered your minds. Let us be brave. Know the Truth and practise the Truth. The goal may be distant, but awake, arise, and stop not till the goal is reached.

HOLY HUMILITY

From "The Little Flowers of St. Francis"

Whenas Saint Francis on a time abode in the House of Porziuncula with Brother Masseo of Marignano, a man of much sanctity, discretion and grace in speaking of God, for the which cause Saint Francis loved him much: one day Saint Francis returning from the wood and from his prayers, and being at the entrance to the wood, the said Brother Masseo desired to make proof of his humility, and stood over against him, and as though mocking said: "Why after thee? why after thee? why after thee?" Replied Saint Francis: "What is this thou wouldst say?" Quoth Brother Masseo: "I say, why doth all the world come after thee, and why is it seen that all men long to see thee, and hear thee, and obey thee? Thou art not a man comely of form, thou art not of much wisdom, thou art not noble of birth: whence comes it then that it is after thee that the whole world doth run?"

Hearing this Saint Francis, all overjoyed in spirit, lifting up his face unto heaven, stood for a great while with his mind uplifted in God; anon returning to himself again, he knelt him down and rendered thanks and praises unto God; and then with great fervour of spirit turned him to Brother Masseo and said: "Wilt thou know why after me? wilt thou know why after me? wilt thou know why after me, that the whole world doth run? This cometh unto me from the eyes of the most high God, which behold at all time the evil and

the good: for those most holy eyes have seen among sinners none more vile, none more lacking, no greater sinner than am I: wherefore to do this marvellous work the which He purposeth to do, He hath not found upon the earth a creature more vile, and therefore hath He chosen me to confound the nobleness and the greatness and the strength and the beauty and wisdom of the world: to the intent that men may know that all virtue and all goodness come from Him, and not from the creature, and that no man may glory in himself; but whoso will glory, may glory in the Lord, unto whom is honour and glory for ever and ever."

Then Brother Masseo, at so humble a reply uttered with so great fervour, was afraid, and knew of a surety that Saint Francis was rooted and grounded in humility.

You can control nothing but your own mind. Even your two-year old babe may defy you by the instinctive force of its personality. But your own mind you can control. Your own mind is a sacred enclosure into which nothing harmful can enter except by your permission. Your own mind has the power to transmute every external phenomenon to its own purposes. If happiness arises from cheerfulness, kindliness, and rectitude (and who will deny it?), what possible combination of circumstances is going to make you unhappy so long as the machine remains in order? . . . "Look within." "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." "Oh, yes! you protest. "All that's old. Epictetus said that. Christ said that." They did. I admit it readily. But if you were ruffled this morning because your motor-omnibus broke down, and you had to take a cab, then so far as you are concerned these great teachers lived in vain. . . . And all because you have a sort of notion that a saying said two thousand years ago cannot be practical.—*Arnold Bennett.*

ANANDA ASHRAMA

In the early days of California, the Franciscan Missions which stretch like a chain along El Camino Real (The King's Highway) from San Diego in the south to Sonoma in the north, were not as they are now for the most part,—abandoned, silent and in ruins; they were centres of life and light and spiritual brightness. Father Junipero Serra, their saintly founder and head, placed them so that they were apart, each from the other, but one day's journey on foot, in order that those who travelled up and down the coast might never lack shelter at night.

Now it is said that Father Serra had in his mind a Mission which was never built, and this Mission, according to John Stephen McGroarty, famous modern chronicler of California and its Missions, was to have been constructed somewhere between San Gabriel and San Fernando. He has taken upon himself the building of this Mission and his choice of location has fallen upon the beautiful valley which holds in its cup the villages of La Crescenta, Sunland and Tujunga. But perhaps Father Junipero's dream has already found its embodiment. In the Sierra Madre mountains in the Valley of La Crescenta, Ananda Ashrama, dedicated to the Universal Spirit and founded "for the good of many and the happiness of many," is bringing to the California of to-day, the pure faith, the sense of surrender to God, the heroism and the indomitable spirit of consecration which flamed in the hearts of those ancient Franciscans. Why should it not be so? The vision of the holy is never lost and God cares nothing for creed or form.

Already in six months the benign influence of the Ashrama is being felt far and wide. To the casual observer, the location seems remote, yet during Swami Paramananda's visits there in the spring and in the late summer, Sunday after

Sunday motors climbed the long grade and people even walked in order to hear the Swami give his supreme message out under the open sky. The most distinguished and talented came and came again. And as a matter of fact Ananda Ashrama is remote from the world only in the spiritual sense. It is within less than an hour's ride of Pasadena, Glendale and Los Angeles.

Meanwhile the work of development goes quietly on. New roads have been built, opening up hitherto inaccessible parts of the property. Cabins have been constructed to house the ever-growing band of workers. Some years ago, a little boy with great love in his heart declared, "Swami, if ever I get rich I'll buy you a goat." That same little boy, now fifteen years of age, is a worker at the Ashrama and he brought with him nine goats, two cows, a donkey, and other live stock. Real devotion makes our words come true. As the rainy season approaches, out-of-door services may have to be abandoned, so already plans are being drawn for library and recreation-hall large enough to seat two or three hundred people, while the present building is to be enlarged for dwelling purposes. Later the main Temple will be built. There is to be an architectural committee composed of three of the most distinguished architects of California, each of whom is giving his skill and his time as an offering to the Ashrama. The young fruit trees on the place have yielded abundantly, large, finely flavored peaches, apricots, pears, walnuts. In truth the Ashrama is a blessed spot and must inevitably become a place of pilgrimage for the thousands who flock to California from all over the world.

The Swami who is now at the Boston Centre expects to return to the Ashrama in November. During his absence there will be no public Services, but the members of the Ashrama will be at home to visitors Sunday and Thursday afternoons.

REPORT

Swami Paramananda remained in Boston through the first two Sundays in July when he returned once more to Ananda Ashrama and the growing activities of the new work. During his absence the Sunday Services were ably conducted, as before, by Miss K. F. Sherwood. To her remarkably sympathetic understanding of the many vital world questions of our time, she brings her experience of fifteen years of devoted and active service in the work. This enables her to combine most constructively the ideals of the East and the West. The fundamental theme of the readings and addresses given was the essential and ever manifesting oneness of all apparent variety. Through the faithful co-operation and attendance of many, the summer proved fruitful and satisfactory.

The regular Tuesday night class was carried on as a study group under the charge of Miss Philadelpheus. Two evenings were devoted to the study of the life of Sri Ramakrishna —that humble God-intoxicated saint of modern India to whose surpassing love is due the new tide of divine mercy which is sweeping away the barriers of prejudice and making the West and the East common inheritors of the Truth which makes man free. Two more evenings were taken up with the life of the most universal and sublime of Christian saints— the Little Poor Man of Assisi. Besides these the writings of Swami Vivekananda and Swami Paramananda were chiefly studied as guides to the practical application of the teaching of Vedanta to daily life.

At the close of September the Boston Centre rejoiced once more in welcoming the return of its beloved founder and leader. With the first Sunday in October the Swami resumed his usual charge of the work. His long and frequent absences since the opening of the California work have only deepened in the hearts of many the appreciation of his message.

MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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

By Swami Paramananda

The secret of right action is in reality no secret at all. It does not lie in any formula which we repeat. There is no magic by means of which we can follow the path of idleness and yet make our life productive. No! The secret lies in our own motives, in our power of application. It is not the strong physical vehicle which makes the productive human being; it is skillfulness in action, knowing how to adjust ourselves quickly, how to perform a task with the least expenditure of energy. This is what gives immediate success. There are some people who talk little and accomplish more, while others talk much and accomplish nothing. Though a man may speak very glibly on religion, on the great ideals of love, service and brotherhood, that does not make him religious. But if he is "a doer of the law" as Christ said, even in a small measure; if he knows how to direct his life and its forces, he will not only be religious, he will be a better, stronger human being and his influence will reach others. This is what I call practical religion,—a religion productive of good, of men and women of an inspiring type,—and not the morbid religion which merely clings to dogma. Not that!

One of the most interesting studies in life is to note how our false concept can distort even a holy example so that it

no longer bears any resemblance to the original idea. For instance, the average man looks upon the world of religion as entirely apart from active life. He thinks that in order to become religious one must abandon worldly activities and assume a mournful repentant attitude. This is not a true concept of religion. What good will even the loftiest ideal do us or our fellow-men if we do not live it and bring it to fruition? Unless it gives us something definite and dynamic it might just as well not exist for us. The whole purpose of religion and philosophy is to give us that which is inspiring, elevating and constructive. Merely going to church or professing a creed, whether it be Christianity or Buddhism, or any other "ism," is not active religion. It is not practical religion. It is a mockery. It is degradation for the soul of the individual and for the soul of the race. It can only produce a lot of hypocrites and fanatics.

True religion we carry into our outer activities; we make it alive, alert and productive. If a person does nothing and gives nothing for the benefit of his fellows, how do we know he is religious? Merely upholding a theory is nothing. If we have high ideals we must express them in our lives. This problem confronts us all. Whether we are laymen or in religious life makes no difference whatsoever. We are living souls in contact with other souls; we have to be active. These are the ideals of Karma Yoga, the great Indian system of right action. It proclaims that religion is not merely for the man who is inactive. On the contrary it holds that the man who is active and energetic, who is constantly doing something in the world has just as much right to enter the Kingdom of Heaven as the hermit without duties and without obligations. It pays great tribute to the people who live in the world and carry their ideal intact. They are the heroes.

