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

# VEDANTA MONTHLY

# Message of the East



VOLUME XVII

1928

Issued by

**ANANDA-ASHRAMA**

**LA CRESCENTA, L. A. CO., CALIF.**

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JAN 24 1928

VOL. XVII. NUMBER 1

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# Message of the East



January, 1928

# The Great Yoga System of India

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ANANDA-ASHRAMA

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(Extension of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, Established 1909)

Entered as second class matter, Feb. 14, 1924, at the Post Office at La Crescenta, Calif. Box 86, under act of March 3, 1879.

Accepted for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized June 17, 1921.

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SINGLE COPIES, 25c $2.00 A YEAR

Published Monthly Except in August and September

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The "Message" sends to all its subscribers hearty wishes for the New Year.

Its sixteenth volume is completed and we hope the subscribers will renew their subscriptions promptly, and also try to secure new subscribers.

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# *MESSAGE OF THE EAST*

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

"Light shall come again from the East."
—Tyndall.

Published Monthly except in August and September

Vol. XVII. January, 1928 No. 1


## THE GREAT YOGA SYSTEM OF INDIA

*By Swami Paramananda*

(Address given at Symphony Hall, Los Angeles, August 21, 1927)

*Let us all come together in the spirit of silence and with the spirit of harmony, tuning our hearts as a musician tunes a violin, making all our thoughts and aspirations full of harmony and rhythm. Let us lift our prayers to the Supreme One Who alone can grant them, Who alone can fill us with inspiration and strength. Peace. Peace. Peace be unto us and to all living beings.*

In India before the beginning of any spiritual work, a prayer such as this is given as a sacred chant. It is called the Peace Chant and its object is not the observance of any special form, but to create the right kind of atmosphere. It is not only in India that we find this custom. Did not Christ ask His followers to go and make their peace with their brethren before bringing their offering to lay on the altar? The mind must be made tranquil and pure before it can be directed to higher things. It must turn away from the distractions of the world. Then the noise of the world will have less and less reality for it.

Very great is the power manifested through the proper use of mind. The Indian Yogi, as you call him, has acquired this power to such a remarkable degree that even though he may be sitting in the midst of a crowd, he can transport himself almost to the solitude and silence of the forest.

Let me give you the meaning of Yoga. It is derived from the Sanskrit word *yug* which literally translated means to join, to unite or to bring together. It is very similar to the idea that Christ gave when He said, "Take My yoke upon you." Actually it signifies that practical system of thought and the methods it has evolved, leading to the supreme union—union between man's higher Self and lower self, between God and the individual soul. The Christian mystics have this same idea, but they have interpreted it in other words; they call it *unio mystica*,—mystic union. In this Western world the idea of Yoga is very little understood. It is confused with magic and jugglery, a playing with the supernatural. Therefore I have chosen this subject with the hope that I can in some measure remove these false notions concerning this great system which has been practised in India for thousands of years. There are some people who have a tremendous prejudice against it, because they think it is dangerous. They do not know what a beneficent motive lies behind it. Others are tempted to follow it because it is strange and they think it will give them something in the manner of magic. It will not. In India they have learned through centuries to discriminate between higher and lower; they know the difference between magic and miracle.

There are two definitions of Yoga which to my mind are the best. One was given by Sri Krishna, the Lord of

Wisdom, and the other by Patanjali, the great father of the Yoga system. According to Patanjali, Yoga means that which gives us power to control our mental waves,—the waves of sadness, the waves of depression, the waves of anger, the waves of unrest, the waves arising from any kind of mental disturbance. The person who learns to control these waves has conquered life itself. Sri Krishna, on the other hand, defines Yoga as that which teaches us skillfullness in action. I have chosen these two because they give us both the idealism and its practical application. Otherwise you might say, "When we have gained that indifference to pleasure and pain and all the afflictions of life, we may possibly enjoy that wonderful, exalted, tranquil attitude, but what avail if it does not make us efficient, if it does not give us power to do things well." According to these definitions, however, a man not only can conquer himself, can master his lower nature, his flesh, and all that is produced through the limitations of the flesh, but he can make himself very useful, and not in the ordinary sense.

The Upanishads give us this definition of what happens as a result of the practice of Yoga: "When the fivefold result of Yoga takes place, then there is no longer illness, old age, or pain for him who has obtained a body produced by the fire of Yoga. The first results of Yoga they call lightness, healthiness, steadiness, a good complexion, an easy enunciation, a sweet odor and slight excretions." We would all like to enjoy these results, we would all like to have such a fragrance about us, but there is nothing external that can give it to us. It is not like a cheap perfume that we can buy at the ten cent store. I say this because there are people who take things in a literal sense, and this fragrance is something that comes

from within. One who has it is not conscious of it, and it is not anything that any mortal can take away from him. That stillness, that steadiness, that odor, that tranquillity, that healthiness and wholesomeness once we have them, cannot be removed from us in any circumstance.

"Are there then, no marvels of Yoga?" you may ask. There are marvellous things that are achieved by the Yogis but the greatest marvel is their moral conquest. It is, however, not so easy to see a real Yogi; even in India one has to seek for them. There are many who come and claim to be Yogis, but no true master of Yoga goes about saying: "Behold me, I am a great Yogi," any more than a real saint will say: "Worship me,—I am a saint." A man who has attained that mighty consciousness would be incapable of stooping to any low motive. In India they know very well the difference; but the West has not yet come to that point of discrimination. In the streets of India almost any day you may see a live man completely buried under the earth for hours and come out uninjured —I saw this myself with these eyes—or you may see him lift himself from the ground by some invisible power. I have known of such experiences, but these wonder-workers are not looked upon over there as a specially high type, or as exalted spiritual personages. One who has attained illumination, however, who has conquered anger, who has conquered hatred, who has conquered all fretfulness, feverish ambition and greed, in other words, one who has conquered himself, is regarded with the greatest reverence. Such a man, though he may have lived for fifty years, or a hundred years, or a hundred and fifty years will often have the face of a child,—not because of any magic or charm, but because by his life he has kept the inner light burning so constantly that there is no dark-

ness to mark or mar his body in the flesh. Any one who in this way keeps himself purified, any one in whose system that fire is burning, is cleansed and made new.

The best illustration I can give is that of a goldsmith who takes a piece of gold and puts it into the fire. We might be afraid to do such a thing, but he is not afraid. He knows that he is not going to lose it; that it will come out in better shape and more shiny than it went in. Same way it is with the great Yogis—the master-spirits. They are not working for small ends,—a little name or fame or personal gain—they want something of fundamental value, of moral and spiritual value. Naturally the result is seen in the physical, for physical, moral and spiritual are inter-related. There is no man who can be physically healthy unless he has awakened his spiritual consciousness. I want you to think this over very carefully. If any one comes and tells you that in order to have physical health and spiritual power you need not do anything for yourself,—you need not think right thoughts, or have self-control, or practise unselfishness, that all you need to do is merely take a course of lessons, and that if you are only willing to pay the price, you can ascend to a very great height of seership,—do not believe that person. It cannot be. Can any one eat for you and give you the benefit of the nourishment? Can any one drink for you and quench your thirst? If you cannot trust another to do these things for you, why should you trust some one to change your moral being?

Perhaps the thought may come to you that Yoga is only for Orientals. Do not think for a moment that the Yoga system is peculiarly Indian. It is a pure psychology of thought, mind and culture. It teaches a man how he can master himself, how he can gain control over his

body, over all his evil propensities, and rise higher and higher till he finds complete oneness with the Supreme. It is the very thing which the mystics practise as union. Whether in the East or in the West, a man who has attained the results of the Yoga system through concentration, introspection, self-control and tranquillity arrives at a state of consciousness where he transcends the limits of the flesh. In India this is called *Samadhi*,—a transcendental state of mind, or super-consciousness. It is pleasing to find that Meister Eckhart describes St. Paul as experiencing a similar state to this, where he was not at all conscious of his body,—a state wherein he walked with the Christ-spirit, with God, and did not know what was going on about him. Of St. Francis it was spoken that he stood transfixed, unaware of what was happening around him,—that he saw without seeing. Such experiences are well-known in India, and to my mind there is no difference between the practices that have existed among the mystic souls in the Occident and those which are found among the Yogis of India, the Sufis of Persia, or among the incarnate saints of other nations. I draw no limitations. Truth is Truth and is not limited to any area or geographical point, but India, because she has given herself to this tremendous, exalted state of consciousness, has become identified with it. The mind works one way with one group of people and another way with another group, and according to its practical trend and to our own ardor, we receive results.

In this country people are interested in material success and they have a tremendous amount of it, but what does it avail? "What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world" and lacks balance and spiritual power? Without these, all his possessions will but weigh upon

him and prove a hindrance. Therefore what we need to-day is a combination. Patanjali tells us that a man can control all the waves—all the disturbing elements—which arise in him. Man is susceptible to cold; he is susceptible to heat; he makes himself miserable. The Yogis, however, teach that this should not be. Man is born to be master, therefore let him practise and he will find that he is not the slave of any one, or anything. In northern India, way up in the Himalayas, we find men who seek through the sternest discipline to gain mastery over the body. Not only do they sit in meditation in the snow, but they seek a further stage of self-conquest by plunging into the icy water, and remaining there, sometimes for hours, in order to conquer absolutely all sensation, thus by degrees bringing the body to a point where it obeys them. Of course it would be fatal for the ordinary man to force himself suddenly to anything like this; but the idea back of it,—self-control, rising above the varying moods of the body, we can all practise.

There are people who are over-sensitive, who are fretful. If it is cold, they can think of nothing else; if it is hot, they say, "I am miserable—I am dying!" and they may almost bring themselves to the point of death. If they are crowded they complain about their discomfort. If they have to sit in a cramped position for a little time, they think that they cannot possibly endure it. Yet in my own experience I have known a person to sit in one position for twenty-four hours or longer and not impair his health or his limbs in the least degree. I am not asking you to conclude that these are vital issues. Since all of us, however, experience these sensations, the secret of life lies in our gaining mastery over them and over ourselves. By practice, we can, little by little, come to such

a point of concentration that this mind which is constantly jumping from one thing to another, making us and other people restless, will grow fixed and steady.

If we are to cease being slaves to all the passing conditions of life, it is vital that we practise the great lesson of sitting still, of introspection, of concentration—not the concentration by means of which you focus your mind upon a new hat, or coat, or shoes, or anything like that which you may want—I do not mean that—that is to use the faculty of the mind for unworthy ends; but that concentration which gives one complete mastery over the lower self, so that at any time when you have aches or pains or physical difficulties you can withdraw your mind completely from them and thus heal yourself. Yogis do not recognize that there can be any illness in the Spirit. Spirit is eternal. The Spirit of man is invincible; it is deathless and diseaseless,—"Fire cannot burn it; water cannot wet it. . " Therefore what the Yogis ask us to do is to think of that which is invincible in man; it is there that they want us to concentrate. If we think of the flesh, we have to take the consequences of the flesh; if we fix our mind on things that are changeable, we shall keep on changing and our happiness will be constantly disturbed. The point is to concentrate our mind on that which is unchangeable, real and vital. You may ask, "How can we do that? The body is fretful." That is why we have to learn by degrees.

The Yoga system is divided into many branches. The first step is for a man to learn to order his body. This which you call your body, you must prove that it is your body—your hands, your feet and every limb; your eyes and ears and all your senses,—you must prove that you can bring them to order and co-ordination. How many

of us can sit still for a few minutes without feeling any strain, or any nervous confusion? If for a little time we are forced to be silent, we feel almost as if we were going to explode. It is because we are not accustomed to these things, but as soon as we form the habit of them, we shall enjoy them because we shall be conserving our energy. God has given us plenty of energy. It is manifested through this body; we express it through our eyes, our ears, our voice,—every part of our being exhibits a certain amount of energy. Those who know how to conserve this God-given force, how to build it up and concentrate it, they transmute it into a great strength, and they become healed.

There are some people who are full of magnetism, they attract us, we love to be near them, we want to draw close to them, and we wish that we could be like them. It is not by learning some magic charm, however that we are going to acquire this power. Among flowers the rose has a most magnetic personality. Think of the personality of a rose that has just come to blossoming! A man filled with criminal intent is passing by. Suddenly the fragrance of a rose arrests him, the beauty of it hypnotizes him and for the moment he forgets his evil nature and purpose. Similarly there are people who have so conserved their energy, who have brought themselves to such a state of co-ordination, that they are full of power—power of body, power of mind, power of soul. The greatest power we can attain is through introspection. Now, whenever there is any problem, we think some one else must solve it for us; we feel we are not capable of solving it alone. But have we tried? Let a man search within his own self and find his own capabilities; he will become so poised and concentrated that nothing will be able

to thwart him. You may complain: "When I try to concentrate, everything distracts me, people disturb me." Do not let any one disturb you. What did Christ teach? "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."

These words are full of mystic significance. The Yogis know the secret. Whenever they have any difficulty, they do not merely say: "I am helpless!" They withdraw within themselves and try to find the source of their strength. There is an undiscovered country within us. Introspection opens the way to it. The average person when he closes his eyes in meditation says: "I see nothing but darkness; I am suffocated; I am bored! Let me go and be entertained by some one." The man of introspection, on the other hand, as soon as he goes within himself, becomes so interested that he does not want to come out from his meditation, and only does so in order to help others. As we have read in the Upanishads, the practice of Yoga kindles a fire within and this fire gradually creates a new kind of body altogether—" . . there is no longer illness, old age, or pain for him who has obtained a body produced by the fire of Yoga." Fire of Yoga,—that is a very graphic description—fire of wisdom, fire of spiritual union! It is like a fire; it burns up all dross, all that is injurious. Do not be afraid of it.

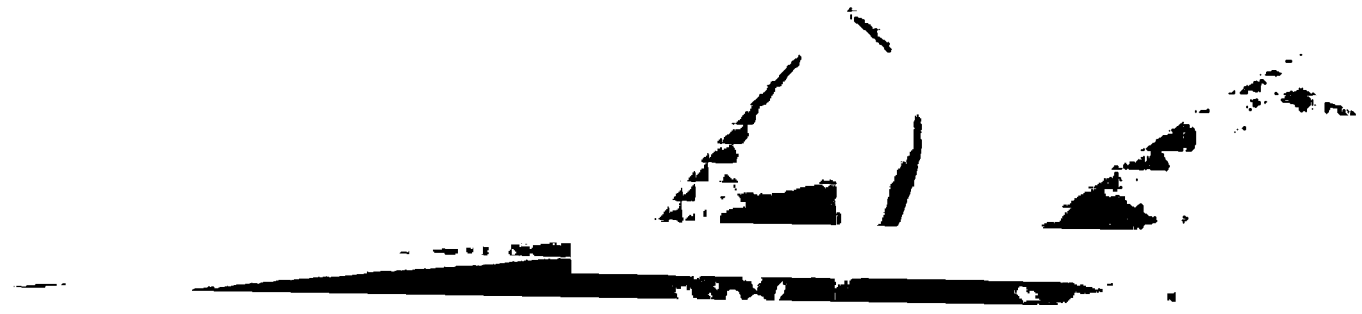
Here you may ask, "Should every one, then, practise Yoga?" There are those who cannot practise it. The Bhagavad-Gita says: "The practice of Yoga is not for him who eats too much." The man who eats too much is a slave of his greed; he has no self-control. One who eats too much cannot assimilate his food and is bound to

be sick. He cannot think of anything but his body. Nor is the practice of Yoga, says the Gita, "for him who does not eat at all." This is a very, very practical point. We cannot hope to learn the higher balance until we have learned balance in our every day life and living. Do not think that Yoga is something that we put away in the closet. When Christ said: "Be perfect as your Father in heaven," it was more than merely a pretty speech. He meant it as something for us to attain, and through its attainment to realize the fullness of life. It means that everything we do,—eating, drinking, sleeping, working, has a significance, and if we learn how to do these things properly, with moderation and tranquillity, we shall be practising what Yoga teaches. We do not need to go through any intricate ways of breathing, or posture, or any kind of complicated mental processes. It is something we all can practise, and if we practise it successfully, the results are certain. Until we learn to have moderation and balance how can we expect to find happiness or any kind of satisfaction? It does not make any difference what path we follow if we follow it with faith, ardor and right intention; otherwise it does not give us anything.

We cannot get something for nothing. We cannot lead a disorderly, careless, chaotic life and expect to have mental co-ordination and a body which is full of health and spiritual beauty. That would be impossible. We can obtain these but we must practise co-ordination in our life. Our thoughts and actions must become harmonious. It is not a question of spending a great deal of time. That is the first thing you are going to say, that you are working people, busy people with many obligations. It does not take much time to think a holy thought. It does not

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We cannot get something for nothing. We cannot lead a disorderly, careless life and expect to have mental co-ordination and a body that is full of health and spiritual beauty. That would be impossible. We can obtain these but we must pay for co-ordination in our life. Our thoughts and actions must become harmonious. It is not a question of spending a great deal of time. That is the first thing you are prone to say, that you are working people, busy people with many obligations. It does not take much time, only thought. It does not

take a tremendous amount of study to rid yourself of all ignoble feelings. It is a question of the quality of mind, and that is something we can all cultivate.

For those who have a little time, there are three points of the day which are beneficial for spiritual practice: early morning, noon and the evening hour. At dawn, light bursts upon us and the darkness vanishes. That hour is very propitious for concentration and spiritual work. At noon two points of the day meet, and at the evening time, light fades and the darkness comes. These hours have a natural tendency to tranquillity, calmness and poise. Take advantage of them as the Yogis do. There is, however, no hour in day or night, or any time of life when we may not put into practice these great truths and benefit by them. Let us safeguard ourselves! Preventive method is the best method. If we learn to think in rhythm, act in rhythm and do everything with a certain balance, we shall find great success no matter where we are placed. The result is skillfullness in action. With the least effort we shall do the greatest amount. That is what follows when we have learned the secret of the Yoga system. It teaches us how to discriminate; it makes us intuitive; it makes us perceptive, and who will not benefit by these qualities? Yoga is the practical application of spiritual principles. What Christ teaches, what Buddha teaches, what St. Francis taught and practised we find contained in the great Yoga system of India.

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The bravest thing any man does is to conquer himself—to bring his appetites into subjection and to hold them in moderation. Self-control in the direction of abstemiousness is the masterly achievement of life.—*Anonymous.*

## UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

A man contains all that is needful to his government within himself. He is made a law unto himself. All real good or evil that can befall him must be from himself. The purpose of life seems to be to acquaint a man with himself. He is not to live to the future as described to him, but to live to the real future by living to the real present. The highest revelation is that God is in every man.—*Emerson.*

We cannot honestly say that there is any wide difference between the Brahman, Sufi, or Christian mystic at their best. What is essential is the way the mystic feels about his Deity, and about his own relation with it; for this adoring and all-possessing consciousness of the rich and complete divine life over against the self's life, and of the possible achievement of a level of being, a sublimation of the self, wherein we are perfectly united with it, may fairly be written down as a necessary element of all mystical life.—*Evelyn Underhill.*

Threefold is the way to God. The first is the way of purification, in which the mind is inclined to learn true wisdom. The second is the way of illumination, in which the mind by contemplation is kindled to the burning of love. The third is the way of union, in which the mind by understanding, reason and spirit is led up by God alone.—*Dionysius the Areopagite.*

As the night keeps hidden in its gloom the petition for light, even thus in the depth of my unconsciousness rings the cry—I want Thee, only Thee.—*Rabindranath Tagore.*

Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.

—*St. Paul*

## FROM THE HEIGHTS

*(An Interview With Commander Byrd)*

The following thoughts which came to Commander Byrd as he flew over the north pole contain the measure of the man. At that moment of supreme achievement his mind dwelt, not on his own great place in the life picture, but upon that picture as a whole. The selflessness of his attitude no doubt opened the door for a true flash of inspiration. He saw with deep penetration the weakness and strength of modern civilization, the much vaunted surface and the undiscovered depths, and in the ensuing interview which was given in the Literary Digest, he speaks with the insight of a seer and the vision of a prophet. The article opens with a description of the explorer. We quote in part:

Physically he suggests a delicate instrument fabricated to the point of frailty. If one chooses to regard him as a product of evolution it is easy to conceive that in the remote past he might have been a frigate bird winging his way on the gales across the seven seas. Even in repose he seems prepared for flight; leaning forever forward into the wind. In action he is Annapolis personified, erect, alert, eager. His eyes are binocular, apparently penetrating to horizons beyond human vision. But there are two Byrds in that one body. A realist and a dreamer; a conqueror of the clouds of the earth, a commuter in the realm of great imagination. With one inadvertent question I stript him of his aviator's plumage. He fell with his feet on terra firma, among those who walk upward on the surface of the world.

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wings and dropt his fine dark eyes in humility. "Do you really want to know?" he answered lifting his glance and recovering his calm. "I have not been asked that."

"Do you mind?"

"No." And then the real Byrd cast off his armor of reserve and addrest the earth-bound. "I thought of the infinitesimal proportions of mortal man, of the frailty of the atoms that occupy the spaces, of the limitations of those who have taken over the conduct of civilization. I caught for the first time, as in a flash of understanding, the inadequate results of the effort to solve not the enigmas of space and duration, but the problems of mankind. At any point of the earth's circumference, at a given elevation, human vision encounters its limitations. The telescope amplifies a definite point, but the whole field of visibility, discernible to human eyes, is comparatively restricted. Beneath me lay a vast, silent, unoccupied field of snow and ice, varying in tone and without life. My knowledge of what existed beyond at every degree of the circle, plus my imagination, carried me into the temperate and tropical zones, the peopled places, the seats of empire, the scenes of turmoil and conquest, and the survival of the fittest. I saw armies and navies beyond the fringe of that arctic wilderness over which a metal mechanism designed by man was plunging onward."

Commander Byrd, in the throes of reflection, passed his hand across his forehead and lapsed into silence, from which he emerged presently as though from a trance. He picked up the thread:

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body, over all his evil propensities, and rise higher and higher till he finds complete oneness with the Supreme. It is the very thing which the mystics practise as union. Whether in the East or in the West, a man who has attained the results of the Yoga system through concentration, introspection, self-control and tranquillity arrives at a state of consciousness where he transcends the limits of the flesh. In India this is called *Samadhi*,—a transcendental state of mind, or super-consciousness. It is pleasing to find that Meister Eckhart describes St. Paul as experiencing a similar state to this, where he was not at all conscious of his body,—a state wherein he walked with the Christ-spirit, with God, and did not know what was going on about him. Of St. Francis it was spoken that he stood transfixed, unaware of what was happening around him,—that he saw without seeing. Such experiences are well-known in India, and to my mind there is no difference between the practices that have existed among the mystic souls in the Occident and those which are found among the Yogis of India, the Sufis of Persia, or among the incarnate saints of other nations. I draw no limitations. Truth is Truth and is not limited to any area or geographical point, but India, because she has given herself to this tremendous, exalted state of consciousness, has become identified with it. The mind works one way with one group of people and another way with another group, and according to its practical trend and to our own ardor, we receive results.

In this country people are interested in material success and they have a tremendous amount of it, but what does it avail? "What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world" and lacks balance and spiritual power? Without these, all his possessions will but weigh upon

him and prove a hindrance. Therefore what we need to-day is a combination. Patanjali tells us that a man can control all the waves—all the disturbing elements—which arise in him. Man is susceptible to cold; he is susceptible to heat; he makes himself miserable. The Yogis, however, teach that this should not be. Man is born to be master, therefore let him practise and he will find that he is not the slave of any one, or anything. In northern India, way up in the Himalayas, we find men who seek through the sternest discipline to gain mastery over the body. Not only do they sit in meditation in the snow, but they seek a further stage of self-conquest by plunging into the icy water, and remaining there, sometimes for hours, in order to conquer absolutely all sensation, thus by degrees bringing the body to a point where it obeys them. Of course it would be fatal for the ordinary man to force himself suddenly to anything like this; but the idea back of it,—self-control, rising above the varying moods of the body, we can all practise.

There are people who are over-sensitive, who are fretful. If it is cold, they can think of nothing else; if it is hot, they say, "I am miserable—I am dying!" and they may almost bring themselves to the point of death. If they are crowded they complain about their discomfort. If they have to sit in a cramped position for a little time, they think that they cannot possibly endure it. Yet in my own experience I have known a person to sit in one position for twenty-four hours or longer and not impair his health or his limbs in the least degree. I am not asking you to conclude that these are vital issues. Since all of us, however, experience these sensations, the secret of life lies in our gaining mastery over them and over ourselves. By practice, we can, little by little, come to such

a point of concentration that this mind which is constantly jumping from one thing to another, making us and other people restless, will grow fixed and steady.

If we are to cease being slaves to all the passing conditions of life, it is vital that we practise the great lesson of sitting still, of introspection, of concentration—not the concentration by means of which you focus your mind upon a new hat, or coat, or shoes, or anything like that which you may want—I do not mean that—that is to use the faculty of the mind for unworthy ends; but that concentration which gives one complete mastery over the lower self, so that at any time when you have aches or pains or physical difficulties you can withdraw your mind completely from them and thus heal yourself. Yogis do not recognize that there can be any illness in the Spirit. Spirit is eternal. The Spirit of man is invincible; it is deathless and diseaseless,—"Fire cannot burn it; water cannot wet it. . " Therefore what the Yogis ask us to do is to think of that which is invincible in man; it is there that they want us to concentrate. If we think of the flesh, we have to take the consequences of the flesh; if we fix our mind on things that are changeable, we shall keep on changing and our happiness will be constantly disturbed. The point is to concentrate our mind on that which is unchangeable, real and vital. You may ask, "How can we do that? The body is fretful." That is why we have to learn by degrees.

The Yoga system is divided into many branches. The first step is for a man to learn to order his body. This which you call your body, you must prove that it is your body—your hands, your feet and every limb; your eyes and ears and all your senses,—you must prove that you can bring them to order and co-ordination. How many

of us can sit still for a few minutes without feeling any strain, or any nervous confusion? If for a little time we are forced to be silent, we feel almost as if we were going to explode. It is because we are not accustomed to these things, but as soon as we form the habit of them, we shall enjoy them because we shall be conserving our energy. God has given us plenty of energy. It is manifested through this body; we express it through our eyes, our ears, our voice,—every part of our being exhibits a certain amount of energy. Those who know how to conserve this God-given force, how to build it up and concentrate it, they transmute it into a great strength, and they become healed.

There are some people who are full of magnetism, they attract us, we love to be near them, we want to draw close to them, and we wish that we could be like them. It is not by learning some magic charm, however that we are going to acquire this power. Among flowers the rose has a most magnetic personality. Think of the personality of a rose that has just come to blossoming! A man filled with criminal intent is passing by. Suddenly the fragrance of a rose arrests him, the beauty of it hypnotizes him and for the moment he forgets his evil nature and purpose. Similarly there are people who have so conserved their energy, who have brought themselves to such a state of co-ordination, that they are full of power—power of body, power of mind, power of soul. The greatest power we can attain is through introspection. Now, whenever there is any problem, we think some one else must solve it for us; we feel we are not capable of solving it alone. But have we tried? Let a man search within his own self and find his own capabilities; he will become so poised and concentrated that nothing will be able

to thwart him. You may complain: "When I try to concentrate, everything distracts me, people disturb me." Do not let any one disturb you. What did Christ teach? "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."

These words are full of mystic significance. The Yogis know the secret. Whenever they have any difficulty, they do not merely say: "I am helpless!" They withdraw within themselves and try to find the source of their strength. There is an undiscovered country within us. Introspection opens the way to it. The average person when he closes his eyes in meditation says: "I see nothing but darkness; I am suffocated; I am bored! Let me go and be entertained by some one." The man of introspection, on the other hand, as soon as he goes within himself, becomes so interested that he does not want to come out from his meditation, and only does so in order to help others. As we have read in the Upanishads, the practice of Yoga kindles a fire within and this fire gradually creates a new kind of body altogether—" . . there is no longer illness, old age, or pain for him who has obtained a body produced by the fire of Yoga." Fire of Yoga,—that is a very graphic description—fire of wisdom, fire of spiritual union! It is like a fire; it burns up all dross, all that is injurious. Do not be afraid of it.

Here you may ask, "Should every one, then, practise Yoga?" There are those who cannot practise it. The Bhagavad-Gita says: "The practice of Yoga is not for him who eats too much." The man who eats too much is a slave of his greed; he has no self-control. One who eats too much cannot assimilate his food and is bound to

be sick. He cannot think of anything but his body. Nor is the practice of Yoga, says the Gita, "for him who does not eat at all." This is a very, very practical point. We cannot hope to learn the higher balance until we have learned balance in our every day life and living. Do not think that Yoga is something that we put away in the closet. When Christ said: "Be perfect as your Father in heaven," it was more than merely a pretty speech. He meant it as something for us to attain, and through its attainment to realize the fullness of life. It means that everything we do,—eating, drinking, sleeping, working, has a significance, and if we learn how to do these things properly, with moderation and tranquillity, we shall be practising what Yoga teaches. We do not need to go through any intricate ways of breathing, or posture, or any kind of complicated mental processes. It is something we all can practise, and if we practise it successfully, the results are certain. Until we learn to have moderation and balance how can we expect to find happiness or any kind of satisfaction? It does not make any difference what path we follow if we follow it with faith, ardor and right intention; otherwise it does not give us anything.

We cannot get something for nothing. We cannot lead a disorderly, careless, chaotic life and expect to have mental co-ordination and a body which is full of health and spiritual beauty. That would be impossible. We can obtain these but we must practise co-ordination in our life. Our thoughts and actions must become harmonious. It is not a question of spending a great deal of time. That is the first thing you are going to say, that you are working people, busy people with many obligations. It does not take much time to think a holy thought. It does not

take a tremendous amount of study to rid yourself of all ignoble feelings. It is a question of the quality of mind, and that is something we can all cultivate.

For those who have a little time, there are three points of the day which are beneficial for spiritual practice: early morning, noon and the evening hour. At dawn, light bursts upon us and the darkness vanishes. That hour is very propitious for concentration and spiritual work. At noon two points of the day meet, and at the evening time, light fades and the darkness comes. These times have a natural tendency to tranquillity, calmness and power. Take advantage of them as the Yogis do. There is, however, no hour in day or night, or any time of life when we may not put into practice these great truths and benefit by them. Let us safeguard ourselves! Preventive method is the best method. If we learn to work in rhythm, not in rhythm and do everything with a certain balance, we shall find great success no matter where we are placed. The result is skillfullness in action. With the least effort we shall do the greatest amount. That is what follows when we have learned the secret of the Yoga system. It teaches us how to discriminate; it makes us intuitive; it makes us perceptive, and who will not benefit by these qualities? Yoga is the practical application of spiritual principles. What Christ teaches, what Buddha teaches, what St. Francis taught and practised we find contained in the great Yoga system of India.

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The bravest thing any man does is to conquer himself—to bring his appetites into subjection and to hold them in moderation. Self-control in the direction of abstemiousness is the masterly achievement of life.—*Anonymous.*

## UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

A man contains all that is needful to his government within himself. He is made a law unto himself. All real good or evil that can befall him must be from himself. The purpose of life seems to be to acquaint a man with himself. He is not to live to the future as described to him, but to live to the real future by living to the real present. The highest revelation is that God is in every man.—*Emerson.*

We cannot honestly say that there is any wide difference between the Brahman, Sufi, or Christian mystic at their best. What is essential is the way the mystic feels about his Deity, and about his own relation with it; for this adoring and all-possessing consciousness of the rich and complete divine life over against the self's life, and of the possible achievement of a level of being, a sublimation of the self, wherein we are perfectly united with it, may fairly be written down as a necessary element of all mystical life.—*Evelyn Underhill.*

Threefold is the way to God. The first is the way of purification, in which the mind is inclined to learn true wisdom. The second is the way of illumination, in which the mind by contemplation is kindled to the burning of love. The third is the way of union, in which the mind by understanding, reason and spirit is led up by God alone.—*Dionysius the Areopagite.*

As the night keeps hidden in its gloom the petition for light, even thus in the depth of my unconsciousness rings the cry—I want Thee, only Thee.—*Rabindranath Tagore.*

Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.

—*St. Paul*

## FROM THE HEIGHTS

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time the passing of one group or another was of small significance, in no wise affecting the world as a whole. The little people were too far apart to feel the consequences of the minor obliterations. Slowly out of the chaos the units became interdependent, the races began to unite, the responsibilities of each increasing as the mutual interests expanded. Figuratively, the world became smaller and the sword longer. Each unit began to feel the effect of conflict. The gaps between countries disappeared; the strong came to the weak and possessed them. Foreign armies conquered other lands. Flames were visible across the seas. War, destruction, hatred took the saddle at the peak of civilization. To-day a shot fired in any country is not only heard but felt around the world. The distant tread of soldiers shakes the whole globe, affects all its inhabitants, disorganizes all classes, saps the vitality of every nation. A declaration of war is an earthquake that racks both hemispheres. We have remade the world, ripped it asunder and re-made it time and again. We have improved and progressed and developed, but we have failed to make the most of ourselves. We have explored everything except our consciences. We are still a horde of pigmies, selfish and envious, each striving for individual supremacy.

"We have come through the ages worshipping in our different ways the Supreme Being that best suits our multiplied faiths, but the sum total of our occupation of this shrinking planet is a pitiful demonstration of weakness. It is not the geographical but the moral limitations of the world that must be charted, and the really great explorers will be those who find the way to universal reconstruction; the first step in which is the abolition of war, and the needless destruction of human life."

He was looking at me quite earnestly now.

"Those were the thoughts that occupied my mind May ninth as I flew over the north pole and on the way back to my native land."

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## THE SPACES OF THE BLUE

*By Sadee Rathbone*

A tiny speck up in the sky,
A flash of sun on out-spread wings,
A steady flight up to the high,
An airplane soaring as it sings
Its song of freedom from the earth—
A paean of joy for its new birth
Into the spaces of the blue.

It fronts a cloud-pack dark and grim;
It holds its course; it enters in—
Is lost to view, and now my fear
Is that it may not reappear.
But there emerging, unafraid,
It triumphs, showing it is made
To climb the spaces of the blue.

Drive on, dear soul, into the skies
Of life! Experience! Have no fear!
Confront—drive through! Your eyes
Must steady be,—heart full of cheer.
Head up—hands firm! Oh! now it's night!
Hold hard—God helps! Ah! now it's light!
You've climbed the spaces of the blue.

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True glory lies in the silent conquest of ourselves.

—*Thompson*

## JOURNEY'S END

*A Parable by Sri Ramakrishna*

A man was cutting wood in a forest when he was accosted by a holy man. The holy man said, "Go on ahead." The wood-cutter came back home with his load of wood, wondering why the sage had bade him go ahead. Thus passed away some days. One day he was put in mind of the holy man's words and he made up his mind that day to go farther on with a view to cut wood. What was his surprise to find that portion of the forest full of sandal trees! Of course he brought cart-loads of sandal-wood to market and soon grew enormously rich. In this way again some days passed when he was once more reminded of the injunction laid upon him by the holy man, viz., "Go on ahead." So again did he form the resolution of going into the forest and of making a further advance. What was his surprise to find a silver mine close to the bed of a river! This he had never looked for even in his dreams. He worked at the mine and brought away tons of silver with which he made a splendid bargain. It is needless to say that after this he turned out to be one of the millionaires of the day. But once more, after the lapse of some years did the holy man's words come back to his mind. He thought within himself, "The holy man did not bid me stop at the silver mine but he told me to go on ahead." This time he went across the river and came upon a gold mine and finally a diamond mine!

So go ahead, my children, and never lose sight of your Ideal! Go onward and never stop until you have reached the Goal. Reaching a particular stage, do not run away with the idea that you have come to your journey's end. Work is only the first stage of the journey. Bear in mind that doing acts *unattached* is exceedingly difficult; that

therefore the path of love is better suited to this age, and that work, even if unattached is not the end of your life but only a means to the end. So march on and never halt till you have come up to the great Ideal of your life—*the seeing of God.*

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## THE INDIAN FOREST SCHOOL

By Forest Cooke

(The writer of this article is an instructor in one of the best-known boys' schools in America. Recently he had the privilege of visiting the Ashram established by Mahatma Gandhi, near Ahmadabad, India, and of staying some little time at Santiniketan, Dr. Tagore's Ashram at Bholpur. His educational experience in the West makes his survey of the Indian Ashram, or Forest School, peculiarly valuable and timely.)

When I was in India I was told that an Ashram was a forest school, but I soon discovered that the term had to be considerably qualified to be understood by American ears. "Forest" did not necessarily mean a shady or untrodden wilderness. Tagore's Ashram at Santiniketan is situated in a small and open grove on a rather infertile plain. In the dry winter season of my visit one could look for miles over the brown expanse broken only here and there by toddy palms or distant tree-fringed tanks and peasant villages; and Gandhi's Ashram near Ahmadabad, though on the banks of a river, was almost barren. Nor were these places schools in our sense. For in spite of the efforts of liberal educators "school" to us is a somewhat formal idea, generally implying a harnessing process, so that we speak of a person as being unschooled or well-schooled, whereas the Indian communities were more like informal gatherings of kindred souls.

Another definition of an Ashram is really more appropriate: a place where a learner lives with his *guru.* The teacher follows calmly his own life, knowing, if he is wise, that he can seldom teach directly. Doctrines that

seem to him important, if he seeks to instill them out of their time, are either misinterpreted or slide off the pupil's mind like rain from a well-thatched roof; but if he lives his doctrines, a disciple will absorb whatever that particular disciple is ready for. Since there must be a placid atmosphere to allow a natural flow between two minds, the Ashram should be at least figuratively in the forest. It must offer withdrawal and peace (indeed Santiniketan means "the abode of peace") away from the distractions of the market-place; but the Indians themselves have shown us that the properly trained mind can withdraw into an inner serenity without the outward condition of solitude. Still, to borrow a musical expression, outer conditions normally determine the key of thought; and it was natural that at sunset, looking out from under the sal trees at Santiniketan across the wide unsettled plain, the elder Tagore should have felt enlightenment. And it is fitting that friends and pupils of his son should likewise find it there.

One had a feeling that the teachers were also learning. Many of them served without pay. The heart of the place was an Englishman, dressed to be sure like a Hindu (what little difference nationality makes!) who lived in literal Christianity, without money or worldly ambitions, his life actually, not theoretically, determined by love. There was a dark-skinned scholar who knew more about Kabir than any one else in India, still delving in that mine from which he has brought us so many treasures. There was an ascetic with a Mohammedan name who spent what months he could afford to be away from his trade in a distant city in studying and teaching, making Shakespeare glow with a fervor and mystery which Anglo-Saxons hardly suspect. There was a Frenchman who was

finding out; the fact that he had already written several books marked no finality. There was an artist who learned as he taught. There were scores of other beautiful characters, many of them too shy in the presence of harsh occidentals to let out their secrets, but one felt they were all seeking to be wise—not Faust-like in a forbidden way, not pedantically ill-flavored with vanity and self-satisfaction, but with a growth of soul and humility of spirit, so that when men asked they could truly answer, increasing not only the truth but the serenity of those they met. As a matter of fact we can not help growing wiser as we get older, but it is often with only a worldly wisdom, a reflected ghost of truth. These men went deeper. They did not deny the reality of the material world; rather they affirmed the reality around us; but they saw that our perception of it is incomplete. Stones, trees, and men are more, not less, than they appear. To discover this "more" is the hope of a teacher.

Of the boys and girls at Tagore's Ashram I feel less qualified to speak, but I suspect that boys and girls are everywhere much the same. Theirs is an opening world. If the bare feet, the unbleached dhotis, the colored shawls, and the brown complexions make strange impressions, these are only pictures. The reality is underneath. The Indian children certainly showed a gentleness with which we are unfamiliar in America, but in their music, their drama, and their play they revealed the same vividness of life which characterizes all youth. They were given much freedom, were unhurried, learning more as plants learn. If there was less sense of time or keeping of appointments, less fear than we have of the importance of examinations, less worship of the goddess of efficiency, I am not sure they were altogether the losers. They might

not devise a satisfactory solution of India's political problems, but their lives would be full of nobility. Did not Kabir say, "Stay where you are and all things shall come to you in time?"

The Ashram seemed to be the incarnation of certain high ideas of internationalism, of co-operation, of right living, of love; a place not adapted so much to the spreading of facts and methods as to the acquiring of a point of view. This was even more apparent at Gandhi's Ashram, where amidst the spinning wheels that were to usher in *swaraj* the idea of the leader was like a driving wind. The students were after the spirit of the teacher; their attention was on the larger aspect. Trifles were dust, to be washed off at the nearest brook.

As I visited Swami Paramananda's Ashrama in California, so far from the source of the philosophy which prompted it, growing so bravely in a civilization which till recently has been at best indifferent, I was struck by the similarity between its spirit and that of its distant kindred. There were different trees, different costumes, an absence of children, the agreeable satisfaction of American organization, electricity and radio; yet it remains a forest school where learners live with their chosen *guru*. In the words of Plotinus, "The teaching is only of whither and how to go; the vision itself is the work of him who hath willed to see."

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If you urge that I am young and tender, and that the time for seeking wisdom is not yet, then you should know that to seek true religion there never is a time not fit.

—*To-sho-king-tsan-king*

Truth is a thing immortal, and so perpetual.

—*Epictetus.*

# A NEW LIGHT ON THE "IDYLS"

*By Mildred Phillips*

(Concluded from the December issue)

Through the medium of these exalted verses Tennyson discloses not only the wide range of his reading and study, but also his intuitive understanding of the thought-life and heart-life of times and peoples different from his own. That he was a student of the ancient Vedic scriptures of India is probable since in many places in these poems the philosophy of life as set forth in the aims and purposes of King Arthur and his Table Round run closely parallel to Vedantic ideals. When Queen Bellicent asks of Merlin the truth concerning Arthur's birth and questions him as to

> "The shining dragon and the naked child
> Descending in the glory of the seas,"

Merlin makes answer,

> "Truth is this to me, and that to thee."

Is not this an echo of the Vedic words, "That which exists is one, sages call it variously," or as it is usually said, "Truth is one, men call it by various names?"

It is upon the ancient concept of Karma, the law of cause and effect in human action, that the poet is turning his thoughts when he says in *Enid*,

> "How many among us at this very hour
> Do forge a life-long trouble for ourselves;"

and it is with that same law in mind that King Arthur says to Guinevere,

> "The wrath which forced my thoughts on that fierce law,
> The doom of treason and the flaming death . . . is past."

Launcelot encourages Gareth who is grieving, in these words,

> "Victor from vanquished issues at the last
> And overthrower from being overthrown."

These are poetical versions of the immortal truth of the *Dhammapada*, "If a man speaks or acts with evil intent, pain follows him as the wheel follows the foot of the ox which draws the carriage." And Buddha says again: "The fruits of his good works bid him welcome who has walked in the path of righteousness."

The ancient Rishis taught that the law of Karma is operative not only in this life, but extends its influence for good or ill to the lives that come after this, and that the soul takes new bodies in succession to avail itself of fresh opportunities for retrieving its mistakes. Tennyson refers to the law of reincarnation several times in these poems. As King Arthur departs into the dawn, Sir Bedivere says what we have already quoted:

> "He passes to be king among the dead.
> And after healing of his grievous wound,
> He comes again."

Queen Bellicent says:

> "Merlin hath sworn
> Though men may wound him that he will not die
> But pass, again to come."

And Guinevere in her high bower watching the king ride out of the city, muses thus:

> "Where is he who knows ?
> From the great deep to the great deep he goes."

In *The Holy Grail* when dealing with the question of reincarnation, Tennyson acknowledges the Eastern source of this philosophy. Telling of the re-birth of a Divine Incarnation, the holy hermit says to Sir Percivale:

> "O son, thou hast not true humility,
> The highest virtue, mother of them all;
> For when the Lord of all things made himself
> Naked of glory for his mortal change,
> 'Take thou my robe,' she said, 'for all is thine,'

**And all her form shone forth with sudden light**
**So that the angels were amazed; and she**
**Followed him down, and like a flying star,**
**Led on the grey-haired wisdom of the East."**

The ancient sages of India found that this "grey-haired wisdom" had its primal source in silence. It is the flowering of thought, nurtured and brought to maturity in the silence of ancient Vedic forests. Sri Krishna, the blessed Lord says: "I am the silence of secrets; I am the wisdom of the wise . . . . He who is alike in praise and blame, is silent, content with everything, homeless, steady-minded, such a devoted soul is dear to me."

And Kabir, poet and mystic of India, says: "This is the ultimate Word—knowing it the ignorant man becomes wise and the wise man becomes speechless and silent."

The same philosophy is voiced by Merlin when he says:

**"Who are wise in love, love most, say least,"**

and Vivien answers:

**"Silence is wisdom; I am silent then."**

Two conceptions of this immemorial wisdom that link themselves together in continuity and are emphasized in all Vedic teaching are the ideals of service to others and the oneness of all living creatures. We read in the Isa Upanishad:

"He who perceives all beings in the Self, for him how can there be delusion or grief when he sees this oneness everywhere?"

In the Bhagavad-Gita we find almost the same expression: "He looks everywhere with the eyes of equality seeing the Self in all beings." And again in the Gita: "He who looks upon pleasure and pain everywhere with the same regard as when it is applied to himself, that one is highest." The keynote of the purpose of King Ar-

thur's Round Table was service to others. King Arthur mourns:

> "How often, O my knights,
> Your places being vacant at my side,
> The chance of noble deeds will come and go
> Unchallenged."

The wise Merlin gives this teaching:

> "Fame, with men,
> Being but ampler means to serve mankind,
> Should work as vassal to the larger love
> That dwarfs the petty love of one to one."

The attendant idea of oneness is expressed by Queen Bellicent when she says to King Leodogran:

> "And when he spake and cheered his Table Round
> With large, divine and comfortable words
> Beyond my tongue to tell thee—I beheld
> From eye to eye through all the Order, flash
> A momentary likeness of the king."

Again King Arthur says to his knights:

> "For good ye are and bad, and like to coins,
> Some true, some light, but every one of you
> Stamped with the image of the king."

The Bhagavad-Gita compares wisdom to a sword: "Therefore cutting asunder with the sword of wisdom, this doubt of Self, etc." The Lady of the Lake who symbolizes Divine Wisdom presents a sword to King Arthur by which he shall become victor in all his conflicts. This sword is called Excalibur, "the blade so bright that men are blinded by it," and upon one side was "graven in the oldest tongue of all this world, "(Sanskrit?) " 'Take me!' " and upon the other "in the speech ye speak yourself, 'Cast me away!' " And Merlin counsels him:

> "Take thou and strike
> The time to cast away is yet far off."

In Indian tradition, those who set themselves apart for

holy living bind themselves by vows of purity of life and devoted service to others. Does not this Order, made up of monks consecrated to high ideals, find a counterpart in King Arthur's knights of the Round Table?

"A Table Round
That was to be for love of God and man
And noble deeds, the flower of all the world."

King Arthur says:

"My knights are sworn to vows
Of utter hardihood, utter gentleness
And uttermost obedience to the King."

And in his last speech to the queen:

"I made them lay their hands in mine and swear
To reverence the king as if he were
Their conscience and their conscience as their king,
To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,
To speak no slander; no, nor listen to it,
To lead sweet lives in purest chastity."

Queen Bellicent in describing the ceremony of the knighting, says:

"Then the king in low deep tones
And simple words of great authority
Bound them by so straight vows . . . . .
That when they rose, knighted, from kneeling,
Some were pale as at the passing of a ghost,
Some flushed, and others dazed as one who wakes
Half blinded by the coming of a light."

Gareth saw

"in all the listening eyes
Of those tall knights . . . . .
Clear honor shining like the dewy star
Of dawn."

Balan says:

"Bound are they to speak no evil."

and as Pelleas came from the consecration of his vows, we are told:

"The men who met him rounded on their heels

**And wondered after him because his face**
**Shone like the countenance of a priest of old**
**Against the flame about a sacrifice**
**Kindled by fire from heaven."**

In this poetical allegory evil seemingly triumphs over good, but King Arthur at the last illustrates the age-old teaching of the *Dhammapada*, "Evil is not conquered by evil, evil is always conquered by good. Hatred is not overcome by hatred, hatred is overcome by love," for after Guinevere has wrecked his life, overthrown his kingdom, undermined his Order of the Round Table and brought to naught all his high purposes and ideals, he yet can say:

**"Lo, I forgive thee as eternal God forgives.**
**Do thou for thine own soul the rest."**

He gives love for hate, faith for faithlessness, good for evil and he turns the seeming defeat of truth and right into victory. By this triumph the soul of man is turned to the Infinite for its highest ideal, exemplified in this king who has

**"Wrought with human hands the creed of creeds."**

Such work cannot die. As Tennyson says in the Epilogue to the "Idyls," "The goal of this great world lies beyond sight," and what it will mean to the world of men in ages to come is prophesied by the king himself as he passes out:

**"The old order changeth, yielding place to new**
**And God fulfils Himself in many ways.**
**. . . . More things are wrought by prayer**
**Than this world dreams of . . . . .**
**For so the whole round world is every way**
**Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."**

---

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.—*Solomon.*

## THE SOUL'S WAY TO GOD.

*By Jacob Boehme*

The Disciple said to the Master: "How may I attain to the heavenly life, that I may see God and hear Him speak?"

The Master said: "If thou couldest enter for a moment into that wherein no creature dwelleth, then Thou wouldest hear what God speaketh."

The Disciple said: "Is that near or far?"

The Master said: "It is in thyself, and if thou couldest be silent for an hour from all thy thinking and willing, thou wouldest hear the unspeakable words of God."

The Disciple said: "How shall I hear if I do thus?"

The Master said: "If thou desist from the thinking and willing of thy self-hood, the eternal hearing, seeing, and speaking will reveal itself in thee, and God will be seen in thee. Thine own hearing, willing and seeing keepeth thee from seeing and hearing God."

The Disciple said: "As I am in a state of nature, how may I attain to the source of the heavenly, without a disruption of nature?"

The Master said: To that belong three things. The first is, that thou deliver thy will to God and bury thyself in the depths of His loving kindness.

"The second is, that thou hate thine own will and refrain from doing that which it desireth. The third is, that thou place thyself under the Cross, that so thou mayest be able to support all the attacks of nature. And if thou so doest, God will communicate with thee and will lead thy resigned will into the source of the heavenly; so wilt thou hear what God would speak in thee."

---

Happiness is the union of ourselves with God.—*Pascal.*

## REPORT

Swami Paramananda sailed for India, Dec. 12th, on the Dollar Line Steamship, President Monroe. The days immediately prior to his departure were filled with activities and were marked by one soul-stirring experience. As his original plan was to leave on the 5th, the Sunday of Dec. 4th was announced as his farewell Sunday, with special morning and afternoon Services at the Cloister, while a luncheon cooked by the Swami's own hand was to be served at the Guest House. All the offerings of the day were to go towards the building of the "Temple of the Universal Spirit," the ground for which, adjacent to the Cloister, was consecrated last Easter. For months the Swami had pored over plans with Mr. Constantine Hillman, the architect, until a result had been achieved, satisfying in its beauty and simplicity. Thus on Saturday eve, as he stirred the large cooking pots in preparation for the next day's feast, there must have been a sense of fulfillment in his heart—fulfillment of a dream of great unity, of tolerance based on the oneness of God and the oneness of man.

No high ideal, however, comes easily to birth. There is always struggle in the inner worlds, and sometimes it seems as if the very forces of nature combined to overthrow it. So it happened that as the Swami stirred the *kitcherie*, a sudden glow of flame was seen above an adjacent hill—red sparks rising into the sunset sky. Fire! Fearful menace in these mountains with their blanket of brush made dry as tinder by the summer sun! Fire which travels with unbelievable speed, going miles in a few minutes! Fire which even now was leaping towards the Ashrama out of the growing dusk! Then a strange thing occurred, just as in a play where the stage is set. All at

once, with the vast spaces of the desert behind it, a fierce unrestrained wind came sweeping across the Ashrama and flung itself against the encroaching flames, which in a brief space had turned the lower end of La Crescenta Valley into a scene from Dante's Inferno, and which, leaping across three hundred feet of brush, had ignited the Verdugo Hills on the opposite side of the Valley and transformed them into living volcanoes. The hundreds of fire-fighters who arrived could do nothing in the face of those mighty windswept flames. Knowing this, and knowing that because of the wind, and because of Something far greater, the Ashrama was safe, the Swami went on stirring his cooking pots for a time. Orders went forth from the kitchen, orders of calmness and self-control, of strength and efficiency in the organization of the Ashrama forces. Later the Swami went out to his workers where they watched the fire, in defiance of the wind, creep up the Sierra Madre hills towards the Ashrama, threatening a great Sanitarium which lay in their path. Sometimes the men workers put themselves in immediate physical peril, rushing in where they might easily have been cut off by the flames.

What words can convey it? A wild scene of terrible beauty and desolation, of element arrayed against element in some gigantic struggle. No one seeing it could ever forget it, yet for those who were with the Swami, one picture stands out supreme—the picture of him and his little group, sitting silent on an exposed hill-top, sitting in prayer—prayer for all that lay in the path of the flames—while the wind flung cruel hand-fulls of stinging gravel into their eyes and against their cheeks, pummeling and beating them, even while it defended them. Perhaps it is after all, an inner picture, a picture from the

Upanishads of *Brahman*, the Supreme, holding a straw in His hand, which neither wind nor fire could destroy because of the One who held it. And as they sat upon the hillside, the menacing flames gave way, died down, flickered into extinction as the wind carried the main body of the fire farther and farther away.

There were those among the workers who kept watch all night, but even those who slept were conscious of the red glow beneath their eyelids. The next day dawned fair with little trace of fire visible from the Ashrama, the encircling hills shutting out the ruin. The wind had so abated that out-door Services were possible, and many people came in spite of the fear that they might be drafted as fire-fighters. Save for the fact that some eyes were red and scorched, neither the Swami nor his workers bore trace of fatigue. At the Services the Swami put his whole soul into the appeal he made for co-operation in building the Temple, that every one might be blessed by having a part in it. For it is indeed a blessing to share in bringing about the realization of a great and universal ideal. The Temple must be and should be the expression of many hearts; it should be and will be. The work on it will go forward while the Swami is absent—for it was his great wish to find it well along on his return—and like the cathedrals of old, it will be built almost entirely by consecrated hands, from the architect down to the last fitter of stone. May many share in this holy task, and bring their offerings, great or small, for its fulfillment!

During the Swami's absence, Services and Classes will be conducted at the Ashrama by Srimati Gayatri Devi, and at the Vedanta Centre of Boston, by Sister Daya.

A report of the Christmas services at both the Boston Centre and the Ashrama will be given in the February issue.

FEB 14 1928

LUME XVII NUMBER 2

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

# VEDANTA MONTHLY

# Message of the East



February, 1928

# Man His Own Redeemer

Issued by

ANANDA-ASHRAMA

LA CRESCENTA, L. A. CO., CALIF.

(Extension of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, Established 1900)

Entered as second class matter, Feb. 14, 1924, at the Post Office at La Crescenta, Calif. Box 85, under act of March 3, 1879

Accepted for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized June 17, 1921.

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SINGLE COPIES, 25c $2.00 A YEAR

Published Monthly Except in August and September

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# *MESSAGE OF THE EAST*

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

"Light shall come again from the East."
—Tyndall.

Published Monthly except in August and September

Vol. XVII. February, 1928 No. 2


## GRIEVE NOT

*By Swami Paramananda*

Turn thy face to Me and grieve not.
Why dost thou fear, My child?
Fear not, but look to Me:
I will give thee comfort;
I will dry thy tears with My hand of love
And put on thy countenance a radiant smile.
I am the Spirit of joy;
Where I am there is no sadness.
I am the perpetual springtime;
I am the sweetness of love;
I am the essence of life, residing in all
living things.
I am in thee now and evermore.
When wilt thou know this and be free of
fear and doubt?

