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GIFT
FEB 19 1935

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

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East



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Swami Vivekananda

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Message of the East

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

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

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O DESIRE OF ALL HEARTS

A Hymn of Praise

(From the "Gnosis of the Light," translated by A. A. F. Lampflugh.)

O Alone-begotten of Light, I praise Thee! . . .
O Light Invisible, who art before all those beyond vision, I praise Thee! . . .
O Unknowable One of Light, who art beyond all that is unknown, I praise Thee!
O hermit of the Light, who art above all solitaries, I praise Thee! . . .
O Thou True Unmoved One of Light, who by Thy Will movest all things, I praise Thee!
O Silence of all things, Silence of Light, I praise Thee! . . .
O Thou Only Universal Mystery, I praise Thee! . . .
O Thou Repose of them who seek repose, I praise Thee!
Thy children search for Thee because Thou art their father.
Hear the prayer of Thy children, for Thou art He who is hidden in every place,—
He who is the Desire of all hearts.

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THE TRUE TEACHER

By Swami Vivekananda
(COMPILED)

The true teacher is one who can throw his whole force into the tendency of the taught. Without real sympathy we can never teach well. Give up the notion that man is a responsible being, only the perfect man is responsible. The ignorant have drunk deep of the cup of delusion and are not sane. You, who *know* must have infinite patience with these. Have nothing but love for them and find out the disease that has made them see the world in a wrong light, then help them to cure it and see aright. Remember always that only the free have free will; all the rest are in bondage and are not responsible for what they do. Will as will is bound. The water when melting on the top of the Himalayas is free, but becoming the river, it is bound by the banks; yet the original impetus carries it to the sea and it regains its freedom. The first is the "fall of man," the second is the "resurrection." Not one atom can rest until it finds freedom. . . .

Freedom and highest love must go together, then neither can become a bondage. We can give nothing to God; He gives all to us. He is the *Guru* of *gurus*. Then we find that He is the "Soul of our souls," our very Self. No wonder we love Him, He is the Soul of our souls; whom or what else can we love? We want to be the "steady flame, burning without heat and without smoke." To whom can you do good, when you see only God? You cannot do good to God. All doubt goes, all is "sameness." If you do good at all, you do it to yourself; feel that the receiver is the higher one. You serve the other because you are lower than he, not because he is low and you are high. Give as the rose gives perfume, because it is its own nature, utterly unconscious of giving.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

He alone enters the kindom of heaven who is not a thief of his own thoughts. In other words, guilelessness and simple faith are the roads to that kingdom.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

Blessed is the man that doth meditate good things in Wisdom, and that reasoneth of holy things by his understanding. He that considereth her ways in his heart shall also have understanding in her secrets. —*Ecclesiasticus.*

The residue of life is short. Live as on a mountain.

—*Marcus Aurelius.*

The Pilgrim they laid in a large Chamber, whose window opened towards the sun rising; the name of the Chamber was "Peace," where he slept till break of day, and then he awoke and sang. —*John Bunyan.*

Happy is that fortunate man who, in meditation, prepares for the last journey by means of the knowledge of God.

—*The Bustan of Sadi.*

Is there so small a range
In the present strength of manhood, that the high
Imagination cannot freely fly
As she was wont of old? prepare her steeds,
Paw up against the light, and do strange deeds
Upon the clouds? —*John Keats.*

All perfect things are garnered up in the perfect residence of the good mind, the wise and the true. —*Zoroaster.*

The wise sages of the great sage collect their mind and collect their thoughts. —*Svetasvatara Upanishad.*

What is grace of contemplation but beginning of joy.

—*Richard Rolle of Hampole.*

HEIGHTS OF MEDITATION

By Swami Paramananda

(Words spoken in connection with a moonlight Meditation Service, held at Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, California.)

Let us lift our thoughts to high places!

Just as when we climb the mountain-top we are able to look down and see so much more than we can in the valley, and feel a greater freedom,—an atmosphere which gives a sense of exaltation; in the same way, let us climb the inward heights, leaving behind and beneath us all that belongs to the lower order of being.

In the great forests of India, in days of yore, the illumined sages, as they sat together with their disciples, indeed prayed, indeed chanted their invocations, thus creating an atmosphere of peace. They laid great accent on That One from Whom we have descended, from Whom we have acquired our life,—all that we are and all that we can ever be,—seeking in this way to ally themselves with that Spirit, teacher and taught,—blending their hearts like a great symphony in a mighty volume of thought, aspiration, humility and high resolve. "May the Supreme Being protect us from all evil!" thus they prayed, "May that Infinite One, that Unalterable One, protect us from everything that is not eternal! May He bestow upon us His blessing!"

What is the greatest blessing? Understanding, wisdom. The greatest blessing is being able to climb to the mountain-top and remain there.

"May we, as we study, find illumination!" they chanted.

May we, as we study, be illumined—as we are studying here tonight under this auspicious moon. I call it such because we all feel the spell of it; the very atmosphere seems to give us a certain benediction and an impetus to thought, to beautiful thoughts, high, holy and strong thoughts. In

such moments, may our study bring us not merely a little knowledge about things, a little technique, but "may our whole being be flooded with light, leaving no room for doubt."

"May we never strike a discordant note!"—their chant continued, and this wish was not limited to that especial occasion or time. Discord at any time is a most pernicious experience; it breaks the rhythm in our body, our mind, our heart; it disturbs our thought and prevents the possibility of higher vision. So the prayer was uttered: "May we never strike a discordant note! Peace,—Peace,—Peace!"

Sometimes you may wonder why so much emphasis is laid upon this simple word, Peace. Because it is the fulfillment of life's great ideal. If we are at war with ourselves, as often we are, all our high and lofty resolutions amount to nothing. Wise men have ever taught the way of peace, peace not only with those who live with us—this one or that with whom we have had some difference—but with the entire universe. "I make my peace," the ancient sages chanted, "with whatsoever exists in this wide creation,—with the West and with the East, with the North and the South—above and below."

These things can seem to us either sensational and sentimental or they can become for us such living realities that they will produce an immediate result even in our physical body, and we shall feel their blessing throughout our entire being. That is why tonight, as I sit with you here, I am opening my heart with these vital thoughts, so that all of you, every one of you, may go deep down and tune your own lives—your hearts, your minds, your bodies,—bringing them into such perfect accord, that there will be no longer any warring within you, but only wonderful, rhythmic harmony within and without.

AS THEY KNEW HIM

From "The Life of the Swami Vivekananda."

(Compiled from the book by his Eastern and Western disciples. Published from the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas, India.)

After his [Swami Vivekananda's] return from the tour in Eastern Bengal and Assam, the Swami, to please his *gurubhais* [brother disciples] and disciples, forsook his plans for still further work and dwelt at the Monastery for seven months in comparative retirement. People flocked to the Belur Monastery in these days from all parts of India to receive the Swami's blessings and instructions. He moved amongst them like a father amidst his children; and of each newcomer to the Monastery he made loving inquiries.

Sometimes he would wander over the Monastery, nude except for a *kaupina*. Or in the simple garment of the *Alkhalla,* the long robe of the wandering monk, he would stroll, immersed in thought, along the village paths that led from the Monastery gates to the highroad. Or again, he might seat himself wheresoever the moment found him, by the Ganges side, or under the spreading branches of some inviting tree in the Monastery compound, there to meditate on his Guru, or the Mother, or the Infinite. And often he would return to those fiery moods of old and make the Monastery throb with the spiritual consciousness, as he had done in the Baranagore Math of former memories.

With reference to his more intimate discourses with his *gurubhais* and disciples, they were most diverse and complex. They included such topics as: the meditation on death and the renunciation that comes therefrom; the necessity of boundless faith, especially in one's own self; of strict Brahmacharyam and of the making of REAL MEN in the work of the regeneration of the Motherland. In fact, his discourses included the whole range of Hindu Religion, Philos-

ophy, Sociology, Science and numerous other departments of knowledge, on which he dwelt in a masterly way, throwing new light on them.

Often in this time, the Swami would be lost in song or meditation, dwelling in regions other than this world. And yet, on many days, he himself would supervise the cooking arrangements and prepare delicacies for the inmates of the Monastery. And again he would be visited by deeper moods, and by thoughts of India and India's problems; and in such moods he would now and then pass some casual remark that vibrated with the great power of his thought. At times his very appearance was so saturated with a power beyond this world that he became unapproachable. Altogether how sweet and how majestical was his personality in these days! The way in which he spoke even of trifling matters would make the monks ponder on each word. Now he would be playful, then serious, but at all times, an amazing personality, of which each new manifestation was, to those who loved him, both human and divine at one and the same time. Did he sit silent by himself, they would look upon him, some with tenderness, others with awe. For his thoughts were always prodigious like high mountains, or luminous like suns. When he sat in silent abstraction in the grand isolation of his soul, they loved the tense and rapt expression of beatitude and power written on his face. Sometimes he would remain in his room for hours without seeing anyone. Then he would emerge in radiance, or in wonderful peace, or in shining power, full of spiritual glory. Who knows what had transpired!

He was always frank and free, ruling not so much by the authority of a system, but by the vigorous power and presence of his personality and love. He would rouse the monks from sleep in the early hours of the morning. He himself

was always an early riser. He would order them to see that the regulations were strictly observed and followed. He would send them to practise austerities; but he would see that they did not go too far. His love would not allow them to suffer. Indeed he *loved* them. It was all excitement and activity, and spiritual fervor and great training at the Monastery. On the other hand, the garden, the cooking, the care of the cows which the Monastery kept, in fact the very simplest things, interested him. And to this day the monks recall how, boylike, he would dispute with the Swami Brahmananda with regard to the boundaries that separated the pasture-field for the cows from the latter's vegetable and flower gardens, and the alleged trespassing on each other's rights. On many occasions, he had the whole Monastery roaring with laughter at the jokes or funny stories he would tell.

After coming back from Eastern Bengal, the Swami devoted himself to a number of pets he had acquired from various sources, including Bagha, the Math dog, a she-goat which he playfully called "Hansi," or "Swan," several cows, sheep, ducks, geese, an antelope, a stork, and a kid which he named "Matru," and on the neck of which he placed a string of tiny jingling bells. Wheresoever he went, the kid accompanied him. And those who came to the Math in great reverence to see the man who had shaken the Parliament of Religions and dictated spirituality to the East and the West, were overcome with a wonderful love for his sweet human personality when they found him playing and running hither and thither like a boy of five years, to amuse his favorite kid. When it died, he was as sorry as a child, and he told his disciple, Sarat Chandra, "How strange! Whomsoever I love and fondle die early!" These animals loved him exceedingly and he would speak with them as though they were actually human. The kid had access to

his room and used to sleep on a couch there as though it had every right to do so. Sometimes the Swami would go to "Hansi" and beg her for milk for his tea, as though she could refuse or give as she might choose. Swamiji dearly loved his animals. Even in a letter to an American lady-disciple, dated the seventh of September, 1901, he writes fondly concerning them:

"The rains have come down now in right earnest, and it is a deluge, pouring, pouring, pouring, night and day. The river is rising, flooding the banks; the ponds and tanks have overflowed. I have just now returned from lending a hand in cutting a deep drain to take off the water from the Math grounds. The rain-water stands at places several feet deep. My huge stork is full of glee. My tame antelope fled from the Math and gave us some days of anxiety in finding him out. One of my ducks unfortunately died yesterday. She has geen gasping for breath more than a week. One of my waggish old monks says, 'Sir, it is no use living in the Kali Yuga [Iron Age] when ducks catch cold from damp and rain, and frogs sneeze.' One of the geese was losing her feathers. Knowing no other method of treatment, I left her some minutes in a tub of water mixed with a mild carbolic solution, so that it might either kill or heal her,—and she is all right now."

At times when the Swami found his body getting more and more incapable of further work, and a sufficient number of workers not coming forward to take up his work, he used to feel despondent. His hopes were centered on a band of intelligent young men of character who would renounce everything for the welfare of others, and who would lay down their lives in working out his ideas for the good of their own selves and of their country. He used to say that if he got ten or twelve youths fired with a faith like that of

Nachiketas he would turn the whole current of thought and aspiration of his country into a new channel.

Speaking one of these days to Sarat Chandra on the above subject and on the ideals and means that were imperatively necessary to be taken up in India at the present day, he suddenly warmed up and exclaimed:

"Keeping the national ideal of renunciation which comes out of devotion to the Lord before your eyes, you have to work fearlessly with the strength of a lion, heedless of the fruits of action and careless of criticism. . . . We must revivify the country through the thundering notes of the Vedic rhythm. In all our spheres of activity we should display the austere loftiness of spirit which heroism breathes. In following such an ideal of manliness alone is there the welfare of the Motherland. If you for one can mould your character in the light of such an ideal, hundreds of people will like to do the same by following your example. But, mind you, never for a moment swerve an inch from the path of righteousness. Never let weakness overcome you. In all your actions in daily life, always, manifest moral courage. Thus and thus alone will the blessings of the Divine Mother descend upon you."

On the disciple telling him that at times he felt weak and faint-hearted, Swamji resumed:

"At those times you should bring in such thoughts as, 'Am I not the son of *him*? Being his follower, how can I stoop so low and be wanting in courage?' Knocking down all debasing thoughts and weakness, stand up like a hero saying, 'I am possessed of infinite strength, I am posssessed of purified intellect, I am possessed of supreme wisdom, I am the blissful Brahman!' [the Absolute One] . . . See Brahman in everything,—and then no more will weakness, cowardice and low spirits dare to approach you!"

Speaking in this strain, Swamiji came downstairs and sat facing the West, on the canvas cot under the mango tree in the courtyard, as he often used to do. His eyes were luminous with a great mood. His whole frame seemed stirred up with a strange spiritual consciousness. Pointing to the Sannyasins and Brahmacharins who were about him there, he exclaimed to the disciple, "And where shall you go to seek Brahman? He is imminent in all beings. *Here, here* is the visible Brahman! Shame to those who neglecting the visible Brahman set their minds on other things! Here is the Brahman before you as tangible as a fruit in one's hand! Can't you see! Here—here—here is this Brahman!"

He spoke these words in such an inspiring way that they felt a thrill in their souls and a strange perception of Reality. Over all came the Peace and Insight of deep meditation. Their figures in those tense moments seemed as though carved of marble, so motionless and hushed in silence had they become! Swami Premananda was then returning from his bath in the Ganges with a kamandalu of the sacred water in his hand, and was on his way to the worship in the chapel. Seeing him, the Swami exclaimed, "Here—here is the visible Brahman! Here is the visible Brahman!" Hearing these words, his gurubhai stopped suddenly and was rooted to the spot, as it were, like one bound by a spell. He too fell into deep meditation, inebriated with God-consciousness. About a quarter of an hour passed in this way, and then Swamiji, addressing his *gurubhai,* said, "Now go to your worship." Then only, Swami Premananda, and gradually all others, returned to the sense-plane, to the world of individual ego and egoism.

The Swami, speaking of the incident, said to the disciple some time later, "Did you see what happened today? They were all immersed in meditation. They are all Sri Rama-

krishna's sons! As soon as told, the Brahman woke up within them!" On the disciple telling him that he had also felt like that, but it had now passed away, he said, "My boy, this will come to you in time of itself. But first you must work —work for the good of others—work to raise the veil from eyes blinded by Maya! . . . Giving away one's self and all for the good of others—this is true Sannyasa. . . . Alas! How can we have the heart to put a morsel to our mouths when our countrymen have not enough wherewith to feed or clothe themselves. . . . Seeing their poverty and distress, I think sometimes. . . . 'Let us throw away all pride of learning and study of the Shastras and all Sadhanas [spiritual disciplines] for the attainment of personal liberation, and going from village to village, devote our lives to the service of the poor . . . and through the force of our character and spirituality and our austere living, get money and the means wherewith to serve the poor and the distressed.' . . . How I wish to demolish the barriers of 'Don't-touchism' and go out and bring together one and all, crying, 'Come, all ye that are poor and destitute, fallen and downtrodden! We are one in the name of Ramakrishna!' Unless they are elevated, the Great Mother will never awake! What are we good for if we cannot provide facilities for their food and clothing! Alas! they are ignorant of the ways of the world, and hence fail to eke out a living, though laboring hard day and night for it. Gather all your forces together to remove the veil from their eyes. What I see clear as daylight is, that the same Brahman, . . . *is* in them as in me! Only, there is a difference in the degree of manifestation—that is all. Have you ever seen a country, in the whole history of the world, rise unless there was a uniform circulation of the national blood all over its body? Know this for certain, that no great work can be done by that body, one limb of which

is paralysed, in spite of the rest of its members remaining strong and healthy."

A lay-disciple now said to the Swami, "It is too difficult a task, Sir, to establish harmony and cooperation among all the varying religious sects and creeds that are current in this country, and make them act in unison for a common purpose." Vexed at hearing these words, Swamiji cried out in an excited voice:

"Don't come here any more if you think any task too difficult. Through the grace of the Lord, everything becomes easy of achievement. Your duty is to serve the poor and the distressed, without distinction of caste and creed. What business have you to think of the fruits of your action? Your duty is to go on working and everything will set itself right in time and work by itself. My method of work is to construct, and not to destroy that which is already existing. Read the histories of the world and you will see that invariably, at some particular epoch, a certain great man arose in some country and stood as the centre of its national life-goal. Influenced by his ideas, hundreds and thousands of people devoted their lives to the good of the world. You are all intelligent boys, and profess to be my disciples,—tell me *what* you have done. Couldn't you give away one life for the sake of others? Let the reading of the Vedanta and the practising of meditation and the like be left to be done in the next life! Let this body go in the service of others, and then I shall know you have not come to me in vain. Keep firm-fixed in your mind all that I have spoken to you today, and act on it. May Sri Ramakrishna be your help and guide! May His spirit abide with you all!"

Lo! I would pour my blood if it could stay
Thy tears . . . —*Light of Asia.*

PASCAL'S BLAZING VISION

By Evelyn Underhill

(From her book "Mysticism," published by Methuen & Co., Ltd., London.)

The Memorial of Pascal is a scrap of parchment on which, round a rough drawing of the Flaming Cross, there are written a few strange phrases, abrupt and broken words; the only news which has come to us concerning one of the strangest ecstatic revelations chronicled in the history of the mystic type. After Pascal's death, a servant found a copy of this little document, now lost, sewn up in his doublet. He seems always to have worn it upon his person: a perpetual memorial of the supernatural experience, the initiation into Reality, which it describes. Beyond what we can deduce from these few lines, we have no direct knowledge of the processes of Pascal's inner life: but we do know that this abrupt illumination came at the end of a long period of spiritual distress, in which indifference to his ordinary interests was counterbalanced by an utter inability to feel the attractive force of that Divine Reality which his great mind discerned as the only adequate object of desire:—

"L'an de grace 1654
"lundi, 23 novembre—jour de Saint Clement,
pape at martyr, et autres au martyrologe,
veille de Saint Chrysogone, martyr et autres—
depuis environ dix heures et demie du soir
jusques environ minuit et demie,
Feu."

"From half-past ten till half-past twelve, Fire!"

That is all so far as description is concerned; but enough, apparently, to remind the initiate of all that passed. The rest tells us only the passion of joy and conviction which this nameless revelation—this long, blazing vision of Reality—brought in its train. It is but a series of amazed exclama-

tions, crude, breathless words, placed there helter-skelter, the artist in him utterly in abeyance; the names of the overpowering emotions which swept him, one after the other, as the Fire of Love disclosed its secrets, evoking an answering flame of humility and rapture in his soul.

"Dieu d'Abraham, Dieu d'Isaac, Dieu de Jacob,
Non des philosophes et des savants.
Certitude. Certitude. Sentiment. Joie. Paix."

["God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, not of the philosophers and the scholars. Certitude. Certitude. Feeling. Joy. Peace."]

"Not the God of philosophers and of scholars!" cries in amazement this great scholar and philosopher, abruptly turned from knowledge to love.

"Oubli du monde et de tout hormis Dieu!"
["Forgetful of the world and of all save God!"]

he says again, seeing his universe suddenly swept clean of all but this transcendent Fact. Then—

"Le monde ne t'a point connu, *mais je t'ai connu.* Joie! Joie! Joie! pleurs de joie!"
["The world has not known Thee *but I have known Thee.* Joy! Joy! Joy! tears of joy!"]

Compare with the classic style, the sharp and lucid definition of the "Pensées," the irony and glitter of the "Provinciales," these little broken phrases—this childlike stammering speech—in which a supreme master of language has tried to tell his wonder and his delight. I know few things in the history of mysticism at once more convincing, more poignant than this hidden talisman, upon which the brilliant scholar and stylist, the merciless disputant, has jotted down in hard, crude words, which yet seem charged with passion—the inarticulate language of love—a memorial of the certitude, the peace, the joy, above all, the reiterated, all-surpassing joy,

which accompanied his ecstatic apprehension of God.

"Mon Dieu, me quitterez vous?"

he says again; the fire apparently beginning to die down, the ecstasy drawing to an end.

"Que je n'en sois pas séparé éternellement!"

"Are you going to leave me? Oh, let me not be separated from you forever!" — the one unendurable thought which would, said Aquinas, rob the Beatific Vision of its glory were we not sure that it can never fade. But the rhapsody is over, the Vision of the Fire has gone; and the rest of the Memorial clearly contains Pascal's meditations upon his experience, rather than a transcript of the experience itself.

It ends with the watchword of all mysticism, Surrender— "Renonciation, totale et douce" ["total and sweet"] in Pascal's words: the only way, he thinks, in which he can avoid continued separation from Reality.

A SONG FROM INDIA

Translated by John Moffitt

O King of Kings, reveal Thy sovereign form,
  Hide not away, now that I seek Thy grace!
Ah, look upon me with compassionate eyes
  And let me gaze upon Thee face to face!

I have laid down my soul before Thy feet,
  Unworthy offering as I do confess,
All soiled and covered with delusion's dust,
  And charred in the great fire of worldliness.

O gracious Lord, I am too near to death,
  Too close enwrapped in these foul snares of earth!
Ah, lift again to my expiring lips
  Thy nectar cup, and give my soul rebirth!

FAITH AND VISION

By Sister Devamata

Faith and vision are inter-locked and inter-dependable. They unfold in alternating rhythm. As vision widens, faith deepens, and deepened faith brings larger vision. Without faith, vision blurs and darkens; without vision, faith drops into bigotry and fanaticism. Coordinated, they carry to ultimate illumination. Both are essential elements in man's being. They form part of the frame-work of his higher nature, as the bony structure of his physical organism provides the supporting frame for his body. Every act of life is an act of faith and a proof of vision — not the vision of these outer eyes, but a vision born of a deeper, more penetrative inner sight.

If we had not unwavering confidence in the stability of Nature and the dependability of God, we would fear to go forward. When we breathe, we exercise faith—that there will be air to fill our lungs; when we walk, we practise faith —that the earth will hold and not engulf us. When we plough and sow, we have faith—that a harvest will follow. Nor do we doubt that planets will turn in their orbits, that sun will rise and set, tides ebb and flow, at the appointed hour.

Faith is the warp on which man weaves the pattern of his daily living. Experience of created things, it is claimed, rests upon sense perception; but if there were not a more stable foundation beneath the variable perceptions of our senses, our experience would contribute little toward our knowledge or toward our development. Sights, sounds, tastes, and smells in themselves deceive. Objects register on the retina reversed and must be turned right side up in our thought. Sounds reach us undefined, what they are is a matter of surmise. Touch, tastes, smells are still less definite.

One sense, it is true, corrects and interprets the other; but without faith in a steadfast Reality behind, our sense experience would leave us confused and adrift. St. Paul bears witness to this when he writes in his second Epistle to the Corinthians: "For we walk by faith, not by sight."

The spiritual equipment of all men is the same. They all have the same essential nature. Humanity has for its background Divinity and in the Divine there is neither differentiation nor division. "Alike am I to all beings," the Lord declares in the Bhagavad-Gita; and in the Bible we are told that God is no respecter of persons. He does not portion out His benefits in unequal parts and distribute them by favor. As His rain falls on those who do His pleasure and those who defy Him, as his sun shines on those who love and those who scoff, so does all mankind share equally in His spiritual gifts. Why then do men manifest them so unequally? Because they sense their presence but dimly. It is a question of awareness. We may possess great wealth yet if we are not aware of it, we are poor.

God buries a rich spiritual treasure in the heart; it is left to man to uncover it, when and how he will. Methods have been formulated, but in the end man must work out his own salvation. He must mine his own treasure. No one has access to his heart except himself, and in this hidden area of his being the will is given free play. He may choose his own time, but sooner or later he must bring forth his treasure from its hiding and make use of it in his daily living. His senses and intellect cannot suffice him.

"Intellect takes us along in the battle of life to a certain limit," Mahatma Gandhi states, "but at the crucial moment it fails us. Faith transcends reason. It is when the horizon is darkest, and human reason is beaten down to the ground, that faith shines brightest and comes to our rescue. It is

such faith that our youth require, and this comes when one has shed all pride of intellect and surrendered oneself entirely to His will."

Man must reach the Ultimate. There is a unitive instinct within him which will not let him rest until he has united hmself with the Whole. This cannot be accomplished by any outer means. Many eminent scientists now frankly acknowledge that by observation or experiment or mathematical calculation Reality cannot be apprehended. There will be always something which will elude telescope, microscope, crucible, and equation; a something which must be revealed, not discovered. It is here that vision and faith replace test-tube and lens. Every science has its tools and the tools by which higher revelation is perceived and transmitted are faith and vision.

Working with them as a strong aid is the imagination—not the power of dreaming dreams or of drawing fanciful mental pictures, but the power of anticipating tomorrow's vision. Without the foreshadowing of new ideals and new images of thought, faith would remain static and vision would be purely retrospective. The imagination carries both forward to unexplored realms of being, to fresh revelations of Reality. It guards faith from crystalizing and vision from growing dull.

Faith, among all spiritual gifts, is the most fundamental. Even love without it would not endure. Its power is limitless. Joined with vision, it makes the invisible, visible; the inaudible, audible; the intangible, tangible. It strikes deep into the essence of things, and sheds light where there was darkness. It reveals God to man, and man to himself.

The man of unflinching faith, who has mastered his senses, attains wisdom. —*Bhagavad Gita.*

WORDLESS COMMUNION

From Ancient Records

BROTHER GILES AND THE KING OF FRANCE

Saint Louis, King of France, went on a pilgrimage to visit the holy places throughout the world; and hearing the exceeding great fame of the sanctity of Brother Giles, the which had been among the first companions of Saint Francis, he set it in his heart and was fully purposed to visit him in person; for the which cause he came unto Perugia, where in those days the said Brother Giles dwelt. And coming up to the door of the house of the brothers, like a poor pilgrim and unknown, with few companions, he asked with great earnestness for Brother Giles, without telling the porter who it was that asked. So the porter went to Brother Giles and told him that at the door was a pilgrim that asked for him: and being inspired of God, it was revealed to him that it was the King of France. So straightway with great fervor he left his cell and ran to the door; and without further questioning, albeit they ne'er before had seen each other, kneeling down with great devotion, they embraced and kissed each other, with such signs of tender love as though for long time they had been close, familiar friends; but for all that, they spoke not, nor the one nor the other, but continued in this embrace, with these signs of love and tenderness, in silence.

And when as they had a long time continued together in the manner set forth above without having spoken together, they parted the one from the other, and Saint Louis went his way on his journey, and Brother Giles returned unto his cell.

When the king was gone, a certain brother asked one of his companions who it was that had embraced Brother Giles for so long a time; and he replied that it was Louis, King of France, the which had come for to see Brother Giles. When

this he told to the other brothers, they were exceedingly sorrowful for that Brother Giles had spoken never a word to him: and murmuring thereat, they said to him:

"O Brother Giles, why hast thou shown thee so discourteous as to say naught at all to so holy a king that had come from France to see thee and hear from thy lips good words?"

Replied Brother Giles:

"Dear brothers, marvel not thereat, for neither I to him nor he to me could speak a word; sith so soon as we embraced each other, the light of heavenly wisdom revealed and showed to me his heart, and mine to him, and thus through divine working, each looking on the other's heart, we knew what I would say to him and he to me, far better than if we had spoken with our mouths, and with more consolation than if we had sought to show forth in words the feelings of our hearts. Through the weakness of human speech, that cannot express clearly the secret mysteries of God, it would have left us all disconsolate rather than consoled; wherefore, know ye that the king departed from me with marvelous content and consolation in his soul."

—*From "The Little Flowers of St. Francis."*

THE FLUTE PLAYER AND THE SCHOLAR

Huan I. or Shua Hsia, who lived during the Eastern Tsin dynasty, A.D. 317-419, was in his youth a military official of note, finally rising to the prefectship of Yu Chou, where he maintained good order and gained great popularity. In the evening of his life, following the example of so many of his colleagues, he retired to a life of seclusion in Ching Chi, where he cultivated his literary and musical talents; in the latter art especially attaining great proficiency, being famed as the first musician of Kingnan. It is said that when he brought forth marvellous strains from the bamboo flute of Tsai Ying, which had come into his possession, the very

trees rustled their leaves in admiration, the blossoms cast their petals in ecstacy, while the fish in the stream below leapt for joy, and the birds above joined heartily in the chorus of appreciation.

The great scholar, Wang Hui Chih, so runs the tale, came from afar to pay his respects to this master-musician, and moored his boat near Huan I.'s retreat, while the latter discoursed sweet music on his flute. When the strains ceased, the visitor departed as he had come, feeling that words could but mar the sweet communion of their souls.

—A Chinese commentary on the subject of a painting by Shen Chou, famed artist of the Ming Dynasty.

MY WORLD AND MY GLOBE

By Sir Thomas Browne

Now for my life, it is a miracle . . . which to relate were not a history, but a piece of poetry, and would sound to common ears like a fable; for the world, I count it not an Inn, but an Hospital; and a place not to live, but to die in. The world that I regard is myself; it is the microcosm of my own frame that I cast mine eye on; for the other, I use it but like my Globe, and turn it round sometimes for my recreation. Men that look upon my outside, perusing only my condition and fortunes, do err in my altitude; for I am above Atlas his shoulders. The earth is a point, not only in respect of the heavens above us, but of that heavenly and celestial part within us: that mass of flesh that circumscribes me limits not my mind; that surface that tells the heavens it hath an end cannot persuade me I have any. . . .

Whilst I study to find how I am a microcosm or little world. I find myself something more than great. There is surely a piece of Divinity in us; something that was before the elements, and owes no homage unto the sun.

FACING GODWARD

*From "Spiritual Teachings of Swami Brahmananda"**

(A dialogue between the Swami and a devotee.)

The Swami Brahmananda. — A pure, healthy mind is what is required. Remain under the shelter of His lotus feet. He will do all that is needful; you have only to keep your mind fixed ever on Him. . . . Struggle and struggle — you will have to struggle hard. Begin this moment; no more delay, no more doubt, no more speculation. Oh, the joy of realization, the satisfaction of it. Just a little of it even will suffice for you. Strive, strive to cross over *Mahamaya* (Divine illusion); yes, in this very life you must go beyond it. Strive hard; it is indeed a difficult task. Faith, unshakable faith is necessary. Without that you cannot succeed. Be determined; remove all doubts; then you can tear the veil of *Maya* and see God. Faith, you know, is the only resource; strengthen it by all possible means.

Devotee. — If doubt creeps in at times, what shall I do?

The Swami. — You cannot have unshakable faith until God-realization comes. It is possible only when you have the vision of God, when you have realized Him. Till then, you can only make an approach to true faith — nothing more. Whenever doubts disturb the even balance of the mind, hold fast to God and pray. If you can do so over and over again, your conviction will be firm and invincible. Doubts surely will come, but drive them out in this wise. Think within yourself: "God is, but because of my lot I cannot see Him. The moment His grace descends, that moment I shall be blessed by seeing Him." Do not lose faith. Cling to Him always and under all circumstances.

This gross mind cannot comprehend God. God is beyond mind, He is far beyond intellect. The world that you see is

*A direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and first President of the Ramakrishna Mission.

within the domain of the mind; the mind is its author, the mind has created it, and beyond it the mind cannot go. But *through Sadhana* (spiritual practice) a subtle mind opens up — the mind of spirit. That is already in you, but in the form of a germ. In course of time this germ will develop and unfold. The gross mind will lead you to the subtle. The subtle shines forth in the glory of its own self. It is at this stage that you can have the vision of finer truths. The world with all its diversity will then lose all charm for you. It can delude you no more. Then you will pass your time, day and night, completely lost in the contemplation of God and His glory. . . .

Devotee. — In this world certain works seem to us as duties; how are we to do these, Sir?

The Swami. — "This world is God's. Nothing in it can I call my own; He is getting His work done by me; verily nothing belongs to me." If you can do what you call your duties with this attitude, then they will do you no harm; your work will no longer bind you. "This thing belongs to me, that is mine," this attitude you must banish from your mind. In its stead, say: "Everything is God's, even myself; I am placed here by His Will, and I shall be removed hence the moment He wills it." Let this be your principle of life. Do not identify yourself with the things of the world. Do your duties with this attitude; and also do them thoroughly and well, so that people may not perceive your real motive and blame you. But in the heart of hearts know, earthly things you have none. God is the Doer and you the instrument. Through you, He will get done what He likes to have done.

Devotee. — Maharaj, in my attempt to do work in this way, if at times I forget the true motive, if egotism asserts itself and if attachment prevails, what then?

The Swami. — Do not yield to depression. Never allow

yourself to be depressed. If at times you forget your true motive, never mind. Begin once more with redoubled energy and see that it does not recur again. Doubts and confusion? Who can kill them before God-realization is attained? They will come and they will go. That is their nature. But do not get dejected. Shake off despair, shake off disappointment, shake off doubt; make no compromise. Have infinite tenacity, and infinite energy. "To do or die" — let this be your motto.

THOUGHTS FROM THE JOURNAL

Of Henri Frederic Amiel

We must learn to detach ourselves from what is capable of being lost, to bind ourselves only to what is absolute and eternal, and to enjoy the rest as a loan, a usufruct.

Put personal ambition away from you, and then you will find consolation in living or in dying, whatever may happen to you.

Be what you wish others to become. Let yourself and not your words preach for you. . . . At the sight of a *man* we too say to ourselves, "Let us also be men."

To be disinterested is to be strong, and the world is at the feet of him whom it cannot tempt.

Heaven, hell, the world, are within us. Man is the great abyss. . . . Unbelief is death; and depression and self-satire are alike unbelief.

Dare to be what you are, and learn to resign with a good grace all that you are not, and to believe in your own individuality. . . . Nothing resembles pride so much as discouragement.

Watch then, disciple of life, watch and labor toward the development of the Angel within you! . . . Bring God down into your heart.

VIVEKANANDA THE FAR-SEEING

By Sister Nivedita

(From her book, "The Master as I Knew Him.")

Vivekananda's passion of pity . . . did not concern itself with the Indian people only. True to his Oriental birth, he would always defend the *small* farmer or the *small* distributor, against those theorists who seem to consider that aggregations of business are justified in proportion to their size. He held that the age of humanity now dawning would occupy itself mainly with the problems of the working folk, or as he expressed it, with the problems of the *sudra*. When he first landed in the West, he was greatly attracted, and his letters show, by the apparent democracy of conditions there. Later, in 1900, he had a clearer view of the underlying selfishness of capital and the struggle for privilege, and confided to someone that Western life now looked to him "like hell." At this riper stage of experience, he was inclined to believe that China had gone nearer to the ideal conception of human ethics than newer countries had ever done, or could do. Yet he never doubted that for man, the world over, the coming age would be "for the People."

"We are to solve the problems of the sudra," he said one day, "but oh, through what tumults! through what tumults!" He spoke like one gazing direct into the future, and his voice had the ring of prophecy; but though the listener waited, hoping eagerly for more, he only became silent, lapsing into deeper thought.

O God of mountains, stars and boundless spaces!
O God of freedom and of joyous hearts!
When Thy Face looketh forth from all men's faces,
There will be room enough in crowded marts.

—*MacDonald.*

CAN YOU TELL ME?