There is no one who can claim that he does not need to

take part in active life. Whether we spend our days at home or go out daily, we must be doing something for our self-preservation. A man who does nothing, his mind and his physical vehicle quickly deteriorate. He becomes dead although carrying on an existence. One who is so convinced of his own principle that he is indifferent to what others say, and who is willing to give himself to his task, that man will accomplish his purpose. Great artists know this, also scientists,—though perhaps unconsciously. They plunge into their work. There are moments when we forget our environment, forget everything but the one thing that we are doing, and those are the supreme moments of our life. They make it possible for us to attain success.

How does the average person work? He works with a sense of weight and drudgery or else with feverish intensity. Either will break him. One who works with indifference, how can he accomplish anything? His heart is not in it. His mind, his soul, his energies are all divided. If our heart is not in our task we shall resemble laborers who have no real interest in what they are doing; they only pretend. If they break things they do not care; they merely want their wage. Such work can never bring satisfaction to us or to any one and we learn nothing from it. When the aim is low it can only produce something very small and unsatisfying. On the other hand, a person who is driven by the fever of a selfish motive, who works with nervous excitement, how long will he last? Sooner or later he will break his machine.

What we need is the understanding spirit—the love element. By that I mean, we must learn to love the task we are performing. Any machine which does not receive sufficient lubrication will break because of friction very quickly, and it is the element of understanding, of love, which keeps our human machine in running order. No one can do his work

properly unless he has feeling. A person with cut and dried attitude may try to do his duty, but he will not be really productive. Many charitable organizations are like that. They are excellent institutions but they seem to be untouched by human feelings. It is not intended for human beings to destroy the finer part of their life and become like machines. We may direct a machine, we may use it, but we must have intelligence and feeling in abundance. It is not an arduous task to put these ideas and ideals into practice. What we now do with small, selfish mind we can do just as well with idealistic motive. It will refresh us. Instead of feeling crushed and broken down by our work, we shall be filled with energy, we shall know greater inspiration.

We have spoken of master artists, musicians and scientists, how through concentration and one-pointed love for their art, they attain their ideal. There is a point here. An ordinary person when he undertakes anything at once begins to think of the money he is going to get out of it, or some other return. It stands to reason that we cannot fill our mind with these calculations and imaginings and not weaken it for the task in hand. The logic is plain. Instead of doing his work with the wholeness of his being, he is dividing himself into many parts, is thinking of the non-essentials. Naturally his return will be very small. He has scattered his forces thereby wasting his time. Of course work done in this way, half-heartedly, with distracted mind, must be done badly and often has to be taken apart and done over again. Poor laborers turn out this sort of work, or sometimes shrewd people who think it will pass unnoticed. But there are others more shrewd and they find it out. This not only means lost labor, but it has a very demoralizing effect upon the laborer.

Action and reaction are constantly taking place in this world. No one can escape them. We may declare that we

are going to have in our life only happiness and beauty, that we will have riches and not poverty. But the pairs of opposites are always playing. We cannot have happiness without unhappiness. We cannot have light without darkness. What is the remedy? It is given in the Gita: "To work alone thou hast the right, but never to the fruits thereof." The man who is a slave to his passions, who is bound by small ideas of gain and loss, must suffer from reaction. Suppose we scheme and plan and then something goes wrong? We not only lose that which we have set our heart upon, but we no longer have the will or inclination to try again. The man of discerning mind, however, who understands the secret and is not attached to results, rises above a failure. He does better the next time and still better, till he finally succeeds. He gives no thought to the fruit. The fruit will come when we are deserving of it, and we make ourselves deserving by learning to throw our entire being into our acts. This is what makes us dynamic. Let the fruit alone for the time being. Do not be afraid that some one else will take it from you. No one can. What is your rightful heritage will be yours.

If it is a fact that you do not want to lose anything, physically, mentally, morally or spiritually, then do not play the losing game. Never think anything too small to do. The truly great do not discriminate between big tasks and little. Their keenness, their power of appreciation, their desire to do what they do well, makes them forget that a task is little. This is the true sign of greatness. Men of vision, of genius, never feel that any work is beneath them. There is nothing beneath us and nothing beyond us. That should be our attitude. By doing small tasks whole-heartedly with concentration and skillfulness, we evolve within ourselves a power which will enable us later on to perform some great task which now seems like a mountain, inaccessible and unobtain-

able. It will melt away before us when we know the secret, and this power of single-hearted devotion is the secret; it is a gift, an inspiration, subtle and noiseless. We cannot force it upon another mind. Each soul must evolve it. That which we evolve within, saturates our whole life. We may not be regarded as religious by our community, but that makes no difference. We carry a sustaining influence. When an emergency arises we know how to adjust ourselves quickly. We possess the power to do our work, no matter what its nature, and come out unsullied and unspoiled.

So do not imagine that religion means retiring from the world. That idea brought corruption among the great schools of philosophy and religion in the past. Disciples began to think that the religious life meant simply withdrawing and meditating. Meditation is a very active thing,—that is, true meditation. It means first seeing clearly, and then putting into practice what we see. Love is an abstract ideal if we lay it to one side, but the act of loving service,—filling the heart with love and expressing it through our life,—brings a dynamic return. Think what a tremendous benefit it would be to the world if all men who believed in Christ and His message of love would practise that love even in small measure. What a mighty thing it would be if the five hundred million people who profess Buddhism would follow the wonderful example of their compassionate teacher Gautama Buddha and practise non-killing,—not merely refraining from partaking of animal food, but never harming another by a hateful thought, actually practising non-injury in thought, word and deed. What an atmosphere would be created in this world! And that is what the world needs to-day.

The superiority of any religion or philosophy lies in its practical life and not in its theories or dogmas. Religions are not high or low because of these. Each religion has one

supreme pinnacle, but it is when we touch practical living that we bring to fruition all that these great ideals stand for. We go on with a sense of consecration, a sense of high duty. The nature of our work does not matter. It is not high office that ennobles a man, but his motive. We need not boast because of any position that we hold, or feel degraded because of lack of opportunities. Opportunities will come when we have proved our fitness. That is the law of compensation. There is an Indian parable of a rich man who employed two servants,—one, a talker, clever and convincing; the other, not so skilled in words, but industrious, always busy in the orchard producing things. One day the rich man came to visit the garden. The clever, shrewd servant began to praise his master's person, flattering him, telling him how beautiful were his hands and face and everything pertaining to his personality. The other servant said nothing; he went and gathered all the things that he had produced through his silent labor and placed them before his master. With whom do you suppose the master was pleased?

It is not the talker, the noisy, aggressive type of human being who produces the most or who brings the greatest amount of blessing. It is the quiet, concentrated worker. Although he asks nothing, he receives everything. Whether we care for the fruit or not, it will come to us when we deserve it. Let us carry that in our mind, in our consciousness. It will ennoble us; it will heal our wounds when we are disappointed. We are placed here by a divine hand. To disconnect ourselves from that, to feel and think that we are isolated and unprotected, existing merely for our own self-gratification, is the greatest tragedy that can befall us. To restore ourselves to that One is to rid the soul of selfish desires.

Let us have a great ideal, an ideal that will startle us at

first with its greatness. That is the only kind of an ideal to hold before our mind's eye and to work for. Little by little our imperfections and difficulties will vanish and instead of regarding life as a drudgery, instead of shrinking from it, we shall bless this life which offers so many opportunities; we shall find joy even in the little daily tasks and wherever we are placed we shall know happiness.

WORK AND RENUNCIATION

Dialogue between Buddha and a Householder

Anathapindika said: I see that thou art the Buddha, the Blessed One, the Tathagata, and I wish to open to thee my whole mind. Having listened to my words advise me what I shall do. My life is full of work, and having acquired great wealth, I am surrounded with cares. Yet I enjoy my work, and apply myself to it with all diligence. Many people are in my employ and depend upon the success of my enterprises. My heart yearns to do what is right and to be a blessing unto my fellows. Let me then ask thee, must I give up my wealth, my home, and my business enterprises, and like thyself go into homelessness in order to attain the bliss of a religious life?

And the Buddha replied: The bliss of a religious life is attainable by every one who walks in the noble eightfold path. He that cleaves to wealth had better cast it away than allow his heart to be poisoned by it; but he who does not cleave to wealth, and possessing riches, uses them rightly, will be a blessing unto his fellows. It is not life and wealth and power that enslave men, but the cleaving to life and wealth and power. The bhikkhu who retires from the world in order to lead a life of leisure will have no gain, for a life of indolence is an abomination, and lack of energy is to be despised.