## MAN HIS OWN REDEEMER

*By Swami Paramananda*

In India there is a simple saying, the tremendous nificance of which I am learning more and more eve- day. It is that a man may have the grace of God, may have the grace of his *guru*— his teacher or ritual guide—he may have the grace of all his friends, yet if he lacks the grace of his own mind, it will il him nothing. We may think, "With God's ce what other do we need?" Yet we find that no tter what blessings we have, if we lack the harmonious operation of our own mind and thought with our as- tions, nothing avails. This is the most definite fact have to face. A man may have fortune, advantages, utiful home and comforts, the friendship of others, if his own mind is dejected, he will know neither e nor happiness. Also he will accomplish nothing. true is the wonderful, prophetic voice we hear from past: "Let a man raise himself by his Self, let him r lower himself; for he alone is the friend of himself he alone is the enemy of himself." A man has no y other than his misdirected self-will. This we have cognize.

nturies of dependence on dogma has not brought rength. It cannot bring us strength, because strength t in the outside world. We must realize this truth. most stupendous things in the outer world can be of to us only as we have the knowledge to direct them erly, otherwise they are drawbacks. See the crea- of science—things of the greatest possible value, et these very things we have turned to our own de- ion and the destruction of others, although science not tell us to employ them this way. If a man has

## UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

He whose mind is subdued and perfectly controlled, is happy.—*Udanavarga.*

Moral life is lived either for the sake of the Divine, or for the sake of men in the world. The moral life which is lived for the sake of the Divine is spiritual life; both appear alike in the external form, but in the internal they are altogether different. One saves man, the other does not save him; for he who lives a moral life for the sake of the Divine, is led by the Divine; but he who lives a moral life for the sake of men in the world, is led by himself.

—*Emanuel Swedenborg.*

If ye help God, God will help you, and will set your feet firm.—*Koran.*

We should live as though we were living in the full blaze of publicity, and think as though any one could look into our innermost consciousness.—*Seneca.*

A creed is a rod
And a crown is of night,
But this thing is God:
To be man with thy might
To grow straight in the strength
of thy spirit
And live out thy life as the light.

—*Swinburne.*

That which is nearest is least observed. The *Atman* (eternal Spirit) is the nearest of the near, therefore the careless and unsteady mind of man gets no clue to It. But the man who is alert, calm, self-restrained and discriminating, ignores the external world and diving more and more into the inner world, realizes the glory of the *Atman* and becomes great.

—*Swami Vivekananda*

## MAN HIS OWN REDEEMER

*By Swami Paramananda*

In India there is a simple saying, the tremendous significance of which I am learning more and more every day. It is that a man may have the grace of God, he may have the grace of his *guru*— his teacher or spiritual guide—he may have the grace of all his friends, and yet if he lacks the grace of his own mind, it will avail him nothing. We may think, "With God's grace what other do we need?" Yet we find that no matter what blessings we have, if we lack the harmonious co-operation of our own mind and thought with our aspirations, nothing avails. This is the most definite fact we have to face. A man may have fortune, advantages, beautiful home and comforts, the friendship of others, but if his own mind is dejected, he will know neither peace nor happiness. Also he will accomplish nothing. How true is the wonderful, prophetic voice we hear from the past: "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." A man has no enemy other than his misdirected self-will. This we have to recognize.

Centuries of dependence on dogma has not brought us strength. It cannot bring us strength, because strength is not in the outside world. We must realize this truth. The most stupendous things in the outer world can be of use to us only as we have the knowledge to direct them properly, otherwise they are drawbacks. See the creations of science—things of the greatest possible value, and yet these very things we have turned to our own destruction and the destruction of others, although science does not tell us to employ them this way. If a man has

not the grace of his own mind, is not uplifted above the lower order of things, whatever he may acquire will be harmful to him. It is not that we should throw away our blessings,—the concepts, the facilities and advantages we are receiving to-day from the achievements of life and science,—but in order to put them to right use we need first of all to know the ordering of our own mind. We know that life is an inevitable fact. We cannot deny the existence of ourselves or of others, or of that great Power which has given us life. That will serve as the foundation of everything.

Whether we cling to orthodox dogma or to some liberal element of faith, what is most vital is how we may bring it to a practical issue and make our life fruitful—how we may eliminate those things which are destructive in human society. But we must begin at home. We may not be able to control what is going on in the outer world, we may not be able to control the mind of a child, because it is outside of us; but we can learn to control our own mind and thoughts. Beginning there, gradually we shall extend our influence to others. For no one can be better, more wholesome and healthy, no one can think loftier thoughts, live and express more beneficent and inspiring ideals of life, without casting a beneficent influence upon the world. No matter how insignificant we may seem, we cannot rise above our helplessness, our inefficiency, and not affect the world in a general way.

Sometimes a man does things which are full of error, but if he brings in an element of self-condemnation or self-pity, if he thinks that he should not show his face or have anything to do with life, he not only is overwhelmed himself, but he throws weight upon the world, the weight of sin, darkness and despair. It is not that people should

go about recklessly, doing what they please, under the plea that there is no sin or sorrow. That is not what is meant. Every one of us may blunder. The child before he learns to walk must fall many times, but through these falls he learns to stand erect. In same way, we may do things we would not think of doing later on, yet these very things play a tremendous part in our evolution. It is not a crime to commit a blunder, even to sin, but it becomes a calamity for the individual if he repeats that blunder, if he does not counteract it by recognizing his power for good. To awaken a man's faith in himself is the greatest service we can render him. With the worst of people—criminals—if we go to them and tell them that they are not low, that they are not lost, are not degraded, but that they are full of the Divine, it will redeem them and lift them up by God's grace. If, however, we destroy their faith in themselves, if we impose thoughts of failure upon them, we but make them greater criminals.

When a man makes his contact with the divine element he is safe, but when he shuts the door, even a Saviour cannot save him. Those who are familiar with the life of Christ say that there were some who shunned Him. They thought he was an element of destruction and so they destroyed him. Not even a Christ can save a man until through his own soul he unveils his own mind. It is not a question of outer ostentation. It is from within we must work. Our measure of success depends on what we have achieved in the life within, and my experience is that no matter how we may condemn society, we shall not correct it by adding to its hopelessness and suffering, but by finding a measure which is corrective, preventive and wholesome, and this we shall find first in our individual life.

Missionaries, priests, ministers want to build up a following, but we need not seek to build up anything if by our own life and thought we do the right thing by our fellow beings, if we practise not destruction but construction. People may not recognize us, but we should not work for recognition or for any petty personal return. This idea of running after heaven is a small thing. A man is afraid of punishment, he wants salvation and seeks to obtain it through some organized religion. After all it is a small idea. Our interest should be in some of those mighty symbolic characters we have in history, who do not want anything for themselves. The story is told of the great king Yudisthira who went on a pilgrimage with only one companion, a dog. Finally he reached the gate of Heaven and was received and welcomed. The sentinels, however, told him that he must abandon the dog because no dog was allowed in the Kingdom of Heaven. He said, "This creature has taken shelter with me, do you think I will forsake it? No. If it cannot enter Heaven, then I will not enter." And what happened? That dog was no other than the Lord Himself, trying in this way to test the strength of the man.

Love, strength, faith, these qualities must become innate. We talk of them and write about them, but it is only when they have permeated our lives that they become powerful. If we only speak of them and read of them, they amount to nothing. We cannot gain them through calculation; they are principles we should feel. For instance, we say, "I will not speak a harmful word," and the next moment something overthrows us. A business man tries to regulate these things in his life, and when he fails, he calls it an accident. There is, however, no such thing as an accident. If we live in harmony with

spiritual principles, with love in our hearts, such things will not happen. This cut and dried idea of salvation! If our mind is free—liberated from the limitations of self, doubt and self-pity,—we are liberated now. If we have the light of God in our heart and soul, we radiate that light. We have no right to confine it in a little place, saying, "God's light is here," or "there." It is everywhere. Let us remind ourselves that it is everywhere, and as that element radiates from our life we shall find that there is no one who is without it.

To condemn another is to condemn ourselves. When you have been unloving or tried to maltreat some one, who is the loser? You, yourself. It is better that we should abandon these measures. Who are we to judge? Our principal work is to keep things in order in our own house, to do with efficiency, with our heart and thought and mind, all that we have to do, for therein dwells our ideal, the ideal that man's body is a temple of God. We discredit that temple when in our thought we do violence to others. When a man has hateful or angry feelings, it is he who suffers because he makes his ideal suffer. Why should we lower ourselves by thinking thoughts that do not belong to us? Thoughts are starting points. The thought of sin may be a starting point for degradation. When a man blunders, we should try to lift him. If we have done something unworthy, we should counteract it by doing something good.

Man is his own redeemer. I do not mean by this, however, that he can redeem himself if he stands separated from the Source of his being. He is his own redeemer, but only as he believes in God, in Truth—call it what you will. Through this belief he will be transformed. His life will be filled with mildness and gentleness, while

harshness, dissonance, inharmony—all the things that make for misery—will drop away from him. Let us try and see if this is not true. "At our present stage of evolution," you may say, "these things do not coincide with our experiences." Of course not, because our experiences are on another plane. We must lift our life and experience to where lie the real strength and inspiration of man. Then we shall be re-made and renewed, then shall we recognize a light other than that which has come to us from earthly source.

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## OUR GOD-GIVEN OPPORTUNITIES

*From "My Religion" by Helen Keller*

Once affliction was looked upon as a punishment from God—a burden to be borne passively and piously. The only idea of helping the victims of misfortune was to shelter them and leave them to meditate and live as contentedly as possible in the valley of the shadow. But now we understand that a sequestered life without aspiration enfeebles the spirit. It is exactly the same as with the body. The muscles must be used, or they lose their strength. If we do not go out of our limited experience somehow and use our memory, understanding and sympathy, they become inactive. It is by fighting the limitations, temptations, and failures of the world that we reach our highest possibilities. That is what Swedenborg calls renouncing the world and worshipping God.

Sick or well, blind or seeing, bond or free, we are here for a purpose and however we are situated, we please God better with useful deeds than with many prayers or pious resignation. The temple or church is empty unless the good of life fills it. It is not the stone walls that make it small or large, but the brave soul's light shining round

about it. The altar is holy if only it represents the altar of our heart upon which we offer the only sacrifices ever commanded—the love that is stronger than hate and the faith that overcometh doubt.

A simple, childlike faith in a Divine Friend solves all the problems that come to us by land or sea. Difficulties meet us at every turn. They are the accompaniment of life. They result from combinations of character and individual idiosyncrasies. The surest way to meet them is to assume that we are immortal, and that we have a Friend who "slumbers not, nor sleeps," and who watches over us and guides us—if we but let Him. With this thought strongly intrenched in our inmost being, we can do almost anything we wish and need not limit the things we think. We may help ourselves to all the beauty of the universe that we can hold. For every hurt there is recompense of tender sympathy. Out of pain grow the violets of patience and sweetness, the vision of the Holy Fire that touched the lips of Isaiah and kindled his life into spirit, and the contentment that comes with the evening star. The marvellous richness of human experience would lose something of rewarding joy if there were no limitations to overcome. The hilltop hour would not be half so wonderful if there were no dark valley to traverse.

I have never believed that my limitations were in any sense punishments or accidents. It I had held such a view, I could never have exerted the strength to overcome them. It has always seemed to me that there is a very special significance in the words of "the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews": "If we are chastened, God dealeth with us as with sons." Swedenborg's teachings bear me out in this view. He defines the greatly misunderstood word chastening or chastisement, not as punishment, but

as training, discipline, refinement of the soul. . . . Now, limitations of all kinds are forms of chastening to encourage self-development and true freedom. They are tools put into our hands to hew away the stone and flint which keep the higher gifts hidden away in our being. They tear away the bandage of indifference from our eyes, and we behold the burdens others are carrying, and we learn to help them by yielding to the dictates of a pitying heart.

The example of the newly blinded man is so concrete, I wish to use it as a type for all life-training. When he first loses his sight, he thinks there is nothing left for him but heartache and despair. He feels shut out from all that is human. Life to him is like the ashes on a cold hearth. The fire of ambition is quenched. The light of hope is gone out. The objects in which he once took delight seem to thrust out sharp edges at him as he gropes his way about. Even those who love him act unwittingly as an irritant to his feelings because he can no longer give them the support of his labour. Then comes some wise teacher and friend and assures him he can work with his hands and to a considerable degree train his hearing to take the place of sight. Often the stricken man does not believe it, and in his despair interprets it as a mockery. Like a drowning person he strikes blindly at any one that tries to save him. Nevertheless the sufferer must be urged onward in spite of himself, and when he once realizes that he can put himself again in connection with the world, and fulfil tasks worthy of a man, a being he did not dream of before unfolds itself within him. If he is wise, he discovers at last that happiness has very little to do with outward circumstances, and he treads his dark way with a firmer will than he ever felt in the light.

Likewise those who have been mentally blinded "in the

gradual furnace of the world" can, and must, be pressed to look for new capabilities within themselves and work out new ways to happiness. They may even resent faith that expects nobler things from them. They say in effect, "I will be content if you take me for what I am—dull, or mean, or hard, or selfish." But it is an affront to them and to the eternal dignity of man so to acquiesce. How often it comes over us that there is much in us which our nearest friends cannot know—more than we dare or care or are able to lay bare, more of feeling, more of power, more of manhood. How little we know ourselves! We need limitations and temptations to open our inner selves, dispel our ignorance, tear off disguises, throw down old idols, and destroy false standards. Only by such rude awakenings can we be led to dwell in a place where we are less cramped, less hindered by the ever-insistent External. Only then do we discover a new capacity and appreciation of goodness and beauty and truth.

From such experience we may gain a wonderful interpretation of the Lord's words: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me." We may know that in every limitation we overcome, and in the higher ideals we thus attain, the whole kingdom of Love and Wisdom is present. In this way we learn that the real way to grow is by aspiring beyond our limitations, by wishing sublimely for great things and striving to achieve them. We grow in our increasing consciousness of the deeper meaning of the outer life in which we have always lived.

The eye grows by learning to see more in particular objects. To man's physical sight the earth looks flat, and the stars are the same to us that they were to the ancients. Yet science has opened up infinite new won-

ders and glories in these phenomena! A child sees in the things about him only what he wants or does not want, but when a Newton recognizes the falling of an apple as the expression of a universal force in Nature, he sees far beyond ordinary sight. It is the same with our spirits. We grow as we discern more fully the possibilities of new life wrapped up in daily contacts. But when we forget or ignore this vital fact, the senses lead us astray. That is why limitations are necessary to bring before us the greatness of inner life offered us in the circumstances of our lives, and show us our God-given opportunities.

We can decide to let our trials crush us, or we can convert them to new forces of good. We can drift along with general opinion, or we can throw ourselves upon the guidance of the soul within and steer courageously towards truth. We cannot tell from the outside whether our experiences are really blessings or not. They are cups of poison or cups of healthful life, according to what we ourselves put into them. The choices offered us are never so much between what we may or may not do, as between the principles from which we act when we are thwarted and limited. Earth is not intended to be an altogether delightful abode any more than it is to be a place of wrath. Since the soil brings forth thistles, and roses have thorns, why should man's life not have its trials? It is not strange or cruel. It is the urge of God that impels us to enlarge our lives and keep strong for that higher destiny which cannot be accomplished within the limits of earth. Only by striving for what is beyond us do we win expansion and joy.

Let us, then, take up that limitation which each one has, and follow the example of Him who bore upon His frail human shoulders the cross of the world, that He

might become a luminous and inspiring influence, communicating life-giving thoughts and desires to the weak, the tempted, and the despondent.

## YEARNING

*From "The Allinghams" by May Sinclair*

Out of the darkness, the thick darkness, I cry to thee,
And thou hearest me not.
Thou art hidden in the darkness as a child in the womb,
And none knows the day of thy birth, the bright hour of thy appearing.
The waves of thy darkness go over me;
I look for thee in the depths and I cannot find thee;
I climb all the heights of darkness,
Cliff on cliff, stair on stair,
And I cannot find thee.
Thou movest before me unseen,
Without sound of feet,
Without beating of wings,
A darkness flying in darkness,
And my hands cannot hold thee, or touch
The outermost skirts of thy clothing,
As thou goest by.
I cry aloud my passion in the night,
And thou hearest me not.
Thou hast no dwelling place in my heart,
And my soul must go empty of thee all the day long.
Yet I have seen thy passage in the travelling of a star,
And thy glory in the face of a flower
The beauty of earth is thy garment to cover thee.
But neither star, nor flower, nor beauty of earth contents me;
I long for the heart of thy Godhead.

## THREE MAXIMS

*By Rene Descartes*

In order that I might not remain irresolute in my actions, while reason obliged me to be so in my judgments, and that I might not omit to carry on my life as happily as I could, I formed for myself a code of morals for the time being, which did not consist of more than three or four maxims.

The first was to obey the laws and customs of my country, adhering constantly to the religion in which by God's grace I had been instructed since my childhood. . . .

My second maxim was that of being as firm and resolute in my actions as I could be, and not to follow less faithfully opinions the most dubious—when my mind was once made up regarding them—than if these had been beyond doubt. In this I should be following the example of travellers, who, finding themselves lost in a forest, know that they ought not to wander first to one side and then to the other, nor, still less, to stop in one place; but understand that they should continue to walk as straight as they can in one direction, not diverging for any slight reason, even though it was possibly chance alone that first determined them in their choice. By this means if they do not go exactly where they wish, they will at least arrive somewhere at the end, where probably they will be better off than in the middle of a forest. And thus since often enough in the actions of life no delay is permissible, it is very certain that when it is beyond our power to discern the opinions which carry most truth, we should follow the most probable; and even although we notice no greater probability in the one opinion than in the other, we at least should make up our minds to follow a particular one and afterwards consider it as no longer

doubtful in its relationship to practice, but as very true and very certain, inasmuch as the reason which caused us to determine upon it is known to be so. And henceforward this principle was sufficient to deliver me from all the penitence and remorse which usually affect the mind and agitate the conscience of those weak and vacillating creatures who allow themselves to keep changing their procedure, and practise as good things which they afterwards judge to be evil.

My third maxim was to try always to conquer myself rather than fortune, and to alter my desires rather than change the order of the world, and generally to accustom myself to believe that there is nothing entirely within our power but our own thoughts; so that after we have done our best in regard to the things that are without us, our ill-success cannot possibly be failure on our part. And this alone seemed to me sufficient to prevent my desiring anything in the future beyond what I could actually obtain, hence rendering me content; for since our will does not naturally induce us to desire anything but what our understanding represents to it as in some way possible of attainment, it is certain that if we consider all good things which are outside of us as equally outside of our power, we should not have more regret in resigning those goods which appear to pertain to our birth, when we are deprived of them for no fault of our own, than we have in not possessing the kingdoms of China or Mexico. In the same way, making what is called a virtue out of necessity, we should no more desire to be well if ill, or free, if in prison, than we now do to have our bodies formed of a substance as little corruptible as diamonds, or to have wings to fly with like birds. I allow, however, that to accustom oneself to regard all things from this point of

view requires long exercise and meditation often repeated; and I believe that it is principally in this that is to be found the secret of those philosophers who, in ancient times, were able to free themselves from the empire of fortune, or, despite suffering or poverty, to rival their gods in their happiness. For, ceaselessly occupying themselves in considering the limits which were prescribed to them by nature, they persuaded themselves so completely that nothing was within their own power but their thoughts, that this conviction alone was sufficient to prevent their having any longing for other things. And they had so absolute a mastery over their thoughts that they had some reason for esteeming themselves as more rich and more powerful, and more free and more happy than other men, who, however favoured by nature or fortune they might be, if devoid of this philosophy, never could arrive at all at which they aim.

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The flint on being struck by the steel marvelled greatly, and said to it in a stern voice, "What arrogance prompts you to annoy me? Trouble me not, for you have chosen me by mistake; I have never done harm to any one." To which the steel made answer, "If you will be patient you will see what a marvellous result will issue forth from you." At these words the flint was pacified and patiently endured its martyrdom, and it saw itself give birth to the marvellous element of fire, which, by its potency, became a factor in innumerable things.

This is said for those who are dismayed at the outset of their studies, and then set out to gain the mastery over themselves, and in patience to apply themselves continuously to these studies, from which one sees result things marvellous to relate.—*Leonardo da Vinci.*

## EXALTATION OF THE UPANISHADS

*By Srimati Gayatri Devi*

At the very outset of our consideration of the Upanishads, let us ask ourselves this question: What is peace? Do we really know what peace is? Is it something outside ourselves? Can we attain it by coming to a church and contacting some one who has it? Where can we find it? Some of you will say that you know what peace is,—"When we have not too many difficulties to meet, too many problems to solve, when we have no one to thwart us, we have it." Can we expect not to have misfortune, difficulties and problems? Can we expect the world not to thwart us? We cannot. If we wait for that condition we shall not know any peace at all. There are, however, some people who have great peace and who always carry it even in the chaos and turmoil of the world. How do they keep it? There is a greater peace, perhaps, than we know of, which is born in our soul and which only comes when we know that God is there. That inner, higher peace is born of understanding of life and its meaning; it comes when we take our misfortunes and troubles easily, thinking that the Hand which has often bestowed upon us great blessings has also given us these times of trial, and if we take them easily, surrendering our will to Him, then we can have that peace. Otherwise, if we grudge and grumble, there can be no peace for us. We must all learn to cultivate in our soul that which can carry us under all conditions, in all circumstances. Therefore let us feel within us that great peace which comes from God.

You may wonder why I talk this way when I was going to tell you about the Upanishads. Because to understand something that is so lofty, so great, we must grasp the

significance, the value of this peace. Peace is the keynote of all higher wisdom. It opens the door to all great knowledge. As a body of water unless still cannot reflect any object, so to a mind constantly in turmoil nothing that is lofty can come.

To speak of the Upanishads I feel very unequal. You will understand if I tell you their value in Indian life. The Upanishads are the very essence, the very gist of all Indo-Aryan culture, and in their bosom lie innumerable treasures for the human soul—not to calculate, not to count, not to measure; but to unfold, to realize. These teachings we find now in books and written forms, but in the beginning they were never written down, for they were given from master to disciple as a revelation. India believes that they are eternal, that all her civilization and culture came through them and after them. You may say, "How foolish!" How can you believe something that is not historical, not recorded?" It is not that India has no rationalism, or that she is superstitious. It is because of the great ideal that the Upanishads have given men,—the ideal of manhood. When we say "the ideal of manhood," we understand manhood in its highest expression of nobility, greatness and virtue. The Upanishads, however, take you even farther. They show how man whom we know to be full of limitations and faults,—how he can, overcoming these, ascend to the realm of perfection; how man who is a separate, individual soul, can lose his separateness and enter into the great infinite consciousness of God and Truth. They show us the Unchangeable behind all that is seemingly changing, the Reality behind all that is unreal, that Unmanifested behind all that we see as manifested, the great Immortality behind death.

If I quote from the Upanishads some wonderful utter-

ances, you will say, "How lofty, how great, how poetic, how rhythmic!" You will be satisfied and go home with an intellectual grasp of all I read or recite. But this is not enough. In order to understand the Upanishads one has to know the lives which brought forth these utterances to grasp the meaning of the living which produced such marvellous thoughts.

I want to give you a picture—a picture of the life which the Upanishads reveal. To the modern world the picture may not appeal at all. It has not the gorgeousness, the glamour, the light which we look for to-day. It is very simple. Simple is the only word that can convey what it is. But its simplicity can be compared to the magnitude of the sky, to the depth of the sea. Am I saying too much? Minds that had no stamp of prejudice, no set idea of belief or thought, that were without any distinction of caste or creed—the mark of this or that—minds that were lost in one unlimited vision, can you compare them to anything but the sky? And their souls were like the ocean. Just as the rivers, taking their course from different directions, come and meet in the sea, losing all their differences, same way those great souls came and blended all their desires, aspirations, longings, thoughts in one great consciousness that is God, that is Supreme.

You may say I have used these terms sky and ocean to suit my poetic fancy. Why not take the life of Christ? If any of us had seen Christ or come in contact with Him, and then some one had asked us, "Can you tell me of Christ's life? Can you tell me what kind of a man He was, what kind of heart and soul He had?" would you not say that His mind was infinite as the sky, His soul as deep as the ocean? Did He not love everybody that

crossed His path, poor and rich alike, without distinction of caste? Did He not take in high and low with equal feeling? And was He not steadfast as a rock? What did He not have to meet? Cruelty, treachery, enmity beat against Him; but these did not touch Him. Was He not unwavering in His vision of God? Was He not lost in His implicit faith in His Father? Same way with these ancient seers. If you understand one of them, you understand them all. There is no difference between one great soul and another. They are born of the same spirit and give the same message.

Let me read you a few selections, showing how the identical note which sounds through the Upanishads, comes out from other great minds. Truth is never confined to any age or country. When it reveals, it reveals in the same way to all. This is from a Chinese source: "The true sage rejects all distinctions between this and that. He takes his refuge in God and places himself in subjective relations with all things . . . Viewed from the standpoint of *Tao* (Divine Way), a beam and a pillar are identical. So are ugliness and beauty, greatness, wickedness, perverseness and strangeness. Separation is the same as construction; construction is the same as destruction. Nothing is subject to construction or to destruction, for these conditions are brought together into one."

This is from Peter Sterry, the English mystic: "Didst thou ever descry a glorious eternity in a winged moment of time? Didst thou ever see a bright infinite in the narrow point of an object? Then thou knowest what spirit means—that spire-top whither all things ascend harmoniously, where they meet and sit connected in an unfathomed depth of life.

And this from the Aenead: "Since the nature of the

soul is divine, be assured that you will attain the Divine. Through the soul, by self-identification with the soul, you will ascend to the Eternal World. You need not seek for the one Self far from your self, nor is there in reality any barrier between yourself and That. To reach the Self, take as your guide the higher principle of the soul, which is in essence one with Divine Wisdom."

That is the great message, and it is the same that is in the Upanishads. It shows not only the bigness, the Infinitude of God, but it tells us that it lies within the power of man to reach That. These are not mere sayings with no weight, not mere words. If they were just utterances without the background of feeling, of realization, they would not have any influence on our lives. When we hear the commandment of Christ: "Love the Lord with all thy strength," we do not think it merely a saying. Do we not remember right away the One who uttered it, how He was lost in the love of God? Same way when Buddha asked his disciples to be kind, to be compassionate to every living creature, we cannot help but think of his mighty compassion, how he offered his life for a little goat.

Herein lies the significance of all great sayings. They are fruitful because they are the expression of life. It is as we realize these things that they become true for us. The Upanishads give us a very definite conviction of this realization. When the disciple approaches the master, searching for truth, for the knowledge of that great Reality which is the Source of all this universe, the master tells him in few words: "O Man, know thyself. Know that thou art That which thou art seeking,—the Truth, the God which lies within thee." What a marvellous saying! Man whom we identify with all mortal disease and

affliction, whom we know to be the slave of greed and pettiness, rising to a realm where he can utter such a thing! Nor was it merely an utterance. The teacher said, "Do not stop with just knowing it, find it and realize it." And they did realize.

From the same source came that magnificent saying, immortal in India: "I am That. I am that Infinite, that Supreme One." Perhaps we may not know what to make of such words. The understanding of them must come from within one's own soul, for it is born of great realization. What they said, they felt, they realized. And it is not that it was meant just for that age, for those special people to realize the great Truth. It is given to all of us to have the ideals which they cherished. We must try to make them our own. We must not be satisfied merely to read about them, we must make them vital in our life. If we want this, desire it, if we feel that we must have it, that we cannot do without it, then we shall attain it. It comes to us when we have great longing for it. And when it comes—what happiness!

Does the one who has experienced this great realization become proud or arrogant, does he keep his blessings to himself? Never. When man realizes his great heritage, his only desire is to give to others. It is said of Lord Buddha that when he had his illumination, his first thought was to share it with his fellow-men; and when the seers of the Upanishads came to that supreme consciousness, they cried out to all mortals, "Arise! Awake! Awake from sleep! Arise from spiritual lethargy, from fear, from doubt of your higher Self. Awake and realize!" We cannot grasp it. The words fall flat on our ears, because we have not that awakening. In same way the voices of all the great masters have cried and been

lost. How many really heard the call of Christ, or of Buddha, or any of the mighty ones? How many followed them? Not many.

You may object to this, saying, "Why do you say that? Is not half the world Christian? Is not a great part of humanity Buddhist? Are not you a Hindu?" It is not by going to a church or reading Bibles that we can attain what Christ or Buddha attained. It lies in the soul—a path within ourselves, which we are to follow—a path of humility, a path of love of God, of consecration to an ideal, a path of purity. It is not difficult to follow it; we make it difficult because we move away from it. We do not want it. But once we realize that it is the greatest need of our life, that it is our goal, our end, then it becomes easy. We must strive, practise, hunger for it. When I speak of practice, I do not mean that we should go to a corner and follow some occult practice. No, that is not it. We must make our life simple and full of love, free from all lust, selfishness, pettiness. Be humble—want nothing. We are too proud, we are too egotistic. We think we know all; but one who really feels this way can never attain to That. One who is really wise, who realizes how insignificant he is in proportion to the great universe, to the Great Spirit, cannot be arrogant or egotistic.

We must have faith. Three things are needed if we are to have any spiritual life,—purity, humility and faith. We must believe. If the goal seems beyond our reach, still we must believe that we are able to reach there, and that if we want it, we shall have it. Even though we work years and years, it makes no difference. As Christ says: "When you pray, believe." We must believe, we must have conviction. If we are steadfast, Truth will come.

"Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth will make you free." But what is the use of saying all these things? If we have not that inner awakening it can do no good. So long as we are happy with the world of material gain, we do not search after That.

When I speak of happiness I wonder if we are really happy. Can any one of us say, "I am happy every day, every moment, every second; I have unchanging happiness?" None of us can say it. There is no such happiness, because we have not reached the source of happiness. It will not, however, be out of the way if I say that we all suffer. There are moments of despair when we go down under mental agony, when we toss on our beds and wonder how to get out of our misery. Do we know why these hours come? They come because we are not founded in our inner life. We do not let the Divine Spirit, the Divine part of ourselves, govern us. We fall under the sway of our lower self. But we can make ourselves free from these things if we try. If in the moments of darkness we can see some light, can identify ourselves with the higher truths of life; if we say, "I will be identified with God, these things are nothing!" then we can make ourselves free. First time we try, it will be difficult, next time easier, next time still easier.

Any one who wants that higher expression of life—who desires to unfold the God part which is in him, must have discrimination. Discrimination is the very first step. We must learn to discriminate between what is true and what is untrue, real and unreal, material and spiritual. When I think of this discrimination, I am reminded of a story that has always been a living ideal to me since I was a little girl. The story comes in the Upanishads. There was a sage named Yajnabalka, who, although he was a

sage, was a married man and lived in the world. At the end of his life, however, he did not want to be absorbed any more by material things, he wanted to go out alone in search of Truth. So he came to his wife and said, "Maitreyee, I have heard that call inside me and I must respond to it. I cannot stay any longer. I must leave you. Here is my wealth, here are all my treasures—enjoy them, they are yours." Maitreyee was devoted to her husband—he was everything in her life—but she was wise; so when her husband spoke these words, she did not bring out her personal feeling, saying, "How I shall suffer; you are going away!" or "What right have you to leave me, your wife?", she just put before him one question; she said, "O lord, I want to ask you something. You are leaving me all these treasures. Are these the things which will set me free, will take me beyond disease, death and affliction and make me immortal?" Yajnabalka replied, "No, Maitreyee, these are the things of the world; they cannot make you free." Then she said (and this is a marvellous saying in India): "What shall I do with something that is not going to make me immortal? What shall I do with untold weath—with these riches? I do not want them. Give me that which will make me immortal and free."

This is the discrimination we must have before we aspire for any higher life, and that is what the Upanishads awaken in every man's soul. There must grow in us a yearning for the higher expression of life; for when we begin to yearn, we are able to rise above the world of selfishness, of personal desires and longings, and to follow the path that Christ, that Buddha followed, which the sages of India proclaimed,—the path which leads to that higher world where dwell unchanging exaltation and abiding peace.

## MAN, KNOW THYSELF

*From the "Theologia Germanica"*

We should mark and know of a very truth that *all* manner of virtue and goodness, and even that Eternal Good which is God Himself, can never make a man virtuous, good, or happy, so long as it is outside the soul; (that is, so long as the man is holding converse with outward things through his senses and reason, and doth not withdraw into himself and learn to understand his own life, who and what he is) . . . . Therefore, although it be good and profitable that we should ask and learn and know what good and holy men have wrought and suffered, and how God hath dealt with them, and what he hath wrought in and through them, yet it were a thousand times better that we should in ourselves learn and perceive and understand who we are, who and what our own life is, what God is and is doing in us, what He will have from us, and to what ends He will or will not make use of us. For of a truth, thoroughly to know oneself is above all art, for it is the highest art. If thou knowest thyself well, thou art better and more praiseworthy before God than if thou didst not know thyself, but didst understand the course of the heavens and of all the planets and stars, also the virtue of all herbs, and the structure and dispositions of all mankind, also the nature of all beasts, and, in such matters, hadst all the skill of all who are in heaven and on earth. For it is said, there came a voice from heaven, saying, "Man, know thyself."

Thus that proverb is still true, "going out were never so good, but staying at home were much better." . . . In like manner, all the great works and wonders that God has ever wrought or shall ever work in or through the creatures, or even God Himself with all His goodness, so far

as these things exist or are done outside of me, can never make me blessed, but only in so far as they exist and are done and loved, known, tasted and felt within me.

## THE THREE PEARLS

*A Legend of Jalal-ad-Din Rumi*

When Adam was created, God commanded Gabriel to take the three most precious pearls of the divine treasury, and offer them on a golden salver to Adam to choose for himself one of the three.

The three pearls were: wisdom, faith and modesty.

Adam chose the pearl of wisdom.

Gabriel then proceeded to remove the salver with the remaining two pearls in order to replace them in the divine treasury. With all his mighty power, he found he could not lift the salver.

The two pearls said to him: "We will not separate from our beloved wisdom. We could not be happy and quiet away from it. From all eternity we three have been the three compeers of God's glory, the pearls of His power. We cannot be separated."

A voice was now heard to proceed from the divine presence, saying: "Gabriel! Leave them, and come away."

From that time, wisdom has taken its seat on the summit of the brain of Adam; faith took up its abode in his heart; modesty established itself in his countenance. Those three pearls have remained as the heirlooms of the chosen children of Adam. For, whoever of all his descendants, is not embellished and enriched with those three jewels, is lacking of the sentiment and lustre of his divine origin.

So runs the narrative reported by Husam, Jalal's successor, as having been imparted to him by the latter.

## THE FORTRESS OF PEACE

*An Extract of a Letter From Santa Teresa of Jesus*

Oh, that I could clearly explain to your Lordship the peace and quiet my soul has found! For it has so great a certainty of the fruition of God, that it seems to be as if already in possession, though the joy is withheld. I am as one to whom another has granted by deed a large revenue into the enjoyment and use of which he is to come at a certain time, but until then has nothing but the right already given him to the revenue. In gratitude for this, my soul would abstain from the joy of it, because it has not deserved it; it wishes only to serve Him, even if in great suffering, and at times it thinks it would be very little if, till the end of the world, it had to serve Him who has given it this right; for in truth, it is in some measure no longer, subject, as before, to the miseries of this world; though it suffers more, it seems as if only the habit were struck, for my soul is, as it were, in a fortress with authority, and accordingly does not lose its peace.

Still, this confidence does not remove from it its great fear of offending God, nor make it less careful to put away every hindrance to His service, yea, rather, it is more careful than before. But it is so forgetful of its own interests as to seem, in some measure, to have lost itself, so forgetful of self is it in this. Everything is directed to the honour of God, to the doing of His will more and more, and the advancement of His glory.

Though this be so, yet in all that relates to health and the care of the body, it seems to me that I am more careful than I was, that I mortify myself less in my food, and do fewer penances: it is not so with the desires I had; they seem to be greater. All this is done that I may be the better able to serve God in other things, for I offer to

Him very often, as a great sacrifice, the care I take of my body, and that wearies me much, and I try it sometimes in acts of mortification; but after all, this cannot be done without losing health, and I must not neglect what my superiors command. . .

I am at peace within; and my likings and dislikings have so little power to take from me the Presence of the Three Persons, of which, while it continues, it is so impossible to doubt, that I seem clearly to know by experience what is recorded by St. John, that God will make His dwelling in the soul; and not only by grace, but because He will have the soul feel that presence, and it brings with it so many blessings, particularly this, that there is no need to run after reflections to learn that God is there. This is almost always the state I am in, except when my great infirmities oppress me. Sometimes God will have me suffer without any inward comfort; but my will never swerves—not even in its first movements—from the will of God. This resignation to His will is so efficacious, that I desire neither life nor death, except for some moments, when I long to see God; and then the presence of the Three Persons becomes so distinct as to relieve the pain of the absence, and I wish to live—if such be His good pleasure—to serve Him still longer. And if I might help, by my prayers, to make but one soul love Him more, and praise Him, and that only for a short time, I think that of more importance than to dwell in glory.

It is while you are patiently striving at the little tasks of life that the meaning and shape of the great whole of life dawns upon you. It is while you are resisting little temptations that you are growing stronger.

—*Phillips Brooks.*

## TEMPLE BUILDING

The coming of 1928 at Ananda-Ashrama was marked by beginning the "Temple of the Universal Spirit." which Swami Paramananda had planned from the time he acquired the Ashrama. The ground was consecrated by him last Easter. Later, grading was completed and the newly turned soil was allowed to settle. Now an imposing Temple is rising on it.

On Tuesday, the third of January, after an early Service in the household Chapel and the usual morning Class, all the members of the Ashrama gathered on the hill and held a Special Service of song and prayer. As an ancient Vedic hymn was being chanted in Samskrit, the sun rose over the hilltops flooding the building site with light and warmth. It seemed the promise and assurance of the radiance and warmth of universal love which the Temple will shed forth on the world when it is completed. The work was begun immediately after the Service and is continuing. It is in large measure a labor of love. The Ashrama possesses a band of remarkably gifted and efficient workers and they will all contribute their share towards the construction. So far, all the work has been done by the men workers under the direction of an expert builder and the daily supervision of an able architect who is giving his services with tireless ardor of spirit. The foundations are nearly completed and the walls are being laid. The structure of hollow tile and stucco is an extensive one. Besides the Temple proper, there is a large patio for open air services. It is enclosed by arched cloisters. In one corner stands the Swami's living quarters, in another, the library and a spacious room for arts and crafts, and at the end of the northeast cloister, a room for the publication department.

## REPORT

### CHRISTMASTIDE AT THE VEDANTA CENTRE

Christmas once more! Again the flickering of the lights! Again the greens—the evergreens—the hemlock and the pungent balsam! Again the flowers on the altar —the pictured faces of the Babe and Mother garlanded! The gifts and giving—the joy and festival—the silence, and the hush of holiness.

It was indeed the hush of holiness that seemed to pervade the Chapel of the Vedanta Centre of Boston during the early evening hours of December 24th, when the Christmas-eve Service was held there. The red and white vigils on the altar portrayed in light what the flaming poinsettias, against their background of forest boughs, and the white roses and carnations did in color. The platform and the altar steps were strewn with tiny hemlock fronds, so that the whole looked like some fair, enchanted woodland shrine, before the altar of which, twelve white angels, circling twelve white roses—bowed in worship above the star-like vigils at their feet.

The Service consisted of a reading from the story of the Nativity, with carols, and a short address; but the spirit that all felt was more than word or song. As those who had assembled there, went home, their last glimpse of the Centre was the Christ-child altar in the large front window, tenderly appealing, with its ethereal setting of lights and flowers.

Christmas day being Sunday, both Services,—morning and evening,—were given over to the Christmas message and carol singing. The Centre was happy to have as its guest Dr. Rabindranath Tagore's niece, Miss Sushama Tagore, who arrived just in time for the observance of the great Christian festival. On January 5th, an inform-

al reception was held in her honour by the Vedanta Centre, and a goodly number availed themselves of the opportunity of greeting one who is truly representative of India's best. Miss Tagore graciously consented to give a short talk, and for about half an hour, spoke on the social and cultural conditions of her country, giving a true picture to offset the false picture which has lately been made current in the West.

## CHRISTMAS AT ANANDA-ASHRAMA

Christmas tide began at Ananda-Ashrama on Friday evening, December twenty-third, when the household gathered to decorate the big community room of the Cloister. The altar was made beautiful with a picture of the Christ-child forming the background for a statuette of the Virgin of the Annunciation over which a lovely glow was thrown by the candles and the vigil lights with which the altar was decorated. Two long rows of vigil lights made a flame-studded band around the big stone chimney above the fireplace.

Saturday afternoon at four o'clock a Christmas Eve Service was held when carols were sung and a talk was given by Gayatri Devi on the significance of the Nativity.

Sunday morning dawned with a fine rain falling. At the Christmas Service held at eleven o'clock Gayatri Devi spoke on the Christ-Spirit, revealing an unsuspected understanding and giving an unusual interpretation of the Christ-Ideal.

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Swami Paramananda reaches India about the first of February. Cable messages have been received from him along the course of his travels and he has had a successful voyage and feels much refreshed. During his stay at Manila, the Hindu Community gave him a reception. It is expected also that he will see friends at Singapore and he may go to Rangoon on his way to Calcutta.

MAR 16 1928

VOLUME XVII. NUMBER 3

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

# VEDANTA MONTHLY

# Message of the East



March, 1928

# The Great Law of Justice

Issued by

ANANDA-ASHRAMA

LA CRESCENTA, L. A. CO., CALIF.

(Extension of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, Established 1900)

Entered as second class matter, Feb. 14, 1924, at the Post Office at La Crescenta, Calif. Box 86, under act of March 3, 1879.

Accepted for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized June 17, 1921.

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SINGLE COPIES, 25c $2.00 A YEAR

Published Monthly Except in August and September

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*MESSAGE OF THE EAST*

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

Published Monthly except in August and September

Vol. XVII. March, 1928 No. 3

# THE GREAT LAW OF JUSTICE

*By Swami Paramananda*

THE word Karma is derived from the Sanskrit root *kri* meaning work, or that activity which is produced as the result of action and reaction. Karma, therefore, literally means the Law of cause and effect; not only cause and effect as it is manifested on the physical, phenomenal plane, but that which goes deep down to the root of our being. There are certain results which we reap in the form of suffering or enjoyment for ourselves or for others that we are not able to account for by outer circumstance. The only way we can find any explanation for them is to go beneath the surface life around us and realize that what is happening to-day is the outcome of yesterday,—is rooted in some past cause. The definition of this Law of cause and effect we find very clearly given by Manu, the great Law-giver of India, who is also called "The Father of Man:" "Thou canst not gather what thou dost not sow; as thou dost plant the seed so will it grow." Later on we find an echo of this in St. Paul when he says: "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap;" and I do not doubt that as we go back into the Old Testament, the Egyptian Scriptures, the Chinese and other ancient classics, we

shall find the same principle given, because it is a Law and not merely a dogmatic assertion. It is the Law upon which the whole of human destiny is established. In India it is known as the Law of Karma by which a man reaps only as he sows.

To-day many among us are rebellious; we feel that there is a great deal of divine injustice in the world. Let me read to you, however, what Max Muller, one of the greatest of Orientalists, has to say on this subject: "*In*dian philosophy contains no outcry against divine injustice, and in no way encourages suicidal expedients. They would, in fact, be of no avail, because according to Indian views, the same troubles and the same problems would have to be faced again and again in another life. *Con*sidering that the aim of all Indian philosophy was the removal of suffering, which was caused by nescience, and the attainment of the highest happiness which was produced by knowledge, we should have more right to call it endaemonistic than pessimistic." Perhaps you *will* not care to accept a law like this which prevents a man escaping from his miseries even by bodily death. Yet what kind of justice would there be in this universe if those who have done great harm to others could evade all consequences merely by taking their own lives? We would not want to live in a universe whose constitution was as vulnerable as that. Do not think, however, that this great Law is adamantine. By means of it we create, but what we create we also have power to destroy; through it we make and we can unmake. If our present life is the sum total of our past thoughts, actions and desires, then certainly it stands to reason that we can change it —we can re-create our life, and that is better than to try to get rid of it.

There are some people who look upon Karma as though it were fate. They say, "It is my Karma, it is my doom." In India, however, the wise man does not take it that way. If such a person is placed in the midst of hardship he knows how to overcome his difficulties, how to dispel the clouds and enjoy once more the clear sky and the sunshine. We can counteract,—that is the secret. By our prayers, our aspirations, our power of service, in fact by means of the vitality God has given to us, we can so transmute our thoughts and emotions that they help us to balance our past. Certain individuals have an idea that it does not make any difference what they think or do here and now, that so long as they subscribe to some religion or belong to some creed, they will have their salvation. Practical wisdom, however, shows us that salvation has nothing to do with dogma, doctrine or anything of that kind. Salvation comes through following a fundamental principle of life. Only thus do we advance. If we find ourselves handicapped, we should not feel thwarted, we should not feel that it is our fate,—something forced upon us. We can outgrow these conditions, we can transcend them. How soon? That depends upon the intensity we put into our efforts, upon our earnestness, our zeal, our sincerity of purpose; according to these, we overcome.

Does not this furnish a logical basis for life? Without it we find that there is nothing but injustice. We see a child, blind, deaf or a cripple, while side by side with him, perhaps in the same family, is one who is born a genius,—a scientist, poet or musician,—and we ask why this should be. At first we may seek to explain it on the grounds of heredity, but often we fail to find any connecting hereditary links. The orthodox will try to

give a solution by saying that it is the will of God. But God is all-loving. We can imagine that almighty Providence through His will bestowing blessing upon His children, but we cannot think of Him cursing any one. There is, however, the eternal Law, "as a man soweth, so shall he reap," and this gives us the key.

The whole index of a man's life is contained in his soul. He may conceive a crime in a cave or a jungle; he may commit it in a dark corner, and no one may see him do it, yet he knows and is tormented by it. Sometimes he is so burdened by the knowledge of it that he seeks to rid himself of it by confessing it. How do we explain this if he does not carry the Law within himself, if he is not the creator of his own destiny? It is not that some divine Providence is holding a rod over us and is taking account of everything that we think and do. Suppose through misguided zeal we have done something which we regret, we also have the power to undo it. It will not help matters to sit in a corner and say, "I have sinned, my life is doomed." The thing is to get up with courage and determination and make a fresh start. Determination is half the battle. In this way we counteract our error. It is one of the things we need to teach children, —also grown-up people,—those who are discontent, who are always finding fault with their lot, with their fellow-beings, with their superiors, with everything around them.

The destiny of man is in great measure controlled by himself; no one else can make us think right, and certainly if we do not think in the right way, we cannot act in the right way. It is like sowing seeds. Lord Buddha, the great compassionate teacher of India, gives a very interesting and graphic picture of this whole process

when he says: "If a man speaks or acts with evil thought, pain will follow him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage." Likewise if a man does anything with good intent, with loving heart, happiness follows him with the same precision. Why not choose the path of happiness? There is no one who is asking us to be unkind; there is no one who is asking us to sow on the field of life poisonous seeds. We may say that we sow them accidentally, that we were angry, or spoke an unkind word by chance. Do not let us take any such chance with our spiritual life, then accidents like this will not happen.

I always compare this life of ours with a harvest field. The man who is industrious, who is diligent, who is careful, he does not take any chances with his harvest. He tills the soil, and then he carefully sows the seed, but he does not think that his duty ends there,—he keeps it watered and watches over it until there comes the time of harvesting. We may think that we do not have to do any of these things. Perhaps our neighbor's harvest is going to suffice for us, or some one may be kind enough to share with us. There is, however, no real satisfaction or surety in this. We must, every one of us, make our own life abundant, and we can do it, we have the power to do it. God has given us hands and mind and brain and heart. With these we can work and counteract any handicap which may arise against us.

The great Law is not just a relentless machine. It is something that we can use, that we can operate with intelligence, and it will give us tremendous impetus for advance in every step of our life. Take the law of love,—love has tremendous healing. If a man thinks of love and acts with loving interest, if he constantly meditates

on love, he will be healed and he will help to bring healing to the world. Think of the miracles that are performed through love! We know these principles, yet if we do not apply them how can we expect to reap the harvest? That is the question. As a man soweth in his heart and through his deed, so must he reap. The Law is very simple. You may say, "We sometimes find a good person suffering and an innocent person unjustly accused." We do not always see the Law's fulfillment. Even suffering has its blessing and I do not say this with any morbid sense. Life has tremendous lessons for us all, but we have to be wide awake to learn these lessons. Condemnation, bitterness, discord, rebellion, these are not going to solve our problems. We must believe in our destiny, we must believe that it is not something vague and indefinite, but that it is in our own keeping, the exact result of our thoughts and actions.

There is nothing that can check our progress unless we ourselves step in our own light. Try to understand the theory of it, the logic of it. Something cannot come out of nothing. This is one of the greatest points in Hindu philosophy and religion, logic and ethics, a point the Hindus discovered a long, long time ago. Instead of trying to throw the blame on Providence, they arrived at this great Law of cause and effect. Evolution cannot take place without involution. Carlyle gives us a similar conception. "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." This life, as we find it, with all its endless advantages and disadvantages, opportunities and the lack of them, is not the result of

accident, but only as we are able to make our connection with yesterday can we find an explanation for to-day.

Those who understand the Law never waste any time. They know that all the energy, service, intelligent effort which they put into life, they will reap in full measure. It cannot be otherwise. Life is not for idling. It does not do to take a lethargic attitude towards our destiny, and expect some miraculous happening to bring us good fortune over night. The man of genius keeps on working. Those who grasp the true meaning of Karma—of cause and effect—they do not sit and weep when ill-fortune comes, they try to counteract it by doing something good. Evil is always counteracted by good. That is the eternal law. Lord Buddha told his disciples: "Hatred is never conquered by hatred, hatred is conquered by love." Since our pain and suffering and sorrow are the results of past hatred, misguided zeal, and misdeeds, what we need to do is to direct our forces properly along the lines of love, wisdom, and service. No matter how we are born, or where we are placed, we can change the whole current of our destiny. Such is the Law of Karma. It is not fate. It gives us the explanation why certain things are happening, and wherefrom they come, even though we may not see the process actually take place before our eyes. It reveals to us in a very interesting way our great responsibility.

A man's past life explains his temperament, his tendencies, and his opportunities or lack or them in this life. Suppose we have some limitations, what are we to do? Strive to overcome them by right thought and action. This should be one of the fundamental principles in education. Instead of bringing children up to think that they must either endure with a morbid spirit of suffering,

or else react with passion, they should be taught to keep on working, so that through their work, through their service, through their intelligent operation of life itself, they may be able to wipe out past ills and build their life and destiny on a new basis. In this way they redeem themselves and they redeem others. We have so much that we can share with others. That is the way the Law of Karma works. Whatever we gain, we have done something to earn it. There is no chance, no accident in this cosmic universe. There cannot be, because it is controlled by a great, unfailing, all-loving and all-just Intelligence. So long as we have any complaint, any spirit of discontent, it means we do not understand.

If a man places himself in the path of an engine, he will be crushed and all his strength will not avail against it. In same way, it is only a foolhardy person who tries to go against the Law. One who understands the operation of the Law, he uses that great power intelligently, and he accomplishes great things. The Law of Karma is very much like fire. Fire cooks our food and also it can cause disaster. A child out of fascination for the flames may put his hand into it and be burned. Yet we cannot say fire is evil. A thing that gives us benefit also can become detrimental if we do not know how to handle it. That is the idea of Law. If we oppose it, it may hurt us and hinder us, but if we know how to work with it, it will always help us.

It is not, however, merely through logic that we can remind ourselves that we must do this and we must not do that, and if we do this, we are going to reap that. We must lift our mind to a higher level where these conditions can no longer bind us. In the presence of light all darkness vanishes. Leave your world of sorrow, and

misery, and turbulence, and struggle, and seek to rise to that plane of consciousness which mystics and sages and all spiritual beings define as Light. If troubles and difficulties are hurled upon you, do not try to find escape by ordinary means. Go within your own self. Retire within the cave of your heart, as the Hindus call it. There nothing can ever touch you, there you will find your security and there you will be made whole. Christ speaks of it as entering into the closet and shutting the doors; Lord Buddha refers to it as that "Island of Peace," where no storm can reach, that "Island of Rest," where no turbulence can come, no disturbance touch you. Yet how many of us seek this refuge? If someone strikes us, or unjustly accuses us, we think that we must do him even greater harm in order to get even with him. This however, is not in accordance with the Law of our spiritual being. If we indulge in hatred and bitterness, we are merely sowing poisonous seeds on the field of life, and we shall have to reap the harvest.

Let us rather sow the seeds which will blossom forth with fragrant flowers and bear luscious fruits. The field, —this human field—is allotted to us, and we all have our choice. Our hands, our brain, our heart are given to us for inspiration, in order that we may produce something of value. We want happiness, we want pleasure, we want God's blessing. Every one of us would like to have the ability of the genius, the peace of the saint, the vision of the wise man, but we forget that they do not acquire these qualities accidentally. They work for them, they live for them, and they die for them. Most of you will say, "We have heard this before,—it is not anything new." That is true. There is nothing new, and there is no need for anything new. We have not even tried to put

into practice all the beneficent, beautiful principles that already have been given to us for the upbuilding of our individual life and the life of the whole. It is for us with determination to apply these principles; to put them to the test of science and of practical living. The Law of cause and effect will stand the test of science. Go and think in the right rhythm and you will find that you have generated a force within yourself, have created a dynamo of invincible power which can reconstruct your life; and above all remember,—hatred is never conquered by hatred; evil is never conquered by evil, it is conquered only by good,—it is healed by the influx of life and love.

## UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

It is the part of intelligent persons, before difficulties arise, to think beforehand how they may not arise; but of brave men, when they do arise, to put them into a proper state.—*Pittacus of Mitylene.*

Yet they, believe me, who await
No gifts from chance, have conquered fate.
—*Matthew Arnold*

One will not collect good products by sowing evil words.—*Papyrus of the Scribe Ani.*

Know this simple truth, wrong does not result from right and a good present cannot give birth to a bad future. You are the custodian of your deeds, but not of the results which flow from them. The deeds of to-day bring the happiness or sorrow of to-morrow. Be, therefore, concerned about what you think and do, rather than about what may or may not come to you: for he whose deeds are good does not concern himself about results and is free from future ills.—*James Allen.*

# A LESSON FOR KINGS

## *A Buddhist Jataka*

(A translation by T. W. Rhys Davids of the "Bajovada Jataka." The last two stanzas are omitted as unessential. The Jatakas, or Buddhist Birth Stories, are a collection of tales concerning the former lives of the Lord, Gautama Buddha).

Once upon a time, when Brahmadatta was reigning in Benares, the future Buddha returned to life in the womb of his chief queen; and after the conception ceremony had been performed, he was safely born. And when the day came for choosing a name, they called him Prince Brahmadatta. He grew up in due course; and when he was sixteen years old, went to Takshashila and became accomplished in all arts. And after his father died, he ascended the throne, and ruled the kingdom with righteousness and equity. He gave judgments without partiality, hatred, ignorance, or fear. Since he thus reigned with justice, with justice his ministers also administered the law. Law suits being thus decided with justice, there were none who brought false cases. And as these ceased, the noise and tumult of litigation ceased in the King's court. Though the judges sat all day in the court, they had to leave without any one coming for justice. It came to this, that the Hall of Justice would have to be closed!

Then the future Buddha thought: "From my reigning with righteousness, there are none who come for judgment; the bustle has ceased, and the Hall of Justice will have to be closed. It behooves me, therefore, now to examine into my own faults; and if I find that anything is wrong in me, to put that away, and practise only virtue."