Questions and Answers

(From the records of a Tuesday Night Class, Vedanta Centre, Boston)

Question. — Will you please interpret your meaning of "God helps those who help themselves."

Swami Paramananda. — It is simple enough. When we really are rightly resolved and try with earnest spirit to do our part, then, even though we may seem to fail, it will not be long before a power will come to help us. Once a disciple came to Sri Ramakrishna. He was distressed because he could not meditate, pray or do what the master had asked him to do. "I go before the altar and try day after day, as you told me, but my efforts seem absolutely useless. I am confused; teach me." Sri Ramakrishna replied: "My boy, do not be troubled. All this that you call absolutely useless will have its fruit. Though your mind may not obey, there is a Supreme Intelligence who hears even in your struggles, and because you struggle, some day He will bestow His mercy upon you."

That is one way to interpret it. There is another way. We can think of God not as something apart from us, but as one vast, all-enfolding Life and Consciousness. When we strive with our whole soul, when in thought we have joined our whole being with That, have felt that there was no power but that God-Power, then we find God's blessing, not apart from our individual effort, our desire to do the right thing, not severed from it, but one with it.

Question. — If we try to make our own adjustment, do we not create more trouble for ourselves and others?

Swami Paramananda. — Do not start with the idea that you are going to create trouble for yourself and others. It all depends on your meditation — the quality of it — whether or not it is free from self-interest and selfish desires.

That is the real standard of judgment. And do not try to make your own adjustment. Rather strive to cooperate with the Higher Power. Before undertaking anything, seek the cooperation of the Highest. That alone is wisdom and safety for every soul.

Question. — Can we be "in the world and not of it," and still retain our friendships?

Swami Paramananda.—It has nothing to do with friendship, but of living in the world and not being defiled by it. Those who are molested and pushed about by life do not do much good to their friends. The value of friendship is to bring joy. Nobody wants a friend who is morose, long-faced and dejected. The Bhagavad-Gita gives a very beautiful simile, the simile of the lotus-leaf. The lotus grows in the water, but because the leaf is oily, the water runs off from it. Similarly, a man or woman can live in the world and not be contaminated. This means detachment, but detachment does not interfere with friendship. On the contrary, we maintain our friendships in greater measure when we do not seek anything for ourselves. Give, and ask nothing in return! All this may sound to you terribly impersonal; you may say, "It frightens me. Who would want friendship with someone who does not care?" It is not a question of not caring but of the quality of mind and spirit. If you are all the time calculating — "I have given, I wonder if I shall receive in return!"—that is bargaining. Do not be afraid to give. If you are a superior person and not attached in the ordinary sense, then I think you will have a better foundation for your friendships. They will be unbroken. Try to understand. When that understanding spirit dawns in your heart, you can do so much; you can give so much. Understanding spirit can bring great wisdom.

Question. — When a person without a knowledge of

Raja Yoga methods seems to have a vision and superconscious experience, is it due to former incarnations or to effective meditations?

Swami Paramananda. — Superconscious experience is not an ordinary thing. It would be better not to use this term too glibly. I do not say this with harshness of spirit. Superconsciousness is not something we can buy in the marketplace. It is the greatest idea and one that we find manifested in Christlike personages. I say this because one hears so much in the way of talk. Often people ask, "Have I attained superconsciousness?" One who has will not ask. Superconsciousness transforms the life. It is a light that illumines. It can be the result of former incarnations or it can come from right meditation and without definite knowledge of Yoga methods. We will find many examples of this. I have given before an incident in the life of St. Francis of Assisi. One evening, as he was witnessing Vesper Service, all at once he stood transfixed. The Service was ended, his Brothers departed and still he stood there, unconscious of the outside world. It is an exact picture of a Yogi. I do not always want to conclude by saying,—"It is true because India says so." No one has everything—Truth has no boundary lines; it has no creed or dogma. Nations and individuals, however, are endowed differently. There is a distribution of blessings. Where our mind is directed, there we evolve. This living awareness of man's greater consciousness is India's special contribution to the world. It is her wonderful, divine heritage, and the whole world will want it some day.

Whosoever knows that Person whose dwelling is love, whose sight is the heart, whose mind is light—the principle of every self—he indeed is a teacher, O Yagnavalkya.

Brahman, who is knowledge and bliss, He is the principle.

—*Upanishads.*

REPORT

Very suddenly, in response to outer necessity and a deep inward urge, Swami Paramananda set sail for India on December 29, from the port of San Francisco. Accompanying him were two of his resident workers,—Srimati Gayatri Devi who has been his platform assistant for the past seven or eight years and who has been absent from her Motherland for nine years, and Miss Camille Christians who will join Srimati Charushila Devi in her great work with women and girls at the Ananda-Ashrama in Dacca. While the Swami's plans are not in any sense fixed, he hopes to return to this country in time for the Easter season.

Naturally his stay at the California Ashrama was exceedingly brief,—exactly two weeks into which were packed many activities, including a dinner which opened the Christmas Bazaar, and other Christmas celebrations. He arrived at the Ashrama on December 13 and embarked from the port of Wilmington on December 27, and from San Francisco two days later, after lying there for twenty-four hours. Both sailings were the occasion for a warm demonstration of feeling and affection on the part of the many friends who came to wish him and his companions "God-speed."

Mr. Brown and Mr. Schwend of the Hindu Temple in San Francisco, extended every courtesy to the Swami and helped to make his stay in their city a pleasant one.

During his short sojourn at his Southern California Retreat, he was able to fill two important lecture engagements, —one at the "Los Feliz Woman's Club," where he spoke to a most appreciative group soon after his arrival, and one with the "Pasadena Browning Society." This latter coming as it did on December 24, was in the nature of a Christmas meeting—the first to be observed in the Society's new Club-House. The Swami was introduced by a former president

of the Society, Mrs. Ella Abeel, who made some gracious introductory remarks concerning his work. Against a background of wonderful flaming poinsettias and red carnations, he brought to his listeners the message of peace and showed that there was irradiating from the poems of Robert Browning the selfsame oneness that is the light of Vedanta. The response was very deep and genuine. As one lady expressed it, "I felt as if he were throwing out nuggets for us to catch if we could." Another writes: "I was more than a little amazed to see him take the most difficult passages from Paracelsus and read them with such clarity of understanding, saying, 'Now, when I came upon that, I felt at home! for that is the thought I was nurtured in'." He said in part:

"The inspiration of poets does not belong to any creed or color, but to the universal brotherhood of man. The poets who are real prophets are not doing things egotistical, but are expressing the exuberance of souls. In moments of inspiration the poet translates himself. We forget what Browning was because he gives us the expression of soulness. We approach the spirit of this great poet with a feeling of inspiration which wipes out all feeling of little things. The fellowship of man is only realized as our thoughts become ripened with a greater consciousness. Universal thought does not strike discord. Robert Browning tells us the same soul exists in all. Unless we elevate others, we walk alone.

"We must revise our thoughts. We cannot touch Infinitude without realizing the insignificance of the finite life. Great poets are emancipated souls—they do not have biassed limited thoughts. They do not have borrowed thoughts, for one cannot partake of what is not in one's nature.

"Robert Browning says God is love. Today, on Christmas Eve, we are inspired to share with others. May the Infinitude which we revere in Christ abide in us, and may

we transform our lives and help our brothers and sisters to live in the finest, highest atmosphere."

One year ago on the night of December 31, the Swami stood in the Temple pateo of the Ashrama, battling flood waters to keep them from entering the Temple, and later, in rain-soaked clothes, conducted an unforgettable Service beside the fire-place of Ashrama Cloister while death and destruction danced on the hillsides and in the valley beneath. This year, on the last night of December, the Swami was far out on the Pacific, while at the Ashrama—fair and smiling once more—Sister Achala conducted the New Year's Eve Service in the Temple of the Universal Spirit, as she will conduct all Services and Classes during Swami Paramananda's absence.

VEDANTA CENTRE, BOSTON

The high lights of the month of December for the Boston Centre were naturally the Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve Services. Both these occasions were marked by that mingling of beauty and sanctity that is characteristic of all festivals at the Vedanta Chapel. The Swami's absence was deeply felt, but there was warm response. The Watch Service at the close of the old year especially drew forth a generous attendance of those who wished to go forward into 1935 with the impetus of the Spirit. Following the Service, greetings were exchanged and hot chocolate was served.

On the Saturday before Christmas, the last of the series of Christmas Bazaar teas was held at the Centre, and as usual proved a happy affair—so much so, that it is planned to hold one such tea the final Saturday of each month and it is hoped these will bring increasing spirit of fellowship.

The Bazaar proved a success in every way, and thanks are herewith extended to all those who helped to make it so, both in Boston and at the Ashrama in California.

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

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East



FEBRUARY, 1935

Our Mental Attitude

Issued by

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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

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INFALLIBLE WITNESS

From the Tao Teh King

THE complete manifestation of things visible proceeds only from Life.
In its nature Life is always coming into activity;
Yet in itself it eludes our sight and touch.

Eluding sight! Eluding touch!
Within it are hid the plans of created things.
Eluding touch! Eluding sight!
Within it are hid all created beings.

It is profound; it is obscure!
Within it is hid pure Spirit.
It is pure Spirit enfolding Truth.
Within it is hid an infallible Witness.

From of old until now
Its Name remains unchanged.
Through its doorway comes the Universe into existence.
How do I know that the Universe is coming to full perfection through Life?
The Witness is in Life itself.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Men are vexed and miserable as though all were over with them, and why? Because they do not use their hearts in the enjoyment of outward things, but use outward things as a means of delighting their hearts. —*Huai-Tan Tzu.*

Back of the sound broods the silence; back of the gift stands the giving. —*Richard Realf.*

Whatever teaches us to look for happiness within ourselves must advance in some measure the dignity of our nature. —*Sir Joshua Reynolds.*

Great art dwells on all that is beautiful; but false art omits or changes all that is ugly. Great Art accepts Nature as she is, but directs the eyes and thoughts to what is most perfect in her; false art saves itself the trouble of direction by removing or altering whatever it thinks objectionable. —*John Ruskin.*

Leonardo da Vinci painted a picture of the "Last Supper." He had a bitter quarrel and painted his enemy as Judas. Then he tried to paint Christ. Day after day he attempted it, and failed. At last he took a brush and wiped out the face of Judas. Then he saw Christ as he desired to paint Him. —*Source Unknown.*

Beware the contrary currents of anger, fear and pride, but turn the strength of these currents into the channels of your purpose. —*Austen Fox Riggs.*

Essentially man is not a slave either of himself or of the world; but he is a lover. His freedom and fulfillment is in love. —*Rabindranath Tagore.*

Do thou therefore absolutely and freely make choice of what is best, and stick unto it. —*Marcus Aurelius.*

OUR MENTAL ATTITUDE

Class Lecture by Swami Paramananda

Our mental attitude can pave the way for everything we undertake; also it can make everything we undertake harder for us.

Let a person practise concentration upon one subject, let him hold his mind upon one idea, one theme at a time. It should not be difficult for anyone to do this. In fact, it is all we are capable of doing, and our success depends upon it. Whoever tries to think on more than one thing at a given moment will meet with failure. For instance, when you walk in one direction and look in another, you will stumble, possibly you will fall down, and your progress will be impeded. That is the sum total of concentration, and I think we all understand the virtue of it, the great power it gives along every line of action, from the most ordinary practical problem of human existence to the highest metaphysical study.

Why is it, then, that that which we accept as being logical and most beneficial, we find so difficult to do? Is there no way that it can be made easier?

There is one way, and only one, by means of which it is possible for us to practise one-pointedness, without having to go against the current of our own thoughts. It is by cultivating an understanding, a love for the object of our concentration. Whenever you love anyone, your mind becomes focused on that person. It is useless to say that you love your ideal, and at the same time tell me that it is a struggle to concentrate upon it. There is no struggle once we have that blending harmony, and it is that harmony we should try to cultivate as a foundation for everything.

Patanjali, the Father of the Yoga system, states very clearly that a man should direct his mind toward a chosen

ideal, for having gained the power to fasten himself to that, he can apply that power to the attainment of anything. He will be able to gain knowledge wherever the mind attaches itself. It will give him access everywhere—"from the atom to the Infinite."

Often we misunderstand the idea of concentration. It does not mean that we narrow our sphere and spend our life doing just one thing. Rather it means that we have a basic principle for our life, a subject, an ideal, a theme which gives us impetus for everything else. First and foremost, we have an objective, then, by means of concentrating upon it, we find our definite relationship with it, and once we have succeeded in cultivating this art of concentration with any one thing, we gain knowledge in everything.

A man who is concentrated, whatever task is given him to do, the meaning will unfold. There will be for him nothing high or low. If it is an insignificant task, he will find its significance; he will make it something worth while by his touch. No matter what a master-hand touches, it blossoms. Whenever we see such a hand at work, we can know that there is the gift of coordination and concentration.

Many people think that if they take to concentration or meditation or any of these more profound studies, they may easily become vague and visionary. Rather, the mind instead of being less alert becomes more alert, more wakeful. I used to believe that being absorbed in spiritual practice was an excuse for forgetfulness, until I touched Sri Ramakrishna's way of thinking. Sri Ramakrishna, although he had tremendous vision and constantly experienced the superconscious state of mind, still was very practical. Once a young man went with him to a large tank to bathe. They were there for some little time, and when they returned, Sri Ramakrishna asked him for the towel he had put in his care. The young

man, thinking it would be very impressive, replied that he had been in meditation down there and had forgotten it. "I am in the condition of *Samadhi* (spiritual ecstasy) most of the time," the Master said, "but I have never forgotten anything."

I give you this warning, because often we confuse the two extremes,—the high order of things, the exalted mentality, with the very low. In a way they resemble one another. For example, we see a man sitting idle. He does not work because he is not capable of working. He has no incentive, no initiative, therefore he is lifeless and dull. Another man we see who also is quiet, like a statue, unmoved by circumstances, but he is master of himself, composed, contained, unshakable. What a difference there is! And that difference we have to find out for ourselves. It is not revealed through intellectual perception. There is something higher than intellect—a divine security within, which is unmistakable, and which every one of us can quicken.

A holy person talks, walks, thinks, sees everything just as other men do. Wherefrom, then, comes his holiness? Is it only for him or is it something we also can know? Human and Divine are constantly present in us at the same time. Often I use the expression, "blending harmony." When our voice blends in harmony, it has soul quality; there is music; there is song. There are voices we like to hear again and again, and there are voices which strike a harsh, dissonant note. These things are all the product of our own thought, our own blending. Every moment ideas are surging up within our soul, impelling us to action; not necessarily good ideas, but nevertheless we have the capacity for lofty and noble ideas and instincts. For instance, there are times when we feel inspired to serve, when the thought of doing something for someone moves

us so tremendously that for the moment we forget our little self and self-interest. It is sweet happiness that comes upon us unexpectedly, like a light bursting on the soul. We do not know from where it comes. It is a Divine experience.

Now the point is, that that experience which comes perhaps once and leaves its mark upon us, can be made quite constant; that is, if we are earnest and sincere artists. I like to use this expression. We have to be artists in every line. Being an artist does not necessarily mean painting a picture, making a portrait or mixing colors. Everyone has to learn the art of producing something, of creating the mental image of perfection. We all have an idea of what perfection is, what beauty is, and loveliness, so we all begin to draw—from within. Then that picture which is within we place without, and the way we do it depends on how much thought, how much care, how much devotion and one-pointedness we have been able to put into it.

This is a concrete example of what I mean by concentration. Whatever we do must be whole-souled, and that whole-souled devotion to an ideal or a task, whatever the ideal or the task may be—I am not making any limitation—that quality will enable us to find the fruition, and having found it, to retain it.

The great utterances of the sages, also the sayings of the great Bibles, tell us that man is truly a part of the Divine Substance—the Heavenly Father. If we believe in this, if we live with it, if our faith is established in it, then there is nothing that can ever shake us, nothing that can ever make us ignoble, or of a different order from that with which our mind has been blended. That is the reason we need to be one-pointed.

The mind is like a package of mustard seeds. Once we begin to scatter it—as we do—in the terrestrial world, it

becomes so tremendously mixed with what is good, bad and indifferent, that it is a most arduous task to gather it together again. One who has no objective, no definite ideal, who wanders through life, every little thing seems to absorb him. Such a one, when he tries to grasp some vital subject, such as meditation, for instance, finds it almost impossible to collect his scattered thoughts and to direct them. He is unable to establish any connection whatsoever with his subject. There are people, however, who can live in this world, can walk through its heat and cold, pleasure and pain, pleasing circumstances and the opposite—through all kinds of conditions—and yet remain absolutely collected. And they have arrived at this state not by any accident. Always a man can find some objective where he can focus his mind, so that he is able to go through life with singleness of purpose, no matter how much diversity may come before him.

It is not that we ever find our inner unity merely by surrounding ourselves with the things that suit our tastes and by destroying everything else. That is an old-fashioned idea,—trying to proselytize the world, putting everything in one melting-pot, in order that all people may belong to one thought, one religion. You might just as well ask the entire humanity to fit into one little packet; feeling that those who cannot have no reason to exist. It is not logical or in the nature of things.

Concentration sometimes can be very misleading. We see a person pouring his life and strength into some one great purpose, and we say he is limiting himself, giving all to that one thing, and has shut himself off from the life around him. Is this true? Let us take for an example the most immediate ideal. Let us take concentration on the quality of love. One who is concentrated on the ideal of love, who

has been inspired by that beneficent force, do you not see that his heart impels him to loving acts, his hands are busy with loving deeds, he thinks thoughts productive of great good, while his feet lead him spontaneously to those places and circumstances where he can tangibly prove and give expression to that which he feels in his heart and soul. So we see that concentration is far more than merely focusing on a given point. A mechanical act, a menial service, so called—whatever we do—all becomes inter-related.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." That is one-pointedness—everything focused, nothing left apart.

Do not scatter your forces. The whole secret of happiness is dependent on that, on not being scattered. It does not mean growing narrow or biased or cutting down our usefulness. On the contrary, our hands and feet, our mind and brain all learn the art of coordination; we become fortified, quickened; and as step by step we rise higher and higher, we gain a taste of real meditation. Then will our countenance be lighted up with happiness. A person who is making a great effort to hold his thought, his face becomes full of lines and rigid; but one who has actually attained true meditation, his whole being is relaxed, and his face illumined with a sweet, heavenly smile. Concentration does not mean merely making ourselves rigid and brittle. Concentration is a very rhythmic thing. Therefore, do not grow confused or discouraged, but keep right on until you gain the goal.

Love is greater than work, knowledge, or Yoga; because it is its own end. . . . Therefore Love alone is to be embraced by those who desire liberation. —*Narada Sutra.*

THE SPIRITUAL VALUE OF APPRECIATION

By Sister Devamata

The power of appreciation is the fruit of culture—a culture that is more than mere learning or intellectual attainment. True culture implies fineness of feeling, dignity of thought, and certain spiritual qualities which lend beauty and distinction to life, word and achievement. It betokens also a quick intuitive perception of the deeper sources of effort and character. All the vital forces impelling human action and accomplishment are hidden. The deed is apparent, not the motive; the picture, not the vision which inspired it; the result, not the aspiration it embodies. The superficial observer sees with the eyes only and condemns. The man of insight penetrates below the surface and commends.

There is a cynical depreciation which passes for cleverness, or even for superior intelligence; but it is akin rather to the denunciation of a blind man embittered by his inability to see. Criticism is destructive. It benumbs effort. To vindicate it, the claim is made that it stimulates; but that cannot stimulate which chills and dampens. Without enthusiasm and confidence nothing great can be achieved, and criticism crushes both. A fault-finding word, the accent laid on a weak point, may shatter a vision and check a noble creative effort.

The critical attitude defeats itself. It closes the avenues of discernment and deadens the perceptive faculties. As it grows through practice, one looks by habit for the imperfections and ceases to see the merits. One listens for the false note in music or searches for the wrong color-value in art. The intelligence seems at stake, if some defect or demerit is

not discovered. Criticism becomes habitual fault-finding, and judgment the reaction of mood or prejudice.

This statement may call forth protest, but the dictionary bears witness to the truth of it. At the end of a varied definition of "criticism", it adds: "Especially unfavorable criticism, animadversion, censure." How far is this in meaning and intention from the Greek "*kritikos*" or the Latin "*criticus,*" of which the English word "critic" is a derivative, and which signifies one who discerns qualities and defects, discusses and passes fair judgment.

Unreasoning admiration is as harmful as unthinking depreciation. Whether we admire or condemn, if we do it without understanding, we desecrate that which we judge. What we need to practise is discrimination. Discrimination is the servant of appreciation. It provides a balanced and impartial method of weighing all the elements in a judgment, while appreciation completes the task by laying stress on the qualities. It does not ignore the defects, but it leaves them in the shadow.

The habit of appreciation is not difficult to cultivate when we remember that no work of human hand is a finished product. Man himself is not finished. He is still in the making, and his achievement cannot reach beyond his furtherest limit of power. Humanity, individually, is moving toward perfection; but we must not apply the standard of perfection to it or to its accomplishment before it has attained its goal. Along the way there is need of courage and of hope. The least word, or gesture even, which cools the ardor or breaks the confidence of any member of the human family, does injury to all mankind and delays its onward march.

Appreciation spiritualizes social relations wherever it finds expression. It pacifies and makes men mindful of their points of contact rather than of their points of difference.

The appreciation of another's creed or custom, ideal or aspiration, reconciles and unites. There is always some truth in every doctrine, some merit in every effort, something fine in every character. If we will hold to this nobler side of life, we shall lift the standard of living and doing, not only for ourselves but for all men. Also we shall soothe and silence the grievances and antagonisms which rise so readily in the group consciousness.

Nothing is more subversive of appreciation than gossip. Bred of idleness and emptiness, it seems too petty and trivial to consider; but when one finds how far at times it reaches, one realizes its danger. Gossip feeds on misfortunes and distresses, failures and shortcomings, on slander and denunciation. It delights in criticising and finding fault. It tears down and refuses to rebuild. A proverb declares: "He is void of wisdom who despises his neighbor." Little intelligence is required to destroy or condemn, but to create or to appreciate calls for power and wisdom. A baby can throw down a block house, but it takes deft fingers to set the blocks in place.

The practice of criticising puts us at variance with all Nature. Nature is never negative in her processes. She does not tear down, she restores, renews and utilizes. Out of the fallen tree trunk springs a carpet of bright blossoms; from the dropping leaves comes a richer soil; from the fading petals, a ripening seed. Everywhere life rising from apparent death! On all sides reconstruction and renewal! Those who do not follow this course laid out by Nature forfeit her support and move out of rhythm with the universe. The character hardens, the face loses its light, the voice becomes harsh, the step heavy and the manner unlovely.

Appreciation is the lubricant of life. It makes the mechanism of daily living run smoothly. Out of it grow

courtesy and graciousness. Both are essentials in the mingling of men. Without them life becomes crude, abrupt and dissonant. Human intercourse should not be made a matter of social convention. It belongs to a higher, nobler realm. We are all children of one Supreme Parent. Shall we rend one another like beasts of the jungle? Shall we make of life a battlefield? Or shall we live in kindliness and generosity of spirit? Let us rather silence the harsh tones in our voice, check the sharp word on our lips, and go forth into the world, not to wound and sadden, but to bring new hope, stauncher courage and loftier vision.

THE PROPHET AND THE TRAVELERS

By Edwin Markham

Gone is the city, gone the day,
Yet still the story and the meaning stay:

Once, where a prophet in the palm shade basked,
A traveler chanced at noon to rest his mules.
"What sort of people may they be," he asked,
"In this proud city on the plain o'erspread?"
"Well, friend, what sort of people whence you came?"
"What sort," the packman scowled, "why knaves and fools!"
"You'll find the people here the same,"
The wise man said.

Another stranger in the dusk drew near,
And pausing, cried, "What sort of people here
In your bright city where yon towers arise?"
"Well, friend, what sort of people whence you came?"
"What sort," the pilgrim smiled, "good, true and wise!"
"You'll find the people here the same,"
The wise man said.

GOD IN EVERYTHING

By Swami Vivekananda

All religions tell us that if you take the world as it is, as most practical people would advise us to do in this age, then nothing would be left to us but evil. They further assert that there is something beyond this world. This life in the five senses, life in the material world, is not all; it is only a small portion, and merely superficial. Behind and beyond is the Infinite, in which there is no more evil. Some people call It God, some Allah, some Jehovah, Jove, and so on. The Vedantin calls it Brahman.

The first impression we get of the advice given by religions is that we had better terminate our existence. To the question, how to cure the evils of life, the answer apparently is, give up life. It reminds one of the old story. A mosquito settled on the head of a man, and a friend, wishing to kill the mosquito, gave it such a blow that he killed both man and mosquito. The remedy of evil seems to suggest a similar course of action.

But what is the remedy proposed by all the religions? That this world is nothing. Beyond this world is something which is very real. Here comes the difficulty. The remedy seems to destroy everything. How can that be a remedy? Is there no way out then? The Vedanta says that what all the religions advance is perfectly true, but it should be properly understood. Often it is misunderstood, because the religions are not very clear in their meaning. What we really want is head and heart combined. The heart is great indeed; it is through the heart that come the great inspirations of life. I would a hundred times rather have a little heart and no brain, than be all brains and no heart. Life is possible, progress is possible, for him who has heart, but he who has no heart and only brains, dies of dryness.

At the same time we know that he who is carried along by his heart alone has to undergo many ills, for now and then he is liable to tumble into pitfalls. The combination of heart and head is what we want. . . .

Most of the religions understand the fact, but the error into which they all seem to fall is the same; they are carried away by the heart, the feelings. There is evil in the world; give up the world: that is the great teaching, and the only teaching, no doubt. Give up the world. There cannot be two opinions that to understand the truth every one of us has to give up error. There cannot be two opinions that every one of us in order to have good must give up evil; there cannot be two opinions that every one of us to have life must give up what is death.

And yet what remains to us, if this theory involves giving up the life of the senses, the life as we know it? And what else do we mean by life? If we give this up, what remains? . . .

The Vedanta does not in reality denounce the world. The ideal of renunciation nowhere attains such a height as in the teachings of the Vedanta. But, at the same time, dry suicidal advice is not intended; it really means deification of the world—giving up the world as we think of it, as we know it, as it appears to us—and to know what it really is. Deify it: it is God alone. We read at the commencement of one of the oldest of the Upanishads, "Whatever exists in this universe is to be covered with the Lord."

We have to cover everything with the Lord Himself, not by a false sort of optimism, not by blinding our eyes to the evil, but by really seeing God in everything. Thus we have to give up the world, and when the world is given up, what remains? God. What is meant? You can have your wife; it does not mean that you are to abandon her, but that you

are to see God in the wife. Give up your children; what does that mean? To turn them out of doors, as some human brutes do in every country? Certainly not. That is diabolism; it is not religion. But see God in your children. So, in everything. In life and in death, in happiness and in misery, the Lord is equally present. The whole world is full of the Lord. Open your eyes and see Him. This is what Vedanta teaches. Give up the world which you have conjectured, because your conjecture was based upon a very partial experience, upon very poor reasoning, and upon your own weaknesses. Give it up; the world we have been thinking of so long, the world to which we have been clinging so long, is a false world of our own creation. Give that up; open your eyes and see that as such it never existed; it was a dream, *Maya*. What existed was the Lord Himself. It is He who is in the child, in the wife, and in the husband; it is He who is in the good, and in the bad; He is in the sin, and in the sinner; He is in life, and in death. A tremendous assertion indeed! Yet that is the theme which the Vedanta wants to demonstrate, to teach, and to preach. . . .

Thus we avoid the dangers of life and its evils. Do not desire anything. What makes us miserable? The cause of all miseries from which we suffer is desire. You desire something, and the desire is not fulfilled; the result is distress. If there is no desire, there is no suffering. But here, too, there is the danger of my being misunderstood. So it is necessary to explain what I mean by giving up desire and becoming free from all misery. The walls have no desires and they never suffer. True, but they never evolve. This chair has no desires; it never suffers, but it is always a chair. There is a glory in happiness, there is a glory in suffering. If I may dare say so, there is a utility in evil, too. The great lesson in misery we all know. There are hundreds of things we have

done in our lives which we wish we had never done, but which, at the same time, have been great teachers. As for me, I am glad I have done something good and many things bad; glad I have done something right, and glad I have committed many errors, because every one of them has been a great lesson. I, as I am now, am the resultant of all I have done, all I have thought. Every action and thought have had their effect, and these effects are the sum-total of my progress.

We all understand that desires are wrong, but what is meant by giving up desires? How could life go on? It would be the same suicidal advice, killing the desire and the man, too. The solution is this: not that you should not have property, not that you should not have things which are necessary, and things which are even luxuries. Have all that you want, and more, only know the truth and realize it. Wealth does not belong to anybody. Have no idea of proprietorship, possessorship. You are nobody, nor am I, nor anyone else. All belong to the Lord, because the opening verse told us to put the Lord in everything. God is in the wealth that you enjoy. He is in the desire that rises in your mind. He is in the things you buy to satisfy your desire; He is in your beautiful attire, in your beautiful ornaments. This is the line of thought. All will be metamorphosed as soon as you begin to see things in that light. If you put God in your every movement, in your conversation, in your form, in everything, the whole scene changes, and the world, instead of appearing as one of woe and misery, will become a heaven.

"The kingdom of heaven is within you," says Jesus; so says the Vedanta, and every great teacher. "He that hath eyes to see, let him see, and he that hath ears to hear, let him hear." . . .

If we understand the giving up of the world in its old, crude sense, then it would come to this: that we must not work, that we must be idle, sitting like lumps of earth, neither thinking nor doing anything, but must become fatalists, driven about by every circumstance, ordered about by the laws of Nature, drifting from place to place. That would be the result. But that is not what is meant. We must work. Ordinary mankind, driven everywhere by false desires, what do they know of work? The man propelled by his own feelings and his own senses, what does he know about work? He works who is not propelled by his own desires, by any selfishness whatsoever. He works, who has no ulterior motive in view. He works who has nothing to gain from work.

Who enjoys the picture, the seller or the seer? The seller is busy with his accounts, computing what his gain will be, how much profit he will realize on the picture. His brain is full of that. He is looking at the hammer, and watching the bids. He is intent on hearing how fast the bids are rising. That man is enjoying the picture who has gone there without any intention of buying or selling. He looks at the picture and enjoys it. So this whole universe is a picture, and when these desires have vanished, men will enjoy the world, and then this buying and selling, and these foolish ideas of possession will be ended. The money-lender gone, the buyer gone, the seller gone, this world remains the picture, a beautiful painting. I never read of any more beautiful conception of God than the following: "He is the Great Poet, the Ancient Poet: the whole Universe is His poem, coming in verses and rhymes and rhythms, written in infinite bliss." When we have given up desires, then alone shall we be able to read and enjoy this Universe of God. Then everything will become deified. Nooks and corners, byways and shady

places, which we thought dark and unholy, will be all deified. They will all reveal their true nature, and we shall smile at ourselves, and think that all this weeping and crying has been but child's play, and we were only standing by, watching.

So, do your work, says the Vedanta. . . . Desire to live a hundred years, have all earthly desires, if you wish, only deify them, convert them into heaven. Have the desire to live a long life of helpfulness, of blissfulness and activity on this earth. Thus working, you will find the way out. There is no other way. If a man plunges headlong into foolish luxuries of the world without knowing the truth, he has missed his footing, he cannot reach the goal. And if a man curses the world, goes into a forest, mortifies his flesh, and kills himself little by little, by starvation, makes his heart a barren waste, kills out all feeling, and becomes harsh, stern, and dried-up, that man also has missed the way. These are the two extremes, the two mistakes at either end. Both have lost the way, both have missed the goal.

So work, says the Vedanta, putting God in everything, and knowing Him to be in everything. Work incessantly, holding life as something deified, as God Himself, and knowing that this is all we have to do, this is all we should ask for. God is in everything; where else shall we go to find Him? He is already in every work, in every thought, in every feeling. Thus knowing, we must work, this is the only way, there is no other. The effects of work will not bind us. We have seen how false desires are the cause of all the misery and evil we suffer, but when they are thus deified, purified, through God, they bring no evil, they bring no misery. Those who have not learned this secret will have to live in a demoniacal world until they discover it. Many do not know what an infinite mine of bliss is in them, around

them, everywhere; they have not yet discovered it. What is a demoniacal world? The Vedanta says, Ignorance.

We are dying of thirst sitting on the banks of the mightiest river. We are dying of hunger sitting near heaps of food. Here is the Blissful Universe, yet we do not find it. We are in it all the time, and we are always mistaking it. Religions propose to find this out for us. The longing for this Blissful Universe is in all hearts. It has been the search of all nations, it is the one goal of religion, and this ideal is expressed in various languages in different religions. It is only the difference of language that makes all these apparent divergences; one expresses a thought in one way, another a little differently, yet perhaps each is meaning exactly what the other is expressing in a different language. . . .

More questions arise in connection with this. It is very easy to talk. From my childhood I have heard of seeing God everywhere and in everything, and then I can really enjoy the world, but as soon as I mix with the world, and get a few blows from it, the idea vanishes. I am walking in the street thinking that God is in every man, and a strong man comes along and gives me a push and I fall flat on the footpath. Then I rise up quickly with clenched fist, the blood has rushed to my head, and the reflection goes. Immediately I have become mad. Everything is forgotten; instead of encountering God I see the devil. . . . You all remember how in *Aesop's Fables* a fine stag is looking at his form reflected in a lake, and is saying to his young one, "How powerful I am, look at my splendid head, look at my limbs, how strong and muscular they are; and how swiftly I can run." In the meantime he hears the barking of dogs in the distance, and immediately takes to his heels. . . . Such is the case with us. We think highly of humanity, we feel ourselves strong and valiant, we make grand resolves; but

when the "dogs" of trial and temptation bark, we are like the stag in the fable. Then, if such is the case, what is the use of teaching all these things? There is the greatest use. The use is this, that perseverance will finally conquer. Nothing can be done in a day.

"This Self is first to be heard, then to be thought upon, and then meditated upon." Everyone can see the sky, even the very worm crawling upon the earth sees the blue sky, but how very far away it is! So it is with our ideal. It is far away, no doubt, but at the same time, we know that we must have it. We must even have the highest ideal. Unfortunately in this life, the vast majority of persons are groping through this dark life without any ideal at all. If a man with an ideal makes a thousand mistakes, I am sure that the man without an ideal makes fifty thousand. Therefore, it is better to have an ideal. And this ideal we must hear about as much as we can, till it enters into our hearts, into our brains, into our very veins, until it tingles in every drop of our blood, and permeates every pore in our body. We must meditate upon it. "Out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh," and out of the fulness of the heart the hand works too.

It is thought which is the propelling force in us. Fill the mind with the highest thoughts, hear them day after day, think them month after month. Never mind failures; they are quite natural, they are the beauty of life, these failures. What would life be without them? It would not be worth having if it were not for struggles. Where would be the poetry of life? Never mind the struggles, the mistakes. I never heard a cow tell a lie, but it is only a cow—never a man. So never mind these failures, these little backslidings; hold the ideal a thousand times, and if you fail a thousand times, make the attempt once more. The ideal of man is to

see God in everything. But if you cannot see Him in everything, see Him in one thing, in that thing which you like best, and then see Him in another. So on you can go. There is infinite life before the soul. Take your time and you will achieve your end.

"He, the One, who vibrates more quickly than mind, who attains to more speed than mind can ever do, whom even the gods reach not, nor thought grasps. He moving, everything moves. In him all exists. He is moving. He is also immovable. He is near and He is far. He is inside everything. He is outside everything, interpenetrating everything. Whoever sees in every being that same *Atman,* and whoever sees everything in that *Atman,* he never goes far from that *Atman.* When all life and the whole Universe are seen in *Atman,* then alone man has attained the secret. There is no more delusion for him. Where is any more misery for him who sees this Oneness in the Universe?" . . .