The Dharma of the Tathagata does not require a man to

go into homelessness or to resign the world, unless he feels called upon to do so; but the Dharma of the Tathagata requires every man to free himself from the illusion of self, to cleanse his heart, to give up his thirst for pleasure and lead a life of righteousness. And whatever men do, whether they remain in the world as artisans, merchants, and officers of the king, or retire from the world and devote themselves to a life of religious meditation, let them put their whole heart into their task; let them be diligent and energetic, and if they are like the lotus, which although it grows in the water, yet remains untouched by the water, if they struggle in life without cherishing envy or hatred, if they live in the world not a life of self but a life of truth, then surely joy, peace, and bliss will dwell in their minds.

As the strength of the tree shows itself in the fruit, so the true divine strength in a man is shown in his good works and virtues. "There is no faith without works." Otherwise prayer is but a mockery and an outward form, and does not attain to the city of God. . . . God is well-pleased with everything that is not false, or contrary to the love of God and man. If one should carry stones into the sea to please his brother, he would be as well-pleasing to God as a preacher in the pulpit. For what work does God need? Just as the flowers of the field do not envy each other, although one may be more beautiful and comely than another, but live happily with each other and enjoy each the other's virtue, so do we all please God, who dwell in His will alone—we are all in the same garden.—*Jacob Behmen.*

It is the business of a musician to harmonize every instrument, but of a well-educated man to adapt himself harmoniously to every fortune.—*Demophilus.*

THE GIFT OF THANKFULNESS

By Sister Daya

True thanksgiving comes as a sense of wonder in the soul, felt only in those moments of profound humility when the heart stripped bare of all self-conceit and pride of power is conscious both and at once, of its own barrenness and of the glory which floods it. Prosperity, health, wealth, good fortune so-called, these gifts for which man so often gives his all, for which he kneels and says: "My Lord I thank Thee," seem in the face of the one supreme gift of God Himself like tinsel or glass in the face of the sun. To him who has experienced this moment of wonder, that which the world is pleased to term success is but the pity of the gods. The outer life of such a one may be limited on every side by pain, by hunger, by want, by misunderstanding, even by torture, but when that supreme moment comes of complete emptiness and complete fulness, that yielding of the finite to the Infinite, then the very soul overflows with thanksgiving. Just as Mary sang her Magnificat, so the heart, the little handmaid of God, gives thanks for the ineffable Light that has entered it. This is the true thanksgiving,—an eternal flow of love and gratitude, untouched by time or circumstance.

Outer fortune comes with the dawn and goes with the sunset; its very blessings are doubtful. Even while the soul, crowned by fame and adorned by wealth, is revelling in what it feels to be God's bounty, the real gifts of God are withdrawn,—the gifts of thankfulness, humility and vision. Blind to its loss, the soul reaches out ever more and more for that which is destroying it. It gives perfunctory thanks (if it gives thanks at all), self-conscious and calculating; but at bottom it takes everything as its right and its gratitude for favors received is balanced by its curse when favors are withdrawn. The world recognizes all this theoretically but continues to pray for "fool's gold."

The quality of our desires proclaims our spiritual status. Give me wealth and authority, prays the fool; serenity and peace, the love of children, the power of giving and of loving, supplicates the noble soul; "Anything or nothing" so that it be Thy Will; grant me only Thy blessed Presence, is the prayer of the truly illumined.

There was once a holy man whose life was so pure that God desired to bestow upon him some signal blessing. An angel messenger was sent to him and offered him fame, but he refused; wealth, he refused; wisdom, love,—the rarest gifts of God to man; but still he refused. "Surely there is something which God may bestow that you yearn for?" said the angel. "Name your own gift." "Let Him grant me," replied the holy man, "to be able to bless others endlessly without ever knowing that I am blessing." "So be it" said the angel. From that moment wherever that holy man's shadow passed, new life arose. If it touched the sick, they became well; the miserable, they became happy; the restless, they became full of peace; but the man went on his way all unconscious. No taint of vanity or ego tortured his soul or marred the purity of his gift; it flowed untainted from the hand of God, blessing the heart through which it passed to other hearts. In time even the man's name was lost and he became known as "The Holy Shadow."

Many may exclaim; the only joy in blessing is to know that we bless. We fail to realize that the moment the sense of "I do" enters, the power to bless withdraws. That is why the holy ask only for God and there lies the difference between goodness and holiness. The good desire power to bestow and they pray for the means to help their fellow-men. The holy know that there is only One who gives, only One who blesses; so with utter surrender they pray, "I do nothing; Thou doest all things. Possess me so utterly that there is naught left in

me that is not Thee. Not I, not I, O Lord, but Thou!" With most of us it may take many lives for this prayer to be granted. Ancient encrustations must be broken from the heart before it can expand sufficiently to receive God. But though we may not yet be able to experience the supreme wonder of gratitude, we can strive to "cover all things with the Lord." There is nothing in the world too dense or dark for His Face to shine through.

If discontent frets us then it is well indeed,—being young souls,—to remember even our outer blessings: the mother hands that held us, the milk that nurtured us, the very protecting influences which have kept us alive and given us vision enough to yearn. Every humble, grateful thought will fill the heart with sweetness and melt a little of its hardness. Gratitude can become worship and in worship, self is forgotten. There is no life that cannot count its blessings when it views destiny in this light, when it sees one little human existence as only a short act in the great drama of the soul. So many lovely things come to us from the Infinite Mother! Let us be truly grateful to Her. Let gratitude flow from our heart spontaneously just as it flows from the heart of the true artist for the gifts of light and shade, form and color, for the flash of a sunset in the dusk, or the bend of a flower in the dawn. In fact the great artist comes very close to covering everything with the Lord. Does he not reveal God in that which to the unseeing is merely dark or even sordid?

It is not what we receive but what we are able to gain from what we receive that constitutes the gift of God. One small gift may bring to the surrendered heart an ocean of blessing while the selfish, contracted heart may not be able to receive even a drop of blessing from an ocean of giving. We covet what another has, we see him surrounded by all that we lack, all that we long for; but if we, lacking all that,

can be possessed of a humble heart and the power of gratitude and he, possessed of all that, lacks in thankfulness and humility, then he has nothing and we have everything. Ingratitude and a complaining heart shut the doors of our soul against "the unasked, unceasing Giver." Then though He gives, we cannot take. His bounty is never lacking, but our power to receive is lacking. By our attitude we turn away beautiful things which are at our very threshold. We would dictate what He should give and how and when and where. Then when He bestows something far more precious in His own way and time, we reject it.

In our greed we barely begin to enjoy one gift before we are crying for another. We would always pluck the fruit before it is ripe. If we would be content to wait; if we would concern ourselves with our own fitness or unfitness to receive rather than with God's slowness to give, then the fruit of our yearning would come at the moment of ripeness and we should be prepared to draw from it the essence of its sweetness. God knows best what we need and when we need it. Nothing is blessed save that which comes from His own hand at His own time. Our concern, anyway, should not be over what we desire to receive, but over that which we long to give. The final divine gift is the power to give, not this or that, but our whole being,—mind, heart, soul, body, to the Supreme. If we have to grieve, let it not be a petty grieving over some favor withheld, but let it be a noble grief over our inability to lay our all at God's feet. Let us transform our longing for things into yearning for God. One is desire and the other is true prayer. When He enters the heart there will be need for no words, for no teaching. He is the only Teacher, the only Lord, the One Revealer. "To the knower of God all the Vedas are as of little use as a small water tank in flood time." We must give all to receive all. "God says pay for

it and take it" writes Emerson. It is true. We pay for everything in some coin or other. If we take unrealities, then we must pay for them in the coin of realities; but if we take realities we pay for them in the coin of the unreal. We give the finite and receive the Infinite.

We can allow our minds to dwell on anything, on our lack or on our fulness; on what has been denied us or on what has been granted. How can we be unhappy or fretful if we are constantly thinking of God's Presence in our heart and His blessing in our life? He who has an ungrateful demanding heart will never know either satisfaction or peace, but will be driven whipped from one unfulfilled desire to another. Let us never take anything as our right. To what have we an especial right? Every little thing that comes to us, let it be to us as a divine surprise. Then will some passing kindness glow with the freshness of a young flower and God will smile at us from every pair of smiling eyes.

Shall we be grateful for pain? Swami Vivekananda once said that until we can receive pain as the kiss of the Divine Mother we shall never know Spirit in Its wholeness. There is a marvelous litany from the Sanskrit which gives the key to true thanksgiving. If we say it from our hearts, its great meaning will be unveiled little by little and we shall be overwhelmed with gratefulness for the enfolding presence of the Supreme. It sings the worship of the One Infinite Mother in and through all things,—in hunger, in thirst, in peace, in power, in faith, in compassion, in beauty and even in mistakes. Nothing is excluded and there is this final promise, "He who takes shelter at Thy Feet never meets with any danger but becomes the shelter for other souls."

Let us then take shelter at Her Feet. Let us have intimate and tender communion with Her in every event of life. She will reach us through a thousand channels, blessing, guid-

ing, disciplining. Let us offer every task, even the meanest and most trying, to Her, for it is She Who has given it to us to do. Above all, let us feel Her as real, Reality Itself, the close Companion of the heart, the Essence of all love, all comradeship, ever present,—a Being that we can feel and hear and see once we learn to use the senses of the soul. In the Infinite lies all power even the power to make Itself known to the finite. If we can even long to do this; if we even have the power of yearning for the divine Presence, then there will come to our hearts the marvel of thanksgiving and then although we may be cast into the streets, naked and starving, we shall feel ourselves richer than the richest king, blessed as only the little ones of God are blessed.