Thenceforth he sought for some one to tell him his faults; but among those around him he found no one who

would tell him of any fault, but heard only his praise. Then he thought: "It is from fear of me that these men speak only good things, and not evil things," and he sought among those people who lived outside the palace. And finding no fault-finder there, he sought among those who lived outside the city, in the suburbs, at the four gates. And there too, finding no one to find fault, and hearing only his own praise, he determined to search the country places. So he made over his kingdom to his ministers, and mounted his chariot; and taking only his charioteer, left the city in disguise. And searching the country through, up to the very boundary, he found no fault-finder, and heard only of his own virtue. And so he turned back from the outermost boundary, and returned by the high road towards the city.

Now at that time the King of Kosala, Mallika by name, was also ruling his kingdom with righteousness; and when seeking for some fault in himself, he also found no fault-finder in the palace, but only heard of his own virtue. So, seeking in the country places, he came to that very spot. And these two came face to face in a low cart track with precipitous sides, where there was no space for a chariot to get out of the way.

Then the charioteer of Mallika, the King, said to the charioteer of the King of Benares: "Take thy chariot out of the way!"

But he said: "Take thy chariot out of the way, O charioteer! In this chariot sitteth the Lord over the Kingdom of Benares, the great King Brahmadatta."

Yet the other replied: "In this chariot, O charioteer, sitteth the Lord over the kingdom of Kosala, the great King Mallika. Take thy carriage out of the way, and make room for the chariot of our King!"

Then the charioteer of the King of Benares thought: "They say then that he too is a king. What is now to be done?" After some consideration he said to himself, "I know a way. I'll find out how old he is, and then I'll let the chariot of the younger be got out of the way, and so make room for the elder." And when he arrived at that conclusion, he asked that charioteer what the age of the King of Kosala was. But on inquiry he found that the ages of both were equal. Then he inquired about the extent of his kingdom and about his army, and his wealth, and his renown, and about the country he lived in, and his caste and tribe and family. And he found that both were Lords of a kingdom three hundred leagues in extent; and that in respect of army and wealth and renown, and the countries in which they lived and their caste and their tribe and their family, they were just on a par.

Then he thought: "I will make way for the most righteous." And he asked: "What kind of righteousness hath this King of yours?"

And the other saying: "Such and such is our King's righteousness," and so proclaiming his King's wickedness as goodness, uttered the first stanza:

"The strong he overthrows by strength,
The mild by mildness, Mallika;
The good by goodness he o'ercomes,
The wicked by the wicked too.
Such is the nature of this King!
Move out of the way, O charioteer!"

But the charioteer of the King of Benares asked him: "Well, have you told all the virtues of your King?"

"Yes," said the other.

"If these are his *virtues* where are then his faults?" replied he.

The other said: "Well, for the nonce, they shall be faults if you like. But pray, then, what is the kind of goodness your King has?"

And then the charioteer of the King of Benares called unto him to hearken, and uttered the second stanza:

Anger he conquers by non-anger,
By goodness he conquers what is not good;
The stingy he conquers by giving gifts,
By truth he meets the speaker of lies.
Such is the nature of this King!
Move out of the way, O charioteer!"

And when he had thus spoken, both Mallika the King and his charioteer alighted from their chariot. And they took out the horses, and removed their chariot, and made way for the King of Benares.

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## CREATIVE CO-ORDINATION*

*By Michael Pupin*

(Professor of Electro Mechanics, Columbia University.)

Our mother earth is a tiny dust speck in the material universe, but as the home of the creative soul of man it becomes the crown of creation. The life of man is, as far as we know, the highest product of creation, and it is the most precious gift of heaven. Its broadest aspect is co-ordination, which eliminates the chaos from the activities of its countless molecules of life, and constructs the cosmos, the presence of which we feel in the internal world of our creative soul, our consciousness; in the language of science it might be described as "the climax of Creative Co-ordination." Its cosmos is probably the ideal cosmos which the poets of ancient Greece had in mind when they represented it as the creation of the Olympian gods.

*Extract from "The New Reformation."

No scientist can contemplate the mighty theme, the life of man, without pausing reverently and recalling Tennyson's well known lines, dedicated to a tiny flower plucked from the crannied wall:

"I . . . hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is."

No words of mortal man can describe more beautifully the mystery of organic life. Can the knowledge for which Tennyson was yearning be advanced even a tiny bit if the life of man is viewed in the light of the cosmic processes of Creative Co-ordination? Such an attempt is not without some promise. Paderewski's vibrating fingers speeding along the keyboard like electric waves through quiescent space arouse my emotions and I wonder at the harmonious response of the billions and billions of organic cells to the co-ordinating physical processes which animate Paderewski's ethereal touch. But my wonder is amplified a thousand fold when I listen to the tuneful message which this performance of perfect physical co-ordination conveys to me from the internal world of Paderewski's consciousness, where it was recorded by the creative soul of some heaven-born genius. I cannot resist, then, crossing the boundary-line which separates the external material world from the internal world of my consciousness. Here I find a power which is at work creating this internal world; this power is a manifestation of a new entity in the existence of which mankind always believed and called it the soul of man. This belief is the essence extracted from all human experience. No physical reality rests upon a broader or deeper foundation of experience than this belief.

The soul is the creative co-ordinator residing in the body of man and guiding its functions so as to make the life of man a cosmos, a creation of simple law and beautiful order. Our belief in the existence of the creative soul is the origin of our belief in the existence of the Creator. Our present knowledge derived from man's experience ever since he began to live a human life rejects the hypothesis that the creative power of man's consciousness is the highest form of Creative Co-ordination; it demands a still higher form of Creative Co-ordination. The creative power residing in us is, therefore, the origin of the belief that our creative soul is a part of Him who endowed the electrons and protons, the atoms and molecules, and the tiniest units of living matter with those primordial attributes which manifest themselves in the cosmic processes called in this narrative Creative Co-ordination.

Never did man exhibit more clearly the divine origin of his soul than when he began to recognize that his life is a part, only,of a much more complex and significant life, the life of humanity, the life of an enormous number of autonomous individuals each facing daily the struggle for existence. To guide this complex life from a threatening chaos of a non-co-ordinating humanity to a social cosmos became then the highest problem of man's creative soul. The gradual solution of this problem is the evolution of social co-ordinators, which promised to lead humanity to a social cosmos. Church and State are the most important among the social co-ordinators; they are like the physical structure of the human body, physical structures only, employed in co-ordinating operations. But just as the human body becomes a living soul when it is animated by the divine breath of its Creator, so the same divine breath must give to Church and State

a living soul which will guide their operations and put into them the power of that Creative Co-ordination which will lead the life of humanity to a cosmos. That soul is the co-ordinated effort of our individual souls, guided by the highest ideals of spiritual achievement. Without such efforts the life of humanity will never rise to the full glory of a social cosmos, and the individual life of man, the most precious gift of heaven, will lose many blessings to which it is entitled by its close relationship to the divinity of the Creator, the fountainhead of all spiritual realities. Just as the cosmic processes of Creative Co-ordination guide the evolution of the external material world, so Creative Co-ordination also guides the evolution of the internal world of the human soul, the destiny of human life. This is my message from science. . .

Creative Co-ordination . . . is not a metaphysical abstraction; it is a familiar physical process which meets us everywhere. The steam-engine and the snow-flake; the cycles of the moving water masses which carry their blessings to the thirsty terrestrial continents; the growth of plants and of animals—they all tell the simple story of Creative Co-ordination. It is a physical operation defined in terms of definite physical laws, and it exhibits a progressive advance from lower to higher forms of orderly structures and functions in the organic as well as in the inorganic world; a continuous rise from lower to higher levels of creation. When the narratives pass from the external physical world to the internal world of consciousness then again Creative Co-ordination is a welcome interpreter and guide. . . The beauty of the sunset, a living picture of joy in the world of our consciousness, is the ultimate product of a creative co-ordination. The radiation of the setting sun, reflected, refracted, and

scattered by matter floating in the atmosphere, is the external source of this beauty. It is an energy chaos, a practically infinite number and variety of electrical pulses sent out at random by the busy solar electrons. These chaotic signals are recorded by our sensations and appear in our consciousness as the beauty of the sunset, a cosmos of consciousness, a creation called into existence by the chaotic energy supply of the external world. This is Creative Co-ordination, which connects the external physical world to the world of our consciousness. The perfume of the rose, the comforting glow of the log in our fireplace, the ambrosial sweetness of the honey—are all orderly realities of pleasure and joy in the world of our consciousness, but they all can be traced to the chaotic stimuli of the external world. These few examples suffice to show that chaotic signals convey messages to the living body from its environment, but that each deciphered message appears as an intelligible cosmos in the world of consciousness. There is somewhere in the paths of these messages a Creative Co-ordination which transforms their chaos into an intelligible cosmos of our consciousness. . . .

Creative Co-ordination is unthinkable unless there are intrinsic forces acting upon the chaotic granules which are to be co-ordinated; these forces are co-ordinators. . . History records innumerable evidences which testify that among the co-ordinating forces in the life of man and of humanity, the spiritual forces are the most powerful co-ordinators. . . Love, according to Christ is the most powerful of all these co-ordinating forces. Its co-ordinating action in the spiritual world is very similar to the co-ordinating action of the gravitational force in the physical world. Christ discovered it and revealed

it to us in His two commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." These commandments are fundamental laws in Christ's spiritual dynamics. It is obvious that under the guidance of this law we can liberate ourselves from the dominating love of purely material things and thus rescue our own individual lives and the life of humanity from the threatening chaos, and transform it into a cosmos, a life of simple law and beautiful order.

Creative Co-ordination leads, therefore, to a higher level of creation by the action of spiritual forces, just as it does in the physical world by the action of physical forces. It is the concept of this universal co-ordinating process which unites the two worlds to each other, so that our understanding of one will aid our understanding of the other. The cultivation of this view is encouraged by the following words of St. Paul addressed to the Romans: "For the invisible things of Him for the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead."

Yes, God's spiritual realities are invisible, but they are illustrated and made intelligible by the physical realities revealed in the physical things which are made. According to this interpretation of the Apostle's words the physical and the spiritual realities supplement each other. They are the two terminals of the same realities; one terminal residing in the human soul, and the other in the things of the external world. Here is one of the fundamental reasons why Science and Religion supplement each other. They are the two pillars of the portals through which the human soul enters the world where the divinity resides. . . If the signs of the times do not

deceive, than there is a universal drift towards this mental attitude. This drift I call The New Reformation.

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## AN INTERVIEW WITH HENRY FORD*

"I never made a mistake in my life," said Henry Ford the other day to an interviewer. . . "Never! And neither did you ever make a mistake—or anybody else." To talk about making mistakes is absurd, according to Mr. Ford. "For what purpose do you suppose you are living on earth?" he demanded of his interviewer. "Do you know what you are here for?" And then he answered his own question: "I'll tell you what every living person is here for, and that is *to get experience.* That's all we can get out of life."

It is impossible to understand many of the policies of the Ford Motor Company, we are told, unless we realize that Henry Ford is a devout believer in the theory of reincarnation. The interviewer who drew his fire on the subject of mistakes is Charles W. Wood, associate editor of *Forbes Magazine.* . . Mr. Wood asserts that there is a definite relation between the new Ford car and the faith just mentioned. He works it out this way:

"Mr. Ford not only believes, but he acts constantly upon the belief, that the Engineer of the Universe has placed each of the two billion or so of human beings on this planet on the job of learning by experience the particular things each most needs to learn. If a man becomes a murderer, it is because he needed the experience. If he lives in poverty and pain, that was the experience of which he stood most in need. After he gets his experience, he dies. Then he is born again into another life which will give him other experiences of which he stands in need. Eventually, through the eons, some souls thus

*Reprinted from "The Literary Digest."

learn a good deal which nobody knew a million years ago. That is, nobody but the Engineer of the Universe. Most of us, in fact, have already learned not to murder, except in war, and we may in time learn not to make war. Only recently did anybody learn how to make wagons run without horses. Mr. Ford was one of the pioneers in this particular field, and it is his aim to get all the experience out of it that he can.

"An understanding of this belief is necessary to an understanding of Mr. Ford. Wealth, simply as acquisition, has no meaning for him. Profits, simply as profits have no meaning. It is only what we learn that counts. If, therefore, we make what we call mistakes, it shows that we needed the experience in order to learn better, which in turn proves that it was no mistake. . .

"That the experience of one generation is passed on to the next, does not figure much in Mr. Ford's philosophy. He is not even that much of a socialist. What passes over from one generation to another, as he sees it, is the individual, human soul—the soul which has occupied a body, perhaps, in some now-forgotten civilization, being assigned by the Great Executive to be born again into present day America to learn the lessons which work in America may give him. Henry Ford is the world's champion individualist. But, perhaps, its greatest social force."

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Difficulties show what men are.
Reason is not measured by size or height, but by
principle.
No great thing is created suddenly, any more than
a bunch of grapes or a fig.
No man is free who is not master of himself.

— *Epictetus.*

## THE BURNING BUSH

*By Julia P. Dabney*

Hush!
Dost thou not hear
Some cryptic breath borne to thine ear?
Dost thou not feel
A thrill of premonition o'er thee steal?
Look there, at yonder bush
Gleaming so wondrously
Amid the grasses that our footsteps crush;
'Tis not the Autumn flush—
Not the swan-song of seasons that expire,
But some profounder mystery;
The unimaginable fire
Of very Presence!

* * * * *

All the whole wood seems full
Of power ineffable.
Fades out the world of sense—
The littleness, the strife, the sordid aim—
Fused in undying flame,
Gulfed in the sudden rush of Immanence!
As on some rock-girt shore,
With yawning chasms and frowning ledges hoar,
There roll the surges of some tide immense,
With such vast sweep
That it submerges all things—scarp and deep,
And whirling pool, and precipices steep.
And naught remains of that which seems to be;
Only one orbic, universal sea.

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Faith is to believe what we do not see, and the reward of this faith is to see what we believe.

—*St. Augustine.*

# GOD, SOUL AND MATTER*

*By Swami Sharvananda*

From very early days of history, human mind has been trying to unravel the mysteries of these three fundamental principles,—God, soul and matter. In fact, man's very progress depended upon the discovery of their truths from behind the veil that hides the face of Reality. Investigation has been carried on along different lines, and the results achieved have been highly beneficial to mankind. Religion was and is busy knowing the true nature of God. Philosophy with its branches of psychology and ontology has been trying to know the true nature of the soul. And science is still busily investigating into the constitution of matter.

The relations between these lines of investigation are sometimes misunderstood. We often think that the truths of religion and philosophy, *i. e.*, those relating to God and soul, have no relation to the truths that science tries to find out. But this estimation is not true. The present is an age of synthesis. Modern science and the different branches of human knowledge, probing deep into the mysteries of nature and life, are slowly discovering a common unity amidst their apparent varieties. It has thus become easy for us to synthesize the truths of religion, the truths of philosophy and the truths of science. Nor is it correct to think that religion or God is a mere matter of faith and cannot be proved on rational grounds. The popular mind assumes the existence of an insurmountable barrier between religion and science. But the advanced knowledge of man does not think so any more. Every knowledge is now being subjected to the strict scrutiny of reason. Mere faith often biases inference and colours judgment. We shall try here to

*Reprinted from the "Prabuddha Bharata."

study the fundamental principles of God, soul and matter from a purely rational view-point.

## *MATTER*

We shall first take up matter. It is best and easiest to start with the gross, and of the three aforesaid principles, matter is assuredly the grossest, being concrete and tangible. Let us take the instance of a table. We perceive the table so clearly and find it so gross and concrete and so very real that were we to declare that it does not exist and is a fiction of our brain, all would laugh at us and think us as fit objects for a lunatic asylum. But such in fact it is. For what is a table really? According to modern science it is only a vision imposed upon a group of carbon compound molecules. These molecules are revolving round each other like the planets of the solar system. The molecules are made up of tiny atoms of certain elements such as oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, etc., and these atoms themselves are made up of very fine particles of energy called electrons and protons. A proton is the centre round which a number of electrons revolve in order to constitute an atom. Some scientists go further and say that electrons are so many vortices of the imponderable substance called ether.

Such is the analysis of matter according to modern science, and so far as it goes it is no doubt good and correct. But when we seek to rationalize these scientific conclusions, we are faced with great difficulties; we find ourselves involved in contradictions and absurdities. A time was when matter and energy were considered different entities, and matter itself was thought to be composed of mutually independent elements. These old theories are now no longer respected. It is now accepted

that matter and energy are essentially one. What we call matter, or atoms, or molecules, are but different forms of the same energy. And matter is fundamentally one. But even this advanced view does not help us out of philosophical difficulties.

Let us take, for instance, the atomic theory of matter, that matter is made up of fine atoms or electrons; that is to say, the corpuscular theory of matter, that matter is constituted of corpuscles which are elemental in their nature. These corpuscles cannot be broken into finer particles; they are the smallest indivisible particles. If we break a table and reduce it to the subtlest particles conceivable, then those subtle particles would be the finest state of matter. Those corpuscles, or atoms, or electrons, or whatever we may call them, are therefore devoid of magnitude or length, breadth and thickness, for any substance having magnitude ought to be divisible. To say they are irreducible is to maintain that they have no length, breadth and thickness, that they have no magnitude. That means that they have no existence in space. Anything that exists in space must have magnitude and must be reducible to finer forms. To hold that the ultimate state of matter is irreducible is to make it at once transcendental like a geometrical point which has existence but no magnitude,—which is unthinkable. This is the first difficulty of the scientific theory of matter. The second difficulty is that a combination of such matter particles cannot by any means produce dimensions, the phenomena of length, breadth and thickness. If matter in the ultimate state, *i. e.*, as corpuscles, is devoid of dimensions, then a group of corpuscles cannot produce dimension. Zero multiplied infinitely is zero still. The phenomenon of dimension or space is inexplicable according to this theory of matter.

If we take the other, the homogeneous theory, that the ultimate state of matter is homogeneous, *i. e.*, without any corpuscle and immobile like ether, then it becomes impossible to explain motion in matter, and the phenomena of heat, light, electricity or magnetism remain unexplained. Suppose that the capacity of a room is 320 cubic feet. If we pack that room with 80 boxes 4 cubic feet each, the whole space will be filled, there would not remain any space between the boxes and they would not move ever so slightly. For the boxes to move even by an inch, there must be some gap between them. Similarly, in the case of homogeneous condition of matter, as there is no intercorpuscular space, no motion is possible. Hence motion cannot be explained by the homogeneous theory of matter. So from every standpoint we find that the scientific theory of matter leads us to insurmountable difficulties.

And these are not all. The greatest puzzle is how matter such as science defines it, produces the variegated vision of the universe. We see the wonderful effect that matter is producing upon us. We perceive the table so tangibly yet it is not real. If we were endowed with superhuman vision so as to be able to see the subtle constituents of the table, or if human ingenuity could devise a microscope powerful enough to reveal the molecular, atomic or electronic composition of the table, then we would have found that the table vision is a chimera and that only a number of molecules are revolving and breaking into atoms and the atoms are revolving and breaking into electrons, and there are electrons and nothing else. If we come to realize this state of electronic existence, we shall find that the universe is one infinite sea of electrons or matter and its infinite varieties are nowhere.

Science does not explain how and why we perceive these varieties, if as a matter of fact there are only shapeless electrons. For an explanation of this mystery we shall have to go to psychology. Psychology will tell us that the varieties of the universe are due to our mind and defective senses. The table is an aberation. Why do we see the table? First, because our eyes have not the capacity to see the molecules, atoms or electrons; and secondly, because our mind misinterprets or misreads the reality. It is well known that the human eye has only a limited power of receiving the light rays. It can receive only the seven rays of the spectrum. Below the red rays, *i. e.*, the heat rays, it cannot be seen, nor above the violet rays or actinic rays, though there is light both above the violet rays and below the red rays. All the senses are thus limited in their capacity. Our senses are able to respond only to certain vibrations of the original matter. They fail us beyond that limited range. Our senses cannot and do not perceive matter as it in itself is. But it nevertheless affects them and the mind, and we, according to our tendency and capacity of response, interpret it as our external world. The world is therefore partly external and partly internal. It is both subjective and objective. And here is the contribution of the mind to the constitution of the visible universe.

We have already alluded to the vision that will present itself to our eyes if they are endowed with superhuman powers;—there certainly would not be any dimensions or the opacity and solidity of our present vision of things. These apparent attributes of objects are clearly then contributed by our mind, (not as the individual mind but as a part of the cosmic mind). Not merely the dimensions of things, but even their position in space and time

is affected by our mind. Our mind interprets even time and space according to its varying moods. When we are very cheerful, a day seems to fly away like an hour. When we are morose, time hangs heavy on our hands and an hour seems as long as a day. As this is true of time, so it is of space. When, for instance, we travel in mountains, even distant things appear as quite near. The reason is that the mountain air is so clear that our standard of the measurement of space, formed on the plains where the atmosphere is thick with dust and dirt, deludes and fails us. This is how time and space are affected by our mind. We do not mean that time and space and causation are wholly subjective as some Western philosophers seem to maintain. They have some objective existence also. But we wholly discredit the idea of the modern realists that they are entirely objective. They are, as we have mentioned before, subjective-objective.

We thus find that psychology and logic in trying to supplement and perfect the scientific theory of matter, have led us gradually to a point where matter blends into mind. There is no escape from this conclusion. Our ancient thinkers also held the identical view. We find that the Sankhya school looks upon the mind to be fundamentally the same as the external gross matter. The opinions of this school are replete with suggestions that help us to overcome the difficulties that beset the conclusions of science regarding the ultimate nature of matter. If we take mind along with matter and look upon them as essentially one, we at once find the connecting link that relates the formless original matter to the finished forms of the variegated world, which as our analysis has shown, are contributed by the mind. We have seen before how science reduces matter to an extra-material

form when it holds that atoms have no magnitude and are really vortices of energy. From there the mind is not very far off. Such matter stands on the border-land of the mind. Space will not permit us to dwell here on the explanation of how mind becomes what we call material objects. The Sankhya and Vedanta philosophies dwell on it elaborately. We shall content ourselves by pointing out certain circumstantial evidences which corroborate the idea that matter and mind are fundamentally one and are essentially related.

For instance, the phenomena of thought reading and mental telepathy and the experience of occultists who can stop the swinging pendulum of the clock by merely fixing their gaze upon it. These phenomena are common in India and are generally looked upon as superhuman and supernatural. But Indian thinkers hold that there is nothing supernatural about them, they are perfectly natural. What is required is that our definition of matter should be revised and made inclusive. Fifty years ago wireless telegraphy and telephony would have been considered supernatural, but to-day they appear perfectly natural. As an electric wave sent out by the wireless apparatus from one corner of the world is received through the medium of ether in another corner, so in the case of mental telepathy and thought reading, one brain becomes the receiving station and another the transmitting station for the sending and receiving of a thought-wave. A thought-wave is as much material as an etheric wave or electric wave, only it is finer, much finer than even the finest conception of matter. The phenomenon of stopping a pendulum by means of the fixed gaze shows that mind can work upon gross matter, that is to say, the mind is sending out an energy that can work upon matter. If mind

and matter were not kindred substances, the one could not act upon the other.

As regards mental healing, cure by auto-suggestion is an accomplished fact. It has been clearly proved that physical ailments can be cured by bringing mental forces to bear on the body. Therefore there must be an intimate relation between mind and matter. Unless mind were one with matter, it could never work upon matter.

The Indian definition is that anything that changes, has motion and works in time, space and causation, is matter. Mind changes, has different conditions and works through time, space and causation. Modern science is sure to arrive in course of its progress at a stage where it will recognize that matter and mind are one and that thought is as much an energy as heat, light or electricity,—of course not in the sense of the so-called materialists who look upon the mind as an epiphenomenon of gross matter, but in the sense that matter in its original form is far subtler than even electrons and that in its primal condition it branches out of the cosmic mind.

(To be continued)

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We live dreams with almost the same intensity as we do reality. All of our life, from birth to death, is fraught with dreams. Is it not also a dream which we take for reality? Are we certain of its reality because we do not know another life more real? Not only do I believe that, but I am convinced it is the sole reason of the certitude that our earthly life is one of dreams of another life more real and so on to infinity—until we reach that last life, which is the life of God.

—*Count Leo Tolstoi.*

## BOOK REVIEWS

"Days in an Indian Monastery," by Sister Devamata, published and for sale by Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, California; and The Vedanta Centre, 875 Beacon street, Boston, Mass. Price $3.00, postage, 15 cents.

The following is a portion of a review written by the well-known critic, S. C. Clover, and printed in the "Los Angeles Saturday Night," a weekly devoted to the criticism of books of unusual merit:

"While 'Days in An Indian Monastery' is in no sense a reply to 'Mother India,' there is so much light shed, incidentally, on the social life of India that, in a measure, it may be said to refute, largely, what Katherine Mayo has recorded. Sister Devamata, who knows her India from a long study of the Indian people, and from personal contact with them, is an American member of the Order of Ramakrishna, a remarkable, non-sectarian religious organization. . . . At Mylapore monastery, a suburb of Madras, the Sister lived for many months, pursuing her religious studies, which brought her into close association with not a few of India's greatest spiritual teachers. Because of this affiliation she was received in the inner circles of the high-caste Brahmins and had opportunities to learn the truth about India such as are afforded few aliens.

"If it is in the hope of creating a wider understanding and a deeper sense of kinship between East and West that she offers her reminiscences, it should be said at the outset that she has fully accomplished her purpose, for her observations are eminently enlightening, her style vivid and her viewpoint at all times sympathetic.

"Space forbids enlarging on the social customs observed by Sister Devamata, which serve to help interpret

modern India to occidental minds, but what is written makes the student, who has read 'Mother India,' hesitate to accept Miss Mayo's conclusions as revelatory of the country by and large. Where there is so firm a religious basis, so much self-denial, so much gentleness and devotion to family, the picture that 'Mother India' has mentally raised appears distorted and inconsistent. Sister Devamata, besides extolling the selfless work of the Order of Ramakrishna, to which she belongs, has done a great service to the Indian people by interpreting them, through her clear-seeing eyes, to the West. Her book should reach a wide circle of readers."

"A Son of Mother India Answers," by Dhan Gopal Mukerji. Published by E. P. Dutton & Co., New York City. Price, $1.50.

"Sister India," a pamphlet, published at Boston, Mass. Price, 5 cents; 15 copies, 50 cents; 40 copies, $1.00.

Both these publications, the one a volume, the other a small pamphlet, have as their motive, the refutation of the sweeping charges against India made by Miss Mayo in her book, "Mother India." For this reason we review them. Mr. Mukerji's answer is clear, concise, convincing —withal humorous, and his spirit in the face of much provocation is generous and restrained.

"Sister India" is a compilation from the best replies to "Mother India," with a useful bibliography at the end. Like Mr. Mukerji's book it is in no wise vindictive, but constructive and humanitarian. It is being brought out by a number of private individuals in the interests of fair play, and because of its pamphlet form and low price it should travel far. It may be obtained from its sponsor, Chester Green, 88 Washington Ave., Cambridge, Mass.; from Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, California, or from The Vedanta Centre, 875 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

VOLUME XVII NUMBER 4

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

# VEDANTA MONTHLY

# Message of the East



April, 1928

# Perpetual Resurrection

Issued by

ANANDA-ASHRAMA

LA CRESCENTA, L. A. CO., CALIF.

(Extension of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, Established 1900)

Entered as second class matter, Feb. 14, 1914, at the Post Office at La Crescenta, Calif. Box 65, under act of March 3, 1879.

Accepted for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized June 17, 1921.

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SINGLE COPIES, 25c $2.00 A YEAR

Published Monthly Except in August and September

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Cincinnati, Ohio: Mr. W. H. Starick, 2360 Rohs St.; Dr. Peter Boike, 6121 Madison Ave., Madisonville.

St. Louis, Mo.: Mrs. Anna Leimback, 5241-A Page Ave.

Chicago, Ill.: Brentano 218 So. Wabash Ave.

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# *MESSAGE OF THE EAST*

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

Published Monthly except in August and September

Vol. XVII. April, 1928 No. 4


## PERPETUAL RESURRECTION

*By Swami Paramananda*

(An Easter address delivered under the trees at Ananda-Ashrama).

LET us lift our thoughts and prayers to the Supreme Being of the universe, Who alone can grant our prayers.

Let us open all the avenues of our heart and soul with child-like and guileless devotion, that His Divine radiance may enter and penetrate our inmost depth.

May we feel that great Presence permeating our whole being, and may we rejoice in that Presence, losing all self-consciousness and desire for self-seeking.

May our hearts be so cleansed and purified that in our prayers we shall forget all smallness and pettiness, and feel within us an awakening of true strength, undaunted courage and unfailing vigor.

O Thou Bestower of all blessings and blessedness, Who knowest our innermost need, surround us at this hour with what is beneficent, with what is shielding, with what is redeeming, that we in humbleness of heart, may receive Thy blessing and retain it.

We pray for this with our whole being—with fervor and sincerity.

May we through Thy grace, hear with our ears that which is holy and uplifting to our souls, and express it through consecrated action and spirit of service;

May we learn to open our eyes with spiritual understanding, that our delusion may vanish as darkness before the Light, and we may behold the Glory of Truth in all things.

O Thou Infinite, All-loving and All-enfolding Spirit!
Surround us with Thy protecting love and keep us ever in peace.

The Service this day should be a Service of song—song of the soul! Hear how the birds sing, joining in the choir! At this season all nature seems to have the impetus, the desire to express. Therefore I am going to give you a Vedic hymn, especially appropriate, because it is the song of the soul, and such a song we need to sing many, many times and on many occasions before it leaves its imprint on our mind, before we can really absorb its true meaning.

"Hear ye, all ye children of the Immortal One!
I have known that indestructible, all-glorious Being,
Who is beyond darkness like the radiant sun.
By knowing Him alone, mortals overcome death.
There is no other way;
There is no other way;
There is no other way."

This hymn the Indo-Aryans have sung for centuries, and yet it comes to us ever new and ever fresh because its true magnitude lies not in the word, or even in the sentiment, but is felt in the silent sanctuary of the soul. If we, even in small measure, can conceive its significance, then indeed we shall begin to understand what resurrection means, and how there must be a perpetual resurrection. It is a very graphic description of the spiritual life. "There is no other way; there is no other way!" There

is no other way of escape; there is no other way of liberation; there is no other way of going beyond the realm of sorrow, sickness and death; and it is for this reason, to give us a living example, that an Incarnate Spirit comes to earth.

Let us, however, not confine the idea of resurrection merely to the life of Christ. The scope of the spirit is unbounded and infinite. The Christ gave us a very vivid example, and it is indeed beautiful that a large portion of humanity have that example; but it is not the only one. Examples are constantly being given to us, because the Lord never fails us. Otherwise we should forget and again be buried in ignorance. It is easy for us to have knowledge of the letter of Truth—any one can gain that from the great books and Bibles of the world; but that does not make one possessed of power. Power lies in realization. We may conceive a beautiful picture of immortality in theory, we may carry it intellectually; but in the hour of death and distress—in the hour of gloom—it does not sustain us; we forget it when we actually see people dying, when we behold the burial ground. The Master-spirits of the world, however, tell us by their words and by their lives that these things are only apparent, that the real man, the indestructible, the invincible, is undying and unalterable, that no one has any power over him—no one can ever bury him.

The sun that shines upon us this morning, that comes to warm us and heal us , is but a symbol of the real Sun which never fails to rise within us, even when there is gloom and darkness in the outer world. This great Truth has been given through the centuries. You heard it just now in that Vedic hymn which was sung by illumined Rishis thousands of years ago. Beautiful things are not

merely of to-day, or of to-morrow; they are of eternity; they never die. And that is the Soul, that is the Self—the real being of man. Let me read a few passages to you from the Bhagavad-Gita—the Song Celestial—for this is the day they should be read that we may be reminded of the risen Christ:

"This Self is never born, nor does It die, nor after once having been, does It go into non-being. This Self is unborn, eternal, changeless, ancient. It is never destroyed even when the body is destroyed. . .

"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.

"Sword cannot pierce It (Self), fire cannot burn It, water cannot wet It, and air cannot dry It.

"It cannot be pierced, nor burned, nor wet, nor dried. It is eternal, all-pervading, unchangeable, immovable, everlasting. . . therefore knowing this to be so, thou shouldst not grieve."

There is no death; Soul can never be annihilated. This is the message that the Christ-spirit gives us every day, and Easter is to remind us of this. It is not only in Christendom, however, that Easter is observed. It is celebrated in some form or other throughout the world, for it is a very symbolic occasion, coming as it does with the consciousness of spring, when Nature holds before us the picture of redemption after the seeming death-blow and devastation of winter. This is the significance of the risen Christ, that we may all believe in the power of the Spirit, the magnitude of the soul—believe so much that the afflictions of the material world will no longer cloud our vision. It is not difficult for us in India to be-

lieve in the resurrection, because we have had so many examples. A great soul among us passes away, and yet he appears before us. You may say, "But the flesh, the body, was destroyed!" The Hindus believe so much in the invincible quality of the soul that they cremate the body. They feel it does not matter what happens to the cage, because there is another body, another subtle, beautiful garment that can never be destroyed, where the real Self of man has Its dwelling.

Think what a wonderful world it might be if all those who profess Christianity, if all the peoples of the ancient civilizations who inherit the great teachings of immortality, really believed in the power of the Spirit! What a tremendous background it would make for us! Restlessness, pettiness, fear, envy, hatred, war—all these things would cease if we believed in our heart that the soul was indestructible. It would give a new sense of magnitude to the man who limits his existence by the boundary lines of a few years, who feels that he must accomplish everything—fulfil all his desires—in that time or he is going to lose his opportunities. He will no longer be impatient and selfish when he finds that there is Infinitude behind, before and on all sides of him. Instead, he will take everything with calm attitude; not that he will become indifferent, but this feverish longing, this fear, all these petty desires will cease and a bigger vision will rise in their place.

We must never forget the deathless nature of the soul. Easter Sunday is a reminder of that,—when we rise from the burial ground of matter and sing the glory of the spiritual dawn—of the sunrise that never fails. Spiritual awakening must take place within the soul, so that even in our dark days—our days of gloom and sadness, we

may look up to the Sun, the rising Sun, the unfailing Sun which is within us. Resurrection means to arise and awake. The significant fact was not that Christ was crucified and rose,—people wanted a sign and He gave them a sign,—but that through His life he was able to awaken other souls from slumber, from the death-bed of doubt and despondency. We may sing the glory of the dawn and the Song of Resurrection, and we may praise the Lord, but if we still cling to the burial-ground of matter, then we have altogether missed the meaning of Christ's message.

I am not going to say very much, because this Service is especially for song. The whole of nature sings, the wind sings; the birds have sung for us, even the flowers and the trees. The mountain-tops glisten and speak with their own voice: "Let no one remain asleep, let no one feel that he is impoverished, that he has only a little, limited life. Life is vast and unbounded. In that which is unbounded and unlimited, there lies the happiness of man." God gives us examples upon every side. There is an innate desire within every living thing for life, for immortality. The soul does not recognize death. Only the other day I saw instances of this in the little wild plants and vines, how in their great zeal to live they tangle around each other, winding about trees and rocks, as the life within them tries to express itself. If these things which are only partially conscious are ever exhibiting that tenacious instinct to live and to survive, how much more the conscious soul must feel it, and how much more capacity we as conscious beings must have for the expansion of this soul quality. Are we not reminded constantly by the great lives of the prophets, saviours, and consecrated mystics, that death is an incident that touches us, as it

were, very lightly once we gain a sense of true value in life, and that it is only as we lose our sense of value and with an overpowering material consciousness touch the metallic, gross, dense world that we find the sting of death?

What is the significance of the resurrection? Should we take it only in its materialistic sense, that after we are dead and buried we are going to rise in exactly the same body? What consolation does this give? How do we know that we shall want this body any more? Resurrection means the realization of life—real life—invincible life—life that does not come under the sway of death. To my mind, the Christ example stands for something much greater than the materialistic notion most people have concerning it. There is far more to life than just its physical aspect. In fact we limit ourselves, our power and our potentiality when we think only of this side. Man does not live merely because he clings to material consciousness. In fact we must realize in our inmost being that it is not through the desire to save ourselves that we gain immortality. The man who is constantly seeking for his own happiness, or trying to lengthen his own life at the cost of another's, through a strange law he loses it and all that belongs to it. Those, however, who are triumphant through spiritual consecration, they have no fear, because they know that which removes all fear. They bring eternal life into manifestation.

Why do mystics, saints and sages retire sometimes from the world? It is not for their own safe-keeping, it is not that they seek to preserve themselves, but that they want to have something real to give to the world. Our greatest gift is the knowledge of spiritual values. When we have learned through devotion to blend all our facul-

ties, consciously offering ourselves that we may be used to greater advantage, for greater blessing, then there comes real consummation for the individual. Then are we true children of Divinity. Then is our religion no longer a question of creed or dogma, it becomes an active quality of the soul, a beautiful manifestation of the life. Only in this way can we make our existence worth while for ourselves and for our fellow beings, and for that reason we must not regard the act of devotion as something alien to manliness, or to the natural way of living. It is so very natural, so very needful that when we cut ourselves off from it there is a part of our life that suffers, that withers.

There are certain principles that are fundamentally true and unless we apply them in our daily living we become great losers. Work we must do and play we must have. Work and play are necessary for the healthfulness of human mind and body; but there is another element equally necessary, and that is the element of worship. Every soul needs it. We need love, because love is the greatest factor in taking away the sting that comes often through action and reaction. What man or woman can work indefinitely without breaking down, unless there is the actuating power of love to make the road smooth? We need love to counteract the terrible, devastating effect of material influences, to keep us from becoming hardened by the constant touch of matter; and the greatest manifestation of love is spiritual devotion, the recognition that there is a Power to Whom primarily we owe our life—our very existence. And not only recognition; we owe the acknowledgement of our debt, the showing in some active, creative, beneficent way that we are conscious of it. Work, play, worship—how lovely when we can blend these in harmony; when in action we can be,

not rigid, not metallic, but energetic, devout, inspiring and playful as children of God must be!

One of our great mystics, Sri Ramakrishna, used often to say that people should never have gloominess of soul, that they should never carry a countenance that is sad or mournful. His conception of Deity was that of an All-blissful Mother ever caring for us, ever watchful of our needs. When we have the assurance of such a Deity—an ever loving Mother, or loving Father, looking after us, shielding us, protecting us—how can we be other than perpetually happy, and will we not scatter that happiness through every act of our life? This is the only meaning I can give you in regard to devotion. It is not a morbid act, it is not a selfish attitude, it is not a question of observing one set of rituals or another; it is the expression of the soul. It is the tribute of our life to the Source of our life. And how awe-stricken and inspired we become when we recognize this. Our pettiness, smallness, selfish instincts all fade away. How can anything unworthy remain before that Light? Now we have fear of loss, of disease, of death, because we do not know our strength; but as soon as we discover it, as soon as we realize our great spiritual heritage, these things vanish. That was the consummation of Christ's life. Why was He not fearful like us when he was confronted with danger? Why did He not feel thwarted? Because there was surety behind Him, unfaltering faith within.

These are the thoughts I like to give you. They are nothing new, nothing astounding. They are simple as the breeze that blows every day; but we can shut ourselves away from them, just as we shut ourselves away from the cool breeze, or from the beneficent light of the sun. There is but one thing that is needful, one simple thing, and that

is to learn to open our souls to that which is healing, radiating and upbuilding. This little act we can all perform, but we perform it best when we are not conscious of ourselves, when we are not fretful and anxious and full of worrying thoughts.

There are some people already buried even before they have departed from this life. Their aspirations, their feelings and powers of self-expression are all buried under the heavy weight of material consciousness. To be able to rescue ourselves and others from that is the greatest service we can render, and we render it not so much through aggressive speaking and preaching as through our life. We can never do these things through mental calculation; we must go deeper and deeper within our own soul. We may start with the belief that we are petty, small and insignificant, but we shall come out with a sense of grandeur and spiritual magnitude. We are transformed; we rise with new life, with faith and aspiration, as Christ rose from the burial ground.

Invincible life! That is the significance of Easter. It is not a day merely of outer observance and the wearing of new clothes, although these too have their meaning. It is well to observe the outer and to wear the garb of freshness if we feel a freshness within—a renewing of life, a renewing of strength, a renewing of that great consciousness that we are primarily of God, children of Eternity. Trees wear new clothes after winter. When all is covered with snow and ice and it seems as if all the trees were dead, suddenly they awake and put on green leaves. Same way it is with souls in this world. When they learn to separate the unreal from the Real, and cling to the Real, then they find their invincible life right here on earth, then they awake, just as nature awakes after its

long winter's sleep. The great message of Easter is awakening.

Let us as we rise with prayers in our heart pray with more fervent spirit that He, the Giver of life, may also give us understanding—understanding of true life, true love, true service, that our prayers may include the happiness of others, that they may ascend, not only for our own good, protection and blessing, but for all those who are in distress. May we even pray for those who may not seem to be our friends. Let us leave no one out of our prayers or out of the range of our love in this hour of spiritual communion.

Peace—Peace—Peace be unto us, and to all living beings.

## HYMN TO JOY

*By Johann Friedrich Schiller*

Joy is the mainspring in the whole
Of endless Nature's calm rotation;
Joy moves the dazzling wheels that roll
In the great Timepiece of Creation;
Joy breathes on buds, and flowers they are;
Joy beckons—suns come forth from heaven;
Joy rolls the spheres in realms afar,—
Ne'er to thy glass, dim Wisdom, given!

* * *

Joy from Truth's pure and lambent fires,
Smiles out upon the ardent seeker;
Joy leads to virtue man's desires,
And cheers as Suffering's steps grow weaker.
High from the sunny slopes of Faith,
The gales her waving banners bouy;
And through the shattered vaults of Death,
Lo, 'mid the choral Angels—Joy! . . .

## UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children; for blessed are they that keep my ways.

Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.—*Proverbs*

Theologians, philosophers and scientists in the West, are ransacking everything to get a proof that they live afterwards! What a storm in a teacup! There are much higher things to think of. What silly superstition is this, that you ever die? It requires no priests or spirits or ghosts to tell us that we shall not die. It is the most self-evident of all truths. No man can imagine his own annihilation. The idea of immortality is inherent in man.

—*Swami Vivekananda*

What is death? A mask. Turn it and be convinced.—*Epictetus*

In us there is a secret and mysterious and wonderful power, by means of which we may retire from the mutations of time and into our inner Self, stripped of all that which comes to us from the outward things, and there, under the form of unchangeableness, gaze upon the Eternal.—*Schelling*

Knowing that which is soundless, touchless, formless, undecaying; also tasteless, odorless and eternal; beginningless, endless and immutable; beyond the Unmanifested: (knowing that) man escapes from the mouth of death.—*Katha Upanishads*

## THE ANCIENT ONE

*From the Svetasvatara Upanishad*

I know that great Spirit, sun-hued, beyond the darkness. Knowing Him, man escapeth Death; there is no other way to walk.

Than this naught else is higher, nor subtler, nor mightier; with this Spirit the universe is filled.

Formless, sorrowless, is the Highest; they become deathless who know it; but others come to very grief.

With face, head, neck everywhere, dwelling in covert in every creature, pervading all, the Lord is He; thus everywhere is the presence of the Gracious.

A great lord is the Spirit, mover of the understanding, ruler of this pure approach, Light unfading.

The Spirit dwells ever as inward soul within men's hearts, conceived by the heart, the imagination, the thought; deathless they become who know this.

Showing himself in the qualities of all senses, void of all senses, He is lord, ruler of all, refuge of all.

Handless and footless, He speeds and seizes; eyeless, He sees; earless, He hears. He knows what may be known, but there is none to know Him. Men call Him the Primal, the Great Spirit.

Subtler than the subtle is He, greater than the great, the soul lodged in covert in living beings. Freed from grief, man sees by the Almighty's grace Him, the desireless, Him the Power sovereign.

I know Him, the ageless, ancient, All-soul, dwelling everywhere in universal presence, to whom Brahma-teachers deny birth, whom they call the Eternal.

The one hue that by blending of powers lends manifold hues in diverse wise from gathered substance, the Beginning and End wherein the All dissolves—He is God; may He unite us with blessed understanding!

In vision of the Lord, the bounteous worshipful God, who stands sole warder over every womb, in whom this All falls together and dissolves asunder, man comes to this everlasting peace.

His form is not to be beheld; none sees Him with the eye. Deathless they become who in heart and mind know Him as heart-dwelling.

## ELEVATING POWER OF RELIGION

*From Fichte's "Characteristics of the Present Age"*

Religion elevates him who is devoted to her service above time as such, above the transient and the perishable, and puts him in immediate possession of eternity. On the one original Divine life his eye reposes; there his love is rooted; whatever meets his view and seems to be beyond this one original life, is not beyond it but within it, and is merely a temporary form of its development according to an absolute law which likewise lies within itself; he sees all things only in and through this one original life, and in this life he sees the whole infinite universe of being. His view is thus always the view of the eternal, and what he sees, he sees as eternal and in the eternal: nothing can truly *be* which is not, even on that very account, eternal. Every fear of perishing in death, and every effort to discover an artificial proof of the immortality of the soul, lies far beneath him. In every moment of his existence he has immediate possession of the eternal life with all its blessedness; and he needs no argument or inference to prove the truth of that which he possesses in ever-present feeling and consciousness. There is no more striking proof that the knowledge of the true religion has hitherto been very rare among men, and that in particular it is a

universally place eternal blessedness beyond the grave, and never for a moment imagine that whoever will, may here and at once be blessed.

## THE MORAL LAW

*From the Teachings of Confucius*

The ordinance of God is what we call the law of our being. To fulfil the law of our being is what we call the moral law. The moral law when reduced to a system is what we call religion.

The moral law is a law from whose operation we cannot for one instant in our existence escape. A law from which we may escape is not the moral law. Wherefore it is that the moral man watches diligently over what his eyes cannot see and is in fear and awe of what his ears cannot hear.

There is nothing more evident than that which cannot be seen by the eyes, and nothing more palpable than that which cannot be perceived by the sense. Wherefore the moral man watches diligently over his secret thoughts.

When the passions such as joy, anger, grief and pleasure have not awakened, that is our true self or moral being. When these passions awaken and each and all attain due measure and degree: that is the moral order. Our true self or moral being is the great reality (lit. great root) of existence, and moral order is the universal law in the world. When true moral being and moral order are realized, the universe then becomes a cosmos, and all things attain their full growth and development.

Confucius remarked: "The life of the moral man is an exemplification of the universal moral order. The life of the vulgar person, on the other hand, is a contradiction of the universal moral order. The moral man's

life is an exemplification of the universal order, because he is a moral person who unceasingly cultivates his true self or moral being. The vulgar person's life is a contradiction of the universal order, because he is a vulgar person who in his heart has no regard for, or fear of the moral law.

Confucius remarked: "To find the central clue to our moral being which unites us to the universal order, that indeed, is the highest human attainment. People are seldom capable of it for long.

Confucius remarked: "I know now why there is no real moral life. The wise mistake moral law for something higher than what it really is; and the foolish do not know enough what moral law really is. I know now why the moral law is not understood. The noble natures want to live too high above their moral ordinary self; and ignoble natures do not live high enough, i.e., not up to their moral ordinary true self.

Confucius remarked: "There was the Emperor Shun. He was perhaps what may be considered a truly great intellect. Shun had a natural curiosity of mind and he loved to inquire into near facts. He looked upon evil merely as something negative; and he recognized only what was good as having a positive existence. Taking the two extremes of negative and positive, he applied the mean between the two extremes in his judgment, employment and dealings with people. This was the characteristic of Shun's great intellect. . .

Confucius remarked: "A man may be able to renounce the possession of kingdom and empire, be able to spurn the honours and emoluments of office, be able to trample upon bare, naked weapons: with all that he shall not be able to find the central clue in his moral being."

## THE CUP OF COMPASSION

*By Sister Daya*

Where do legends originate? In the souls of poets, or in the minds of priests? On the lips of mothers, or in the half-forgotten memories of the old? Are they born of some unfathomed wonder interpreted through man's credulity, or of that Truth which ever transcends fact? There's none can say. This only do I know: the legend that I give herewith I never heard until I heard it in my heart, and were a child now sitting on my knee, and were I living in the Middle Age, when holy things seemed closer, why I think that I might tell it to that child as now to you.

One day the gentle Christ was walking through the barren lands without Jerusalem. It was very hot. The roses of Sharon along the way drooped their frail heads and the Christ was weary. His body was weary and His heart was weary, for the world had, for the moment, thrown its black shadow even over Him who was all Love and Light. His disciples, likewise tired, lingered behind, realizing, perhaps, that the Master wished to be alone.

A sudden longing for water came to the Lord, and He quickened His steps. Why did the thought so draw Him? Usually His mind soared far above His body needs—but water! Water to wash away all dust and stain! Water of God! Water of Life! Water at last—bubbling up beside the road! He was glad to see the cooling, healing water. Before He could approach the spring, however, a merchant prince, pompous and arrogant, with gorgeous retinue, swept by Him, crowding out at the same time a wretched beggar, a pathetic woman creature who was used to being thrust aside by men. The merchant seiz-

ing a flashing, golden goblet which his servant filled and handed to him, drank eagerly, and while he drank, the beggar woman, trembling at the holy beauty of the Christ, said: "Master, go thou first," but she thought, "Oh, if only I were worthy to go and fetch the water for him!" Then seeing that the Lord had no cup, she thought again, "Would I had a precious bowl to offer him; my cup is far too mean, even had it not been already defiled by me." It was indeed an old mis-shapen thing, like to its owner. The dear Lord turned and smiled upon her; but the merchant who had finished with his drink, took from his servant's hand his own gold goblet new-filled at the spring, and pushing past her, proffered it to the Lord. "Drink this," he said; "I see Thou art a Master in Israel, so it will bring me blessings and my goods will fetch high price in the markets of Jerusalem."

"Nay," said the Lord Christ, "neither from your hand nor from your cup. The world has filled them and the world will empty them." With a shade of fear the merchant turned away, hiding his chagrin beneath a show of bluster.

When he had gone, the Christ turned towards the woman. "Give me thy bowl," He said, she wanted to speak, wanted to tell him that it was polluted, old, in no way fit for Him, but somehow speech refused to come, and her eyes were dazzled by the light. So, obedient, she held the bowl towards Him. He took it from her shaking fingers, and kneeling down, He dipped it in the stream till it overflowed with purity,—and drank of it. Then, rising, He held it to her lips with tender hand, while she partook of the remainder. Strange—now the light was in her and around her! She could see His face, but that was all, and she could hear His words:

"The greatest glory of the Lord is His compassion. He pours Himself into the abandoned life, and into the discarded bowl."

Discarded bowl!—her life!—yea, it was that!—but grown holy now. Why, she could even offer it to Him, because His life had touched it! . . . .

Again she was alone and He was gone. Again the long, long road—again the heat! But age and pain had fallen from her soul, weariness and sadness from His heart.

And here my vision falters. How the cup became a chalice out of which men drank, not wine, but love,—I cannot say. Yet so it was. And when the sacred Feast was ended, it was never left behind upon the table, like some common dish—ah, who could think of it?—it was carried off by one—beloved—in his tunic's fold above his heart; but how it chanced to fall without his knowledge, that is dark to me; only I saw it fall,—upon the Place of the Skull, men call Golgotha. I saw it kicked about by many feet and roll until it stopped just at the base of a new-risen Cross, where all a long day through it lay unnoted, while above it Heaven and earth were fused in one great act of uttermost surrender. And there God's life again poured into it, this time in drops of blood which dripped from out the wounds of the Christ Crucified.

When Joseph came—he of Arimathea—to claim the body of his Lord, he found it there, that sacred Cup, and worshipped it, and wept; and it became from that time on the symbol of a Mystery,—the goal—the vision for all seeking hearts—the light-filled Holy Grail.

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Look within, within is the fountain of good, that is the life, that is the man.—*Roman Wisdom*

# PRAISE-CHANTS TO THE SUN-GOD

*From the Egyptian*

(Ra, the solar deity, was worshipped by the ancient Egyptians as the chief personification of the One Supreme with Whom he was often identified).

Hail to thee, Ra, Lord of Truth!
Whose sanctuary is hidden,—Lord of gods!
Khepri in the midst of his bark,
Who commanded and the gods became;
Atum, who made the people,
Who determined the fashion of them,—
Maker of their sustenance,—
Who distinguished one color (race) from another,
Who hears the prayers of him who is in captivity,
Who is kindly of heart when one calls upon him.
Who saves the timid from the haughty,
Who separates the weak from the strong,—
Lord of Knowledge, in whose mouth is taste,
For love of whom the Nile comes,—
Lord of Sweetness, great in love,
At whose coming the people live.

Sole likeness, maker of what is!
Sole and Only One, maker of what exists!
From whose eyes men issued,
From whose mouth the gods came forth,—
Maker of herbs for the cattle,
And the tree of life for mankind;
Who maketh the sustenance of the fish in the stream,
And the birds that traverse the sky,
Who giveth bread to that which is in the egg,
Who maketh to live the son of the worm,
Who maketh that on which the gnats live,
The worms and the insects likewise,

Who supplieth the needs of the mice in their holes,
Who sustaineth alive the birds in every tree.
Hail to thee, who hast made all these!
Thou Sole and Only One, with many arms!
Thou Sleeper waking while all men sleep,
Seeking good things for his cattle!
Amen, enduring in all things,—
Atum-Harakhte!
Praise to thee in all that they say,
Jubilation to thee for thy tarrying with us,
Obeisance to thee who didst create us!
"Hail to thee!" say all cattle;
"Jubilation to thee!" says every country,
To the height of heaven, to the breadth of earth,
To the depths of the sea.

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## ABSOLUTE BEAUTY

*From the "Symposium" of Plato*

He who has been instructed thus far in the science of Love, and has been led to see beautiful things in their due order and rank, when he comes toward the end of his discipline, will suddenly catch sight of a wondrous thing, beautiful with the absolute Beauty;—and this, Socrates, is the aim and end of all those earlier labours:—he will see a Beauty eternal, not growing or decaying, not waxing or waning; nor will it be fair here and foul there, nor depending on time or circumstance or place, as if fair to some, and foul to others: nor shall Beauty appear to him in the likeness of a face or hand, nor embodied in any sort of form whatever, . . . whether of heaven or of earth; but Beauty absolute, separate, simple and everlasting; which lending of its virtues to all beautiful things that we

see born to decay, itself suffers neither increase nor diminution, nor any other change.

When a man proceeding onwards from terrestrial things by the right way of loving, once comes to sight of that Beauty, he is not far from his goal. And this is the right way wherein he should go or be guided in his love: he should begin by loving earthly things for the sake of the absolute loveliness, ascending to that as it were by degrees or steps, from the first to the second, and thence to all fair forms; and from fair forms to fair conduct, and from fair conduct to fair principles, until from fair principles he finally arrives at the ultimate principle of all, and learn what absolute beauty is.

This life, my dear Socrates, said Diotama, if any life at all is worth living, is the life that a man should live, in the contemplation of absolute Beauty: the which, when once you beheld it, would not appear to you to be after the manner of gold and garments or beautiful persons, whose sight now so ravishes you, that you and many others consorting with your lovers forget even to eat and drink, if only you may look at them and live near them. But what if a man's eyes were awake to the sight of the true Beauty, the divine Beauty, pure, clear and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollutions of mortality, and the many colours and varieties of human life? What if he should hold converse with the true Beauty, simple and divine?

O think you, she said, that it would be an ignoble life for a man to be ever looking thither and with his proper faculty contemplating the absolute Beauty, and to be living in its presence? Are you not rather convinced that he who thus sees beauty as only it can be seen, will be specially fortuned? And that, since he is in contact not with images but with realities, he will give birth not to

images, but to very Truth itself? And being thus the parent and nurse of true virtue it will be his lot to become a friend of God, and, so far as any man can be, immortal and absolute?