If you go deep enough, all will be seen as only variations of the One, and he who has attained to this conception of Oneness has no more delusion. What can delude him? He knows the reality of everything, the secret of everything. Where is there any more misery for him? What does he desire? He has traced the reality of everything to the Lord, the Centre, the Unity of everything, and that is Eternal Existence, Eternal Knowledge, Eternal Bliss. Neither death nor disease, nor sorrow nor misery, nor discontent is there. All is Perfect Union and Perfect Bliss. For whom should he mourn then? In reality, there is no death, there is no misery; in the Reality there is no one to mourn for, no one to be sorry for. He has penetrated everything, the Pure One, the Formless, the Bodiless, the Stainless, He the Knower, He the Great Poet, the Self-Existent, He who is giving to everyone what he deserves. They grope in dark-

ness who worship this ignorant world, the world that is produced out of ignorance, thinking of it as Existence, and those who live their whole lives in this world, and never find anything better or higher, are groping in still greater darkness. But he who knows the secret of Nature, seeing That which is beyond Nature through the help of Nature, he crosses death, and through the help of That which is beyond Nature, he enjoys Eternal Bliss.

THE HOUSE OF NATURE

By Ralph Waldo Emerson

In the depths of the forest where the noon comes like twilight, on the cliff, in the cavern, and by the lonely lake, where the sounds of man's mirth and man's sorrow were never heard, where the squirrel inhabits and the voice of the bird echoes,—is a shrine which few visit in vain, an oracle which returns no ambiguous response. The pilgrim who retires hither wonders how his heart could ever cleave so mightily to the world whose deafening tumult he has left behind. What are temples and towered cities to him? He has come to a sweeter and more desirable creation. When his eye reaches upward by the sides of the piled rocks to the grassy summit, he feels that the magnificence of man is quelled and subdued here. The very leaf under his foot, the little flowers that embroider his path, outdo the art, and outshine the glory of man. . . .

Society's iron sceptre of ceremony is dishonored here,—here in the footsteps of the invisible, in the bright ruins of the invisible creation, over which the Morning stars sang together, and where, even now, they shed their sweetest light. Whatsoever beings watch over these inner chambers of Nature, they have not abandoned their charge. Nature never tires of *her* house, and each year its glorious tapestry is newly hung.

CHINA'S MINISTERS OF BEAUTY

By Sister Daya

My spirit is tuned to the Spring-season:
At the fall of the year there is Autumn in my heart.
Thus imitating cosmic changes
My cottage becomes a Universe.
—Lu Yün (4th Century A.D.)

Throughout the long ages of human development upon this planet, Beauty no less than Religion has had its priests and ministers. Coincident with primitive man's first trembling obeisance before a Mystery he could not fathom, a Power he could not ignore, was his first breathless, albeit unconscious, recognition of an element outside the merely useful—a fascinating, illusive element which was able to transform the ordinary task of making into a time-dispelling act of creation.

The world's first artist, however, decorating his crude implements of peace and war as spontaneously as a bird builds its nest, was little aware, we may be sure, of anything unusual in his occupation. It was for him part of living, as instinctive as breathing, as absorbing as the play of a child. We can picture him, if we like, as still in the Womb of the Great Mother, with Her Life flowing in, around and through him, like the sea.

Hardly can we measure the distance in consciousness between the then and now, between that original shaper of stone and the winner of the Prix de Rome, between the painted rock walls of a prehistoric cave-dwelling and the walls, let us say, of the Sistine Chapel. The artist today is classified and set apart, has a tradition to draw upon, a basic, inherited knowledge from which, if he wills, he can take his flight into the blue. He has developed a technique,

by means of which he starts at a point his ancestor never attained. Yet, for all this, Beauty today, so it often seems to us, is no more near to man, nor yet more far, than it was in those dim forgotten years of his first striving. In fact, often the present-day seeker after perfection, in his despair, feels that if he could but find his way back into the Mother's Womb, and be as naked and surrendered to the stirring of Her Life as was his "unborn" prototype, it would be better than all his culture.

It is not a rule of man but an inherent necessity which decrees that the creative spirit must forever exist beyond the sense of ego. The artist—at least during his hours of creative fire—cannot afford to be aware of self and self-interest, for just to the extent self enters in, Beauty—Love—Spirit—are not there.

Now one cannot live with ego and its brood twenty-three hours a day and command the company of the gods on the twenty-fourth—that is, not for long: the gods soon find one out. In other words, art must include living if it is to endure, and to be a true minister of Beauty requires an inner attitude as controlled, as selfless, as detached as that of any Eastern Yogi. In truth, the comparison is apt, for the more one contemplates the Way of the Artist, the more one sees it as a true path of Yoga, connecting the finite with the Infinite, the here with the Beyond. And just as a Yogi perceives within himself the wholeness of life, and in his own being balances all opposites, so must the artist do the same in his work and in himself, without fear or favor or thought of reward. He must be at one and the same time saint and profligate, doer and witness, child and sage, fixed as a star and fluid and vagrant as the water and the winds.

Life, Beauty, Truth—all are equal in their demands upon their devotees, for *they* are one and equal in their essence,

and equal in their bestowal of blissful vision upon those who follow their path to its uttermost goal. Indeed one vowed to the service of the Beautiful could well invoke his "deity" in the closing words of the ancient Vedic prayer:

"Reach us through and through ourself,
And evermore protect us—O Thou Terrible!—
from ignorance,
By Thy sweet compassionate face."

Ignorance!—is it not this very dividing of the world into watertight compartments, with the artists in one division and the ordinary workers in another, this sentimentalizing over that which should permeate every phase of human activity, every motion of every hand? Yet always we have to go forward from where we stand, and talk in the common parlance if we would be understood, and even among the members of the craft there are few indeed who are qualified to be the guardian of the flame. The whole civilization of today is too clamorous with ego for the average individual to be able to resist its impelling demands, and withstand the pull of the mass. Only now and then one is seen who has never bartered himself for the fruits of his labor, one who, like a Cyrano, has succeeded, at least to a certain extent, in keeping unstained his white plume.

A scene comes back to me,—a New York studio, where a little colored artist of great talent is having an interview with one of the world's leading sculptors, Mr. Frederick MacMonnies. My part was to listen, and what was said that day to the young, eager, untried girl-student I can never forget, because of the clarity of vision it implied, the integrity of purpose, the innate wisdom—wisdom of India, of the Bhagavad-Gita—coming forth from his lips spontaneously, as the result of direct experience, character and accomplishment.

"Go home," he told her, (unfortunately I can recall but the sense of his words, and that only as I was able to grasp it): "go home and think, if you are capable of thinking—most people do not know how to think—and decide what branch of art you want to follow, then give yourself to it completely; let nothing turn you aside. And do not make the mistake as some do, of looking upon one expression of art as inferior to another. Many an artist has spoiled his possibilities, because instead of giving himself whole-heartedly to his own particular line, he has been continually dreaming of the day when he can be a portrait-painter or a sculptor. It is just as great an accomplishment to achieve perfection in the making of a finger ring as to paint a perfect portrait.

"Avoid publicity. Do not desire to see your face or name in the papers. Do not sell yourself for recognition. Work without any thought of return; keep your aim one-pointed and pure. So many people deceive themselves—trick themselves into the belief that their motive is pure when all the time they are working with the idea of some personal reward.

"I once knew a man," he continued, "a great church-worker. He was always doing kindly things. His name was never mentioned without someone saying, 'There is nobody like him! How good he is—how generous!' and all the time he was being poisoned to the soul, as he himself afterwards admitted to me, by his dependence on this human praise. Subtly it had become the motive for all his actions.

"Be true to your work!" Mr. MacMonnies concluded—and one felt his whole being behind his words—"People may fail you, everything may fail you, but your work will never fail you. If you hold to that, you are safe."

"To work alone thou hast the right, but never to the

fruits thereof," the Lord Sri Krishna tells Arjuna in the Gita. "Be thou neither actuated by the fruits of action nor be thou attached to inaction. Abandoning attachment and regarding success and failure alike, be steadfast in Yoga and perform thy duties. *Even-mindedness is called Yoga.** O Dhananjaya, work (with desire for results) is far inferior to work with understanding. Wretched indeed are those who work for results. Being possessed with this understanding, one frees one's self even in this life. . . . Therefore engage thyself in this Yoga. *Skillfulness in action is called Yoga**. . . . Better one's own duty, though devoid of merit, than the duty of another well-performed. . . . The duty of another is full of danger. . . . Him from Whom is the evolution of all beings, by Whom all this is pervaded, by worshipping Him with his own duty man attains perfection."

Might we not call Mr. MacMonnies' counsel an artist's paraphrase of these immortal teachings? And do they not give us heart when we begin to doubt the possibility of combining the highest, most subtle type of intelligence with that almost blissful innocency, that unselfconscious creative spirit, as of Nature herself, which seems to be the mark of the child and of the simple, unspoiled primitive type of man?

Yet even admitting, as we have to admit, that this combination does sometimes occur in isolated individuals throughout all departments of life, it has been only latterly, as we have somewhat reluctantly turned our eyes to the Orient, that we have seen it as the flowering of a national ideal, and have acknowledged that China, especially during the great period of the Tang and Sung dynasties from about the 7th to the 13th centuries A.D., produced the most wonderful landscape paintings that the world has yet known. Not

*Italics mine. S.D.

that this in itself would set China apart as a country, a culture, based on this blend—to use her own symbolism—of Heaven, Earth and Man. Greece, Italy, France, and other great nations and races as well, have dowered the world as richly in their way. It is the Chinese paintings themselves—by the moods they awaken and the moods they suggest—which tell the story of the consciousness, individual and national, which brought them forth; a consciousness leading outside of the self into a universal apprehension of life and being.

"The life-movement of the spirit through the rhythm of things," the first Canon of Hsieh Ho's "Six Canons or Necessities of Painting," composed in the sixth century A.D., describes, perhaps as well as anything can, what one feels as one gazes on these cloud-veiled valleys of enchantment, the lonely pine, the rushing torrent, the soaring mountains of mist and dream, which lead the mind up and up until it loses itself in what must forever be the inexpressible vision of Beauty.

Likewise, the Canon reveals the inward impulse of Chinese genius. Some have felt that the term, "spirit," as used in this Canon, referred originally to something outside the artist, but that under the influence of Zen Buddhism "which regarded the ideal as something to be sought by each man within his own nature," it received a new and subjective interpretation. One scholar interprets it as meaning that "a man who paints must be in agreement with the universe," and no doubt all these meanings are true, since they are not contradictory.

A student of mysticism or of Vedanta will at once perceive the transcendent depths to which this ideal must inevitably lead; while the art-critic and the true artist will recognize the tremendous danger here of over-balance and

a loss of all form-sense in a vague other-worldliness. But it was in the union of form with the formless that China excelled and showed her mastery. Ching Hai, over a thousand years ago, aptly defined this "middle-path" of culture.

"Painting," he writes, "is delineation: to measure the shapes of things, yet with the grasp of Truth; to express outward form as outward form and inner reality as inner reality. Outward forms must not be taken as inner realities. If this is not understood, resemblance may indeed be achieved, but not pictorial Truth; resemblance reproduces form, but neglects spirit; but Truth shows spirit and substance in a like perfection."

Here again we catch the echo of the Vedic teaching, where in a great Upanishad it is stated: "They fall into blind darkness who worship the Unmanifested and they fall into greater darkness who worship the manifested. . . . He who knows at the same time both the Unmanifested and the destructible or manifested, he crosses over death through knowledge of the destructible and attains immortality through knowledge of the First Cause."

A significant characteristic of Chinese landscape painting, setting it apart from the landscape painting of the West, is the attitude it suggests toward Man and Nature. In the Occident, as the natural fruitage of a strongly individualistic tendency which cannot rest, it seems, short of complete dominance of everything external to itself, Nature is used largely as a background for humanity and human pursuits; while China, sensitive by right of its Eastern heritage to the universal rhythm of things, places man *in* Nature, along with trees and clouds and houses and creatures, all bound together by the unity of spirit. Thus while in the West, Nature is looked upon as a field of conquest, in Eastern lands it is felt to be the Matrix, enfolding all living things.

"An opposition between man and Nature has been ingrained in Western thought," writes Laurence Binyon, an authority on Eastern culture, "It is the achievements, the desires, the glory and the suffering of man that have held the central place in Western art; only very slowly and unwillingly has the man of the West taken trouble to consider the non-human life around him, and to understand it as a life lived for its own sake: for centuries he has heeded it in so far as it opposed his will or ministered to his needs and appetites. But in China and Japan, as in India, we find no barrier set up between the life of man and the rest of God's creatures. The continuity of the universe, the perpetual stream of change through its matter, are accepted as things of Nature, felt in the heart and not merely learnt as the conclusion of delving science. And these ways of thought are reflected in Eastern art. Not the glory of the naked human form, to Western art the noblest and most expressive of symbols; not the proud and conscious assertion of human personality; but instead of these, all thoughts that lead us out from ourselves into the universal life, hints of the Infinite, whispers from secret sources — mountains, waters, mists, flowering trees, —whatever tells of powers and presences mightier than ourselves: these are the themes dwelt upon, cherished and preferred."

Thus by his very premise and approach, the Western artist invokes egotism, even as he seeks to glorify the sublimity of man; while the artist of the East, by the same token, has already gone far toward transcending egotistic awareness. Ceasing to centre his livingness upon his little self, suddenly he finds the whole universe coming alive, not as separate fragments, but as a boundless whole—a flowing river of life and consciousness, forever turning back upon itself. It is not that the Way of the West led to any less

glorious heights than the Eastern Path, but by its very nature it had to pass at first through the jungles of Ego, where the battle is fiercest and the goal most obscured, before reaching the pinnacled summits. Change, drama, intensity and strain mark its windings, and he who would follow it, vibrates for a long long time between man and God, triumph and disaster, victory and despair. Hamlet, in the midst of his inward wrestling, makes this articulate:

"What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a god!"

"Yet it is inevitable," remarks Mr. Binyon, in commenting on this famous eulogy, "that to this spirit, the hour of discouragement and dismay should bring, with a sharpness unknown to the Oriental temper and the detached Oriental mind, the desolation of the sentence of mortality:

" 'And yet what to me is this quintessence of dust'!"

Underlying the Occidental consciousness was the undying memory of a Man's passion and death, while over it hung the shadow of the cross; whereas the mind of China, ordered and restrained by the teachings of Confucius, lay like a dewdrop in the lotus of Buddhism, floating on the limitless sea of TAO. For it was the combined influence of Confucius, Lao-Tze and the teachings of Buddhism, more particularly the Zen, which helped to color, round out and balance the whole of China's culture and genius. And curiously enough, we find in the opposing tendencies contained in Confucianism and the other two, something of the same alignment—greatly spiritualized—of the individual against the mass, that characterizes the struggle in the world today but a struggle that was very different in its expression.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

REPORT

Through letters and cablegrams, reassuring word has come from Swami Paramananda and his party concerning their trip to India. Going by way of the Pacific, they have touched at Honolulu, Japan and at Hongkong where they changed ships for Singapore. Owing to a storm, their ship was delayed and they had to take a Dutch liner from that port instead of a Japanese boat, as originally planned. We anticipate that before long more detailed word will arrive, telling of their visit in the Malay States and Burma, as well as their arrival at Calcutta on January tenth.

VEDANTA CENTRE, BOSTON

Services on Sunday, January 27, were dedicated at the Vedanta Centre, Boston, to the observance of the Swami Vivekananda Birthday Anniversary. As usual, the great Swami's living spirit seemed to thrill through the hearts of all present. Aside from this celebration, the Centre has but one special event to record for the month of January, and that a social one. On Saturday, January 26, there was held the regular monthly tea which on this occasion was graced by the presence of Swami Akhilananda, head of the Providence Vedanta Society, as guest of honor, and certain of his devoted students. In spite of the aftermath of a great blizzard, a goodly number came and listened with deep interest to the Swami's vivid account of his recent trip in India, and the changing conditions he found there, notably in connection with the women.

The public is reminded that this monthly tea will be held the last Saturday of each month until further notice. All are most cordially invited to be present.

ANANDA-ASHRAMA, CALIFORNIA

At the California Ashrama the work has been moving rhythmically since the Swami's departure. Services and Classes have been well attended, as there is always the same living spirit that draws people up the hill to the Temple of the Universal Spirit. All hearts are hoping, however, that the Swami will be back by Easter, and we join in that hope.

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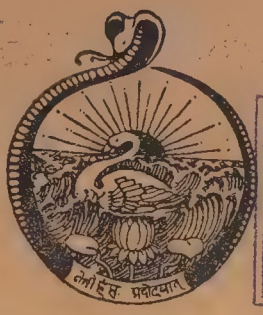
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VOL. XXIV NUMBER 3

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

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East



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Wisdom of Sri Ramakrishna

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Message of the East

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

(These utterances of the Master are taken from the small but invaluable book, "Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna," just brought out in a most attractive form by the Sri Ramakrishna Mission, India.)

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

There is no distinction between Impersonal God on the one hand and Personal God on the other. When the Supreme Being is thought of as inactive, He is styled "Brahman," God the Absolute; and when He is thought of as active—creating, sustaining and destroying—He is styled "Shakti" or Personal God.

God is absolute eternal Brahman as well as the Father of the universe. The indivisible Brahman, pure Existence, Intelligence, and Bliss, is like a vast, shoreless ocean without bounds or limits, in which I only struggle and sink, but when I approach the ever sportive Personal Deity, I get peace, like the sinking man who finds the shore. God with form and without form are not two different beings. He who is with form is also without form. To a devotee, God manifests Himself in various forms. Just think of a shoreless ocean—

an infinite expanse of water—no land visible in any direction; only here and there are visible blocks of ice formed by intense cold. Similarly under the cooling influence, so to say, of the deep devotion of His worshipper, the Infinite reduces Himself into the Finite and appears before him as a Being with form. Again, as on the appearance of the sun, the ice melts away, so on the appearance of knowledge, God with form melts away into the formless.

Question.—If in all religions of the world there reigns the same God, then why does the same God appear different in different religions?

Sri Ramakrishna.—God is one but many are His aspects. As one master of the house appears in various aspects, being father to one, brother to another, and husband to a third, so one God is described and called in various ways, according to the particular aspect in which He appears to His particular worshipper. Many are the names of God and infinite the forms through which He may be approached. In whatever name and form you worship Him, through that He will be realized by you. Our duty is to fall down and adore where others only bow.

As one can ascend to the roof of a house by means of a ladder, or a bamboo, or a staircase, or in various other ways, so diverse are the ways and the means to approach God. Every religion in the world is one of the ways to reach Him.

A disciple once told Sri Ramakrishna that in the course of his meditation he could see things as they actually happened at a distance and also what certain people were doing at the time, and that on subsequent enquiry the vision proved to be correct. Sri Ramakrishna said to him, "My boy, for some days, don't meditate. Those things, seeing visions and so forth, are obstacles to the realization of God."

Pointing to the heart, the Master used to say: He who

has it here, has it also there (pointing to the external world). He who does not find God within himself will never find Him outside himself. But he who sees Him in the temple of his soul, sees Him also in the temple of the universe.

It is in the nature of the lamp to give light. With its help some may cook food, some may forge deeds, and some may read the scriptures. Is it the fault of the light? So, is it the fault of God that some try to attain salvation with the help of His holy name, while others use His name for success in attempted theft?

Do you know how God dwells in man? He dwells in the same way as ladies of wealthy families do behind a latticed screen. They can see everybody, but no one can see them. God abides in all in an exactly similar way. The sun lights up the earth, but a small cloud will hide it from our view. Similarly, the insignificant veil of Maya (phenomenal consciousness) prevents us from seeing the omnipresent and all-witnessing Existence-Knowledge-Bliss.

What is the relation between the Individual and the Universal Self? If a piece of timber be thrown across the flowing Ganges, one side of the water will appear to be separated from the other. In the same way, the idea of Ego makes the soul seem distinct from the Supreme Self. Really, there is no division between them. When bound in fetters the soul is the Jiva, when released from them the same thing is Shiva.

Question.—God is infinite, the Jiva a finite being. How then can the finite grasp the Infinite?

Sri Ramakrishna. — It is like a figure of salt trying to fathom the depths of the ocean. In doing so, the salt doll is dissolved into the sea and lost. Similarly the Jiva (the individual soul), in trying to measure God, loses his individuality and becomes one with Him.

Question.—Sir, why are we so bound? Why cannot we see God?

Sri Ramakrishna.—Because the idea of self is the Maya of the soul. It is our egotism that shuts out the light. When this "I" is gone, all difficulty will have vanished. If by God's grace, the thought "I am not the doer" is firmly established in the heart, a man becomes free even in this life. For him there is no more fear. Twice God smiles—once, when two brothers go to law about the partition of their land, and once again when the doctor assures that he will save the patient's life. The fool of a physician does not know that no human power can save him whom the Lord chooses to destroy. Those who seek for name and fame are under a delusion. They forget that everything is ordained by the Great Disposer of all things, that all is due to the Lord and to nobody else. The wise man says, "It is Thou, O Lord, it is Thou!" but the ignorant and the deluded say, "It is I, it is I!"

If one ponders over this word"I," trying hard to track it down, one sees that it is only a word which denotes egotism. Know thyself and thou shalt know the non-self, the Lord of all. What is my ego?—Is it my hand or my foot, flesh or blood, muscles or tendons? Ponder deeply and thou shalt know that there is no such thing as "I." An analysis of the "ego" convinces that the ultimate substance is God alone. When egoism drops away, Divinity manifests Itself. So long as one has not seen the divine vision, so long as one has not touched the philosopher's stone, so long must there remain the illusion, "I am the doer,—here I have done evil, and there good."

Question.—How can the idea of egohood be destroyed?

Sri Ramakrishna.—It requires constant practice to do it. In threshing out rice from paddy, one must look to it from time to time, to see that the rice is properly husked; if not, one must of course go on threshing. If, after all, you cannot destroy this "I," then let it remain as "I the servant." This

self that knows itself as the servant and lover of God will do little mischief. Know certainly that the world is God's and not yours; you are His servant only, come to carry out His Will.

Question.—What is the state of that man who is in the world and yet free from its attachments?

Sri Ramakrishna.—He is like a lotus-leaf in the water and a mud-fish in the mud. The water wets not the lotus-leaf, and the mud stains not the glossy skin of the fish. He indeed is blessed in whom all the qualities of head and heart are fully developed and evenly balanced. He bears himself well in whatever position he may be placed. He is full of guileless faith and love for God, and yet his dealings with others leave nothing to be desired. When he engages in worldly affairs, he is a thorough man of business; in the assemblage of the learned he establishes his claims as a man of learning, and in debates, he shows great powers of reasoning. To his parents he is obedient and affectionate; to his brethren and friends he is loving and sweet; to his neighbors he is kind and sympathetic, always ready to do them good; and to his wife he is the lord of love. Such a man is indeed perfect.

Disciple.—How ought we to look on women?

Sri Ramakrishna.—He who is face to face with Reality, who is blessed with the vision of God, sees them as they really are, images of the Divine Mother of the Universe. So he not only pays to womanhood honor and respect, but actually worships them as a son does a mother. When the fruit grows out of the flower, the petals drop off themselves. So, when the Divinity in you increases, the weaknesses of your human nature will all vanish of their own accord.

How beautiful upon the mountain are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace. —*Isaiah.*

OMNIPOTENT MIND

By Swami Paramananda

Omnipotent mind!—what a paradox these words seem to convey! Man's mind which is so fickle, so undependable, how can it ever be thought of as omnipotent? Yet even those who lay their emphasis on faith, and devotion to Deity, acclaim the power of the mind, and affirm that without the co-operation of his own mind, man can accomplish nothing. Moreover, through our mind we can make great contacts in a definite way, contacts which will yield us a tremendous measure of spiritual fruition.

In India, there is a very ancient saying: "Verily, the cause of man's bondage, of his unhappiness and suffering, lies in his own mind; also from that same mind come his liberation, happiness and perfection." Does it not seem strange that one mind has power to lift to the highest or drag down to the lowest? We do not need to consult classic literature to find this out; all we need to do is to observe. The most beautiful creations of humanity, the greatest architecture, the noblest expressions of music, the finest idealism—in fact, everything that seems to resemble Divinity—are the product of mind. Again we see the mind playing havoc. It is probably the most destructive element in the world. Ammunition for war and all the weapons that human beings can make or use are not half so dangerous as a cruel mind. The potent factor lies not in mind itself, but in the direction in which the mind is turned. Think of lawlessness and all its devices. We are appalled that great minds can be so directed. Mind is like a mirror; it reflects. It reflects high and it reflects low. Every mind has the potentiality for God-power, but this does not mean that every mind manifests God. That depends upon Him, the Supreme,—whether He uses it that way or not.

Sri Ramakrishna, the great Saint of modern India, was

a tremendous devotee. He trusted absolutely in the Lord, Whom he called his Divine Mother; yet we find him saying that the mind is everything. In an egotistic sense, man may have all the graces and blessings of the world—all its privileges and opportunities—and yet through a mental twist, spoil everything. People create unhappiness for themselves. They grow impatient. Sometimes through fear and mental worry, they even commit suicide when the very next dawn would have brought them relief, if they had only waited. But they could not wait; the mind had already done its damage. These are not fictitious imaginings; they are facts, very human and very true.

Children are quick to take the color of other minds and of environments. That is why we have to be so careful in our relation with them. For instance, in their training, it is not so much the oral teaching and the abstract ethical codes which count—and if we are honest we shall have to admit it—as it is the immediate influence of character. Children always pick out a model—an older man or woman, a brother or sister—someone who seems to them to represent all that they want to be. He may be a pirate or an athlete; it makes no difference. They take his imprint in the same way as a white cloth takes color when it is dyed. But I need not confine this to children. All people do the same. As human beings, we take the color of a stronger mind, and herein lies the great value of teachers, prophets, saints, and noble men and women everywhere. They pass on to others the definite impression of their character. They give the color scheme to life, as it were.

People receive differently, however. It all depends upon where they make their point of contact. There are those who are opposed to finer things—almost diabolical characters. Anything that is spiritual, aesthetic or fine they can-

not endure; it stirs the very worst in them. Again, there are others whose minds are so susceptible to higher concepts that they absorb, assimilate and build them into their own stature, until we cannot differentiate between them and their ideal.

Mind is always the same, but it can be differently directed. Whatever a man thinks, he eventually becomes. It is logical. It stands to reason that we cannot think one thing and become another. Even physically this is true. For instance, a man cannot indulge in thoughts of meanness, pettiness, smallness, jealousy, hatred, anger, he cannot follow these ignoble instincts, and maintain the serenity of his countenance. Impossible! If there are no wrinkles in your mind, you may expect that there will be none on your face. Outer occasions may arise, of course,—mishaps, misfortunes, emergencies, as we call them, but the only real remedy for these lies in our mental attitude. We can take our mind entirely off these things. It is one of the lessons that we have to learn. The thing is, to *do* it.

This applies both to life and to religion. It is not a man's religion that matters, but his application of religion. Most religions agree on fundamental principles. There is not a single religion that teaches man to be cruel and unkind. I know of none. Read from the greater Bibles of the world, and when you have compared their beautiful sentiments, if you are not already prejudiced, you will say that they might all have been written by the same mind, the same heart might have conceived them. They blend in harmony; there is rhythm.

God is not a respecter of names and forms; He sees deep down. You may be able to deceive a man, you may even successfully forge important papers, such as credentials or a passport, but there is no such thing possible in the Divine

realm. Here is where we have to deal directly. Here our mind is our only credential. Our thoughts are always leaving their imprint on our heart, and our actions cannot be anything other than our mind makes possible. The great men have realized this. For instance, Emerson says: "The key to every man is his thought." By his thought, man can open large doors—great vistas—through which inspiration will come in a flood, or he can so completely bar the entrance to his mind that he becomes suffocated within himself. The mind can become so twisted that it will cause a man forcibly to take his own life. His life—imagine!—the source of his opportunities and blessings! Likewise, the mind with great power of perception can make us conscious that we are a part of that Infinitude; not in the sense that we, in our small capacity, are all in all, but in the sense that there is a Power which sustains us, by means of which our minds can conceive great thoughts, and our hands, though frail, when united with that Power, can accomplish great things. For under inspiration, what can a man not do! The wise man says truly: "Lord, I am nothing, I can do nothing!" yet he becomes a potent factor, because he has connected himself with That which is omnipotent.

It seems to me that we are like to many receptacles. We partake of what we are capable of containing. Yet men are continually quarrelling over what they call Divine injustice. "That man is so honored, has such power and blessing! Why cannot we have the same?" You have heard it, I have heard it. We all know there is this rebellion. Many feel that if they could adjust the world condition, everything would be made right. When we sum it all up, however, we find that there is a law, and that man himself operates that law. A man connects himself with something pure and lofty, and his whole being expands; his life becomes, as it were, a tre-

mendous mouth-piece for the high, the fine, the beautiful; then, through some distortion of mind, he begins to think—in the way of self-depreciation—"Oh, I am nothing!" and at once he partakes of the nature of his thought. Let a man continue to think he is nothing, and maintain his negative standard, and he will become nothing. If he continually says, "I am a sinner!" he will become a sinner. You may think this is in conflict with the Biblical teaching. There is no conflict. The Biblical teaching may ask you to admit that you have committed sins and errors, but it does not ask you to stop at that point and brood over your failings, without trying to increase your life of holiness. The only antidote for sin and sorrow and imperfection is to learn to partake of that which is their opposite. Christ said: "Be perfect as your Father Which is in heaven." It is a tremendous statement. Man who is so frail and faltering, to him He said, "Be perfect." And He was addressing all men, not just the few.

In the teaching which I represent, the finest thought of the ancient Indo-Aryan world, tremendous emphasis is laid on the mind. It holds that mind is the reflex of the great God, and that it is through the mind that we connect ourselves with this Infinite Being. Therefore, since we feel that we are His children, essentially of the Divine origin, it is for us to cleanse the mind, purify it and *keep it in good shape*.

Mind is a little like the elephant as we see him in India. You give the elephant a bath; you wash him, cleanse him, and then you let him loose. Immediately he rolls in the dust and is worse than he was before, because now he has a cake of mud all over him. Same way it is with us. On a certain day we really feel close to Divine things and our mind seems so free and purified; then we become careless and soon we are mentally in the same condition as the elephant.

The thing is, we have to acquire a sense of values. There

was a time when through the element of fear people were held in order. And even now we find this in the realm of religion. "If you do not do certain things, God is going to punish you," we are told. That is childish. It is not by holding the rod of threat that you can make people behave, or make yourself behave either. Such a method may possess a certain helpfulness for people of a low order of mentality who cannot be reached in any other way, but in the realm of freedom, we love Truth out of our own volition, because it is supremely lovable. Human beings resent a lack of freedom, and I myself, have a tremendous sense that nothing great can be accomplished through bondage. Freedom is the condition for growth. The whole world is permeated with holiness, purity, beauty and strength, and all these will come to us if we but choose to have them. Man must make his own choice. It is not that he is forced to fall down on his knees and pray out of fear; he chooses to do so. When he thinks of higher things, he does so because he wants to. He feels at home in that atmosphere, and absorbs there the power and the potentiality of the Divine. It all depends upon the individual. There is the man who hails the dawn, who feels the glory of the rising sun, its life-breath, and whose whole being seems to respond to its inspiration; and there is the man who, when the dawn comes, curses his destiny. "Another day!" he groans, "What a terrible thing! Again I have to meet another day! The same drudgery, the same struggle, the same conditions once more to face!"

Here we have two complete pictures, and fundamentally there is no difference between the one mind and the other, except in their concepts. Now I am not going into any philosophical intricacies as to why these concepts differ. Why does a man look downward instead of upward and forward? —tell me that. You may be able to state thousands of rea-

sons. You may say it is because he has been dealing with the element of doubt, that his mind is full of fear and misgiving, but in the final analysis you will have to admit that all these things are his because he has accepted them out of his own volition. He had the power to reject them. He could have barred his mind entirely to these negative elements, if he had desired. When someone comes to us with a wrong idea, it does not mean that we have to embrace it. Sometimes we hear it said: "I was so happy till so-and-so told me this awful story. Now my faith is broken, my religion is gone, my whole life is disturbed!"

Is not this an admission of weakness? Does our happiness, our destiny, everything depend on what another person may tell us? Here is where the mind is our greatest safeguard. There is no one who can turn you against yourself or against anything else if your own mind is your friend. Let me quote a very salient and practical text from an ancient classic:

"Let a man raise himself by his Self, let him never lower himself; for he alone is the friend of himself and he alone is the enemy of himself. He who has conquered himself by the Self, he is the friend of himself; but he whose self is unconquered, his self acts as his own enemy like an external foe."

If you give your own interpretation to this through your life, thought and action, you will have written a volume—although it may not be in printed form—in the way of goodness, happiness and inspiration, for the many who come in contact with your life to read.

We must believe in these things. We have to believe either in one thing or the other. Often we believe too much in the visible things. We are unduly influenced because one thing appears this way and another that way. There is a Power which is far beyond all these shifting, changing, ap-

parent conditions, and if we rely on That, at once we counteract them.

Strange it is that man, mortal as he is, hungry and thirsty and full of yearning to attain immortality, yet spends more time thinking of his mortality than he ever spends thinking of his immortal aspect. Man who wants to be free of all the sins and sorrows and imperfections of the world, spends the major portion of his time and thought dwelling on these very things and thus he has little time to think of That which is perfect and above and beyond the realm of matter. Our actions, you see, are most incongruous. We think of one thing and desire to obtain another. But that cannot be.

What is the greatest factor in life? There is nothing that man has yet invented that can equal the velocity, the capacity, in every sense of the term, of the human mind. By what means can we travel as fast as mind can travel? Why, through mind we can relate ourselves with the Highest! This does not mean that in any aggressive sense we become omnipotent, and are able to dictate to the whole world what it shall do, and what shall happen; it means that by blending our mind with the Loftiest and most Exalted, we reflect, according to our measure, that great Power. Every individual has this potentiality, which we find developed in the lives of the saints, prophets and Messiahs. It is not that they themselves are endowed with Divine Power, it is rather that they have become the mirror for that mighty Force. Why is it if all people possess this possibility that so few seem to manifest it? Have you never seen a person stand in his own light and say: "I do not seem to be able to read?" We do many peculiar things of this kind. There is the story of the man who came home at nightfall and found that the fire on his hearth had gone out. Very dejected, he went to his neighbors, carrying a dimly lighted lantern, and begged them

for a flame to rekindle his fire. Naturally they exclaimed: "You foolish man! in your own hand you carry the flame to relight your fire."

I want you to grasp the full significance of this parable. He is not the only man who has made this mistake. Our mind is so often focused on our immediate loss. For instance, I have heard some of you say: "'I have lost my fortune! I have lost everything!" as if everything were gone with your fortune. There is something that is not gone. Your intelligence is not gone; your mind, your heart, your hands are not yet gone; the faculties that helped you build up your life and your fortune are still intact, and perhaps this time they will be able to build even better than before. Look at real artists, how flexible they are. Often they will wipe out a whole canvas because they are not satisfied with it. Those who are standing by are shocked. "Why it was beautiful —perfect!" they cry out. "How could you do such a terrible thing?" But the artist did not think it was perfect, therefore he was willing to begin all over again.

Something resembling this consciousness we need in the background of our understanding. Trivial losses, shifting conditions—if we let our mind be tossed by these, of course we shall have no possibility for peace, happiness or rest. That is exactly what is causing suffering for the major portion of humanity. It is not that the mind itself is at fault, it is the use that we make of it. We can learn to disconnect our mind from our pain and sorrow. No one can force us to do it; but we can do it. We all know how a physician often will prescribe a change for one who is suffering from some acute condition which no medicine can control. Sometimes he does so out of disgust at the patient's mental attitude; or he does it as a last resort, in order to make him forget his sickness. There is a great deal of mental psychology

involved in such an order. The new environment, the change of setting and of contact, may strike fire and give the mind a fresh start.