VIRTUE OF SINGLE INTENTION

By John Ruysbroeck

Mark how, in each of our works we shall go out to meet God and shall increase our likeness unto Him, and shall more nobly possess the fruitive unity. By every good work, how small soever it be, which is directed to God with love and with an upright and single intention, we earn a greater likeness, and eternal life in God. A single intention draws together the scattered powers into the unity of spirit and joins the spirit to God. A single intention is end, and beginning, and adornment, of all virtues. A single intention offers to God praise and honour and all virtues: and it pierces and passes through itself and all the heavens and all things, and finds God within the simple ground of its own being.

That intention is single which aims only at God and in all things only at their connection with God. The single intention casts out hypocrisy and duplicity, and a man must possess it and practise it in all his works above all other things; for it is this which keeps man in the presence of God, clear in under-

standing, diligent in virtue, and free from outward fear, both now and in the day of doom. Singleness of intention is the inward, enlightened, and loving tendency of the spirit; it is the foundation of all ghostliness; it includes in itself faith, hope and charity, for it trusts in God and is faithful to Him. It casts nature underfoot, it establishes peace, it drives out ghostly discontent, and preserves fullness of life in all the virtues. And it gives peace and hope and boldness toward God, both now and in the day of doom.

Thus we shall dwell in the unity of the spirit, in grace and in likeness; and shall always go out to meet God by means of the virtues, and offer up to Him with a simple intention our whole life and all our works; and thus in every work, and ever more and more, we shall increase our likeness. And thus we rise up out of the ground of our single intention and pass through ourselves and go out to meet God without means, and rest in Him in the abyss of simplicity: there we possess that heritage which has been prepared for us from all eternity. All ghostly life and all works of virtue consist in the divine likeness and in the singleness of intention; and all their supreme rest consists in simplicity above all likeness. Nevertheless, one spirit surpasses another in virtue and in likeness, and each possesses its own proper being in itself, according to the degree of its nobleness. And God suffices each one in particular, and each one, according to the measure of his love, seeks God in the ground of his spirit; both here and in eternity.

We cannot say that God is gracious because He feeds us, for every father is bound to supply his children with food; but when He keeps us from going astray and holds us back from temptations, then He is truly gracious.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

DESTINY NOT A MATTER OF CHANCE

Selection from the Mahabharata

Draupadi said: It seemeth, O Yudhishthira, that creatures derive the character of their lives from their acts of former lives. Amongst mobile creatures man differeth in this respect that he aspireth to affect his course of life in this and the other world by means of his acts. Impelled by the inspiration of a former life, all creatures visibly reap in this world the fruits of their acts. Indeed, all creatures live according to the inspiration of a former life. Cover thyself up with action as with an armour. There may or may not be even one in a thousand who truly knoweth the utility of acts or work. All the creatures in the world would have been exterminated, if there were no action.

Those persons in the world who believe in destiny, and those again who believe in chance, are both the worst among men. Those only that believe in the efficacy of acts are laudable. He that lieth at ease, without activity, believing in destiny alone, is soon destroyed like an unburnt earthen pot in water. So also he that believeth in chance, sitteth inactive though capable of activity, liveth not long, for his life is one of weakness and helplessness. If any person accidentally acquireth any wealth, it is said he deriveth it from chance, for no one's effort hath brought about the result. And, O son of Pritha, whatever of good fortune a person obtaineth in consequence of religious rites, that is called providential. The fruit, however, that person obtaineth by acting himself, and which is the direct result of those acts of his, is regarded as proof of personal ability.

Some say that everything is the result of chance; others that everything is the result of providential dispensation; others again, that this is not so, but that everything which is supposed to be the result of destiny or chance is the result of

the good or the bad acts of former lives. It is seen that possessions are obtained from chance as also from destiny. Something being from destiny and something from chance, something is obtained by exertion. That person that doth not act, certainly succumbeth, O Yudhishthira. The man of action in this world generally meeteth with success. The idle, however, never achieve success. If success becometh impossible, then should one seek to remove the difficulties that bar his way to success. And, O king, if a person worketh hard his debt to the gods is cancelled whether he achieveth success or not. The person that is idle and lieth at his length, is overcome by adversity; while he that is active and skillful is sure to reap success and enjoy prosperity.

The acts of others, it is seen, are crowned with success. It is probable that ours also will be successful. How can one know beforehand what the consequence will be? Having exerted thyself, thou wilt know what the fruit of thy exertions will be. The tiller tilleth with the plough the soil and soweth the seeds thereon. He then sitteth silent for the clouds after that are the cause that would help the seeds to grow into plants. If, however, the clouds favor him not, the tiller is absolved from all blame. He sayeth unto himself,—What others do I have done. If, notwithstanding this, I meet with failure, no blame can attach to me. Thinking so, he containeth himself and never indulgeth in self-reproach. O Bharata, no one should despair, saying,—Oh, I am acting, yet success is not mine! For there are two other causes, besides exertion, towards success. Whether there be success or failure, there should be no despair, for success in acts dependeth upon union of many circumstances. No man should ever disparage himself, for the man that disparageth himself never earneth high prosperity. O Bharata, success in this world is attainable on such conditions! In fact, success in the world is said to de-

pend on acting according to time and circumstances. My father formerly kept a learned Brahmana with him, he said all this unto my father. And, O Yudhishthira, while at intervals of business, I went out of the inner apartments and sat on the lap of my father, that learned Brahmana used to recite unto me these truths, sweetly consoling me therewith.

Thus ends the thirty-second section of the Arjunabhigamana of the Vana Parva.

OUR LADY'S TROUBADOUR

A Mary-Legend

Near Roc Amadour, in the country of France, lived one, Pierre de Syglar, a minstrel, who in all the world knew nothing but to play upon his viol. Being of courteous heart, he loved to pleasure gentle ladies with lai and rondel; but above all, his delight it was to laud and honour Her Who is Queen of all ladies,—Mary the Blessed.

There came a day, when to Her church at Roc Amadour, he went on pilgrimage in company with others. There were pilgrims young and pilgrims old, artisans, labourers, craftsmen skilled as well as those who ate the fruit of idleness. All went for the salvation of their souls and all went empty-handed, save only Pierre, who carried underneath his arm, his viol, for he loved it overdearly. Now in the shrine of Our Lady candles shone and votive offerings glistened. Pierre watched the pilgrims as they entered there and knelt before Her feet. Always they asked of Her somewhat, always they prayed, imploring this or that, and She smiled on them always from above the flickering lights. So gracious is Our Lady! Then Pierre timidly approached and made his orisons.

"Blessed Mother of God, dear Madame," so he prayed, "Meseemeth many come here to beg of Thee; but scarce one cometh here to give. Many supplicate Thy help and comfort;

yet who thinks to service Thee in aught? I am only a poor troubadour; but if Thou wilt deign to listen, my very great joy will be to entertain Thee with sweet music, to laud Thee with voice and viol as every loyal troubadour should laud the Mother of his King. Most sweet and holy Lady, I implore Thee to listen; for know, that if this be too poor for Thy acceptance, then in no wise can I serve Thee, since in the making of melody is my only skill."

Then very softly Pierre began to play in honour of his Queen. The sound at first was like an angel's breath, but ever as he drew his bow across the strings, the music swelled and throbbed until it flamed like to the seraphim and all the space within the silent church was filled with heavenly strains, while folk drew nigh to hear Our Lady's troubadour. Following this, he sang to Her (as was his wont with other ladies, and the which pleased them much) of battles and of heroes slain, of lovely fair in tears above their dead of happy chance and bright adventuring. And as the music died away he flung himself before Her smiling image and humbly asked of Her a gueridon,—one little boon; a candle from the many at Her feet, since ladies all reward their troubadours. Then, it is written, by angelic hands, Mary the Mother sent a candle down to rest upon Pierre's viol, the fairest and the tallest of them all, the one that burned immediately before Her.

But since the shrine was very rich in treasure, an abbey stood there keeping guard. A harsh and witless man he was, dry and barren of all favour. "Wicked enchanter!" cried he in a rage, "This is vile magic and a desecration!" And he did fall on Pierre and took from him the candle, placing it once more at Mary's feet. But the jongleur, nowise moved, silently thanking Her, took up his viol anew and sang with such high heart that the song staid not on earth at all but went beyond to where the angels are. For what cared he for wrath of man

now that he had Our Lady's grace? And Mary heard and once again She sent Her light and once again the sacristan with cruel hands did cudgel Pierre and take it from him. But when in quietness he went on playing with such high fervour that the tears did roll adown his cheeks and fall upon his viol, the third time Mary caused the candle to descend to Pierre, Her troubadour. Then did the bells ring out and all the countryside gave thanks for such a blessed miracle.