## GOD, SOUL AND MATTER

*By Swami Sharvananda*

(Continued from the March number)

### *SOUL*

Let us next try to understand the nature of soul from psychological and ontological view-points. We naively feel that our personality is essentially dependent on the physical body. We call ourselves Mr. or Mrs. So and So, according to the sex of our physical organism and we identify ourselves with other adjuncts of our physical existence. But a little thought is enough to prove that this assumption is wrong. Human personality does not consist in the physical body. There is something subtler and higher in man—an intelligent principle. Even modern biology has come to recognize this fact. Modern biologists, even when they do not believe in the unity of soul and in the singular nature of the individual, are constrained to grant the existence of a superior principle in man, flowing parallel to the physical energy. They call it the biotic energy. The physical energy forms the outer garments as it were, while the biotic energy is the inner essence. The most modern theory of biology regarding individual life is what is called the colony of consciousness theory, that every cell of the physical body has a life of its own and our individuality is the sum total of the lives of the constituting cells. Biologists adduce the illustration of a bundle of burning candles. If we take a hundred lighted candles and bind them together,

the separate flames will mingle with each other to produce a large flame. The small flames will lose their separate existence and only one single light will be noticed. Similarly with the living cells. There is no such thing as an individual life. What appears as such is only the aggregate of cell lives, and the dissolution of these cells, the going out of the tiny flames, means the death of man.

This is no doubt a fine theory, but a little scrutiny reveals the unsound character of the idea of colony of consciousness. In the case of candles, it is quite plausible because a candle is an unconscious thing and has only an objective existence. Objectively considered, the delusion of the combined flames is perfect,—it *is* really a single flame though made up of smaller lights. But the case of man is different. We have also a subjective existence. We carry within us the consciousness of the singularity of our being. Everyone feels that he is an individual and distinct from everything else, that he is not a compound being, but integral and elemental in his nature. Suppose the candle-flames had consciousness. Then, though to an onlooker their combination would have appeared to constitute a single flame, the candles themselves would have each felt that it had no essential unity with the other flames, was complete in itself and had an absolutely independent existence, and the compound flame itself would have had no self-consciousness of its own beyond the separate, individual consciousness of the candles. Similarly, if human consciousness were the aggregate of the consciousness of individual cell lives, then each cell would feel that it is separate from the rest and the aggregated consciousness would by no means produce the feeling of singularity, unity and integrity such as every man has

within himself. One plus one plus one plus one and so on do not make one. So this biological theory is inadequate to explain soul consciousness.

Whence then this consciousness of "I," "My being," etc.? What does the real nature of our being consist in? Is it in the body? No, because body obviously is inert matter. Its seeming activity is due to something beyond it. We infer its existence by the difference between the living and the dead. What is that principle? The existence of a disembodied spirit is an accepted fact. Even a scientist like Sir Oliver Lodge acknowledges it. In India we have from very ancient times recognized the super-physical existence of man. That existence transcends even the mind. The principle which thinks, feels and wills is not the reality of the soul; for the self-consciousness of man is much wider and more persistent than even the mind. Through all different stages of life, —childhood, youth and age, and the constant changes of the body and mind, the consciousness of the individuality of man persists. An old man feels that he is the same as once was a boy, though he knows that his body and mind have undergone radical changes. Physiologists will tell us that the old cells of the body are being continually replaced by new cells. The body is a flux, it is ever changing like a river. Just as a river, even though fresh quantities of water are flowing down it every minute, retains its identity, even so the body. The constancy of the river is due to its having a permanent bed on which the water flows. Even so there must be something permanent behind the changing body and mind to insure the constancy of human individuality. That we have to find out. That is the soul of man.

We are aware that the mind of a boy and the mind of

an old man are not the same. The mind changes continually. Even a short observation will show how it fluctuates and varies in its moods. But through all these changes there is a thread of permanency. We feel, "I am happy," "I am miserable," "I am doing," "I am thinking," etc. This "I," the consciousness of one singular existence, unchangeable and immutable in nature, forms the permanent background of all the physiological and psychological changes of the human personality.

This fact becomes clearer when we analyze the different states of consciousness. Take for instance the three states of consciousness: the waking state, the dreaming state, and the dreamless deep sleep state. In the waking state we are conscious of the external world and of physical and mental phenomena. In the dreaming state, the consciousness of the physical world is obliterated and a new world rises out of the mind. A beggar dreams that he has become an emperor;—all his poverty and sufferings are forgotten and he enjoys imperial happiness. These are the freaks of the mind; it changes and stultifies even our physical existence. But in and through the extreme changes of the dream state, the "I," persists. The qualifying attributes of "I" vary, but the "I" remains the same even in a dream.

The persistence of the "I" and its unaffected permanency is still clearly proved by the evidence of the dreamless deep sleep state. In that state we are considered to become absolutely unconscious. When we fall into a profound sleep, we no doubt become unconscious of the physical world, of time, space and causation and our own body. But strictly speaking, it is not an absolutely unconscious state, for though the sleeping man is unconscious

of everything else, he is not unconscious of his own being. For had he been so, there would have been a gap in the continuity of his existence. An existence without some kind of consciousness of it, is the same as non-existence to us. If self-consciousness were totally absent in deep sleep, then the man who entered into sleep and the man who awoke from it would have felt themselves as separate individuals. The thread of existence would snap every time a man fell into sound sleep. But such as a matter of fact is not the case. The continuity of existence is not affected the least by the daily sleep of man. This clearly proves that the "I" exists even beyond the functions and existences of the mind and body.

There is a still further proof. When a man wakes up from sleep, he often says, "I slept well. I did not remember anything." Well, though he did not remember anything, he remembers at least that he did not remember anything. So there must be a kind of consciousness even in deep sleep.

Consciousness can be likened to a crystal cup and its contents. When a crystal cup is filled with a liquid, it assumes the colour of the liquid, but when the contents are poured out, the cup regains its original transparency. Our consciousness also is in the same way tinged by its contents, the ideas. Our thoughts and feelings form the contents of our consciousness and impart their colour to it. That is why we do not perceive the true nature of consciousness in either the awakened or dreaming state. Only in deep sleep do we get a glimpse of it and are filled with profound calm and joy. When a man enters into deep sleep, all conditions of life fall off from him; he forgets his physical and mental existences and the self alone remains in its original, undifferentiated state. This is

the essence of man, this is the soul, the principle of consciousness. The English word, "consciousness," is misleading. Our word for the soul is "Chaitanya." *Chaitanya* is not *consciousness*. Consciousness, according to Western psychology, implies mental activity. The Western conception of soul is quite different from our *Atman*, because according to Western psychology, the soul is mind. The true soul of man or the *Atman*, however, is not mind. It is a singular entity quite independent of the mind and its functions. In deep sleep state, the mind does not function, yet man lives. If mind were soul, then man in deep sleep ought to have been soulless. But such is not the case.

But there are certain experiences recorded by a few individuals at different times in different parts of the world, which point to a new phase of consciousness. We cannot disregard these evidences if we are to come to a scientific estimation of the nature of the soul, for the greatest danger to induction is the omission of relative data, however rare they may be. Modern psychology bases its conclusions mostly on the awakened state of consciousness, and errors and imperfections become necessarily inevitable. Indian psychologists, however, have taken all the different states of consciousness into account,—the waking state, the dreaming state, the deep sleep state and another which they call the "'fourth' state. There is a state of consciousness, the superconscious state, in which the ideas of time, space and causation are transcended and forgotten. It differs from the deep sleep state in that whereas we reach the superconscious state by deliberate effort and gain thereby a permanent knowledge and illumination of the Truth and the Real, in the deep sleep state, our attainment of our pristine, unconditioned

nature is veiled by cosmic ignorance and we do not therefore remember our experience on awakening and do not derive any permanent illumination from it.

The superconscious experience is not a freak. It can be had by all. Nor is it morbid. Indian psychologists and philosophers have thrown the challenge to the world to test its validity. It is foolish to deny its truth without taking up the challenge and fulfilling the test. Man *can* transcend all the conditions of his physical and mental existence. The principle of human consciousness *can* realize a state in which it knows the transcendental existence. It is not deep sleep, it is not unconsciousness. It is a state of intense awareness and it has peculiar experiences of its own. These experiences have been recorded in the Vedas and have been testified to by hundreds of ancient Rishis and sages and are being corroborated even to-day by numerous Hindu mystics. These things have been experienced also by the mystics of Persia and Arabia (Sufis), of Greece and Alexandria (Neo-Platonists) and of China (followers of Lao-tze). The superconscious state is not, therefore, the morbid experience of solitary individuals, but is intensely real and healthy. A tree is known by its fruits. Had these experiences been really morbid, the persons who realized them would have shown, like lunatics, signs of morbidity. But history records that these persons who soared so high and knew and stood face to face with Infinity, were the salt of the earth. They wielded gigantic powers for good and noble activities in human society. Surely a Buddha or a Christ is not a lunatic. Sane psychology therefore cannot deny the truth of the superconscious state of existence. This is the real nature of the soul.

(To be concluded)

# LIGHT OF HOLY FAITH

## *By St. Catherine of Siena*

(From her "Dialogue", dictated by her, while in a state of ecstasy, and completed in the year 1370 A. D.)

. . . Thou, oh eternal Trinity, art a deep sea, into which the deeper I enter the more I find, and the more I find the more I seek; the soul cannot be satiated in Thy abyss, for she continually hungers after Thee, the eternal Trinity, desiring to see Thee with light in Thy light. As the hart desires the spring of living water, so my soul desires to leave the prison of this dark body and see Thee in truth. How long, oh! Eternal Trinity, fire and abyss of love, will Thy face be hidden from my eyes? Melt at once the cloud of my body. The knowledge which Thou hast given me of Thyself in Thy truth, constrains me to long to abandon the heaviness of my body, and to give my life for the glory and praise of Thy Name, for I have tasted and seen with the light of the intellect in Thy light, the abyss of Thee—the eternal Trinity, and the beauty of Thy creature, for, looking at myself in Thee, I saw myself to be Thy image, my life being given me by Thy power. . .

Oh! Abyss, oh! Eternal Godhead, oh! Sea Profound! what more couldst Thou give me than Thyself? Thou art the fire which ever burns without being consumed; Thou consumest in Thy heat all the soul's self-love; Thou art the fire which takes away all cold; with Thy light Thou dost illuminate me so that I may know all Thy truth; Thou art that light above all light, which illuminates supernaturally the eye of my intellect, clarifying the light of faith so abundantly and so perfectly, that I see that my soul is alive, and in this light receives Thee—the true

light. By the light of faith I have acquired wisdom in the wisdom of the Word . . . In the light of faith I am strong, constant and persevering. In the light of faith I hope,—suffer me not to faint by the way. This light without which I should still walk in darkness, teaches me the road, and for this I said, oh! Eternal Father, that Thou hast illuminated me with the light of holy faith.

Of a truth this light is a sea, for the soul revels in Thee, Eternal Trinity, the Sea Pacific. The water of the sea is not turbid, and causes no fear to the soul, for she knows the truth; it is a deep which manifests sweet secrets, so that where the light of Thy faith abounds, the soul is certain of what she believes. This water is a magic mirror into which Thou, the Eternal Trinity, biddest me gaze, holding it with the hand of love, that I may see myself, who am Thy creature, there represented in Thee, and Thyself in me through the union which Thou didst make of Thy Godhead with our humanity. For this light I know to represent to myself Thee—the Supreme and Infinite Good, Good Blessed and Incomprehensible, Good Inestimable. Beauty above all beauty; Wisdom above all wisdom—for Thou art Wisdom itself. Thou, the food of the angels, hast given Thyself in a fire of love to men; Thou, the garment which covers all our nakedness, feedest the hungry with Thy sweetness. Oh! Sweet, without any bitter, oh! Eternal Trinity, I have known in Thy light, which Thou hast given me with the light of holy faith, the many and wonderful things Thou hast declared to me, explaining to me the path of supreme perfection, so that I may no longer serve Thee in darkness, but with light, and that I may be the mirror of a good and holy life. . . Clothe me, clothe me with Thee, oh! Eternal Truth, that I may run my mortal course with true

obedience and the light of holy faith, with which light I feel that my soul is about to become inebriated afresh.

## SUPPLICATION

*By Sri Sankar Deb*

**(A great Hindu religious reformer and devotee of the 16th century)**

Oh, my Lord, prostrate at Thy feet I lay myself down and
beseech Thee with a contrite heart to save my soul.
My soul is on the point of perishing through the poison
of the venomous serpent of worldly things.
On this earth all is transitory and uncertain,—wealth,
kinsmen, life, youth, and even the world itself.
Children, family, all are uncertain. On what shall I
place reliance?
Like a drop of water on the lotus leaf, the mind is un-
steady. There is no firmness to it.
There is nothing uncertain in Thy grace and no cause for
fear under the shadow of Thy feet.
I, Sankara, pray to Thee, O, Hrishikesh, the Dweller in
my heart, to pilot me across this world of trouble.
Turn my heart to Thee and lead me to Thyself,
Oh Lord of all blessings and all grace.
Vouchsafe unto me the truth, the right light, and
the kindly guidance.

## REPORT

It was not expected that Swami Paramananda's trip to India would be a long one. He is now returning after a short stay and will probably reach Ananda-Ashrama about the end of April. His trip to India was full of unexpected triumphs. When he landed at Manila he was surprised to have a delegation meet him at the steamer and entertain him during his stay there. At Singapore several hundred people were at the pier to receive him and he was given ovation after ovation, culminating in a lecture tour covering the Malay States and Rangoon. There is not space enough to give an adequate account of it in the present number of the Message, but a full report will appear in the May number.

VOLUME XVII. NUMBER 5

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

MAY 16 1928

# VEDANTA MONTHLY

# Message of the East



May, 1928

# Trust in the Divine

Issued by

ANANDA-ASHRAMA

LA CRESCENTA, L. A. CO., CALIF.

(Extension of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, Established 1909)

Entered as second class matter, Feb. 14, 1924, at the Post Office at La Crescenta, Calif., Box 85, under act of March 2, 1879.

Accepted for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized June 17, 1921.

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SINGLE COPIES, 25c

$2.00 A YEAR

Published Monthly Except in August and September

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# *MESSAGE OF THE EAST*

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

"Light shall come again from the East."
—Tyndall.

Published Monthly except in August and September

**Vol. XVII.** **May, 1928** **No. 5**


IN THE springtide when the great truths of resurrection and rebirth are written in every hollow of the earth by grass and flowers, Christendom celebrates the victory of Christ on the Cross, while at almost the same season, from Japan in the East to Siberia and even Swedish Lapland in the West, millions upon millions of human beings hold festival at the anniversary of the birth of the Lord Buddha, which took place in a little kingdom in the foothills of the Himalayas about 543 B. C., in the first flush of the year.

Christ and Buddha! The one born out of lowliness became the King of kings—Son of man and Son of God! The other, born a prince and surrounded with every conceivable luxury, renounced all and became a divine beggar for the sake of Truth and for his fellow men. Both taught that only through the renunciation of the self—the losing of the little, lesser life—could salvation be attained, that love was the greatest of all means for freeing the human heart, and that by love alone could evil be overcome.

Had Gautama the Buddha been born in Galilee, he would have carried the Cross, we dare to believe, even as did the Christ—with glory; and if Jesus the Christ had taken birth as the son of Sudhodana, the king, he would have lived out his days in stainless purity, firmamental love and unshakable wisdom, even as did the Lord Buddha. For love and Truth is one Spirit, however manifesting—one Eternal Blessedness—and before that Eternal Blessedness, shining with such clear lustre through these and other mighty lives, we bow our heads in worship.

# TRUST IN THE DIVINE

*By Swami Paramananda*

The Infinite, All-loving One speaks to us in many ways —through Nature, for instance,—more eloquently than through any sermon. Simple lessons of trust in the Divine, —cheerfulness and exuberance are constantly being poured out upon us, but our inner being is not always open to receive them and profit by them. Sometimes we are in an altogether contrary mood. There is a deep significance hidden in the simple facts of life, and we can find it, if we will only forget ourselves.

The great compassionate Buddha says: "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." "Anxious to learn,"—that means humility. It is one of the marks of true greatness. The great men of the world proclaim unanimously: "So long as we live, we learn." There is an unending and infinite storehouse. It is only the small man who takes the stand that he knows everything. One who has real nobility of purpose makes his way by the sheer strength of his humility. He causes men to feel that there is no difference between him and them. Little children go to him as though he were one with them. Yet even such a man can find no contact with those who deliberately close their gates. Men of this exalted type never try to force anything. The Lord Himself does not force us to love Him,—it rests with us.

"Have faith in God. . . What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them." Here is a teaching of the Christ which can be misinterpreted through our own misconception. My humble

opinion is that no man, no woman, no soul, can have real strength in his prayer, if there is in it any self-seeking, any weakening influence. Suppose, for instance, a person seeks to take revenge on his enemy by praying to God. The very thought of revenge defeats him. From such a desire no strong prayer can ascend. He may attempt to pray, but the prayers which bring fulfillment are not those which are actuated by lower human instincts, they are the prayers which rise from the moments in our life when we forget ourselves altogether. Once I picked up a little leaflet issued by some church, and it very strongly impressed me. In it Christ says to a devotee, "Child, ask of Me what you will,—ask big things, for I like generous hearts. Ask for your friends." And then in conclusion He says, "I love those hearts who in their generosity forget themselves, when they are asking for others." Here is the whole secret of life, and it shows how fundamentally one the Truth is. No matter what garb it may wear, wherever we find it, we must bow the head. It does not make any difference wherefrom it comes. There is no inconsistency in these fundamental principles. In our days of darkness we think that there is. We doubt the Truth; we call it falsehood, or we take falsehood for Truth. We try to compromise, but there is no need for compromise. We know what is true—at least we have the power to know—and there we must place our faith.

"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 is dazzling even to think of this; yet it is the natural fulfillment of the law. What a tremendous power man gains through faith, and what mighty things he can perform through faith. There is no question left here in what Christ says. He states very definitely,

"nothing shall be impossible unto you." Nothing! If we take this literally and seek to put it into practice, we may find that it does not work. Why does it not? Because we are trying to experiment from the outside. We want to see immediate results. We think how wonderful it would be to perform a miracle. Let us first consider some of the ordinary facts of life. We see one man who has difficulty in lifting a weight of ten pounds; another lifts a hundred pounds without any effort. There is so much gradation in human strength, whether it is physical or mental or both combined. One person is barely able to lift up his own hand, for he has hypnotized himself into the belief that he can do nothing; while another is hardly conscious of his physical being. He has fastened himself to something greater and higher, and he walks on earth scarcely touching the ground. These are simple, every day facts. Through inner expansion and realization, we are able to transcend our self-limitation and do that which, to the ordinary mind, seems miraculous, or supernatural.

The thing is, we want to move a house, or a mountain, when we are not yet able to move ourselves. We are fastened to the material ground, and we wish to remain fastened. We do not want to shift our position, and we do not want to shift our thoughts, yet we desire to perform miracles. That is idle curiosity. Strength must be created,—strength of the individual soul, and not of the body only. By moral strength, by spiritual strength, we can perform many things which now seem to us impossible. This you can verify in your own lives.

"We sleep in peace in the arms of God when we yield ourselves up to His providence. . ." In these words Fenelon gives us a very beautiful, a very graphic picture of the mystic. "No more restless uncertainties, no more anxious

desires." With most men there is a constant struggle, a ceaseless question,—"Shall I do this, or shall I do that? Is this going to happen, or is that going to happen?" We desecrate the term faith when in one breath we say we have faith in God, and with the next, give voice to such anxieties; when we speak of God and Truth and then lie awake half the night, calculating and scheming—full of worries and cares. These two states of mind do not go together. It is impossible. It is not that we should settle down and do nothing. A man of faith is also a man of action; he has the vitality, the strength, the inspiration. These are definite qualities springing from the life of faith, the life of higher consciousness. When faith comes to us, instantly we feel the stirring of new life; strength rises in us automatically, and inspiration carries us on. So Fenelon says: "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?" Think of the grandeur of the life that has been so tuned—the majesty of it! It is the real life of faith; not the morbid life which men often call by that name. It is because of such misconceptions that religion sometimes becomes unpopular. The fact of its being unpopular should not affect us, but we should consider the reason for it, and there is a reason. If there is a lack of harmony between what a man says and what he does; if he talks of faith, of love, of trust in the Divine, and at the same time is fretful, anxious and nervous, how are we going to respect his religion? The real lessons of religion we do not learn from books. It makes no difference what book we read—Christian Bible or Hindu Scripture—what we want to see is its living interpretation. Any man or woman who in daily life gives us that interpretation is our friend—is, in a sense, our saviour. Such a one saves us from doubt and

despondency,—from the onslaught of our own self. For sometimes there is an onslaught going on within us. We, ourselves, seek to break down those very things which give us vitality, life and action. Therefore when we see one who really walks in faith and not just in theory, one who stands with uplifted head, as if above all the petty fears of men, we at once receive the impression of a faith that we may likewise hope to have. It is not a question of secular education. Education may enhance our inner strength, or it may decrease it. Wealth may give us opportunities; also, if it is not properly utilized, it may enshroud this living instinct in us. Age may through experience unfold the quality of faith, or it may altogether cover it over. No, it is not a question of any of these things. We must learn to take with intelligence and fervent feeling all that life can give us. A man should cultivate faith in God, faith in himself, and faith in humanity. To my mind, faith represents strength, a radiant, living strength. Can we not almost picture Christ, or Buddha, or St. Francis, or any of the great ones, standing alone with invincible faith against the world's opinion? What is the opinion of the world? The world teaches that we should believe only in the things which are definite and concrete, that we should not have faith in anything which we cannot feel, or see with our own eyes. It tells us not to trust others, because they may hurt us or betray us. How contrary this is to the teaching of those lofty souls. Yet for our own protection, and for the sake of our onward course, there must be some way of harmonizing it with that which we call our spiritual life.

"He who can resign himself to the will of the Lord with simple faith and guileless devotion, attains unto Him without delay." Sri Ramakrishna gives us here the beginning of spiritual consciousness. It is like a dawning—suddenly

our point of view changes. We have been fastened to the material, we have thought of it as the only certain thing in life. All our hopes, expectations and happiness have likewise been fastened to it, and have seemed permanent because of their connection with it. And now suddenly we find that this solid ground is solid only in appearance. At once there rises in us the question: Is there not something more abiding than this which seems so enduring, and yet is not? It is at this point that our whole outlook shifts, and faith is born. If our faith grows, soon we find that there is no difference between what is imperceptible and ethereal and that which is solid and gross. There is only one Life, one eternal abiding Principle, and as we make our connection with that, we are able to link together the seen and the unseen, uniting them within ourself. In this way man becomes complete.

"He who believes in God," says Martin Luther, "is not careful for the morrow, but labors joyfully and with a great heart. . ." I quote this especially, because no life, be it the life of rationalism, intellect or devotion, finds its completion without this fervent spirit of faith. Man can work along any line so long as he has faith. If his faith is broken, he is broken along with it. It is the most living factor in our life and we cannot do without it. Unfortunately, however, many people regard it as old-fashioned. But think well,—what is faith? Have we anything better? We thought, perhaps, that the life of science, or what we call advancement or civilization with all its outer grandeur would take the place of it. This which is true, is eternally true; it is never old-fashioned. Man cannot leave faith behind, for it is part of his life; it is necessary for his unfoldment. He may enlarge upon it. He may, if there is anything defective or alien in certain phases of his life, have to polish it, or purify it, or add something greater to it. But it is always in the nature of

fulfillment; never of destruction. And here we have the words of Christ: "I come not to destroy, but to fulfill." How wonderful if we could all of us preserve that attitude! It is the real test of manhood—of humanity. Increase of faith does not mean the wiping out of those lesser things which we have left behind. As our power of faith grows, in the same proportion grows within us the tender feeling of compassion. That is why it is not possible for a man to abuse this teaching and employ his faith for the satisfaction of his own little selfish desires. The picture of Christ's life, of Buddha's life and the lives of the great saints, still stands; but their interpretation we can find only within our own soul.

Trust in the Divine—this is the foundation, the bedrock of life. When we make it the first principle, the stepping stone towards that great Kingdom, we go on in safety. It is the path which is secured for us, but we must find it. God has given us the power of reason, and we do not silence our reasoning when we take up the life of the Spirit. Have faith in God above all other things; trust in Him. Here is where we can learn a great deal from children. Watch the little child, how carefree it is as it sleeps in its mother's arms. So do we rest in the arms of God as we grow in faith, not by pretending, not by professing, but by living. Living and emanating the true purpose of our existence, thus alone we come to a wholeness of being and wholeness of life. There is no other way to accomplish this save when we merge our life into the great life, our will into the great will. Is this an impossibility? Are the difficulties so great that we can never hope to surmount them? We can answer these questions only as we learn to search within ourselves through the light of contemplation. Neither the lustre of brilliant intellect nor aggressive egotism can aid us here, but only the pure spiritual flame which burns within our hiddenmost be-

ing. This unfailing light of the soul is ever ready to help us and guide us when we are ready to turn our back to the outer glamour and seek its beneficent aid.

We have within our heart the whole kingdom of good and evil. Sometimes we almost dread to enter it. There are some people who fear to look within, because of the material they have collected there. Others are happy and full of peace when they are left alone, because they have faith in themselves, faith in God, and in humanity. Prayer, devotion, wisdom—these are united. Finding one, we find them all, and as we increase them, other wholesome aspects of life increase in the same proportion. When we have faith, we have love; when we have love, we have wisdom; and when we have faith, love and wisdom, we have also power of action, for they are inseparable attributes.

Let us, therefore, lift our hearts above all the concerns of material life, that we may bring down fresh courage, strength and light to fulfill our material duties. And may the All-loving Spirit bestow upon us His tender and abiding protection, and keep us ever in peace. Peace, peace, peace be unto us and to all living beings.

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Thou knowest my years entire, my life,
My long and crowded life of active work, not adoration merely;
Thou knowest the prayers and vigils of my youth,
Thou knowest my manhood's solemn and visionary meditations,
Thou knowest I have not once lost nor faith nor ecstasy in Thee,
In shackles, prison'd, in disgrace, repining not,
Accepting all from Thee, as duly come from Thee.

—*Walt Whitman*

# ON THE BIRTHDAY OF THE BLESSED ONE

*By C. F. Andrews*

(An address delivered May 26th, 1926, at the 2550th anniversary of Gautama, the Lord Buddha. Reprinted from the "Visva-Bharati Quarterly").

1.

Ever since my coming to India from Europe, more than 22 years ago, the gracious attraction of Gautama, the Lord Buddha's personality, has grown upon me and taken an increasingly direct hold upon my conscious life. Furthermore, in the constant travels I have had to undertake to and fro about the world, and especially in the far East, his transforming influence has been made visible before my eyes in the different civilizations. For it has been possible for me to trace it out in very distant places, from the Indian community in South Africa, across the Indian Ocean westward, to the dwellers in the islands of the Pacific in the farthest East.

But it was at Boro-budur in Java (the hill of the "Great Buddha") that a spiritual revolution took place which has affected my life deeply ever since. In the days spent there in solitude and meditation, the panorama of history, as it had been lived in the past ages on this planet, seemed to rise into view before me. A vast range of human experience, about which I never had any conception before, came vividly before my eyes in those galleries of sculptured stone. Once and for all, from that time forward, the purely western perspective was left behind. There came to me a new vision of humanity, in its suffering and sorrow, its sacrifice and love of service, intimately bound up with the supreme personality of the Buddha himself. For the sculptures plainly showed that it was he who had inspired this love of service and had given this consolation to suffering mankind. That vision at Boro-budur, I repeat, has never faded from my mind, and it is vividly present with me on this auspicious occasion.

It is the greatest satisfaction to me that in our own day and generation his adored memory is being revived in India itself, the place of his sacred birth. For it has been one of the strangest things in all history, that India, the home of religion, should have almost forgotten, for so many centuries, the very greatest of all her saints and teachers. But, thank God! that ignorance is rapidly passing away and a new era of his influence upon mankind is beginning to appear.

Therefore, on this anniversary of Gautama, the Lord Buddha,—this jubilee of his birth,—I shall mention in outline only, and with the briefest comment, certain aspects of his moral teaching, wherein he was the very first to bring home three vital sovereign truths to the masses of mankind.

Let me make clear, however, in parenthesis, that I do not imply that these truths had never even been adumbrated before. There were "Enlightened" ones before Gautama, the Buddha. There was Akenhaton, the reformer, in Egypt, whose greatness as a religious and moral teacher we are only just beginning to discover. There was Moses, the Founder prophet of Israel, and the long line of saintly Hebrew religious leaders. There was Zoroaster in Persia, whose prophetic utterances concerning pure thoughts, pure words, pure deeds, appeared at one time likely to grip the imagination of mankind and travel far beyond the Persian kingdom. In early Greece there were the great moral teachers and poets who lived before Gautama, the Buddha. In China, there was his own contemporary, Lao Tze, who independently discovered much that Gautama in India revealed.

But the inspiration of all these great personalities, when we come to examine the question historically, was somewhat local in character. They did not penetrate permanently, vitally and dynamically vast masses of mankind. The truths they foreshadowed did not reach beyond their own borders,

or down to all the common people,—the slave, the outcaste, the aboriginal, the untouchable. They did not affect multitudes of the human race far from the place of each different prophet's birth and away from the special centre of his influence while he lived in the world as a teacher. They did not actually create a new and vital transformation in the mass of mankind, lifting the common people almost bodily out of the dust and setting humanity once and for all on a higher spiritual level.

But Gautama, the Buddha, appears to me to have achieved just this very thing. History as I read it now, took a new turn from the date of his enlightenment under the Bo-tree.

2.

Let me return from this digression to the three sovereign truths themselves, of which I would make special mention today. I have chosen them because they seem to me to represent some of the most striking of his teachings and to mark the new epoch which had begun in the history of the world.

The first was the truth on Non-Retaliation,—*Ahimsa*. He gave with living power the new watch-word to mankind: *Evil cannot be overcome by evil, but only by good.*

Before that time, the law of righteousness, in most of the public relations of human life, had been based on the law of retaliation. But Gautama, the Buddha, was the first to declare in an entirely uncompromising and universal manner, with power to move millions of the masses of mankind, the truth, that retributive justice is not the highest law of man's spirit, but that forgiveness carries with it a surer and a greater justice,—the justice of love. "Overcome," he said, "anger by kindness: untruth by truth: evil by good."

Such words as these had been spoken and also lived in a fragmentary manner in the past by saints and sages. But they had not gripped the living heart of mankind. Now at

last, with the vast personality of Buddha behind them, they reverberated to the farthest shores of the world. They reached Alexandria in the West and the islands of the Pacific in the East. Their amazing potency is to be traced in the Rock edicts of Asoka; in the sculptures of Boro-budur in Java; amid the ruins of Angkor in Kambodia; in the temples of Kyoto and Nikko in Japan; in the sacred Buddhist shrines and mountain retreats of China; in those precious paintings, manuscripts and carvings rescued from the desert sand of Chinese Turkestan.

Nay, further, I have been convinced, (though the story is too long to tell in detail) that the Sermon on the Mount, which Christ preached on the mountain top to the village people near the waters of the sea of Galilee, contains echoes of the Buddhist teaching uttered in the plains of India more than five hundred years before. The historical links of connection, let historians decide. But the sameness of the one sovereign truth itself—the truth of Non-Retaliation,—may be seen and judged by all.

"Ye have heard," said Christ, "how it was said by those of old time, 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say unto you, Love your enemies, do good unto them that hate you, pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." Here, surely, the underlying truth is identical with that of Buddha, and it is expressed in almost identical terms.

The second of the three sovereign truths appears to me to be this: Compassion in sorrow and suffering is a spiritual power that makes the whole world kin. Mankind is essentially one, because it has a common human destiny of suffering and sorrow and death. Gautama, the Buddha, was the first spiritual genius to establish through this truth a universal basis for religion, not in the intellect, but in the heart. The

Upanishads had already revealed to mankind an intellectual and spiritual unity of the deepest character. *Tat twam asi* (Thou art That) had been declared, with profound spiritual insight, to be the final truth of man's soul in its relation to the divine. But its practical basis in common life,—its practical application in every day affairs,—had not been revealed clearly and simply and in a manner understood by the common people, till the Buddha came. It was this fact that gave to this second truth, when he declared it, all the glowing effect of a new discovery.

The story of the princess who had lost her child and had come to the Buddha for comfort is well-known,—how at the Buddha's behest she searched everywhere for a house in which there was no death, and came back to tell Gautama that she could not find a single family where no death had occurred. The answer of the Lord Buddha to her grief strikes the universal note. "Know," he said, "that the whole wide world weeps with thy woe."

In that answer, with its simplicity and directness, and its deep religious content, the compassion of the Buddha can be seen breaking down all barriers of caste and race and creed and country and social standing. The new Faith, with that miracle of dynamic personality behind it, whom we call the Buddha, made humanity realize its unity for the first time. The Buddhist monks and nuns (for women took up the new Faith with even greater spiritual enthusiasm than men) went out to distant lands, across the highest mountains and the stormiest seas to help the afflicted. There was now for them no far or near, no stranger or foreigner, no outcaste or untouchable, since universal love, realized through kindred sorrow and suffering, pointed the way to the brotherhood of mankind.

It is impossible to relate the wonder of all I saw in those vast galleries at Boro-budur,—all those noble figures in stone,

upraising from the dust the primitive aboriginals who bow before them,—the ethereal figure of the Buddha, as he stands almost transparent, even in the hard medium of stone, like an angelic messenger of the divine, preaching to the lowest of the human race, nay, preaching also, as St. Francis did, in a much later age in Europe, to the very birds and beasts and trees and flowers, the same message of universal love. I have tried to describe something of the effect wrought upon me by what I saw; but I find I have not told even a fraction of the whole story,—how night after night at the period of the full moon in a cloudless sky I wandered alone up and down, from one gallery to another, with the calm stone figure of the Buddha himself, seated in meditation, meeting me at every turn. The carved pictures also stood out in full relief in the moonlight, with the Buddha represented in a standing posture, in the midst of suffering humanity. At that critical time in my life, during those days and nights of solitude, I understood the meaning of the great consolation which came to mankind through the Buddha, and it was no longer strange to me that men and women, age after age, gave their lives to carry on his teaching under the inspiration of his personal guidance.

"Do you think, after your death," says one poor weak woman to her husband in the *Angatthura Nikaya*, "that peace shall be wanting to my soul? Do you think that I shall not stand firm without wavering, knowing the doctrine of the Master and trusting in it? But if ever any uncertainty should come upon me, why, then, He is staying near us, the exalted one, the Holy Buddha, to Him I can go and put my question."

Even in such a casual utterance as this, taken out of countless similar passages, there is a new note in human history, a new spiritual beginning to mankind. It strikes a universal note. The outcaste, the untouchable, can say concerning the

comfort that the Lord Buddha offers exactly the same thing as this poor woman did. For this compassion of the Buddha had no limits. It made the whole world one humanity. Combined with the first sovereign truth of Non-Retaliation, or *Ahimsa*, it introduced a quality of peace-making and sympathy and love singularly akin to the Beatitudes which Christ preached in the Sermon on the Mount. It gives the highest benediction, not to the proud and the strong, but to the poor in spirit, the mourners, the meek, the peacemakers, the persecuted. Again I would point to the fact that I do not enter into the problem of their historical connection, which scientific historians may decide. What I am dealing with at this point is the inner spirit. The simple and unlearned can see the intimate relation of both. The Buddha and the Christ, in these fundamental moral aspects, speak the same message to mankind.

The third of the three sovereign truths, which through Gautama, the Lord Buddha, became for the first time in human history living, dynamic and effective among the multitudes of mankind was the truth of tolerance in religion. It may seem at first sight that this is a lesser truth than the two others I have mentioned. But in human history we find that religious tolerance has been one of the most difficult of all things to learn. Even to-day, in this twentieth century after Christ, and this twenty-fifth century after Buddha, we are only just beginning to understand how deep a change among the masses of mankind this truth of religious tolerance implies.

Historically, I think it may be said with certainty, the Rock edicts of King Asoka are the very first enunciations of religious tolerance on a universal scale known to the civilized world. For tolerance in them is proclaimed as a fundamental moral principle, not as a matter of expediency or diplomacy

or clever state administration. In this direction the carvings at Boro-budur and the neighboring temple at Prambhanan are no less wonderful and convincing; for they also tell the story of religious tolerance in a noble manner. The sharp icy barriers of hatred toward another Faith melt away before the sunshine of the Buddha's love.

The proof of this is not in the world of theory, but of practice. The severest test of all in this direction is the practical test; and the Buddhist Faith, as enunciated by the Buddha himself, comes through the fierce ordeal of human conflict unshaken. For though it would be easy enough to find instances of the spread of Buddhism being due to motives of worldly advantage after some great king like Kanishka had enbraced the Faith, yet it may be, I think, historically proved that it won its chief victories by reason and persuasion and love.

3.

I have not the time to elucidate these three sovereign truths,—of *Ahimsa*, Compassion and Tolerance. You will notice that I have dwelt only upon the *moral* beauty of the teaching of the Lord Buddha, without making mention of the philosophy which underlies his system. Such a limitation has been intentional. For I have felt that in this our present crisis in Indian history and also in the history of the world,—most of all perhaps that of Europe to-day,—the lesson of the Buddha's universal moral ideal was very specially needed. Also I wished to do something to rescue it from much misunderstanding. For even Count Tolstoy, who had himself derived indirectly such immense benefit from the Buddha's teaching, seems in his "Confessions" to regard it as entirely pessimistic and to lose sight of its positive beauty. He has no idea of its radiant optimism as a faith of deliverance from misery and sin. Furthermore, in Dr. Grimm's recent scholar-

ly work, called "the Doctrine of the Buddha: the Religion of Reason," while there is very much that brings out with fresh emphasis the moral beauty of the Buddha's teaching, those simple elements which make its very foundation might not be fully realized by the reader who is not himself a scholar.

Harsh voices everywhere to-day are telling us in strident tones, that it is necessary to be intolerant, that it is imperative to assert ourselves; that it is patriotic to place our own nation first, whether right or wrong; that it is a religious duty to establish our creed first, regardless of the truth. India to-day is torn asunder, Europe is torn asunder, because these sovereign truths of love, compassion, tolerance, which Gautama, the Buddha, taught more than 2500 years ago, have nearly been forgotten. But, thank God! even in this dark hour there is a stirring of men's hearts. The gracious personality of Gautama, the Lord Buddha, is becoming every day in modern India, in Europe, and in America, realized anew by human hearts. A great revival of interest in his moral teaching has begun in the lands which have owned his name, such as Java, China and Japan. Here in India, at each fresh anniversary, his figure comes back to us with radiant moral beauty.

Therefore is it a joy to me, indeed, one of the happiest things of my life in India, that on this anniversary of his birth, I as a true and sincere Christian, can join in this heartfelt act of reverence to Gautama, the Lord Buddha.

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He that believeth like the child receiveth the grace of God. The calculating intellect of the world weigheth things with an eye to worldly loss and gain. Man's limited reasoning seeth not far enough. It hath no right to entry into the land of the gods. It is faith—the faith of a child—which leadeth you forth into that land.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

# THE SOUL'S INTIMACY

*By Juan de Los Angeles*

(A Spanish Franciscan monk, preacher, and writer of the 16th century).

*Pupil*: It seems that thou art about to expound to me that which I desire exceedingly to know.

*Master*: In truth thou canst not have failed to comprehend it from what I have already said; and since we have arrived at this point (I must say first that it is the highest of all in the spiritual life and that to remember it will serve thee greatly hereafter) know that the intimacy of the soul is its simplest essence, stamped with the image of God. Certain of the saints have called it the "centre," others "intimacy," others " the apex of the spirit," others "mind." St. Augustine the Great and the most modern writers speak of it as the soul's "depth," because it is the most interior and secret place of all, where no images of created things may enter, but only, (as has been said) that of the Creator. The deepest hush and the deepest silence are here, for no form of created thing can reach this centre, and in respect of it we are godlike or divine,—so like, indeed, to God Himself that wisdom calls us gods. This empty, void, and formless state of intimacy is raised above all created things, above all feelings and powers of the soul; it transcends all time and place, and the soul remains in perpetual union and unity with God, who is its beginning.

This intimate union is for ever enlightened and illuminated by the eternal uncreate light. So soon as it is revealed and discovered to man, it fills him in wondrous wise with tenderness and love, like unto the man who found the treasure and for the exceeding joy thereof went and sold all that he had and bought the field. Oh, noble and divine temple, which God never leaves, in which dwells the Most Holy Trinity and man tastes eternal life . . . Here indeed is a

well of water springing up into life everlasting; so great is its efficacy and virtue, and its sweetness, that it conquers and drives out all the bitterness of vice, and exceeds and surpasses all the rebelliousness, controversy and vice in a nature that is vicious and inclined to evil. For when a man drinks of this water of life, it flows through every region, both of the body and of the soul, giving and communicating to body and soul a marvellous purity and fecundity.

*Pupil*: A great thing indeed is this, and a man should never slacken nor cease from prayer until God grant him to drink of this water, be it but a single draught.

*Master*: Didst thou drink but one drop thou wouldst no longer thirst after vain things nor after creatures which pass away, but rather after God alone and His love, in which the more thou dost grow the greater will be thy progress in divine union; and the closer thy union with God and the deeper thy absorption in Him, the more clearly wilt thou know Him, and knowing Him, with the greater ardour love Him. This is the aim of all our exercises and labours; by this they are ordered, and in this come to an end, for if thou hast not love, all thy toils, though they exceed all that men and devils have suffered and do suffer, are vain and fruitless. In brief, thou wilt be as holy as thou art loving, and no more. And if thou think that I prolong this matter unduly hear the great Father Augustine, who says thus: If thou wilt perfectly fulfil all that explicitly or implicitly is contained in the Divine Scriptures, keep true love in thy soul, for this is the end of the law and of the prophets.

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The heart that abandons itself to the Supreme Mind finds itself related to all its works, and will travel a royal road to particular knowledge and power.—*Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

# THE BUDDHA'S TOLERANCE

(Nigrodha, the ascetic, thinks that the master wishes to overthrow the views and practices of other sects. He is shown that the Norm,—the great Law of the Buddha—is of universal application).

Now this is what I say to you, Nigrodha:

Let any intelligent man come to me, any man who is also without guile, not a deceiver, but an upright man. I will teach him. I will show him the Norm. And if he practises according to my instructions, to know and realize for himself even in this very life that unsurpassed holy life for the sake of which clansmen go forth from home to the homeless in its perfection, he too shall know and realize in seven years. Do I say seven years? Why, Nigrodha, even if he do so, as I have said, for six, five, four, three, two years, even one year . . nay, if he so practise for seven days, Nigrodha, . . . such a man coming to me shall so realize. . .

Now this I say, Nigrodha, not desiring to win pupils, not wishing to make others fall from their religious vows, not wishing to make others give up their ways of life, not wishing to establish you in wrong ways or to make you give up ways that are good. Not so!

But, Nigrodha, there are bad things not put away, things that have to do with corruption, things that draw one down again to rebirth, things causing suffering, having ill for their fruit, things concerned with rebirth, decay, and death in time to come. It is for the rejection of these things that I teach you the Norm, walking according to which these things that are concerned with corruption shall be put away by you, and wholesome things shall be brought to increase; by which even in this present life by his own abnormal powers a man shall realize and abide in the full knowledge and realization of perfect wisdom.

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O heavy burden of a doubtful mind!—*Francis Quarles.*

# A CRY IN THE NIGHT

*(An Imaginary Legend)*

*By Sister Daya*

Once, long ago—or so a voice in my heart has told me—there was a humble follower of the Lord Buddha—so humble that he hardly dared to call himself a follower of that Blessed One. For years he had tried to live his life in accordance with the Great Law—modest, restrained and loving. For years he had brought offerings of flowers at Wesak season—the season of new bloom—and had offered them at the feet of the great stone image of the Lord, with its calm look as of eternal peace, and again and again, as he prostrated himself, he would say: "I take my refuge in the Buddha! I take my refuge in the Buddha!"

And now he was on pilgrimage. Under his feet was the warm dust of the Indian road by day, over his head the clear shining of the Indian stars by night, in his hand the staff and the bowl, as he wandered over hill and plain, over desert and valley that he might at last worship at that ever sacred spot where underneath the Tree the Lord attained his vision.

There were other pilgrims—countless others—but no longer of his faith, and these, one evening gathered at the foot of a great, spreading Banyan tree, while each spoke of his Ideal. Some told of Sri Krishna, the Beautiful, playing eternal music on his flute beside the holy Jumna, others, of Chaitanya, the Golden One, who like a dancing flame kindled the heart of India with mad love; and finally they called on him, our wanderer. "Tell us of thy Lord," they said. Tell them of his Lord!—Ah, how he longed to tell them! So he closed his eyes and gazed into the glory that is Buddha, seeking to frame his words, while they sat in silence, waiting. But as he gazed, across his burning ardor fell a sudden shadow—the shadow of his own small self—his littleness.

Could *his* tongue dare to utter praise of one who was beyond all praise and blame? Presumptuous fool! the tears rose to his eyes, yet somehow cleared their sight, for in a moment stars and dusty fields, and drowsy stir of cattle seemed to melt into another scene and he the witness of it.

The Mighty One, the Peaceful One, the Lord—his Lord—with yellow robe and bowl, came home to his retreat among the Brothers—our pilgrim saw him come,—majestic like an elephant, calm, glorious. All day he had been walking, preaching, counselling, the refuge of unnumbered seeking hearts, and now for a few hours he would take his rest—for a few hours, leaving mind and body far behind, he would soar into a realm past thought and speech, and men would say: "He sleeps!" So blessing and dismissing with a smile the faithful Ananda who bore his cloak, he lay down beneath the arch of night all murmurous with sound, lay upon his right side, with feet crossed, as does the lion; but Ananda still lingered watching him. So quiet did he lie—so king-like, with a brow from which light seemed to shine. Was he gone far from this the world of sense? No! for he rouses—"Ananda," he says, "there is a cry that beats upon my heart. I hear it above all the cries of men!" And then he sent his mighty Buddha vision forth, and also listened with the hearing of the Buddha to every sound on earth, in sea, or sky—the sound of thought, the sound of unshed tears, the sound of growing grass and opening flowers. Long time he sat there motionless, as Buddhas sit, and then his great eyes opened with such smiling look of tender brooding love that our poor pilgrim's heart melted like wax within the warmth of it.

"Ananda," so spake the Lord, "I have seen the one who called to me, and I have heard his words. Deep in the long grass, Ananda, is a small ant who once sought refuge with the Buddha. On my knee he rested safely that long night of

struggle neath the Tree, and when the Dawn came, somehow he too shared the bliss, the joy, the victory. Now upon a leaf in the deep grass, he cries with his small voice untiringly, seeking to tell all things and beings of the great love of the Tathagata—the Holy One. So mighty is his faith and fervor, Ananda, that it could not be contained within his body were he a hundred times his size, nay, Ananda, not if he were a hundred hundred times his size. And of all the voices in the world his voice is sweetest, for it rises from the depths of lowliness, being borne to me by love and faith. My Gospel, Ananda embraces all—has room for all. He will be reborn on earth again—not as an ant, Ananda, not as an ant, and he will gain Nirvana through his faith."

The stars shone, and the cattle stirred, and our wanderer opened his eyes and gazed upon those waiting pilgrims. Then from his heart of worship, from the fullness of his vision words flowed forth—ardent, self-forgetting words—and he spoke to them of the great love of the Tathagata, even as the ant had done. . . . .

And to this day the statues of the Buddha have long pendant ears, showing that he hears the smallest cry of the least creature in the universe.

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"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." This sentence alone would save mankind, if all books and prophets were lost. This purity of heart will bring the vision of God. It is the theme of the whole music of this universe. In purity is no bondage. Remove the veils of ignorance by purity, then we manifest ourselves as we really are and know that we were never in bondage. See all as Self and love all; let all idea of separateness go.

—*Swami Vivekananda.*

# SWAMI PARAMANANDA IN MALAYA

(A record of Swami Paramananda's visit in the Federated Malay States and Rangoon, Jan.-Feb., 1928.)

In giving to our readers this account of Swami Paramananda's visit in the Federated Malay States and Rangoon, we are moved by a desire to share with them a vision of the Orient rarely experienced by the average tourist who sees it either as rose-colored or sombre according to the color of his (or her) spectacles, and knows little or nothing of the real country of the Easterner,—the inner country of his soul.

Had the Swami been alone, we might have been deprived of this intimate picture of the welcome accorded by the people of the Orient towards any one who they feel is on the path of holiness. Not only, however, was the Swami accompanied throughout his Malayan tour by one of his Mission brothers, Swami Adyananda, but a student who has been connected with the Swami's work from the first years of his sojourn in America, likewise made one of the party. Through Swami Adyananda's report, and through this student's eyes and pen, we gain a fleeting view of a world very different from ours of the West, a warm and fragrant world, a world of worship and child-like enthusiasms, of age-old experience and of patient waiting, a world where men do not hesitate to bow the head even to the dust before any one or anything that represents to them the Ideal, while it observes with unmoved curiosity the passing pageantry of kings.

And so we give our story, feeling that to withhold it through reticence would be to deprive many of a unique glimpse into the soul of the East.

About two weeks before the Swami's arrival, Swami Adyananda came to Singapore from Kuala Lumpur—where there is a branch monastery of the Ramakrishna Mission—in order to arrange with the leading men of the city for the Swami's reception. About a year and a half ago, the Swami

had stopped at Singapore for a few days, enroute for America, but the time was so short and the visit so unexpected that the public could not take advantage of it. Therefore the news that he was coming again and for a longer time, was received with such enthusiasm, that even before he set foot on shore his program was full to overflowing.

*1st Day*

It was on January 23rd at daybreak, that the S. S. President Monroe, bearing the Swami, steamed into the harbor of Singapore after six long weeks at sea. The arrival had been scheduled for 11:30, but in spite of this misunderstanding, about 500 people soon gathered on the wharf to receive him. On board the boat the Swami was met by the reception committee, including the Secretary of the Indian Association, who formally welcomed him. "At least 50 people gathered about him; three garlands of lovely, sweet-scented flowers were around his neck; someone sprinkled him with rose water from silver sprinklers, the Secretary made a touching address of welcome, while the passengers assembled, interested and surprised." The Swami in his response drew the attention of his Western friends to this manifestation of "the real heart of India." But in these days of interchange East and West mingle, and no where more than at Singapore which is at the cross-roads of the world. Thus the Swami, instead of entering a riksha or a bullock cart, was whisked off in a beautiful limousine.

His destination proved to be a charming bungalow, set down in the midst of a tropical garden, a stone's throw from the sea and seven and a half miles from the city—the same bungalow that Dr. Tagore had occupied during a recent visit. What would have happened had it been closer, it is hard to tell, for even as it was "there was an unbroken stream of callers all the day through and well on into the night. Motors

kept coming and going, the groups constantly changing. In the evening there was a musical party in the Swami's honor, one of the performers being "a dear little girl of ten who spoke English well and sang and played the harmonium with perfect composure. The musicians of course all sat on the floor,—a violinist, a player of harmonium, and a drummer with two drums which he tuned and played most skillfully. Two men clapped their hands and one sang. The violinist, being seated cross-legged, was able to rest the handle end of his violin on his great toe, which must have been quite an unusual help in holding it." The guests were many and varied "including two with only the cloth from the waist down, one with shaved head dusted with ashes, and beads around his neck, the other with long hair."

Of Singapore and the impression it made, the student writes: "I am of course fascinated with the colorful street-life and could never grow tired watching it. From the moment one floats into the harbor of Singapore it is all so different—so full of color. As we drive in and out through various routes, the impression left is of Chinese everywhere, and at night it seems as if houses turn inside out—everything goes on in the streets. So far we have had rain and sun alternating, making steam part of the time. But it is a lovely place just the same, and *so* interesting. I must have seen in the street a million people and no two alike in face, or color, or dress. A Victor nearby is playing the "Merry Widow," the telephone rings, the sweeper-man, bare-footed, with a *felt hat*, is washing the steps! A strange combination.

*2nd Day*

In all, the Swami was in Singapore for seven days—each day filled with lectures, social engagements, and people! Of the activities which claimed his time, a few stand out pre-eminently.

January 24th there was a public reception held for the Swami at the Victoria Theatre Hall. "The hall can accommodate about two thousand persons and it was full, with many standing inside and out. The gathering was very representative. There were distinguished Indians, Malays, Chinese, Moslems and Europeans in the audience." Ten of the Swami's fellow-passengers were there, "adding to the very cosmopolitan atmosphere." The president, after first garlanding the Swami, made a deeply sincere speech, touching on his work and achievements in America. Then the Address of Welcome, printed on green satin and framed was read and presented to him. This Address of Welcome, is so typical of India and Indian sentiment, that we quote it in part as follows:

"The Mission which you so worthily represent to-day in America has received a great impetus through your spiritual leadership. But it is not only as a spiritual leader that we know and revere you. . . . Both as a poet and author you have imparted into your works a classic beauty and chasteness of thought so interwoven that they strike a high spiritual note and lift one out of the ordinary plane of material things. Your words are so alive that they seem rather spoken than written, striking fire in even the smallest fragment of verse with your honesty of mind and purity of purpose. We are sure that the presence of your Holiness in this city will rekindle the holy fire in us and help us strive for the realization of the grand ideal of service to the God in man."

The Swami in reply spoke on "My Mission in America," but every word vibrated with a note which has rung through all his utterances since his journey started, the note of the "Commonwealth of Humanity." "Swami was most touched by the whole affair," comments our student, "and gave a fine address on broad, universal lines that could only unite and not disturb any one there."

### *3rd and 4th Days*

On January 25th the Swami gave another public lecture, as also on the 26th, his subjects being, "India's Contribution to the World of Thought" and "The Pulse of Time."

### *5th Day*

The reception at the Mariamma Temple on Jan. 27th, was perhaps the most interesting and impressive of all the events at Singapore, at least to foreign eyes. "There were thirteen entertainments for the Swami at Singapore," again writes our correspondent,—"all kinds! But the function that made the most impression on me was the one at the Hindu Temple. There Swami gave an address and unveiled a sacred statue, which was the greatest honor that could be conferred upon him. There must have been a thousand people there, and when we went out the crowd could hardly be kept back to let us through. Many were prostrating themselves before Swami and when we drove away there were shouts of "Jai Swami Paramanandaki Jai! (Victory to Swami Parmananda!)" In regard to this unusual ceremony, Swami Adyananda's report states: "It is customary with the Hindus to honor their monks with great ceremonials. When the Swami got down from the car he was garlanded and his forehead was anointed with sandal paste, while rose water was sprayed upon his body. Afterwards about ten persons with big burning sticks stood on both sides of the Swami, and a man held a big umbrella over his head. Then the procession passed around the Temple, with music and incense. After the ceremony (of unveiling) the whole gathering, consisting of men and women of all classes from the poorest laborer to the richest man in the community, squatted before the Swami on the ground, while he spoke to them of the beauty and significance of the Mother aspect of God. A remarkable feature of the meeting was the presence in the gathering of European and American ladies and gentlemen."

Following this ceremonial, the Swami and his friends were driven to a Bengali gentleman's house where they performed "Saraswati Puja"—a religious worship. "Here," the student writes, "we had a regular Bengali feast. At first the guests sat down stairs on a rug and listened to music. Upstairs the feast was spread on plantain leaves where two long rows of guests sat facing each other—all in native dress. I have had a good deal of Indian cooking in one way and another. It is pretty rich for daily living. I cannot, however, say enough of the kindness and thoughtfulness of every one."