I believe that all of us, high and low, great and small, can in large measure control our destiny—can create our present life and mould our future. Never allow yourself to brood over a failure or to remind another of his failure. It does no good to step on one who is already broken down by his own weakness. Yet it is just this that human beings often do in their misguided zeal. The man who is weak we only make weaker by telling him that he is no good. The only way that we can elevate him and lift his burden so that he will be able to stand on his own feet, is to make him realize his innate strength; and here is where the mind can serve the individual. We cannot always expect to lean upon a prop, to be forever supported by something or someone. Such an attitude can do us great damage. Even religion may do this damage to us. The mind, however, can help us over all these difficulties and dangers. One person whose mind is in rhythm and united with the Infinite, is a great and real help to his fellow man. It is not through accident that some people are able to maintain their equilibrium; the secret lies in their thoughts. "The key to every man is his thought." Remember that and cease reminding yourself of the weak parts of your nature.

By means of your thought, you can rise to the stature of happiness, power, perfection, and even of success. What is the use of going in for business, art, industry—or whatever may be your vocation—with the thought of failure and uselessness? By holding such negative ideas, you condemn yourself and will be unable to accomplish anything. Your mind has already done the damage by sowing the seeds of imperfection and defeat. You are conquered before you start; like

a man who forgets to lift the anchor before pulling on the oars. No matter how much he pulls, the boat can make no advance. Mind is very powerful; it can work both ways. That is why the Lord Buddha tells us: "Let a wise man guard his thoughts; thoughts well guarded bring happiness." And in the Upanishads we read: "By the serenity of his thoughts a man blots out all actions good or bad. Dwelling within his Self with serene thoughts, he obtains imperishable happiness." You may ask, "Is there such a thing as imperishable happiness?" There is; but it is known only to those who are not susceptible to the changes of the weather, so to speak: who do not make up their minds that there is going to be a good day and a bad day, happiness and misery, but who hold their minds aloof from all shifting and changing conditions, and find their anchor in Truth. This may not be your own experience at the present moment, but it is something to look forward to,—that there is such a calm sea in the spiritual world, where all is safe and abiding.

Why, if all this is true, does it seem impossible for us to realize the potentiality of Spirit? Why is it so difficult for us to partake of omnipotent strength through our own mind? It is because we have scattered our forces so. We cannot think constantly one single thought, yet we wonder why it is that we are not enlightened with the Divine radiance. This should not discourage us, however. We should give up nothing through fear or discouragement. See how stubbornly a man clings to what he wants to do. You cannot check him. This should give us a glimpse of mental strength and tenacity of purpose. The potentiality is within us. What we need is to learn how to manifest it along the proper channel.

By means of the mind, we can feel close to Divinity, to purity, to holy things; by means of the mind, noble instincts

are roused in us; by means of the mind, man is able to forget himself altogether. Let us make use of this God-given instrument. Through it man becomes Christlike and Buddhalike and saintlike. I do not mean by this anything negative. He transcends himself and accomplishes a very positive, untold amount of good. This mind of ours which at the present moment is uncertain, full of error and inadequate even for our own problems, can become more and more allied to the Great Mind, the Omnipotent Mind. I like this expression—alliance. We ally ourselves with a lot of things which cause us to lose our power. Then, again, we form an alliance with the Highest. We think of It, dream of It, dedicate our whole life to It, until unconsciously we give expression to It. We make our own individual interpretation of all the beautiful teachings the great Bibles have pronounced; we give practical demonstration of the truths that are ours by birthright, and in this way, we mould the future by what we hold close to our heart.

AD COELUM

By Harry Romaine

At the muezzin's call for prayer,
The kneeling faithful thronged the square,
And on Pushkara's lofty height
The dark priest chanted Brahma's might.
Amid the monastery's weeds
An old Franciscan told his beads;
While to the synagogue there came
A Jew to praise Jehovah's name.
The One Great God looked down and smiled
And counted each His loving child;
For Turk and Brahmin, monk and Jew
Had reached Him through the gods they knew.

THE FRUITS OF PROGRESS

By Sister Devamata

Civilization rests upon the individual life. Humanity moves forward in a single file. Progress does not occur in the mass. The gravitational pull is too strong. Nations and peoples are never fully civilized, but they contain within them in varying numbers men and women who live up to their highest vision and constitute a civilized vanguard. It is these who preserve and lift the national ideals and standards, and thus raise the average of the whole.

Progress is not civilization. What is gleaned by progress must be applied and assimilated for a long period before it is transmuted into that mellower, riper state we call civilization. It is never a fixed or absolute state. It must always remain relative and changing, as the social order on which it rests is changing.

Cultural development cannot be severed from the background which has given it birth. Customs and traditions vary from people to people, from epoch to epoch, and it must vary with them. What passes as civilized at one moment of history appears uncivilized at another. What is called culture by one nation is accounted barbarism by some other. A modern Chinese writer makes this significant comment on present conditions in Europe:

"It would seem at times that Europe is suffering from hot-headed youthfulness and that, after another century of scientific progress, Europeans will perhaps learn to be a little less brilliant and a little more mature, less self-assertive and more tolerant—at the risk of annihilation. For tolerance will be direly needed when science has knit the world together. There will be a little less desire to make progress and a little more desire to understand life. . . . A lot of the so-called

misery of the Chinese people is such, not to the Chinese themselves, but to those Westerners who cannot conceive of any man's being happy unless he is living in an overheated apartment and owns a radio. The standard that measures a man's civilization and his happiness by the number of buttons he presses in a day is a false standard."

An increasing regard for comfort and convenience is not evidence of advancement. It is rather a symptom of deterioration. The Roman decadence was marked by extreme love of luxury. The more a man pampers his body, the less of a man he is; and the more he asks a machine to labor for him, the less of a workman is he. Mechanical invention is not civilization. The machine does not civilize man; it robs him of his creative power, his initiative and his imagination. It threatens his skill, his strength, even his ability to add and subtract. Art has been defined as "the expression of man's joy in his work," but there is little art and little joy in turning a lever or pushing a button. Richard Wagner, with the insight of genius, wrote, as far back as in 1884:

"Work is for the worker. . . . I hate the fast-growing tendency to chain men to machines in big factories and deprive them of all joy in their efforts. The plan will lead to cheap men and cheap products. I set my face against it and plead for the dignity and the health of the open air and the olden time."

To live wisely, men must be awake spiritually, and their higher sensibilities are deadened when life becomes mechanical and automatic. Without the presence of the spiritual consciousness, cultural growth is abortive. It may find expression in simple form only; it may be divorced from ecclesiastical and institutional religion, but it must exist as a leavening influence. A godless people is not in the ultimate sense a civilized people. Its ideals are sordid, its inter-

relations lack grace and fineness of feeling, and its national life is utilitarian and materialistic. The world today has far greater need of the calming, purifying and uniting power of spirit than it has need of armaments or commercial expansion. The moral and spiritual illiteracy which prevails at present is a much more serious menace to society than scholastic illiteracy could be.

In every human heart a strong civilizing power lies dormant. It must be roused to action, for upon each one of us falls the responsibility of the world's betterment. Nature has not left one of us out of her plan. She counts upon us, each one. Shall we be laggards and shirk our task? She does not ask us to transform the world; she asks us to transform ourselves, to lift our standards and ideals. There is no mightier force for regeneration than a noble life. It transfuses a whole community with its sanctifying influence. If we will but live nobly, in harmony with our highest point of vision, we shall have done our part toward the spiritual and cultural advancement of mankind.

Better the wise men who do lack repute
Than great repute and men of little wit.
Of praises by the unintelligent,
And blame and criticism by the wise,
Better the censure of th'intelligent
Than are the commendations of a fool. . . .
To live by wrong; for doing right to die,
Better 'twere thus to die than so to live.
They who have put off sense-desire and wrath,
Peace in their heart regarding life to come,
They walk the world from lust and craving free;
Likes and dislikes are not for such as these.

—*From "Psalms of the (Buddhist) Brethren."*

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S ADVENT

From "The Life of Sri Ramakrishna"

The advent of a spiritual genius like Sri Ramakrishna augured well for the future regeneration of India. At no other period of her history was India threatened with such utter ruin as in the middle of the last century. Various disruptive forces were about to extinguish her ancient culture and civilization. This was manifest in the social, political, economical and every other phase of her life; and it was so, because the sustaining force of the centre was exhausted. The backbone was broken and therefore the body could not stand on its legs. The main current having dried up, the branches were dying a natural death from inanition. Men forgot religion, the saving factor of Indian life, and thus fell an easy prey to the worst propensities of human nature, such as sloth, mutual hatred, sham and gratification of the senses, which totally undermined their strength and paved the way for the inroad of the dire materialistic influences from the West. For a moment, everything seemed to be lost. But India's providence ordained otherwise, for she was to supply her quota of help to other countries of the world. The safety of the world demanded that India must live. It was imperative that men satiated with imperialistic pursuits, should find a haven of peace in the Indian doctrine of the soul. To prepare herself for this great task, she needed to reorganize her life on the secure basis of spirituality. In Sri Ramakrishna she got the man who could do this for her. To quote the testimony of a Brahmo writer:

A living evidence of the depth and sweetness of Hindu religion is this good and holy man. He has wholly controlled his flesh. It is full of soul, full of the reality of religion, full of joy, full of blessed purity. As a Siddha Hindu ascetic, he is a witness of the falsehood and emptiness of the world.

His witness appeals to the profoundest heart of every Hindu. He has no other thought, no other occupation, no other relation, no other friend in his humble life than his God. That God is more than sufficient for him. His spotless holiness, his deep unspeakable blessedness, his unstudied endless wisdom, his childlike peacefulness and affection towards all men, his consuming, all-absorbing love for God are his only reward."

In these beautiful lines is summed up the greatness of Sri Ramakrishna as well as that of Indian civilization. Thus at a most critical moment of Indian history, a messenger from God arrived and by his own life gave a tremendous impetus to India's future renaissance.

CHINA'S MINISTERS OF BEAUTY

By Sister Daya

(Continued from the February number)

It was aesthetic, this alignment of forces in ancient China, —regimented morals, customs, manners, social usages and modes of thought set against soul freedom and spontaneity.

The mould into which Confucius sought to pour the mind of his people, had to do, it is true, with dignity and the great reserves of spirit, with etiquette based upon superiority of humanhood—if we may use the term—but it was none the less a mould, rigidly defined, and tending to fix the Chinese character in a medium which, if unmodified, would ultimately have crystallized into a prison-house of thought and action. To a large extent, this crystallization did come about, but what effect it would have had upon the artistic genius of the Chinese at that time, if left to itself, we cannot now be sure, because of the immediate counteracting influences of Buddha and Lao Tzu. Nor can we, at this present day, measure the extremes of unregulated, unsubstantial art expres-

sions which would have resulted from a diet of Zen contemplation and the absolute freedom of TAO, undiluted by the form-sense of Confucius. Each influence played its restraining part. Yet, I would rather say, it was the Chinese mind itself, sane, balanced and aspiring, that with fine discrimination accepted only those influences which, when combined, would represent the wholeness of its well-grounded ideal and vision.

"Perfect art," says Mr. Binyon, "satisfies both our instinct for order and our instinct for freedom. . . . Lao Tzu, said to have been born fifty years before Confucius, inspired the reaction of the individual soul against the communistic systems of the latter. The Confucian ideas . . . tended in time to harden and freeze—a revolt was necessary. However, Mr. Okakura has suggestively observed, 'In this Eastern struggle between the two forces of communism and individual reaction, the ground of contest is not economic but intellectual and imaginative.' In all creative art there is a similar contest or dualism. For all art conveys in varying proportions, but inextricably combined, ideas of order and ideas of energy or freedom. . . . Perfect art holds the two elements in equilibrium."

"The life-movement of the spirit through the rhythm of things," Hsieh Ho's first canon of painting, was however, surely liberated by Lao Tzu and by the great, deep inward reachings of the mind through Zen, rather than by means of the set forms of Confucian culture, even though it is these latter we have to thank for the restraint which kept the movement of the spirit within the bounds of the beautiful. One cannot read the verses from the Tao-Teh King without feeling that fluidity of freedom, which has its scriptural counterpart only in India's great Upanishads, in the Isa Upanishad, for example.

"That One though motionless is swifter than the mind. The senses can never overtake It, for It ever goes before. Though immovable, it travels faster than those who run. By It the all-pervading air sustains all living beings. It moves and It moves not. It is far, and also It is near. It is within and also it is without all this. He who sees all beings in the Self and the Self in all beings, he never turns away from It." To this Lao Tzu makes echo, but in his own voice of wisdom, for the great souls never imitate, they only tap the same source:

"There is something chaotic, yet complete, which existed before Heaven and Earth. Oh, how still it is, formless, standing alone and suffering no change, reaching everywhere, exhausted never! It may be regarded as the Mother of the Universe. Its name I know not. To designate It, I call it TAO. Essaying to describe it, I call It Great. Great, It passeth on; passing on, it becometh remote; having become remote, It doth return. Man taketh his law from the Earth; Earth taketh its law from Heaven; Heaven taketh its law from TAO. TAO finds Its law in the affirmation of Self."

"Truth is one; men call It by various names," states the Rig Veda. Tao Chi, a painter of the early 17th century said: "Once my motto was *my own way*. But now I realize that after all there is only one way, and that which I discovered for myself and called my own way was really the way of the ancients."

However that may be, the way of Lao Tzu led the Chinese into a world where every blade of grass was seen as a green sheath of mystery, and all was made alive in a far deeper and more intimate sense than the modern scientific understanding of that term. One could say of Lao Tzu's teachings what Walter Pater once said of Wordsworth's poems:

"They raise physical nature to the level of human thought,

giving it thereby a mystic power and expression. They subdue man to the level of nature, but give him therewith a certain breadth and vastness and solemnity."

Yet this does not, it seems to me, go far enough; Laoism —as the pure philosophy of Lao Tzu is sometimes called, to distinguish it from the superstitious Taoist outgrowth— blends man and nature in the boundlessness of the Absolute One. "The name of Inner Life is Everlasting TAO."

Other-worldly as this vision of existence may at first appear, it actually intensified, for those who shared it, the living quality of all phases of life, even the most outwardly prosaic, giving them a deep and eternal significance. Miss Louise Hackney, in her "Guide Posts to Chinese Paintings," puts this very neatly: "Chinese historians speak of Taoism as 'the art of being in the world.' It deals with the present and tries to find beauty in the mundane things about us. 'It is in us that God meets Nature and yesterday parts with tomorrow,' to put it in the Oriental manner. *The present is the real infinity.*"

Referring to Buddhism which, by the austere Zen discipline in meditation, forced man away from mere theory and toward the practical realization of TAO or the Absolute Truth within—Miss Hackney has this to say: "One of the profound influences in Sung art was the teachings of the Zen or Ch'an sect of Buddhism. It taught what may be called idealistic contemplation, regarding Nature as a storehouse of spiritual laws. It held that man and Nature were two parallel expressions of the same thing, and that the perfect life was to be found only in solitary contemplation of the Universe as it expressed itself through the glories of the sunset and the blossoming of a flower. . . . A religion that taught that no guidance was necessary other than that the student found in Nature and his own intelligence and mus-

ings, tended to develop individualism. Zenism joined with Taoism . . . in opposing the stereotyping effect of Confucianism that submerged the individual in the mass. Many of the Zen priests stand out both as great landscape and portrait painters. . . . It (Buddhism) gave the Chinese painter matter for deep moral and philosophical speculations. The three religions combined caused the artist to reverence life and all its manifestations: the bud opening in the spring, the great men of former generations whose labor aided man yet unborn, and all that which leads the mind out into the Infinite. *They made living itself a ritual.*"

TO BE CONTINUED

SWAMI PARAMANANDA EN ROUTE

THROUGH JAPAN AND AT HONGKONG

During recent years I have followed with keen interest Swami Paramananda's tours around the world, especially through the Far Eastern countries. The accounts of his receptions by his countrymen have fascinated me, but this time it came as my lot and privilege, to witness one of these at Hongkong, during his brief stay on his way to India.

Swami Paramananda left Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, California, on December 27, 1934, embarking on the M.S. "Chichibu Maru," at San Pedro (Los Angeles Harbor). Srimati Gayatri Devi and myself accompanying him. Although the Swami's sailing was very sudden, between forty and fifty people came to see him off, and the N.Y.K. Line kindly served a special tea for his friends. At San Francisco, during the twenty-four hours spent there, the Swami was entertained by his many friends and students. It is very interesting to see how wherever Swami Paramananda goes, someone unexpectedly turns up. In Honolulu, January 3, Mrs. Watmull's young daughter recognized Swami and Gay-

atri Devi on the street, told her mother she had seen them, and after a fruitless search, they finally found Swami and Gayatri Devi on the "Chichibu Maru" at four o'clock in the afternoon. They garlanded them with fragrant flower *lahas* of welcome. The Watmulls deeply regretted not having been informed of Swami's arrival because they felt the loss of an opportunity to entertain him the few short hours he spent there. Honolulu is "the Paradise of the Pacific," a heavenly spot!

Dr. Fritz Hansgirg, a noted Austrian scientist on his way to Japan with his wife, embarked on "Chichibu Maru" at Honolulu, and found an immediate kinship with Swami, treasuring his spiritual breadth of universal vision. They derived great inspiration from Swami's books and conversation. Reluctantly the Hansgirgs departed at Yokohama, carrying with them some of the Swami's works. Swami did not follow his usual custom of lecturing on the ship, because he was resting. Mr. G. Sekimoto, a newspaper man of Yokohama, remembered Swami's visit in Japan two years ago, and in one of Yokohama's leading newspapers, he put a writeup of Swami's arrival there, January 13.

From Yokohama, the Swami and his companions visited Kamakura, where they saw the beautiful Diabutsu Buddha, forty-two feet in height, cast in the year 1252. It is full of gentleness and tenderness. Tall pines make the approach and background. A tidal wave washed away the Temple, and ever since, the great Image is exposed to all weathers. During the terrible earthquake in 1922, the Image remained intact. Incense burns constantly before Its benign presence. The Hase Kwannon, 26 feet in height, made from one half of a camphor tree, was carved in the year 1250. It is a beautiful work of art. Kwannon means "Goddess of Mercy." Hachiman Shrine is one of the famous places of Shinto wor-

ship. The rural life of Japan, with oxen, native colorful kimonas, children at play in bright, orange-brocaded costumes, immaculate houses, rice fields, and lovely gardens, painted a picture of unusual beauty.

Tokyo is a large and modern city. At the Olympic Restaurant there, coincidentally Swami met a strange Hindu gentleman, Mr. Chamon Lal, journalist on "Delhi Times," India, and at present writing a book on Japan. He happened to be a personal friend of Gayatri Devi's brother, who is also a journalist and a Doctor of Philosophy. Mr. Lal took notes for a writeup of Swami's passing visit through Japan. Zojo-ji, Buddhist Temple at Shiba Park, Tokyo, was an impressive visit for Swami and his companions. Shrines (Shinto) and Temples (Buddhist) are numerous throughout Japan, thus but a few could be visited in a short time. Yokohama was seen sketchily before sailing, January 14, for Kobe.

At Kobe, January 15, the Swami met, through Mr. Lal, one Mohammedan lady, Mrs. Ali, and a Delhi couple, Dr. and Mrs. Bersha. Dr. Bersha is professor of languages at Tokyo University. They were unable to arrange a meeting for Swami due to shortness of the stay. Swami and his companions visited Kyoto, Nara and Osaka. Pressed for time, only very few of the many Shrines and Temples could be seen; amongst them at Kyoto, Chion-in Temple-Monastery, covering a large area, and the impressive Sanjusang-endo, where is the lovely wooden golden-seated Image of thousand-armed Kwannon, 8 feet in height. It was jointly carved by the famous sculptor Tankei, then eighty-two years of age, and his assistants Koen and Kosei. There are 33,033 manifestations of Kwannon, each standing 5 feet 7 inches in height. Many people streamed in and out of the Temple, as it was a special festival to Kwannon.

At Nara, Todaiji Temple is the Hall of the Grand Buddha

Diabutsu,—a colossal bronze Image seated, 53 feet high, completed in the year 748. The Nara Deer Park, Temple of Thousand Lanterns, Horyuji Temple and Pagoda are among the interesting places to visit. Nara was the first capitol of Japan and the cradle of arts, crafts and literature. Kyoto was the second capitol, and today, Tokyo is the third.

The Swami and his companions missing their connection at Hongkong on "Suwa Maru" by eleven hours, due to the "Chichibu Maru" docking late on January 19, necessitated their remaining in Hongkong from January 20 to January 22. Swamiji had no expectancy there. Mr. Watmull of Honolulu had given his brother's address at Hongkong, and through the brother, the Swami met Mr. Karamchand, silk export merchant, who phoned Mr. Gopaldas. Mr. Gopaldas came immediately to Mr. Karamchand's office to meet Swamiji, and he phoned to Mr. V. S. C. Singham, editor on "Canton Daily Sun" and "The Canton Truth." Mr. Singham knew all about Swami, having met him in Kuala Lumpur a few years previous. These gentlemen arranged a lecture for Swami the following day, January 21, at the Theosophical Hall, Hongkong Annex, Chater Road, at 6 P.M. The Swami's Address was the first he ever delivered at Hongkong. The Hall was filled with people, representing various parts of the world,—China, England, Germany, Norway, Holland, Scotland, United States and different parts of India. The Swami delivered an illuminating and inspiring Address on "The Need of the Hour," stressing that individually we must put into practical application the Ideals of spiritual living.

Mr. John Russell (Scotchman), President of Hongkong Theosophical Society, expressed his deep appreciation in behalf of the Society and all present, for the beautiful atmosphere of sunshine, happiness and peace Swamiji created, and

how much they are in need of just such a message of the good will and unity he conveyed. A German gentleman, whose name I do not remember, gave a few words of genuine appreciation in behalf of Germans. Mr. M. P. Talati, a prominent Parsee gentleman, read his Address of welcome and appreciation of the Swami. He read, to quote a few of his own words: "Time does not permit us to express fully our respectful regards towards you, yet with sincere joy and esteem, we welcome you here today as one of the greatest sons of India, and one of the foremost spiritual teachers of Divine Truth, who is so whole-heartedly working for the benefit of the entire human race. Your untiring energy, zeal and devotion for the well-being of humanity has won our profound esteem and admiration. Your noble work, the Ananda-Ashrama, that unique establishment, is now universally known and will ever remain as an emblem of your noble and self-sacrificing work. We earnestly pray that the Almighty may bestow on you strength and health to continue your blessed work of peace, which the world so greatly needs."

Mr. Wei Tat, a Chinese graduate of Hongkong University, spoke very spontaneous and touching words, voicing his deep appreciation in meeting personally the inspiring author, Swami Paramananda, whose literature he has known and drawn inspiration from for the past eight years.

Rev. Karl Ludvig Reichelt, a Norwegian gentleman of the Christian Institute, "Tao Fong Shan," meaning "The Mountain from which the Logos Wind—the Christ-spirit—is Blowing," gave very genuine words of gratitude and appreciation and extended his invitation to the Swami and his companions to visit his Place of Retreat near Shatin Valley.

Mr. K. B. Vaidya, President of the Hindu Association of Hongkong, came all the way from Canton to see Swamiji. He gave a few words of tribute in glowing terms, stating

that Swamiji is an intellectual, philosophical and spiritual ambassador of India to the world.

Gayatri Devi and the writer were called upon by Mr. Singham to give a few words, which they did accordingly.

The meeting was a real success because it touched the hearts of so many people with appreciation and enthusiasm, and touched our hearts by its warmth and friendliness. It is good to interchange in this way with those who are working along similar lines. All present showed eagerness for the Swami's literature and deep regret not to keep him with them for a longer period of time. He feels that in Hongkong is a nucleus of earnest seekers for spiritual light.

Doctor M. R. Deb, Malaria specialist for the Government in the colonies, drove Swamiji and his companions to "Tao Fong Shan" near Shatin Valley, and there the party was graciously received by Rev. and Mrs. Reichelt. The Retreat is magnificently situated on a mountain top, a place of pilgrimage overlooking a gorgeous valley. The landscape is not unlike that of California mountains and valleys, a real Ashram. A large canopied Chinese bell greets one. The buildings, including the church, are monastic Chinese architecture. Mrs. Reichelt told me, "Last night Rev. Reichelt returned home from Hongkong, and he spoke constantly of the inspiration he had received, and could not dismiss from his mind the Swami's wonderful spiritual message." Rev. Reichelt had the great Chinese bell rung to call the residents at the Retreat,—Buddhist monks, Taoist monks, and a Tibetan monk. They came together at the Chinese church which contains the Christ. There Swamiji was requested by Rev. Reichelt to speak to them. The Swami's words of benediction were translated into Chinese by Rev. Reichelt for the benefit of those who had come to the Retreat to study the Scriptures. Rev. Reichelt seemed deeply grateful to the

Swami for coming, and considered his visit a blessing. Rev. Reichelt is a learned scholar of Mandarin, German, English, Chinese, Japanese, French and Italian. He is the author of "Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism." Thousands of pilgrims from all over China go to the Retreat and spend a few days, weeks or months with him, for study and religious fellowship. Dr. Deb drove the Swami and his companions back to Hongkong via Kawloom and over the ferry to the Island.

Hongkong is a picturesque Island and exceeds the charm of the Italian Riviera, I was told. From the Peak, the view immediately below is something unforgettable. Hongkong, Kawloom, the busy harbour and countless islands form a unique picture. Of the Chinese population, approximately 75,000 are known as "floating population," living entirely upon junks and boats in the harbour. Hongkong at night, with her many hills and lights, looks like a jewel box.

Swamiji spent three very strenuous and active days sightseeing in Hongkong and was overwhelmed by the hospitality, generosity, love and esteem of his countrymen, who, in a large group, reluctantly saw him sail away too soon, on the M.S. "La Plata Maru" for Singapore.

—Amala (Camille Christians)

REPORT

At the Ananda-Ashrama, California, and the Vedanta Centre, Boston, all activities have been carried on rhythmically during the past month. Frequent rain in California and a cold and snowy season in Boston during the winter just over, have made attendance difficult at Services and Classes; but friends have proved faithful, so that the Swami, on his return, will feel that the living atmosphere of devotion in both places has been held intact.

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VOL. XXIV NUMBER 4

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

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Message of the East



APRIL, 1935

Thy Will Be Done

Issued by

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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

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GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN

An Easter Message

OCCASIONALLY, even in these times of mean selfishness and ruthless competition, one hears of a deed so simple, so heroic, and so truly great that words of praise die away before it, and, in the face of it, even the homage of men seems dead and lifeless.

Such a deed is described in the Associated Press despatch which we reproduce below. The doer of it—one out of the 400,000,000 Chinese—will forever remain as nameless as the Unknown Soldier whose grave is wreathed at Arlington, and far less honored by his fellow men. There was no glamour in his sacrifice. The setting of it was stark and dreary enough, God knows, and the occasion, blood-lust and brutality. Therefore this man's act stands clear and free, with no possible motive other than his true manhood and the divine compassion which stirred within his breast. Whether he were Buddhist, Christian or non-believer matters not at all. What he *did* stands and will stand as a proof of the Eternal in every human soul, forever beyond creeds, codes, forms and all limitations.

The "Message of the East" feels that no philosophy however lofty, no written scripture, can convey, as does this living deed, the real meaning of that Sacrifice which the Christian world glorifies anew at Eastertide; or illustrate more potently the immortal words: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

Tsinanfu, Shantung Province, China, January 27 (AP)

A nameless Chinese prisoner sacrificed his life for little Helen Priscilla Stam, orphaned at the age of three months

by the murder of her missionary parents, it was disclosed today. W. J. Hanna of Toronto, an official of the China Inland Missions who brought the child here from Wuhu, Anhwei Province, to live with her grandparents, told the story.

After the execution of Mr. and Mrs. John C. Stam at Miaosheo, Southern Anhwei, last December, the Communist captors of the Stams were on the point of killing the child, Hanna said, but a man who had been released by Communists only a few hours before from the village prison pleaded for the infant's life.

"Don't harm an innocent thing like this" he urged; "it has done no harm to us."

"Who are you?" a Communist officer asked. "Why do you intercede for the baby?"

The prisoner said he had no connection with "these foreigners," Hanna related, but begged that the baby's life be spared.

"Who will forfeit his life for the child?" the officer asked. The released prisoner volunteered, and was killed on the spot. The baby was spared, and was found after the retreat of the Reds in an abandoned house.

Hanna, who made a thorough investigation of all the circumstances of the Stam murder, said this account had been amply authenticated by Chinese witnesses.

Who is he who will affirm that there must be a web of flesh and bone to hold the shape of love. —*Wm. Faulkner.*

All for themselves the loveless spend; the loving e'en their bones for others give. —*Tiruvalur.*

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the Will of God abideth for ever. —*St. John.*

THY WILL BE DONE

By Swami Paramananda

(An Address delivered by the Swami at "The Temple of the Universal Spirit," Ananda-Ashrama, California.)

We have here, in this subject of surrender, one of the grandest of themes, found in practically all spiritual records both ancient and modern, and possessing a universal appeal. Naturally at once you connect it with your Christian Bible, beginning with the many sayings in the Old Testament, and finally given in the words of the great Master, Christ. But as we turn the pages of the scriptures and great Bibles of the world, everywhere we come across it in one form or another. It is a universally accepted principle, a grand, magnificent concept, holding before man the ideal that he should at every turn learn to submit his will, his power, and all that he calls his own, to God, the Giver of all good, that thus he may be secured in his actions, his thoughts, and in whatsoever may be his undertakings.

We can never submit our will to the Divine Will, however, so long as we think we have greater wisdom than the Divine. That is one of the troubles with the world today—it has thought it could do things better than God could do them. What we call our modern civilization, with all that that includes, is an illustration of this. Therefore it is no wonder that we have so much loss and confusion, unrest and lack of peace, since this conflict first exists in our own mind.

It avails little or nothing if a man merely pretends that he surrenders everything to God, saying with his lips: "Thy Will be done!" as from our infancy we have heard preachers proclaim from the pulpit, and as we in our turn have taken up the refrain and given it out. It is something more than mere speaking. Words alone do not make one submissive to the Divine Will, and so long as we have even a shadow

of doubt in our mind as to Its nature and our relation to It, we shall be unable to make It a reality in our life.

"If I give over my will to the Great Will," you may ask, "shall I be deprived of my happiness? Will there be for me as much of good, security and protection as there is now? Why should I take the risk?" These questions naturally come to our mind, but we must remember that surrender to God is not just an intellectual concept to be discussed and analyzed, or an ethical subect to calculate about, as to whether we should submit or we should not; it is a fact that grows upon us as we are able to perceive that the Divine Will is the most potent power and the only safe shelter for us in this entire universe. For this reason, we naturally turn to It as our understanding increases, instead of morbidly accepting It after we have been defeated by life and therefore feel that there is nothing else left for us to do.

There was a time when modern man was inclined to think that spiritual surrender was only for the negative, weak individual. The manly man, the intelligent, enterprising and capable man, why should he lay down his will? But surrender is not for the weak, and also I want to add here: it is not for the coward. Surrender calls for heroism. This may sound incongruous, because we think that the one who puts up his stubborn self-will, and fights, represents the strong type of manhood. In the final analysis, however, we find that his strength is only on the physical basis and is not anything we can depend on or that endures. It is not the strength of the Christlike, of those who in all circumstances stand up and face what human beings call "insurmountable difficulties," with never a complaint.

Let me read some of the great sayings from the Christian Bible. The Christ said: "*Whosoever shall do the Will of my Father Which is in heaven, the same is my brother and*

sister and mother." And again, "*For I have not spoken of myself but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. . . . The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's, Which sent me.*"

How it makes one think of Sri Ramakrishna! Once a man came and asked Sri Ramakrishna to instruct him. The Master tried to speak, but for some reason or other the words would not come, and he explained that he could only bring himself to speak when he had the consciousness of the Divine voice speaking through him—not otherwise. What a standard! What an ideal! If even for a single day we could all put into practice not opening our lips unless we had the incentive and urge from within, what a wonderful change would come upon this world! We would, of course, talk much less, but whatever we did say would be of tremendous value to ourselves and to our fellows.

You can see that such an attitude of mind is not based upon a negative principle. It requires an infinite amount of moral courage, feeling and faith. It means that a man grows from within out, *from within out,* instead of trying to grow from without in, as we do now. Man today notices whether or not his body is becoming stouter and stronger, and if he finds that through any mishap it is not, he immediately takes outer measures to increase its efficiency and power. But what is he doing inwardly to enhance his spiritual growth? When he is thwarted by the chaos around him, he gives up and accepts the confusion, because his outer horizon is limited and he does not know what the Divine Will is or how to turn to It. Now this condition can be counteracted, but only as he learns to seek within his own soul, and that means that his turbulent outer nature has to be silenced. The thing is, that as long as we believe we can do better and know better

than God Himself, the idea of surrender will be far from us.

More cleverness—for a long time this has been our standard. Where has it brought us and what has man obtained through his cleverness—tell me that? Today I can speak very frankly because you are thinking along these same lines. Man has set his own traps, has created entanglements, mental worries and unhappiness for himself and for the world, yet now he does not know how to get free from them; he is unable to find any solution. He might turn within, but unfortunately he has been nurtured with the thought that the idea of submission to the Divine Will is a weak, old-fashioned idea, and is not for the practical province of mankind.

One of the most hopeful factors in the makeup of present-day humanity is its admiration for greatness. We admire a great character. Of course, sometimes our admiration is a little like that of the critics at Bernard Shaw's play, who were reluctant to pass any judgment till they knew who was the author. That is often our standard of judgment. Did a famous man do it? Then it must be good. Until a man has been accepted by the world, though he may be a towering genius, we hesitate to accept him. We do, however, have a desire to recognize what is great, and that at least is something in our favor. For instance, today the whole world, even including those who are most conventional, admits that Gandhi is a great man. Why? He goes practically unclad, and in many ways lives contrary to our accepted mode of living. He is not a militant general; he is not a diplomat in the ordinary sense; he is not a man who is striving to build up power for himself or to gain personal name and fame. What then is the source of his strength, and how can he dare in the face of all adverse thoughts and standards, put into practice the concept that anything and everything can be solved by a man when he submits himself to God? How

often do you hear of a leader in politics or human society saying, "I am puzzled; I must seek the answer through prayer"? Does it not remind you of Christ when He retired to the Garden at the time He was face to face with His most terrible ordeal? Why did He not seek to organize an army? There were friends. Why did He not seek human aid? Human aid! He did not even pray to His Heavenly Father to send Him protection. He had only one desire,—how he might find out clearly and without bias the Will of the Father, with no element of conflicting thought anywhere. What a strength! That is the reason why I say that surrender is not for the coward.

You and I have been brought up with the idea that to submit the will is to accept defeat, and that it could never be the way of one who is strong and clever with plenty of red blood in his veins. The few who have said "Thy Will be done" and have lived up to their words, we have regarded as fools—and so is Christ regarded according to the standard of modern life. I am only saying what you already know. There have even been plays written to show what would happen to any man who tried today to follow in the footsteps of Christ. He would almost surely be arrested and would finally land in an insane asylum, of which we have plenty.

Man's will and the Divine Will are in clash, and that is the reason why man is as backward as he is. It is a blessed thing that at least he possesses the instinct which causes him to recognize the possibility of surrender, and inclines him to open his heart when he actually sees someone, like Gandhi, who is achieving victory through this means.

"*I can of my own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the Will of my Father Which hath sent me.*" What a great

vision for a man to carry!—Christ knew that to increase one's strength one should depend upon the Source of strength and not merely on one's own cleverness, shrewdness or physical valor.

Today we are going through a struggle, unmistakable. It is no imagination. Every one of us is called upon to meet some phase of difficult adjustment. We have spent many, many sleepless nights trying to solve the problem, trying to find a clue. Have we found anything? On the contrary, the minds of most men have become more confused, less clear, enshrouded with greater doubt, therefore with greater weakness, than ever; because when doubt enters, one always is made weaker. Should we not pause, then, when everything else has failed, and try at least to analyze our position in order to discover if there is not some way we can unite our frail mind and all our mental and material forces under the One Great Power Whom we call "Father, Mother, Friend, Great Teacher"? Why not look to Him? Why not try to find some definite point of contact through our faith and feeling, that we may discover what He really wants us to do. It is not a thing that is impractical, my friends, but we make it so through our doubt, through our constant critical attitude. Oh, how we drive God away from us! and yet we say "We need Thee every hour." We sing hymns and talk glibly of many wonderful things, but when the test comes we fail to apply them. No wonder we lose our faith in the Divine, and the world loses faith in itself.