Upon the following day, Pierre came again and offered at Our Lady's shrine the candle wherewith She had paid his songs. Nor did he ever fail in his devotion. Through all his life, no matter whom his songs might praise, they silently were offered unto Her Who had so graciously received his gift, and always on that day at each new year, he laid before Her feet, within the chapel of Roc Amadour, a candle made of virgin wax and a full pound in weight. So may we all, with humble heart, offer unto God our only skill, nowise ashamed though it seem small and mean, for He will make it sweet and glorious.

When thou makest a dinner, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor the rich neighbors, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed. For they cannot recompense thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.—*Jesus the Christ.*

Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou offerest as oblation, whatever thou givest and the austerities thou performest, do that as an offering to Me. Thus thou shalt be freed from the bonds of action.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

NEW POEMS

By Swami Paramananda

Rendered into English from the Original Bengali.

I

Suddenly, meteor-like, there hath risen
a glory in the sky of my heart!
Blissful of form, effulgent, beneficent, gentle!
Embodiment of music and song,
Radiant with heavenly smile,
It hath awakened in my soul great memories.

Hail to Thee, Thou Goddess of Inspiration!
Holy art Thou! Forever adored!
Thou art the very foundation of life!
Whatsoever thought ariseth
In the kingdom of our mind,
Be it gross or be it subtle,
Never is it veiled from Thee.

Power have I none to worship Thee;
But if Thou, manifesting Thy compassion,
bestowest upon me Love,
Then, through the strength of Thy gift,
A current strong as the great river Sindhu
Will well up in the inmost recess of my heart.
Bathing in that sacred flow,
Men and women will be sanctified;
Drinking of its holy water,
Their mind and heart will be soothed and sated.

Thou Source of all might! Thou Soul of music!
If Thou wilt but enter my heart as Inspiration
Then will I be blessed, singing Thy eternal song.

II

Thy sleep is over,—arise, O India!
Thy dark night has ended at last, O Mother!
Listen with attentive ear!
The voice of new dawn is calling thee with sweet and gentle tone.
Doubt Her call no longer:
It is the Voice of God.
O India, open thine eyes and behold!
With what tender affection the rays of the morning sun kiss thy brow!
This, O Mother, is thy most auspicious day!
With uplifted heart and bowed head,
Receive the blessings the gods are bestowing upon thee.

COMMENTS ON BENGALI POEMS

By P. Guha Thakurta, B. A.

Here are two of Swami Paramananda's most recent poems, translated from original Bengali. Two most remarkable facts have to be remembered in connection with this new phase of Swami's poetry. He has written nothing in his own native language for these last seventeen years of his stay in America, and prior to his coming to the Occident he spent five years in Madras. Thus Swami has been practically out of touch with Bengali language and literature in original for this long time. All his literary work has hitherto been written in English, yet these new Bengali poems have come, as all poetry comes to him—spontaneous and free. It would be an impossible task to convey through these translations the poetic grandeur or the musical roll of the original verses, not to speak of their superb rhythmic variety and the characteristic tone-quality; yet we could at least render unto our readers the great and noble message which these poems inspire.

Most of these poems were written at his new Peace Re-

treat—Ananda Ashrama in California. Though each poem varies in theme and form, all of them suggest a new awakening in Swami's Oriental memories. Swami's new home in California is characteristically Oriental in atmosphere and surroundings. Maybe the silence that is in the open sky or the deep that is among the lovely hills has revived in the poet the grand images of the Orient. But to Swami, above all, his poetry is his soul's outpouring, expressing itself this time only in a different language and form.

REPORT

In India every autumn there is celebrated a very great religious Feast, known as The Feast of the Divine Mother or *Durga Puja.* At that time, according to popular belief, the Infinite Mother comes down for three days and dwells with Her children. It is an occasion of profound joy and feasting. Gifts are exchanged and on the final day even enemies embrace and forgive. In honor of this Feast, Swami Paramananda held an informal reception at the Vedanta Centre of Boston on the evening of October 19th. Every one entered into the spirit of the occasion so that a peculiarly happy and loving atmosphere was created. Miss Florence Colby gave very real pleasure with her cello. Mr. Das Gupta, organizer of the Union of East and West, spoke on the Indian village theatre. At Swami Paramananda's request Sister Daya gave a description of Ananda Ashrama, which the Swami crowned with a vivid account of incidents relative to its acquiring and upbuilding. The question of the evening was, who wrote the verses about King Tut? Miss Sherwood read them, but disclaimed authorship. Perhaps she dropped a hint when she said, "A little nonsense now and then is relished by the wisest men." This revealed to many Swami's humorous aspect and provided ample amusement. Before the guests went home they were given a folder upon which was printed the Poem "Divine Mother Heart," which appeared in the October Message. It was Swami's *Durga Puja* gift to his guests and gave in his own illumined words the spiritual import of the celebration.

MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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

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PURE SPIRIT



HEN the pure Spirit shines
who sees it?
Few, yea, only a very few!
For not many have the
seeing eye.
Many see the light of the sun, the moon,
the far-distant stars
And the light of the road-side lamp;
But only the pure heart with the eye of
love
Can see the light that shineth from pure
Spirit.

SELFLESS-HEART



E WHO love and serve
without thought of
self, are blessed.
Ye who give your all and
seek no gain,
Are blessed again and evermore.
For what shrine more holy than the self-
less heart?
What offering richer than the gift that
asketh no return?

—*Swami Paramananda.*

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

No decrying of other sects—no depreciation of others without cause, but on the contrary a rendering of honour to other sects for whatever cause honour is due. By so doing, both one's own sect will be helped forward, and other sects benefitted. By acting otherwise, one's own sect will be destroyed in injuring others.—*Rock Inscriptions of Asoka.*

The very thing which now is called the Christian religion existed among the ancients, nor was it absent in the beginning of the human race before Christ came into the flesh, since when the true religion which already existed, began to be called Christian.—*St. Augustine.*

By diverse creeds we worship, thou and I:
The ear of One alone receives our prayer.
Each turns his face in longing toward the sky
To see his secret soul reflected there.

—*Popular Hindu Saying.*

He that is praised is in fact only One. In this respect all religions are only one religion. Because all praises are directed towards God's Light, these various forms and figures are borrowed from it.—*Jalalud-Din-Rumi.*

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.—*Jesus the Christ.*

With pure heart and fulness of love, I will do towards others what I do for myself.—*Teachings of Buddha.*

O Arjuna, he who looks upon pleasure and pain everywhere with the same regard as when it is applied to himself, that Yogi is highly esteemed.—*Sri Krishna.*

Those who worship the Merciful One are they who walk on the earth gently, and who, when fools speak to them, say "Peace."—*Koran.*

Love thy neighbor and suffer the little offences he may give thee.—*Thales of Miletus.*

The awakened man goes not on revenge, but rewards with kindness the very being who has injured him, as the sandal tree scents the axe of the woodman who fells it.

—*Sayings of Buddha.*

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.—*Jesus the Christ.*

The light which resides in the sun, in the moon, in fire, and which illumines the whole world, know that light to be Mine.—*Sri Krishna.*

All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life and the life was the light of men.—*St. John.*

I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

—*Jesus the Christ.*

I am Yesterday, To-day and To-morrow, for I am born again and again; mine is the unseen Force which createth the gods and giveth food to those in the Tuat.

—*Egyptian Book of the Dead.*

O Arjuna, I am the Self existing in the heart of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle and also the end of beings.—*Sri Krishna.*

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.—*Revelation.*

That Purusha (Spirit), of the size of a thumb, is like a light without smoke, lord of the past and the future. He is the same to-day and to-morrow.—*Katha-Upanishad.*

SONG OF THE SOUL

By Swami Paramananda

(Address delivered on Christmas Eve, 1922)

There are moments when the soul sings and these are very precious moments. The soul only sings when it has found its real joy. The significance of Christmas or of similar Feasts, in all countries and among all nations, is the song of the soul, when the Spirit rejoices, when it sings aloud with a sense of triumph. Why? Because in the world of gloom and despair it suddenly realizes its divine heritage,—a spark, a light comes from the darkness, revealing all things, redeeming all things and making us feel our own true worth. That, to me, is the real meaning of Christmas, the real meaning of the birth of any great Saviour: it is to give man a new sense of his own spiritual birth.

We never understand the true life of a Saviour or of any saint or holy personage until we enter into that spirit, and it is not outer feasting that enables us to do so, or even a great show of charity. In cultivating the true Christmas spirit, more is needed than mere outer ostentation. To make it complete, to make it real, there must be the inner awakening. Christmas stands for more than just the birth of the physical Christ-child. It symbolizes the Christ Spirit born anew in our hearts,—the love, the light, the redeeming power, transcending all material bondage. When we experience that, or when we even try to experience it through similar thoughts, feelings and ideas, then we taste bliss, then our soul truly sings. That is the song which brings real joy.

At first perhaps, we are unable to grasp the import of this, but the meaning is that wherever there is infinite Bliss, there is no room for heaviness, heartache or any unhappiness, and whenever that spirit is born in our midst, is manifested in our midst, it removes all sorrow. Then the sorrowing world

can truly smile, not with any sense of fickleness, but with a sense of security, of peace. However much a man may try to be fearless, when he is in the dark he trembles, he fears, he hesitates, in spite of all his logic and intellectual ideas; but he never can have hesitancy or fear or doubt when he is face to face with light. The light reveals, not only the things that are surrounding him, it reveals his own true worth, it gives him new strength, a new consciousness, and that is what I mean by the Christ Spirit being born anew within us. The man—the human, struggling, blundering man—feels for the first time that he has a part in higher things, that he does not need to depreciate himself, to think, "Oh well, I cannot do anything," "I have no power to redeem myself." On the contrary he feels that the redeeming power is already there in his own soul.