*6th Day*

Again the never-ending flow of people whom the Swami saw at intervals throughout the day. In the evening were three occasions of importance: The first,—we quote from our student—"a meeting at the 'Vivekananda Sangam', at another Temple, where a formal address, printed on satin, was presented and the Swami spoke on 'Swami Vivekananda's Message to the World', his reply being translated into Tamil. Again more crowds and garlands and shouting 'Paramanandaki Jai!' The next engagement was at the 'Arya Sangam' in their own place. Not so many people, and not so much local color, but very intelligent faces I saw everywhere, and great appreciation. Here the Swami's address was translated by Swami Adyananda into Hindustanee.

At last, after 8 P. M., we arrived at the 'Singapore Indian Association's' anniversary meeting, which was practically the crowning event of the visit in Singapore, and a very real event I thought. The association consists of Indians of all castes, creeds and denominations and is a very representative body. Hundreds of people—men, women and children—Hindu, Mohammedan and English *seated at tables*—arranged for guests somewhat in the style of Harvard Class Day—many others standing. Music by two bands, one European, the

other Indian—speeches in Tamil, Hindustanee and English. The food was tea, cakes, Indian sweets and ice cream. At our table, at my end, was a Sister Balomal from Mysore—Editor of a Woman's paper in Tamil. She gave a stirring speech in that language. It seems she is quite a person, in the habit of lecturing to thousands. Swami, who was the guest of honor, was asked to distribute the athletic prizes—silver cups on standards. There were many speakers, but after the Swami's opening address everything seemed to centre about him. At the end he spoke again and I said a few words of appreciation of all the kindness that had been shown us. I forgot to say that all this was out of doors—the place hung with colored lanterns. It was a great occasion."

(To be continued)

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## REPORT

Swami Paramananda, arriving at San Francisco from India on April 19th, reached Ananda-Ashrama on the morning of the 20th. An announcement of his return had been sent out and on Sunday the 22nd about 400 people gathered to welcome him and hear him speak. Great enthusiasm was manifest. During the day he conducted two Services. Every one was deeply impressed by his afternoon address on the "Commonwealth of Humanity." He seemed to give all who listened to him a new point of view. His breadth of vision appeared to have no limit. At the Class in Pasadena on Tuesday evening the seating capacity of the room was entirely exhausted. In Los Angeles on the next evening the attendance was so large that the Class was of necessity moved to Symphony Hall in the same building.

Sunday, April 29th, marked the fifth anniversay of the founding of Ananda-Ashrama, and it was celebrated with loving spirit and great fervor. Two Services were held, one at 11 o'clock and the other at 3:30. At both, the attend-

ance was large and enthusiastic. The subject of the afternoon was "The Pulse of Time" and the Swami spoke with great eloquence. The music rendered by the Ashrama choir was unusually fine. The choir was assisted by a gifted cellist and several vocal soloists. Between the two services, a Hindu dinner was served. It was entirely prepared by the Swami who began to cook in the early afternoon of Saturday and who stood at the stove until after midnight preparing the food for three hundred people entirely with his own hand. After the morning Service, the benches were removed from under the wide-branching trees beside the Cloister and small tables were placed here and there among the shrubbery and along the terrace. The dinner was enjoyed by a very large gathering whose comfort was looked after by the watchful and loving members of the Ashrama.

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It is with great happiness we welcome Charu Shila Devi, the new Indian Sister whom Swami Paramananda brought with him on his last trip from India. We cannot help but feel that this new aspect of the Swami's activities in bringing Hindu ladies to assist in the American work will be of significant value. No amount of reading from books written by globe trotters can give us as clear a view of India's life, religion and social customs as the presence of these cultured Hindu ladies among us.

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A new book entitled, "Sri Ramakrishna and His Disciples" by Sister Devamata has just come from the press. Here is a vivid and graphic picture drawn by a skillful pen. The Sister relates with clarity of expression and livingness of spirit the life and words of one of the greatest spiritual manifestations of modern times. Our limited space prevents any elaborate comments on this beautiful work, but we are confident that many aspiring souls will derive inspiration, upliftment and comfort from it.

VOLUME XVII NUMBER 6

JUN 14 1928

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

# VEDANTA MONTHLY

# Message of the East



June, 1928

# Productive Spirituality

Issued by

ANANDA-ASHRAMA

LA CRESCENTA, L. A. CO., CALIF.

(Extension of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, Established 1909)

Entered as second class matter, Feb. 14, 1924, at the Post Office at La Crescenta, Calif., Box 85, under act of March 2, 1879.

Accepted for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized June 17, 1921.

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SINGLE COPIES, 25c

$2.00 A YEAR

Published Monthly Except in August and September

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*MESSAGE OF THE EAST*

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

"Light shall come again from the East."
—Tyndall.

Published Monthly except in August and September

Vol. XVII. June, 1928 No. 6

# PRODUCTIVE SPIRITUALITY

*By Swami Paramananda*

SPIRITUALITY, if it is to be helpful, must be productive. That is, it must be real. It must produce something very definite. God, to most men, is an abstract Principle, and remains abstract until given a concrete shape through our life. And do not think for a moment that it is a sacrilege to say that man is expected to express Godhead. If he does not express it, who will? We cannot live on words; we cannot follow something that is vague and visionary. Spiritual ideas and ideals must become definite, and we make them definite as we work them out in our own life. The trouble is, man begins with a wrong hypothesis. He says, "I am so limited; I feel nothing but weakness in myself. I know that these ideals are very great and beneficial, but it is not within my province to manifest them." He changes his tone, however, when he becomes imbued with the Spirit, and finds that he can make himself an avenue through which the powers of the Spirit can flow, and every one of us, in order to make this life count for something, must come to this realization. Nothing less will satisfy us. Let us try, therefore, to define to our own mind what it means to be spiritually productive. It requires some-

thing more than just working with our hands and feet. We may be engaged in a daily routine of action and yet be utterly useless to ourselves and to others. The impetus must come from within, and religion—true religion—gives us that impetus.

Christ said, "It is not merely those who call me 'Master, Master—Lord, Lord', by any means that shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but those who do the will of my Father." Here is the gist of the whole teaching. To make our life productive, we must learn to do the will of the Father, or whatever we may call our Deity. We must learn to let that divine power flow through us, so that being productive within our own self, we may become a definite factor in the world of life. Take our influence upon the lives around us—the lives of children, for instance. In the eyes of a child, a grown person plays a very important part. He is constantly imitating older people because he has not yet formed an ideal of his own. He imitates you,—his father, or mother, or brother, or friend,—because you are his most definite point of contact. By your thoughts, words and deeds, therefore, you are helping to create an atmosphere in which he and others must live.

Those schools of thought which make a practice of being cheerful, or of being kind, are doing something for the world; that is, if they are doing it not from the surface, but fundamentally. A cheerful mind is a direct, counteracting influence for gloominess, but to maintain cheerfulness we must find within us something deeper than the little self. This is where religion comes in. We may inherit wealth, or a good name, but we cannot inherit religion. We have to earn our right to it. We may start with a denomination, a sect, or a creed, but we must be re-born in the Spirit. Our spiritual life begins with an altogether new consciousness.

Religion is something we have to evolve within our own soul. We owe this to ourselves, to humanity and to our Maker. He has given us intelligence, and it is for us to utilize that intelligence. When we have utilized it to the best of our ability, greater power will be given to us. In this way we make our life ever more and more productive. If through right thinking, and right application of principle, your efforts have been fruitful and your individual life has been successful, why stop there? When your own responsibility no longer hangs over you with a sense of weight, then you have freedom to think of others. This way you enhance your inward growth.

There is no end to man's faculty for self-expression, but he can raise great barriers by bringing in negative thought. Through disbelief he can almost sever himself from his Source, and how can a life cut off from its Source produce anything? Can a branch severed from the mother tree be productive? It withers very soon, no matter how much vitality it may seem to manifest. Its vitality came from its root, and as soon as we sever it from the root, it droops and dies. Same way it is with us. We may not succeed in severing ourselves entirely from our Root, but we almost do so, and that is the reason why we live only a partial life. We are able to do certain things, but we do them so imperfectly that we are not satisfied, nor can we expect any one else to be satisfied. We develop a grudge against ourselves and a grudge against humanity. We think others are interfering with us, or standing in the way of our progress; but all these fictitious ideas and barriers vanish when we consciously contact the Source of life.

It is not enough for a man to plan his day's work, to take his daily exercise so that he will be in trim physically, or go over his notes in order to follow a routine. A good

wholesome diet and a night's sleep are essential, but these alone are not going to give him the strength which he needs for his daily work. Something more is necessary if his mind is to be poised and his whole being in tune, and that is a good clear conception of what lies within him. A man must learn to live within his spiritual province in order to make life safe for himself and for others. It is not an arduous task. It only means increasing his sense of proportion, his sense of values. We recognize the physical life, and we should recognize it, because it is a very important factor; but this material life of ours becomes stronger and its usefulness is enhanced, as we find our connection with spiritual being. It is something we must develop from within, and not through any outer medium. Our own mind, our harmonious thoughts, our good cheerful spirit, these are the best mediums for conveying to us the benediction of Godhead.

There are some people who work hard and do not feel fatigued by their work, others work far less and feel exhausted. The difference lies not so much in the physical strength of these people as in the way that that strength is applied, and this refers equally to the mental attitude. We can go to work in such a state of mind that in a few minutes we feel tired and disgusted with everything. Again, when we enter the field of work with constructive thought, the more we do, the more we seem to find a new supply of life, energy and inspiration. These are experiences we all go through, every one of us. Sometimes we learn by them, and sometimes our avenues of learning are closed. The lessons come to us but we do not seem to gain anything through them. What Emerson says is very true:

"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 endeavour exactly, bravely and cheerfully, to solve the problem of that life which is set before him."

We can easily overlook our duty in life. We may, perhaps, think that we have no other duty except that which birth has placed upon us in the way of a little bit of earning and a little bit of exertion, and that if we do this, we have done our best. This is tremendous self-limitation. Some day we shall be surprised when we open up the avenue of the Spirit, the avenue of Self-expression within us. We do not yet know our best, and we shall not know it until we are willing to exert ourselves in the right direction.

Spirituality is to me an exact science. It works just like chemistry. If you do certain things, certain results are produced. If a person carries a happy heart, he is going to draw happiness to himself at every turn. There are some who will deny this, and it is true that these results do not always seem to come. That is because we are in the process of experimenting and during that process there is seldom the perfect combination. When mind, heart, and all the bodily actions are in tune,—that is, when the combination is perfect, the results will be immediate and unfailing. If we live with loving thoughts and right mental attitude, our health is bound to increase, and we shall attract more love towards us.

There is nothing to fear. Keep on experimenting in this science of the Spirit and you will find that it works just as surely as chemical experiments work. If it is valuable, if it is productive of good, if it is exact, if it can stand the test of science and rationalism, why should not every one try it? You may smile and say, "But it does not work in

the world." Does it not? Try it out in your home, in your business, in walking and sitting and mingling with people, and see whether it works or not. If it does not work in the world, then it is for us to change that part of the world where it fails to work. We are responsible for the making of our world. We make it sad or cheerful, good or bad, according to our thought. A doubting mind has no strength. If your interest is divided, you cannot hope to impress people with your ideas, because you are starting out on the wrong basis. If we do something with fullness of feeling, zeal and strength of conviction, very soon we find that we have inspired others with the same ardour. That is the law. It is the way we make life productive. We sow the right seed, our thought, in our own field, our mind, and carefully watch over it until it comes to ripening. When we reap the harvest then we are satisfied that it is something real. We are better physically, mentally and spiritually, and we do not hesitate to share with others. But we cannot share these things with others until we ourselves have found them.

It is for this reason that in India they have very strict ideas about spiritual teachers. Here in the Occident any person can pass as a teacher if he has a certain amount of education; but there, if a person does not radiate the thing that he teaches, they will not accept him. If he talks of love, they expect to see that he is a lover; if he talks of purity, they want to see purity shine through him; if he talks of God, they want to see him full of God. There should not be any inconsistency. What we talk about and what we are, what we believe in and what we express through our life, should be one. Each must support the other; there should be no division. This is what I mean by the spiritual life, the productive life. Every one of us has filled his

mind and heart with many beautiful and lofty ideals. We do not need to quarrel with each other on that ground. The Christian may think that the thoughts contained in his Bible are the best. The Hindu may believe that he has the truth, and the Buddhist may make a similar claim, but quarrelling about it is not going to prove it. Whoever is manifesting the noblest qualities, that man is the best preacher of his faith.

It is the life which speaks and a productive life speaks more eloquently than any theme enforced by word or pen. If we are feeling weak and incapable, if we have lost our impetus for living, all that people may prescribe for us in the way of this theory or that, will not do us half so much good as to see a man with all the odds against him, standing up and conquering them through the sheer force of his life. Seeing him, we see manifested all those ideals which we thought of as abstract and impracticable, and we are filled with a new courage and a new faith. Here is the real duty of every man and every woman. We are in this world to do the will of the Father, for by doing that we shall produce a harmonious chord in our own life and in the lives of others.

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Belief in a Power which transcends knowledge is that fundamental element in religion which survives all its changes of form. This inexpugnable belief proved to be likewise that on which all exact science is based . . . The recognition of a persistent Force, ever changing its manifestations but unchanged in quantity throughout all past time and all future time, is that which we find alone makes possible each concrete interpretation, and at last unifies all concrete interpretations. Matter, motion, and force are but symbols of the Unknown Reality.—*Herbert Spencer*.

# UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

The real mystic is not a selfish visionary. He grows in vigour as he draws nearer and nearer the sources of true life, and his goal is only reached when he participates in the creative energies of the Divine Nature. The perfect man, says the Sufi, must not only die into God in ecstasy, but abide in Him and with Him, manifesting His truth in the world of time. He is called into a life more active because more contemplative than that of other men.

—*Evelyn Underhill.*

Wisdom does not show itself so much in precept as in life—in a firmness of mind and a mastery of appetite. It teaches us to do, as well as to talk; and to make our words and actions all of a color.—*Seneca.*

Go let your *deeds* His praises prove,
To all make manifest His love.—*Goethe.*

The end of life is to be like unto God; and the soul following God, will be like unto Him; He being the beginning, middle and end of all things.—*Socrates.*

The supreme misfortune is when theory outstrips performance.—*Leonardo da Vinci.*

May there be no root of good in me, no knowledge of right, no cunning or skill save such as serve all living things.—*Vow of a Bodhisattva* (*Mahayana Buddhism*).

Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.—*St. John.*

Like a beautiful flower, full of color, but without scent, are the fine and fruitless words of him who does not act accordingly.—*Dhammapada.*

# TO THOSE OF OTHER FAITHS

## *A Message to Christendom*

(Sent out from Jerusalem, Palestine, April 5th, 1928)

A message to all Christians of the world, adopted to-day by the International Missionary Council, was described by the delegates as an appropriate Good Friday proclamation from representatives of those who hold the faith in nearly 60 nations. Despite the differing elements in the Council, the message was endorsed by acclamation. It said:

"We endorse the Christian message formulated at last year's conference on faith and order at Lausanne, but we wish additionally to emphasize the motive of missionary enterprise.

"We believe in a Christ-like world, and wish to place our experience at the disposal of the younger churches and desire that they express the Gospel according to the particular genius of each.

"We believe in going into other nations, not because they are worse than our own, but because they are part of the world and we would share our blessings with them.

"We would welcome from the younger churches missions to America and Europe, not for the advertising of their needs, but that they might share their spiritual treasure with us.

"Every noble quality of non-Christian persons or systems is welcomed by us as evidence that God is nowhere without witness.

"We repudiate the attempts of governments and of business to use the missionary cause for ulterior purposes. We repudiate too, any form of religious imperialism that would impose belief on others against their will."—*Associated Press Dispatch.*

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Bow thy head there, where others are bowing. Veneration never goes unrewarded.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

# THE BROKEN STRING

*From "The Encomium of Kings" by Hermes Trismegistus*

Now in the case of those professing the harmonious art of music—like melody—if when the piece is played, the discord of the instruments doth hinder their intent, its rendering becomes ridiculous.

For when his instruments are quite too weak for what's required of them, the music-artist needs must be laughed at by the audience.

For He, with all good will, gives of His art unweariedly; they blame the artist's weakness.

He then who is the Natural Musician-God, not only in His making of the harmony of His celestial songs, but also in His sending forth the rhythm of the melody of His own songs right down unto the separate instruments, is, as God, never wearied.

For that with God there is no growing weary.

So, then, if ever a musician desires to enter into the highest contest of his art, he can—when now the trumpeters have rendered the same phrase of the composer's skill, and afterwards the flautists played the sweet notes of the melody upon their instruments, and they complete the music of the piece with pipe and plectrum—if anything goes wrong, one does not lay the blame upon the inspiration of the music-maker.

Nay, by no means,—to him one renders the respect that is his due; one blames the falseness of the instrument, in that it has become a hindrance to those who are most excellent—embarrassing the maker of the music in the execution of his melody, and robbing those who listen of the sweetness of the song.

In like way also, in our case, let no one of our audience for the weakness that inheres in body, blame im-

piously our Race—(the Race of the Prophets or Gnostics—the Race of the Logos).

Nay, let him know God is unwearied Spirit—for ever in the self-same way possessed of His own science, unceasing in His joyous gifts, the self-same benefits bestowing everywhere.

And if the Pheidias—the Demiurge—is not responded to, by lack of matter to perfect His skillfulness, although for His own part the Artist has done all He can, let us not lay the blame on Him.

But let us, rather, blame the weakness of the string, in that because it is too slack or is too tight, it mars the rhythm of the harmony.

So when it is that the mischance occurs by reason of the instrument, no one doth blame the Artist.

Nay more; the worse the instrument doth chance to be, the more the Artist gains in reputation by the frequency with which his hand doth strike the proper note, and more the love the listeners pour upon that Music-maker, without the slightest thought of blaming him.

So will we too, most noble Sirs, set our own lyre in tune again, within, with the Musician!

Nay, I have seen one of the artist-folk—(presumably prophets) although he had no power of playing on the lyre—when once he had been trained for the right noble theme, make frequent use of his own self as instrument, and tune the service of his string by means of mysteries, so that the listeners were amazed at how he turned necessitude into magnificence.

Of course you know the story of the harper who won the favour of the God who is the president of music-work.

One day, when he was playing for a prize, and when the breaking of a string became a hindrance to him in the

contest, the favour of the Better One supplied him with another string, and placed within his grasp the boon of fame.

A grasshopper was made to settle on his lyre, through the foreknowledge of the Better One, and so fill in the melody in substitution of the broken string.

And so by mending of his string the harper's grief was stayed, and fame of victory was won.

And this I feel is my own case, most noble Sirs!

For but just now I seemed to make confession of my want of strength, and play the weakling for a little while; but now, by virtue of the strength of that Superior One, as though my song about the King had been perfected by Him, I seem to wake my muse.

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## MORE LIGHT*

*By H. Gordon Selfridge*

(Founder and Head of the House of Selfridge & Co., London)

The following extract from a book written by a king of modern industry is assuredly thought-provoking. It reveals the unutterable weariness of the modern mind, caught in the eternal round of things. With restless dissatisfied eyes the writer surveys the spiritual and mental offerings of the past and complains that the present has in no wise transcended them. "Let us have something new!" he cries. But why should we? Humanity as a whole has never applied the simple, fundamental truths given to it by the Krishnas, the Christs and the Buddhas of the race,—truths which if lived and *realized*, would not only serve to awaken the world from its nightmare dream of conquest, competition and selfishness, but would release the soul into a condition where it would be capable of discerning vaster prospects of life and being.

*From "The Romance of Commerce," by H. Gordon Selfridge.

The rudiments of the science of the Spirit still lie before us unlearned and largely unregarded. Until we turn our minds and hearts towards their realization, it is unreasonable for us to complain. The key lies in our hand, but only as we learn to use it can we open the door of our consciousness and pass into a wider universe.

The world is ripe for a new philosophy, perhaps for a new religion, as understood in its broadest meaning. We are hungry for higher ideals, higher inspirations, standards beyond those which man has thus far conceived. Our minds are finite. We can and do improve our physical condition. Our lives are made continually easier. We have many clever devices which aid us to live. We can and do better our methods, our systems. This is easy because there is so much left to accomplish in that direction before perfection is reached, but our mental development is limited indeed. We cannot go beyond a certain point in our ambitions, our achievements. We seem to reach the end of our ability, and, what is much worse, we seem to have made no progress since the earliest history.

A Brahmin prince, a thousand years before Christ, wrote a great epic poem, a poem of many volumes, and the striking thing in this wonderfully beautiful work is his description of the perfect character. We read his words three thousand years later and realize they describe our ideal. We have imagined nothing finer, nothing more nearly perfection. It is as if our idea of the best were a perfect circle, which, as a circle, cannot be bettered. When the Greeks reached their highest perfection in architecture they had designed that which could not be surpassed. The proportions conceived by them remain in this twentieth century as the acknowledged standard of perfection; we can-

not better their graceful lines. Man's character, however, is not governed by arithmetic but by imagination; and if our minds were not so extremely finite we should pierce through this wall of limitations and picture greater perfection, a higher type of man, a nobler ambition.

The world is ready for a great superhuman mind which can break down the limits of mental vision and give a new philosophy that shall eliminate from the mind those little, petty, mean elements which cause it to be so earthy. Why should man allow jealousy to make him miserable? Why should he hold his eyes so close to the surface that he cannot take a broad survey of life? Why should he not throw from him forever that contemptible yellow streak in his nature which breeds the snob? Why should activity be an effort and laziness a natural trait which must be overcome and thrown out before one is free from it? Why does one follow another without thought, simply because that one has followed someone else? Why do so few think for themselves? Why must one learn to think? and why cannot a philosophy be conceived which makes thinking as natural as seeing?

The human animal is a most superb piece of machinery, and the mind is the most wonderful part of that machine; but man has allowed it to become clogged with old worn-out threads of prejudice, of hypocrisy, of cant, of inefficiency, of dullness, of snobbery, with the dust of a hundred undesirable things that mar the pattern of the fabric which this machine is trying to weave. The world wants another flood,—a great mental torrent to wash away the accumulation of false ideas, the obstacles, the traps, which trip and hold fast against progress.

Oh! for a mental giant who can brush away this wall of limitations and give us new ideas of life!

# THE CARTER*

*By Edward Carpenter*

So in the dirt amid the filthy smoke, and insensate din of the great city—

Into my attic came my friend, the carter and sat with me for a while.

Young and worn, these are the words he said:

"Never before could I have believed it, but I see it all now—

There is nothing like it—no happiness—when you have clean dropped thinking about yourself.

But you must not do it by halves—while ever there is the least grain of self left it will spoil all;

You must just leave it all behind—and yourself be the same as others—

If they want anything, and you want it, well it is the same who gets it—

You cannot be disappointed then—

I do not say it is not hard, but I know there is nothing—no happiness—like it;

It is a new life, and them that has never tasted it, they have no idea what it is."

Thus in the din and dirt of the city, as over the mountain tops and in the far forests alone with Nature,

I saw the unimaginable form dwelling, whom no mortal eye may see,

The unimaginable form of Man—tenant of the Earth from far ages—seen of the wise in all times—

Dwelling also in the youthful carter.

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*From "Towards Democracy."

# GOD, SOUL AND MATTER

*By Swami Sharvananda*

(Concluded from the April issue)

## *GOD*

Religion begins with the personal conception of God who is considered to be endowed with supreme attributes and excellences and infinite powers. He is looked upon as the creator, preserver and ruler of the universe and on his mercy the entire creation depends. He has a distinct personality. He resides in some extra-cosmic region from where He manipulates the infinite forces of the universe. This personal conception is natural with man. The very limitations of man compel him to look up to some being who would help him to transcend those limitations, to realize a better state of being for which his whole soul yearns. And the thought of that greater helper as infinite and perfect in every respect is a deep psychological necessity with him. Man, however, does not seem to feel the incongruity of combining these aspects simultaneously in God. That a God who is infinite and perfect cannot also at the same time be a person, a ruler or helper does not seem to strike him. Anyhow this personal ideal of God is in all revealed religions the motive power and spring of all noble sentiments and inspirer of superior and holy life.

Along with the consciousness of limited existence, an intense pessimism also marks the beginning of religion. Pessimism takes a gloomy view of life. The world seems a vale of tears, and religion is considered to brighten life with the light of hope and glory, promising to take man beyond to a state where reigns perfect freedom from the present harassing limitations. This state of perfection and emancipation through the grace of God is called heaven. The hope of

heaven is a strong incentive to the ordinary mind in taking to the worship of God.

But when the mind is chastened and ethically purified and spiritually uplifted by worship which is nothing but a psychological approach to the Divine Ideal, it is able to perceive subtler aspects of life and existence. It feels that a being who is personal, that is to say, of a limited existence implied in personality, can never be infinite and perfect in the true sense. Individuality or personality always carries with it the consciousness of a distinction which is inherent in all conditioned existence, in objects limited by time, space and causation. Therefore to look upon God as infinite, perfect, omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent and also a personal being, is a manifest self-contradiction. To be truly infinite, omniscient, omnipresent, etc., the Divine Principle must be all-pervasive, immanent, and therefore impersonal. Nay, even the immanent view of God does not truly represent His perfection and infinity. An immanent and all-pervasive principle can be infinite only mathematically. But it is mutable and conditioned even as infinite matter is conditioned, being converted to various modes by time, space and causality. But of course both the material and spiritual principles cannot be mutable, for then they would require a third principle which must be immutable, because no mutation is conceivable without an immutable something as its background, which must be imagined to be superior even to the spiritual principle. But there is nothing beyond spirit. Strict logic, therefore, points that the spiritual principle, or the Divine Principle, must be transcendental and metaphysically infinite to be truly perfect and the permanent basis of existence and life.

That is why we noticed that the philosophies of the different religions of the world have generally taken three views of the Divine Principle, namely, God the personal, God the

immanent impersonal, and God the absolute. This threefold view of God is also found corroborated by practical religion, by the actual experiences of religious mystics in different parts of the world. Some mystics experience God as an actual divine Person, responding to their prayer, succouring their needs, and receiving the devout homage of their heart. They are even vouchsafed the vision of the personal forms of the Divine. These mystics are not frauds. For we find them leading lives of utmost moral purity and saintliness such as are scarcely found among ordinary men. Nor are they deluded fools. For their clarity of vision and keen understanding of things and affairs and highly developed intellectual powers can hold comparison very favorably with the best of the so-called intelligent. We must, therefore, give credence to their evidence and cannot dogmatically set aside their experiences as mental aberrations.

It has been truly said: "Though He is of the nature of pure intelligence, one without a second, without parts and bodiless, yet for the sake of the devotees, *Brahman* (the Absolute Supreme) assumes forms." The concretization of the impersonal *Brahman* into personal forms is not a subjective aberration of the devotee, but an actual objective fact. It may be too subtle to be apprehended by the ordinary mind, yet it is as much a fact as any concrete object of the world. As external objects are subjective, being the visions of individuals imposed upon the formless material principle, but also objective (and not *products* of individual minds) being perceived similarly and simultaneously by all, even so the personal forms of God, though mental visions, are yet not the outcome of any individual mind, but of the cosmic mind, and are therefore as much a fact and reality as any other object of the universe.

We next notice another group of religious mystics who

rise to a still higher experience where the Divine Principle is experienced as the immanent Being imbuing everything, every atom, every pulsation of life. Nothing exists which is not an expression of that Being. He is the soul of all souls. He is essentially of the nature of intelligence, bliss and energy, and is the substance and eternal basis of all phenomena.

There is still another class of mystics whose spiritual experiences transcend even immanence. Contemplating their beloved Deity, they reach a state of consciousness where the human soul rends the rind of individuality, of time, space and causation, of all limitations, and loses itself in the ecstasy of a Being that is at once transcendental, infinite and indescribable. Nothing can be posited of that experience except that it is the consciousness of pure existence, unfettered intelligence and causeless bliss. It is this which has been described by the Vedic sages as the experience of *Satchidananda* (*Existence-Knowledge-Bliss*). In that experience, thought dies and the mind expires and nothing remains except the principle of contentless consciousness shining in its own infinite glory. This is the highest knowledge of God.

Thus our study of matter, soul and God has led us gradually from diversity to unity. We began with external objects. But as we proceeded with our analysis and discovery of underlying principles, we found the multiplicity of existence melt away like mists before the rising sun. What seemed in the beginning unconnected varieties appeared later on as plural expressions of one fundamental unity. Proceeding further, we found the visions of even such plurality disappear. The distinctions of things became naught, and we reached at the Absolute Principle where do not exist time, space or causation—the real causes of the variegated universe. The highest synthesis is therefore that fundamental

Principle which is not and cannot be known by the mind, but which is much more than known, being the very pivot of our existence, and the basis of the knowing mind and all knowable objects. It can neither be known nor unknown. We can only say that it is, and nothing else. That Being, seen through time, space and causation, gives rise first to the vision of plurality interpenetrated by unity. It next develops into the twin vision of matter the perceived, soul the perceiver, and God the presiding power over both. The Absolute is the substance and basis of God, soul and matter. It is behind them all as their common background, like a screen on which the moving images of phenomena are being reflected. So long as matter is the object, there must be the perceiver of that object, which is the soul. And so long as the duality of soul and matter exists, there must be a Being who governs and inter-relates them; and that is God.

Be it noted that these visions of God (personal), soul and matter are relative and not absolute. Matter is not unreal as the idealists would maintain, nor are soul and God unreal as atheists and materialists would have them. Yet these have but relative values, being, as they are, related to our evanescent experiences. On the sense-plane our experience is that of unmitigated plurality. Here all objects appear as distinct and separate from one another. But as we go higher and see things from the thought-plane, our experience is that of unity in variety. But when we transcend even the thought-plane and reach a state where there is neither time nor space nor causation, our experience is of an indescribable reality which can only be imagined or inferred as pure unity. As our experiences are gathered from these three distinct planes and we see things from these three angles of vision, so reality also must be of three distinct truths. Thus God, matter and soul are different and distinct on the sense-plane.

They are inter-related as unity in variety, on the mental plane; but they are dissolved into one undifferentiated existence on the spiritual plane. And that is the absolute value, inasmuch as that is a state unconditioned and unaffected by time, space and causation. There is only a question of values—relative and absolute. The quarrel is not about what exists and does not exist. The world is, soul is, and the personal God is, but only relatively. But all these disappear in the view of the Transcendental which alone has absolute value.

This, in short, is the view of matter, soul and God, as seen through science, philosophy and religion; and to our mind, they are not at all contradictory to one another, but stand graded in the scale of values.

## KING MIND

*From the Yoga Visistha Maharamayana*

Destroy the internal desires of your mind which are raised by ignorance alone, and attain your supreme felicity by your resignation to the divine Will. The mind is a thing that stands between the real and the unreal, between intelligence and dull matter, and is moved to and fro by the contending power on either side. Impelled by dull material force, the mind is lost in the investigation of material objects, till at last, by its habitual thought of materiality, it is converted into a material object, resembling dull matter itself. But the mind being guided by its intellectual powers, to the investigation of abstract truths, becomes an intelligent and intellectual principle, by its continued practice of thinking itself such.

It is by virtue of the exertion of your manly powers and activities, and by force of constant habit and continued practice, that you can succeed in attaining anything to which you

employ your mind with diligence. You can also be free from fears and find your rest in your reliance on the Sorrowless Being; provided you exercise your manly activities therein and curb the proclivities of your mind by your intelligence. It must be by the force of your intelligent mind that you must lift up your deluded mind which is drowned in the cares of this world. There is no other means that will help you to do so. The mind only is capable of subduing the mind; for who can subdue a king unless he is a king himself?

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## SWAMI PARAMANANDA IN MALAYA AND BURMA

(Concluded from the May number)

To continue our pageant of Oriental welcome, begun in the May number of the "Message of the East," at 9 A. M., of the seventh day, the Swami spoke at the Theosophical Lodge, to a very sympathetic audience. In the afternoon people came to call, to have a group picture taken and to see the Ashrama movies which Dr. G.— showed. Being daytime we had to shut out the light and be shut in from the air, but we survived, and all enjoyed it. There were several children present—so sweet they were!"

As invitations were pouring in from all parts of Malaya, claiming the Swami's presence, this had to be the last day in Singapore. "The people were enthusiastic, respectful and cordial all through," writes Swami Adyananda, "and even Mohammedans were very enthusiastic about the 'Temple of the Universal Spirit' which the Swami is building at the Ashrama in La Crescenta, California."

We shall finish this portion of our story with the words of the student: "When we finally left Singapore, there were many people at the station to see us off, and we steamed

away amid cheers from the crowd, having been again garlanded and *speeched.* Several went with us to the next station, one, especially devoted, to Johore. The next morning at Kuala Lumpur were more people and garlands and bouquets, and so it will be for some time, I suppose. It has been wonderful to share in all the festivities that have been given in Swami's honor and I have often wished you could be here to see what has been accorded him and how beautifully he has accepted it. As for myself, I am overcome with the care and attention that have come my way, and that it is because of Swami makes me appreciate it all the more."

On Monday morning, Jan. 31st, at 7 o'clock, Swami Paramananda and his party reached Kuala Lumpur where is situated the only Ramakrishna Math, or branch of the Ramakrishna Mission, in the Malay States. "We were received at the station by a delegation," again writes the American student, "and taken in a flowered motor to the Math where Swami Vidahananda, the President, prepared a delicate breakfast for us. This place is more attractive than Singapore, and the surrounding country is beautiful. The room which I have at the hotel is enormous and high as the heavens, while in the centre there is a large fan such as they have in the restaurants at home. Doors that reach neither the floor nor the top of the doorway, open from the hall, and others similar give on a broad balcony which is shaded by grass curtains. It is very attractive."

After luncheon the Swami (Paramananda) and his companions were taken in procession to the Town Hall where he addressed over a thousand people, speaking on religion as a living force in life. "The speech was powerful and touched the audience very greatly," comments Swami Adyananda. After the meeting came a beautiful ride and a late dinner. "The next evening," he continues, "another

meeting was held at the same hall. There was an even larger attendance, many standing outside. The chairman paid a glowing tribute to the Swami and spoke with especial appreciation of his poems, some of which he shared with the audience. The Swami spoke for over an hour on "Practical Spirituality" after which Rao Sahib Subhaya Naidu Garu, Agent of the Goverment of India, thanked the Swami in very appreciative terms. Thus the Kuala Lumpur program was closed."

In the meantime, other invitations had come from Ipoh and Taiping, two big towns of the state of Perak, one of the Federated Malay states, so on the first of February, the Swami and his friends left by morning train for Ipoh, where they were met and garlanded. The following day there was to be a big horse-race and the city was crowded with visitors. As in the case of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, it had been arranged that the Swami was to occupy the quarters of the Sultan of Johore, whose permanent establishment was elsewhere. Owing, however, to the races, the Sultan had arrived with his fifteen wives, making this plan impossible and a room at the hotel the only solution. In the evening a reception and public meeting were held for the Swami at the Town Hall where he spoke on "India's Spiritual Heritage." "It was a fine meeting to a well-filled house." What followed is described very vividly by the American member of the party:

"After the lecture we had one of the experiences of our trip—an evening procession in our honor, going slowly through the streets of Ipoh. Large arc lights were carried on the heads of two men in front and one behind our motor, while three musicians gave weird Indian music. It was very solemn and I wished I could be among the crowd so I could see it all. It seemed as if thousands took part in it and others watched from the balconies. It was an impres-

sive sight. Every now and then we would pause and the music stop. A nice boy walking on my side of the car, talked to me in very good English and said people were interested to know why there was a European (all Westerners are Europeans) there with the Swamis. So I explained and he came to see us off when we started for Taiping and Parit Buntar the following morning.

"We drove to Parit Buntar by motor, passing through rubber plantations and past tin mines, and all in the loveliest country with heavily wooded hills in the near distance and far, and through fascinating villages. It was quite cool and everything looked like a beautiful picture. Before reaching our destination we were met in one of the villages by two devotees, Dr. J.— and Mr. S. G.— and their children, with garlands and bouquets. These garlands are so sweet-scented and lovely, made of hundreds of little white flowers crowded into a solid rope and decorated with tinsel. From the lower end of the garland hangs a large tassel of flowers—in one I counted fourteen gardenias. Usually they are roses, or both mixed."

After reaching Parit Buntar, which is a very small place, the Swami went with his companions to the home of Dr. J.— where he was received with the deep feeling and reverent ceremonial of a devout Hindu household, the father and mother bowing down to the Swami and placing an offering at his feet, after which the children did the same. Mr. S. G.—and his family were also present. The children had a special holiday in honor of the Swami's coming, and a very sumptuous luncheon was served, after which the guests were taken back to their quarters.

"The evening lecture was arranged at Taiping," the Swami himself writes, "about thirty-two miles from Parit Buntar, so we had to get ready and leave at about five. We

were late in starting so the driver was going most of the time about fifty miles an hour over narrow and winding roads. It was a new Chevrolet of Mr. S. G.—and rode extremely well. We had several showers along the way. It was a beautiful drive. Such foliage I have seldom seen. We arrived a little before six and were received at the Temple with music, garlands, sandal-wood paste, etc. Refreshments were served to the entire party which seemed like a regiment. Then several motor cars went along with us for a little ride around Taiping lake,—very charming."

"The lecture at Taiping was a great success," the American student remarks, taking up the thread of the narrative, "Mr. McC.—, an English headmaster of the school, presided, and after the lecture paid the Swami the most beautiful tribute you can imagine, expressed in perfect English. If I only could remember it! He began by saying that he must confess to have come there under a great misapprehension expecting to hear a learned metaphysical discourse on the Hindu philosophy. Instead he had heard some of the fundamental facts of life talked about in such a simple way—the deepest philosophy stated in terms that anyone could understand, and that although the Swami avowed a disinclination to convert, the very beauty of his statements could not fail to bring followers—that he hoped he would often come to Taiping and he, for one, would always come to hear him. Later when I spoke to him, he again expressed his great surprise at what he had heard and said, 'He has the simple, direct methods of the master teacher.' Those were his words and he was in earnest. We left Taiping at about 8 P.M. and arrived soon after nine and then to Mr. S. G.—'s house for dinner. You can imagine what a full day it was."

The next morning the Swami and his party left by motor for Penang. "Another beautiful ride. When we reached

the jetty(the other side of Penang) we were received by a delegation and were of course garlanded. Later we were joined by Dr. J.—and Mr. S. G.—with their families—the friends who had made our stay at Taiping and Parit Buntar so pleasant. The lecture at Penang was a successful one, Mr. K.—, a Moslem barrister-at-law, presiding. Afterwards we were taken for a ride through most beautiful country and then to Mr. K.—'s home. After dinner we made for the boat. Mr. K.— asked if the Swami would have any objection if his wife drove him to the jetty. At first we thought that she was merely coming with us, but she sat at the wheel and drove. This is probably the highest honor a Moslem lady can pay to a guest. Many were awaiting us at the jetty. Once more we were garlanded, and again by another group when we reached the ship. We sailed at midnight for Rangoon."

The Swami arrived in Rangoon, Monday, Feb. 6th and was met by Swami Shyamananda,—head of the Sri Ramakrishna Shevasram—at Rangoon. He was first taken to the Shevasram, and from there to the Guest House. "From that moment till I left Rangoon," he writes, "I did not have any real privacy. People—people—people—steady stream of them at all hours!"

Through a Moslem acquaintance, the Swami learned of the presence in Rangoon of Mrs. P. T.—, an old friend and student from America, who is now the wife of an eminent Burmese barrister. This lady, with charming hospitality, threw her home open to the Swami and his friends, and did all in her power to make his visit successful and comfortable, nor was she alone in this. On every hand, the Swami met with the greatest courtesy and consideration.

On Feb. 7th, the Swami was taken to see the famous Swe Dagon Pagoda, one of the most famous Buddhist shrines

in the world. Of this, the American member of the party writes: "It was necessary to remove both shoes and stockings in order to enter, and for the first time in my life I walked bare-footed. It was an experience worth the sacrifice. One could have no idea of the place from outside; for after mounting the 105 gradual steps and passing the stalls on both sides, where were sold flowers and candles and little parasols, gold leaf in packages, silks, etc., for offerings, one found oneself in a large compound with marble flooring—trees in some places, and shrines innumerable, each containing from one to many figures of Buddha, both sitting and reclining. The decorations of some of them were gorgeous really. We spent a long time there and it was a great thing to see, representing so much and such varied phases of life and religion. In the afternoon we were taken to the Ramakrishna free reading-room and library, where an informal reception was given to the Swami, and garlanding, as usual, took place. Following this, we attended a Health Exhibition where we finally met Mrs. P. T.—, who had charge of the Child Welfare section. The exhibition is like similar affairs that we have in America, only out of doors and on a smaller scale. The rest of the day was given over to visitors."

Wednesday, Feb. 8th, was notable chiefly for the public reception which was held at 5:30 P.M. "On Swami's arrival nothing had been arranged for the reception or lectures," our correspondent tells us, "but there was a good crowd at the reception on Wednesday and the number increased each evening. Swami has given some stirring lectures in Rangoon—one particularly powerful on the 'Commonwealth of Humanity.' Of course we have all been garlanded at every lecture—lovely garlands of roses which

are so fragrant as they are put over the head, but so heavy and wet to wear."

Thursday, Feb. 9th, gave hardly a breathing space. "Mrs. P. T.— secured some passes for the opening of the Legislative Council, of which her husband is Deputy President. We saw them all come in in state—the President in wig and gown—the Governor in military uniform, knee breeches and much gold lace—his aide de camp, a man carrying an enormous mace which was placed on the desk during the opening. Two men carried bunches of peacock's feathers. How I wish I could remember everything! Following lunch and a little rest, Swami gave his lecture on the 'Commonwealth of Humanity.' There was a large attendance—1000 or more —and every one was much stirred. After the lecture we went to Mrs. P. T.—'s house where a number were gathered to see the Ananda-Ashrama moving pictures. This was repeated at 10 P.M. at the Shevasram. In between all the main events there are people coming constantly and never can Swami have a minute to himself. There is a long balcony outside his room, and it is always occupied, and sometimes filled, with men, or boys, or women, or children—some to interview, others just to *look*. At meal time there is always a group of on-lookers."

Friday, Feb. 10th, began at 7 A.M. when a carriage came to convey the Swami to the Shevasram hospital wards. "The work of the Mission in Rangoon," runs a letter, "is chiefly in connection with this hospital, the grounds and building of which belong to the Government. At present it is all for men, except an out-patient department for women and children, for whom, however, they soon intend to open wards. A very nice 'lady doctor' is there daily. There is also a library for boys which is doing good work I believe. After our visit at the Shevasram, we were entertained at

breakfast by a devotee, to whose house we were driven in a two-horse old-fashioned carriage with driver and footman who stood up at the back, both in khaki uniform and curious turban. Several men awaited us at the door, and took us in, bowing before the Swamis (Swami Shyamananda and Swami Paramananda). A nice woman appeared for a moment, just long enough to touch the Swamis' feet, and disappeared again through some curtains. A table was set with fruits and cakes of all kinds, just for the guests, the others served and watched us and before we left, garlanded us and presented us with beautiful large bouquets of cosmos, roses and marigolds.

"At 10:30, the Swami spoke to the Bengali Academy for girls and boys—about 250 present I should think. A group of such nice-looking girls sang to open the meeting. The Inspector of Schools presided. We were garlanded. Then came the Swami's address, short and to the point, and we left. At 6:30 was the lecture. About 1000 people were there. Subject: 'Pulse of Time.' A Burmese barrister presided and expressed great surprise at the universal aspect of the Swami's message. There followed another showing of the Ananda-Ashrama pictures and then another lecture. This time to the women! Children were there too, for the mothers had to bring them. I counted about 75. Fully 200 men were at the back of the hall. Swami began to talk. The babies cried; the mothers nursed them. Swami paused after a few minutes and let someone interpret in Bengali—a highly educated, lovely Bengali lady, wife of the Head Master of the school. Then a fine-looking woman, an M.A., who spoke English fluently, gave the interpretation in Tamil. She was South Indian and very proud of it, I discovered. What do you suppose the Swami said at the end? I have hardly caught my breath since. He said that if the women

were not given greater opportunities to become companions to their husbands and hold a different position in the family —for upon them depended the future of the children—'If this is *not* done,' he said, 'there is no hope for India,' and he sat down. Before that he expressed the wish that there were more men to hear what he had to say. He has heard since that the women were much stirred, and said they had never been talked to in this way before. We are told that Rangoon was never so roused before by anybody."

This was not the end of the day. The moving pictures were shown again and the Swami had his dinner about midnight. The next morning visitors began to arrive as early as 4:30. The Swami left the house at 7 A.M. and the launch left the jetty at 7:30. There were many friends waiting to see the Swami off and to garland him for a final time before he sailed away for Calcutta, at 10 A.M.

Thus ended a wonderful tour which has left in the minds of those who participated in it, memories of devotion, enthusiasm, warm response, and innumerable loving acts, which, like the fragrant garlands, have wound themselves around the Swami's heart, and will assuredly draw him back to the kindly, friendly and beautiful shores of Malaya and Burma.

## REPORT

Friday, May 4th, at Ananda-Ashrama, was a day of still air and warm sunshine which made a fitting background for the birthday celebration of Lord Buddha, the Tranquil and Compassionate. Early in the evening cars began to arrive and by eight o'clock a large number of people had gathered to listen to the address by Swami Paramananda.

The patio was a wonderful study in light and shadow with electric lights gleaming softly through the green of the trees, disclosing the altar beautifully decorated with flowers

and tall candles, and with the spell of the moonlight falling over all. The audience sat enthralled as the Swami told of the life and teachings of Lord Buddha, and so thoroughly did he make himself one with his subject that his hearers felt the very presence of the matchless serenity and calm dignity of the Buddha himself. The words we often quote: "To understand all is to forgive all" became the unspoken interpretation of the age-old teaching of the Dhammapada, "Hatred is never conquered by hatred, it is always conquered by love." This conception of outreaching and enfolding love was repeated in the selections given by the Ashrama choir who were assisted by Mr. Cleveland, a cellist of ability.

The charm of the surroundings and the atmosphere of repose and peace still held the large congregation after the conclusion of the Service and while the refreshments which had been prepared by the Swami were served, some lingered in the patio or walked about the Cloister, while others wandered along the terrace in the moonlight. Even until a late hour many remained listening to harmonies of piano, violin and cello, intermingled with vocal selections—a much enjoyed impromptu program furnished by artist guests.

* * * *

After three weeks following his return from India, Swami Paramananda left for Boston. His welcome there was warm and enthusiastic. Despite the inclement weather on the first Sunday the attendance was good; it was very much larger at the Tuesday meeting and has steadily increased since. The Swami's work in Boston has made an important place for itself and his friends there cling to him even though he is so often absent. The Swami will not make a long stay as he will soon return to supervise the building of the Temple at Ananda-Ashrama. The Temple is nearing completion and he hopes to dedicate it in July.

VOLUME XVII NUMBER 7

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

# VEDANTA MONTHLY

# Message of the East



NOT ISSUED IN AUGUST OR SEPTEMBER

July, 1928

## Power of Prayer

Issued by

ANANDA-ASHRAMA

LA CRESCENTA, L. A. CO., CALIF.

(Extension of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, Established 1909)

Entered as second class matter, Feb. 14, 1924, at the Post Office at La Crescenta, Calif., Box 85, under act of March 2, 1879.

Accepted for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized June 17, 1921.

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SINGLE COPIES, 25c $2.00 A YEAR

Published Monthly Except in August and September

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*MESSAGE OF THE EAST*

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

"Light shall come again from the East."
—Tyndall.

Published Monthly except in August and September

Vol. XVII. July, 1928 No. 7

# SPIRIT OF LOVE

*By Swami Paramananda*



SPIRIT of Love, open thy gate—
I wait here on Thy threshold,
gasping for life.
O Spirit of Love, breathe into my soul
Thy breath of love,
else I live no more.
Verily Thou art life—all joy—all peace!
Spirit of Love, fill me anew;
Be Thou, Thyself, my all.
Rule Thou my body, mind and heart:
Let Thy voice speak,
Let Thy breath breathe
And Thy pulse pulsate my whole being.
Let Thy music resound and fill my soul.
Spirit of Love, open—open Thy gate:
I am waiting on Thy threshold!

# UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:
Words without thoughts never to Heaven go.

—*Shakespeare.*

Do not be troubled that your faith is not perfect. There is not an iota of faith that you have ever put in God, in man, in the universe, that has not received its legitimate and exact response . . . Trust God a little. If you cannot pray with the faith of Jesus of Nazareth, of St. Francis of Assisi, of St. Joan of Arc, never mind; the mere fact that you are praying shows that somewhere in your heart you have a faint belief in the power and love and wisdom of God . . . When you pray for other people, you cannot guess in what way you are going to be used by God as his channel; only offer yourself continually for that power to be poured through you. That is the way in which great causes are helped.—*Maude Royden.*

The Sanctuary of God, what it holds in horror are noisy manifestations. Pray humbly with a loving heart in which all the words are said in secret. He will protect thee in thy affairs; he will listen to thy thoughts; he will accept thy offering.

—*The Maxims of the Scribe Ani (Egyptian).*

Certain thoughts are prayers. There are moments when, whatever be the attitude of the body, the soul is on its knees.

—*Victor Hugo.*

In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.—*New Testament.*

With me, prayer is an uplifting of the heart; a glance towards Heaven; a cry of gratitude and love uttered equally in sorrow and in joy. In a word, it is something noble, supernatural, which expands my soul and unites it with God.

—*Sainte Therese of Lisieux.*

# POWER OF PRAYER

*By Swami Paramananda*

"Whatsoever things ye desire, when ye pray believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them." Here is a secret which we find, not only in the teachings of Christ, but in all ancient spiritual traditions. Prayer is not a small matter; it is expressed even through the most ordinary actions that man can perform. With very many people it is the custom before eating their food to pronounce a prayer, or silently invoke a blessing, and before going to work, those who have any sense of consecration naturally ask the Deity to make their work fruitful.

From the point of view of science and intellectual analysis, we may question the efficacy of prayer except as a good influence upon the mind; yet even that gives us a working hypothesis for our outer life. In the world of religion, however, we find that prayer is one of the most fundamental factors. We may study and read and we may gain a great deal that is good from our reading and studying, but faith and prayer give us something more definite. "Man consists of his faith." When this element of faith is lacking, our prayers have no real strength behind them. We must have intensity, and intensity is ours only as we believe in a thing. When we pray with intensity our prayer is fulfilled. Why is this? There are moments when man transcends his boundary lines, but these moments do not come merely through analyzing or through intellectual gymnastics, they come when we have a real sense of the value of prayer. When we forget ourselves, the weight of self drops away from us, all limitations seem to vanish and our consciousness expands.

That prayer which is without any self-interest is best. The real power comes in man's soul when he asks nothing for himself. That, I think, is the whole gist of the art of prayer,

and it is when that selfless spirit is present that we find people demonstrating marvellous healing, or performing what seem to be miracles, without being conscious of it. The secret lies in their not asking anything for themselves. I am not going to attempt to give you the rational, intellectual and scientific reason for these things. Prayer is not anything that we can reason about—the how, why and wherefore of its fulfillment. Take a blossom—a rose—if you tear off the petals and try to reach the heart in order to find out exactly why it gives its perfume, I doubt very much if you will gain any satisfaction or convincing proof. Same way it is with spiritual things—ethereal things. Therefore Christ said: Unless ye become like little children—not questioning—ye cannot enter the Kingdom of God. On our spiritual path, if we begin to tear everything to pieces, we destroy our means of progress. In spiritual philosophy we are told, not to silence altogether our rational being, for it has its province,—but when we pray, to close the gates, the doors and the avenues of distraction, in order to make our prayer effective. The doors of distraction are many, so in order to have the true background for prayer, it is necessary that we have a silent attitude, and that we do not let our mind dwell on anything but the subject of our prayer. That is the real secret.

Often we ask: Why is it my prayers are not fulfilled? The reason is, perhaps, that there is not enough spiritual and material co-ordination, not sufficient point of contact with the inner life. We may speak the words of prayer, but words alone have no special weight. There are beautiful words suggestive of high and lofty idealism, and these could set us on fire with devotion, could generate a tremendous amount of force within us, if they were able to strike our inner note; but there must be this rhythmic blending. Again we ask: How shall we pray? We feel ignorant. Real prayers are

the out-pouring of the soul. Thus we find the great mystics crying: O Lord, I know not how to pray—I am not learned—I have no words. And yet, because of their simplicity, great poetry flows through them—comes undiluted and unspoiled from their inner depths. It is not polished language that makes prayer, nor repeating what is given in one Bible or another. A man may do this and be thinking of something ordinary or even vile. Such prayers can have no flavor of spiritual upliftment.

The main thing is to make our inner and outer life co-ordinated. One of the great teachers, Sri Ramakrishna, expressed this in a simple, constructive way. He said: "Make your mind and mouth one." That is, what you think and what you say, let these two become one, no longer any violence or any division between them. We may have set hours for our prayer, our meditation, or for our spiritual studies, and we may observe them with great routine, but this does not vouch for our exalted attitude of mind. In order that we may pray successfully at any hour, we have to prepare through all the other hours of the day. In the West it is the custom to go to church on Sunday, to have it as a day set apart for religion; but although a person may attend church and observe the worship, he will not get its true import unless his thoughts, ideas and ideals—his business affairs and his dealings with others have been in line with his prayer. There are some souls who have so much power within themselves that when they ask anything for any one, it is granted them. Where is this power hidden? Is it something magical or mystical? It is the power of the soul. And how deeply we live in the soul! We may sit in the sanctuary and yet be thinking of some business deal or some domestic problem. Also it can work the other way.

In India the story is told of two friends who started out

together to find entertainment. Now among the Hindus they have what they call spiritual plays or discussions where there is reading and singing. Sometimes a whole drama is given and of course it is full of spiritual fervour. One of the friends decided he would go to that sort of a performance; but the other did not feel so inclined and chose to go to a place of pleasure. The point is, however, that the one who was witnessing the religious drama was saying all through it: "Why am I wasting my time here instead of enjoying myself with my friend," while the friend at the place of amusement was bitterly regretting his choice, his whole heart being at the other place where, as he supposed, his companion was feeling spiritual exaltation. The result was that the experiences were exchanged. The man who was at the music-hall got the benefit of the religious service, while the one who was apparently taking an actual part in the spiritual presentation, let his mind dwell elsewhere, and received the merit accordingly.

I have seen many instances where prayers have produced definite results, and it is perfectly right for us to pray if we have any need. For instance, when we are in danger or difficulty we can, through our prayers, generate the power to counteract the unfavorable conditions. But this also is true, that people who are given to the spirit of self-surrender, they cease to pray merely for their own self-gratification. That is the reason wise men never ask anything for themselves.

Christ said: When ye pray, believe—have faith in God. Here is the difficulty. If we pray only for material things, or when we are in trouble, there is danger that we shall forget to pray when the need is over. Thus when other troubles arise, we shall find that in the meantime we have weakened our nature and in some measure, have forgotten the art of prayer, although we may still carry the imprint of it on our mind. Therefore, simply and directly, I want to convey to you this—

that it doesn't make any difference where we are placed, how we are placed, or what may be our vocation, the human constitution requires a certain amount of prayer. Just as we require food and drink and physical rest, as well as all manner of exercise, physical and mental, for our well being, in the same manner we need prayer or communion with the Supreme, because it opens the avenue through which power flows into us and replenishes us. It gives us the balance. In India we find even poor people, uneducated people, with this natural gift,—people who can completely lose themselves in prayer. And what a great gift it is! We may try to remove a man's material lack. If he is hungry we may give him food. If he has not enough clothes, we may give him clothes. If he is in need, we may give him money, but these gifts are not to be compared with the other form of help which comes through knowledge.