Epictetus, the great Roman philosopher once wrote: "*Have I ever been restrained from what I willed? Or compelled against my will? Indeed how is this possible? I have ranged my pursuits under the direction of God. Is it His Will that I should have a fever? It is my will too. Is it His Will that I should pursue anything? It is my will too. Is it His Will*

that I should obtain anything? It is my will too. Is it His Will that I should be tortured? Then it is my will to be tortured. Is it His Will that I should die? Then it is my will to die."

What we need is the living example, and more than the living example, we ourselves need to do some of these things. We can do them, but never can they be done through pretence. So long as we think we are cleverer than God, we shall never submit ourselves to His Will no matter how many religious precepts are imposed on us, whether from classical writings, Christian Bible or Buddhist scripture.

Let a man cleanse his heart from egotism! What is this ego whch man asserts every day as he clashes with his fellows? There would be no war in this world, there would be no conflict in our social life or in any phase of our life, were it not for the prevalence of this colossal egotistic tendency in man, which has been increased by his wrong, detrimental training. Man wants everything for himself, and in his blindness even grasps for those things which bring disaster and death. It is not that religion has been at fault, but that we have failed to live our religion. What avails it to say in our prayer, "Thy Will be done!" when all the time we know what we want, and we want God to want that for us? At once there is division within, and wherever there is division there is lack of strength. If today we are weak spiritually, it is because we have weakened ourselves. And if we ever find our strength, we shall find it through the power of surrender.

There is no word that can convey the grandeur, the beauty, the practical value of this theme of surrender, and I think the moment is ripe for us to draw closer to this great principle. In its light we can even stand up and say: Blessed be the suffering, blessed be the disappointment, blessed be

all manner of things that bring us to the consciousness that there is a Higher Power, and that we have been following a mirage, which promises much, but gives absolutely nothing, because it is nothing.

It is not for the weak, this attitude, and by "weak" I do not mean the physically weak, but those who have moral and spiritual weakness. When you see everything crumble before you and yet can rise up and say "I will not interfere with Divine Will," that requires a tremendous amount of strength.

O my friends, this is a very difficult thing to convey to anyone. Our doubts will arise, confusion will arise until we have gained a definite concept of what God is, what Truth is, and of our share in God and in Truth. A man becomes a giant spiritually when he has given up all self-seeking. But how can we do this so long as there is any misgiving in our heart? Let us cultivate some of these "old-fashioned" ideas, since it seems that the new-fashioned ideas have not worked out so well. Try putting into practice the things which you have accepted theoretically and which you have called your faith; such, for instance, as "Thy Will be done." It is a teaching that is accepted by everyone. If you are a Jew you will say, "Why, we have that in our classics." The Christian will at once reply, "That is Christ's saying," while the Hindu will remark, "We have known that from four thousand years back." But it is not a question of how long we have known it. To feel that we possess something wonderfully ancient does not in itself bring us any great amount of blessing. Some of your families have ancient treasures, Bibles, for instance, that the grandfathers and the grandmothers have carefully preserved and that the descendants take great pride in. As a matter of fact, they are kept so securely that each time they are brought out, they have to

be dusted. They are no longer of any use. Same way it is with the ideals which man keeps on the shelf: they must be put into practice; the world needs them so tremendously.

We who are seeking today for the solution of our human problems are no longer satisfied to have clever people come and give us theories about them. This country today does not know whom to believe in, and so it is with every country. In India I have found the same condition. Men do not want to hear a lot of political discussion by people who are shrewd and diplomatic. They are seeking those who have real vision, who have become clear channels through which the Divine Power is manifesting. You and I can become clear channels. But it requires of us that we wash our mind, our heart, our thought, ourselves clean of all vanity and selfishness, or to sum it up in one word,—of all egotism. Ego plays havoc. It wants to put itself in the place which belongs to Divinity; to set itself upon the throne where God should rule, within the heart where God should reside. This should not be. It is the cause of all our troubles, just as self-surrender, or the practice of that great, grand spiritual concept, "Thy Will be done!" brings peace untold.

You have seen sometimes a little babe lying in its mother's arms—no cares, no fretting—not anxious, not afraid. Same way it can be with us. We are all children, yet the sad thing is, we think we are so grown-up and so wise; and what is more—we desire to instruct others. But what have we to give to others? The more we think of these things, more silent we become.

Let us cleanse our minds that God's Voice may speak through us; His Will may work through us; His Strength may flow through us! How beautiful are some of the great utterances of the mystic souls: "O Lord, make whatever use of me Thou desirest. Take Thou my mind, my heart!—

I know not how to use them—do Thou use them for me!"

Some of you who are so clever may say that this is sentimental, and you may easily think it, for you are thinking in one term and I am speaking in another. Such an ideal, however, is not to make us shallow or artificial, but rather to help us so that we may become staunch, undivided in our own home, united with God and with ourselves.

Let us be united! Let us be so unified, so absolutely affiliated with that Great Power that there is no question in our mind at any time. Then when we say, "O Lord, Thy Will be done!" our words will sound like a great musical note and will be for us like a mighty symphony whose volume fills our entire being and the whole world. Blessed is the man who can do this. He is the strongest among us, though he may seem puny and weak. Placed by the side of a great general, pompous and glorious according to our way of life, he may seem as nothing; yet he is the one who wins, who is victorious, because he is united with that Will, that Wisdom, which is eternal and unchangeable.

WHAT CHRIST IS

By Pearl S. Buck

(Compiled from her article, "Easter 1933", which appeared in the May number of the Cosmopolitan Magazine for that year.)

What Christ is materially I do not know. I have heard some say he is this man or that God. In the West men say he is Oriental and impractical; in the Orient, men disown him as one foreign to them. I see he is not often truly believed in, even by those who profess to be his followers; he who is most simple and unafraid, how can men who are not simple and who are full of little fears or of some great fear truly believe in him?

One seldom even hears his name except in places of formal

worship, and there he is not to be found for me. . . . East and West, they may not claim him, yet he is the unifying force of East and West. In his nature I find mingled in most delicate equilibrium the best of East and West. The serenity of the Buddha is Christ's serenity. He was not disturbed by the vicissitudes of existence, by poverty, even by no place to lay his head. He was part of the earth and of the fields, of cities too and of the seas and shores. He did not strive as we of the West strive, for goods and houses and possessions. He had time to speak of a flower, to note a ripening seed pod, to bless a child, to stay a month and more alone in a wilderness, if the need for loneliness was on him. His life flowed effortless, under no compulsion of time or place. He was in complete harmony with his environment, whatever it might be. There was no strain in him, no urgency of personal desire, and peace flowed about him. He might have stopped there and been an Oriental god, but he was more. . . . In him I find a passion not Oriental, a sharpness of perception, a keen compassion, even an anger precise and unfailing when the hour came for it to strike. . . . There is a passion in Christ therefore, which saves him from the serenity that may be only an oblivious calm or a weak resignation. . . .

Whether he was magic in a supernatural sense or not is nothing to me. It may even be there is some magic in all the unexplainable great, the men and women who rise out of the mass of men to unexpected greatness. . . . It is not the explanation of why Christ was God that interests me. I do not need to have a proof of miracles. For me the world is full of miracles, and what is the one more or less? No, what draws me . . . is this: here is the one completest man, the one spirit, it seems to me, who received most simply and most fearlessly and used best this thing we all have, and for which none asked—life! . . . His simple spirit, harmonious with the

universe, is with us still, if we will give ourselves up to it. There is no magic needed, no creeds, nothing except the pondering on him simply, the simple joining of ourselves into that greatest simplicity.

He did not fret himself for things or place or power. He let life flow through him, a stream of light, accepting simply what it was as it came—the man, the woman, the need, the beauty of the hour. . . . By his simplicity, in his fearlessness, in his truth, Christ stands to me unique and unsurpassed, his spirit my solution.

And what if he never lived? What of that? Whether Christ had a body or not, whether he had a time to be born in history and a time to die as other men have is of no matter now; perhaps it never was of any matter. What lives today is not the ephemeral body of flesh and bone. If once it lived, then well enough; if not, then well too.

For I say if there existed mind or minds, dreams, hopes, imaginations, sensitive enough to the human soul and all its needs, perceptive enough to receive such heavenly imprint on the spirit as to be able to conceive a personality like Christ's and portray him for us with such matchless simplicity as he is portrayed, then Christ lived and lives whether he was once one body and one soul, or whether he is the essence of men's highest dreams. If men's dreams can reach so near to God, to the Divinity we long for and cannot fully know, so near that from the nearness the concept of Christ was shaped, then there is man's meeting place with God, there human and divine are merged and Christ is born. What need then for the poor proof of a single body born of one woman?

So Christ stands man and spirit, the same yesterday, today and forever. . . . He draws us easily if we will let him, but he draws us whether we know it or not, toward simplicity

once more, toward sincerity in thought and act, toward compassionate understanding of each other. Through common suffering, if we will accept it, he unifies us, binding our thousand wayward wills into the deep calm sureness of his one way of life.

INVINCIBLE LIFE

By Sister Devamata

Life cannot be created, it cannot be destroyed. It survives every death. It triumphs over every defeat. When we try to suppress or annihilate it, it escapes into the eternal.

Life cannot be differentiated or divided. The forms through which it manifests may differ, but it is always the same and indivisible. The form contains it, yet does not imprison it. Life remains ever independent of form. It eludes all efforts at capture.

Age cannot touch it. The elements cannot wear it down. "Fire cannot burn it, water cannot wet it, air cannot dry it." It cannot be wounded or hurt. Nothing can trouble or offend it. Nothing can shadow or darken it. It remains always shining, unconquered and alive.

The first appearance of life is in the protoplasmic cell, but life did not spring into being there. The distinguished Indian physicist, Dr. J. C. Bose, has shown, with finely wrought instruments invented by himself, that life is everywhere; that there is no dead matter in creation; that even the most apparently inanimate object responds to stimuli in the same manner as does a living entity. And George A. Dorsey, former professor of Anthropology at the University of Chicago, declares in his book, "Why we behave like Human Beings:"

"Science knows nothing of the ultimate origin of matter or of the source of energy; it only accepts both as facts and goes on with its business of trying to find out what matter is

and what energy can do. In other words, the problem of the origin of life is locked up in the origin of matter and in the nature of energy. But the line between life and death is not unlike that between organic and inorganic, a vague shadowy line crossed from day to day in the chemical laboratory. Life has been produced in no man-made shop; protoplasm, the chemical matter of life, has been. It does everything but live! It does not seem fit for life. . . . We shall know how life evolves when we can evolve life."

The earth did not evolve it. The earth evolved itself and when it was fit for the manifestation of life, life appeared. It was always there, for only life can strike a spark of life; but it lay hidden in the deeps of Nature. As soon as the environment was ready, it rose to the surface. It still continues to rise through more and more advanced forms, and will rise higher and higher until it reaches the highest expression. "The goal of evolution," Dr. Dorsey says again, "was always in the direction of a broader outlook; a greater capacity to anticipate change and to weather storm."

Life is a gift from the Infinite, and unites us with the Infinite. It comes to us as a sacred trust. If we spend it in petty interests and trivial pursuits, in self-indulgence and in satisfying personal desires and ambitions, we deface and debase it. Each moment is a fresh gift and a fresh opportunity —an opportunity for noble, heroic effort. When we fail to grasp it and use it to lofty ends, we defeat the purpose of living and further opportunities are denied us.

Nature is prodigal in her bestowal of life. She does not stint us in any way. What we are able to accept of her gift depends on our own capacity to receive and use. If we would profit by her bounty, we must strive manfully, and have undaunted courage, making it our endeavour "to conquer ourselves, to wax stronger than ourselves, and daily to make some progress in good."

Life is a dynamic force. It flows in mighty current through the universe. Like all powerful forces it cannot be handled ignorantly or carelessly. The effort to bridle it and use it to personal ends is the cause of the greater part of the catastrophes in the world. When man moves against it, it breaks him; when he moves with it, he has the power of the universe behind him.

Life cannot be individualized. When we try to shut off a portion of it and keep it for ourselves, it grows stagnant and unlovely. It is universal by nature and defies all boundaries. As light mingles with light, so life mingles with life. It makes all creation one. He who takes life destroys himself. There is no need of capital punishment. The doer of crime writes large his own doom. Those who live by the sword, perish by the sword. When we realize this, we cease to injure, wound or kill; and every living thing becomes our friend.

Life is not in us, we are in it. Our existence is part of unbounded Existence. We are immersed in a shoreless ocean of Absolute Being, the manifestation of which is what we call life. It has its origin and its fulfillment in the Infinite. It passes through many changes of form, of circumstance, of environment, yet it remains ever unchanging. It does not grow stronger or weaker, it does not ebb or flow; it is always without condition. It may seem to be caught in matter, but in reality it is free and unfettered, one with the essence of Being.

We cannot attain fulness of joy or fulness of life until we learn to live in the universal. No narrower area of being is able to contain us. We belong in the whole, a part will not suffice. This is the secret of all our discontent. We imagine we are unhappy because we have not this thing or that; but material things can never satisfy us. If we possessed the earth and its abundance, we should still feel a lack.

We have come from the Infinite and we judge our life by an infinite measure. The finite will always fall short. Only when we widen our outlook, lift our aspiration, and lengthen our standard of measurement, shall we feel a sense of completeness and content. Then a new vision will come to us; and we shall know our life to be indestructible, invincible and unbounded.

THE VISTA

By Kazuko Okakura

(From his book, "Ideals of the East," published by E. P. Dutton & Co.)

The simple life of Asia need fear no shaming from that sharp contrast with Europe in which steam and electricity have placed it today. The old world of trade, the world of the craftsman and the pedlar, of the village market and the saints'-day fair, where little boats row up and down great rivers laden with the produce of the country, where every palace has some court in which the travelling merchant may display his stuffs and jewels for beautiful screened women to see and buy, is not yet quite dead. And, however its form may change, only at a great loss can Asia permit its spirit to die, since the whole of that industrial and decorative art which is the heirloom of ages has been in its keeping, and she must lose with it not only the beauty of things, but the joy of the worker, his individuality of vision, and the whole age-long humanizing of her labor. For to clothe oneself in the web of one's own weaving is to house oneself in one's own house, to create for the spirit its own sphere.

Asia knows, it is true, nothing of the fierce joys of a time-devouring locomotion, but she has still the far deeper travel-culture of the pilgrimage and the wandering monk. For the Indian ascetic, begging his bread of village housewives, or

seated at evenfall beneath some tree, chatting and smoking with the peasant of the district, is the real traveller. To him a countryside does not consist of its natural features alone. It is a nexus of habits and associations, of human elements and traditions, suffused with the tenderness and friendship of one who has shared, if only for a moment, the joys and sorrows of its personal drama. The Japanese peasant-traveller, again, goes from no place of interest on his wanderings without leaving his *hokku* or short sonnet, an art-form within reach of the simplest.

Through such modes of experience is cultivated the Eastern conception of individuality as the ripe and living knowledge, the harmonized thought and feeling of staunch yet gentle manhood. Through such modes of interchange is maintained the Eastern notion of human intercourse, not the printed index, as the true means of culture.

The chain of antitheses might be indefinitely lengthened. But the glory of Asia is something more positive than these. It lies in that vibration of peace that beats in every heart; that harmony that brings together emperor and peasant; that sublime intuition of oneness which commands all sympathy, all courtesy, to be its fruits, making Takakura, Emperor of Japan, remove his sleeping-robes on a winter night, because the frost lay cold on the hearths of his poor; or Taiso, of Tang, forego food, because his people were feeling the pinch of famine. It lies in the dream of renunciation that pictures the Boddhi-Sattva as refraining from Nirvana till the last atom of dust in the universe shall have passed in before to bliss. It lies in that worship of Freedom which casts around poverty the halo of greatness, imposes his stern simplicity of apparel on the Indian prince, and sets up in China a throne whose imperial occupant alone amongst the great secular rulers of the world—never wears a sword.

These things are the secret energy of the thought, the science, the poetry, and the art of Asia. Torn from their tradition, India, made barren of that religious life which is the essence of her nationality, would become a worshipper of the mean, the false, and the new; China, hurled upon the problems of a material instead of a moral civilization, would writhe in the death-agony of that ancient dignity and ethics which long ago made the word of her merchants like the legal bond of the West, the name of her peasants a synonym for prosperity; and Japan, the Fatherland of the race of Amu, would betray the completeness of her undoing in the tarnishing of the purity of the spiritual mirror, the bemeaning of the sword-soul from steel to lead. The task of Asia today, then, becomes that of protecting and restoring Asiatic modes. But to do this she must herself first recognize and develop consciousness of those modes. For the shadows of the past are the promise of the future. No tree can be greater than the power that is in the seed. Life lies ever in the return to self. How many of the Evangels have uttered this truth! "Know thyself," was the greatest mystery spoken by the Delphic Oracle. "All in thyself," said the quiet voice of Confucius. And more striking still is the Indian story that carries the same message to its hearers. For once it happened, say the Buddhists, that, the Master, having gathered his disciples round him, there shone forth before them suddenly—blasting the sight of all save Vajrapani, the completely-learned—a terrible figure, the figure of Siva, the Great God. Then Vajrapani, his companions being blinded, turned to the Master and said, "Tell me why, searching amongst all the stars and gods, equal in number to the sands of the Ganges, I have nowhere seen this glorious form? Who is he?" And the Buddha said, "He is thyself!" and Vajrapani, it is told, immediately attained the highest.

It was some small degree of this self-recognition that remade Japan, and enabled her to weather the storm under which so much of the Oriental world went down. And it must be a renewal of the same self-consciousness that shall build up Asia again into her ancient steadfastness and strength. The very times are bewildered by the manifoldness of the possibilities opening out before them. Even Japan cannot, in the tangled skein of the Meiji period, find that single thread which will give her the clue to her own future. Her past has been clear and continuous as a *mala,* a rosary, of crystals. . . . .

But today the great mass of Western thought perplexes us. The mirror of Yamato is clouded, as we say. . . . We know instinctively that in our history lies the secret of our future, and we grope with a blind intensity to find the clue. But if the thought be true, if there be indeed any spring of renewal hidden in our past, we must admit that it needs at this moment some mighty reinforcement, for the scorching drought of modern vulgarity is parching the throat of life and art.

We await the flashing sword of the lightning which shall cleave the darkness. For the terrible hush must be broken, and the raindrops of a new vigor must refresh the earth before new flowers can spring up to cover it with their bloom. But it must be from Asia herself, along the ancient roadways of the race, that the great voice shall be heard.

Victory from within, or a mighty death without.

The Asiatic is, and remains, the supreme artist and poet; it is only contact with Europe . . . that makes him cease to be an artist. The ideal of the West is the conqueror of the world, that of the East—the conqueror of self.

—*Paul Cohen Portheim.*

CHINA'S MINISTERS OF BEAUTY

By Sister Daya

(Continued from the March number.)

It is an illuminating fact, and one which should be given greater regard by the world at large in view of its misjudgment of Buddhism as a negative and unproductive form of faith, that practically every land where Buddhism has penetrated to any appreciable extent, has, as a result, burst into new and lovely bloom, spiritually and culturally. This was profoundly true of Japan, and none can question the deep stirring which Zen Buddhism brought to the soul of China.

Now we may well ask, Was it the Gospel of Lord Buddha alone which brought about this miracle? Were vagrant Buddhist monks, with their repetition of the Four Noble Truths and their palm-leaf manuscripts in Pali, sufficient to account for the increasing glow of Beauty which attended their advent everywhere? Certainly they were not, if we think of them merely as the exponents of a creed, however noble and philosophic. Certainly they were, if we look upon them not merely as ambassadors of a new dispensation, but of deathless India herself, dowered with her material and spiritual culture, carrying the traditions of her *Sanatana Dharma*—Eternal Religion—of which the Lord Buddha was an embodiment and which, in the words of her latest avatar, Sri Ramakrishna, insists upon "realization as about the only great fact in spiritual matters."

Realization, which unites man with the object of his search, whether it be a perfect art expression or the underlying Reality of the universe—here was the key which Buddhism proffered China and which China accepted and used—with what vital result the world knows—to liberate her own particular type of genius. For when that key unlocks the doors in a man's soul, what issues thence is livingness, the

form that it takes depending upon the mind of the seeker and the nature of the thing sought. It was not that the idea of realization was unknown to China, but it now seems that probably it had lost its practical appeal owing to the lack of a definite method for attaining it. This method, India, through Buddhism, supplied. I refer here particularly to that sect, whose very name, Zen, or, in the Chinese, Ch'an, is derived from the Sanskrit *Dhyana* or Meditation, the key note of the great Yoga aphorisms of Patanjali. "The Dhyana of Patanjali-Yoga," writes Swami Jagidiswarananda, in a scholarly article on Buddhism and Vedanta, "was taken up by the early Buddhists as *Jhana* (Pali), from which the Chinese Ch'an and the Japanese Zen sect has come into being. The spiritual exercises of the Buddhist meditations are taken over almost unchanged from the Brahminical sources." This Ch'an or Zen sect was unwavering in its insistence on the validity of the inward revelation and laid emphasis, in its training, upon man's individual approach to the Secret of his own being, for only thus, it held, could the Secret of the Universe be penetrated and understood. A legend, now discredited historically, is given by Miss Hackney, to illustrate the austere and purely subjective spirit of the Zen Buddhists and the establishment of their Order in the Celestial Kingdom.

"The twenty-eighth Patriarch, Boddhidharma, known in Chinese as Ta Mo, arrived in China in A.D. 526 and visited the court of Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty. The emperor was an ardent ritualist and the sage could not brook his endless ceremonies. The doctrine that he taught was far divorced from ceremonies. He is credited with saying, 'You will not find Buddha in images, nor in books: look in your own heart—that is where you will find Buddha.' He departed from the court in haste, according to the legend, cross-

ing the swollen waters of the Yangtze on a reed, and betook himself to the hills, where he founded the Ch'an or contemplative School of Buddhism." In no wise did this scientific and rational approach to reality banish the forms, rituals or the age-old superstitions of China. Ch'an was not for the undeveloped but for the mature minds and souls of that civilization, and these gradually, so it seems, included its principles in their cultural striving, which was based upon the old Chinese adage: "The hand cannot execute what the mind has not experienced." Intellectually they had already applied this rule to the full. Wide knowledge in many fields was demanded of the Chinese artist, who "as collector, philosopher, critic and theorist had a rich storehouse of experience to draw from." The three arts of Painting, Poetry and Music were looked upon almost as one, and supplemented one another. Now a more profound spirit was infused, and it was felt a necessity for the creative artist to go below the surface of outer experience, to contact his object not merely through his senses and his intellect, but through a deeper faculty, which the ordered use of his mind would release into action. This necessitated a mastery over more than technique, which was never discounted, over life and living as well. We can begin to see how in the great Sung period of China, art became a form of Yoga, a path to union not only with the beautiful, but with the very Being of Beauty, not merely with the outer aspects of creation, but with its rhythm and essence. Clearly and briefly Mr. Binyon sums it up:

"Through the teachings of the Zen, the artist obtained a better understanding of the psychological conditions under which art is produced than he has had in any other period of the world's civilization. It taught him how to tap the unconscious. Art was regarded as a kind of Zen, a delving

down into the Buddha that is within each of us. Through Zen we annihilate Time and see the Universe, not split up into myriad fragments, but as a unity. According to their beliefs, an artist's work must be imbued with a vision of the subjective, the non-phenomenal aspects of life. Otherwise his work will have no more meaning than a boy's. It was in Zen terms that art was usually discussed in the China and Japan of the twelfth century. The paintings were of two kinds, illustrations of episodes in the lives of great Zen teachers, and nature subjects. Many of its disciples retired to the hills for contemplation. . . . As uniformity of design was considered fatal to the freshness of imagination, they avoided expressing not only completion but repetition. Landscapes, birds and flowers became their favorite subject, rather than the human figure, the latter being present to their mind in the person of the onlooker. In the presentation of these nature objects, the artists sought to identify themselves with them, and to externalize their inner Buddha in the depictions of them."

One-pointedness, intense concentration upon the goal, an unbroken flow of thought from the subject to the object, comparable to oil that is poured from one vessel to another, all this was required, and it was no light task; nor did it leave room for the pseudo or the sentimental. Even the medium with which the Chinese artist worked, tended to cultivate these very faculties and was an enormous stimulus to mind control and self-mastery, as we shall now see.

TO BE CONTINUED

The pure artist who works for the love of his work is sometimes more firmly planted on the right road than the occultist who fancies he has removed his interest from self, but who has in reality only enlarged the limits of . . . desire.

—*Light on the Path.*

SWAMI PARAMANANDA EN ROUTE

In the Malay States

SINGAPORE

In the early morning of January 27, Swami Paramananda and his companions reached Singapore, where they were met and greeted by Swami Bhaswarananda, in charge of the Ramakrishna Mission Branch of Singapore, and several friends. The day was auspicious, because by good fortune, it happened to be the 73rd Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekanandaji, and the devotees at Singapore considered it a great blessing to have Swami Paramananda, a direct disciple of Swami Vivekanandaji, to preside at the Anniversary Celebration held at the Ramakrishna Mission.

Many gathered for the occasion in the Mission patio where Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa's and Swami Vivekanandaji's garlanded pictures were hung. Some of the Mission School children also attended, the girls in colorful saris and the boys in their Sunday suits. Each child paid his or her respects at Swami Paramananda's feet, which is India's custom with her holy men.

After garlanding Swami Paramananda, and a fitting introduction and welcome by Swami Bhaswarananda, Swami Paramananda presided over the meeting. He gave a prayer, and then called upon Mr. Siva Pragasram to deliver his lecture on the "Life of Swami Vivekanandaji." Mr. Pragasram gave an unusually fine, comprehensive, inspiring resumé of Swami Vivekanandaji's life from his birth to his passing.

Swami Paramananda after calling upon Srimati Gayatri Devi and myself to give a few words for the occasion, spoke in an illuminating and inspiring way about his great and illustrious Master. The children of the school offered their songs in honor of Swami Vivekanandaji. Light refreshments were served. The day was a happy and successful one.

Friends from Johore present immediately availed themselves of the opportunity of having Swami Paramananda with them, by arranging a lecture for him the day after his arrival.

On January 28, 6 P.M., at the "India Ceylon Association" in Johore, Swami Paramananda was introduced by the Vice President of the Association, Mr. N. K. Pillay. Swami spoke on "India and the World," stirring his distinguished audience of men with responsive and vital interest. He laid great stress on the fact that India must not forget her spiritual heritage, her one treasure for the world, which can be recovered only by each one individually; or her sons forget their innate spiritual background.

One gentleman of Johore, Mr. M. V. Rajam, arose in the audience and with heartfelt appreciation told Swami Paramananda how his books had been an unceasing inspiration to him, and now that he had the great privilege of meeting him and hearing him, he had no words to express his feeling.

Johore is a picturesque place of the Non-Federated Malay States. The Sultan of Johore, H. H. Sir Ibrahim, in ruling Johore, rules over the richest of the Malay States. In a drive about Johore, one sees the unending rubber plantations, cocoanut palms and luxuriant vegetation. Through the Botanical Garden, past the market on a water front,—Abu Bakas Mosque, English College, the Lake Batu Pahat are a picturesque delight.

Tuesday, January 29, Swami Paramananda and his companions were royally entertained by a Bengali family. The gentleman visited Ananda-Ashrama in La Crescenta, California, nine years ago, in his college days. Now he is married, has a family and lovely home, and is established in business.

The evening of January 29, 5:30 o'clock at the Victoria Hall, Swami Paramananda delivered a stirring lecture on

"The Need of the Hour." Dr. Tyau, Chinese Consul General at Singapore, presided and paid a high tribute to Swami, commenting that his address had transported him to the days previous to his public life, when he lived in more retirement and studied the Chinese philosophy from great scholars. He also emphasized the message of peace and of love the Swami accented as the vital need of the hour to bring understanding to all peoples of the earth. Swami roused the spirit of each individual by his spiritual fire.

Mr. M. N. Samadar, principal of the City High School in Singapore, invited the Swami to give a talk to the two hundred students in his school, on the morning of January 30. The Swami addressed the boys in clear and simple language, calling upon them to be truthful and obedient, thus growing into noble and honest manhood. He read to them some of his poems, and this touched Mr. Samadar because he had read Swami's poems in his college days, and this was the first time he had heard them read by the Swami himself. In fact, he had met Swami the night before for the first time, at the home of Mr. Guha Thakurta, where Swami and his companions were entertained. Mr. Samadar's work is highly commended by the Government. It is unique in so far as on the staff of Teachers, three ladies are each of different nationality—Chinese, Hindu and Eurasian—while the gentlemen are Chinese, Parsee, Hindu and Ceylonese. Mr. Samadhar started with but twelve students, and the number has grown to its present proportions. The school bids fair to continue its good work for years to come.

Under the auspices of the "Lotus Club" of Singapore, a lecture was arranged for Srimati Gayatri Devi, on January 30, at 6 P.M., Victoria Hall Theatre. Mr. Pillay introduced Srimati as one of the first Hindu ladies to go to America to give Indo-Aryan culture, and noted that she had

lectured before large audiences there at Clubs and Universities, and that at the International Conference for Women at Geneva, in 1930, she was the only Indian woman representative. Srimati spoke on the theme, "My Nine Years in America," expressing herself with fluent ease and grace of language. She inspired her audience (chiefly composed of men) with her purity, simplicity and able presentation of her subject. Mrs. E. V. Davies, a cultured Indian lady, gave a few fine words in comment and appreciation. I was also called upon by Srimati as an American sister. I expressed my sudden consciousness of women, since, in Singapore audiences, I had felt their absence, I appealed to the men on the ground that it does not require education or knowledge of English to understand the spiritual "language of the soul," and described how Srimati had been to me the ideal of Indian womanhood, inspiring me through her simplicity, dignity, love and kindness.

Swami Paramananda was called upon at the close, and with his usual grace and eloquence, brought the final benediction of peace and love to all present. He aroused their spirit to the need of Indian women for opportunity other than the monotonous routine of household duties. They must, he urged, be made companions, and share in spiritual and current things as did the men. India, he said, would not rise until her women were allowed privileges which now they are deprived of. He cited Srimati Gayatri Devi as an example of American opportunity. Her fine latent qualities had blossomed forth and brought inspiration to the people of America with whom she had made contact. Through her they had come to know the noble qualities of Indian womanhood.

Mr. J. P. Naraindas entertained Swami Paramananda and his companions with overwhelming hospitality. Mr. Na-

rayanasamy, Mr. Lingham, Mr. Krishnan, Mr. Chandar, Mr. Murugasu were touching in their devotion. Many, many others whose names do not appear, were true brothers in their love and kindness.

The day of departure, January 31, Swami Paramananda was entertained at the Ramakrishna Mission Singapore Branch by the kind and gentle Swami Bhaswarananda. There we saw the remarkably fine work being done at the Mission School. A staff of five teachers instruct the hundred and more students in English and Tamil. The students are children of all stations—coolie children as well as the children of merchants and others. They are allowed free education if they cannot make an offering. Swami Bhaswarananda is the head and supervisor. It is a pioneer work of its kind in Singapore, and deserves high commendation. Swami Bhaswarananda and the many devoted friends came to the S.S. "Karapara" to bid God-speed to Swami Paramananda and his party, who felt real reluctance as the ship pulled anchor and sailed for Penang.

Singapore has a picturesque beauty of tropical freshness. It is known as the "Gateway of the Far East,"—a cosmopolitan centre where Indians, principally from Ceylon and Madras but also from Sind, Punjab and other parts of India, find a common meeting-place with Chinese, Mohammedans, Siamese, Japanese, Dutch, English and other nationalities. The island is thirty miles long and fifteen miles wide. Its chief export is tin, rubber and copra. Among flora one particularly observes the palms and orchids. The fruits are principally mangosteen and Durian. The drive through the Botanical Garden at night is a dream picture of magnificent charm, and in daylight a delight of luxurious jungle and tropical vegetation. One sees small monkeys playing about unharmed in the cool spots of thick growth. A light rain

falls daily. Rubber trees are abundant, also cocoanut palms and beetal-nut palms. The traveller's palms are like the outspread pride of a peacock. A visit to the Chinese Temple was intensely interesting. At the Siamese Temple is a fifty-foot Image of the Buddha. At the base of the Image in the back is a room containing an Image of the Reclining Buddha. That room had atmosphere. The monk in his yellow garb was gracious and kind, a true devotee of the Lord Buddha. The Raffles Museum, the Mosque, Chinese quarters, and the magnificent harbor with ships from all over the world and picturesque junks with sails were all of great interest. Rick-shas are used, but the motor car is thinning them out. The mold-stained buildings with tile roofs are pictures against a clear blue tropical sky. Singapore is a refreshing memory of a definite touch with India.

PENANG

February 2, at an early hour, Swami Paramananda was greeted on board the steamer by devoted and loving friends who came by launch from Penang to pay their respects. Swami was garlanded by the devout Doctor G. H. Joshi, Mr. Parthan, Mr. Patel and many others who came to welcome him. They also tendered their welcome to Srimati Gayatri Devi and myself. They took us to Penang by launch. There at Dr. Joshi's home, Swami and his party were entertained. Mataji (Mrs. Joshi) and her three children served a delicious breakfast that she had prepared. Mr. Parthan, his wife and children, Mr. Patel, Dr. C. Singh and his little girl, and many others, were Dr. Joshi's guests for breakfast. His home has a glowing atmosphere of devotion. He played beautiful Bengali and Hindustani records especially chosen for Swamiji, one, a lovely record to Lord Rama. Dr. Joshi was radiant with joy and happiness in having Swamiji once more in his home. The devotion of each one,

their prostrations, offerings of fruit and love, were overwhelmingly touching and inspiring. I was moved to tears when I witnessed the depth of holy feeling and spiritual devotion showered so abundantly upon Swami Paramananda, who as their teacher, is for them as a jewel of divine inspiration residing in their hearts.

Dr. Joshi's dream is some day to go to Ananda-Ashrama, at La Crescenta, California, to spend the rest of his days, and also to allow his three fine children, a son and two daughters, to go there for spiritual as well as secular training, in order to serve India. Many others aspire to visit or live at the Ashrama. May their dreams be fulfilled.

Swami Paramananda was given five overwhelming receptions by different merchants. He was so heavily garlanded that three times he had to remove the garlands so that his face would not be completely covered.

Since time did not permit visiting the Chinese and Snakes Temples, nor driving forty-six miles around the island, nor reaching its height of 2400 feet, we were taken for a short drive through the beautiful Botanical Garden, the Chinese Quarters and past some of the important buildings. Penang is lovely with rising green hills, tropical growth, cocoanut palms, rubber trees and luxuriant beauty.

Dr. Joshi and the many devotees regretted that Swamiji could not remain a longer time and begged that he return soon again. They all accompanied him and his fellow-travellers to the S.S. Karapara where garlands were again bestowed. With tears of devotion and folded hands, they departed for Penang by launch. The four and a half hours spent at Penang were crowned with the most genuine sweetness, tenderness and warmth of love, and will remain as an everlasting and overwhelming memory of rare and holy devotion.

NOTE

Owing to lack of space in this issue, the regular report of the work will be held over until the May number of the "Message of the East."

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VOL. XXIV NUMBER 5

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

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East



JUN

MAY, 1935

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Message of the East

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

From the Dhammapada

HE whose conquest cannot be conquered again, into whose conquest no one in this world enters, by what track can you lead him, the Awakened, the Omniscient, the trackless?

He whom no desire with its snares and poisons can lead astray, by what track can you lead him, the Awakened, the Omniscient, the trackless?

Even the gods envy those who are awakened and not forgetful, who are given to meditation, who are wise, and who delight in the repose of retirement from the world.