Now a Saviour does this for us. Yet we often hold such a One aloof, distant. We think it is enough if we bow before the altar and offer our worship. It is not enough. My concept of spiritual life is to have intimate relationship with our Ideal, just as a child has intimacy with his mother or father. He does not fear. He goes to them in his moments of despair and also in his moments of exaltation. All things he shares with them, and that is what we do when we understand spiritual feasts. We share all things, there is nothing to hide. Who will hide from the beneficent Spirit? When we know that One Who gives all blessings, then we shall not be reluctant to take those blessings. We shall not be afraid, because we shall know that there is an infinite Source from which we can draw. We cannot exhaust it. When we have that realization of an inexhaustible supply before us, above us, below us, then will come a sense of joyousness, a sense of relief. A spiritual avenue will open before us; the spirit of divinity will be born within us. Unless it is born within we

shall never know what it means to come in contact with our higher resources. We may fast, we may pretend religion, we may practise its outer forms with ostentation, but it will give us nothing real, nor shall we be able to convey anything real to any one else.

It is the inner life that we must have, the spirit of joy that comes from within,—the song of the soul, and Christmas, transcending all gloom and sadness and sorrow, forgetting all bitterness, is that Spirit. Through it we rise above materiality with renewed spirituality. That is the birth of Christ,—the birth of any Saviour. He is born anew and will continue to be born anew. One who lives in the turmoil of worldly concerns never seems to understand that access to that Spirit cannot be gained merely by belonging to a church or creed. It is by being born within one's self. People regard spiritual life as being full of mythical sayings. But they are not mythical, they are real. We are born again. The man of flesh who grieves, who sorrows, who blunders and who struggles, suddenly realizes that he has another Self which neither blunders nor grieves. That is the spiritual birth. A Saviour gives it. He tries to bring to us that glowing spiritual exaltation which transcends all things, not only when everything is going the way we want it to go, but even when everything is going against us.

The real glory of the Spirit is found within and when we have found it within, when it is born within us as reality, then we feel safe, then we realize the significance of Christmas. You can give a very great gift to your friends, to all people with whom you come in contact if you have kindled that spark within yourself, that hope, that courage, that something which lifts us above all material conditions. Then you have the real gift and a gift that is unbounded. It is not limited to the Christmas season. It redeems at all seasons. It has a very

beneficent power. By looking at your face a person may be inspired with new faith and resolution.

Christmas comes to remind us how we should love and how we should forgive, how we should be even willing to die this material death so that the Spirit may triumph, and the Spirit always triumphs and will always triumph if we only allow it to do so. If we are able to put aside our hide-bound ideas and materialistic notions, then the Spirit will be victorious and in that victory we shall rejoice and the soul will sing freely its blissful song.

Let us unite our thoughts and prayers so that we may have a sense of the spiritual Presence. Let us remember that the only rest we can create for our divine Guest, is our quietude, our peace, our serenity of soul. Let us in silence lift our hearts so that we may all find our peace in that infinite and unbounded One—the Giver of all blessings, the Embodiment of all blessedness, the Basis of our life and strength—our Source and Sustenance.

PAWNEE INDIAN HYMN

Ha, many things have the stars to tell us,
the morning star, the evening star,
Many things have the constellations to tell
us, all about the heaven.
But Chakaa, (the stars), they would guide
us all aright,
They would teach the people how we may cleave
one to another in the heavenly places,
Having one mind alone to mount into the still-
ness of the night and shine.
Wherefore, we sing this song, made for his
people by the wayfarer
Whom their leader visited in dream and saved;

Yea, hearken, we sing it circling solemnly
four times about the holy lodge:—
"They come to us, they rise, behold!
Over the marge of Mother Earth
Into Father Sky, they rise, they rise,
Chakaa the silent brethren!
Ah 'tis a blessed thing to behold them yonder
More blessed yet for us to mount with them,
To shine together each in his place as they!
They come to us, they rise,
We come to them, we rise,
We as Chakaa mount on high!
Behold them coming, climbing,
And we as they
Brethren in unity together."

* * * *

Such holy things and many more the stars
would tell us all,
Us the children of the Heavenly One, our Father:
How we should stand each in his place, and move
together forward with his fellows:
How we should dwell among men as Father Sky
doth brood over Mother Earth,
How we should leap invisibly, in spirit only,
full of the heavenly gladness,
How we should hang as the sign of God and lift up
the eyes and the hearts of men
Till they may become one soul in a shared hunger
for the Heavenly One,
Who verily set his token for them even whence
he doth send down
His breath to be their life, his stillness their awe,
his love for them—their joy.

CHRIST-MASS

By Sister Daya

Will it take from the tender and holy joy of Christmas-tide, to know that the same day which we of the West hold sacred as the birthday of the infant Saviour, had for the peoples of the past an almost identical significance? The 25th of December was not originally the day upon which the Christ Mass was celebrated. Not only the natal day of the Christ but the natal year is most uncertain. Both can be inferred only from texts which do not always agree. The year has been set back as far as the third century B.C., and forward to 10 A.D. As for the day, it was not till the fifth century that the 25th of December was definitely chosen. Up to that time various dates had been observed, ranging from the 3rd of January to the 20th of May. The reason for the final choice may sound strange to Christian ears. December 25th was fixed upon by the early church as the birthday of Christ Jesus, because that day was already set aside as a great festal occasion by almost the entire pagan world.

On the first moment after midnight, December 24th, practically all nations solemnized the birth of the sun at the winter solstice. Yet it was more than an astronomical observance. There seems ever to have been an intimate connection between the world's religions and the solar myths. The lives of the divine heroes and Saviours bear close resemblance, not only to each other, but to the sun's course in space. Thus Mithraism, young Christianity's most formidable rival, established the worship of Mithras as *Sol Invictus* or the Invincible Sun, Spirit of Truth and Light, "Mediator" between humanity and God. His birth within a cave was celebrated yearly on December 25th, not only in Persia and other parts of Asia Minor, but throughout pagan Europe.

It was a great holy day in ancient Rome when was observed

the festival of Sol the Invincible. There were games at the circus and universal rejoicing. "All public business was suspended, declarations of war and criminal executions were postponed, friends made presents to one another, and the slaves were indulged in great liberties." Mr. Gibbon in his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" states, "The Roman Christians, ignorant of the real date of His (Christ's) birth, fixed the solemn festival to the 25th of December, the *Brumalia* or winter solstice, when the pagans annually celebrated the birth of Sol." St. Chrysostom (390 A.D.) refers to it: "On this day also, the birth of Christ was lately fixed at Rome, in order that whilst the heathen were busy with their profane ceremonies, the Christians might perform their holy rites undisturbed."

As a matter of fact, the Christian rites in themselves both in purpose and observance, seem closely akin to these "profane ceremonies." From what source do we inherit the Yule-fire, the Christmas-tree, the garlands and greens? There is nothing in the Christ story to account for them. But when we turn to the north we find the Yule-feast being celebrated by the ancient Germans with great rejoicing and good-will at the time of the winter solstice. The same date in Scandinavia marked the greatest festival of the year. The night of its observance was known as the "Mother-night" in commemoration of the birth of Freyr, son of the supreme god Odin and the goddess Frigga. From these northern peoples we derive our remnants of nature worship. Godfrey Higgins writes concerning the Druidic festival on December 25th: "The Druids kept this night as a great festival, and called the day following it Nolagh or Noel, or the day of regeneration, and celebrated it with great fires on the tops of their mountains, which they repeated on the day of the Epiphany or Twelfth Night." The mistletoe and the Christmas-tree are

our heritage from the Druids. France still calls Christmas Noel.

Even in the Far East the close of December is marked by religious solemnities and cessation of business activities. Centuries before Christ the Egyptians depicted the god Horus,—the "Saviour," the "Lord of Life," the "Only-Begotten,"—as a little child in the arms of his Virgin Mother, Isis: "Queen of Heaven" as she was called. His birth was likewise coincident with the winter solstice or the 25th of December, and effigies were shown of him lying in a manger, like the infant Jesus. An ancient Christian work, the "Chronicles of Alexandria," says: "Watch how Egypt has constructed the childbirth of a Virgin and the birth of her son, who was exposed in a crib to the adoration of the people." Among the Greeks, Bacchus, Adonis and Hercules were all born at the time of the winter solstice. Bacchus was always called a Saviour and was said to have been born of a virgin.