The higher a person rises in true knowledge, the more dependent he is on the Deity. Is not this a most astounding thing? The bigger a man becomes,—the greater his height of ascension spiritually,—the more dependent he grows. We find among the mystics that they do not seem to be able to do anything apart from God's power. Before they undertake a task they want to commune, they want to have His blessing, they want to have His sanction; and how wonderful it would be for us, if instead of depending on our self-will, our egotistic notions, or our material calculations, we should form the habit of always asking His aid. We can have nothing greater, and it is the only way to sanctify our lives. This cannot be done, however, merely through outer observances. Here is one of the points I want to make. It is not by following one form or another that we gain the power of prayer, rather it is through the spontaneous, childlike outpouring of the soul. If you feel keenly for someone who is suffering, and if you

really pray, you become a definite avenue for bringing help to that person. This is one form of prayer. There is, however, another form,—when we do not ask even that we may bring a little help to someone else, or remedy a circumstance, but rather dedicate everything to the Supreme One—"Not my will but Thine be done." This is the highest form of prayer that man can utter.

Sometimes we feel a lack of something and we ask for it so intently that it is given to us. Whatever a man prays for he receives in time, but he may discover when that time comes that it was not what he really desired. He wants praise; he wants name; he wants position; he wants, perhaps, certain material things, but he finds out ultimately that what he wanted all the time was happiness. So the final form of prayer is not what I want, or what I will, but rather, "May I blend my will with Thy will—may Thy will be done." In our spiritual infancy it is difficult for us to reach this point. We may imitate, we may say "Thy will be done," and at the same time be feeling the urge of our own will. This creates a cross-current. What we can do, however, even when we follow our own will, even though we pray to have our own wishes gratified, is to make in our prayers a little reservation, that we may not be carried away primarily by greed, selfishness, or vanity, but that we may have the spirit of surrender, never forgetting that our own wisdom is far from complete, our own judgment far from being perfect. It is better for us when we can have this reliance and alliance, and keep close to the heart of that One who gives us the fullness of life.

Through prayer we feel a definite connection with the Deity. We cannot dwell on the thought of Him without transforming our own nature. We wonder often how it happens that a person through prayer becomes restored. Some-

times a man without even asking to be healed is healed involuntarily. The secret is this—he has found his contact with the Supreme One. You may ask: What is this Supreme One? Who is this Being? He is that which we cannot define by words, although we may define many of His attributes. He is Love; He is Light; He is Truth. He is all-beneficent; He is ever-perfect; He is undying. The idea is to feel a definite contact with that One. When that happens to a human being he is revived and the Divine is kindled within him. How often after we pray we feel rested and refreshed. Christ tells us to enter into our closet when we pray and shut the door. Those who travel in the Orient are at once struck with this spirit. For instance, in a Moslem country, no matter where Mohammedans may be, even though they may be in their workshops, when the hour comes for prayer they leave everything and fall on their knees or sit cross-legged, according to their custom. They close their eyes, they close their ears, while some even put their hands over their ears so that all the noises of the world may be shut out and they can commune with the Supreme in silence. It is very impressive. Modern man forgets, however, and many of us think that it is a waste of time to spend a few minutes in prayer. But it is never a waste: it is the greatest safeguard we can have. A man without prayer is very barren. His efforts are often fruitless.

Prayer—devotion—faith—these are spiritual qualities. They are something that we feel, and as we feel, we become silent. People who are given to prayer, who are given to meditation, who enter into that kingdom of spiritual realities, how mellow, how gentle, how transformed they are! There is a saying that whatever is brought into contact with the philosopher's stone is turned into gold. In like manner, man's mind, his heart, his thought, his impulses, his propensi-

ties are all transformed and transmuted when he comes into contact with the Supreme. The purest prayer is never the result of our own ingenuity; it descends upon us. Let us hold that concept in our mind, that the Deity Himself comes to us in the form of pure prayer. We are not able even to formulate a prayer until we have His grace. And upon whom does His grace descend? When the beautiful rainfall comes, where does the water settle? On the lowly ground. God's grace descends on those alone who are humble, simple, childlike. The man who is mad with ambition, with greed, with vanities, he does not want to pray. To whom shall he pray? He has already banished the Lord from the throne of his heart where He should abide as the great Intelligence, the guiding Spirit. Pure prayer cannot enter into such a man.

Let us never forget that we are the children of that Infinite One. Custom may try to make us think that we are worn and old. But when we find our spiritual connection, when in the hour of prayer we go unto Him, it is as little children who have need of His guidance, His protection and His love.

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## THE MYSTIC'S PRAYER

*By William Sharp (Fiona Macleod)*

Lay me to sleep in sheltering flame,
O Master of the Hidden Fire!
Wash pure my heart, and cleanse for me
My soul's desire.

In flame of sunrise bathe my mind,
O Master of the Hidden Fire,
That, when I wake, clear-eyed may be
My soul's desire.

# LARKS OF ST. FRANCIS*

*By Evelyn Underhill*

The modern affection for St. Francis, waylaid by the picturesque attractions of his secondary characteristics, seldom penetrates to the source from which those characters arise—that inward temper of which Franciscan poverty and joy are outward signs, and which Jacapone da Todi described in a famous quatrain:

*Dio non alberga en core stretto;*
*tant'e grande quant' hai affetto,*
*povertate ha si gran petto*
*che ci alberga deitate.*

Only those who live in the actual way of Francis, and for the reason for which he chose that way, can show to us this peculiar combination of simple humanity and powerful spirituality which was the secret of the Saint and his first companions. Certainly nothing has ever brought me so near to the real Franciscan spirit as a few hours spent in the Vale of Spoleto with a little group of women who are trying to bring back to modern existence the homely, deeply supernatural and quite unmonastic ideal of the Primitive Rule.

It was the wish of St. Francis that his followers should live in small family parties, of whom one should act as "parent" of the rest; that they should enjoy the liberty of poverty, should work, pray and be joyful, and receive without distinction all who asked their hospitality. Of this kind were those early hermitages where we are told that the true seraphic spirit lived on; and this is the life which has now been revived in the heart of modern Italy. When I visited the group they were living in an old country house not far from the Fountain of Clitumnus. In the stable they had made

*From "The Spectator".

a tiny chapel as poor and naked as the Poverello could desire. The head of the household and foundress, who is known as the Least Sister, came down the lane to welcome me. She was dressed, like the rest of the family, in a peasant's grey linen frock, an apron and a little shawl. I shall not presume to describe her remarkable personality, or the simple beauty of the life she has inspired. That life with its gracious suppleness and entire avoidance of rigorism, its spiritual deeps, its deceptive appearance of ease—even of gaiety—cannot fully be understood by a passing guest; nor does the Least Sister, whose friendship I count as one of my greatest privileges, easily disclose the secret of her unassuming power. Those who recognize her type will discover without surprise that her delicate courtesy, her serene and wide-spreading love conceal a Teresian inflexibility of purpose; a profound sense of the pain and need of the world, and a passionate desire to help it. As we sat in the woods, I asked her to tell me something of her conception of the spiritual life. She replied in words startlingly at variance with her peaceful surroundings: "*In tormento e travaglia servire i fratelli.*"

This is not the place to discuss the mysterious connection between such a vocation and the apparent tranquillity of her life. I had rather let her reveal herself through some "Notes" she has lately written for her friends. They describe a life which is actually in being; a place of peace which has begun to do its bracing and purifying work. The little community is now precariously established in great poverty in a small Franciscan hermitage among the Umbrian hills. The "Notes on our Life" begin thus:

"We are a little group of women free from family ties, coming from various parts of Italy, who live together in a fraternal and Franciscan way; without belonging to any religious congregation, but submissive and reverent to author-

ity, as all the faithful should be. Ours is not a budding institute; therefore we do not seek for approbation and recognition. We desire rather to be left in that obscurity which is the very condition of life for us, as it is for the violets in the woods. One of us (the foundress) received the benediction of the Holy Father before beginning that humble work to which she felt herself to be called. Almost all of us are Tertiaries, but this for us is a secondary matter. We have a great devotion to St. Francis, and the desire to live something of his thought. Each of us is simply called by her name—Maria, Immacolatella, Jacopa, Angeluccia, Rosa, etc. No title is due to us; but humble folk have given to us the name of the 'Larks of St. Francis' *(Allodole)*, and we have received it as an admonition to be joyful. She amongst us who has responsibility, and therefore owes the greatest debt of love and service, is called the Least Sister. We dress coarsely and plainly, for this is right in Christian women, and poverty will not permit us to do otherwise. We inhabit an ancient Franciscan hermitage, restored by the generous efforts of many friends and by our own labor, that we may save from ruin and destruction the traces of the venerated inhabitants of the past. It is reached by a steep path which ascends from the Via Flaminia. The thornless Franciscan roses flower there, and the juniper grows. We dwell there as strangers and pilgrims, so long as circumstances and our friendly landlords permit. We work the land, which is poor and was uncultivated; and strive to live in the hard and joyful effort of each moment. We spin, weave, and embroider the ancient Umbrian patterns on linen spun and woven by ourselves. Sometimes, compelled by necessity, we ask for alms. More often this help comes to us without demanding it, as the sensible sign of that Providence which cares for the poor and the solitary."

Did the "Notes" stop here, they might give the impression merely of a retreat from the stream of life; a charming but sterile bit of spiritual atavism. But this description merely sets the scene within which the *Allodole* do their real work; and apply the spiritual power born of poverty and self-abandonment to certain needs of their time:

"We practise hospitality, with the desire that whoever comes may find here a pause for peace, or a period of recollection for work and for his task in life. We do not wish to conduct retreats, or give instructions, or lend ourselves to any religious discussions whatever; nor do we offer ecclesiastics the opportunity of holding instructions here. Living in simplicity of heart and in faith, we offer to our guests that which we have: participation in our prayers if they desire it; meals in common, and the peace of this solitary place, where contemplative souls have lived, and where nature and silence utter their eternal speech. In receiving them, we do not consider that we are 'doing good.' We care for them, and because of this we always welcome them; and we receive good from the experience which each soul brings to us: from an example, from a fraternal warning, from that gaze with which we follow every creature in reverence of heart, learning to love, venerate, help and pray."

After a few lines defining the terms on which guests are received at the hermitage, each putting in the alms box what he can afford, and doing the work of his own cell, the "Notes" continue:

"The one thing which we demand humbly but firmly from our guests is to be good enough to respect that silence which we consider as our guardian. Silence is kept in the evening from after curfew till nine o'clock the following morning; silence in the afternoon between two and four; and silence in the hour before sunset. The bell of our tiny church an-

nounces with an equally profound respect and love our short common prayers, our hours of silence, and the arrival of our guests."

Thus we may think of the little hermitage, standing away from the feverish life of modern Italy, as a "closed garden" where spiritual values are conserved and may be sought; as St. Francis insisted that there should be a flower bed in every vegetable plot "to praise the Eternal Sweetness." But its gentle ordered life of recollection, hospitality and work is the frame of other and deeper activities; born of that passionate desire to "help the brethren" which is for the Least Sister as for St. Francis the hallmark of a spiritual life. The hermitage is really a power-house, maintained at full strength by the devoted lives of its inhabitants, and broadcasting its beneficent influences to all who need them:

"To receive guests with an unfailing welcome is not our only loving service to our brothers. We pray for those who are distant. We seek to make them present to us, and penetrate with our hearts into their lives. There is here at the hermitage, rising above the olives, oaks and cypresses, a Roman ruin whereon is built a little cell we call the Nest. Each sister, from time to time, ascends to this place, and remains there alone for a day of retreat. It is specially during this day that the sister in prayer thinks of the distant, and offers, implores, and seeks to help them."

Perhaps the world owes more than it knows or can yet understand to the all-penetrating radiations which are poured out from such hidden centers of spiritual energy as this. At present, the continuance of the experiment is threatened by the very fact of this hiddenness; and the difficulty of obtaining the bare necessities of existence in a world which admires the Franciscan ideal but does little to support those who are translating it into the terms of actual life.

# FROM THE PEN OF A SUFI

*Extracts from the letters of Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri*

Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri, or, according to his titular name, Makhdum-ul-Mulk, "Master of the Kingdom," was born at Maner, a village near Patna in Behar, India. He was distinguished from his earliest childhood by all Godly signs, and even phenomenal wonders are recorded concerning him, as once when the mother saw a strange being leaning over his cradle whom she was told by the father, a great saint, was no less than the prophet Khezar, meaning that the baby was destined to be a man of spiritual advancement. Sharfuddin, on attaining manhood married, and after the birth of a son left home and travelled extensively. He received his spiritual initiation at or near Delhi by Najib-ud-din Firdausi, after which he lived for many long years in the woods of Bihia and the Rajgiri hills. He died in the opening years of the 15th century A.D., leaving a name renowned for knowledge and sanctity. His tomb at Bihar is still looked upon as a place of pilgrimage for devout Mohammedans. The present article consists for the most part of brief extracts from his work "Maktubat-i-Sadi," a series of a hundred letters addressed to one of his disciples, as translated from the Persian by Baijnath Singh. These extracts, for the sake of smoothness, have been re-combined and blended into one continuous article.

O brother! though an ant, thou mayest turn out to be a Solomon. Do not think thou art an impure sinner: though a gnat, thou mayest become a lion. God raises the monotheist out of the dualist, the faithful out of the faithless, and the devotee out of the sinner.

According to a tradition of the Prophet, all beings were created out of Darkness, but each took in Light according to

its capacity, and thus became luminous. Hence all beings are sparks of the Divine Light, and their luminosity is derived from It. Now one can fully understand the sacred verse: "God is the Light of heaven and earth."

Thou-ness and I-ness pertain to our world. They do not exist in the region of the Beloved. He is the one Reality: futile is the assertion of any existence but His.

Do all your works for His service, not in the hope of gaining heaven or shunning hell. He who aspires to work in His service should be careful of the purity of his motives. An act without pure motive cannot soar from the region of sham to the sphere of service. A prayer worth the name is one performed with the fervour of the heart, and not with the lips only. Khwaja Ahmad had a vision of God, who told him: "Ahmad, all men ask Me for something, save Bayazid who asks for Myself alone."

The Divine treasury is too full of prayers already. Put in a grain of humble devotion if you can.

To work for show, and desire the rank of a saint, is not the mark of piety. Thy deeds are all tainted with desire. Purity consists in the spirit of service, not in avarice. The one is not compatible with the other. But we want bribes to serve the Lord.

Service is an essential duty for the disciple. Its gains are superior to those of worship. It kills the desire nature; it breeds humility and good manners; it destroys pride, impurity and inertia, quickens the soul and illumines the inner and the outer man.

They asked a Great One, "How many ways are there to God?" He said "There are as many ways as there are atoms in the universe. But the best and the shortest is service. I have reached the goal by treading this path, and recommend it to my disciples."

*Rules of Service*: To put aside one's own desires, to render oneself agreeable to others, and to regard one's powers and possessions as intended for the use of others. As the wealthy are to serve with their wealth and the learned with their knowledge—so the disciple is to use *all* his activities for the service of others.

A certain Great One was told that the chief of a certain town spent the whole night in prayers. He replied that the poor fellow had missed the way and undertaken the work of others. On being questioned again, he added that that man's path of duty lay in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, comforting the distressed, and fulfilling the wants of the needy; and that keeping up all night in prayer was the duty of a recluse. Each man ought to work according to his position in life.

The value of a disciple's act lies in his motive. The motive is to the act as life is to the body and light to the eye. As the body without life or the eye without light is useless, so the acts of a disciple without a pure motive are mere forms. A valid motive arises from purity, as rays from the sun and sparks from the flame. It is said that the motive of a man is according to his knowledge and wisdom. If desire and love of the world predominate in the heart of a man, all his acts will be worldly—even his prayers and fasts. If desire and love of heaven predominate in his heart, all his acts will be heavenly—even his eating and sleeping. Again there are others of loftier aspiration, caring neither for earth nor for heaven, but for God only. All acts done by such men will be purely divine.

The daily routine of a disciple in the absence of his Teacher, should be such as to secure purity of heart, whether by prayer, sacred study, mutterings or meditation. The secret of prayer is inexpressible. When the disciple, renounc-

ing separateness, stands for prayer in a mood of self-surrender, his body ranks with *Kaba's* shrine, his heart with *Arsh* (the Divine Throne) and his spirit sees the Vision Divine.

The devotee mostly prays with the fire of love without observing external forms, takes all devotees as one, and does not stigmatize any man with the brand of infidelity or damnation. In the state of prayer, one merged in the Divine cannot be conscious of anything else; as Ali, while praying, was operated upon and an arrow drawn out of his thigh, but he did not feel it.

God never made anything so precious as the heart of His servant because it is there that He treasured up the wealth of His wisdom: "I cannot be contained in heaven or earth, but I am contained in the heart of my faithful Servant."

What is Service?—To be resigned to the Divine Will without a murmur. A Servant is he who does not think of wages, and has been liberated from the bonds of desire. He who serves God for wages is the servant of wages, not of God.

There is a treasure buried in the heart of the knower. It is Love. A single jewel out of it is worth a thousand heavens. The guardian of heaven is an angel named Rizwan, whereas the guardian of the treasure of Love is God Himself.

Know that thy merit is measured by what thou seekest. If thou worshippest to obtain heaven or avoid hell, thou worshippest thy own desires. If thou seekest or fearest an object, thou art the worshipper of that object. Thy real value depends on what is in thy heart. If thy heart is attached to God, thou art a divine man.

Thou walkest every morning to office and comest back at dusk. Where is the difference between thee and the fire-worshipper and the Jew? Thy prayers are for increase of wealth, and thy pilgrimages for popular approbation. All

thy acts are similarly tainted with name and form. The real end of life is yet veiled from thee.

Khwaja Bayazid was asked, "What is the way to God?" He replied "When *thou* hast vanished on the Way, *then* thou hast come to God." Mark this: if one attached to the Way cannot see God, how can one attached to self see God?

When the Sun of Divine Knowledge rises, all modes of knowledge become ignorance; when Divine aspiration appears, all desires melt away.

## THREE WAYS OF PRAYER

### *By Francisco de Osuna*

(A Spanish Franciscan monk and contemplative of the 16th century, who did much to popularize mystic theology in Spain.)

The first form or manner of prayer is vocal, according to which we say that they who recite the Divine office pray, as also do they that say any prayers whatsoever, pronouncing them with the lips in praise of the Lord. . . .

The second manner of prayer is that within the heart, wherein the mouth pronounces no words vocally, but the heart speaks with the Lord, and we ask Him within ourselves for all that of which we have need. Then, as in a secret place, with none hearing us, we speak to the Lord, and are alone with Him; and here his favors are wont to be greater, for we speak as it were in the ear of God. . . .

The third manner of prayer is called mental or spiritual, whereby the highest part of our soul in the highest purity and affection is raised to God upon the wings of desire and holy aspiration strengthened by love. The greater is this love, the fewer are the words it has, and the more comprehensive are those words, and the more effective; for love, if it be true love, seeks not tedious and subtle reasonings, but works great things in silence, knowing that if it withdraws itself from the creatures and take shelter in God, it will be unreservedly re-

ceived by Him, the more so according as it is the more completely and fervently recollected . . . The greater is the conformity between him who prays and the Lord to whom he prays, the more acceptable will be the prayer; so that as the Father is in Himself pure spirit and has nothing that is of the body, our prayer will be the more welcome to Him the farther it is withdrawn from the imagination and even from the thoughts of the heart. For these cannot be so high as not to be full low by comparison with the Lord, whereas the desires that embrace God in His essence and without the intermediary of bodily parts, and the love that has no care for words, these pray to God with the greatest purity and in the closet and most spiritual way; for the soul says not that it prays save that prayer in the Song of Songs: My Beloved is mine and I am His. . .

That which God can do for His lover beyond this is to give Himself to him and that which man can do further is to give himself to God; we cannot, however, do this last without His grace . . . It is to be observed, moreover, that this self-giving of man to God, and of God to man, is a gift so perfectly given that when it is given, God seems to be wholly and entirely in man. I mean that, did faith not enlighten the man who possesses God, he might almost say that within himself is comprehended the whole of God, and that apart from him He is not. At times the righteous soul sees itself so full of God, that the narrowness of its bosom seems to confine His Presence, though, in fact, He is without limit. The gift which in the giving of themselves recollected souls offer at times to God, is likewise so abundant that for themselves they keep nothing; in this way they lose their free choice and their will, and so entirely are they mindful of God and given up to Him that they are as forgetful of themselves as though they were not.

# THE LADY AND THE "HEATHEN"*

*By Frances Parkinson Keyes*

It was on the good ship Insulinde, bound from Batavia to Colombo, that I caught myself humming one day,

"From Greenland's icy mountains,
From India's coral strand"

and remembered, with a sudden pleased surprise, that the second and most famous stanza of that greatest of all missionary songs went somewhat like this:

"What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle,
Where every prospect pleases
And only man is vile;
In vain with lavish kindness
The gifts of God are strown;
The heathen in his blindness
Bows downs to wood and stone."

I have been to "Ceylon's isle," and felt the softness of its spicy breezes, and gazed upon its pleasing prospects, and beheld the lavish kindness with which the gifts of God are strown. But I did not feel that these gifts were in vain or that any man I saw was vile; and though I have seen the heathen bowing down to wood and stone—as my grandmother, no less than the writer of that hymn, would have expressed it—I should put it in a different way. And I hope when I have finished that you will agree with me, and feel that you understand and approve the way I have put it.

If I could take only one drive in a tropical country, I believe that I should choose the drive from Colombo to Kandy; for here, in the space of a few hours, can be seen a greater variety of scenery rich in concentrated beauty, of vegetation,

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*Compiled from "Coral Strands," an article by Mrs. Keyes which appeared in the "Good Housekeeping" Magazine. The author is the wife of the Junior Senator from New Hampshire to the Senate of the United States, and not long ago completed a trip around the world.

and of humanity than can be seen in double or treble that time in any other place with which I am familiar. Ceylon is not, like Java, the land of one native people; it is the land of many native peoples, and representatives of all go to and fro on this road—Singhalese, Kandyans, Moors, Malays, Tamils, each race wearing its own distinctive dress. The fez, the turban, the gay handkerchief doing service as a cap, the graceful scarf, the horn-like comb, bob side by side upon adjacent heads. Many of these people are carrying umbrellas, not, as one might suppose, to keep off the burning light, but as a sign of respectability.

Tea, rice, and rubber can all be seen in the process of growth and cultivation along this road. Bricks are lying out in the sun to dry, baked by this natural process. Cocoanuts are drying, too, split in halves, showing snowy-white semi-circles. All these products represent untold comfort and wealth. "The palm is a good friend to the Singhalese, who declares that it so loves human beings, that it pines and dies when out of the sound of the human voice, and that it will not flourish unless you walk under it and talk under it," writes Bella Sidney Woolf in her delightful and valuable book, "How to See Ceylon." "It is said, too, that it has as many uses as the days of the year." Some idea of these manifold uses of the cocoanut we were able to form even in that one day's drive; for, of course, the houses in the little villages we passed were made from the palm, and the tiny shops were full of edible portions, but I must confess that the white beauty of the severed discs made even more impression on me than its domestic and commercial importance.

Other impressions, too, crowded rapidly upon us: Tiny shrines appeared scattered at frequent intervals along the way; Bible Rock shaped like a great volume crowning a mountain, loomed in the distance. We passed the famous

botanical garden at Peradeniya, to which, fortunately, we were to return again later on; and came into Kandy in the cool of the evening, just when it is most beautiful. The sun was shimmering over the smooth little lake built by the last King of Kandy, and turning to tawny gold the broken arch on the little island where he used to immolate his wives if they proved refractory. The tom-toms were beating for the evening service at the Temple of the Tooth, that famous shrine of Buddhism at the farther end of the lake, but no other sound fell on the sentient air. The green hills closed down around the water and around the little city which encircled it, and the sky closed down on the hills. Then it was night.

The temples in Kandy are and must always remain the greatest attraction of the place. We visited them first by daylight: the Nata Dewara, on the grounds of which are a sacred bo-tree, spreading its great branches, which have never been cut, in splendid shade, and a number of small shrines, one of them containing a huge, recumbent Buddha; and the Temple of the Tooth, gorgeous with frescoes of scarlet and yellow, with an oriental library in its rotunda where the holy books of Buddha, formed of strips of dried talipot leaves on which the writing is traced with an iron stylus, are preserved in covers of wrought silver encrusted with gems. Every shrine was sweet with offerings of frangipani flowers, plucked from their stems. Noticing the enormous number of pilgrims who were going to and fro, we were not surprised to learn that the great festival of the Singhalese New Year was at hand, that some of the pilgrims had come even from distant Burmah, and that the following night the temple lights would burn till dawn, and the sacred relic of the tooth, alleged to have belonged to Buddha, from which the temple takes its name, would be shown.

Hesitating lest we might be thought guilty of curiosity

untempered by reverence, we asked if we might see something of the ceremony and were assured that we might. Even then, the boys, with wild memories of stories of fanatic antagonism toward Christians, leaping through their minds, did not feel entirely happy to have me make the attempt. But having been strangely impressed with the gentleness and courtesy of all the people with whom I had come in contact, I insisted that we had no cause for alarm. And I was right. I noticed, as we drew near the shrine of the tooth, that several pilgrims glanced at our feet to see if we had taken off our shoes—as, of course, we had; but we did not receive so much as an unkind look, and more than once the crowds parted to allow us to obtain a glimpse of some treasure hidden from view, or to press forward, even out of turn.

We returned first to the Nata Dewara, where the myriad tiny candles, burning before each shrine, illumined it to jewel-like radiance and cast flickering shadows on the open spaces of the courtyard beyond the dense shade of the bo-tree. Then crossing the street, we walked with extreme caution that we might not tread upon the prostrate forms of beggars clustered about the steps, sleeping calmly on the hard stones, or soliciting alms in a soft, whining monotone. We passed the entrance with its "guard stones" of elephants, and the moat where the tortoises bask; and, ascending the stone stairway, paused at the beautiful entrance to make our offering to the yellow-robed priest who stood there extending an immense salver of wrought brass. The tom-toms were beating in the inner courtyard, and it was thronged with pilgrims; but moving very slowly through their midst, we followed our guide up another gloomy stairway to an upper shrine, where, in a blaze of light, a small, exquisite, crystal figure of Buddha was displayed. Then, descending again, we threaded our way across the courtyard and entered the

door leading to the narrow stairway by which the shrine of the tooth is reached.

It was very dark, except for the occasional flash of candle or lantern, and it was stifling hot, the impact of perspiring, crowded bodies and the heavy scent of the frangipani blossoms which the pilgrims carried in their hands adding to the sultriness of the tropic night. For moments at a time we could not move at all, and even after we had mounted the stairs, there was a long passageway to traverse before we reached the silver and ivory doors leading to the sanctuary. When these opened to permit a server bearing food on a tray to emerge, but not to allow any to enter, we were flattened with a grinding pressure against the wall as he passed. At last, however, when we had almost lost hope of penetrating to the shrine, we were suddenly admitted. On either side of golden bars were set golden candelabra, and two priests in yellow robes were standing; behind the bars of gold, we saw the golden *Karanduah*, encrusted with gems—the outer casket of the tooth. The tooth lies upon folds of red silk in the last of five *Karanduahs* which are slowly removed, one after another, to expose it to view; and in that strange and gorgeous chamber, crowded with worshippers, tense, reverent, and exalted, dim with mysticism, fragrant with perfume, we touched —vaguely and uncomprehendingly, but none the less surely— the hem of the garment of the East.

We ate our final luncheon in Kandy at the bungalow, sitting at a table gorgeous with coral-colored sprays of *Amherstia nobilis*, and half a dozen varieties of tropical fruits lavishly and lusciously displayed on tall dishes of wrought silver; then we started back toward Colombo. When we reached the city, the native shops were all closed, and the great open park by the sea coast was thronged with holiday makers. And—what concerned us even more closely—the big

ship flying the stars and stripes which was to take us on our way was already in the harbor, so that delightful luncheon was not only our farewell festivity in Ceylon, but in the Orient.

I caught my last glimpse of it through my porthole window, which encircled the scene before me as a frame does a picture: the black shape of four ships anchored in the harbor against a crimson sky; over all, a crescent moon. And now, after days of gliding over glassy seas, the coast of Italian Somaliland, in Africa, snow-white with sand, precipitous with cliffs, gleaming with sunny heat—is already in sight. I have been in the Far East for eight months—long enough to know how short a time that is; long enough to resolve to come back at the first possible opportunity, to go to all the places which I could not visit this time; long enough to have learned far more than I have seen; and I think the consciousness of what this new knowledge meant to me came to me most overpoweringly in Ceylon, where the breezes are so soft, and the prospects are so pleasing, and the gifts of God are strown with such lavish kindness.

It came to me, as I sat at evening service at Kandy in the Church of England—which corresponds to our Episcopal church at home. The curate was a Singhalese; his face shone dark above his vestments as he conducted the services; there were many others of his race in the choir, and others still, both men and women in the congregation. We all recited the Apostles' Creed together, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth; and in Jesus Christ, His Only Son, Our Lord . . ." The bishop, a Colonial with years of faithful service behind him, was sitting in his high carved chair near the altar where the cross gleamed golden through the dusk, and the clergyman, an earnest, vivid, young Englishman but recently come to the Orient, was preaching

a sermon on the divinity of Christ—the divinity in which we had just expressed our belief as we recited the creed. Then suddenly, through the doors open to admit the soft air, came the sound of the beating of the tom-tom; and, involuntarily glancing in the direction whence the sound was heard, I saw on my right a temple illumined for the festival of the New Year, and pilgrims ascending its steps—the same pilgrims who had made way that I might enter their sanctuary, and whose worship, at the same time and so close to the same place where I was worshipping, disturbed neither curate nor bishop nor preacher. And in a flash as blinding as those temple lights, I realized that while to my grandmother, who first taught me about Ceylon, those "heathen bowing down to wood and stone" would have seemed "vile," I knew that they were the followers of a great and ancient faith, different from my own, worshipping in their holy place. I should have been glad, of course, had they been worshipping in mine, like the curate and the choir boys and the congregation about me. I admire and revere the noble men and women, Christian missionaries, who are giving them an opportunity to do so as soon as they will. But, meantime, I know that they are seeking salvation no less surely than I am. "There are more roads than one to heaven, perhaps more heavens than one."

We need other phases of consciousness with regard to the Orient, too, of course: the realization that while we always hurry, it never does, and that we simply beat our heads against a stone wall when we try to hasten it; the realization that it sets tranquillity above achievement, wisdom above knowledge, courtesy above riches, and self-control above all—in short, a more thorough acquaintance with the psychology of the nations which we criticise without understanding. But without the feeling of tolerance and respect for the oriental's viewpoint, religious and otherwise, as the foundation of our

friendship with the Orient, we shall not make that friendship deep and lasting; and I know how much we need that friendship, which is ours, I believe, for the taking, if we will only take it right.

"The permanent peace of the World," writes Dr. Sunderland in "The New Orient," "depends upon peace between the Orient and the Occident. And that, as I have said before, depends upon acquaintance and friendship between the two . . . One of the most amazing and regrettable facts of modern history is the arrogance and semi-contempt with which the people of Europe and America have long looked down upon Asia, as if her people were inferior, as if her place in the world's civilization and the world's achievement were insignificant. But what are the real facts? Let me go a little into detail. She is the mother of the world's most important races, including the races of Europe; she is the greatest mother of nations; she is the most important mother of languages; she is the mother of the alphabet and of literature; she is the mother of astronomy, mathematics and navigation, and of most of the arts and industries of the world; she is the mother of the world's highest civilizations, having given to mankind its first great centers of enlightenment many centuries before any part of Europe had emerged from barbarism, and when civilization came to permeate Europe, it was from Asia that it came. What is of immense importance, too, Asia is preeminently the mother of religion. All the great historic religions of the world are of Asiatic origin, not one arose from any other continent. Europe, herself, received both her Christianity and her Bible from Asia. Moses, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Paul and Jesus were all Asiatics. Where, then, is there any ground for Europe's pride or arrogance when comparing herself with Asia?"

I have learned, in these past eight months, the truth of

every one of those statements; the truth also that this high degree of civilization, this deep and perfect culture, does not exist in the past alone; it exists in the present and in the future. If I have been able to pass some of the knowledge on to you, I am glad, for knowledge, like happiness, reaches its fulfillment only when it is shared.

## THE PRAYERFUL SPIRIT

*By M. K. Gandhi*

(A message to his Indian followers)

One word that I would like to leave with you, doubly afflicted people of this afflicted land, is that you will lose yourselves in the ocean of the submerged humanity about you. Because it is submerged, the problem is simple. The way is straight, even though it is narrow, and you must treat it in the right and prayerful spirit. We have been praying here for three days. Prayer brings a peace, a strength and a consolation that nothing else can give. But it must be offered from the heart. When it is not offered from the heart, it is like the beating of a drum, or just the vocal effect of the throat sounds. When it is offered from the heart, it has the power to melt mountains of misery. Those who want are welcome to try its power.

As food is necessary for the body, prayer is necessary for the soul. A man may be able to do without food for a number of days, but believing in God, man cannot, should not live a moment without prayer. You will say that we see lots of people living without prayer. I dare say they do, but it is the existence of the brute which, for man, is worse than death. I have not the shadow of a doubt that the strife and quarrels with which our atmosphere is so full to-day, are due to the absence of the spirit of true prayer. You will demur to the statement, I know, and contend that millions of Hindus, Mus-

sulmans and Christians do offer their prayers. It is because I had thought you would raise this objection that I used the words "true prayer." The fact is, we have been offering our prayers with the lips, but hardly ever with our hearts, and it is to escape, if possible, the hypocrisy of the lip prayer that we in the Ashram repeat every evening the last verses of the second chapter of the Bhagavad-Gita. The condition of the "Equable in Spirit" that is described in those verses, if we contemplate them daily, is bound slowly to turn our hearts towards God. If you students would base your education on the true foundation of a pure character and pure heart, there is nothing so helpful as to offer your prayers every day truly and religiously.

## REPORT

It was indeed a welcome from the heart which the members of the Vedanta Centre extended to Swami Paramananda on his return to Boston May 19th, after a seven months' absence in the Far West, the Far East, the Malay States, Burmah and India. There are no friends more old or more tried than the Boston friends, many of whom have been with the work since its first small beginnings at St. Botolph Street, and they never fail to express to the Swami their loyalty and devotion. Although the Swami's sojourn was cut short by the imperative need for his presence at the Ashrama where the final touches are being put upon the Temple of the Universal Spirit, he poured into the Services and Classes for the two weeks that he was here, such spiritual vitality that all were revivified by it.

Besides the regular Services, there were many interviews and one social evening when moving pictures were shown of the Ashrama, and of the recent trip in the Orient. The Swami hopes to be again in Boston in the Fall. The Temple of the

Universal Spirit is to be dedicated July 22nd and a cordial invitation is extended to all for this occasion. Not a few are already planning to make the trip from Atlantic to Pacific, in order to be present, and it is hoped that many more will join their number, for seldom indeed, in the history of the world has such a Temple dedicated to the one God of all faiths been consecrated.

* * * *

After a brief but eminently successful stay at his Centre in Boston, Swami Paramananda made a short lecture tour through the middle West. He delivered his first lecture at Columbus, Ohio, spoke twice in Cincinnati, several times in Louisville, Ky., and again in Chicago. He also visited Grand Rapids and closed his tour at Denver. He met with a warm reception everywhere, but the greatest enthusiasm was shown in Louisville. A friend telling of his visit there writes:

"Louisville turned out to show the Swami how much they appreciated his message. A large audience heard him on Wednesday night. All the chairs that could be found were used and many people had to stand in the hall and outside round the doors. The Swami spoke very forcefully and the response was wonderful. At the close the audience seemed reluctant to leave the hall. On Thursday morning the hall was filled again, which was very unusual for a morning meeting."

The Swami reached Ananda-Ashrama on June 13th and has been strenuously active ever since his arrival. Besides the two regular Sunday Services at the Ashrama, he is delivering a public lecture every Sunday evening in Los Angeles. He is also holding a mid-week Class in Los Angeles, and another in Pasadena, both at the branch Libraries connected with the Ashrama. Every day brings a number of visitors and interviews. The hours that remain are filled with the unceasing tasks incident to supervising the completion of the Temple of the Universal Spirit rising on the hill behind the Cloister.

VOLUME XVII. NUMBER 8

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

# VEDANTA MONTHLY

# Message of the East



October, 1928

## Infinite in Man

Issued by

ANANDA-ASHRAMA

LA CRESCENTA, L. A. CO., CALIF.

(Extension of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, Established 1909)

Entered as second class matter, Feb. 14, 1924, at the Post Office at La Crescenta, Calif., Box 85, under act of March 3, 1879.

Accepted for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized June 17, 1921.

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Published Monthly Except in August and September

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*MESSAGE OF THE EAST*

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

"Light shall come again from the East."
—Tyndall.

Published Monthly except in August and September

Vol. XVII. October, 1928 No. 8

# SUNSET ON THE GANGES

*By Swami Paramananda*

SUNSET on the Ganges!
Such a color, such a beauty
I have never seen! I have never seen!
Tinted ripples, blue and amber,
Glistening foam as beads of silver
Dancing at sunset on Ganges' bosom serene.
Such a painting is only seen in dream;
Such a calm is only felt within,—
only within.
Sunset on the Ganges!
Such a color, such a beauty
I have never seen! I have never seen!
Setting sun hath no reflector
so serene—so clean.
Flame and water mixed together
never before have I seen!
never before have I seen!
Sunset on the Ganges is a holy sight—
Never before such wonder have I seen!

(Written on recent trip to India on steamer just before reaching Calcutta. Sung at the dedication of the Open Air Temple, at Ananda-Ashrama, August 30th, 1928, by Madame Concorde Brodeur.)

## UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

By aspiring to a similitude of God in goodness or love, neither man nor angel ever transgressed or shall transgress.—*Lord Bacon.*

Our souls if not awake to God's most holy truth, are not awake.—*Jalal-ud-Din-Rumi.*

As the suraya flower floats in the water, so does the heart exist in a pure body; but let it not be forgotten that the root of the flower holds to the ground, and that the heart of man depends upon his conduct in life.—*Paniti Sastra* (*Javanese*).

A man can even here be with God, so long as he bears God within him. We should be able to see without sadness our most holy wishes fade like sun flowers, because the sun above us still forever beams, eternally makes new, and cares for all, and man must not so much prepare himself for eternity, as plant eternity in himself: eternity serene, pure, full of depth, full of light, and of all else.—*Richter.*

The worst place for a boat is in the shallows. The ship is safest out on the mighty deep with the measureless fathoms beneath its keel. The soul is safest out on the great deeps with God. Launch out into the deep of faith, launch out into the deep of sacrifice, launch out into the deep of service! Give yourself entirely to God! Hold back nothing! Take up the line that ties you to the shore! Lift the anchor that holds you in some little human harbor and launch out into the deep!—*James I. Vance.*

The splendidest of all thy deeds is that one by doing which thou meanest to take a right course; the best of all thy words, "To God the glory!"—*Meditations of Ma'arri.*

# INFINITE IN MAN

*By Swami Paramananda*

This subject may seem a very large order to one who is overwhelmed with his finite nature. Even the most intelligent among us recognize the limitations of body, mind and brain. How, then, can we assume that the man before us, human and failing, can ever hope to claim to be related to the Infinite? Yet, for him to find his relationship—not in a theoretical way, but directly with the Supreme should be the great goal of his life, his most profound study. And this means that when he goes through his round of physical duties, and even when he is confronted with difficulties, he will seek to remind himself that he is part of that indivisible Whole.

Nowhere was this theme discussed, studied and contemplated as it was in India. The Hindus wanted to get away from the noise, turmoil and turbulence of the world, from those things which cause affliction, yet do not allow us to think of the higher and deeper things of life; so they entered into the depths of silence. That was the origin of the "Forest Books," as they called them,—the forest books of wisdom, and I am going to venture to give you some lessons from these great Scriptures of the Indo-Aryans.

Enter into thy closet—Christ said—shut the doors, and then pray silently. We find this exemplified in the life and aspiration of those ancient people. They sought Truth for no other reason than for the sake of Truth Itself, recognizing It as the greatest factor in human existence, without which man's life is very much impoverished, so they made it their first and foremost thought, seeking with all the ardour of their soul to be related with It, transcending and transcending their finite nature until it altogether melted away before the glory of the Infinite, just as ice melts before the sun.

Whenever these Indo-Aryan sages spoke to their disciples in regard to the grandeur of the soul, they were at the same time tremendously puzzled as to how they could convey the significance of it to a person who was seeing and perceiving things only with the senses.

Thus we find this conversation between a youth and one of these teachers to whom he had come for instruction: "Sire," said the youth, "teach me about this Infinite. You say that It is vast and unbounded. Tell me something more definite that I may comprehend: Where is It? How can I find It? Is It within the body? If so then why am I not able to know It?" The abstract Truth has always to be conveyed to the minds of people by concrete forms; that was the origin of parables. Christ's teaching is filled with them. Therefore the teacher said: "My boy, I shall try to give you a living illustration. Do you see that *nigrodha* tree standing there? Go and fetch me one of the fruit lying beneath it." The boy did as he was told and the master said: "Break it." "Sire, it is broken." "What do you find within?" "A large seed, Sire." "Break that and tell me what there is inside." And so the boy went on taking off layer after layer till he came to the invisible centre. "What do you find at the heart of the seed?" enquired the teacher. "I find nothing, Sire," the boy replied. "Yet there," the sage explained, "where you see nothing, lies the real germ out of which this great tree has come into existence."

But the boy was not satisfied. This also seemed to him a riddle, that a big tree could spring out of what seemed like nothing; yet he was interested, so he said: "Master, tell me more about that life within." "Very well," said the sage, "bring to me a glass of water and a lump of salt, place the salt in the water and come back in the morning."

This the disciple did and returned the next day full of keen desire to know how a glass of water and a lump of salt could illustrate the Vast and Unlimited. As soon as he came, the teacher said: "Where is the lump of salt that you put in the water?" The boy looked but naturally could not find it. "Taste the water from the surface; what is its flavor?" "It is full of salt, Sire." "Taste it from the middle." "It is still full of salt." "Taste it from the bottom." "That also is full of salt." "My son," the sage replied, "as this water is filled with salt which you taste yet cannot see, similarly this whole universe is pervaded and permeated by That which is invisible to the eyes." This was convincing. He sensed the salt, he tasted it, yet it was not perceptible to his mortal sight. Thus he was shown the connection between the finite and the Infinite.

It is only when our subtle intellect is quickened with intensity of feeling that we begin to know about that great Absolute. We cannot, however, advance in that knowledge so long as we allow our mind to remain buried in material desires, in selfishness, greed, avarice, jealousy, hatred, narrowness, or any of those elements which spring from the flesh. By continuing to cling to them, we keep on depriving ourselves of that which sustains us. The Bible tells us, all Bibles tell us—I cannot make any exception—that we must become like unto our Origin,—be perfect as our Father which is in Heaven, or, as the Indo-Aryan sages reminded their children: Know that there is an infinite, unbounded, invincible, indivisible, unalterable *Purusha* (Being), and that Being exists in thee. How does it exist? "As from the blazing fire burst thousands of sparks like unto fire, so also, gentle youth, do the various beings spring forth from the Imperishable and return thither again."

Let us pause for a moment. We do not think in these

terms. If some wise man, or a Christ comes and tells us that we are the possessors of Infinitude, we feel puzzled. If we are cynical we may say, "This man is mad." Many people thought that Christ was. Whenever such a voice speaks, we are apt to think that it sounds the note of extremes, not recognizing that it is we who have lost a sense of balance and proportion. "Know thyself; thou art That." A statement like this is dazzling to us and we feel that we must go slowly. We begin to analyze: If we have any connection whatsoever with that vast unbounded Life—immortal and indestructible—why is it we are afflicted, why are we conscious of limitation? The trouble is, we are thinking of one aspect of our being, they are speaking of another, and that other is within us. Just as the sword is in the sheath, and the germ of life in the fruit, so in man there is this inner Spirit concealed by a shell, an outer covering. The thing is how to find it and not be prejudiced by the exterior. We are prejudiced. If I should ask you, "Who are you?" and put down your answer side by side with the reflections of the great teachers, I should find at once that it was influenced by your mental concept of the physical. We are thinking thoughts and making admissions constantly about ourselves which are neither becoming, nor representative of our true nature. When a man forms a selfish concept of his own entity, he feels that he must think of himself in selfish terms, must assert his rights and be aggressive in order to protect his interests; but by this he is really lowering himself. Of course we have to speak of these things with a certain reservation. The average person does not think in this way. He might hold that I was teaching false philosophy.

Spiritual grandeur is not a question of pretending. The point is we must know our own value. From what point of

view are we speaking? From what point of view are we acting, and from what point of view are we influencing the world consciousness? That is the question, and it is the thing which determines our destiny. We are thinking of the finite in connection with ourselves and that makes us feel suffocated. We centre ourselves upon some small interest; we dwell on those things which are connected only with our own personal happiness, with the life of the flesh, till by reason of our increasing limitations, we impose upon ourselves every reason for suffering. I do not know whether I convey the idea to you; but this narrowing down of consciousness is the real cause of our afflictions. No matter how much we have in the way of material wealth, life becomes a weight upon us when we take it in this way. "What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world . . . ?" Christ gave this warning for all humanity, not for a little portion of it. "And what can a man give in exchange for his soul?" That is the great challenge, and it is where we find the clash between the finite and the Infinite.

Can we ever be satisfied—being reminded constantly that we are bound? If we go out, we may catch cold; if we do this or that we may get hurt; if we have an impulse to help some one, we must not do so because we shall have less for ourselves. Such thoughts we consider wise for self-preservation, but they spring from a lower source, and until we can break these fetters, we cannot come in touch with a Higher. This is done through understanding—understanding our own worth, as I have said, not in the terms of materiality,—how much money we have put away in the bank, or what a name we have acquired in the struggle of physical life,—not that; but our true worth, our relationship to God, the Absolute, the Infinite. It is consciousness of this, that gives man the power to govern his own destiny, to conduct

himself through all the various passages of life, and to aid others. He establishes a standard for living.

You may say, "My mind does not go so far; I am concerned only with what will give me a good, healthy body and a certain amount of peace and happiness." But a certain amount is not going to satisfy us. There is within us a Divine Spark—we are part of that great Effulgence; It is our heritage. Until we know it consciously, however, and are able to put it into practice, we have not yet unfolded our entire nature; we have not wholly developed. You may imagine that such consciousness will make us aggressive. If man suddenly becomes aware that he carries within him the Infinite Spirit, will he not become domineering and seek to rule over others? It works in the opposite way. Knowledge—wisdom—makes a person very mellow. Harmfulness in the world does not come from people who are great. Small people may misunderstand us, they may harm us, we may fear to approach them, but the men of genius, the men of perception, those who have contacted in some way or another this inner Spirit, are very humble. It is not a calculated humility,—that they give a little smile here and a little pretense there in order to gain popularity; it is something that springs from within, spontaneously, and it is that spontaneous something which we must gain before we can find our true Self-expression.

We want to be shown what we call miracles and mysteries. We are always seeking for signs, as if any sign could convince us. What more do we require than that we have life, that we have intelligence, are endowed with all these fine faculties? The point is, are we making the best of them? Do we know what is right? Do we know the worth of love, and have we learned to be governed by the instinct of love and to banish all hatred from our hearts? Realization of

the Infinite is not a dogma or a doctrine written down in a book; it is a consciousness we have to unfold. Man has gradually to break through his finite, limited barriers, and at the outset it seems like a very difficult task. He may feel that it is too much for him; but nobody else is going to do it for him. We do not depend on others to eat, drink or sleep for us, so why should we in this? One of the questions that often comes up is that if Christ realized that Infinite, if He brought salvation to the world, why was it not accomplished for all time? If the great saviours, saints and sages bring wisdom why is it not sufficing for us? It would be if we only would walk on the same path, if we would make our hearts like theirs. We cannot, however, turn our eyes in another direction and expect to find their vision.

"That Effulgent Being, He is within man and He is without man." It is not that we should condemn the flesh. I do not want you to go away with the idea that in speaking of the Infinite, or the vast subtle life within, that I would have you ignore the physical life. It would be going to another extreme. "He exists both within and without. He is everywhere." When you have the perception to know that Great Being, innate, operating this whole mechanism of life—body, mind, senses, brain, heart,—every pulsation of our being, then you no longer go into the world of action unarmed and unprepared. You will have found a definite point of contact with the Source and this is what makes all the difference in our actions and in our dealings. Your own thought, your own understanding spirit can bring you untold success and protection. When you become a conscious instrument of that great Infinite, there is nothing that can hinder you. Through you this Light will radiate Itself into the world of life, into the hearts of men.

You may challenge this. You may say, "I have tried

but it does not work out. The times I have held the kindest thoughts and the most loving feelings, people have proved untrustworthy, have deceived me." This is to accept failure. It means that you have not yet the amount of conviction that you need. We should not put this matter on the basis of bargaining and bartering, practising an ideal with the one idea to see how much we can gain. The question is, from what point of view are we going to work? Shall we fasten our heart and mind, our interest and our aim on the flesh? Shall we depend on our muscle or on what operates our muscle? On the mental capacity we have, or on that which operates the mind? We must go deeper and deeper. To-day we have formed the habit of living very much on the surface, and see the result of this surface living! People smile when they don't feel like smiling, they say things they do not mean at all; it is causing a tremendous amount of misunderstanding, not only in the world at large, but in families. And what does it show? Emptiness—lack of faith. It means that we are not really thinking, that we are acting in a mechanical way as if we were machines; therefore we must cultivate a more profound attitude towards life, because the whole strength of man lies embedded within.

It is not that a few people who are pre-destined, come into the world with this power and because of it, rise to a great height; we all have it. There is not a soul who does not possess this inner strength. Has not the great Upanishad declared that we are like a spark from the Divine Fire? Nothing can extinguish that blazing flame. Emerson uses the same expression. He was a great student of the Eastern Scriptures. He tells us that every man possesses within himself the Divine Spark. Unfortunately we have forgotten it. We do not know that we have that Spark within us; we think our house is absolutely in the dark and that we must

borrow our light from others. There is a story of a man who actually did this. Coming home at nightfall, he found his fire had gone out. There was, however, a very dim lamp burning in his room, so he took this to light his steps and went forth to beg a fire brand from his neighbors. At first they all refused—some people have that habit; but finally one looked out at him and exclaimed: "Foolish man! Why are you going begging from door to door when in your own hand there is a light. You think that it is dim and insufficient, but I tell you that small flame has enough power to set this whole village ablaze. Go home and light your own fire. So he did, and no longer was he dwelling in the dark, no longer was he cold and suffering.

This is a hint that we can all take. We go from place to place, carrying a heavy heart, a mournful spirit, a despondent attitude, thinking that others are going to help us, that we shall be given a magic word which will make us prosperous and forever free. The only thing that the wise give us, however, is to show us what we truly have and are. Our little light may seem inadequate, but if we add fuel to it, it will blaze forth and all our darkness and sadness will vanish, as night vanishes before the light of the day.

"When He is seen who is both high and low, the fetters of the heart are broken, all doubts are cut asunder, and all *Karma* is destroyed." We have formed the habit of worshipping God only in churches or sanctuaries, but the man of wisdom finds Him everywhere. We speak of Him as Almighty and Omnipotent, but we do not put this idea into practice. We should try to see godliness and glory and all fine things even there where it is not so obvious, even in those who do not seem to manifest these attributes. "When we see Him in everything, all doubts are cut asunder and all bondage is destroyed." We do not have to struggle

against these limitations; they fall automatically. This vision, this glimpse of Truth, this spiritual effulgence does away with all that is detrimental; through it we feel remade and requickened.

"That stainless indivisible Brahman, pure Light of all lights; dwells in the innermost golden sheath—the core of the heart." "Indivisible," that, I think, is one of the most interesting expressions of the Upanishads, yet how little we feel its significance. We even try to partition off the sky line, we are so concerned in asserting our rights, in defining what belongs to us. Therefore it is good for us to think in the terms of the Infinite in order that we may not be merged in limited, worthless, selfish thoughts; when we follow the path of aggressiveness, we meet with reaction and experience a sense of failure. When, however, we base our hopes on these higher ideals, this can never happen, because then we shall be connected all the time with that which can never fail.

"He dwells in the innermost recess of our being." Thus the knowers of Truth find Him within—within—in the depth of our real being. "The sun does not shine there, nor the moon, nor the stars, nor do these lightnings shine there, much less this fire. When He shines, everything shines after Him; by His light all is lighted." Thus the Upanishads tell man that even the sun and moon cannot reveal That. All this glamour and glory of material life, they are nothing; it is because He shines that all these things shine after Him. What a wonderful lesson for us to learn! No matter how glorious we may become, or how much power may be bestowed upon us, let us never forget that all our strength and our blessings are dependent on that One. Even the sun draws its light from Him; and for us, to feel that we are a part of that Infinitude, to rely on It, to fasten our heart

upon It, is the highest wisdom, the only way of salvation, the banishing of darkness from this world of misery.

## WISE SAYINGS

*By Kwang-Tzu*

A man's proper truth is pure simplicity in its highest degree: without this pure sincerity one cannot move others; hence if one only forces himself to wail, however sadly he may do so, it is not real sorrow. If he forces himself to be angry, however he may seem to be severe, he excites no awe, if he forces himself to show affection, however he may smile, he awakens no harmonious reciprocation.

True grief, without a sound, is yet sorrowful; true anger, without any demonstration, yet awakes awe; true affection, without a smile, yet produces a harmonious reciprocation. Given this truth within, it exercises a spiritual efficacy without, and this is why we count it so valuable.

Wu-yo said, "The small man pursues after wealth, the superior man pursues after reputation. The way in which they change their feelings and alter their nature is different; but if they were to cast away what they do and replace it with doing nothing, they would be the same." Hence it is said, "Do not be a small man,—return and pursue after the heavenly in you. Be it crooked, be it straight, view the thing in the light of heaven as revealed in you. Look all around on every side of it, and as the time indicates, cease your endeavours. Be it right, be it wrong, hold fast the ring in yourself in which all conditions converge. Alone, by yourself, carry out your idea; ponder over the right way. Do not turn your course. Do not try to complete your righteousness; you will fail in what you do. Do not haste to be rich; do not follow after your perfection. If you do, you will lose the heavenly in you."

# LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR

*By St. Catherine of Siena*

(From her "Dialogue", dictated while in a state of ecstasy, and completed A. D. 1370)

. . . It is necessary to bear with others and practise continually love to one's neighbour, together with true knowledge of oneself. In this way will she (the soul) feel the fire of My love in herself, because love of her neighbour is developed out of love of Me—that is, out of that learning which the soul obtained by knowing herself and my Goodness in her. When, therefore, she sees herself to be ineffably loved by Me, she loves every rational creature with the self-same love with which she sees herself to be loved. And, for this reason, the soul that knows Me, immediately expands to the love of her neighbour, because she sees that I love that neighbour ineffably, and so, herself, loves the object which she sees Me to have loved still more.

She further knows that she can be of no use to Me and can in no way repay Me that pure love with which she feels herself to be loved by Me, and therefore endeavours to repay it through the medium which I have given her, namely, her neighbour, who is the medium through which you can all serve Me. For, as I have said to thee, you can perform all virtues by means of your neighbour, I having given you all creatures, in general and in particular, according to the diverse graces each has received from Me, to be ministered unto by you; you should therefore love them with the same pure love with which I have loved you. That pure love cannot be returned directly to Me, because I have loved you without being Myself loved, and without any consideration of Myself whatsoever, for I loved you without being loved by you . . . This love you cannot repay to Me, but you can pay it to my rational creature, loving your neighbour without

being loved by him and without consideration of your own advantage, whether spiritual or temporal, but loving him solely for the praise and glory of My Name, because he has been loved by Me.

Thus will you fulfill the commandment of the law, to love Me above everything, and your neighbour as yourselves.