Not to commit any sin, to do good, to purify one's mind, —this is the teaching of all the Awakened. . . .

Not to blame, not to strike, to live restrained under the law, to be moderate in eating, to sleep and sit alone, and to dwell on the highest thoughts—this is the teaching of the Awakened. . . .

A supernatural person (a Buddha) is not easily found: he is not born everywhere. Wherever such a sage is born, that race prospers.

Happy is the arising of the Awakened, happy is the teaching of the True Law, happy is peace in the Order, happy is the devotion of those who are at peace. . . .

THE WAY OF FULFILLMENT

By Swami Paramananda

Let us, in this hour of silence, lift our inmost thoughts and prayers, according to our inner conviction.

Let us make our heart tranquil and harmonious, and in a perfect state of oneness with our higher Entity.

Let us be still, and think no thoughts save those which produce freedom of spirit, that no cares, nothing that is alien, may thwart our flight.

May the Supreme Being of the Universe, our loving Mother and protecting Father, shield us from all ills.

May His blessing ever abide with us, and may we all acquire strength and wisdom and spiritual bounty through His grace.

What is the fulfillment of life? Tonight as I speak on this theme, I ask myself this. Every one may ask himself and he may ask others, and the answer will naturally be formulated according to each one's desires, aspirations and whatever his concept of the consummation of life may be. Some will say, "I feel that I have fulfillment;" others, who are striving for physical well being, may ask for health in the body. But that is a surface thing; there is nothing deep or abiding in it. What then is the real fulfillment, and how may it be gained?

First and foremost we have in reply that great saying: "First seek ye the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all things shall be added unto you." A tremendous statement this, a promise that if a man seeks with his whole heart to find God, he shall have no lack. Of course at once we ask, "Is it true?" But before anyone attempts to answer, let that person search his own heart to see if he has tried this thing out in a practical way with his whole thought and interest, his entire energy and resourcefulness. If he has

tried for a single day, then perhaps he can make response. Our great teacher, Sri Ramakrishna, used to say that if a man pined and yearned for God or Truth for three days, as he does for worldly things, he would attain to Him. We find very few who can do this for three days. The average human being cannot do it even for an hour. Other thoughts and interests and all manner of confused ideas will come and divide his attention, thus preventing his following a single line of mental endeavor, especially in regard to spiritual things, because in the average man's mind, spirituality represents a vague and uncertain quality.

If then all this be so, how can we put Christ's great saying to the test and make it definite? It is not only that we have the authority of the New Testament to give us faith in its practical value, but as we go back beyond that several thousand years, into very ancient times, we find a similar thought in the Vedic Upanishads, where the aspirant coming to his teacher was taught, "Know That by knowing which everything else becomes known." Perhaps the pupil thought he would have to go through many studies, exhausting one branch after another. Instead, the illumined soul of his teacher comes out with the great decisive statement: "Thou art That. When thou knowest this, thou knowest all."

Intellectually we appreciate these things, we admit their value and the ethical usefulness of such idealistic concepts, but when it comes to bringing their fulfillment into our life, it is a different matter. In spite of difficulties, however, in spite of divergent happenings in the world, and mental confusion, there are men who do not give up hope or admit that this fulfillment is impossible for man to attain. If it were not for such people we would altogether abandon our pursuit of the Unseen, because naturally our concept would die a natural death for lack of realization.

At this point, let me read you something from Mahatma Gandhi:

"I observe in the limited field in which I find myself, that unless I can reach the hearts of men and women, I am able to do nothing. I observe further that so long as the spirit of hate persists in some shape or other, it is impossible to establish peace or to gain our freedom by peaceful effort." He was speaking to a great audience in India who desired their freedom. "We cannot love one another if we hate Englishmen. We cannot love the Japanese and hate Englishmen. We must either let the law of love rule us through and through or not at all."

If you were to ask him what the fulfillment of life is, I think he would tell you that love is the fulfillment. It is very refreshing to me because these are also my own thoughts. At the time of the Great War, I was often confronted with definite questions. I could not reply with sophistry. It is not a question of reading a selection from a Bible or an encyclopedia when the heart strings are being pulled. We have to find what is real, and that can only be through our own experience.

"Love among ourselves based on hatred of others breaks down under the slightest pressure," Gandhi continues, "The fact is, such love is never real love. It is an armed peace. And so it will be in this great movement in the West against war. War will only be stopped when the conscience of mankind has become sufficiently elevated to recognize the undisputed supremacy of the law of love in all the walks of life. Some say this will never come to pass. I shall retain the faith till the end of my earthly existence that it shall come to pass."

Often I have spoken of love as the great fulfillment. But it must be love without its opposite—hatred—in any form

or shape in our individual life. I am not thinking here of the question of politics,—internationalism and the world conditions which naturally agitate the thinking mind; for so far as I know the opinions of great men, until we have solved our individual problems it is worse than useless to try to improve the world.

"Love will conquer all your ills!" Some of you know this poem of mine, and you may ask, "Do you really believe it? Do you believe that when others strike at you through their hate, you will be able to overcome them that way?" Those are the very moments to put our love to the test. The worst harm that anyone can inflict upon us is to arouse hatred in our heart. Therefore, we always conquer when we are fortified by that beneficent spirit. Again you may ask, "Is it possible for us to attain to this?" Yes, it is; but only by degrees. How can we love our enemies—you think—when at the present moment we cannot always love even our own family? The thing is, we have been looking in the wrong direction. Whatever a man looks for, he obtains. Man has been thinking that unless he clings to self-interest, he will get nothing. After a time, however, he finds that when he has nothing, he has everything. It is a most interesting discovery. The man who wants everything for himself finds he has accumulated nothing but misery. Swami Vivekananda once said that a man who has collected art treasures has the least joy from them. He may be very proud of them, but he has to cover them with a big insurance and hire detectives to guard them, and so long as he has them, is always anxious. Those who come to see them enjoy them most, because they have no care. Whoever is interested in accumulation, possessions, name, fame, grandeur and glory, is ever burdened. We do not find fulfillment in these things. We find no happiness in them. Here you may disagree with

me; you may feel that men do find happiness along this line. Momentary happiness, perhaps; but think of the responsibilities they bear—the care, the weight, the anxiety coming down upon them from every direction!

In order to get the best out of life, we have to become more or less like a bird. We have to learn to make ourselves over to That One who alone can direct and guide us, instead of trying to be our own directors. The greatest men I know are the humblest. You may question that. Perhaps among your acquaintances you do not find it so. But I come from a country with a tremendous spiritual heritage, and there we do not sit at the feet of a Master unless we are convinced that his life is full of humility. We like to feel overwhelmed by the atmosphere of it, making us unconscious that anything exists except God and His beneficence. We bring unquestionable faith, but we want to look upon a countenance that is shining, with no shadow of vanity, desire or egotism. Such a soul may have nothing, yet he possesses everything. This is what we call renunciation. It is the fulfillment of which the world dreams. Of course, we cannot all renounce literally. And what good would it do for a man to assume the role of one who has given up all, if he still carries desire and ambition in his heart He would be a caricature.

The greatest lessons we learn are from those who are living radiantly, not from those who merely preach from the pulpit or quote from the Bible, or give ethical reasons to others for doing that which they themselves have no intention of doing. When a man comes to you with the declaration that he has found a gold mine, at once you say, "Show me the gold." You feel it is legitimate to ask for proof. When a scientist makes some surprising new statement, his fellow scientists say, "Tell us the facts." When he cannot

supply these, naturally they doubt. Same way it is with our inner life. When a man says, "Love is a supreme force," we want to see what it has done for him. If he preaches the supremacy of love and his life is poverty-stricken, it will be written on his countenance. How many people we see who have a great deal in the way of material wealth, yet lack that something which makes for the fullness of existence—men whose circumstances are good, yet who have nothing to live for, for whom all is emptiness. What we call life's fulfillment does not lie in possessions or in the station we hold in life. Rather it is something we feel within us, something that makes life complete. I am not speaking in the terms of mental speculation, but of spiritual experience.

Purposely, I avoid dogmatic terms. We must get down to basic principles. It makes no difference how we worship that One, providing we fasten our life, seemingly so frail, and susceptible to all the corruption of the material world, —our moral life, to That which is incorruptible, to That which will make us so strong that even when we have lost everything, ourselves even, still others may lean upon us. There are people who need help. Have you not known them? People who are sad, unhappy, waiting for a turning point that does not come. You may be sympathetic but that does not suffice. What is needed is the atmosphere of spirituality. Spiritual atmosphere radiates and others feel it. All the good I have received in life has come this way. The greatest lessons, the spiritual and dynamic lessons, we learn from silent sources, from men who do not have to use many words but who through the ripeness of their consciousness enrich the world. We cannot pretend. A man may pretend happiness but when disaster comes, he forgets to smile. A man may pretend courage but when emergencies arise, he is a coward. He is not focused on his Ideal. Our

spiritual life must be focused or it will never find its fulfillment. We must make it definite. "First seek ye the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." Every great scripture, every Bible of the world proclaims that man's first duty is to meditation, prayer, work, selfless service, purity of thought and conduct, for only through these can he ally himself with the First Cause.

"Those who worship Me without any other thought, to these ever steadfast devotees I secure safety and supply all their needs," Sri Krishna tells Arjuna in the Bhagavad-Gita, and the Christ said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." These are great promises, but we cannot benefit from them so long as we lack faith. We find it convenient to assume a scientific attitude. The spiritual life we call the unseen life, and since we think we cannot demonstrate it, we look upon it as something unapproachable and unreal. But why not try to approach that which we call the unapproachable and make real what we call the unreal instead of listening to the counsels of the world. World never gives us satisfaction, world counsel never remains long the same. During the years I have remained among you, I have seen many changes of thought. People have come to me with their questions, confused by the conflicting voices of those around them, and I have said to them, "Why not consult your inner voice?" Until we have placed our faith in God—that innermost consciousness which we carry within ourselves—until we have placed our faith in That, I think no outer religious faith can help us. As we believe, as we realize these things in our individual life, the stature of our faith grows; we feel more and more the reality of our spiritual existence and our whole life becomes fashioned after it. "Let nothing disturb

thee; let nothing affright thee; all things pass away. God (the Truth) only shall stay." In our final analysis, we find that here is the resting place. Here the restive mind cannot distract us. Here we find our fulfillment.

In India, it is a wonderful thing to observe the great homage that is paid to a man who has realized the Truth. He may be one whom the world would call a beggar, who has nothing and wants nothing for himself, like Mahatma Gandhi, yet India bows down to his feet. On hearing this, a man who is ambitious will say, "If it is the path of renunciation that will bring me the glory of life, then I shall assume that I want nothing." But there can be no make believe on that path. Take the lesson of the flower, of the rose in bloom in all its perfection, and learn from it. In just this same way, our life must blossom spontaneously with loveliness, unselfishness, generosity and all noble qualities of the Spirit, which are for us like the perfection of the flower.

We lack for nothing. "That is not true!" you may say, "I want recognition but nobody recognizes me." You will have recognition when you learn not to want it. One who is a beggar gets nothing whatsoever. Destiny closes the door to him and it is well that she does. For what would happen if this great power were given to the egotistic individual. He would become a tyrant. He would abuse that power. He would not be able to hold that position. You know this in political life and it is the same with the life of the Spirit. There is nothing illogical about it. Until we have unfolded the bigness and reality of life, we never can appreciate the bounty that Nature, God, Truth gives to us. This is my interpretation of seeking the Kingdom of Truth with our whole being. There is no falsity about it. We do not pretend; we love God and have no enmity toward any creature. Our life is so clean that others share the blessing of it. Every-

thing we hope for comes, and there is an inexhaustible supply. You can put this to the test; you do not have to take my word for it. In fact, we cannot take anybody's word for these things; we must test them out for ourselves.

Try for a single day and see if it does not change your whole condition. Live a whole day through without a wrong thought, a violent emotion, a hateful impulse and see whether or not you will live the next day as you did with your previous mental attitude. No books can convince us. We must convince ourselves and then no one can turn us in another direction. Think how lovely if, in the midst of a group in silence, alone at your own fireside or when walking through some solitary path, these thoughts can take real hold of your mind! Then whoever crosses your path or comes in contact with you, may become inspired by your Ideal,—by your ardent, persistent dedication to it.

This is the way to bring life's fulfillment. For only as we remember our spiritual heritage, only as we consciously know and remind ourselves, that, in spite of our lacks and shortcomings, we belong to that inexhaustible, undying, unbounded Life, which is in Nature and beyond, with no limitations, does the real, the great fulfillment come to us, never to be gained through selfishness and petty desire. Whoever finds the way to that, finds the way to peace and abiding happiness.

Faith is the seed I sow; devotion is the rain; modesty is the ploughshaft; the mind is the tie of the yoke; mindfulness is my ploughshare and goad. Energy is my team and bullock, leading to safety, and proceeding without backsliding to the place where there is no sorrow. —*Gautama Buddha.*

The secret of success is constancy of purpose.—*Disraeli.*

THE PROBLEM OF AGE

By Sister Devamata

Life falls naturally into four stages. Growth, study and outward achievement fill the first three; the fourth remains undefined and optional. It would seem that in his closing years man is left free to choose between world and spirit; between continued outer achievement and the pursuit of inner culture.

The first stage, childhood, is the stage of instinct. The child follows its natural impulses. It has no decisions to make, no problems to solve. It lives in ignorance of the greater portion of its being. With the coming of the second stage an entirely new area of consciousness is uncovered. The noted German psychologist Jung, calls it the "also I." This rouses in the awakening youth frequent inner conflicts. He seems to be two persons, one at war with the other. Added to these ceaseless struggles are many decisions and problems to meet, many adjustments to make. Manhood brings a quieter note. Life settles into fixed grooves of family, profession, business or domestic duties, of social obligations and public service. These ripen the character and prepare it for higher effort.

The age at which these transitions take place is flexible. It depends upon the nature and the development. There are occasional souls who seem to pass over them rather than through them and come out untouched by them. From the time the "also I" rises in their consciousness they lead their "real life." "Our real life is not the life we live," Maeterlinck says in his "Treasure of the Humble," "and we feel that our deepest, nay, our most intimate thoughts are quite apart from ourselves, for we are other than our thoughts and our dreams."

There must be no overlapping in these transitions. We

must not cling to the past or linger in the present, and neither past nor present should be allowed to prove an obstacle to the future. Each stage has its value, its purpose and its opportunities. To try to carry forward one stage into the succeeding one checks our growth and throws us out of rhythm with our circumstances and environment. It is as baneful to struggle to be a youth throughout life as it is to be a child. Both are signs of arrested development. Jung says in his book:

"In the United States it is almost an ideal for the father to be the brother of his sons, and for the mother if possible to be the younger sister of her daughter;" . . . but "whoever carries over into the afternoon the law of the morning must pay for so doing with damage to his soul, just as surely as a growing youth who tries to salvage his childish egoism must pay for this mistake with social failure."

Life as it advances should be cumulative, not reiterative. Each stage should add to the accomplishment of the previous stage, not borrow from it. This is vitally true for those who are passing from middle life to riper years. At that time men and women both fall easily into a dull routine, repeating themselves over and over; or they allow their life to become a mere annex to a younger life,—that of a son or a daughter, or a grandchild. I would not undervalue the sacredness of human relationships or the privilege of service; but there are various ways of serving—a trivial way and a superior way. And the highest service one can render is to offer to the world a life rich in culture, in lofty aspiration, and in noble effort.

Older years should be marked by wisdom, dignity, and a gentle grace, not by an artificial youth which distorts and disfigures. Primitive tribes make the elders of the tribe the guardians of the law and the mysteries. To them is allotted

the task of preserving the cultural heritage of the tribe. In ancient Aryan tradition also it was expected that when the children were grown and married, husband and wife should withdraw from worldly occupations, retire to the forest and devote themselves to spiritual culture.

How much deeper and nobler would be our social consciousness, if our elders would cast aside trivial concerns and strive to be keepers of the spiritual aspirations and standards of society. What a wonderful contribution they would make to their fellowmen. Jung declares: "We moderns are faced with the necessity of rediscovering the life of the spirit; we must experience it anew for ourselves." And Maeterlinck writes: "We dare not act upon the whisper of the God who inspires us. . . . Whence comes the timidity of the divine in man? . . . It is the disaster of our entire existence that we live thus away from our soul, and stand in such dread of its slightest movement. Did we but allow it to smile frankly in its silence and its radiance, we should already be living an eternal life."

The discovery of the soul is not so difficult a task as it would seem. We glimpse it constantly in our daily round. It is the background of our being, our link with Deity. If we will but cultivate the habit of reflection, it will reveal itself spontaneously. To set apart fixed hours and a special place for our study will hasten the revelation. With earnestness, perseverance and regularity in our practice of inwardness we shall not be long in reaching within us the source of inspiration and power.

Those who have lived to riper years should be more creative than others, because they have a deeper experience and a wider vision to bring to their task. They are able to speak with authority. If our instrument of mind and intelligence has become dull, it is not the fault of age; it is because we

have not kept it in condition during earlier years. Our higher faculties and forces have need of exercise. If we allow them to remain unused for a long period, we cannot expect them to be flexible and efficient. As youth with its study, its training and discipline, is a preparation for middle life, so should middle life be a preparation for age.

We should keep all our faculties in training as an athlete does his body. When we do this, our creative power remains unimpaired to the end. I have known musicians who played brilliantly after they were seventy. Some of the great composers did their best work when nearing sixty. Richard Wagner composed and produced his opera, "Parsifal," when he was between sixty-five and seventy; and a writer I knew after she was fifty-five published ten books of real value. These are not exceptional cases. I could cite many others, but these suffice to prove that age may be rich in accomplishment.

Let us make the closing years of our life a triumph, not a defeat. Let us approach them with the words of Heraclitus ringing in our ears: "Enter boldly. Here also there are Gods!" Why should we dread age? The man who lives wisely does not grow old, he grows in mellowness and ripeness. He passes through the different stages of life with a freshness and exuberance that cannot be touched by time.

The body may weaken, but that only releases more of spirit. It leads us to transfer our activity to higher centres of interest. Should our courage falter, let us gather new strength by obeying the injunction given by Plotinus: "Use your body as a musician uses his lyre. When it is worn out, you can still sing without accompaniment."

So I work at the humming loom of Time and create a living garment for God. —*Goethe.*

CHINA'S MINISTERS OF BEAUTY

By Sister Daya

(Continued from the April Number)

A mis-stroke, for an artist, is not a very serious catastrophe if he happens to be of the West. Work can be wiped out and done over again, and there are few artists indeed who arrive at the goal of completion without producing a series of metamorphoses in their subjects, akin to those the worm goes through in becoming a butterfly. With the ancient Chinese artists, however, there could be no false stroke, or if there were one, it would have to remain unaltered. For his "canvas" was not canvas at all; rather it was silk or a porous paper which showed every mark and retained it permanently. Thus, at the very start, hand and eye had to be one, and the vision single; in fact, the artist had to be far beyond the groping, experimental stage in regard to the working out of his concept. "The Chinese artist," comments Miss Hackney, "had to have a complete conception to the minutest detail of what he wanted to do, before putting brush to silk. He had to 'sketch it out with his brain' beforehand, as an ancient Chinese painter once tersely phrased it." Naturally this called for a memory made practically faultless through prolonged training in vizualization. Instead of looking without, the Chinese master looked within, not only for form, color and composition, but for the movement of life as well.

Even to fix in one's mind the image of the most simple of objects requires command of the lower levels of concentration. Think, then, of the heights attained by these wonderful old Celestials who could out of their own mental content reproduce, with what sincerity and how exquisitely, the running stream and the flowing cloud and the relationship between them!

The hand that with one sweeping stroke of the brush

immortalizes the turn of a vagrant wing, must not waver. For be it remembered, the Chinese artist bound beauty, so to speak, with a single unbroken line, rather than through the patient filling in of solid masses of light and shade. "This reliance on line affected the technique of the Chinese painter profoundly," Miss Hackney tells us. "It gave to his work a rhythm such as no other art has produced. It forced him to seek the essential character and genius of his subject. When he portrayed water, his line had to catch weight and mass, the lightness of foam bursting on a rock, the sweep of a curling wave. When he pictured a sage meditating in his mountain retreat, every line of his face and form, his drapery, and even those of the rocks and trees about him, were used to create the mood of meditation. In the same manner he portrayed . . . flowers swaying in the breeze, and the free and untrammelled life of animals. His preoccupation was always with the motion and inherent life of animal and plant, and he displayed a power in their presentation that no Western artist has yet approached. To achieve his effects by means of line, he ignored many objects which the Western artist thinks essential in his backgrounds, and used space to emphasize his subjects. But it is not empty space; the imagination of the onlooker unconsciously supplies the details and has his thoughts drawn away from the concrete to the universal."

Now there never was an artist ancient or modern, of East or West, who was not gifted beyond the average with the seeing eye and the image-making mind. The ordinary human being in comparison is blind, and beside the musician, deaf. Yet compared with the great Oriental masters of old, even the most gifted of moderns (with a few exceptions) are as children in the art of vizualization. It was said of Wu Tao-tzu, greatest of all Chinese painters, that when he was com-

missioned to paint a portrait of General Li, he had the general dance a sword dance before him and made the portrait from the combined impressions he had received.

About 750 A.D., he was sent by the powerful emperor Ming Huang to paint for him the scenery of Chia-ling in Ssuch'uan. Many moons later, Wu Tao-tzu returned without even a single sketch to show for his long tarrying. The emperor, full of anger, chided him bitterly, but Wu Tao-tzu replied, "Sire, I have it all here in my heart." And it is said, he then went to a hall in the palace and in one day threw off "one-hundred miles of painting."

"Memory has a way of sloughing off immaterial details, and the work of the Chinese artist gained immensely through this simplification," remarks Miss Hackney. We can see that the natural result was for the Chinese painter to lay his stress upon the "creative essence" of a thing, "the reality as distinguished from the actuality of the subject," rather than upon mere detailed likeness, which he left to the craftsman.

Do not take from this the idea that there was anything sloppy, "faked" or sentimental in the Chinese creations. If there had been, their reputation would never have survived the centuries. The training of the painter in ancient China was long and severe. "It was not until a painter had saturated himself . . . with the technique of the great masters, and had gained such a complete mastery of his brush that it would respond freely to the command of his well filled mind . . . that he considered himself sufficiently equipped to follow his own bent and create independently."

However remarkable the artistic development may have been in China as a result of the necessities of the times, the development of certain innate powers of the mind were no less extraordinary. By his intense concentration, the Chinese artist found himself master not only of ink and silk and the creative impulse, but of the mental domain as well.

The practice of Yoga is said by Patanjali to give access everywhere "from the atom to the Infinite," and a form of Yoga the Chinese artist was most surely practising—just as in India, through another type of necessity, oral memory was developed to an amazing extent, and in turn helped to develop the power of concentrated listening. The Indian disciple of the early centuries, lacking the written word, was expected to hold in mind the words of the master, as well as ancient scriptures—even to the extent of thousands of slokas—and in his turn to pass them on "from mouth to ear" intact. In the travels of the great Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, Fa-Hsien, this is distinctly referred to: "Fa-Hsien's object was to get copies of the Disciplines, but in the various countries of Northern India these were handed down orally from one Patriarch to another, there being no written volume which he could copy."

We can well realize that teaching was not heard lightly in those days, but with the whole mind of the listener, just as in China a subject was not gazed upon casually by the artist, but with all his awakened and one-pointed attention at work, to fix it in his memory, as a living, moving, detailed composition.

These ancient disciplines imposed by the conditions of life itself at that time, may also have been accountable for a tendency which seems to distinguish the Oriental from the man of the West. I refer to the tendency of deliberation before action, of making a thing your own before sharing it with another. By this I mean the saturation of a man's very soul with the essence of an idea or an ideal before seeking to give it outer expression. Here in the Occident, there are few who permit inspiration to germinate. No sooner does a thought occur to the mind that is a bit novel or unusual, than it is brought forth for the gaze of men, generally

with a good deal of noise and ostentation on the part of the one who has conceived it, and with publicity if that one can obtain it. Seeds, it is true, contain embryonic trees, but they can never give shade unless permitted to go through their long, silent sojourn beneath the soil, and their slow, patient growth beneath the sky. I cannot do better than to quote from Laurence Binyon in illustration of these two tendencies. Writing of Japanese prints, he says:

"Take almost any print, search out the meanings implied in its subject and accessories and you will find yourself tracking by intricate association and allusion, some habit of thought consecrated by a thousand-year-old poem, or be brought back to contemplate the deed of a mediaeval hero, or the saying of an Indian saint, or the precept of a Chinese sage. You cannot detach one of these prints from the life that produced it; some tender filament or clinging root binds it to a nation's living heart. Is it not here that our art of today fails in Europe? Our art tends more and more to be detached from the common life, to be dissociated from things of use, to become an affair of museums and exhibitions. This is all part of a wide tendency.

"The Japanese do not seem to understand an ideal till they have put it into practice. We in the West seem, on the contrary, to think that an ideal practised is no longer an ideal; it is regarded as too good for daily use and in danger of profanation. Is it not so with our religious ideals? Just in the same spirit we hang on walls porcelain plates that are thought too beautiful to eat from, though made for no other purpose. We fill a museum with fine works from divers countries, and place it in the midst of streets that desolate eye and heart, without an effort to make them part of the beauty we desire. Art is not an end in itself, but a means to beauty in life. This we forget.

"I have been told that a certain Japanese artist, who was studying in London, entered one of our chief art schools. On one occasion, the subject of Joan of Arc was set as a theme for competition among the students. What was his amazement to discover that, in attempting such a subject, all that was thought requisite was to pose a model and paint her in armour. To him it seemed that no one could embody in a picture even the least profound conception of a soul, incomparable in loftiness and simplicity, without weeks of solitary thought, without a strenuous inner preparation, if not with prayer and fasting.

"We know what is applauded as the 'conscientious' treatment of such a subject. The painter studies the period, finds a suit of armour of the right date (which usually turns out to be a little wrong), journeys to Domremy or Rouen to make careful studies for his scene, perhaps chooses a peasant girl of the Maid's own district for his model; and what energy is left from these labors and the work of elaborating his design, he devotes to his conception of an heroic soul. A genius of exceptional intensity may, indeed, build on such foundations to magnificent effect, but only one in ten thousand. It was not by such means that Giotto, that Rembrandt went to the heart of the Gospel stories. And for most, the process means absolute defeat. The spirit sets out to conquer matter, and by matter it is conquered. Yet only in the victory of the spirit can art prevail.

"The Oriental painter who desires to portray the image of a figure standing in the history of his own land with such a radiance as Joan of Arc, seeks not in outward relics of the past, but in his own heart. The image of his painting will be perhaps the actual work of a few minutes, but he will not put brush to paper till his mind is saturated with his vision, till the intense emotion it is charged with can be contained no longer.

Slight to appearance may be the result, but what a man puts into his work is there and will be felt by all capable of the feeling that possessed himself, though from the profane it keeps its secrets."

The formula is stated clearly in one of the great Upanishads of India: First a man hears about a thing; then he meditates upon it, and finally he realizes it.

The Angels of Annunciation and High Prophesy come to East and West alike with rumors of heavenly Truth, but it is only the Eastern Mary who has the wisdom to ponder these things in her heart. But, of course, the East has always been subjective, and her creative genius has opened from within. It is time that we studied not merely the results in her arts and products, but the consciousness that produced these, and which no where, perhaps, (outside of spiritual India) has approached its goal more purposefully or intelligently than in China during, in particular, the great Sung Dynasty, under the inspiration of Lao-tzu and the tuition of Zen.

TO BE CONTINUED

SWAMI PARAMANANDA EN ROUTE

IN RANGOON

By special permission from the Port Commissioners, Swami Punnyananda, head of the local branch of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashram of Rangoon, Dr. P. K. Dey, member of the All-India Medical Council, and a few other friends met Swami Paramananda and his companions on board the S. S. Karapara, on February 5th, at Hastings, a few miles from Rangoon. Arrived at the wharf in Rangoon, many friends and devotees came on board to garland and greet the Swami, amongst them being Mrs. J. Paw Tun, Eva Guha Thakurta with her father, Mr. S. Ghose, and many others. The Swami and his party were taken to the Ramakrishna Mission Seva-

shram where the Swami was put up, Srimati Gayatri Devi and Amala being housed at the Mission Guest House several blocks away.

The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashram Hospital is an extensively organized work, ably conducted by Swami Punnyananda and his assistants, Dr. P. K. Dey, Honorary Chief Medical Officer, and Dr. Das, Surgeon in the Ear, Nose and Throat Department. There are many wards for both men and women, operating rooms and surgical wards. Poor people from the street, suburbs and long distances from Rangoon come for medical care free of charge. It is a marvelous work of service to suffering humanity and it makes one's heart leap with joy to see the selfless spirit of those consecrated Ramakrishna Mission workers. In the large kitchen are prepared quantities of food to provide the needs of the ward patients. Besides these resident cases, hundreds come daily to receive medical treatment, which is of the highest order. Such people as His Excellency, Sir H. L. Stephenson, Governor of Burma, Lady Page and many others value the redeeming and wonderful work that the Sevashram Hospital is doing, and are its patrons.

While Swami Paramananda was granting interviews to devotees, Mrs. S. N. Sastry, Hon. Secretary of the Ramakrishna Society Ladies Free Reading Room, and Mrs. L. Roy, Principal of Sarada Sadan High School, took Srimati Gayatri Devi and Amala to the High School of 300 students where English and Burmese (compulsory), Bengali, Tamil, Punjabi, Sikh and Gujrat are taught. Hygiene, domestic science and first aid are the practical subjects given. The work is very fine.

At four o'clock in the afternoon a Ladies Meeting was arranged at the Arya Samaj Hall where Srimati Gayatri Devi addressed the many women gathered to hear her. Lady

Page, K. I. H. (wife of the Chief Justice of Burma) presided. Srimati spoke both in English and in Bengali, and the ladies listened with rapt attention to her words of real inspiration. They were very deeply impressed both by her simplicity and her spiritual wisdom, and many were fired with her ideal. Amala was then called upon to speak, particularly concerning the Boston Vedanta Centre and Ananda-Ashrama, California. A Mrs. Dawson translated into Tamil the salient points of both Srimati Gayatri's and Amala's addresses. Songs were sung and Mrs. Sastry closed the meeting with fitting words.

Immediately after this, Mrs. Sastry and Mrs. Roy accompanied the speakers to an informal meeting at Mrs. Paw Tun's home where Swami Paramananda was requested to address those assembled. Amongst the audience were Hon. Dr. Ba Maw, Minister of Education, U Ba Dun, Barrister-at-law, Secretary to the Legislative Council, U Saw Hla Pru, Secretary to the Government of Burma, and other distinguished Burmese. The Swami gave them a short inspiring talk which his listeners eagerly absorbed. By the Swami's request Amala graphically described the Ananda-Ashrama fire.

From Mrs. Paw Tun's, Swami Paramananda drove to the Ramakrishna Mission Society Hall, where to an overcrowded audience he gave an illuminating and inspired address on the life and teachings of the first President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Swami Brahmanandaji, the occasion being the celebration of his birthday anniversary. The audience composed mostly of men who sat cross-legged on the floor, was moved and uplifted. Swami Paramananda then called upon Swami Punnyananda who spoke in Bengali, giving from his heart his personal experiences with Swami Brahmanandaji. Srimati Gayatri Devi and

Amala, requested by Swami Punnyananda, also gave a few words.

On February 6th, Swami Paramananda was taken to the Bengal Academy of brilliant record and standing, where he addressed the six hundred students, speaking principally in Bengali, and appealing to the boys to follow the inspiration of the great spiritual heroes of India. Srimati Gayatri Devi and Amala were likewise called upon and responded briefly. The Swami missed the warm welcome of Mr. M. K. Mukerjee, the late headmaster, who passed away last December.

At six o'clock that same evening, again at the Bengal Academy, over one thousand crowded into the Hall to listen to the Swami. President U Saw Hla Pru gave a glowing introduction. Swami Paramananda then delivered a magnificent lecture on "India and the World." His audience was attentively with him every moment, and their hearts were stirred to great heights of spiritual grandeur and beauty.

From the Academy, the Swami was escorted to a suburb outside Rangoon, called Theingyngun, to the home of a devotee of the Ramakrishna Mission, who had invited over one hundred guests to meet him. Following the bestowal of garlands, the Swami spoke to the people in Bengali giving them his benediction.

Returning to the Mission, he found many devotees waiting to hear and to see him. Devotional songs were sung by Swami Punnyananda, Srimati Gayatri Devi, Miss Guha, and Amala, and a beautiful song by Swami Paramananda. After a strenuous day of meetings in different places and private interviews, at a late hour the Swami was free to partake of food prepared by a devoted heart, Mrs. Guha Thakurta. Swami Paramananda inspired Swami Punnyananda and the few gathered there with his touching personal reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda, Swami Ramakrishnananda, and

Swami Brahmananda. Retiring time came long past midnight.

February 7th, next day, Swami Paramananda visited the Gujrati Anglo Vernacular School of 550 students where Mr. Subodh Ghose, the Superintendent, conducted him through each class-room in order for the pupils to receive the blessing of a few words and of the Swami's presence. After being garlanded, the entire party was entertained with a Gujrati song of devotion, and a dance by twenty of the girls called "Gurba Dance," done with water pitchers and sticks used for rhythm.

Swami Paramananda's next point of call was the unique kindergarten which Mrs. Paw Tun conducts at her home for the elite of Burmese, Indian, Chinese and English children. He arrived just at the noon hour, which Mrs. Paw Tun felt to be a blessing, as it is that time she sets apart for quiet spiritual reflection. The Swami was not a stranger to the children for they have come to know him and love him very much through his "Book of Daily Thoughts and Prayers" which Mrs. Paw Tun reads to them daily. After speaking a few words to the children, the Swami visited the homes of Dr. P. K. Dey, Mr. J. K. Guha Thakurta, Mr. S. Ghose and others, where he was devotedly entertained.

Many devotees crowded at the Mission at the time for departure for the opportunity to pay their respects to Swami Paramananda and to receive his blessing. A large crowd followed him to the launch at the wharf where Swami Punnyananda, Dr. Dey, Mrs. Paw Tun, Mr. J. K. Guha Thakurta and his daughter Eva, Mr. S. Ghose and a few others accompanied him on board the "Karapara." After nearly an hour's visit they returned by launch to Rangoon with their white handkerchiefs waving in the distance.

Rangoon is twenty-two miles up the Rangoon River from

the sea. The river is muddy, due to the shallowness of the water. Rangoon is interesting—perhaps unlike any city touched previously. The people are composed principally of Burmese, Indians and Chinese. Many temples crown its precincts,—Chinese, Hindu, Buddhist, Siamese, Christian, etc. Picturesque Hpongees (Buddhist monks) with their orange garb, shaven heads and begging bowls are seen in large numbers. There are Hpongee Chongs (monasteries) where these monks live and where young boys go for several years' training after which time they can choose between becoming a Hpongee for life or returning to the world. The people impress one as very natural—their lives have great simplicity.

The visit to the Shwe Dagon Pagoda, meaning "Golden Stupa," (depicted in one of the windows of the Temple of the Universal Spirit at Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, California) was very interesting. It is a little outside of Rangoon proper, and one can enter it only on bare feet. The roads about are dotted with Hpongees, with their colorful robes and begging bowls. The royal lakes form the approach. There is a long flight of steps leading to it, walks, canopied and bordered by open flower beds, also incense, picture and image bazaars. Flowers and incense are purchased by each one to offer. The Pagoda is of gold, and there are shrines, four in number, on the four sides. The Burmese worship, sitting on their feet, with flowers held in their folded hands in salutation to the Lord Buddha. There were Hpongees and nuns, besides Burmese men and women, making their worship. Shrines are built around huge trees. Hundreds and hundreds of images reclining and sitting may be seen, dating from ancient times, each representing the various conceptions of the Burmese artists by whom they were executed. It is interesting to note how the image of Buddha, modeled

in different countries, takes on the characteristics of the people by whom it is worshipped. A sort of museum houses the various offerings of gold and silver and ivory made by devotees. One offering,—a pair of elephant tusks carved in fine filigree, with many images of Buddha seated in succession from the bottom of each tusk to the top—is a very beautiful work of some great devotee. The pagodas are wonderfully wrought with tiny figures depicting the life of Buddha.