Do these facts detract in any way from the Christian story? Do they not rather enrich it by linking it with the aspirations and religious ideals of the races of men who had gone before? What greater symbol of light and life could man have than the sun? It was natural for him to identify its birth in December with the birth of Prophet or Teacher coming as the Sun of Righteousness to a darkened world. Why should not the life of a God-man, symbol of divine Light, parallel the course of the sun in the heavens, symbol of material light? The stars swing in obedience to the same Law which swings our lives. Does it not make God seem very close to us? After all, may not the association of the birthdays of Saviours with the birthday of the sun be but an eternal promise to man that as dawn follows night day after day, as spring follows winter year after year, even so and as unfailingly will the Eternal One manifest Himself from age to age "for the pro-

tection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers and for the re-establishment of virtue and religion upon earth."

What has the Christianity of Christ to fear from any Higher Criticism? Nothing can detract from the glory of that Life. It stands because it is true, because it is beautiful, because it is a divine expression of the deepest aspirations of the human soul. Relate it to Egypt or India, to Buddha, Krishna or Horus and still it stands, because its strength is eternal, is not dependent on historical facts but on spiritual realities. Even if the Man of Nazareth were proved to be a myth, Christ would yet live! If His Teachings were found to be but borrowings from the past, the Sermon on the Mount would remain the living voice of realization, more glorious because of the testimony of time.

There is but one Christ-life lived over and over again,—the life of selfless love, suffering and surrender. He who takes his stand on that will find all great faiths his own, all aspiring souls his kin, and will see in all Christs the One Christ —the One Krishna—the One Buddha: that eternal, unchanging Redeemer Whom no man in any age calls upon in vain.

Once a dispute arose in the court of the Maharajah of Burdwan among the learned men there as to who was the greater Deity, Shiva or Vishnu. Some gave preference to Shiva, others to Vishnu. When the dispute grew hot a wise pandit remarked, addressing the Raja, "Sire, I have neither met Shiva nor seen Vishnu; how can I say who is the greater of the two?" At this the dispute stopped, for none of the disputants really had seen the Deity. Similarly none should compare one Deity with another. When a man has really seen a Deity, he comes to know that all the Deities are manifestations of one and the same Brahman.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF

By Katharine F. Sherwood

We read in the Gospel according to St. Matthew, 19th Chapter, verses 16 to 22, "And behold one came and said unto him, 'Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?' And he said unto him, 'Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God; but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.' He said unto him 'Which?' Jesus said: 'Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not bear false witness, honor thy father and thy mother and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'" And again in a later chapter a lawyer asks him: "Which is the great commandment in the law?" and Jesus answers quoting from the Scriptures, Deuteronomy 6:5—" 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might.' This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself'," from Leviticus 19:18.

This same story is given in the Gospel according to St. Luke, but with the account of the good Samaritan added. In this one the lawyer asks: "And who is my neighbor?" and Jesus tells him the story of the man who on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves who robbed him and stripped him of his raiment and left him half dead. A priest came and passed him by, likewise a Levite, but a certain Samaritan came that way and had compassion on him, bound up his wounds, took him with him, brought him to an inn and took care of him and on the morrow when he departed left money for the care of him. "Which now of these three" Jesus said, "thinkest thou was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves?" And the lawyer said, "He that showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said unto him, "Go and do likewise."

The fact that it was a man of Samaria who did this makes the story all the more powerful for the Samaritans were looked down upon by the Jews because there were no Jews in Samaria any more and that idea of superiority was so strong. We are accustomed to this saying and it is always quoted as an utterance of Jesus the Christ, and so it was, but he quoted it from the Jewish Scriptures as was his wont, to give that authority from the law and the prophets, knowing well that this would the more impress the Jewish mind. We come to this teaching again in the writings of St. Paul. In a letter to the Romans he says: "Owe no man anything but to love one another, for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this: Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness (against thy neighbor), thou shalt not covet and if there be any other commandment it is briefly comprehended in these words: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." And again writing to the Galatians he says: "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."

Once more in the Epistle of James, the brother of Jesus, we read, "If ye fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture 'thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself' ye do well," and in that great letter to the Hebrews (it brings it closer to us to call it a letter) we read: "Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them, and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body."

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the

prophets." Matthew 7:12. All is summed up in that simple golden rule, to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us. If it were possible to do this we need have no deep philosophy, no laws, no government. It would be the fulfilling of the law. Why do we find it so difficult, this loving our neighbor as ourself? Who can do it? Who tries to do it? The Christian teaching has followed the same line as the Jewish and has given us directions with no explanations. It is still the law without explanation and we must go farther back in order to get that explanation which will give us the understanding necessary for an acceptance of the law. It is not enough for us to be told to love our neighbor as ourself. But when we come to know another teaching which says that our neighbor *is* ourself we begin to see that it is not only a direction to follow blindly, but it is a necessity inherent in the law of our being.

How long we have been coming to this understanding and how long it will be before we fully understand it! For a full understanding of that fact of unity depends on our own evolution. Until we come to a realization of our true spiritual nature, we will continue to see separateness. What then can we do? We can at least listen to those great seers who have risen to that higher plane of consciousness and if they all agree in what they say we can at least accept it as Truth and long for the time when we too can see it as they do.

Now what do they say? It is the ancient, sometimes called the hermetic or secret teaching of all the great races and religions that there is but one soul in the universe manifesting in variety, manifesting as many. The Hindus call it the *Paramatman*, the individual soul they call the *Jivatman*. It has been called the Adam Kadmon in the Kaballa of the Jews. Swedenborg calls it the Grand Man; Emerson, the Over-Soul. It is also the Universal Christ. It is one of the great mysteries,

—how this can be and we not see it as it is. How can there be only one and we see it as so many? It is said in the Bhagavad-Gita, that great Scripture of the Hindus, "The Supreme Lord abides in all bodies equally." And again, "Indivisible, yet it exists as if divided in beings." I know of nothing more difficult to understand. Yet we must try. Much depends on it to-day. We are still having wars and rumors of wars. Who heeds the words of St. Paul, "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another"?

Greed and desire for possession are paramount in the world to-day. It takes some horrible calamity as has just befallen, (the earthquake in Japan), to draw people together and perhaps beget a better understanding. Under such circumstances at once everything is forgotten in the desire to help. Loss of life and property is something that we can understand, and it is most inspiring to see the true spirit of brotherhood that comes out at such a time. No theorizing is necessary, no philosophy, just the outpouring of love and mercy goes freely to those who are suffering and many will be the sacrifices made in the months to come by those who perhaps a short time ago were full of criticism and suspicion. The great lesson for us to take to our hearts is the feeling of oneness that comes at such a time, the feeling of pity which is akin to love. Often we might say that to love our neighbor as ourself was impossible, but at such a time we have a stronger feeling than one of self. Selfish love ceases as we think of the suffering and the loss and the necessity for patience and courage in starting life again for those who are left. It is inspiring to think of the many congregations who are listening to-day to words of love and sympathy being poured out from the fulness of the heart from many pulpits all over the world as we are drawn together in this common affliction. If we can realize that, it will be a great step toward the realization of the

oneness of life. It almost seems useless to give our attention to the philosophies or theories underlying it, for we can feel it true. It is like the shining of the sun which puts out all the other lights.

"One touch of nature makes the whole world kin." That touch of nature is the underlying spirit which unites all in oneness. The diversity is all on the outside. What difference does it make that one skin is white and another brown and another black? "He has made of one blood all the Nations of the earth." That there is one life, not many, is fundamental in all deep teaching. The seeming separateness is what is called illusion and is seemingly necessary in the process of development. Some one has said that it seems as if man found every way of going wrong before finding the right way. But when he finds it he knows and that gives him the faith of knowledge which is greater than the faith of belief. The teaching of the Hindu sages and Scriptures is *Tat Twam Asi,* Thou art That, find it out for thyself. This is the end of all life: to know God "Whom to know aright is life eternal." Christ said, "If ye love not your brother whom ye have seen, how can ye love God Whom ye have not seen?"

After rising to heights of the universal we must always come back to the particular with which we have to deal immediately. How to love our brother when he seems unlovely. "Man looketh on the outward appearance." That is natural. Love in its deepest sense is perhaps too intense in its meaning for use in this case. Sympathy is a better word. That is the first step and getting away from prejudice is the next one. We must learn to feel for others and in order to do this we must have imagination, must be able to put ourself in another's place, to take his point of view. If we can throw ourselves into the lives of others and feel for and with them, we enlarge our own consciousness and it is said that speaking

other languages puts us in touch with the thoughts of other peoples. If we go to a new country we are first impressed with the differences; but if we stay long enough and try to understand the people we find that many of those differences disappear; others do but enlarge our life if we let them. If we are so fixed in our own way, however, that cannot happen. Froebel's teaching is to begin with the concrete and expand to the universal, to begin with that which is nearest to us and be led as far as we can go. Most of us wish to do something big, far away, but if each one would try to be sympathetic with those people whom our lives immediately touch, to feel with them, get under their skin, it would be a step in the right direction, and with the big things which pertain to the community, the state, the nation, know that what is bad for one is bad for all. Cultivate a public conscience, enlarge ourself into that of the city, the state, the country and not stop there, but the whole world for it is a unit, expressive of the One Spirit within, which is slowly evolving to a complete consciousness of itself through the evolution of the individual or personal consciousness.