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## THE LOTUS

*By Sister Devamata*

A lotus, golden-hearted,
Lying on an Indian lake;
Cool shadows in the waters round it,
Perfumed sweetness rising from its
pink-tipped petals,
A deep blue sky stretching in
domed vastness above it;
Shining sun-rays resting on it
Deepening the gold of its heart;
No wave or ripple,
No sound in the air,
Everywhere quietude and fragrant
stillness—
Thus does the lotus of the soul rest
On the calm waters of the Infinite,
When it remembers its true being.

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One prayeth that he may compass his desire; another how he may be rid of such a one. Pray that thou mayest so patiently bear with him, as that thou have no such need to be rid of him. Another, that he may not lose his child. Pray thou that thou mayst not fear to lose him. To this end and purpose let all thy prayer be, and see what will be the event.

—*Marcus Aurelius.*

# CAUCASIAN BUDDHISTS

A copy of the *Honolulu Star Bulletin* of recent date in its department "Timely Letters from the People" prints a most interesting letter concerning the initiation into the Buddhist Brotherhood of several individuals who sign themselves "The Caucasian Buddhists." The letter which speaks for itself is quoted in part:

"Although we were admitted to membership in the congregation of the Hongwanji Temple and accepted into the Brotherhood by ordained priests, it was with the distinct understanding that we were not indorsing any particular creed or dogma, but were merely signifying our acceptance of the general principles of religion, ethics and philosophy that were given to the world through Prince Siddhartha, known as The Buddha, and taught in India over 2400 years ago.

"The fact that we were admitted to the Brotherhood freely upon these conditions is the best evidence of the broad and tolerant spirit that characterizes this religion, even in its sectarian aspects. It is a fact that though there are many different sects among the Buddhists there are no narrow lines of demarkation and no insistence upon the acceptance of certain creeds or dogmas as the condition of salvation.

"The ceremony of initiation was wholly public, and we regarded it as simple, beautiful and symbolical. The obligation that we took was one that any right-thinking individual can readily indorse, if he knows the facts upon which it is based. It has the special merit of leaving us with our intellectual and spiritual liberty unimpaired.

"It is time that western people understood that there is nothing alien or even characteristically Oriental in the Buddhist philosophy of life. There is nothing that is incom-

patible with the highest ideals of western civilization, and much that would exert a redeeming influence upon the gross materialism of the age if it could be rightly applied. In England and on the continent of Europe there has been in recent years a re-awakening of interest in Buddhism, and many lodges have been formed and temples built among the white populations.

"Much has been made locally of the fact that we who joined the Buddhist Brotherhood here in Honolulu were Caucasians. In this connection it might be well to point out that fact that Buddhism is the only great religion that is distinctively Aryan, having originated in India, the starting point from which our own Indo-European branch of the Caucasian or white race spread westward into Europe. It is more directly and intimately the religion of our own race than any of the offshoots of Semitic origin that have been grafted with the paganism of the early Mediterranean tribes!

"It is the intention of those of us who have started this English section at the Hongwanji Temple here in Hawaii to welcome all who feel the need of a religion or a philosophy of life that is based upon simple common sense and that is in full accord with all that modern science has to teach. We shall be glad to welcome those who wish to study Buddhism and learn more about the theory of existence that explains the facts of life without the necessity of resorting to miracles. We shall be glad to point out to those who are in earnest the law that holds each individual responsible for his own acts under a universal relation of cause and effect, and to show the path by means of which each one may finally attain to complete freedom and happiness."

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The greater perfection a soul aspires after, the more dependent it is upon divine grace.—*Brother Lawrence.*

# CONSTRUCTIVE FORCE OF THOUGHT

*Indian Teaching of Yoga*

When an objectionable thought enters our mind the best way of putting it down is by evolving a strong current of an opposing thought. The stronger will destroy the weaker one. Even when the opposing current is not strong enough to destroy its enemy, in their struggle to repel each other we shall be left some respite to recover and return to the attack with redoubled vigor. When an enemy rouses evil passions in you, to think of him as your beloved friend is the best way to suppress them. If one person stirs in you a bad feeling, think of another which would awaken quite the opposite feeling. Every vicious and evil thought projected by a person is sure to recoil on him sooner or later with accumulated force. The natural law is that every current once set in motion will make a circuit and eventually come back to the starting place. Obstructing thoughts, therefore, should be carefully avoided.

The same result may be achieved by various other means. When a bad thought haunts a man's mind, he may avoid it by engaging himself in hard work, which will occupy all his attention and leave him no time to think of it. During such trials he should continue his work till the bad thought dies a natural death from want of nourishment. Men of great political or religious fame and others whose minds are incessantly engaged by some imminent problem are as a rule good men for their minds have no time to brood over bad thoughts. A sharp weapon is no doubt a very useful help, but it is at the same time capable of proving dangerous to the possessor when not properly handled. A powerful mind is such an instrument for good or bad.

A good thought is a virtue in itself and is as conducive to happiness and growth as a bad thought is a source of pain

and misery and is obstructive to growth. We should never try to remember an idea by associating it with a painful feeling. Painful thoughts do greater harm to the body than any physical injury. When a Yogi becomes well-established in loving thought it is said that others give up all enmities in his presence. The peaceful and loving thoughts of a Yogi have the power of shedding a tremendous influence on all those around him. The tiger and the lamb are said to play together in his presence, forgetting their natural enmity. When a powerful dynamo is working, susceptible objects brought within the sphere of action of that dynamo, are easily affected. Such a dynamo is a Yogi's mind, radiating its influence to a long distance. A person caught within the circle of its influence cannot help thinking harmoniously. When we are able to throw such an influence unconsciously around us, we may be said to have attained the power of non-injury, not hurting another even in thought, of loving all alike as our own self, as the essence of universal existence.

When the Yogi realizes the ideal of truth, whatever he says will come to pass. Whatever he thinks or desires will be attained. Without work he will enjoy the fruits of work; without desire he will command the highest happiness. His power over the forces of nature will be so great that if he wills the good of another, it will bring blessing to that person. If he wishes the cure of a disease, the disease will be no more. To acquire and utilize such a power of influencing others for the good and happiness of one's fellow-beings, thinking that one's own well-being is the well-being of others, is the highest truth in this world, and is akin to godliness.

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Know thyself! Whatever people may talk of you, do what you think is right. The wise man preserves in his own bosom the sacred flame that enlightens him.

—*Grecian Wisdom.*

# THE BLESSING OF FORGETFULNESS

*By Mildred Phillips*

The potency of right thought to build up the mental and spiritual structure of our being and of wrong thought to tear it down is known to us all.

As the physical body grows and increases its vigor with upbuilding and nourishing food so does our spiritual self develop as we nourish it with good and healthful thinking. The noxious sentiments of selfishness, expressed in fear, anger, jealousy, hatred, vanity, or self-conceit are as destructive to spiritual growth as poisonous food is destructive to the growth of the body.

Side by side with this potent force of right thought and as inseparable from it as shadow from substance is the power of forgetfulness, for although it seems to be a negative condition into which we allow ourselves to drift, it is really a cultivable power and in the same way that well-directed thought brings beneficent results so does forgetting bring true blessing with it.

It appears to be a negative state because it seems so easy to stop thinking of certain things and simply drop them from our mind. But is it so easy? Try it and see. At first it is quite impossible and all the aids that can be brought to help us will be needed. Many aids we bring, meant to help us to forget, prove too often to be merely reminders; but many outside conditions which tend to turn the flow of our mental current will be beneficial and will be necessary. The only way we can begin to forget is by filling the mind with other and stronger thoughts, thoughts of constructive value; then after this has been practised there will come a day when, if sad or irritating thoughts arise we can cause them to vanish by the action of our will; this is the heralding of the glad day when they will cease to arise at all.

If a man commits a blunder does it avail him anything to hold it in constant memory? Not at all. Going over and over it in the mind cannot undo it. Is it not the part of wisdom then to forget it since it cannot be remedied? Perhaps we have wronged someone who is soon removed from us by distance or by death. We somehow feel that by brooding over it we are helping to counteract it; that in some mysterious fashion we partially at least absolve ourselves from our sin by the constant attitude of repentance.

It seems as if the only doorway open to us by which we may retrieve our error is that of remorse and so day after day we scourge and flay ourselves thinking that in this way we are doing something to right the wrong which we have committed. It makes us wretched and unhappy and so it seems as if this continued pain and grief were our atonement. But is it atonement? Would we not in reality be doing far more to turn the ill we have done into good if we put it entirely out of our mind and devoted our mental energies to constructive effort? This is of course much more difficult; but should we not welcome the difficult thing? We feel the need of self-immolation. Then we should do the harder, braver thing—set aside the pain and grief on which we have come to love to dwell and turn the energies thus employed to better ends.

By retiring into the recesses of our sorrow do we render any good to any one? Never; to ourselves least of all. By making the effort to forget and definitely to put in place of sorrowing thought a cheerful mental attitude plus attentive regard for the conditions and problems of those nearest us we are helping them and ourselves as well.

We imagine our friend has wronged and ill-treated us. We love to brood over our wrong and continue to do so until it assumes gigantic proportions, until our sense of values

is utterly distorted and a friendship which is a rare and lovely treasure is broken beyond repair. If our mind had been trained wholesomely to forget and the idea of ill-treatment consigned to oblivion, the chances are that time would have unfolded the explanation, our own construction of character so painfully builded would be unimpaired and the friend in whom we took delight would delight us still.

By cultivating a salutary forgetfulness we are enabled to check the very beginnings of the impulses to fear, anger, jealousy and ill-will; and as the days go by, sometime we will find most unexpectedly that we have lost our tendency to indulge in those corroding emotions. The seemingly insignificant irritations which come into the day of every one will be readily consigned to the limbo of forgotten things, when once we have learned to assert our will against the tyranny of the tendency to irritability; and also little by little the larger forms of self-indulgent thought will be conquered.

It is no crime or misdemeanor for us or for our neighbor to commit a blunder, rather it is a source of wisdom and when we have learned the lesson is it not the part of good judgment to forget the mistake and to pass along our way with step more assured because of our added knowledge?

The things which lie behind us are never worth continual remembrance whether they be good or ill and especially those things which have brought us pain and sorrow because of former fault. Evidently the purpose for which each one of us is here is for individual development and unfoldment. This never has and never will come accidentally. We have to grow to it by the right attitude of mind and right inclination of the heart, guided by the faculty of discrimination and governed by the power of the active will. And how can we accomplish this even in small degree if we constantly hold

in our thought the accumulated memories of our own faults and mistakes and those of others?

If our mind is constantly busy with regret it can have no capacity for dwelling on those things which can bring greater expansion of our latent powers and dormant possibilities.

"Know that state of separation from contact with pain as Yoga. This Yoga should be practised with perseverance and undepressed heart."

"After having attained which no other gain seems greater; being established wherein he is not overwhelmed even by great sorrow."

Let the painful occurrences of the past remain in their oblivion and with renewed spirit let us say with St. Paul: "Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God."

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## THE WAY OF HOLY LIFE

*From the Dhammapada*

Long-suff'rance is the best austerity:
Nibbana, say the Awakened Ones, is best.

No wanderer is he who others harms:
Who wrongs another,—he is no recluse.

Refrain thyself from every evil deed:
Stablish thyself in good: cleanse thine own thoughts:
This is the message of the Awakened Ones.

Revile not, harm not, live by Rule restrained:
Of food take little: sleep and sit alone:
In meditation keep thy thoughts controlled,—
This is the message of the Awakened Ones.

# THE REAL TREASURE

*By Srimati Charu Shila Devi*

(A Story taken from the Vaishnaba Scriptures and from a lovely poem by Sir Rabindranath Tagore.)

Brindaban, a place in India, sanctified by the touch of the early days of Lord Sri Krishna, the Lord of Wisdom, is a holy place, a place of pilgrimage; men and women go there to spend their days in prayer and meditation.

So it happened that many years ago a holy man, sitting on the bank of Jumna (the river flowing by Brindaban), was telling his beads. Presently a man came and prostrated at his feet. Placing his compassionate eyes on his face, the holy one asked, "Where have you come from? What is your name? And what is your mission my child?" "O, Sire," the Brahmin answered, "I have wandered far and wide for thee! It is my greatest fortune to-day that I have found thee at last! Once my family was very rich and well known throughout the country, but finally lost everything. Now I have become so poor that I can hardly maintain my family. So in order to become rich again, I worshipped the Lord Shiva. One morning I dreamt the Lord did come and said that my prayer would be answered. He wanted me to come to you and said that you could help me to attain wealth."

The holy one was astonished. Come to him? How could it be? He had nothing, he had left whatever he had in the world; now he lived only on alms. So he began to ponder and all on a sudden he remembered one day he had come across a philosopher's stone at the water's edge; thinking that some day perhaps it might be useful to some one, he had covered it with sand, digging a place on the bank. Philosopher's stone, you know, is a rare thing, if it touches a base metal, the metal is changed into gold.

"Take that stone, O Brahmin," said the holy one, and

may all your miseries come to an end as soon as you touch it." The Brahmin ran and found it under the sand. He had talismans in iron cases which were instantly transformed into gold. He was astonished beyond measure. "Here is a gem," thought he, "that can change everything into gold, yet this holy man is giving it away; he must have something of greater value. What can it be?"

Dazed and dumb with amazement, he sat on the sand lost in thought. The murmuring sound of the water spoke to him; the sun, the sky, the air and everything in nature became eloquent. He sat there for hours; at last truth flashed into his mind—he understood.

Rising again he came back to his benefactor and prostrating at his feet he said: "O thou illumined one, I do not care for these earthly riches any more; please be merciful and give me a particle of the real treasure thou hast attained, knowing which thou canst despise a gem as valuable as philosopher's stone!"

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You are not here to find happiness directly as the first thing. You are here to discover Truth. What business have we yet with happiness? We must win it before we wear it. He saves us; but we must work out our own salvation. He gives light; but we must conquer darkness. And if we want the lazy sweets of life, the ease undignified by any thought, the life untroubled by any disturbing doubt, why, we may have it by throwing ourselves out of the sphere of God's training, and sinking down into our native mud. God will not permit that we have happiness at the expense of spiritual greatness. There is something higher than our miserable happiness. It is the awful blessedness of life with God, the knowledge that we are growing up into better things, the certain hope of a life of eternal righteousness and love and joy, the stern delight of duty done.—*Stopford Brooke.*

## SUMMER ACTIVITIES AT ANANDA-ASHRAMA

On the thirteenth of June Swami Paramananda returned from Boston to the Ananda-Ashrama, entering into even greater activities than those he had left behind. Besides the two regular Sunday Services, the regular morning Class and daily Class for instruction in the Bhagavad-Gita at the Ashrama, the Swami conducted a public Class every Tuesday evening in the Library Room at Pasadena, taking as his theme, "The Spirit of the Bhagavad-Gita." Each week he elaborated some special aspect of the instruction presented in the Gita, relating it constructively to present day problems. Another public Class was held every Wednesday evening in the Music Art Studio Building in Los Angeles when the Swami spoke on "The Spirit of the Upanishads." He presented this ancient Vedic teaching, so beautiful in its direct simplicity, with such forcefulness and clarity of vision that an increasing audience made necessary the securing of Symphony Hall for these Classes. The Swami also gave a course of Sunday evening lectures in the same hall before large audiences. The subjects of these lectures were, "India's Place in Civilization," "Reincarnation and Spiritual Rebirth" and "Higher Consciousness."

These activities, together with the constant supervision of the construction of the "Temple of the Universal Spirit," would seem to be sufficient to absorb entirely the time and strength of the Swami, but in addition he delivered two public lectures at the Pasadena Forum, the first on June 29th, when he spoke on "The Great Yoga System of India," and the second on July 6th, his subject being "The Rhythm of Life." On the evening of September 2nd, he addressed the St. Mary's and All Angels Liberal Catholic Church of Los Angeles, the subject of his address being, "Practical Christianity."

## RADIO TALKS

Beginning with the first week in August, the Swami has given a radio talk each Saturday evening over KGFH, the Glendale Radio Station, taking such practical themes as "The Quality of Patience," "Tranquillity," "Steadfastness," "Blessing of Mistakes," "Simplicity and Contentment," "Tolerance," etc. He also gave a Wednesday morning talk over Station KNX in Hollywood.

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## PASADENA LIBRARY

The Library and Reading Room which the Swami maintains at Pasadena has already outgrown the first room taken in the new Arcade Building, and on August 10th moved into its present headquarters, a much larger room with anteroom on the ground floor of the same building. Here, besides the regular Tuesday evening Classes, several popular lectures have been given, one by Miss Lena E. Whitford on August 17th, who illustrated her talk on the Temples of India with beautifully colored lantern slides. After the lecture, the Swami explained the significance and spiritual origin of these Temples. The next week Dr. Montague Cleeves gave a lecture on English Cathedrals, also illustrated with lantern slides; and Dr. Charles Stivers entertained an enthusiastic audience on August 31st by a lecture on the Flowers and Birds of California, with lantern slides. The Swami presided at all of these lectures. It is hoped to have other addresses in the near future.

* * *

Srimati Gayatri Devi also has been sought as a lecturer and during the month of August gave three public lectures on "The Ideal of Indian Womanhood," one before the Central Forum of Pasadena, given at the Florence Theatre; another at the home of Mrs. Marion Craig Wentworth in Los

Angeles, and a third before the Olcott Theosophical Lodge in Los Angeles.

* * *

An occasion bringing great pleasure to the Ashrama Household was the visit of Swami Prabhavananda, of Portland, Oregon, who was invited by Swami Paramananda to share the pulpit of the "Temple of the Universal Spirit" on Sunday, August 12th. The visiting Swami spoke eloquently on the subject of Universality, which was the theme chosen for the day's consideration. It was very gratifying to Swami Paramananda to have a brother Swami as his guest, and he took pleasure in introducing Swami Prabhavananda on the first two of the three public addresses delivered by Swami Prabhavananda in Los Angeles.

## TEMPLE OF THE UNIVERSAL SPIRIT

The date for the dedication of the Temple of the Universal Spirit was set for July 22nd and many guests arrived from the east and middle west for the occasion. However, the Temple was far from complete and in order not to disappoint any one, Swami Paramananda decided to hold a first Consecration Service in the unfinished Temple.

The litter of boards and plaster, of chips and broken brick which had been collecting on Temple Hill for many weeks vanished as if by magic before the onslaughts of the men of the Ashrama who put forth heroic efforts all day Saturday preceding the day of the consecration. A renewed activity on Sunday morning made everything fresh and shining for the day's Services, and the sanctuary of the Temple was made beautiful with masses of fragrant flowers, while still more flowers filled the niches allotted to the founders and symbols of the different great religions of the world.

The Swami spoke in his own direct fashion of the con-

ception of dedicating a Temple to the One God, the Universal Spirit, and his very simplicity gave added force to the theme he presented to his hearers. Using the ancient saying from the Rig-Veda, "Truth is one, men call It by various names," he outlined with telling strokes a picture of the brotherhood of man, all serving a common Ideal, each one tolerant of the form of his brother's faith and all living and working together in harmony. Perhaps the climax of the morning's address was reached when he paid tribute to the men of the Ashrama working as a unit with the one purpose of carrying through to its finish the task assigned them.

During the morning Service, "The Salutation of the Dawn," a translation of an ancient Sanskrit hymn, was incomparably rendered by a friend, the possessor of a rich contralto voice, and at both morning and afternoon Services a gifted violinist, a guest of the Ashrama, freely gave her contribution to the special music prepared for the occasion. At noon a delicious and bountiful lunch was served to all under the trees beside the Cloister; the lunch as well as all the flowers used for the decorations being the gift of a devoted friend of the work.

The Swami made the afternoon Service an occasion for enlarging upon the theme of the morning, making it clear that when we pray "Thy Kingdom come," we must add the work of our hand to the prayer of our heart, or the words will be empty and of no avail; that it is only through growing in ourselves the qualities of the Ideal which we love and serve, only through being and becoming that of which we dream, that we can take any place as a part of the real Temple which is a Temple not built by hands or conceived by brain, but which stands eternally as the indestructible manifestation of the power and the glory of God.

## ANNUAL DINNER

On July 30th Swami Paramananda gave his annual dinner, about one hundred and fifty guests being seated at tables large and small on the terrace in front of the Cloister. The delicious dinner was cooked and served by the Swami himself and the guests lingered long at the tables enjoying the feast provided and in addition the beautiful picture of the sunset over the Verdugo Hills. When this had melted into the darkness all were summoned to the patio, one end of which had been transformed into a stage upon which a cast from the Ashrama Household presented the Renunciation Scene from "The Light of Asia," Swami Paramananda taking the part of Gautama, Lord Buddha, and so realistically that a thrilled murmur of surprise and appreciation ran through the audience as the withdrawal of the curtain revealed him seated under the tree in meditation. The other parts also were well taken and when the party broke up at a late hour, they still felt the spell of the Eastern atmosphere created by the play.

## MOONLIGHT DEDICATION

An event which for everyone at the Ashrama was permeated with an unusual sense of blessing and consecration was the dedication of the Open Air Sanctuary of the Temple of the Universal Spirit which took place on full moon night, August thirtieth.

The willing hands of Ashrama workers had created a place of loveliness in the open patio of the new Temple and many exclamations of delight were heard when the unusually large number of guests passed through the arcade while an involuntary hush fell as they saw down the length of the patio space the rock altar standing in its enclosure of leafy green under the oak trees in the center of the greensward which had been especially prepared for it.

The charm of the place in no small degree lay in the utter simplicity of its arrangement. At Swami Paramananda's suggestion the huge rock which the Ashrama men had brought from one of the canyons to serve as an altar, was left in its natural state with but the addition of a concrete extension of its top which was adorned quite simply with candles, a large bowl of fruit, bright flowers and golden dates from the date palms. The side of this top made an entablature for the inscription taken from one of the Swami's poems, "Thee I Love in All," done in green and gold lacquer by an artistic member of the Ashrama Household.

The hillside with its covering of mountain heather, made a dark background for the altar and when Swami Paramananda walked toward it the stars in the sky above seemed to draw closer to hold some mystical converse with their sisters, the incandescent lights strung along the three arcades enclosing the open patio. When the Swami rose to speak these lights were turned off and only the moonlight gave its gentle radiance.

The first and larger part of the program was musical, a song in Bengali being sung by Srimati Gayatri Devi with accompaniment on the esraj and guitar. It was a beautiful song of adoration to the Deity and was well-suited to the fresh young voice.

A violin obligato played by Mrs. Laura Allen, a gifted guest of the Ashrama, was much enjoyed by the audience and a delightful feature of the musical program was the rendition of a recent poem of Swami Paramananda's, "Sunset on the Ganges," set to music and sung by Madame Concorde Brodeur, accompanied by the violin.

The Swami spoke but briefly and it was evident that he was deeply moved by the occasion. His words held the thrill of great conceptions, great purposes, great spaces of

thought, and were instinct with the message of the silence that comes down from the surrounding hills. His face, lighted by the moon, was illumined also by a radiance that came from beyond this world as he told of the larger aims and aspirations that lie at the heart of all humanity as the foundation for living and with prophetic voice he spoke of the universality of brotherhood that is yet to be, "that far-off, divine event toward which the whole creation moves."

As he pronounced the benediction, the blessing of the Universal Spirit, the One Most High surely descended upon him, his hearers and the Temple which he has built.

* * *

The day set apart for the dedication of the "Temple of the Universal Spirit" is Sunday, October 21st. There will be two Services conducted by Swami Paramananda, one at 11 o'clock and another at 3:30. The Swami will deliver addresses at both Services and it is expected that it will be a time of great upliftment and blessing. There will be a fine musical program, some of the music being specially written for the occasion by a member of the Ashrama.

On Wednesday, the 24th, a special moonlight Service will be held in the patio followed by a reception. All the friends, new and old, of the Swami and of the work, are cordially invited to attend all the Services and the reception.

* * *

This summer the Boston activities have been carried on as usual, two Sunday Services being held regularly at the Centre during July and August. The first of September Sister Daya and Srimati Gayatri Devi left the Ashrama for the east and Srimati Gayatri Devi has conducted the Services and Classes at the Boston Centre. Swami Paramananda expects to be in Boston the first week in October.

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LUME XVII. NUMBER 9

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

# VEDANTA MONTHLY

# Message of the East

November, 1928

# Richness of Thought

Issued by

ANANDA-ASHRAMA

LA CRESCENTA, L. A. CO., CALIF.

(Extension of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, Established 1900)

Entered as second class matter, Feb. 14, 1924, at the Post Office at La Crescenta, Calif., Box 85, under act of March 2, 1879.

Accepted for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized June 17, 1921.

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SINGLE COPIES, 25c

$2.00 A YEAR

Published Monthly Except in August and September

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Dr. Peter Bolke, 6121 Madison Ave., Madisonville.

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# *MESSAGE OF THE EAST*

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

"Light shall come again from the East."
—Tyndall.

Published Monthly except in August and September

Vol. XVII. November, 1928 No. 9


## WHERE YOUR FEET HAVE TOUCHED

*By Swami Paramananda*

WHERE Your feet have touched
Will I plant flower-seeds
to mark with fragrance.
Where Your laughter hath sounded
Will I make tree-towers
for song birds.
This body will I keep clean
and untouched
For Your touch.
Beloved, Love, Lover,
Union, communion, ecstatic reveries:
All these will I keep
sealed in my soul
For speechless musing.

## UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Into every intelligence there is a door which is never closed, through which the Creator passes.—*Emerson.*

Whoever would see in what state the soul dwells within the body, let him mark how this body uses its daily habitation, for if this be confused and without order, then will the body be kept in disorder and confusion by the soul.
—*Leonardo da Vinci.*

Character is simply habit, long continued.—*Plutarch.*

Great becomes the fruit, great the advantages of earnest contemplation, when it is set round with upright conduct. Great becomes the fruit, great the advantage of wisdom when it is set round with earnest contemplation. The mind set round with wisdom is set quite free from the delusions, that is to say, from the delusion of sensuality, from the delusion of re-birth, from the delusion of opinion, from the delusion of ignorance.—*Buddha.*

The man who has no inner life is the slave of his surroundings, as the barometer is the obedient servant of the air at rest, and the weathercock the humble servant of the air in motion.—*Amiel.*

Perfection in meditation comes from persevering devotion to the Supreme Soul.—*Patanjali.*

God should be the object of all our desires, the end of all our actions, the principle of all our affections, and the governing power of our whole souls.—*Massillon.*

The end of life is to be like unto God; and the soul following God will be like unto Him; He being the beginning, middle, and end of all things.—*Socrates.*

# RICHNESS OF THOUGHT

*By Swami Paramananda*

We never can achieve anything greater than our thoughts enable us to conceive. Here is something we are apt altogether to overlook in our over-zealous and strenuous modern life. We cannot attain anything greater, or finer, or more potent than our thoughts permit us to conceive within our soul. For this reason we find the people of the ancient world taking time to co-ordinate their thoughts, ideas and ideals before going into the field of action. You may say that with machinery we can produce ten times as much as they did. The merit of a production, however, is not always determined by its bulk. It is quality which counts. In our saner moments we realize this. Machines may produce a larger quantity with lesser effort, but they can never bring forth that which will satisfy the souls of men.

Man's being consists primarily of his thought. Physicians are beginning to discover that in spite of all their up-to-date medical science, when a man is ill the wrong turning of his mind can altogether hinder his getting well. It can keep him perpetually sick and suffering. What a wonderful thing it is for us to have richness of thought. Thoughts are more creative than any amount of action. At first you may laugh at this. You may say, "What is he talking about? It is action which is productive,—the busy hands and feet. If a man should merely sit down and think about the things he is going to do, they would never get done." It is not that we should think and do nothing. For the man who is thoughtful that would be impossible. People who truly think, people who conceive great and lofty ideas, are incapable of sitting idle. Their bodies become charged with something dynamic, and their whole being pulsates until they find an avenue of expression. "As a man thinketh in

his heart, so is he," is an old proverb, and in India this has been repeated many times through its ancient literature. If a man thinks, contemplates and meditates on a specific thing, that alone he attains. He cannot attain anything else. We must realize that no matter how much we may want to achieve, we can achieve nothing other than our thoughts permit. A man may pretend to be happy, but unless his thoughts are happy, he will not pretend long. We cannot play this game of life by thinking one thing and doing another. Our whole strength depends on the co-ordination of thought and action. People who have learned the art of thinking or, as it is stated in philosophic terms, the art of meditation, cannot be turned aside.

The projected thought, the continuous thought, the subtle and potent thought—thought which cannot be broken—that is my definition of meditation, and the mind which is so firmly set upon a subject, a theme, or an ideal that it can find its way through obscure and difficult avenues without being defeated, is the meditative mind. What kind of strength is required for this? The casual thinker is not capable of it, nor the man who never thinks out anything, but merely does what is before him. It is impossible for us to enter into this arena of life unguarded, unprepared, unarmed. Only through co-ordinated thoughts do we become conscious of the strength before us, behind us, and all about us, and only when that co-ordination is lacking do we feel absolutely weak and incapable. Therefore the Scriptures, the holy Bibles and the precepts of practical wisdom all tell us: Let a man think. What should he think? What can he think? Not anything other than what he is. If he dwells on the beautiful, he will partake of the beautiful. A person, however, cannot concentrate his thought on such things unless he has cultivated a taste for them. The man

who has an ugly concept in his mind, who is hateful, petty, envious, full of unhappy traits, will not be able to hold high and noble thoughts.

By focusing our mind on the beautiful constantly our whole countenance will be beautified. Even an ugly face in spite of all its physical shortcomings may assume an unearthly lustre. Indeed we are made over in such a way that we transcend all earthly limitations. This is an open secret. I can vouch for it, and anyone who knows anything about the philosophy of life can do the same. If you brush from your mind all ugly thoughts, unkind feelings, harsh words and ignoble imaginations, and merely keep on thinking of the idealistic, the lovely and the lovable, you will be transformed; you will become lovely, lovable and loving. We may, however, know the theory of this without being able to accomplish it. It is not a question of planning. We often make plans. We say, at such and such an hour I am going to do such and such a thing; at a certain time I shall exercise, or meet my friends, or rest. As a mental discipline this may be good, but man's success depends on whether or not he is able to create a current of continuity in his mind.

There are moments when everyone feels exalted and there comes a tremendous surging of power. We experience this sometimes when we are alone, or are going through a crisis, or perhaps in an hour of inspiration. But how to make it lasting? That is the problem. Why is it that we cannot continue to feel this exaltation? I think we can, and there is nothing which will aid us, protect us and shield us more than to learn the art of thinking. To-day we are inclined to depend on machinery. It is the age for manufacture. Science is widening out in many directions. Sometimes it seems as if it were on the point of being able to create, but I feel sure that it will never produce any machine or

device that will do our thinking for us. It may be able to evolve something in the way of diabolical machines by which we can destroy each other, or machines which can substitute mental action up to a certain point, but never can it bring about that subtlest of creations—the creation of character,—the fine thought, the idealistic conception, the practical wisdom which we find in Christ, in Buddha, in St. Francis, and in the lives of all sages of every country and age. These qualities can be created only by man, as his aspiration enables him to come in close alliance with his Maker, and there is nothing which can give us as immediate a connection with that One as our thoughts. I am not able to travel this moment to India, but my thought can reach out and find a definite point of contact with some holy shrine there. There are memories which exalt my mind to such an extent that I can transcend altogether the material surroundings. This is true of everyone. We carry within our own mind sacred imaginations and memories which have the power to lift us into another world. And what a wonderful thing it is to be able to co-ordinate these and to draw strength from them in an emergency or in a moment of distress. Man with his thought, can create anything and everything. He can create the most wonderful atmosphere, he can break his loneliness, also he can deprive himself of solitude and peace even while living in a mountain cave, or in a wilderness where there is nothing but stillness.

According to an ancient parable, a man was once wandering through the forest when suddenly he came upon a beautiful tree, and being weary, he sat down beneath its shade. Now it happened that this was a tree which in India they call *Kalpataru*, the tree of fulfillment. Whatever a man desires sitting under it, whatever thoughts he thinks, they materialize at once. So when this man, as he sat there, said: "Oh, I

am tired! I wish I could lie on something soft," immediately he found himself upon a couch. He said: "I am hungry; if only I could have some food!" and hardly had he wished for it when special food was placed before him. Man's mind is active; it is creative. Unfortunately, however, it is not limited merely to lines of thought which bring happiness. So in this case, as his fancy took hold of him, the man's desires became more and more enlarged. Everything he wished for came, even a wife; but just at the point of greatest fulfillment, suddenly he thought, "Perchance a tiger may appear and swallow us up," and the tiger also came. Right here lies our difficulty. We study books and Bibles and strive sincerely to apply what we have learned. We feel that we are receiving great good when someone, perhaps, offends us, and all at once an uncontrolled thought, —a tiger or a serpent in the form of wrath,—comes and destroys all that we have gained, unless we can quickly co-ordinate and preserve ourselves. This takes place in our lives every day. Always we are creating and destroying. We build beautiful homes amid lovely surroundings, only to pull them down. We hear songs in our quiet moments, soothing to our soul, and then again we hear hideous cries of agony; all of which shows how needful it is for us to learn the art of meditation.

It should play a very vital part in the training of children. In India the whole educational system was based on it. What avails if we give a child merely a little intellectual training, fill his mind with information and mechanical knowledge, unless at the same time we build his character, thus developing his insight into his own inherent power, so that he may learn to create and co-ordinate? Knowledge is not just what we acquire through borrowing; it is something which we must make our own. We may, however, find inspiration

and a great deal of help from that which comes to us from others. The thoughts and teaching contained in the literature of the world may stimulate us to such an extent that we ourselves shall be moved to create; but it is our own thoughts which sustain us and enable us to enter into the spiritual realm, and these we can govern. As one of the great teachers tells us: "It is the mind that makes one wise or ignorant, bound or emancipated."

In the morning we wake up sometimes feeling despondent. Clouds rise,—doubt of self, doubt of others, doubt of existence. A tremendous inertia settles upon us till we can hardly hold ourselves upright, and whatsoever we try to do, meets with crushing defeat. Another day, in spite of adverse conditions, we have buoyancy, radiancy, optimism, hope, faith; the clouds break and the light of the sun becomes victorious. All the beautiful things we see in the world—cities and countries, homes and places of pilgrimage—all are the creations of man's mind. Man can think of himself as a sinner, and by so thinking can make himself an even greater sinner. He can start with a thought of failure, and by dwelling on it enlarge it till it becomes a veritable failure, or, through his mind, he can lift up his head and raise his standard high, even when there is nothing outer to sustain him; he can build up something very beautiful, even though he may be standing upon ruins.

In regard to all this, Indian teaching gives a very dynamic warning: Do not think of the negative side. Often we picture Hindus as sitting in meditation, and we have an idea that they take a very passive attitude. On the contrary their philosophy warns us not to dwell on weakness, not to dwell on sin. He who thinks all the time of his weakness, becomes weak; he who imagines himself to be sinful, becomes a sinner. Rather let us think of our divine heritage, for it is our

safeguard, our stepping-stone towards the spiritual kingdom. Whatever defects there may be in our life, although they may seem insurmountable, we can altogether wipe them out and start with a fresh, clean slate, by learning the art of thinking and meditating; therefore, we must try to cultivate it. Healing is performed through it. Miracles are performed through it. Man's whole life becomes transformed because of it, and not only his own life,—he becomes an aid to others. Often have I seen this.

Find a little time to co-ordinate yourself and to get away from all outer turmoil. We have plenty of time out of the twenty-four hours of the day for our domestic duties, for our business and our worries, so surely we can take a few minutes to refresh ourselves inwardly. We need this that we may not feel defeated by life itself. We need it just as we need a daily bath for our physical refreshment. But the inner freshening no outer condition can give us; we give it to ourselves through the systematic control of thought. Let us strive to cultivate a cheerful attitude. It is needful for the healthfulness of man. These things, however, cannot be produced artificially; they must come from within. A man's thought should be so invulnerable that in every step of the way, in every station of life, wherever he may be—alone or in the crowd, protected or unarmed—he will know that he has the greatest of all safeguards. This is the highest form of intelligence, and one that we should seek to develop. The ancient leaders of men urged it upon themselves and upon their followers, and to-day we need it even more than they did, surrounded as we are with countless distractions and material glamour. We call this civilization—advancement. Let it, then, be productive of great good. A machine when it is guided by well balanced intelligence can be of enormous benefit to man; but if it is

controlled by a vicious instinct, it may prove destructive. Therefore, whether our science, our inventions, and our material achievements represent real progress or not, depends on what thoughts we are thinking. Thoughts of hatred will destroy all the beautiful things we see before us, even those we have created, whereas thoughts based on nobility, idealism and the productive instinct, will enhance our own happiness, health and prosperity, and will enlarge the beauty, peace and prosperity of all, for in each individual life lies the responsibility for the good and the evil of the whole.

We have a way of saying, "This world is full of evil; we cannot trust anyone." A thoughtful man, however, sees that he has a very large share in that evil, and even though he may be thrust into the midst of calamity, he will overcome it through his mental strength. There are people who can tame tigers and venomous snakes. Once I talked with one who was an expert. I had seen him wrestling with a tiger and I asked him how he was able to do it. He said, "It is not done through physical muscle, but through courage and faith. I make the animal realize that he is my subordinate." In the same way man, through his thought, can always make the lower instincts become aware that he is the supreme master.

Let us dwell in this thought,—not with any aggresive idea, not that—but with the consciousness that there is no difficulty we cannot overcome, no infliction we cannot meet, if, as we strive and struggle, we never let ourselves forget the One who has given us life, who has given us intelligence, and all the blessings and opportunities that are ours. Let us learn to think of Him every moment, for when we fail in this, all our ventures are fraught with danger.

If a tree which had grown tall and majestic should say in the exuberance of its growth: "I care not for my roots;

they are too far removed. I have reached near to the sky, the heavens; my glory is there. Why should I look down?" Would not that tree be very foolish, since it is the root which has enabled it to gain its glory? So a man who, in the exuberance of his strength and success forgets That which has given him power to gain his victory, becomes his own enemy.

Strive, therefore, that such a calamity may never befall you or your fellow-beings. If you find one who is not doing what you would like to have him do, instead of condemning him, seek to inspire him by your own life. You may say, "It is very difficult to inspire another." It may be difficult, but there is no end to God's power. With patience and perseverance ever greater force will come, and always we must hold the remembrance that as a man thinketh on his Maker, he becomes like unto Him in wisdom, in glory, and in strength.

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That we be not again led back into the errors of those that went before us, who left the power and got into the form . . . . that no footsteps shall be left for those that shall come after, or to walk by example, but that all may be directed and left to the truth, in it to live and walk and by it to be guided, that none may look back at us, nor have an eye behind them, but that all may look forward, waiting in the Spirit for the revelation of those glorious things which are to be made manifest to them . . . that none may exercise lordship or dominion over another, nor the person of any be set apart but as they continue in the power of truth . . . that truth itself in the body may reign, not persons nor forms, and that all such may be honored as stand in the life of the truth, wherein is the power . . . that our path may be as the way of a ship in the sea, which no deceit can follow or imitate.—*Extract from a letter of Anthony Pearson to a meeting of Friends, 17th Century.*

# THE MECHANICAL MIND

## *A Chinese Story told by C. F. Andrews*

(From "Young India.")

There was once a disciple of the great sage, Confucius. This disciple, though poor, and occupying the humble position of gardener, was a scholar and a gentleman. One day a Mandarin, who was being carried past in a sedan chair, alighted to enjoy the cool shade of the garden. The Mandarin, was also a scholar and a gentleman, profoundly versed in the venerable Confucian Classics. He sat down in the garden and fanned himself. While he was resting under the shade of some bamboo trees, he saw the gardener patiently toiling with a bucket in order to fetch water from a well to water the flowers. The Mandarin said: "Let me show you a mechanical structure, whereby the water may be drawn up from the well without such a vast amount of human labour."

The gardener however, replied: "Sir, I have read in the ancient Classics that the man who perpetually employs mechanism comes at last to possess a mechanical mind. Now a mechanical mind is not in harmony with Nature. In my work as a gardener, I desire always to keep my mind in unison with Nature. Therefore, I prefer drawing the water slowly in a bucket, while I enjoy quietly the beauties of this garden; and I have avoided bringing into the garden machinery which might produce in me the mechanical mind."

The Mandarin was so pleased with the gardener's answer, that he reported it,—through the proper court authorities,—to the Emperor of China. This emperor was himself a profound scholar and also a lover of Nature. So he sent for the gardener and placed him in charge of one of his summer palace gardens.

# GOD-SEEING LIFE

## *By Jan van Ruysbroeck*

**(Flemish Priest and Mystic, 13th Century)**

I have said before that we are one with God, and this is taught us by Holy Writ. And now I say further: that from the Face of God, or from our highest feeling, a brightness shines upon the face of our inward being, which teaches us the truth of love and of all virtues: and especially are we taught in this brightness to feel God and ourselves in four ways. First, we feel God in His Grace; and when we apprehend this, we cannot remain idle. For like as the sun, by its splendour and its heat, enlightens and gladdens and makes fruitful the whole world, so God does to us through His Grace: He enlightens and gladdens and makes fruitful all men who desire to obey Him. If, however, we would feel God within us, and have the fire of His love ever more burning within us, we must, of our own free will, help to kindle it in four ways: We must abide within ourselves, united with the fire through inwardness. And we must go forth from ourselves towards all good men with loyalty and brotherly love. And we must go beneath ourselves in penance, betaking ourselves to all good works, and resisting our inordinate lusts. And we must ascend above ourselves with the flame of this fire, through devotion, and thanksgiving, and praise, and fervent prayer, and must ever cleave to God with an upright intention and with sensible love. And thereby God continues to dwell in us with His Grace; for in these four ways is comprehended every exercise which we can do with the reason, and in some wise, but without this exercise no one can please God. And he who is most perfect in this exercise, is nearest to God. And therefore it is needful for all men; and above it none can rise save the contemplative

men. And thus, in this first way, we feel God within us through His Grace, if we wish to belong to Him.

Secondly: when we possess the God-seeing life, we feel ourselves to be living *in* God; and from out of that life in which we feel God in ourselves, there shines forth upon the face of our inward being a brightness which enlightens our reason, and is an intermediary between ourselves and God. And if we with our enlightened reason abide within ourselves in this brightness, we feel that our created life incessantly immerses itself in its eternal life. But when we follow the brightness above reason with a simple sight, and with a willing leaning out of ourselves, toward our highest life, there we experience the transformation of our whole selves in God; and thereby we feel ourselves to be wholly enwrapped in God.

And, after this, there follows the third way of feeling; namely, that we feel ourselves to be one *with* God; for, through the transformation in God, we feel ourselves to be swallowed up in the fathomless abyss of our eternal blessedness, wherein we can nevermore find any distinction between ourselves and God. And this is our highest feeling, which we cannot experience in any other way than in the immersion in love. And therefore, so soon as we are uplifted and drawn into our highest feeling, all our powers stand idle in an essential fruition; but our powers do not pass away into nothingness, for then we should lose our created being. And as long as we stand idle, with an inclined spirit, and with open eyes, but without reflection, so long we can contemplate and have fruition. But, at the very moment in which we seek to prove and to comprehend what it is that we feel, we fall back into reason, and there we find a distinction and an otherness between ourselves and God, and find God outside ourselves in incomprehensibility.

And hence the fourth way of distinction; which is, that

we feel God *and* ourselves. Hereby we now find ourselves standing in the Presence of God; and the truth which we receive from the Face of God teaches us that God would be wholly ours and that He wills us to be wholly His. And in that same moment in which we feel that God would be wholly ours, there arises within us a gaping and eager craving which is so hungry and so deep and so empty that, even though God gave all that He could give, if he gave not Himself, we should not be appeased. For, whilst we feel that He has given Himself and yielded Himself to our untrammeled craving, that we may taste of Him in every way that we can desire—and of this we learn the truth in His sight—yet all that we taste, against all that we lack, is but like to a single drop of water against the whole sea: and this makes our spirit burst forth in fury and in the heat and the restlessness of love. For the more we taste, the greater our craving and our hunger; for the one is the cause of the other. And thus it comes about that we struggle in vain. For we feed upon His Immensity, which we cannot devour, and we yearn after His Infinity, which we cannot attain: and so we cannot enter into God nor can God enter into us, for in the untamed fury of love we are not able to renounce ourselves. And therefore the heat is so unmeasured that the exercise of love between ourselves and God flashes to and fro like the lightning in the sky; and yet we cannot be consumed in its ardour. And in this storm of love our activity is above reason and wayless; for love longs for that which is impossible to it, and reason teaches that love is in the right, but reason can neither counsel love nor dissuade her. For as long as we inwardly perceive that God would be ours, the goodness of God touches our eager craving: and therefrom springs the wildness of love, for the touch which pours forth from God stirs up this wildness, and demands our activity, that is, that we should

love eternal love. But the inward-drawing touch draws us out of ourselves, and calls us to be His; and therefore, we must renounce ourselves and leave Him to work our blessedness. But where He touches us by the outpouring touch, He leaves us to ourselves, and makes us free, and sets us in His Presence, and teaches us to pray in the spirit and to ask in freedom, and shows us His incomprehensible riches in such manifold ways as we are able to grasp. For everything that we can conceive, wherein is consolation and joy, this we find in Him without measure. And therefore, when our feeling shows us that He with all these riches would be ours and dwell in us for evermore, then all the powers of the soul open themselves, and especially the desirous power; for all the rivers of the Grace of God pour forth, and the more we taste of them, the more we long to taste; and the more we long to taste, the more deeply we press into contact with Him; and the more deeply we press into contact with God, the more the flood of His sweetness flows through us and over us; and the more we are thus drenched and flooded, the better we feel and know that the sweetness of God is incomprehensible and unfathomable. And therefore the prophet says: "O taste, and see that the Lord is sweet." But he does not say how sweet He is, for God's sweetness is without measure; and therefore we can neither grasp it nor swallow it. And this is also testified by the bride of God in the Song of Songs, where she says: "I sat down under His shadow, with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste."

In order to learn we must attend; in order to profit by what we have learned we must think, that is, reflect. He only thinks who reflects.—*Samuel Taylor Coleridge.*

Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.—*Confucius.*

# THE MEDITATION OF THE HEART

*By Jean Le Charlier De Gerson*

*Translated from the original Latin for the "Message of the East" by Mabel Schopbach.*

(Gerson was at heart, though not by education, a mystic, a profound contemplative. We have it on good authority that he was, without any doubt, the most remarkable personality of the age in which the "Imitation of Christ" was written: and that this little treatise on meditation was as popular in the Middle Ages as the Imitation itself.)

1. Always in Thy sight is the meditation of my heart. Indeed, happy is he who, with the prophet, can, when he will, make this declaration to God! But let us see first what the meditation of the heart is, not the heart of the flesh only, but the heart of the spirit as well. Now meditation is the directing the mind zealously to investigating and ascertaining something. And this zealous directing the mind has difficulties, which at some times are greater and at other times less.

So that this may be understood, let it be suggested that, in accordance with belief and experience, the soul is deeply buried and has three kinds of eyes, the spiritual eyes, the reasoning eyes, and the feeling eyes. And they look out into the two directions, the one into the realm of intellect, the other into the realm of feeling. There is another division in that it is said man has a two-fold quality or form of reason, the higher of which is directed to eternal laws, the other to temporal laws, neither of which, however, is dependent upon a bodily organ. Under these is hidden deep in the body a faculty which is called sensual. By some the first of the eyes is called the eye of the soul; the second, the eye of reason; the third, the eye of the flesh.

2. There had been from the beginning such order and such harmony in the reasoning faculty, well-hidden, that at the merest expression of will or the slightest order the sensual affections obeyed the lower reasoning faculty and the lower

reasoning, the upper; and there was from the lower to the higher an easy and ready ascent. And this happened at the beginning through the heart, in accordance with the divine law, tending to rise upwards because of its lightness, as naturally as fire is carried upwards by its own light weight.

But in truth, when, with the loss of innocence through sin and with the failure of returning gratitude to the Supreme Goodness, this original divine law justly and deservedly had been removed, a heaviness, accompanying this most grievous sin, entered in; and this does not cease to hold captive, and to drag down to the lowest depths the mind in its wretchedness to beggarlike poverty and utter ruin, as though it were bound round and round with ropes and loaded with chains and fetters. Thus, indeed, because of the wrath of the Almighty, such a complete change in the former order took place through the confusion, so fearful, in truth, so appalling, that the triple eye in man, looking out in both directions, plunged so completely in shadows and prison-darkness, because over-clouded through imperfection in the sensual affections an overshadowing of the lower reasoning faculty, and an almost blinding of the higher.

3. Lo, we have the first reason for the difficulty which we meet in meditation, which we experience in striving to hold our eyes ever fixed upon the Ruler of this whole Creation.

That weight, which had descended upon all men as punishment and continually drags them down to lower things, brings this about—just as with the carnal eye it is possible to see how water in an aqueduct is carried downwards with the greatest ease. It is held bound and is lifted upwards only through the force of violence; even so does the mind, tending downward, when left to itself, flow forth with the greatest ease in this direction and in that to the lowest depths, unless held bound, as it were, with chains, even with a most valiant

struggle, since, as the poet says: "The descent to the world below is easy, but to retrace one's step and reach again the upper air, this is the real labour, this is the true difficulty."

4. In accordance with the preceding, let us investigate thoroughly the nature or quality of meditation, since from this alone shall we be able to see how indispensable this is for us who are seekers after God.

I said before and I repeat that meditation is courageously and zealously applying the mind or directing the attention to the study and the discovery of something profitable. I add this extra idea, profitable, lest meditation should tend only to opinion, or curiosity seeking, or pensive passivity. Let me say, therefore, in conclusion, that meditation is the directing a healthy mind ardently to investigating something and coming to an understanding of it through knowledge resulting from experience. I place this last on account of the very nature of feeling, which chooses different appellations conformable to the state of understanding. For in no other way can feeling be understood except through experience by him who is affected by it. One who has experienced a state of feeling and therefore comprehends it is not able to pass it on to another with any words whatsoever unless that other has been affected by a like feeling, since he alone knows (as is written in the Apocalypse) who receives. Therefore is it called the hidden manna.

An example can be given of one who knows the sweetness of honey through knowledge imparted by another. Or as a physician, sound in body, knows through knowledge imparted by another the anguish of weakness. Sweetness, however, is found to be very different in taste itself; pain, very different in illness itself.

5. Now let us investigate and see how profound is the prophet's knowledge of the nature of meditation when he

says, "Fire is enkindled within me during meditation," for he has laid hold of both,—the light in the intellect and the ardor in the heart.

Indeed, how difficult it is for the fire of spiritual devotion to be enkindled by the breath of meditation, can be understood through a consideration of material fire, when one tries to kindle a blaze in firewood, green, water-soaked, and spattered with mire. Blow on it as much as you will, blow on it again and again with renewed energy; at first a cloud of smoke will arise, causing the eyes great annoyance; finally a tiny spark will become apparent, which presently will die away. Perhaps, in your irritation you will dissipate it before the wood is heaped upon it, if you do not hold fast patience: Which patience I here call meditation or the entering into meditation.

6. I recall that I wrote some instructions or exercises, not in Latin but in the French vulgate, which had to do with the holding of such meditation. But such difficulty is found, such varied experiences because of the difference in people, in carrying out the instructions for true and sacred meditation, that even I myself am uncertain as to whether it is better to write something on this subject or to pass over it in silence.

7. For while I realize that from the exercise of meditation, no one, without a special miracle from God, is lifted directly into, or raises himself to pure contemplation; that no one is remade according to the pattern shown him by Christ; nevertheless zealously and ardently do I venture to advise the practice of sacred meditation. For I have been amazed and astounded to perceive, from experience and from experiments made with a very definite purpose in view, how difficult it is for one to rise to high ascents—yea, how very

seldom does one rise to those high ascents to which meditation should lift one.

Someone may ask why it so often happens that meditation in its intense ardor changes and melts into the vice of black passion on account of want of moderation, or on account of arrogance sinks into a false sense of diabolic illusion.

8. Let us consider this, which I have just said, carefully and illustrate it with a well-known example. We know that wine is made for the delight and health of mankind. A passage of Scripture tells us this; reason tells us the same thing. Nevertheless, we see through the excessive use of wine, especially while one is racked with heat of fever, that a drink of wine, at other times a source of health, makes one more ill, and produces loss of reason and madness, and, at times, even death.

9. What, then, are we doing? Why will we go headlong over the steep precipices of our sins to our own destruction? Shall we go after the desires of our heart only to come upon the greatest griefs in despair, without a hand to guide us, without law, without order? Surely, thoughts that are inconstant, ignoble, ever changing, merely idle dreams—thoughts that bring not forth encouragement and a well-built structure, but desolation, sorrow, and ruin, though they give us pleasure for a time, will not satisfy us; will they?

My answer is that this ought in no wise to be; but let there be keen discernment, as a guide in all things, which we shall be able to rely upon with more assurance through Divine Grace than through the trustworthy understanding of another, gained through personal experience after persistent effort—an understanding which we, too, shall finally lay claim to and possess through thoughtful and strenuous endeavor.

10. Aristotle tells us, giving his testimony from experience, that the acquiring of skill in any art, yea, even in

the art of living is always difficult; as the skill in painting, in writing, in playing the cithara; as in living the virtue of kindness, of courage, of continence. This should be accepted as true: that at first the expression of virtue in life and skill in any art presents many difficulties in their mastery, until, indeed, they become easy to those who have gone in search of them with earnest endeavor. A painter skilled in the art paints anything with the greatest ease; we see the same thing to be true of one who writes and of one who plays the cithara.

Aristotle, the same Aristotle, whom I just now mentioned, also tells us that skill, after it has been acquired and perfected, stops not to deliberate; so easy does the carrying an act into execution become.

11. Let me make use of this very comparison in speaking of meditation. Let us note that there is no difficulty in drawing the lines of a picture in any direction, nor in writing, nor yet in moving the fingers at random over the strings of a cithara. We find the same thing to be true with thoughts; for it is not difficult to think now this, now that, as one happens upon this thought or that thought by chance. But as you see no accomplishment in painting, in writing, and in playing the cithara is effected in this manner, precisely so is there nothing accomplished in thinking in this manner; nay more, when one amuses himself with such thoughts, so rambling, he will, as Seneca says, remain sad and desolate. With industry, however, through study, and the most zealous attention, with the same diligent application of the mind as in the study of painting, writing, and playing, it happens that your thoughts will—yea, very quickly—become helpful thoughts to you at any time soever.

12. To what purpose these things? To show indisputably how no one can ever progress or lift himself from (idle)

reflection into meditation—much less into contemplation. In truth, from meditation, which involves serious difficulties and painful struggles, if anyone is willing to submit to stern discipline, to wise and serious training, he will grow into that state of perfection, a condition which will bring forth for him to his advantage whatsoever he wishes to seek after, with his whole heart, through ardent meditation. Then at length meditation will pass over into contemplation; for meditation differs not from contemplation except in the degree of difficulty and ease, while the results in both cases are very different from reflection.

13. Now contemplation is described as deliberate attention to one thing, in a free and unfettered manner; and this to a state of intense absorption in contemplation, which lies beyond all human thought, and then to the state of pure contemplation, resting in love and prayer. This Hugo describes; and he tells us that with a cry of rapturous joy from the mind comes a death of desires after the flesh. This is to taste how sweet is the Master; the awareness which follows this taste is very different: since things in writing seen with the eye and things heard with the ear on faith are of the intellect only.

14. Lo! someone making a lamentable noise and cooing like a dove will meditate, and will say with the prophet, "I meditated the whole night through with my heart, I exercised myself therewith, and made ready my spirit." This he does seriously, devoutly, ardently, recollecting now the bitterness of his heart through all his years, now the many judgments of God which are a great deep, in the heavens far above out of his sight for height and deep in the earth for depth. And, as he thus meditates, so devoutly does he apply his mind to all things that he reflects upon, that those things, which he fixes his attention upon, he perceives more clearly,

and he draws them the more ardently into his affection; and it will come to pass at length that all these things will happily come back into his remembrance and he will be wise.