A legend or superstition tells us that the relic from the Blessed Head of the Buddha, (hair) is in a small packet in the central part of the Stupa where it floats on churning water, and should anyone enter there they die. Recently a terrible fire swept one side of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda and instead of burning it in any way, the fire leaped over it to the other side and burned there. It reminds one of a similar miracle which took place at the Ananda-Ashrama in La Crescenta California, a year ago last November. It was a real pilgrimage walking barefooted from Shrine to Shrine. The Shwe Dagon is very high and its golden lustre may be seen for miles around.

The Sule Pagoda in the heart of Rangoon is a small pagoda with golden lustre. A reclining Buddha in the outskirts of Rangoon is about two hundred or more feet long. One has to walk at least half a mile across a field to reach it, and pass before it barefoot. It is made of brick and mortar, and tiny trees are growing in its arms, a Burmese conception. The feet were most impressive. A Hpongee Chong is at the bottom of the hillside. When we were there, one Hpongee was reading the Buddhist scriptures aloud in Pali.

Dr. P. K. Dey and Mr. Koo Soo Ee conducted a visit to two Chinese temples. One Shinto in character, that is, with ancestor worship, where the Koo-Chuang Clan are worshipped. The temple is exquisitely wrought—pillars of

lacquered teak and columns of carved granite with symbolic dragons and also carved granite mythical lions. At the Kwannon Chinese temple, twenty-four carved colored panels represent the Moral Code of Confucius.

Rangoon showed genuine and deep appreciation of Swami Paramananda's visit. He left deeply moved by the hospitality bestowed and the warm invitation given him to return in the very near future. —*Amala.*

ARRIVAL IN INDIA

[Swami Paramananda reached Calcutta on February 10th and went straight to the Head Math or Monastery of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission at Belur, where he remained for four days. On February 14th, accompanied by the Sister Satya Prana, who had met him on his arrival, and his travelling companions,—Gayatri Devi and Amala, he left for Dacca, arriving the next day. Naturally he was taken at once by Charushila Devi to the Ananda-Ashrama of which she is the acting and he the official head. On March 4th he returned to Calcutta, was back in Dacca—a surprise visit—on March 26th, again left for Calcutta on April 4th, and on April 18th departed with the Sister Satya Prana and Gayatri Devi for Madras, en route for Colombo, Ceylon, whence he sailed for the West, on April 24th, via the Mediterranean, Amala remaining behind to assist with the work of the Ashrama at Dacca. The following report of Indian activities is made up of excerpts from letters received from Amala and from Miss Lois Houghton.—*S.D.*]

AT BELUR

"Our visit at Belur and Dakshineswar was blessed. The Swamis were very loving and kind. There are numerous hallowed spots at Belur,—Sri Ramakrishna's Shrine, Holy Mother's, Swami Vivekananda's and Swami Brahmananda's; the Bel tree beneath which, according to his request, Swami

Vivekananda's Shrine is placed, the sandalwood tree and, of great interest to us, the Mango Tree by the Math under which our Swami Paramananda first saw Swami Vivekananda. A Temple is being planned, a very large edifice, seating at one end 2,000 Sannyasins and at the other, about 7,000 devotees. Swami Virajananda told me that several wanted to put marble steps and floors in the Math, but he opposed that because he said so many of Sri Ramakrishna's disciples had blessed the Math by the touch of their feet, that to destroy the original floor would be to destroy that mark of blessedness. Sri Ramakrishna represents divine simplicity and to depart into ostentation would be to forsake his spirit.

AT ANANDA-ASHRAMA, DACCA

"It is impossible at this time to go into details about the Dacca activities. Our Swami (Paramananda) had numerous engagements to fill at schools, colleges, etc. Most interesting was the coming to the Dacca Ashrama of Catholic Missionary Fathers of St. Gregory's High School to hear Swami speak. Father Walter, head-master (American) has become very devoted to Swamiji and gives great reverence to him. He even wants the Catholic Sisters to visit the Ashrama to gain inspiration for the village work of their Mission. Swamiji spoke to the 550 boys at the High School and Father Walter felt that his presence was a blessing.

"When Swami arrived at Dacca, he was greeted with a most touching reception by the Ananda-Ashrama. Every morning at eight-thirty, while he was there, he held a "Daily Thoughts and Prayers" Class. It grew and grew. Especially men were drawn to it.

"The work at the Ashrama is remarkable in every sense of the word. The young widows, girls and married women are receiving so much needed opportunity of learning, among other things, the various vocational arts of basket-weaving,

dyeing, printing, weaving of carpets, cloths, etc. They do lovely work.

"Swami's days were full all the time he was in Dacca. He gave a lecture at Curzon Hall, Dacca University and two talks at Jaganath Intermediate College, besides speaking at several private schools for both boys and girls. He gave a series of talks at the Ramakrishna Mission Branch of Dacca, of which Swami Premeswarananda is in charge."—A.

"The Ashrama made great preparations for Swami's reception. Everything was washed, dyed, dried and polished. Gayatri Devi's father engaged a bus and with all the children, three girls from the Ashrama, as well as Charushila Devi and myself, we drove to the station where the boat docks. The day was hot and the road dusty. Fog delayed the boat in the morning, so we waited in the hot sun about three hours. This somewhat disarranged the program, but everybody was jubilant. The school stood at attention along the walks in the garden of the Ashrama and cheered the arrival of the cars, while Conch shells added their distinctive note of welcome. The girls had made most beautiful garlands for the travellers, which had been put on at the boat-landing, so altogether the garden with all its color and life made a very vivid picture, in the centre of which Swamiji in yellow robe and resplendent turban stood forth as the first magnitude star. Charushila Devi had caused to be erected in the garden a platform where Swamiji sat for the evening entertainment, and from which he spoke. Many came. Five Ashrama girls in yellow saris and wearing marigold wreaths in their black hair sang a ceremony of worshipful greeting which was very effective. Each offered something—the scroll of greeting, painted on silk, being one of the offerings.

"There followed days filled with engagements. A party of us went to the Mission near Narayangunj where Swami

and Gayatri Devi both spoke to a throng of people. Following the speeches we were given refreshments in a small room, where we were seated round a table while young men packed the space behind our chairs and leaned through doors and windows over each other's shoulders.

"Another day we went with Swamiji to a small Shrine where very poor people serve. The man in charge was a son of wealth but gave up everything and now wears the simplest garb. Their reception breathed a sincerity and loving kindness that was very charming. In a tiny room they had prepared food for us and five of us partook of it while as many as could crowd the doorways looked in at us.

"Saturday, in spite of a heavy rain, a throng of people awaited Swamiji at Kyeth-tuli where there is a small branch of the Ashrama work and some very devout and earnest people. They had made their simple altar most beautiful and had woven exquisite garlands for us all. After Swamiji spoke, we returned to the Ashrama. This was Charushila Devi's birthday and though it was still raining the rain did not prevent a most distinctive ceremony when each girl came to greet her, touch her feet and receive her embrace. That was a picture I wish you could all see with your own eyes.

"The next day, Sunday, was the anniversary of the founding of this Ashrama. There was large attendance, reports were read, prizes given. Swamiji gave the men a real blast of eloquence in English, telling them to wake up to their responsibility for the training of women.

"One interesting visit was to the Dakeswari Cotton Mills near Narayangunj, where there are about 2,000 employees. After being shown all through the different departments and partaking of delicious refreshments, we went to a big hall where Swamiji talked to the workers. They were most attentive and quiet though packed in every available seat, and

leaning through every window and door. Afterwards Gayatri Devi and Amala said a few words.

"The last Sunday of this first visit, preparations were made for a simple Service at the Rose Garden, a beautiful property which may become the new home of the Dacca Ashrama. Instead of a few people, however, throngs of people came, at least a thousand. The day following, the Swami returned to Calcutta.

"Swamiji's second visit to Dacca came as a surprise, and was less public, although some outside people came every morning. On Wednesday, April 3rd, Swamiji gave a stirring lecture in North Brook Hall, speaking in English, and his audience listened without moving. He sent out a clarion call to the people of India to remember their glorious spiritual inheritance and bring it out of the dust of ages. It was one of the strongest and most powerful speeches I have ever heard Swamiji make anywhere.

"These notes give only the bare facts. Perhaps you can imagine the color and flowers and eager faces and beautiful saris, and spotless white on the men."—*L.H.*

REPORT

At the Vedanta Centre, Boston and the Ananda-Ashrama, California, the work has moved along rhythmically through the months of March and April. In spite of a late spring in the east and continued rainfall in the west, the public has been faithful. Eastertide was observed with ardor and evoked warm response from the many who came to the Services. The Sunrise Service at Ananda-Ashrama, California, conducted with deep feeling by Sister Achala, especially radiated Swami Paramananda's benediction, even though he was bodily in India. The Swami has now returned to America and during the summer months will divide his time between Boston and California.

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VOL. XXIV NUMBER 6

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

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East



JUNE, 1935

Miracles and Psychism

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Message of the East

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

By Swami Paramananda

(An address delivered at the Vedanta Centre, Boston)

ONE time when the Lord Buddha and his disciples were dwelling in Rajagaha, Jotikha, the son of Subhadda, "having received a precious bowl of sandalwood, decorated with jewels, . . . erected a long pole before his house and put the bowl on its top with this legend: 'Should a samana take this bowl down without using a ladder or a stick with a hook, or without climbing the pole, but by magic power, he shall receive as reward whatever he desires.'

"And the people came to the Blessed One, full of wonder and their mouths overflowing with praise, saying: 'Great is the Tathagata. His disciples perform miracles!' Kassapa, the disciple of the Buddha, saw the bowl on Jotikha's pole, and stretching out his hand, he took it down, carrying it away in triumph to the vihara. When the Blessed One heard what had happened, he went to Kassapa, and breaking the bowl to pieces, forbade his disciples to perform miracles of any kind."

A short time after this, a disciple approached the Lord Buddha with a mind full of doubt.

"*Disciple.*—O Buddha, our Lord and Master, why do we give up the pleasures of the world if thou forbiddest us to work miracles and to attain the supernatural?

"*Buddha.*—O savaka, thou art a novice among novices. . . . How long will it take thee to grasp the truth? Thou hast not understood the words of the Tathagata. . . .

"*Disciple.*—Sayest thou there are no miraculous and wonderful things?

"*Buddha.*—Is it not a wonderful thing, mysterious and miraculous to the worldling, that a man who commits wrong can become a saint, that he who attains to true enlightenment will find the path of truth and abandon the evil ways of selfishness? The bhikkhu who renounces the transient pleasures of the world for the eternal bliss of holiness, performs the only miracle that can truly be called a miracle."

The average man does not like to hear this type of teaching. He really desires that the great teachers exhibit what he calls miracles, and feels disappointed unless something is given which has the flavor of the supernatural. Genuine spiritual teachers have a different sense of values, however, and in India they warn their followers against the dangers of the *Siddhis* or psychic powers.

Why do great men thus discourage their disciples? Do they not want them to possess power, or are they seeking to hide something from them? We shall see. We know how young children like to play with fire, go near the water or climb over precipices. But parents and older people who are wiser, protect them by forbidding them to approach the flame, however attractive it may be, or to go beyond their depth in the water. So with our spiritual parents, those who have the authority, the wisdom, they only desire that we learn to have a sense of values, so that we may do nothing to impede our progress or destroy our true happiness.

Miracles as you and I understand them, are not miracles. But there are miracles. Faith and love perform great miracles. You have read of them, but perhaps you have not

been able to put them into practice in your own life, therefore you may feel doubtful about them. This, however, does not change the fact that simple faith performs miracles. There is a little parable given by Sri Ramakrishna, one of the great mystics of India. A milkmaid used to bring milk every morning to her teacher, but often she was late and the teacher had to reprimand her. "Why are you late?" he asked, and she replied, "Sir, I am poor, so the ferryman delays me, waiting for other passengers." Then the teacher said, "My good woman, if a person has faith, he does not have to depend on a ferryman; through his faith he can cross the ocean." She took his words seriously, and the next morning arrived on time, and the next morning too. The teacher, noticing that she was never late any more, inquired how it was that she now came so promptly. "You said," she explained, "that through faith one could cross the ocean, so what is a little river? By my faith I have succeeded in crossing it, so that now I do not even have to pay my fare." The teacher was astonished. "Can you show me how you do this?" he asked. "Yes I can," she replied, and in simple trust went and walked across the water. The one who was supposedly her teacher, through whose words she had been quickened, started to follow her, but as he stepped into the river, he became fearful that the water would wet him, and tried to raise his clothes. The woman looking back, said: "You take the name of the Lord and yet you are afraid!"

How shall we understand miracles except through love and faith? Certainly not through a mind which is soaked in materialism, doubt and despondency. Here is a realm where the thoughts are so subtle, the light so ethereal that the only way we can be convinced of it is to see and feel and know. In this way alone we can learn to discriminate between the real and the unreal, between the psychic and

the spiritual. I am not going to enter into a discussion as to whether or not there is truth on the psychic plane, whether or not these things have definite reality, only this I must say: Everything has its place; everything has its own measure of usefulness. The danger lies in mistaking one thing for another. If we mistake one thing for another, we have to suffer the consequences. In India, a land of great spiritual heritage, they have learned through ages of training, to differentiate. They know the difference between jugglery, psychic display and spiritual manifestation. I am afraid, however, that in the Occident the majority of people are unable to discriminate. In India, if a man produces out of the dust a fruit tree bearing fruit, we are not startled; we know it is a physical or psychic trick. Long spiritual training teaches us not to be deluded by something of passing fancy.

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and loses his own soul, and what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" When you evolve power to increase your material pomp and glory, that same power can endanger you and your happiness. I do not deny the psychic faculties; they are innate. I have known people who possessed them. When they become acute, man is able to see more; he can even see in the dark. Cats can do this; they have natural psychic faculties, but with human beings such faculties often prove detrimental. Through them we are apt to be sidetracked and misled—also sometimes they fatten up the ego, and by following them, we may lose our sense of values and our balance. That is why if at any time I have laid great emphasis against any culture, it has been against developing and encouraging psychism. I do not mean this in the sense of spiritual power, but in the sense that I have described. Spiritual power always makes the mind clearer so that it

reflects like a mirror that is so polished, there can be no question about what we perceive. We gain direct vision of Truth.

The psychic, as we are generally familiar with it, represents a want of sacredness. It is apt to be inspired by curiosity—a trespassing on some one else's life and thought—and that does not benefit us or anybody. It is like a man going home after a day's work, who is fascinated by strange roads and outside attractions. He may be caught in a storm or lose his way and be delayed indefinitely.

Let me tell you this with all the emphasis I can lay upon it: hold fast to your sense of values. In the teaching of Christ and of Buddha, in the teaching of every great and holy personage, when we can bring it close to our hearts, we find that its great accent is always upon the miracle of love,—love which heals and restores. If you love, you can perform miracles; you can purify; you can inspire. Is it not a far greater miracle to renew the faith of one who is downcast than to demonstrate name or fame or riches? We cannot fulfill our material ambition and at the same time be a clear channel through which God may perform His Law. We have to choose. Therefore we must cultivate discrimination.

It is all a question of the point of view. When you become instrumental in restoring a man's faith, you transform his life. Miracle means transforming the life. When a spiritual person comes, his touch transforms. He lays his hand on a life that is almost destroyed—one who has lost his faith and hope and courage and ambition—and that life is quickened and renewed. It is a moral and spiritual miracle and should interest us far more than having someone read our thoughts or tell our fortune. In India we do not pay much attention to such things. Of course fortune-tellers are

entertaining. One can engage them by the hour, and if one does not know, one may think that they are highly evolved. You have all heard of the Temple of Jagannath. Well, in 1911 when I was back in India I went to visit the temple, and as I was walking along the street, I saw a man with his head buried in the ground. He remained that way for hours. According to science it was a startling phenomenon, but for this man it was merely a matter of psychic control. He did not seek superconsciousness, he was interested in gathering pennies. Was it a great miracle? I think it would have been more miraculous for him to inspire someone who is leading a worldly life to do something productive, something healing and helpful to humanity. Humanity, however, prefers signs and wonders. Even Buddha's disciples were annoyed, as we have seen, and the Christ rebuked the people because they looked for signs.

We forbid our children to use a revolver or a knife till we are quite sure they know the use of them, and in the same way, the wise warn others less advanced against whatever may be detrimental to their spiritual endeavor.

Often I meet people who are confused. "I see all kinds of things," they tell me; "I hear sounds and voices." These experiences may be fascinating, but if we cultivate them, they may lead us into conditions which we cannot get out of. We may evolve that which will merge us with unhappiness. In India, the first thing the teacher gives his pupils is a warning, when they come saying, "I have seen a beautiful light over your head." He does not encourage them. If he is a true teacher, he tells them, "These things are probably nothing but fancies, and they may prolong the way." There is no doubt that they retard our growth, if we are not strong enough to go deeper and seek that which is more vital.

Do not think for a moment that I want to deny the existence of psychic faculties. Often we enjoy beautiful dreams or have a sense of a beautiful presence. Sometimes we hear sounds that with our gross sense we cannot hear. This may make us aware of a higher realm, but it is not the way to gain the highest revelation. When our senses become purified and focused, then we perceive Reality. Let me give you an illustration: A house is neglected for years; dust accumulates, and the little light that comes through only distorts the objects. When the windows are polished, however, the light shines in without any obstruction, and we see everything clearly. So with our souls. Some men are in the process of cleaning their inner windows; some have cleaned them a little and through that little they see, while others have cleaned them fully and kept them clean through spiritual thought and aspiration. Such men partake of holiness or *wholeness,* and thus they feel their oneness with every living thing. To them, life is like a crystal; they have clear vision. Those who lack this sometimes are frightened by what they see. To one who has been in the dark, a light is very distressing and can even be blinding. Once I heard of a person who had been kept in the dark for years and then given his freedom. On coming into the light he found that his sight had been almost destroyed by the darkness. We follow the path of darkness because the doors and windows of our soul are shut, but it is not through the ordinary so-called miracle that we shall be able to open them. Pure miracle comes from the Source of Truth which alone reveals true knowledge. Jesus the Christ, Buddha, St. Francis, often did not know that they were performing miracles. It was the touch, the contact, the deep feeling of compassion and love which flowed through them, because they were no more separated from the Source of true love and compassion.

If you desire that which is of vital importance, go to the source, then the little things you have need of will come. One who has spiritual power conveys healing by his word, by his touch, because of his spiritual contact, and whatever he does has life-giving quality. Therefore he can say to the dead, "Rise!" and the dead rise up. It is the fulfillment of the Great Law, but so long as we are bound hand and foot on the material plane, we are unable to use it and are often frightened by it. When the flower blossoms it does not have to beg for recognition. It is beautiful and gives freely of its fragrance, just as the spiritually quickened soul reveals its healing power and performs countless miracles.

Perhaps you feel that you would like to be like this. Everyone wants to be beautiful. But it means getting rid of all selfishness, ambition and petty desires. Here is the clash. You do not want wrinkles on your face; you want the miracle of youth and beauty; yet the only person who can perform that miracle is yourself. You have it in your power to safeguard yourself from the wear and tear of life. Follow the path of love! A child often gives the illustration of the miracle which love can perform. A man and woman become angry; they are almost on the point of committing murder, when a little child's hand—the hand of love—gentle, powerless yet potent, touches them, and at once the mother's anger vanishes, the murderous quality is gone.

What more do we want? How many of us are courageous and true to our ideals? By permitting covetousness and vanity to take possession of our souls, we draw down all the maladies which afflict humanity and which wound us and others through us. But if we have devotion, very quickly we shake off these obstacles and through the impetus of love and service, learn to perform our part in life. In this way our thought can be used to perform miracles, not by prac-

tising certain formulas, but by following in the footsteps of the great Leaders and Master-Spirits.

It is an age for thinking and speaking. Many of us have listened to lectures on psychology and on the subtler planes of existence, and often it has been straight talk. The world has heard many theories advanced, so much so that it is weighted down by them. People have prided themselves on their interest in psychic matters, but if they are really interested in these realms of the mind and the soul, let them produce something that is of value; let them help their brother man out of darkness, that unhappiness may be minimized and all hearts may be quickened. And let them remember that this can never be brought about merely by cleverness and cunning or by polished words, but only as the light and benediction of the Most High manifests through us in unalloyed service and love.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Wait till one day that thought and imagination spread their wings without any veil;

You will see the mountains even as soft wool; and this world of cold and hot, annihilated.

You will see not the sky, not the stars, not any existent being; you will see nothing but God, the One, the Living, the Loving. —*The Masnavi.*

The Miracle of Miracles is that mortal man is made Divine. —*Eucken.*

Hold fast to that which has neither substance nor existence. Listen only to the voice which is soundless. Look only on that which is invisible alike to the inner and the outer sense. —*Light on the Path.*

THE PSYCHIC OR THE SPIRITUAL

From the Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna

The realization of God is not the same as the acquirement of the *Siddhis* or psychic powers. Krishna once said to Arjuna: "When you see one who exercises any of the Yoga powers, you may know that such a one has not realized God, because the exercise of these powers requires *Ahamkara* or egoism which is an obstacle on the path of realization." The genuine devotee must not, therefore, desire any of these powers.

There is indeed great danger in possessing the *Siddhis*. God cannot be realized so long as there is the least desire for powers in the heart. *Siddhis* or miraculous powers are to be avoided like filth. These come of themselves by virtue of *Sadhanas* or religious practices, and *Samyama* or control of the senses. But he who sets his mind on the *Siddhis*, remains stuck thereto—he cannot rise higher. It is the mean-minded who covet supernatural powers. . . . Those who are pure Bhaktas (devotees) do not want anything but the lotus feet of the Lord. During the period of my austere *Sadhanas* under the Panchavati tree, a man named Girija came there. He was a great Yogi. When I wanted to come to my sleeping-room in the dark night, he used to raise his arm and a strong light was projected from his body, illuming the whole path. Through my advice he gave up using that power and turned his mind to the realization of the Eternal Reality. He lost that power, but gained in true spirituality.

A beggar would be acting very foolishly were he to go to the king's palace and beg for such insignificant things as a gourd or pumpkin. Similarly, a devotee would be acting foolishly were he to appear at the threshold of the King of kings and beg for psychic powers, neglecting the priceless gifts of true knowledge and love of God.

WHITE BIRCHES

By Amy Russell

(Inspired by the Ananda-Ashrama, Cohasset)

Once, long ago, I dreamed a dream
Of slender birches standing in a wood
Their pointed leaves a'quiver with the stir
And lifting of the breeze. A tender light
Came flickering down to bathe the ground beneath
In shifting shade; to touch the lichened rocks,
The banks of moss, the whitening briar
About their roots.
And underneath the trees
Renascent with the Spring, a wood nymph stood,
Alone and innocent, young loveliness,
Stretching her eager arms along the trunk,
Laying her cheek upon the silver bark,
Murmuring, "O sister birches dear,
This place is Love, and I shall find it here
When all the world is quick with Spring, and down
The brambled paths and through the thickets deep
I'll follow as He leads." The birch leaves moved
Unceasingly, but answered not; true love
Requires no answer.

If a man were to ask Nature for what purpose she produces, and if she chose to attend and reply to him, she would say, "You should never have asked; you ought to have understood in silence, even as I keep silence and am wont to say nothing. What is it then that you should have understood? This: that whatever is produced is a sight for me (Nature) to look upon in silence, a vision naturally produced. . . . I owe my life not to any action, but to the being of thoughts greater than I, contemplating themselves."

—*Plotinus.*

MEDITATION AND SAMADHI

By Swami Vivekananda

(From his book, "Raja Yoga")

We have two planes in which the human mind is working. First is the conscious plane; that is to say, that sort of work which is always accompanied with the feeling of egoism. Next comes the unconscious plane, the work beneath, that which is unaccompanied by the feeling of egoism. That part of mind-work which is unaccompanied with feeling of egoism is unconscious work, and that part which is accompanied with the feeling of egoism is conscious work. In the lower animals this unconscious work is called instinct. In higher animals, and in the highest of all animals, man, the second part—that which is accompanied with the feeling of egoism—prevails, and is called conscious work.

But it does not end here. There is a still higher plane upon which the mind can work. It can go beyond consciousness. Just as unconscious work is beneath consciousness, so there is another work which is above consciousness, and which, also, is not accompanied with the feeling of egoism. The feeling of egoism is only on the middle plane. When the mind is above or below that line, there is no feeling of "I," and yet the mind works.

When the mind goes beyond this line of self-consciousness, it is called *Samadhi,* or superconsciousness. It is above consciousness. How, for instance, do we know that a man in *Samadhi* has not gone below his consciousness, has not degenerated, instead of going higher. In both cases the works are unaccompanied with egoism. The answer is—by the effects, by the results of the work, we know that which is below, and that which is above. When a man goes into deep sleep, he enters a plane beneath consciousness. He works the body all the time, he breathes, he moves the body, per-

haps, in his sleep, without any accompanying feeling of ego; he is unconscious, and when he returns from his sleep, he is the same man who went into it. The sum-total of the knowledge which he had before he went into the sleep remains the same; it has not increased at all. No enlightenment has come. But if a man goes into *Samadhi,* if he goes into it a fool, he comes out a sage. . . . As this illumination with which a man comes back from *Samadhi* is much higher than can be got from unconsciousness, or much higher than can be got by reasoning in a conscious state, it must therefore be superconsciousness, and *Samadhi* is called the superconscious state.

This, in short, is the idea of *Samadhi.* What is its application? The application is here. The field of reason, or of the conscious workings of the mind, is narrow and limited. There is a little circle within which human reason will have to move. It cannot go beyond it. Every attempt to go beyond is impossible, yet it is beyond this circle of reason that lies all that humanity holds most dear. All these questions, whether there is an immortal soul, whether there is a God, whether there is any supreme intelligence guiding this universe, are beyond the field of reason. Reason can never answer these questions. What does reason say? It says, "I am agnostic; I do not know either yea or nay." Yet these questions are so important to us. Without a proper answer to them, human life will be impossible. All our ethical theories, all our moral attitudes, all that is good and great in human nature, has been moulded upon answers that have come from beyond that circle. If the universe is only a "fortuitous combination of atoms," then why should I do good to another? Why should there be mercy, justice or fellow feeling? . . . Why should we be unselfish? Where is the necessity, the force, the power, of my being unselfish? Why

should I be? You call yourself a rational man, a utilitarian, but if you do not show me a reason, I say you are irrational. . . . What is the reason? The utilitarian can never give it. The answer is that this world is only one drop in an infinite ocean, one link in an infinite chain. Where did those that preached unselfishness, and taught it to the human race, get this idea? We know it is not instinctive; the animals which have instinct do not know it. Neither is it reason; reason does not know anything about these ideas. Whence did they come? . . .

To get any reason out of this mass of incongruity we call human life we have to transcend our reason, but we must do it scientifically, slowly, by regular practice, and we must cast off all superstition. We must take it up just as any other science; reason we must have to lay our foundation, we must follow reason as far as it leads, and when reason fails, reason itself will show us the way to the highest plane. . . .

All the different steps in Yoga are intended to bring us scientifically to the superconscious state, or *Samadhi*. . . . When the mind has been trained to remain fixed on a certain internal or external location, there comes to it the power of, as it were, flowing in an unbroken current towards that point. This state is called *Dhyana*. When this power of *Dhyana* has been so much intensified as to be able to reject the external part of perception, and remain meditating only on the internal part—the meaning—that state is called *Samadhi*. . . .

This meditative state is the highest state of existence. So long as there is desire, no real happiness can come. It is only the contemplative, witness-like study of objects that brings to us real enjoyment and happiness. The animal has its happiness in the senses, the man in his intellect, and the God, in spiritual contemplation. It is only to the soul that

has attained to this contemplative state that the world has really become beautiful. To him who desires nothing, and does not mix himself up with them, the manifold changes of nature are one panorama of beauty and sublimity. . . .

When, by the previous preparations, the mind becomes strong and controlled, and the power of finer perception has been attained, then the mind should be employed in meditation. This meditation must begin with gross objects and slowly rise to finer, then to finer and finer, until it has become objectless. The mind should first be employed in perceiving the external causes of sensations, then the internal motions, and then the reaction of the mind. When it has succeeded in perceiving the external causes of sensations by themselves, it will acquire the power of perceiving all fine material existence, all fine bodies and forms. When it can succeed in perceiving the motions inside, by themselves, it will gain the control of all mental waves, in itself or in others, even before they have translated themselves into physical forces; and when he will be able to perceive the mental reaction by itself, the Yogi will acquire the knowledge of everything, as every sensible object, and every thought, is the result of this reaction. Then will he have seen, as it were, the very foundations of his mind, and it will be under his perfect control.

Different powers will come to the Yogi, and if he yields to the temptations of any one of these, the road to his further progress will be barred. Such is the evil of running after enjoyments. But if he is strong enough to reject even these miraculous powers, he will attain to the goal of Yoga,—the complete suppression of the waves in the ocean of the mind; then the glory of the soul, untrammelled by the distractions of the mind, or the motions of his body, will shine in its full effulgence. And the Yogi will find himself as he is and as

he always was, the essence of knowledge, the immortal, the all-pervading. . . . Then will all sorrows cease, all miseries vanish; the seeds of action will be burned, and the soul will be free forever.

THE POWER TO THINK

By Sister Devamata

All men possess minds, but few men think. When they have a free moment, they talk. If there is no one to listen, they read aimlessly. But neither talking nor reading is an adequate substitute for thinking. Idle talking squanders the brain power, while scattered reading drugs the thought and plunges it into a dream-world, from which it emerges dazed and unrelated to its surroundings. The mediaeval Italian poet, Petrarch, writes of it thus:

"Always in my hand or hidden in my cloak I carried a book; and thoughts seemed to me to be so much more than things that the passing world—the world of action and achievement—appeared to me to be an unworthy world, and the world of thought to be the true and real world. It will thus be seen that I was young and very unformed."

Excessive greed of books is a sign of mental immaturity. When the mind ripens, it thinks its own thoughts; it does not borrow from others. To evolve an original thought is an achievement which overtops any amount of reading. Books as a stimulant to thought are good; but books used as an escape from thought or as a means of gathering chance information bar our mental growth. An unorganized accumulation of ill-digested knowledge clogs the thinking faculties and hampers their free action.

The mind was not meant to serve as a storage warehouse, dull and static. It was designed for active thinking. It is told of Confucius that he taught his pupils, Truth had four

corners; he, as the teacher, gave them one;—the other three they must find for themselves. There are men who seem to be able to assimilate vast stores of learning and yet retain the ability to think independently; but they are rare exceptions.

The power to think is a gift, and like all talents it can be developed only through intensive practice. We would not expect to paint or to model or to play an instrument without training. Thinking also must be acquired by exercise. Taking the thoughts of others will not help us. Our thoughts are the outgrowth of our whole being, not merely of our brain. They are the product of our individual experience. The thoughts of another hang on us loosely, like an ill-fitting garment. They betray themselves.

The first step toward independent thinking is to learn to direct our own mind. Now, words, sights, sounds, the behaviour of our neighbor, shape our thoughts. They are reactions of the outside world upon us rather than our reaction upon it,—a rebound of the senses, not an inward act of intellection. Wisdom and true knowledge do not come in this way. The Bhagavad-Gita says: "He who is able to withdraw his senses from sense-objects as a tortoise doth his limbs, his wisdom is well-established."

As we give daily exercise to the body, so each day we should set apart fixed times for exercising the mind. Plato claimed that, since thinking was man's supreme gift, he should devote at least five years of his early manhood to the practice and study of abstract thought. This was possible for those who walked with their Master along shaded paths in the garden of Academus at Athens; but for the hurrying men and women of today, the utmost that can be asked is fifteen minutes in the morning and again in the evening.

During these two quarter hours the practice should be to

choose an elevating thought, which makes strong appeal to the mind, analyze it, dismember it, delve into its deeper meaning; then put it together again and apply it. Those who do this cannot fail to gain from their practice a new and illuminating conception of the thought chosen. Also they will have increased their power of reflection, which is the channel through which all true knowledge comes to us.

Intelligent observation of Nature is another helpful practice. The scientist bending over his microscope, or scanning the heavens through his telescope, or studying his test-tube, is alive and alert—the very embodiment of thought. We may lack microscope and test-tube, but we cannot find a better laboratory than the garden, the woodland, the open field or winding lane. Flowers, trees, birds, and the countless living things of forest and meadow are full of suggestions for deeper thinking.

As we think, we are freed from bondage to self and to the world. We care less to read, and even more we care less to talk. The cry is for freedom of speech and freedom of thought; but what will they profit so long as men lack the power to think? The best they can offer is an opinion born of habit or prejudice. They have not thought out into the wider spaces of life and acquired a broader scale of values.

The fault lies with existing educational systems, which concern themselves more with learning than with thinking. There is no doubt an effort being made to discard old routine methods of memorizing and copying, but the attempt is still very young. Children should make up their own arithmetical tables, not merely learn them by heart. Older students should formulate their own equations, find their own demonstrations for geometrical propositions. Even a child of five can be trained in original thought by asking a few

simple questions, which hold the attention and gather interest from day to day.

The mind has no attributes of its own. The use we make of it determines its nature,—whether it be clear or clouded, strong or faltering, sluggish or alert. If we use it wisely and to noble ends, it will become a dynamo of power and carry us to the heights of thought. If we use it lazily and to small ends, it will weaken and fade into ineptitude. It rests with us. Shall we be like the man who hid his talent, or like the man who multiplied his an hundredfold? The art of thinking is one of the rarest of arts. We must strive with all diligence to acquire it, or we must be content to remain always beggars of thought.

AN ANCIENT ADVICE

By Nicholas Roerich

In one of the old Italian manuscripts, possibly of the Fifteenth Century—the first pages and all the decorations of which have been torn out by the "noble" hand of some bibliophile—is related simply the story of how a pupil came to the artist-teacher, Sano di Pietro, for advice regarding his painting.

The Teacher was working over a special order and could not answer the call of his pupil who had independently begun his picture, "Adoration of the Magi," for a small village church in the Siennese district. The Teacher said:

"My dear boy, I have given my word to the Abbot of Montefalcore not to leave my house until I have completed the Coronation of the Holy Virgin, commissioned by him. But, tell me, wherefore are your doubts? I am afraid that you have worked too much with me and are lost before your own work!"

"Revered Teacher," said the pupil, "my picture is com-

plicated and it is difficult for me to coordinate its separate parts. Is it better to paint a dark olive grove against a red rock, at a distance? Are the tree-trunks visible, and how distinct is the outline of the foliage?"

"My dear, paint as is necessary!"

"The mantle of the Virgin is full of a golden design. Would it not be better to break it up into small folds and cover it with a pattern of large squares?"

"Do as is necessary!"

"Revered Teacher, you are too busy with your own resplendent works. I had better be silent until your nearest moment of respite."

"My dear one, I do not expect any respite soon and you must not lose time if your picture has so much still unfinished. I am listening to everything and answer you, although with certain surprise."

"The heads of the warriors which follow the kings are many. Is it necessary to find one line for them or to paint in each head?"

"Do just as you need."

"I have made bushes on the distant fields and intercrossed them with flowing rivers. But I wanted them quite clear cut, as is sometimes seen by the naked eye. I wanted to see the ripples in the water and a vessel on them, and even an oar in the hand of the oarsman. But it is all in the distance."

"Nothing is simpler. Do what is necessary."

"Master, I am frightened. Maybe you will in any case tell me should the crowns of the kings be made convex or only leave the applied gold for the crown?"

"Place the gold where it is necessary."

"I begin to think whether or not to make tufts of wool on lambs, although they are hardly seen, but I remember

what silky soft fleece the lambs have. I want to make them with a fine brush, but in the general picture they are almost unseen."

"Make them as is necessary."

"Master, I do not find any advice for my work in your answers. I know that all *must* be as is necessary. But what is 'necessary'? It is obscure to me."