Dostovievsky says: "For our psychology stops at that part of self which emerges from the soil, noting minutely individual differences, but forgetting that this is only the top of the plant, that nine-tenths are buried, the feet held by those of other plants. This profound or lower region of the soil is ordinarily below the threshold of consciousness, the mind feels nothing of it." The symbol of the iceberg is also given to illustrate this fact, the greater part of it being submerged. But what symbol can give any idea of so vast a concept?

In practical living there are so many sides to the question. One thing we must always remember and that is the law of Karma, individual Karma and collective Karma, and another is, that freedom is the only condition of growth. We must

never interfere with any one's freedom to choose and develop his own life. Know that there are many paths all leading to the same goal, that even mistakes are sometimes best, if they bring an awakening or teach a lesson and that each one must learn his own lessons. No one can learn our lessons for us no matter how much he loves us, and the greatest love for the neighbor can often be shown in non-interference.

It is a great comfort to know that when we must sometimes be inactive in our desire to help, that our attitude of mind is very important. Christ said: "And I, if I be lifted up will draw all men unto me." The Scripture adds "signifying by what death he should die," and it has been so connected with His crucifixion that it is difficult to loosen it, but in the light of greater understanding we must see that He meant something very different, that it has a spiritual significance, that His spiritual upliftment is what is meant, and that in that all men can be included. We can all apply it to ourselves. If we are really all one and this separateness is only what in the highest Hindu philosophy is called *Maya,* illusion of sense, then what we do for ourselves we do for all, be it good or ill, but not in any selfish way. A great educator once told me that the way to decide any question of conventional right and wrong was to make it universal,—would it be well for all to do the same under the circumstances? If I cause my brother to offend by eating meat, then I must abstain. Would we get rid of greed in the world? Get it out of ourselves. Would we eliminate deceit and anger and all uncharitableness? Cast them out of ourselves. Let us look to the beam in our own eye, not the mote in that of the other man. Is not the influence of a true life widespread even as we look at it outwardly?

If then we consider the inner side where there is unity, not diversity, it is even more far-reaching and potent. The sage who has retired from the world is a part of us, sending

out thought which may reach us if we are open to it. The man in the jungle is part of us. Shall his thought reach us or ours reach him in this vast world of unity? You know the lines:—

"Without me God could not one moment live.

"If I to death should go, He too would death receive."

This use of the name "God" of course refers to the immanent God, the Over-Soul about which we have been speaking, the Grand Man in which we all live, and it means to show the impossibility of being disconnected from our Source. If then God and man are one, as is claimed, this must be true. This human plane upon which we are manifesting is one of decision which way we will go—up or down. Shall we help or shall we hinder? Shall we live to ourselves alone, which no one really can, if what we claim is true, or shall we feel a part of that great whole and strive to help in every way that we can toward the development of that consciousness of unity implied in the simple teaching of all ages and all prophets and all Saviours,—"Love thy neighbor as thyself."

WHO IS THY NEIGHBOR?

Quoted From Prof. Josiah Royce

What, then, is our neighbor? Thou hast regarded his thought, his feeling, as somehow different from thine. Thou hast said, 'A pain in him is not like a pain in me, but something far easier to bear.' He seems to thee a little less living than thou; his life is dim, it is cold, it is a pale fire beside thy own burning desires. . . . So, dimly and by instinct hast thou lived with thy neighbor, and hast known him not, being blind. Thou hast made (of him) a thing, no Self at all. Have done with this illusion, and simply try to learn the truth. Pain is pain, joy is joy, everywhere, even as in thee. In all the

songs of the forest birds; in all the cries of the wounded and dying, struggling in the captor's power; in the boundless sea where the myriads of water-creatures strive and die; amid all the countless hordes of savage men; in all sickness and sorrow; in all exultation and hope, everywhere, from the lowest to the noblest, the same conscious, burning, wilful life is found, endlessly manifold as the forms of the living creatures; unquenchable as the fires of the sun, real as these impulses that even now throb in thine own little selfish heart. Lift up thy eyes, behold that life, and then turn away, and forget it as thou canst; but, if thou hast known that, thou hast begun to know thy duty.

THE SPIRIT OF ASIAN CULTURE

By T. L. Vaswani, M. A.

The word for culture in ancient books is *prabuddhita.* He who, by being adored alike in India, China, Korea and Japan, has become the nexus of the nations of the East—Sakyamuni Buddha—was the typical man of "Culture." This culture, *prabuddhita,* is not mere understanding, the *verstanden* of German philosophy. Culture is the life of the higher reason in man. India has been a votary of culture from the beginning of her days; indeed it has been said over and over again in Indian scriptures that there is no *mukti* (salvation) without culture. Knowledge is increase of sorrow; such is the sentiment of an ancient Jewish writer. The Aryan sentiment is different; knowledge is the ending of sorrow. This knowledge, this higher reason, is often referred to also as *darshan,* vision. Of What? Vision of the One Eternal Self in all. There to my mind, is the very secret of Asian culture.

Asia is one because Asia has borne witness to this Spirit-consciousness through the ages. The culture problem has been approached in the East from diverse standpoints,—intellectual,

aesthetic, ethical, religious; it has engaged the attention of thinkers and poets and prophets in India, in Persia, in China, in Japan, in Arabia, in Afghanistan. The problem has been interpreted in diverse tongues and diverse ways; but there is, I believe, an underlying unity. For the soul-consciousness of Asia is one. It is indicated in the text of an Upanishad which says:—"The Eternal is one; He hath no caste." Asian culture is one continuous effort through the ages to interpret in art and poetry and philosophy and worship this consciousness of the One Eternal Self in all. Not without significance is the fact that all the world-religions have been born in Asia. Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Islam are Asian in their inspiration; and Christianity is a gift of the East to the West. Asia, unlike Europe, has not talked of conflict between science and religion. Nor have Asian sages imagined, as some western thinkers have, a conflict betwen culture and nature. Culture in India has been regarded as growing out of nature's inspiration; and some of the noblest books which have enriched the world's literature were written in *asrams*, in forest-universities. Asian culture, again, is not like the *kulturs* of European nations, an aggressive force. The ancient culture of India developed on no narrow nationalism; it was inspired by profound reverence for humanity, indeed for all forms of life. Kinship with all creatures in and through the universal Self,—that was the supreme conviction of Hindu and Buddhist cultures in their highest forms.

Asian idealism, is the world's piteous need to-day. The Vision Spiritual was the secret of Asiatic greatness in the past; the Vision Spiritual is what a bankrupt Europe needs urgently to-day to enrich civilization. As that seer of science, the late Professor Tyndal, said "The light once came from the East; once more will the light return to Europe from the

East." I believe profoundly in Asia's spiritual message to the West. The world looks to Indians to give the message; and they can give it,—but on one condition; that they do it in deep humility for the service of humanity. Patriotism tarnished with pride, with passion, with hate and strife, will not make India great. A Chinese sage has said: "Be gentle and you will be bold; be simple and you will be liberal; be humble and you will be a leader among men." And if India is to be, as I believe the spirit of history wants her to be, a spiritual leader among the nations, she must be humble,—a servant of humanity, a servant of God. The modern age dominated by machinery and materialism may yet be saved by the spirit of Asian culture, by the Vision Spiritual which has inspired the philosophies and literatures and arts and idealisms of the East. (*Reprinted from "Orient"*)

INDIA'S TASK

By Rev. C. F. Andrews

(Excerpt from a recent address)

I believe that India is to teach the world what Christ truly taught; what life Christ truly lived; what Christ truly was and is. For in the West, what I feel so much on my return to England is this, that we in England and in Europe have lost for a time the Christ; we have lost him in our belief in force, in our belief in violence and war; we have lost him in our search for wealth, and for more wealth, and for ever more wealth. We have lost him in our greed for possessions and empires and colonies and all the rest. So we have to find him again. We have to find him, who said, "Come unto me all ye who are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest to your soul; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

REPORT

November at the Vedanta Centre of Boston was marked by two special events. On November 21st, students and friends of Swami Paramananda held a reception in his honour at the Centre. It was a tribute to him and to his work and its object was, not only to express to the Swami before his return to California, the devotion, loyalty and gratitude of the Boston members, but to draw them together in tangible expression of this, and in active co-operation with his immediate workers. The whole affair was carried through with lovely feeling and culminated in a love-offering to the Swami,— a surprise check enclosed in a charming silk case,—which was given to him in the name of many devoted followers. In a future issue of the "Message" a fuller report of this reception will be given.

The second event of interest was the Thanksgiving Service held for the first time on Thanksgiving morning. The Swami spoke on "Thankfulness" in its pure spiritual aspect, showing how man who thinks he does so much of himself, can do nothing apart from the Divine. In illustration of this he cited that portion of the Kena-Upanishad which tells of the victory of *Brahman* (the Supreme) over the gods. Before and after the Swami's address there was special music. White flowers shone in the shrine and upon the outer altar, and true peace was felt in all hearts.

The Swami expects to return to Ananda Ashrama, California, before Christmas and will not be back in Boston until the Spring. The activities of the Boston Centre will be carried on by his assistants with the aid of those members of the Boston work who feel the desire to express in this way their deep feeling for the Centre. It is, in fact, upon the active, practical expression of that interest that the future welfare of the Boston work depends.

HERE ENDS THE TWELFTH VOLUME.