How easy this very recollection is, examples, that have been given us, will show us, if we doubt it; for a writer, a painter, a player has no more difficulty in doing well what he has learned how to do, than one, unskilled and untrained, who at the beginning works aimlessly, without training and discipline, at his sketch or the lines of his poetry or the strings of his cithara.

15. Then, too, it should be added to the foregoing that with arduous labour anyone skilled in this way in his art may have whatever he needs either for knowing or accomplishing. Much more is this true in this very field of meditation that I am dealing with now, which is ever desirous of new-born offspring of truth and devotion.

But pangs of travail are not wanting, in accordance with that curse spiritually understood, "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth thy children:" nevertheless one remembers not the suffering to be endured on account of the delight in that the soul has conceived and brought forth a new-born child of knowledge and of a sacred love in the universe of his mind.

16. Moreover, at the beginning, more frequently it happens that while someone, not yet cleansed of sin, is busily engaged in meditating like a dove, like an ape he is thinking about an old resentment and hatreds, like a mad dog he is meditating, "gnawing his ravings to himself," as the satirist has it. It is darts of faithlessness that are being thrown out, or an abyss of hopelessness that is being uncovered. Experience, too, makes it clear that wisely did the sage give this bidding, "Son, as thou enterest the service of God, prepare thy heart for the trial." There follows a most sure defense: "Stand in awe: for happy is the man that feareth always."

17. But, indeed, standing in fear always, someone will ask how one can be happy while fear is added to fear, doubt to doubt, pusillanimity to pusillanimity, especially when the procurator, the director and shower of the straight and narrow way is not constantly at hand: if now such an one will by chance be found—and this rarely happens—with the leisure to instruct one inexperienced in meditating as much as he should like, fortunate, indeed, would the novice be!

Indeed, in regard to doubts and questions, let this rule be followed: turn them over in your mind; if a counsellor, wise and tried, will have given a rule, precept, or admonition, you will not act on it meritoriously contrary to your own conviction, until, through the freedom of reason, you change your mind, you accept the counsel of the wise, and you are relieved of uncertainty, even though the senses may continue to murmur against it; in no other way will there ever be made in the heart a place for God in peace.

On the other hand, this must be taken into consideration: since, as Aristotle tells us, all our knowing comes from the faculty of perception, again is it necessary for him who would know to speculate on appearances. Thus the meditation of the heart begins with sense perceptions, which have become tinged, which have been formed and twisted together by diverse accidents of time and place. Out of this experience have been fashioned the exercises in meditation; out of this experience have come the pictures that have been painted and the statues that have been chiselled; out of this experience in general has come the writing of the psalmist, "I have meditated on all Thy works; I mused on the works of Thy hands," which deeds or works, undoubtedly, are those merely after the flesh. But in meditation one ought to mount up, as upon a ladder, and soar beyond, from the things that are seen to those that are unseen: as the Apostle

says, "For the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." Therefore teaching us to pass over from the bodily to the spiritual, he said, "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more . . ."

## THE STARRY TRAIL

*By Julia P. Dabney*

Weary, footsore, forespent in body and mind, the old Poet stumbled heavily over the desert stretch, toward the little spring which formed a tiny oasis in the midst of that desolation. But he was too exhausted even to drink, and sank down beside it a prey to the darkest thoughts.

From far over the mountains he had come;—those mountains which loomed like a phalanx of snow-capped Titans upon the far horizon, their rock-ribbed shoulders cleft by savage gorges, home of the eagle and the vulture. Many fair lands, smiling with harvest, had he traversed; through many villages full of stir and merriment had he passed, but in all he felt himself alien. And so at last he had tramped the fringes of the stony and sandy desert wastes, wandering on and on, he knew not why nor whither.

The shadows were falling about him, for night was at hand,—night which in those latitudes where there is no gloaming follows swift upon the heels of the day.

And night was in his soul.

"This is the end," he moaned despairingly. "Oh, I have lived in vain! Once I could stir and thrill the hearts of men, but now no more—no more! I have made songs of love which melted men and brought women weeping to my feet. I have made songs of valor and prowess which inflamed the hearts of men and incited them to glorious achievement.

I have made songs of vision which soared through the brooding night and drew answers from the very stars. But where are they now? All spume!—forgotten. No one wants them. They are not even remembered. All that I have been or done or dreamed is waste—vain—lost! Lost—lost—lost!"

But even as he bemoaned him he became conscious of a Presence beside him. What kind of Presence he could not discover with his dimming eyes, but it seemed to radiate warmth and light like some great sun.

And then the Presence spoke to him. It seemed as if all that glory became as it were translated into a vibrant cosmic Voice, akin to the singing of the winds through mighty pine trees, only infinitely more melodious, and its surging rhythms smote him with awe.

"No," said the Voice, "nothing is lost. Nothing true or pure or beautiful that has ever been created can perish. It is self-imprinted upon the impalpable ethers and becomes a part of the Eternal Rhythm. Look up and see."

The old Poet turned his eyes up to the vast, over-arching cope of the night and was thrilled to perceive a myriad of twinkling lights, not indeed the processions of the great stars, but some sort of lesser luminaries. And as he gazed he seemed as it were to look into the very hearts of them, and he perceived with amazement that they were in reality his own golden dreams—his own ideal creations, shining of their own internal luminance. And these divine sparks seemed as it were to range themselves like an avenue upon each side of some mysterious track which appeared to spring upward and upward through inter-planetary space and become lost in some ineffable Beyond.

A great wave of joy swept him.

"It is the Way," he murmured ecstatically. And then he turned to repeat the words of the Presence, but there was

no Presence there;—only a wonderful diffused luminousness and the multitude of twinkling stars.

But beatitude possessed him, and he lay there rapturously whispering over and over to himself, "It is the Way!—it is the Way!—it is the Way!"

A long time afterward there came to that place four travelers, dusty and parched from the long traverse of that arid wilderness. And, glimpsing from afar the gleam of water, they hastened their steps to the spring. But beside the crystal stream they beheld stretched the body of a man and it gave them pause.

"Is not this the old Poet of the Altai?" asked one of the travelers.

"His zither is shattered. Look. He must have fallen upon it," remarked the second.

"He is dead," commented a third awesomely.

But the fourth traveler stood for a few minutes in silence.

"No," he said softly, "he is not dead. He is alive—alive forevermore!"

And indeed as they contemplated the old Poet, lying with arms outstretched and face upturned to the early dawn, there seemed to have passed some strange transfiguration upon his countenance. All signs of age had fled away, and he lay faintly smiling like a dreaming child, full of an abiding stillness, peace and joy.

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Trials, temptations, disappointments—all these are helps instead of hindrances, if one uses them rightly. They not only test the fiber of character, but strengthen it. Every conquered temptation represents a new fund of moral energy. Every trial endured and weathered in the right spirit makes a soul nobler and stronger than it was before.

—*James Buckham.*

# CONSECRATION

*By Lola Haynes*

(Written on July 23rd, 1928, to commemorate the preliminary dedication Services of the Temple of the Universal Spirit.)

White worship filled the little
chapel fair,
White song, white words and purest
whitest prayer;
The altar gleamed with flowers,
gem-like, rare,
The Presence shone and Holiness
was there.

Soft golden chime notes fell, a
cooling shower;
They seemed to float from some
far ivory tower;
And consecration bloomed within
that hour—
Deep in our hearts, we felt it
stir and flower.

And there was sense of joy and
blessedness,
And warmth of love; we felt its
soft caress
As Jesus felt a touch midst throng
and press
And poured on womanhood His ten-
derness.

White angel wings dried tears ere
they could start—
And there was balm for every weary
heart
And stillness—never felt in busy
mart.
We thank Thee, Lord, for this day
set apart.

# THE TEMPLE OF THE UNIVERSAL SPIRIT FINAL CONSECRATION

The final dedication of the Temple of the Universal Spirit at Ananda-Ashrama on Sunday, October 21st, marked a culminating moment in the fruitful achievement of Swami Paramananda during his twenty-two years in America. There had been two preliminary consecration Services, one in July and one in August, to make possible the use of the Temple itself and the Out-door Auditorium, though both were far from completion. The present dedication was of the finished Temple. The date chosen was the time of the great Festival of Divine Mother in India, the salient feature of which is the reconciliation of warring factions. At the close of this Festival each one embraces not only his friends, but his enemies also. There must be no ill will toward any one, otherwise the blessing of the Festival is lost. It is one of the deepest traditions of India and one specially fitting to imbed in the nascent tradition of this new Temple of the Universal Spirit which stands above everything for universality and tolerance, the salient characteristics of all the Swami's teaching.

The Ashrama has already established a name for its unfailing welcome to all sects and creeds, nationalities and races. The Temple is placing a new and stronger accent on this universal note. It contains shrines to all the great world religions and its windows show pictures in stained glass of Temples, shrines and pagodas of Egypt, Greece, Japan, China; Christian, Buddhist, Jewish, Mahommedan and Hindu.

On Sunday, the twenty-first, six hundred people climbed the steep slopes of the Sierra Madre foothills to take part in the two Services. The parking places of the Ashrama were crowded with cars and the winding stone-edged paths of the

gardens were filled with enthusiastic visitors. All were loud in their praises of the Temple with its large patio, its curved arched cloisters and the marvellous views visible through them. The Temple was crowded to its doors for the morning Service, some being unable to get in. In the afternoon over a hundred people were obliged to content themselves with seats in the patio or outside the windows.

Swami Paramananda spoke at both Services. In the morning he lay stress on the unbounded scope of the Temple, expressing the hope that people of all faiths and all races would find a home there and closing with the statement that it had been built with loving hands "for the good of many and for the happiness of many." He told how the Ashrama workers had toiled not only through long days, but also through whole nights to make it ready, how the finishing touches had been laid upon it by the gifted members of the Ashrama. One had decorated the walls, another the wood work, still another had installed all the electric fixtures which are among the beautiful features of the new building; another had woven the curtains which are drawn across the sanctuary when no service is going on. Others had hung the doors, put in the hardware and done all the carpentry; while one had written the words and music for an anthem which was sung at both Services.

In the afternoon the Swami dwelt on the primal need of universal tolerance, void of condescension or compromise, to heal the wounds of the world and to cure its evils. Everyone was deeply impressed by his words and went away with a larger point of view and an expanded love of humanity.

As a spontaneous expression of the universal harmony and brotherhood of man voiced in the Swami's address, all those who came to the first Service were invited to remain and partake of a Hindu dinner served on small tables ar-

ranged under the trees on the high terrace of the Cloister. The dinner was prepared by the two Bengali Sisters of the Ashrama who are both skilled cooks as well as the Swami's able assistants. Fully a hundred people availed themselves of the invitation.

### Durga Puja

The festivities did not close with the dedicatory Services on Sunday, but the Divine Mother Feast continued for the usual three days. On Monday and Tuesday public Services were held in the Temple at 8 o'clock in the evening, and everyone felt them to be unusually uplifting in the new Sanctuary silent except for the Swami's musical voice and the chanting of the choir. On Wednesday evening there was another Service followed by a reception to dedicate the new Library at the northwest corner of the Temple patio. Despite its spaciousness it was so filled that it was necessary to give the dancing in the patio outside. Two of the Ashrama household, the Cleveland sisters, gave a beautiful temple dance. They are exceptionally gifted dancers and the effect of the shimmering skirts and flashing jewels in the moonlight was lovely to see. Madame Brodeur sang several delightful selections, among them the Swami's poem "Sunset on the Ganges" adapted to the music of "Le Nil." There were also two songs, the words and music of which were written by Sister Devamata, the Sister herself playing the accompaniments. The chief artist of the evening was Mr. Gaillard, one of the two leading cellists of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He played one selection at the Service and three others at the reception. He is a cellist of remarkable power and grace and gave the deepest pleasure to all who heard him. One of the most interesting features of the evening was the singing of two delightful Bengali songs by Srimati Gayatri Devi, of India, who accompanied herself on the *esraj*, an Indian stringed instrument.

DEC 29 1928

VOLUME XVII NUMBER 10

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

# VEDANTA MONTHLY

# Message of the East

December, 1928

# Temple of the Univeral Spirit

Issued by

ANANDA-ASHRAMA

LA CRESCENTA, L. A. CO., CALIF.

(Extension of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, Established 1900)

Entered as second class matter, Feb. 14, 1924, at the Post Office at La Crescenta, Calif., Box 83, under act of March 2, 1879.

Accepted for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized June 17, 1924.

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SINGLE COPIES, 25c

$2.00 A YEAR

Published Monthly Except in August and September

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*MESSAGE OF THE EAST*

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

"Light shall come again from the East."
—Tyndall.

Published Monthly except in August and September

Vol. XVII. December, 1928 No. 10

# UNFAILING LAMP

*By Swami Paramananda*

TRANQUIL, transcendent, unfailing lamp,
Like a star of the far-distant realm,
Dost thou shine with gentle glow at
the sanctuary door,
Revealing hidden path and awakening
ever-fresh hope in the heart of weary souls.
If perchance my eyes are dimmed or
distracted by the world's glamour
Yet do thou ever show me His compassion
At whose door Thou dost shine.

# UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

As every drop of water sprinkled by the clouds reaches the sea, even so do prayers offered to God, no matter under what name, reach the throne of the Most High.

—*Pandava-gita.*

I shall think of our soul as of a castle, formed of a single diamond or of a transparent crystal, in which there are many rooms just as in Heaven there are many mansions. . . . Some of these are above, others below, others on either side; and in the centre, in the midst of them all, is the chiefest of them, where many things most secret pass between God and the soul.—*Santa Teresa of Jesus.*

Children of men! the Unseen Power, whose eye
For ever doth accompany mankind,
Hath looked on no religion scornfully
That man did ever find.

—*Matthew Arnold.*

To obliterate every other religion than one's own is a sort of Bolshevism in religion which we must try to prevent. We can do so only if we accept something like the Hindu solution, which seeks the unity of religion not in a common creed but in a common quest.—*Professor S. Radakrishnan.*

For all things throughout there is but one and the same order; and through all things, one and the same God, the same substance, and the same law. There is one common reason, and one common truth, that belongs unto all reasonable creatures.—*Marcus Aurelius.*

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.—*St. Luke.*

# TEMPLE OF THE UNIVERSAL SPIRIT

*By Swami Paramananda*

**(A combination of two addresses delivered by the Swami at Ananda-Ashrama; one, at the preliminary dedication Services of the Temple, July 22, 1928; the other at the final dedication, October 21, 1928.)**

We have gathered together here to consecrate this place of worship; but first I shall have to ask you to overlook any inconvenience you may be caused.* We feel your discomfort very keenly, because you have come here as our guests, and the spirit of service is always the main factor in our undertakings.

There are many things which we are not able to do because of lack of time. Time becomes an element of drawback. This is the reason why in ancient days people who entered into a life of meditation, altogether disregarded the idea of time, space and causation, losing themselves in the thought of the Infinite. Our modern life does not permit us to do this to the same extent, but it is a good thing that time occasionally makes us aware of our task and gives us a greater incentive for speed. I am telling you this, because we could not dedicate the Temple without giving you the background. Things have been moving here with great swiftness for the last three weeks in order that all might be in readiness, and even this morning some of the workers worked till four o'clock and began again at five. This will show you the eagerness for service which everyone here holds in his heart as the practical demonstration of spiritual life.

It is fitting that so many voices are singing in harmony. The music of it, I know, has reached more than just the ear. And as I sat silently listening, I heard other voices in the air—the birds blending their notes,—giving us the upliftment, the

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*Because of overcrowding, the Chapel was full, and many were sitting outside in the Court.

soul-impetus we need to make this day fruitful. It is a day when we are naturally inclined to think more deeply, more profoundly than we do under ordinary circumstances. It is for me especially a day of consecrated feeling, and sanctity, when the soul expands with the vision of universal idealism. What is it to dream of a universal ideal?

"The true Christian," writes Sydney Smith, "loves the good under whatever temple, at whatever altar he may find it." And Sri Ramakrishna tells us: "A truly religious man should think that other religions are also so many paths leading to Truth. The light of the gas-lamp illuminates various localities with varying intensity, but the sustenance of the light—the gas—comes from one common reservoir. So the religious teachers of all ages are so many lamp-posts through which is emitted the light of Spirit flowing constantly from one Almighty Source." To speak of a gas-lamp may seem a little out of date, but there is nothing out of date in the thought which permeates this saying. To-day it is not the sect, not the dogma, not the creed that is winning the souls of men. I have realized this more and more as I have gone about in my travels. Everywhere people are reaching out for something bigger, more inclusive. In spite of themselves, they want to merge, to come together, without any limitation, in the great dream of brotherhood, the great dream of unity, the great dream of the realization of One Deity. Last year when I stood—there in the Malay States—before an assembly, not just of one or two nationalities, but of Americans, English, Europeans, Chinese, Japanese, Siamese and Burmese, this dream of the Commonwealth of Humanity—the Temple of the Universal Spirit—which had been burning in my soul,—took definite form.

*Visvamandir*, that is what I call this little temple. It is a Sanskrit term signifying Universal Temple—the Spirit of

the Universe, or Temple of the Universal Spirit. I speak of it as little, not because its ideal is small, but only in the sense that we give the attribute of littleness to anything we cherish. The question may come to your mind: "Have we not enough temples and chapels and churches; what is the use of adding another? And can man worship Universal Spirit?" You may think that by trying to hold any concept so stupendous, so all-embracing, he may scatter his forces, and lose altogether the connection he has made through his own particular faith. This is one of the arguments often put forth by those who seek to uphold creed and dogma. While the building has been going on, I have asked these questions myself, perhaps with even greater intensity. For though you may come here with enthusiasm, though you may be appreciative of what has been done, you have not given as much thought as have I, to the bringing of this dream to fruition. What is its import? What is it going to mean to others? And why should we build something on the mountain-top?

It is on this that I want to speak, and I hope that the Divine Power may give me inspiration. Our thought has been not so much to arrange a program as to prepare the Sanctuary, not so much to make ready a sermon as to create an atmosphere. I have wished that it were possible to consecrate this shrine without a word, for the real consecration is silent prayer. We can, however, make our prayer to speak, and the hymn or supplication felt in our soul, to have its outburst or overflow into the world of men. In the exuberance of our feelings we must have some outlet in order to share with others, and that is what this temple stands for.

One of the prophets has said: "The house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains and people shall flow into it. . . . And I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord and their substance unto the Lord of the whole

world." The Lord of the whole world! "There are neither two Gods, nor three, nor four; but one." This sounds like St. Paul. It is, however, from one of the ancient Vedic revelations, and I shall make it the basis for what I am going to tell you. These little niches which you see along the walls, each dedicated to a particular faith; these windows with their pictures of famous places of worship, are to remind us of the great spiritual impulse which has existed in this world from all time, inspiring the hearts of men. What you are receiving now, is it not the continuity of that which was in the past? Can we bury what has given us life, or discard what has given us impetus? Can we look without reverence upon anything which has led us thus far and is going to lead us farther. It is not that we should think any less of our own particular faith, but as we follow that faith, whether it be the teaching of Christ or of Buddha, Confucius or Mahabir —the founder of Jainism,—whether we draw our inspiration from Judaism or ancient Hinduism, that we should not forget that these are all the varied expressions of the One.

Above the entrance to this temple there is a Sanskrit text: *Ekam-eva-dvitiam*—"Truth or God is One without a second." You may say: "There is nothing very unusual in that; do we not know that God is infinite? Have we not all these things in Christ's teaching?" Of course you have, and the same ideas you will find in Lord Buddha's expression, as well as by other master-spirits. Over the Buddhist niche there will be some text from his teaching, such as: "Hatred is never conquered by hatred; it is conquered by love. This is an eternal principle." Can you improve that, any of you? I would like to have you. Christ taught men to love their enemies; so did Lord Buddha teach his disciples. There is nothing new and there is not going to be anything new. We are not trying to give something sensational or mystifying,

but rather that which will help us gain true spiritual expression. We have plenty of ideas and ideals and theories; what we need is their practical application, a consciousness of the reality behind them. How can we call our God infinite and all-loving and at the same time turn our back on someone and say, "He has no God"? In every turn of life we must seek to realize that we are children of Divinity and as such, as a part of great humanity, all are our brothers and sisters.

First, last, and forever we are one, because we have one Origin; but it takes strength, courage and inspiration on the part of man to realize this. It is not enough to form a league or a society of universal brotherhood. We must become charged with the spirit—the immensity of it. I have told you again and again, in relation to this temple, that we do not feel that the ideal which inspired our hearts is attained merely because we have built a little shrine. That is only the beginning. We want to see men inspired with such fervor, with such fire that they will not only say, "Christ taught love for all, even for one's enemies," but they will demonstrate it in their lives. People talk of universality, but if any one fails to join their particular cult or creed, they feel that there is no salvation for him.

India has stood for something quite different. Only in her ancient idealism do we find practical tolerance. Now you will cry: "Oh, you are going to preach India!" If that were so I would have a shrine dedicated only to India. It would not suit me; it would not be large enough for the spirit which imbues me and is giving the impetus for a dream and a vision which encircles and encompasses all the hearts, and all the lives, and all the feelings which pulsate through the great universe. As I come from India, however, naturally I must tell you of that which we may draw from the heart of India—her practical idealism. You have all heard of the

banyan tree, how it keeps on spreading and spreading its shade and beneficence. It is very symbolic of India's faith. We find in history that when the Jewish people were driven from their own soil, some of them came to India; but India did not try to absorb them. On the contrary, the Hindus helped them to build their synagogues. The Mohammedans came and built their mosques side by side with the Hindu temples. The Parsees came and preserved their belief. The Christians came and built their churches and cathedrals, while among the Hindus themselves many sects sprang up, and many shrines. Back of it all, however, was the consciousness: "God is only One. We invoke Him differently, we conceive Him differently, because He is infinite and endless." There is practical strength in that realization: God is One; Truth is One, and we are all the children of that one Deity. As such, we must be united in our hearts, in our prayers, in our feelings, in our sufferings, sharing everything with each other, thus helping to remove the miseries of the world.

As I try to express these things, my words, I find, are inadequate. I feel like saying what Emerson did: One who would speak of That, his voice should be lyrical, his heart full of music. Yet there are times when even music becomes dumb before that great Silence, which rising from deep, deep down in man's inner consciousness, where stillness resides, pronounces the sonorous chant of the soul: "*Shanti—Shanti—Shanti.*" Let there be beauty; let there be love; let there be peace, descending from the heart of God to heal the hearts of men—their restlessness, their feverish longing. It is in this way that the great revealers of Truth scatter their benediction and their light. Can we differentiate light? Can we say, "This light comes from the East, and therefore, since we live in the West, we cannot recognize it? It is God's Light; it is the universal Light, and this little house of worship

stands here to remind us of that—of the great concept which we have enshrined here. It is a great concept. We all recognize how much it is needed in the world to-day for the healing of the nations. Even though we may not be interested in it from the religious point of view, just for the preservation of the human race we need this unity, and there is nothing that has greater power to bind the hearts of men than religion; also nothing has done more harm than misguided fanatical zeal.

The Temple of the Universal Spirit means unity, not a mixture of faiths. Each has its own place, just like these pillars. The pillar that is holding an arch is no less important than that which is supporting the Holy of Holies. They are all knit together; that is the great plan. You and I, Christian and Buddhist, Hindu and Mohammedan, East and West, North and South, are but different parts of this cosmic universe, of which not one part can be forgotten without our lacking that much to make us complete. Man has the power to turn his face in every direction, and when he does so, what is it that he finds? That the same life which pulsates through him is pulsating through every living being—through every thing. This brings him to a point of blessedness. Instead of being fearful, he begins to feel kinship even with those he thinks he cannot trust. There comes a larger vision and a greater happiness.

To-day we have so much to remind us of our physical life. Rather do we need something to remind us of our spiritual heritage. It is a great secret that the less we think of the physical, the more we feel the great reality behind. We are all looking for saving grace. What is going to protect us? What is going to save our civilization? Every one is asking this. Guns will not do it; nor inventions, nor science, nor poison-gas. What then will bring us peace? "Where I

am there is peace." That is the motto which adorns our sanctuary door. Not in wealth, not in worldly possessions, not in kingdoms, not even by selling our own soul shall we find it; but—"Where I am there is peace." Only when man senses the Divine Presence can he know peace.

We want this sanctuary to be a spiritual centre, not essentially Hindu, not marked with Christian dogma or Buddhistic creed, but significant of all the beautiful things born in the world of spirituality, that we may draw inspiration from them and be reminded in every turn of our divine birthright. Do not think for a moment that we feel that what we have been able to accomplish here is going to fill the need of a universe. The real Temple is not this little Shrine. If it is the will of the Divine Being, I pray that He will infuse the souls of men with His Light and Life so that there may be more places like this, more hearts coming together without any friction or sense of superiority, for in that way we shall realize the great dream of a Universal Temple. Also do not have the idea that we think we are the first to hold this dream. One of the things I said at the outset, when we were consecrating the ground for this building—and I must repeat it again—is that in all the ages there have been men who have outgrown the world of theory, the world of fanaticism, and have held this unifying ideal.

Symphony of religions! I do not find any other expression that gives the idea so well. A symphony where many different instruments play together in one accord. Each has its importance,—like these stained-glass windows. If one of them should fall out you would miss it at once. Same way it is in this great universe. If one brother becomes crippled, one heart full of grief, the other hearts must feel. We cannot expect to love everybody at once, but we have the power to love those who are immediately connected with us,

and after a while we come to a point where we no longer recognize boundary lines. That is what true religion does for us. Religion to me does not mean dogma, theory, or nationalism. It is something which we realize in our hearts; our littleness melts away; we feel more; we love more. Herein lies the practical aspect of any faith.

When in our prayer we can transcend ourselves, we get a glimpse into the heart of Divinity. The heart of Divinity is not confined in the crust of dogma and ritual. These may help us as they have helped mankind throughout the ages, but we have to go beyond and beneath all forms and ceremonials to find what is fundamental—unchanging. It is this unchanging Reality that is the theme of this sanctuary. We have come here to worship a Loving Spirit, One who knows no hatred,—not a God of tradition, a God of revenge. There is no tyranny, there is no vengeance, no unforgiving nature in the concept of God—your God, my God, everybody's God. Pause and think for a moment if this is not so. Is there any religion in the world where men do not look upon the Lord as All-loving, All-mighty and All-beneficent? Nor can I believe that anyone can come and pray, no matter at what shrine—Christian church, Hindu altar, Buddhist pagoda, or Mohammedan mosque—unless his heart is cleansed and sanctified, unless it breathes and pulsates with love.

Man is not born here accidentally. He has a distinct place, and he must fill his place. We should not take a negative point of view, that it does not matter what we do or say. Of course it matters. If we do not live the right kind of life we have no happiness to give ourselves or others. We have no peace; therefore we bring unrest to those around us, and then we say that this world is a terrible place. We create our own world. That is the way I feel in regard to this undertaking: We may not be able to inspire everyone to become

tolerant, broad and universal, but one thing we can do is to live according to our own light and radiate as much of that light as we can. If you, and I, and all of us try to do this, the world will be transformed. Think of what Christ gave for the good of humanity, of how Lord Buddha abandoned all his personal happiness in order to rescue man from his bondage of misery. You may be afraid to be fired with such an ideal; but there is no fear in Truth. There is no fear before the Light, and we certainly need the Light. What shall it profit us if our cities are glittering with artificial illumination and there is darkness within our soul? We are not really prosperous if the light of the soul is dim.

There is no age limit; there is no time limit; there is nothing that can hinder the soul. Such are the thoughts which we want to radiate from this place. We are not seeking conversions. A man who has the Light, his very presence helps others. Our objective is that we may be inspired to live the ideal life, the life that brings man face to face with his Maker. And may our hearts be so freed from the blemish of petty feelings, hatred, anger, misunderstanding, lack of balance, that we may be secured by the Spirit of God, and help to extend that security to our fellow men.

Brotherhood is not a dream; it is not a vague idea. It is a fundamental fact. If we have impoverishment to-day in our spiritual life, it is because we are not trying to make it practical. It must be made practical, for it will fire our hearts with enthusiasm and give us the incentive, the inspiration to cross over the difficulties which stand before us. Faith, courage, hope,—these we must have in great abundance, and we shall have them once we find the means for going within. Christ went to the mountain-top to pray in seclusion, and we have gathered on a mountain-top in order that we may think freely and have the courage to seek out our spiritual heritage.

We have pulled down a whole rock to raise this temple, and now, as we consecrate it, let us pray that we may have His light to shine upon us. May he direct our footsteps, give us inspiration, and cause our hearts to pulsate with His Spirit, so that we may do nothing other than what He would have us do, or think, or speak. Then will we become true instruments "for the good of many and the happiness of many." I am repeating this from the great and compassionate Buddha. It is one of my favorite thoughts, and was the first thing I pronounced on this hill about six years ago: Let this place be for the good of many and the happiness of many. In this way I would like to extend my prayer, hoping that you who have come here will feel that our efforts—marked to-day with a special consecration—may be for the good, the happiness, the health, and the blessing of many. I ask you to dwell on this thought with all the power of your soul.

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## LED BY A STAR

*By Julia P. Dabney*

Led by a star we go—
Led by a star!
Groping through mists below,
Reaching afar;
Striving to know—to know
All that we are—
Led by a star!

Led by a star we climb—
Slow, oh so slow!—
Out of the mists of Time
Learning to grow
Up to the heights sublime,
Where we shall know—
Led by a star!

# RELIGION IS ONE

*By Friedrich Max Muller*

We live in two worlds: behind the seen is the unseen, around the finite the infinite, above the comprehensible the incomprehensible.

There have been men who have lived in this world only, who seem to have never felt the real presence of the unseen; and yet they achieved some greatness as rulers of men, as poets, artists, philosophers, and discoverers. But the greatest among the great have done their greatest work in moments of self-forgetful ecstacy, in union and communion with a higher world; and when it was done, such was their silent rapture that they started back and could not believe it was their own, their very own: and they ascribed the glory of it to God, by whatever name they called Him in their various utterances, whether Apollo or the Muses, Egeria or the Daimonion. And while the greatest among the great thus confessed that they were not of this world only, and that their best work was but in part their own, those whom we reverence as the founders of religion, and who were at once philosophers, poets, and rulers of men, called nothing their own, but professed to teach only either what their fathers had taught before them, or what a far-off Voice had whispered in their ear.

That highest self-surrender marks the highest point which human greatness can reach, and no ruler, no poet, no artist, no philosopher or discoverer can claim such sway over millions of human hearts as the so-called founders of the ancient religions of the world, whose very names are often unknown to us, and whose glory of countenance no human pencil has ever portrayed.

The ancient religions were not founded like temples or palaces, they sprang up like sacred groves from the soil of

humanity, quickened by the rays of celestial light. In India, Greece, Italy, and Germany not even the names of the earliest prophets are preserved. And if in other countries the forms and features of the authors of their religious faith and worship are still dimly visible amid the clouds of legend and poetry, all of them, Moses as well as Zoroaster, Confucius, Buddha, and Mohammed, seem to proclaim with one voice, that their faith was no new faith, but the faith of their fathers; that their wisdom was not their own wisdom, but, like every good and perfect gift, given them from above.

*Moses* preached the God of his fathers, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the laws which he brought down from Mount Sinai were written, he says, with the finger of God.

*Zoroaster*, whoever he was, believed what the patriarchs had believed before him, and the law which he taught was not what wise men had agreed upon, but what Ahura Mazda, the Wise Spirit, had revealed to him, as a friend to a friend.

*Confucius* resented being called the founder of a new faith. "I am a transmitter," he said, "not a maker. I believe in the ancients and love them."

Even *Buddha* declared that he had come on the same path on which many had come before him; though he alone, of all religious teachers, knew of no heavenly friend to reveal to him what he, the Enlightened, knew.

And *Mohammed*, when he first taught Islam, that is, Surrender, only proclaimed anew the old God of the fathers, of Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, and Jacob; what he wrote was not his own, but the words which Gabriel had spoken to him when showing him "the eternal original of the Koran."

What should we learn from these prophets who from distant countries and bygone ages all bear the same witness to the same truth?

We should learn that though religions may be founded

and fashioned into strange shapes by the hand of man, religion is one and eternal.

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# THE LEGEND OF ST. CHRISTOPHERUS

*By Franz Trautmann*

(From "Legends and Tales of Old Munich," translated by A. Curtis-Stahl)

In Canaan, there lived one by the name of Opherus, an unbeliever like his parents, and exceedingly tall, broad and mighty, and he took no thought of fine clothes, although his father was powerful and rich. Rathermore, he went about clad most shabbily, and as much as possible, just as God had made him. As he continued to grow bigger and stronger all the time, he became so proud of his size and strength, that he wished to serve no other than the most powerful lord, so he made close inquiries as to where the mightiest king lived. Someone told him of a proud king far away from Canaan. He proved to be so powerful and mighty in land and people that he seemed to Opherus to be the greatest and he offered himself in his service.

One day a strolling player happened by. He sang and acted before the king, and spoke much of the vanities and pleasures of this world, and of other things, which one must guard against. He mentioned the Wicked Enemy often, and whenever the king heard that name, he crossed himself. When the player had departed, Opherus asked the king what he had meant by the sign he had made on forehead, mouth and breast. Said the king: "I meant thereby that I protect myself from him whose name was mentioned. You ought to do that in the future also, because he flies away then if he were there invisible. But if one does not make that sign, he gets power over one's soul and brings ruin upon it." "If that is so," said Opherus, "you are afraid of him. His power is greater, then,

than yours. Since I know that, I do not wish to be your bondsman any longer, for I serve only the mightiest." He forsook the king at that and inquired everywhere for the Wicked Enemy. Everyone knew him by name and was frightened at it, but no one could say where he was.

One day, he happened into a deep forest, and there he saw a group of knights riding toward him, and he who led them wore black armor, and was of a stern and forbidding aspect. But he smiled when he saw Opherus and rode off from the others toward him and said: "Welcome! You are the mighty Opherus, and I know what you seek and whom! Come and serve me, for I am the most powerful king in the world, the Wicked Enemy!"

Then Opherus said: "As you know everything about me and are the Wicked Enemy, I will serve you." And they rode off together, and went into a cave down under the earth. It was dark and barren there, and the new lord of Opherus said to him, he wished to show him his power, and whatever he commanded he would make come to pass.

Said Opherus, "Then let the ground there become green, and the darkness light!"

Upon that a blithe meadow appeared suddenly, and on it was a lovely garden with trees full of fruit, and strange animals wandered around, and wonderfully plumaged birds flew here and there, and above it all was a light blue like the sky.

Then Opherus said: "Now I want to see all that destroyed. Let a storm come!"

And it was not long before clouds began to come, and lightning, thunder and hail, and destroyed everything, and darkness was there as at first. Opherus saw from that and much else, that he had found the most powerful lord and king, and followed him out of the earth, and stayed with

him, doing all he was told to do without asking why.

One day, they were going together along a narrow lane near which a cross stood, and when Opherus' master noticed that, he took another road. Opherus asked him why he went out of the way. Said the other: "A cross stands on that road and I do not like to pass it." Opherus asked, "Does it mean anything?"

Said the Wicked Enemy: "To be sure! It reminds me of one, called Jesus Christ, and I cannot bear that!"

"Ho! Ho!" said Opherus, "If you fly from His sign, He must be more powerful than you! I will not serve you longer, but will serve Him, no matter what He tells me to do!" Thereupon he left the Wicked Enemy, and inquired everywhere for that mightiest of kings, Jesus Christ. And some told him He was everywhere, and others said He was in heaven, but all praised His mildness and goodness, although He demanded great sacrifices. Opherus knew not what to believe and kept on seeking until, one day he came upon a recluse kneeling before a cross, and he thought, "He can tell me if anyone can," and asked where to find the great king, Jesus Christ, whom he wished to serve, and he told of all he had heard.

Said the recluse: "What you heard is really true. He is in heaven, and yet on the earth. He is master of all things, and king of all kings. Whoever wishes to serve him must fast and pray, must kill the sinful life within him, and must be full of meekness toward small as well as great."

To that Opherus said: "I do not wish to fast and pray, what good can that do me or Him? I do not know anything about sin, but I will try meekness. So what do you want me to do first?"

Said the recluse: "Yonder is a wide river, and there is no bridge. If you are in earnest about meekness, take your place

there day and night, or build yourself a hut, and when anyone comes, large or small, carry him across without uttering a murmur. Do that for love of your master and king, and if you never see Him in this world you will see Him when you die!"

Said Opherus: "That is a long way off, and what if I should not see Him even then?"

The recluse answered: "You must not doubt. Only do your duty, and then I will come and baptise you, and whenever you die after that, your soul will surely see your Lord." Upon that, kind Sir Opherus went forth, and toiled day and night carrying people across the river. He hoped the recluse would come and baptise him, and began to fear that he had not done his work aright, and that perhaps he would never see his Lord, either here, or after death, and at last he began to think that the recluse had been making fun of him.

But one night, he heard a voice like that of a child calling out, "Opherus, arise!" Kind Sir Opherus rose from his bed of rushes, at once, but could see no one. The same thing happened a second time, but the third time, he saw a lovely child standing upon the bank, and it said: "Thou art faithful to thy work, carry me across the river!"

So kind Sir Opherus took the child up on his right arm and his staff in the left, and went into the water. Then the waves began to rise gradually as if they would flood the banks and the child on his arm grew heavier and heavier like lead, and at last the water was so high that Opherus thought he would soon drown, and the child was so heavy, that he could scarcely carry him. Then he stopped a minute and said: "Child, I do not know whether to turn back or go forward, the water is so deep and the danger so great! And thou art as heavy as if I were carrying the whole world upon me!"

Then the child spoke in its marvelous voice and said:

"Thou art carrying not only the world, but Him who is Lord of heaven and earth, and King of all Kings! Behold, I myself will baptise thee!" And the child covered Opherus' head with water several times, saying, "I baptise thee in the name of God the Father and Mine, God the Son and His, and God, the Holy Ghost, Three and One. Thou art baptised and thy soul is saved. And thou shalt no longer be called Opherus: I name thee Christopherus, because thou didst carry Me thy Lord Jesus Christ, whom all must serve, not that they be humbled but that they become great and godly."

And Sir Christopherus said: "Ah, thy speech is sweet, would that it is no dream!"

And the dear, fair Christ-child said: "No, it is no dream, thou wilt be blessed in my presence. I will give thee a sign. Turn back to the shore and plant thy dry staff in the earth, and as it blossoms, so wilt thou blossom in heaven when thy earthly body has withered away."

Thereupon the child disappeared from his arm, the water sank to its former level, and Sir Christopherus returned to the bank, where he stuck his dry staff into the earth, and prayed all night upon his face. And in the morning, when he looked up his staff was full of green leaves and flowers. Upon that, he was filled with joy and exclaimed: "Oh Lord, because this has come to pass, I believe firmly, and I will teach others, that they likewise believe!" Then he called the recluse to him, and they kneeled down together and prayed with most devout hearts, and the recluse begged Christopherus for his blessing. He gave it to him accordingly and when he looked again, the staff was bare as before; and he took it and departed from thence and converted many people until his beatified death.

That is the legend of St. Christopherus and whoever did not know it before, knows it accurately now.

# MOTHER-HEART

*By Sister Daya*

In the life of the human family many people have had visions, and of these visions there are endless chronicles, both in the East and in the West; their value, however, to those who read, consists not so much in the sights and sounds of wonder which they describe—marvellous though these may be to the seer himself—as in the love that they convey, in the purity, the humility, the simple ecstatic faith, the whole blissful nature of the person, which occasionally shines through the revelation.

Of such are the "Shewings" which God made to the Lady Julian at Norwich, in the year of our Lord 1393. Of this gentle lady we know practically nothing directly, but a great deal indirectly by virtue of the flavor of her writings. Blomfield's History of Norfolk contains only this slight reference in connection with the old Church of St. Julian, outside of Norwich: "In the east part of the churchyard stood an anchorage in which an ankeress or recluse dwelt till the Dissolution, when the house was demolished, though the foundations may still be seen (1768). In 1393 Lady Julian, the ankeress here was a strict recluse, and had two servants to attend her in her old age. This woman was in these days esteemed one of the greatest holiness."

In the record of the "Shewings" she tells us no word of herself save that she is "a simple creature—unlettered;" but she reveals to us a character strong, loveable and fine: gentlewoman through and through—a flower of the spirit, yet with such large humanness that she could know no rest till the problem of human sin and suffering was made clear to her in the light of divine all-enfolding Love, and in that Love, despite her reverence for Holy Church, she caught no glimpse

of eternal damnation, so far as we can discover. She writes that a threefold longing possessed her: To have mind of Christ's passion; to have bodily sickness in youth—at thirty years—(in order to know the cleansing and the spiritual regeneration that would follow it), and to have of God's gift three wounds,—"The wound of very contrition, the wound of natural compassion, and the wound of steadfast longing toward God." On the eighth of May, when she was thirty and a half years old, these longings were fulfilled. Out of a strange illness which seized her on that day, lasted through to the next and brought her to the doors of death, were born the sixteen "Shewings" contained in her "Revelations."

These come to us, as is natural, through the forms of her particular faith. In their teachings of God and the soul, sin and redemption, they are purely Catholic. But though we may not, all of us, be able to fit our belief in with hers, I think there is none but would be glad to share the tender solicitude of her heart for all that sin and suffer, the sweetness and greatness of her faith, balanced by calmness of judgment and power of review, and the childlike unquestioning response to the never-failing compassion of God as she understood it. For there was no pretense there—in that living relationship between her soul and its Origin.

The burden of her song is love—a love which no fearful threat of God's wrath could frighten or deceive, and which colored her faith and her vision with its own hue. So in the very end she writes: "And from that time that it was shewed I desired oftentimes to learn what was our Lord's meaning. And fifteen years after, and more, I was answered in ghostly understanding, saying thus: *Wouldst thou learn thy Lord's meaning in this thing? Learn it well: Love was His meaning. Who shewed it thee? Love. What shewed He thee? Love. Wherefore shewed it He? For Love. Hold thee therein and*

*thou shalt learn and know more in the same. But thou shalt never know nor learn therein other thing without end.*"

Something of this comes to us in the words which she makes Christ speak to the sinner who in the depth of despair feels the Divine touch and turns toward the Divine forgiveness: "And then sheweth our courteous Lord Himself to the soul—well merrily and with glad cheer—with friendly welcoming as if it had been in pain and in prison, saying sweetly thus: *My darling I am glad thou art come to me: in all thy woe I have ever been with thee; and now seest thou my loving, and we be oned in bliss.*"

Do we not sense the fragrance of her own sanctity in the picture she draws for us of the Virgin:

"In this shewing He brought our Blessed Lady to my understanding. I saw her ghostly, in bodily likeness: a simple maid and a meek, young of age and little waxen above a child, in the stature that she was when she conceived. Also God shewed in part the wisdom and the truth of her soul: wherein I understood the reverent beholding in which she beheld her God and Maker, marvelling with great reverence that He would be born of her that was simple creature of His making. And this wisdom and truth: knowing the greatness of her Maker and the littleness of herself that was made,—caused her to say full meekly to Gabriel: *Lo me, God's handmaid!* . . . This greatness and this nobleness of the beholding of God fulfilled her with reverent dread, and withal she saw herself so little and so low, so simple and so poor, in regard of her Lord God, that this reverent dread fulfilled her with meekness. And thus by this ground of meekness she was fulfilled with Grace and with all manner of virtues, and overpasseth all creatures."

Finally is not the fervent beauty of surrender along the path of devotion—the way of childlike love and trust—ex-

pressed with a delicacy that no mere skill could imitate, in her description of the Mother-love of God?

"But now behoveth to say a little more of this forthspreading, as I understand in the meaning of our Lord: how that we be brought again by the Motherhood of Mercy and Grace into our Nature's place, where that we were made by the Motherhood of Nature-Love: which kindly Love, it never leaveth us.

"Our kind Mother, our gracious Mother, for that He would all wholly become our Mother in all things, He took the ground of His works full low and full mildly in the Maiden's womb. . . . That is to say; our high God is sovereign wisdom of all: in this low place He arrayed and dight Him full ready in our poor flesh, Himself to do the service and the office of Motherhood in all things. The Mother's service is nearest, readiest, and surest; nearest, for it is most of nature; readiest, for it is most of love; and surest, for it is most of truth. This office none might, nor could, nor ever should do to the full, but He alone. We know that all our mothers' bearing is bearing us to pain and to dying: and what is this but that our very Mother, Jesus, He—All-love—beareth us to joy and to endless living? Blessed may He be! . . . The mother may give her child suck of her milk, but our precious Mother, Jesus, He may feed us with Himself, and doeth it full courteously and full tenderly with the Blessed Sacrament that is precious food of my life. . . . The mother may lay the child tenderly to her breast, but our tender Mother, Jesus, He may homely lead us into His blessed breast. . . .

"This fair lovely word *Mother*, it is so sweet and so close in Nature of itself that it may not verily be said of none but of Him; and to her that is very Mother of Him and of all. To the property of Motherhood belongeth natural love, wisdom, and knowing; and it is good: for though it be so that

our bodily forthbringing be but little, low, and simple in regard of our spiritual forthbringing, yet it is He that doeth it in the creatures by whom that it is done. The kindly, loving mother that witteth and knoweth the need of her child, she keepeth it full tenderly, as the nature and condition of motherhood will. And as it waxeth in age, she changeth her working, but not her love. And when it is waxen of more age, she suffereth that it be beaten in breaking down of vices, to make the child receive virtues and graces. This working with all that be fair and good, our Lord doeth it in them by whom it is done: thus He is our Mother in Nature by the working of Grace in the lower part, for love of the higher part. And He willeth that we know this: for He will have all our love fastened to Him. And in this I saw that all our duty that we owe, by God's bidding, to fatherhood and motherhood, for reason of God's Fatherhood and Motherhood, is fulfilled in true loving of God; which blessed love Christ worketh in us. And this was shewed in all the Revelations, and especially in the high plenteous words where He saith: *It is I that thou lovest.* . . .

"The mother may suffer the child to fall sometimes, and to be hurt in diverse manners for its own profit, but she may never suffer that any manner of peril come to the child, for love. And though our earthly mother may suffer her child to perish, our heavenly Mother, Jesus, may not suffer us that are His children to perish: for He is All-mighty, All-wisdom, and All-love; and so is none but He,—blessed may He be!

"But oftentimes when our falling and our wretchedness is shewed us, we are so sore adread, and so greatly ashamed of our self, that scarcely we find where we may hold us. But then willeth not our courteous Mother that we flee away, for Him were nothing lother. But He willeth then that we use

the condition of a child: for when it is hurt, or adread, it runneth hastily to the mother for help, with all its might. So willeth He that we do, as a meek child saying thus: *My kind Mother, my gracious Mother, my dearworthy Mother, have mercy on me: I have made myself foul and unlike to Thee, and I nor may nor can amend it but with thine help and Grace.* And if we feel us not then eased forthwith, be we sure that He useth the condition of a wise mother. For if He see that it be more profit to us to mourn and to weep, He suffereth it, with ruth and pity, unto the best time, for love. And He willeth then that we use the property of a child, that evermore of nature trusteth to the love of the mother in weal and in woe.

"Fair and sweet is our heavenly Mother in the sight of our souls; precious and lovely are the gracious children in the sight of our heavenly Mother, with mildness and meekness and all the fair virtues that belong to children in Nature. For of nature the child despaireth not of the mother's love, of nature the child presumeth not of itself, of nature the child loveth the mother and each one of the other children. These are the fair virtues, with all other that be like, wherewith our heavenly Mother is served and pleased. And I understood none higher stature in this life than Childhood, in feebleness and failing of might and of wit, unto the time that our gracious Mother hath brought us up to our Father's bliss. . . . Thus I understood that all His blessed children which be come out of Him by Nature shall be brought again into Him by Grace."

One time, when travelling in southern Italy, my feet were happily led to the hills above the gulf of Salerno—even to Ravello, by Richard Wagner called "The Giver of Infinite Dreams." A tiny hamlet, set high above an opal sea, one of countless villages which mark with ancient bell-tower these

immemorial slopes to which they cling. I can recall the magic of its sun and shadow, of its groves of lemon trees trained like climbing roses, of its perfumed breath; but most of all, there stands out in memory one night when, just at sundown, from the Moorish campanile there suddenly rang out a wild carillon of bells—calling—calling to the sister churches beyond—and beyond—and beyond. And as we listened enthralled, on the evening stillness which no sound could shatter, floated the response—faint fairy-like carillons—over-tones and under-tones, echoing and blending, as the Sisters made reply. The darkness deepened, and even as the bells rang on, from isolated hamlet and from clustered dwellings, near and remote, shone forth a thousand starry lights. No house but showed its beacon. Then we learned—we of the prosaic modern world—that it was held by the simple hearts dwelling in those hills, that every Thursday night the Christ-child walked the earth. So bells pealed forth to welcome Him, and flickering candles were set by patient hands to illumine His pathway and guide His steps, perchance to some lowly peasant door.

Triumph of faith! For a moment, like an echo from the past, we had heard it in the signal bells, we had seen its inextinguishable beauty and radiance in the tiny answering lights. "What children!" we said, and yet how we loved them for their simple gesture. Such a child was the Lady Julian who in her trust drew close to the infinite Mother-heart and felt its blessings overflow her. Such a child was the blessed Francis, who walked the Umbrian hills with God, held sweet converse with his "Brother Wind" and "Sister Water," and bore on his hands and feet the mark of his Lord's passion. Such children have all the holy been from the beginning—dwelling blissfully in a world whose joy we have never known and whose very existence we question.

Primitive faith! Remnant of the childhood of our race! Still it throws its glamour over us. Thus at Christmastide we ring our bells in memory of the Christ-child and His mother, we frame their pictured faces in gold and holly, we place lights within our windows and upon our Christmas trees in His Name; but alas and alas! we do not really believe. Otherwise—who knows?

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# CHRISTMAS CAROLS

## Carol of the Russian Children

(White Russia)

Snow-bound mountains, snow-bound valleys,
Snow-bound plateaus, clad in white,
Fur-robed moujiks, fur-robed nobles,
Fur-robed children, see the light;
Shaggy pony, shaggy oxen,
Gentle shepherds wait the light;
Little Jesu, little mother,
Good Saint Joseph come this night.
Fur-robed moujiks, fur-robed nobles,
Fur-robed children wait the light.
Light, Light, Light.

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## Tryste Noel

(In the Manner of the Eighteenth Century)

The ox op'neth wide the doore
And from the snowe he calls her inne,
And he hath seen her smile therefore,
Our Ladye without sinne.
Now soon from sleepe a starre shall leap,
And soon arrive both King and hinde;
But Oh, the place co'd I but find!

The ox hath husht his voyce and bent
    True eyes of pitty ore the mow,
And on his lovelie neck, forespent,
    The Blessed lays her browe.
Around her feet full warm and sweete
    His bowerie breathe doth meeklie dwell!
    But sore am I with vain travel!

The ox is host in Judas' stall,
    And host of more than onlie one,
For close she gathered withal
    Our Lord, her little Sonne.
Glad hinde and king their gyfts may bring,
    But wo'd tonight my tears were there,
    Between her bosom and His hayre!

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## Harken, Harken!

(Old Czech)

Harken, harken, mother dear,
Hark, my father, come and hear!
I have brought you news exciting,
Gladsome news for your delighting,
Wonders that the Lord has shown,
Such as earth has never known.

Lo! in Bethlehem to-day,
Christ is cradled in the hay,
Joseph and His mother holy
Watch him in a manger lowly,
Humble oxen standing by,
Warm the house where He must lie.

Shepherds came to greet their King,
Brought their pipes to play and sing.
Out amid the hills and heather
They had never played together,
So each played a tune he knew,
Keeping time with stamping shoe.

## THE NATIVITY

*From the Apocryphal Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus Christ*

The following accounts we found in the book of Joseph the high-priest, called by some Caiaphas:

He relates, that Jesus spake even when he was in the cradle, and said to his mother: "Mary, I am Jesus the Son of God, that word, which thou didst bring forth according to the declaration of the angel Gabriel to thee, and my father hath sent me for the salvation of the world."

In the three hundred and ninth year of the aera of Alexander, Augustus published a decree that all persons should go to be taxed in their own country. Joseph therefore arose, and with Mary his spouse he went to Jerusalem, and then came to Bethlehem, that he and his family might be taxed in the city of his fathers. And when they came by the cave, Mary confessed to Joseph that the time of bringing forth was come, and she could not go on to the city, and said, "Let us go into this cave." At that time the sun was very near going down. But Joseph hastened away, that he might fetch her a midwife; and when he saw an old Hebrew woman who was of Jerusalem, he said to her, "Pray come hither, good woman, and go into that cave, and you will there see a woman just ready to bring forth."

It was after sunset, when the old woman and Joseph with her reached the cave, and they both went into it. And behold, it was all filled with lights, greater than the light of lamps

and candles, and greater than the light of the sun itself. The infant was then wrapped up in swaddling clothes, and sucking the breasts of his mother St. Mary. When they both saw this light, they were surprised; the old woman asked St. Mary, "Art thou the mother of this child?" St. Mary replied, she was. On which the old woman said, "Thou art very different from all other women."

St. Mary answered, "As there is not any child like to my son, so neither is there any woman like to his mother."

The old woman answered, and said, "O my Lady, I am come hither that I may obtain an everlasting reward." Then our Lady, St. Mary, said to her, "Lay thine hands upon the infant," which, when she had done, she became whole. And as she was going forth, she said, "From henceforth, all the days of my life, I will attend upon and be a servant of this infant."

After this, when the shepherds came and had made a fire, and they were exceedingly rejoicing, the heavenly host appeared to them, praising and adoring the supreme God. And as the shepherds were engaged in the same employment, the cave at that time seemed like a glorious temple, because both the tongues of angels and men united to adore and magnify God, on account of the birth of the Lord Christ. But when the old Hebrew woman saw all these evident miracles, she gave praises to God, and said, "I thank thee, O God, thou God of Israel, for that mine eyes have seen the birth of the Saviour of the world."

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Blessed is the man who has the gift of making friends; for it is one of God's best gifts. It involves many things, but above all, the power of giving out of one's self, and seeing and appreciating whatever is noble and loving in another man.—*Thomas Carlyle.*

# REPORT

Swami Paramananda spent the latter part of the month of November in Boston. On his journey from the West he stopped in Cincinnati and delivered two lectures before large and appreciative audiences. The day after his arrival *in* Boston, which was Sunday, he conducted two services and gave a lecture before the "Fellowship of Faiths." A warm welcome awaited him and he purposes to make his stay there an intensive one. He hopes to return to the Ashrama to celebrate the Christmastide in the new Temple with the fragrance of flowers and the song of birds to add beauty to the services.

Besides stopping in Cincinnati, Swami Paramananda also made a short visit in St. Louis and met all his old friends who expressed great joy in seeing him after a long absence. They urged him strongly to return there and give a series of lectures which he will probably do later on.

* * *

A group of faithful adherents of Ananda-Ashrama have banded themselves into an "Association of Friends," the purpose of which is to extend the usefulness of the work and to share with its founder and head, Swami Paramananda, as well as with his devoted workers, the responsibilities of the Ashrama. The Swami and his immediate household have carried the burden so cheerfully and efficiently for the past five and a half years that the public has imagined that it was an endowed work. Now the members of the larger household have asked to have their share in bearing it. They have agreed to form a membership, the dues of which will be elastic to suit the resources of the contributor, and they now open the doors of this Association to all who wish to take part in this new and loving effort. All those near or far who desire to become members of this Association may communicate with the Committee of Friends at the Ashrama.

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