"Tell me, did Father Giovanni make any stipulation of work for you?"

"Outside of a date, no conditions. He said, 'Benvenuto, paint a good image of the Adoration of the three Magi before the Holy Child, and I will pay thee ten ducats out of the monastery funds.' Then he gave the date for the work and the measurements of the panel. But during the work I had various thoughts, in my desire to create a better image. And so, Master, I came to thee as before, for good advice. Tell me what is the meaning of 'as necessary.' "

" 'Necessary' means all must be as is 'good.' "

"But what means 'good?' "

"Poor, uncomprehending Benvenuto. What did I always speak about to you? What word did I often repeat to you? To make as good as possible means only one thing: *as beautiful.*"

"And 'beautiful?' "

"Benvenuto, go out of this door and to the shoemaker, Gabacuc. Tell him, 'Please hire me to soften leather, because I do not know the meaning of *beautiful.*' But do not come to me any more, and, still better, do not touch your work."

After this story, the manuscript gives some recipes concering the preparation of olive oil and about the use of olive pips. Then there is also a story about a citizen of Pisa, Chirilli Koda, who was buried alive. But the last two narratives do not concern us.

CHINA'S MINISTERS OF BEAUTY

By Sister Daya

(Continued from the May Number)

That the calm, austere, yet profoundly sensitive spirit of the ancient Chinese painters actually came as the result of the flowering of a deeply subjective mental discipline is not merely an assumption, based on the character of the paintings and on our knowledge of conditions in China at that time; it is clearly indicated in the records that have been handed down from the painters themselves, in which they stress the necessity for right psychological conditions as a preparation for creative expression. Among these records, Kuo Hsi's "Introduction to Landscape Painting" stands unique. It is indeed a precious heritage from an age of noble dignity, and though it is but a compilation of art notes jotted down at random by Kuo Hsi's son, Kuo Sze, and put into sequential form by him after his father's death, its charm must be apparent everywhere to artist and layman alike; for few can fail to sense the underflow of its living philosophy, or be impervious to its delightfully Chinese point-of-view, at the same time whimsical and grave, imaginative yet imbued with the soundest commonsense. The very illustrations given invoke before our mental eyes a picture typically Chinese, which we can enter and inhabit. That we may enter and inhabit not merely the picture, but, so far as may be, the mind of the one who conceived it, we give with some omissions the incomplete translation which we possess.

Those who are familiar with Lao Tze's Tao Teh King will recall the verse in which he speaks of the young and new and tender as being the concomitants of life, while the rigid, unbending and strong he refers to as the concomitants of death. I think it is to this verse that Kuo Hsi refers when

he says that he was ever inclined to throw away what is old and take in what is new. TAO gives to us a concept of life as flowing, yet also as eternally still,—a paradox that the Eastern artist grasped and applied, and which Kuo Hsi had apparently assimilated. His essay follows.

INTRODUCTION TO LANDSCAPE PAINTING

Kuo Hsi of Sung on the High Taste of Forest and Fountain. Collected by his son (from fragmentary notes), Commander in Chief of Infantry, Kuo Sze.

PREFACE

The sage said: "It is well to aim at the moral principle [TAO], to derive authority in everything from virtue, to regulate our conduct by benevolence, and to let the mind play in the sphere of art."

I, Kuo Sze, from boyhood followed my revered friend [meaning his father Kuo Hsi], traveling with him among streams and rocks, and every time he painted the actual scene, he said, "In landscape painting there are principles and thoughts that cannot be expressed roughly or hurriedly." And so every time he said any word to be remembered, I took up my pen and recorded it. The records having now amounted to several hundreds without any loss, I publish them for the sake of those who love art.

It is to be added that my father, while young, studied under a Taoist master, in consequence of which he was ever inclined to throw away what is old, and take in what is new. He was thus a man who moved outside the regular region [meaning the Confucian world of strict and regular forms]; and there having been no painters among his ancestors, what was in him was derived purely through intuition. During the whole career of his life, he wandered about in the sphere of art, and thereby acquired its fame. In his private char-

acter he was virtuous in conduct, pious to parents, benevolent to friends, and deeply so. Thus it is incumbent upon his descendants to bring these things to light.

END OF PREFACE

[A little later, Kuo Sze, in explaining some terms used by his father, writes again in his own person thus charmingly:]

Some years ago I saw my father painting one or two pictures, which he left unfinished for ten or twenty days at a time, probably because he was not disposed toward them. That is what he called the idle mind of a painter. Again, when he was much disposed toward his painting, he forgot everything else. But even if a single thing then disturbed him, he left the painting unfinished, and would not look at it. Such was what he meant by a dark mind.

Whenever he began to paint, he opened all the windows, cleared his desk, burned incense on the right and left, washed his hands and cleansed his ink-stone; and by doing so, his spirit was calmed and his thought composed. Not until then did he begin to paint.

To sketch out the picture once, and then try to reconstruct it, to increase some quality or portion, and then to wet it again, to do twice what could have been done once, to do thrice what could have been done twice, to trace again every curve, and thus be always trying to improve, but finally ending in dissatisfaction,—such is what he meant by painting with a proud heart.

THE VERY WORDS OF KUO HSI

Wherein do the reasons lie of virtuous men so loving landscape? It is for these facts: That a landscape is a place where vegetation is nourished on high and low ground, where springs and rocks play about like children, a place which woodsmen and retiring scholars usually frequent,

where monkeys have their tribe, and storks fly, crying aloud their joy in the scene. The noisiness of the dusty world, and the locked-in-ness of human habitations, are what human nature at its highest perpetually hates; while, on the contrary, haze, mist and the Sennin sages [meaning, poetically, the old spirits that are supposed to haunt mountains] are what human nature seeks, and yet can but rarely see. But if there be great peace and flourishing days in which the minds, both of the ruler and subject, are high and joyous, and in which it is possible for one to regulate his conduct with purity, righteousness and honesty during his whole career, then what need or motive could there be for the benevolent man to hold aloof, shun the world, and fly from the common place. Rather would he join the people in the general jubilee. But since this is not the case, what a delightful thing it is for lovers of forests and fountains and the friends of mist and haze, to have at hand a landscape painted by a skilful artist! To have therein the opportunity of seeing water and peaks, of hearing the cry of monkeys and the song of birds, without going from the room! In this way, a thing, though done by another's will, completely satisfies one's own mind. This is the fundamental idea of the world-wide respect for landscape painting; so that if the artist, without realizing this idea, paints landscape with a careless heart, it is like throwing earth upon a deity, or casting impurities into the clear wind.

In painting landscape, it should be remembered that each has its own form; so that if a sublime picture fills the whole expanse of a large silk ground, there need be nothing superfluous; or, if a small scene is painted on a small ground, there need be nothing wanting. The critics of landscape usually give to the scene represented such qualities as are suitable to walk in, suitable or pleasant to look at, suitable to ramble

in, and suitable to live in. The landscape that is supreme combines the four qualities. However, if it should be that only two can be given, then that which is suitable to live in and to ramble in are preferable.

Man, in studying painting, is under the same condition as in studying writing. If, as in writing, one makes Sho-o or Gurinku his master, then, at most, his work can resemble that master and be nothing more. So also is it in painting. A great thorough-going man does not confine himself to one school, but combines many schools, as well as reads and listens to the arguments and thoughts of many predecessors, thereby slowly forming a style of his own; and then for the first time he can say that he has become an artist. But nowadays men of Sei and Ro follow such men as Yeiku only; and men of Kwankio follow Hankwan only. The very fact of following one master only is a thing to be discouraged; added to which is the fact that Sei, Ro and Kwankio are confined regions and not the whole empire. Specialists have from the oldest times been regarded as victims of a disease, and as men who refuse to listen to what others say.

He that wishes to study flower-painting should put one blossoming plant in an earthen pot, and look upon it from above. He that studies bamboo painting should take one bamboo branch and cast its shadow on a moonlight night upon a white wall.

ON CLOUD PAINTING

The aspect of clouds in landscape is different according to the four seasons. In spring they are mild and calm; in summer thick and brooding; in autumn they are rare and thin; in winter dark and grey. And in painting clouds, if one does not try to carve out every minute detail, but will paint only the great total aspect of the thing, then the forms and proportions of the clouds will *live*. Among clouds there

are returning-home clouds. There are strong winds and light clouds; a great wind has the force of blowing sand, and a light cloud may have the form of a thin cloth stretched out.

ON MOUNTAINS AND WATER

Mountains make water their blood, grass and trees their hair, mist and cloud their divine coloring. Water makes of mountains its face, of houses and fences its eyebrows and its eyes and of fishermen its soul. Therefore mountains are more beautiful by having water, bright and pleasant by having houses and fences, open and free by having fishermen. Such are the combinations of mountains and water.

A mountain is a mighty thing, hence its shape ought to be high and steep, freely disposing itself like a man at ease, or standing up with grandeur, or crouching down like a farmer's boy; or as having a cover over it, a chariot below it, seeming as if it had some support in front to lean over, or something behind to lean against, or as gazing down upon something below; such are some of the great form-aspects of mountains.

Water is a living thing, hence its form is deep and quiet, or soft and smooth, or broad and ocean-like, or thick like flesh, or circling like wings, or jetting and slender, rapid and violent like an arrow, rich as a fountain flowing afar, making waterfalls, weaving mists upon the sky, or running down into the earth where fishermen lie at ease. Grass and trees on the river banks look joyous, and are like beautiful ladies under veils of mists and cloud, or sometimes bright and gleaming as the sun shines down the valley. Such are the living aspects of water.

MOUNTAINS

Mountains are some high and some low. High mountains have the blood-range [an old Chinese expression] lower

down; its shoulder and thigh broad and expanded; its base and leg vigorous and thick. Rugged mountains, round-backed mountains and flattened mountains together always appear forcible, grasping and embracing one another with their bright continuous girdle. Such are the forms of high mountains, and these are not solitary. Lower mountains have their blood-circulation higher up, with short stunted neck and broadened base.

If a mountain has no mist or cloud, it is like springtime without flower or grass. Mountains without cloud are not fine; without water not beautiful [the word beautiful used here is that applied generally to women]; without a road or path, not habitable; without forests, not alive. If a mountain is not deep and far, it is shallow, and without being flat and far, it is near, and without being high and far, it is low.

In mountains there are three sorts of distance, that of looking up to the top from below is height, that of looking toward its back from its front is called depth, and that of looking from near mountains to distant mountains is called the distance of flatness. The force of the distance of height is pushing up; the idea of the distance of depth is being thick and folded; the idea of the distance of flatness is that of mildness in grandeur, as of the ocean.

In mountains there are three largenesses. A mountain is larger than a tree and a tree is larger than a man. A mountain at a certain distance, but not farther, becomes in size like a tree; the tree at that certain distance becomes the size of a man. Thus the mountain and the tree are not large. The comparing of a tree with man begins with its leaves, and the comparing of man to a large tree begins with the head. A certain number of tree leaves should match with a man's head, and the man's head is composed of a certain number of leaves. Thus the largeness and smallness of man,

tree and mountain, all go out of this middle ratio. These are the three sorts of largenesses.

A mountain, though intended to be tall, cannot be tall if every part of it is shown. It can be tall only when mist and haze are made to circle its loins. Water, though intended to be distant, can be distant only through visibility and invisibility interrupting its course. Nay, a mountain shown in all parts is not only without beauty, but is awkward, like the picture of a rice-mortar; and water shown in every part is not only without the grace of distance, but resembles a picture of a serpent.

Though valleys, mountains, forests and trees in the foreground of a picture bend and curve as if coming forward, as if to add to the wonder of the scene, and though it is done with great detail, it will not tire the beholder, for the human eye has power to grasp all detail that is near. And, in other parts, though they have flat and far expanse, folded peaks that are continuous like ocean waves receding off into distance, the beholder will not weary of the distance, because the human eye is capable of seeing far and wide.

ON ROCKS

Rocks are the bones of heaven and earth; and, being noble, are hard and deep. Dews and water are the blood of heaven and earth; and that which freely flows and circulates is noble blood. . . . Rocks and forests [in paintings] should preeminently have reason. One big pine is to be painted first, called the master patriarch, and then miscellaneous trees, grass, creepers, pebbles and rocks, as subjects under his supervision, as a wise man over petty men. . . . If a sandy mountain have forests that are thick and low, the rock-bearing mountain must have them lean and high. . . . Great rocks and pines should always be painted beside great banks or table-lands, and never beside shallow, flat water. Some

water runs in streams, some rocks are level at the top, or again, waterfalls fly about among tree-tops, and strangely shaped rocks crouch beside the path.

TO BE CONCLUDED

THE VISIONARY MAID

From the Life of Jalalad-Din-Rumi

One of Jalal's disciples possessed a slave girl of Roman origin whom Jalal had named Siddiqa (after Mohammed's virgin wife A'isha). Occasionally she had miraculous visions. She used to see aureolas of heavenly light, green, red and black. Various of the angels used to visit her, and souls of the departed.

Her master was vexed at her being so favored above himself. Once he was visited by Jalal and expressed his chagrin to him on the subject. Jalal replied: "True! There is a heavenly light resides in the pupils of some eyes. These occasionally mislead a few with visions of beauteous form, with which they fall in love. Others they preserve in chastity, and lead them to their adored Maker. Others, again, they may lead to take delight in exterior objects, so as to cast their eyes on every pretty face they see, while the wife at home is curtained away from her husband. Thus, whenever God opens a way to anyone, appearing to him and showing him glimpses of the hidden world, he is apt to become entranced therewith, and to lose all power of further progress, saying to himself: 'How greatly in favor am I!' Others, in short, use every endeavor, but nothing is vouchsafed to them in visions, until they be favored with a special sight of God Himself, and they be admitted to a near approach unto Him."

The girl's master was comforted and bowed to his teacher, whose disciples then broke out into a holy service of psalmody and dancing.

REPORT

Since his return from India, Swami Paramananda has devoted most of his time to the east, particularly to the Vedanta Centre of Boston, where he has conducted two regular Sunday Services, morning and evening, as well as the Tuesday evening Class. He has also held a private Thursday evening Meditation Class for members.

A special reception was held recently at the Boston Vedanta Centre, in commemoration of its twenty-sixth Anniversary. A large number of friends were present and it was an occasion full of warmth and enthusiasm. The reason for the late date of the celebration was Swami Paramananda's absence from the United States. Swami Akhilananda, head of the Providence Vedanta Society, who came especially from Providence with many of his friends, made a fitting Address, and Srimati Gayatri Devi, who has also recently returned from India, related some of her experiences in her Mother-land and told how India appeared to her after an absence of nine years. Several musician friends of the Centre gave their generous contribution to the enjoyment of the evening. Among them were Mrs. Jane Colpitt and Mrs. Robert Paul, pianists, Miss Florence Colby, 'cellist, Mr. Neelie Shastri, a young Hindu student who is a gifted player on the flute; and a violinist of distinction, Mrs. Gerta Urry, a pupil of Mr. Einar Hansen of the Boston Symphony.

Swami Akhilananda conducted two Sunday morning Services at the Boston Vedanta Centre, on May 12th and 19th. Both Services were largely attended and the congregation greatly enjoyed the Swami's able exposition of Vedanta, his lecture on "Subconscious Mind" being especially appreciated.

Soon after Swami Paramananda's arrival in America, he went on a lecture tour to Cincinnati and Louisville. He

was received with great warmth of spirit by the Louisville Truth Centre, and on Sunday, June 9th, delivered two lectures there on the subjects: "Truth is One," and "Our Mental Attitude." The next day, he spoke on "Karma and Divine Grace," and "How to Renew Ourselves," and Tuesday morning, by special request, on "What is Yoga." On his return trip to Boston, he stopped again at Cincinnati where he gave a talk on "Meditation and Practical Application of Yoga" to an intimate group of friends.

ANANDA-ASHRAMA, CALIFORNIA

During Swami Paramananda's absence, the work of Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, California, has been carried on faithfully by the Sisters and Brothers of the Ashrama. Sunday Services and Thursday evening Classes are conducted by Sister Achala who, through her selective readings and devoutness of spirit, has succeeded in making every lesson a very helpful one. Many visitors come to the Ashrama during the week and a number of people have derived great benefit from a stay at the Ashrama Guest House. To behold the Ashrama today one would not dream of the devastation which overtook it not two years ago. It is now a dream of beauty and fragrance, while word comes that the bees have produced this season nearly two tons of honey. So popular has this honey become that it is in demand far and wide. Recently a large order came from distant Penang.

COHASSET ASHRAMA

Cohasset Ashrama was opened for the season on June 16th. The following Saturday, the Sixth Anniversary of its establishment was observed. It seemed more of a bower than ever, a real woodland retreat, to the friends who gathered for the event. Throughout the summer months, every Saturday afternoon, there will be a Service under the pines in what the Swami calls his "Nature's Sanctuary."

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VOL. XXIV NUMBER 7

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

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East



JULY, 1935

The Quest of the Absolute

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Message of the East

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

By Swami Paramananda

WE are living in an age of great power and immense possibilities. Science has risen to a marvelous height of discovery and invention. Vast resources are at man's command. But in spite of all our material advancement and potentialities, we cannot help but wonder—are we on the path of progress? Are we marching toward the upward goal?

Great powers given to man can be of incalculable benefit and also can have opposite effect upon the world. So should we not pause and reflect and pray humbly to the Giver of all good that He may help us to maintain our balance, our sense of proportion, that the Divine instinct in us may not become over-shadowed by lust and greed, hate and avarice, and defeat our whole purpose?

The more we study the question of peace, the more we become convinced there is only one way to find it, and that is the spiritual way. Our material preparations, our shrewdness, cunning and clever diplomacy—these will never make for permanent peace. The spiritual way is the only sure way to find peace and hold it.

We who have no great power or position in world affairs can only withdraw within our inner sanctuary and pray to the Supreme with sincere yearning and wholeness of spirit for the peace and protection of our fellow-man.

May He help us and shield us in our hour of need.—
Amen.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

The spirit within being awakened, the next step is the realization of the Universal Spirit. It is Spirit that can realize Spirit. —*Sri Ramakrishna*

When, O Fountains of Eternity, will you absorb my Spirit, absorb my marvelous Spirit? —*Nietzsche.*

Thestorides, full many things there are that mortals cannot sound: but there is nothing more unfathomable than the heart of man. —*Epigram of Homer.*

If we did not know half as much, and were more like children, and had but a brotherly mind and good will towards one another, and lived like children of one mother, and as branches of one tree, taking our sap all from one root, we should be far more holy than we are. —*Jacob Boehme.*

I will find
Where Truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the Centre! —*Shakespeare.*

The ends of heaven; like a garment will I fold them round me, consuming what must be consumed; then in power and majesty I will walk forth thro' those wide fields of endless Eternity, a God and not a man, a Conqueror in triumphant glory, and all the Sons of Everlasting shall bow down at my feet. —*Blake.*

That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, though He be not far off from every one of us, for in Him we live, and move, and have our being.
—*The Acts.*

In Thy Will, the object of my search, have I found rest.
—*From the "Hymns of Hermes."*

By fire we perceive the Unseen Fire. —*Empedocles.*

THE QUEST OF THE ABSOLUTE

By Swami Paramananda

The search for an Absolute Being is not of today or of yesterday. It seems to have its origin in man's very existence. As far back as we can look in the nature of man, there has always been an intense yearning to find something that does not change, does not disappoint, does not die,—something that transcends the shifting, the ever-changing, the ephemeral and the transitory. His quest is for an Absolute Being, a Reality that is always real, a life that is always living, in which death does not share, a beauty that is without any shadow of ugliness. Poets, philosophers, mystics and transcendentalists have given their all for this quest. They are not content merely to accept abstract realism; their urge has always been to know, to feel, to become. This has given rise to the very best in the realm of thought. Plato in his "Symposium" conceives the idea of an absolute Beauty:

"Contemplating the universal Beauty, he would no longer unworthily enslave himself to the attractions of one form of love, but would turn toward the wide ocean of Beauty, and from the sight of the lovely and majestic forms which it contains, would abundantly bring forth many fair and noble thoughts in boundless love of wisdom, until, strengthened and confirmed, he would at length steadily contemplate one science, which is the science of Universal Beauty.

"He who has been instructed thus far in Love, by seeing the beautiful in due order and succession, now arriving at the end of all that concerns Love, on a sudden sees a beauty wondrous in its nature. And for this, O Socrates, all the former labors were endured.

"It is eternal, unproduced, indestructible, waxing and waning not; not, like other things, beautiful in one way, unbeautiful in another; at one time beautiful and at another not;

beautiful in this relation, unlovely in that; nor can this supreme beauty be figured to the imagination like a beautiful face or hands, or speech or knowledge. Nor does it subsist in any other being that lives or is, either in earth or heaven; but it is Beauty absolute, separate, simple and everlasting."

My purpose in citing some of these mystical utterances is to show you how deeply rooted is this quest of the Absolute. It is not Plato alone who conceived this idea of the Absolute, but whoever attains his Ideal comes to this selfsame conception of absolute Wisdom, absolute Love and absolute Life.

The Indo-Aryan sages have contributed a very vital thought toward this system of philosophy. They have given man the conception of an Absolute Being with three different aspects. It is called in Sanskrit, "Sat-Chit-Anandam," which literally means Existence, Wisdom and Bliss absolute, a Being that is Existence without the shadow of non-existence; a Being which represents Wisdom without non-wisdom, and a Being which radiates Bliss without shadow of sadness, sorrow or death. The combination of these attributes is the Indo-Aryan conception of an Absolute Being. According to their idealism, no one can have fulness of life without realization of the Absolute.

The Upanishads definitely and dramatically proclaim the power of this vision. When man crosses over the boundary line of Maya, deception and delusion, and finds this absolute Reality, "If blind he ceases to be blind, if deaf he ceases to be deaf, if lame, he no longer is lame." After the attainment of this vision, he becomes vital, real—nay, his entity is no longer separate from the Brahman, the Absolute, but he is one with It.

What a gigantic thought, what a tremendous flight of idealism! What will not man give to become the possessor of such Reality? Tennyson, in a moment of great exaltation,

burst forth, "Come, my friends, it is not too late to seek a newer world!" It is certainly a new and different world that men of vision find. That is why they are aptly called transcendentalists. They indeed transcend the limiting adjuncts of this sense-bound world and it is their contribution of thought and higher ideals that makes our earthly existence endurable. If we did not have hope of a better life, promise of something more abiding than the things we see before our eyes, how could we go on in the face of so many apparent contradictions and confusions? The philosophers and seers realize with definiteness that current of life which runs deep and steady, without fluctuating or moving, and which, unlike the surface waters, knows neither ebb nor flow. Lacking this insight into the deeper realm of life, we cannot explain to ourselves or others all the visible differences and divisions.

In this quest of the Absolute we must find our way out of the multiple forms of existence into the one abiding Existence. This process of finding the One in many is what the philosophers call the quickening of the highest instincts of man. In the beginning, we may follow the processes of discrimination and eliminate through the process of higher logic and rationalism the things of lesser value for that which is greater, that which has abiding qualities. The Indo-Aryans call this *Viveka,* discrimination, and *Neti, Neti*—not this, not this.

We cannot be satisfied with the outer glamour of created things. We want to find that which is the cause of life, cause of beauty, cause of being. It is not that we ever destroy or denounce the manifold forms of existence, but we succeed in bringing these varied appearances into a unit, so that there is no possibility of chaos or confusion.

Man builds up great empires which fall into decay. Na-

ture builds up great masses of earth only to have them swallowed up by the ocean. While we were on our trip around the world this time, the captain called us to see an island thrown up above the surface of the water by a volcanic eruption. One day there is the trackless desert of the ocean over which great steamships may travel in safety, then suddenly the rhythm is broken as steam and land appear out of the body of the ocean and an island is formed, a menace to navigation until its existence is known and charted. It is against such unexpected happenings as these that man wants to be protected. He wants the peace, the rest, the security that comes from knowing he is incapable of destruction, that he is of that substance which is changeless and eternal.

Today I am giving you both a new and an old thought, the best thought of the ancients and the best thought of the moderns blended together. Man does not want to die. He wants to exist eternally. I do not think there is any one of you who does not desire to live if right conditions prevail. When men have a sense of failure in all they have undertaken, when they undergo great losses, they often feel that suicide will be a way out of their difficulties and miseries. Do you think anyone ever wanted to throw away his life because he had reached fulfillment? It is rather because he has found material things unabiding and their pursuit unsatisfying. He feels baffled by a sense of futility and thinks by putting an end to the physical body he can overcome all his troubles.

I have already given you the three aspects of the Absolute, Sat-Chit-Anandam, the sum total of all that man is seeking. These three attributes of the Supreme Being fulfill all the desires of man. What I am giving you today has nothing to do with Christianity, Hinduism, or any religious dogma. I am dealing with something of far greater import, the vital principles of the human soul. To live, to be happy and to

find fulfillment is the natural deep yearning of all human souls, and the answer must come. Man through this intense yearning has succeeded in creating a Christ, a Buddha.

Why did Lord Buddha renounce his kingdom? Sometimes a man who has all manner of material resources feels he has no need of God, but here was one who possessed palaces, wealth and all the pleasures this world can give yet renounced them all because he understood their perishable nature and their inability to bring lasting happiness. I have heard a man say, "I have a comfortable home, a wife and children, and all the means to make me happy. Why, then, should I try to find God?" Such reasoning is only a postponement of the quest of the Absolute which every individual must undertake sooner or later in order to satisfy the deep yearning of the soul.

We are so constituted that we constantly border closely upon the facts of Reality. A very poor man feels he will somewhere find an inexhaustible treasure with which to satisfy his needs and cravings. The cripple or the blind man hopes for a miracle which will cure his infirmities. However dimly, man has a sense of the Divinity that dwells within him.

Meditation on absolute Beauty, absolute Perfection will even benefit one physically, but if we stop there, we are merely stalling our real progress. Meditation on absolute Beauty can enrich life beyond power to measure. Have you not sometimes seen a face so transcendently, benignly beautiful that you cannot turn your eyes away from it? If you have not, I will not argue about it, for I myself have seen such a countenance. You find that in the face of an exalted soul, the natural self expresses. I used to be teased greatly because of my fondness for the companionship of old people, full of mellowness, sweetness and ripeness. In India, we

expect old people to live close to the kingdom of the Absolute and we are eager for their teaching.

What we meditate upon, that we become. That is why poets, philosophers, seers and mystics make meditation on some aspect of the Supreme Being the foundation of their spiritual practices. They meditate upon absolute Truth, absolute Beauty, absolute Perfection, One without a second. Whether you call it God, Truth, or whatever—you cannot have more than one Truth, one Absolute Being. The secret of successful spiritual life is to fill the consciousness so full of the Absolute Being that there is no room for anything else.

Do any of you connect the Supreme Being with disease, death or affliction? Do you think of Deity in connection with Protestantism or Catholicism? What is your concept of God? Is it personal or impersonal? When you think of Him do you not feel you are coming to a pure source where change, adulteration and decay are impossible conceptions? In thinking of Him in this way, you cannot fail to take on some of the attributes with which you clothe Him, if you live in rhythm, consciously taking that Being as a partner in all you think, or say, or do.

What do you do with a partner? Do you not share everything equally with him? In taking that Great Being as a partner, we rid ourselves of change, disease and affliction. You tell Him, "I cannot do without You; two together can accomplish much more than one." Suppose you feel, I am too old to do things myself, I will throw the whole burden on Him Who is my partner. You will find as you associate daily with that Divine Companion, you will become revived, rejuvenated. Things you use outwardly for rejuvenation are not lasting; they do not go far. But through association with that One Who is eternal and unchanging, you will take on

His attributes, and your countenance will become shining, as the inner beauty of spirit shines through it. Such transformations cost nothing, but they do demand your entire devotion. It is not just that some people are destined to manifest this. All carry it, but it must be unfolded. A flower must unfold before it can scatter its fragrance. It does nothing to attract, yet bees are drawn toward its sweetness as though by a magnetic force. So it is with us: we are drawn and held by a holy presence, by one who manifests spiritual radiance.

We live too much on the surface; we are entirely too superficial. As a result, there comes a time when we feel that we are dried up, that we have nothing to nourish our inner being. Then it is that we begin our quest for the Absolute, and once catching even a glimpse of It, we know that nothing else matters; no other happiness seems worth while. In this quest, however, we must have purity of mind and consciousness; we must not indulge in hate, anger, greed or lust. In such oceans man drowns, but in the Ocean of Absolute Being he finds Existence without beginning and without end.

The Absolute is unconditioned. It is not like a table or tree. It is everywhere, within and without you. How do great souls find contact with that Infinite One? They do not analyze. He is found where all things are not. And he who finds Him finds that which is unchanging—bliss supreme. He no longer feels happiness or unhappiness, heat or cold, pleasure or pain. He no longer tries to provide for emergencies. His mind is fixed on that One, and emergencies take care of themselves.

We often call this a practical age, but let it be practical in every department. Let us make it a practical age for spiritual unfoldment. Only those whose hearts are full of

the bliss of God can help others. We must learn to live very close to our Ideal. Only thus can we bring our Ideal down into our consciousness and elevate ourselves through it.

"Thou art the Pole Star of my life—
I shall no more lose my way!
In this sea of life, wheree'er I go
Thou art ever present."

Ideals are like the stars. You will not succeed in touching them with your hands but like the sea-faring man on the desert of waters, you use them as guides and follow them until you reach your destination. Science has done its best to draw the stars close to us. It has also sought to find out of what chemical elements they are composed. The sea-faring man is not interested in their construction but in their constancy. He takes the Pole Star as his guide, knowing it is fixed, constant, and that it will not fail to lead him aright. Even a dying man hopes something will happen, something will save him. Is not his hope a dim turning to the Pole Star within?

It is interesting to note that those who are seized with a passion for the Absolute cannot be casual in their quest. They forget the body and bodily comforts; they turn their backs on all human interests and plunge so completely into It that there is no turning away from It. We see this vividly in the life of Swami Vivekananda and that of his Master, Sri Ramakrishna. There were times in their spiritual experiences when they were completely oblivious of their physical being. Thought of food and drink, sleep and rest, never occurred to them, and because of this, someone always had to look after them. Swami Vivekananda in his great search for the Absolute sometimes went into remote heights of the Himalayas. He was at times almost at the point of death

from starvation when some unforeseen circumstance would preserve him in the flesh.

The reason I am giving you these portrayals is to show you that when this quest for the Absolute is real, it rouses in us a different kind of strength, a different kind of resolution and tenacity. It cannot be discouraged by earthly obstacles, for man has within himself the spark of the Infinite Absolute and, as he goes on in his quest, that which is dormant becomes quickened through thought, meditation and sincere feeling. And with the waking of his inner life, the finite, the struggling, the blundering man, so full of imperfections, suddenly assumes a new role, as if he had discarded his old garb and had put on a new, beautiful and unearthly garment.

Such is the transforming touch of the Absolute. Like the philosopher's stone of the parable, it changes him completely. He is no longer earthy, though he still dwells in the flesh. His vital thoughts, his aspirations, and his realization make him a changed being, and as he becomes more and more of God, more and more of Truth, he thinks more and more of unchanging Reality and less and less of the visible phenomenal world. How much we need this type of humanity who can in a definite way prove to us the beauty of God, the truth of immortality, and the fulness of existence. It is not the letter that feeds the souls of men, it is the tangible manifestation of practical idealists which brings before us, beyond a shadow of doubt, that no matter how imperfect our personal lives may seem, if we persist, sincerely, devoting ourselves to this great quest, our endeavors will not be in vain—we shall find our fulfillment.

. . . Spirit of Beauty, that dost consecrate with thine own hues all thou dost shine upon. —*Shelley.*

The eternal voyage of the adventurous soul.—*Underhill.*

THE POWER OF MUSIC

By Sister Devamata

Man's ultimate feelings are wordless. They elude language. Like curling smoke, they are too subtle to be shaped and fashioned. Color is too concrete, poetry too defined, to serve as a medium of their expression. One art alone is adequate;—that is music.

The German poet, Heinrich Heine, asks the question: "What is music?"; and he gives his own answer in these words: "Like a twilight mediator it hovers between spirit and matter, related to both, yet differing from both. It is spirit, but spirit subject to the measurement of time; it is matter, but matter that can dispense with space."

Music has form, no doubt; the form of note, phrase and rhythm, but emotionally it is formless. It does not present a fixed and rigid picture which all must see alike. It is too fluid and evasive even to impose the thought of the composer; rather does it reflect the mood of the listener. There are certain musical modes and rhythms which induce certain moods, but they are more persuasive than insistent. They leave the one who hears free to picture what he will.

Music reveals man's loftier emotions to himself. This does not apply to all music, however. The ultra-modern school is too mental, too self-conscious, to suggest or awaken higher feelings. Its works seem born more of calculation than of inspiration. Like words in a dictionary, groups of notes follow one another without conveying either idea or mood. It cannot be denied that this type of music makes appeal to a large class of minds, but it is to those who care for intellect more than for spirit. When one turns to Bach, Beethoven, or Brahms, one realizes the difference.

It is not enough for music to be merely interesting, it has a deeper mission. It must stir the soul. When it does this,

it makes vast audiences think and feel and breathe as one person;—it lifts great congregations to heights of united fervor through hymn and anthem. Confucius, it is said, began his teaching always by playing softly on a stringed instrument; and he declared that music brought the mind in right accord with the will of Heaven. The Supreme Ruler must, I believe, lend a readier ear to worship that reaches him in melody and rhythm. A religious service without these seems to lack unity and the power to mount upward.

Music is a fundamental element in human life. Primitive man chanting an incantation as he circles the fire, a choir of voices intoning a Gregorian chant, the folk-song of the peasant in the field, all are expressions of the primary impulse to give utterance to feeling in rhythmic sound. The first mother of men in cave or forest must have crooned her child to sleep at nightfall, and wailed a lament if death snatched it away.

Richard Wagner brought into play a profound truth when he gave to each of his characters a *leit-motif* or special musical phrase, which, following the character through the drama, interprets his thoughts and feelings, his triumphs and his defeats. Every life also has its *leit-motif,* or personal theme, sounding through its sleeping and waking; now sombre, now gay; now fast, now slow. How may we discover this theme of life? By inward seeking and silent listening—the listening that is meditation. We may not hear it in notes or cadence, but if we catch its time-beat and live in harmony with its measure, we shall find ourselves in rhythm with all created things. The great symphony of the universe is but the weaving together of these countless individual melodies, and a grave responsibility rests with each one of us not to mar its beauty by discordant note or broken rhythm.

All Nature is full of song. The carolling of birds, the hum

and whir of insects, the cries of the jungle, the chant of the wind, the gurgling of many waters—these and endless other sounds make up the song of earth. The planets and stars of heaven also sing, but their song is too mighty for human ear to perceive. Wherever there is motion, there is sound; wherever there is sound, there is cadence. Even the railway train or the beat of hurrying feet on the pavement outside our window has its measure and its melody. When we learn to discern this song of created things, sound for us ceases to be noise and becomes tuneful. It disturbs us no longer, rather we find pleasure in it.

To exert power, music need not be purely classical. The deeper forms of tonal expression,—religious music and the works of the master-composers, exercise undoubtedly a stronger, more enduring influence on the hearts of men; but the lighter forms also have their place. The tango, the waltz, the foxtrot, the popular song, the musical comedy, even the more restrained forms of jazz, play their part in helping men to live and move in united rhythm. Whatever is born of the heart as well as of the head, and is the product of inspiration and efficient training, serves as a channel for bettering mankind.

A province which has been scarcely invaded by music, yet which seems peculiarly to belong to it, is that of healing. Personal experience has taught me that acute pain can be transcended by hearing a symphony or some other exalting composition. Why should it not be so? Matter is in constant vibration. When the vibration is disturbed, the rhythm of the body becomes jangled and illness ensues. The regular beat of music restores the troubled vibration and the pain or malady is relieved.

To carry a song in the heart is not enough. It must sing through our words, echo through our thought, give impulse

to our will. Our hands must work in its rhythm, our feet must step to its beat. Our whole life must be a triumphant song. Higher and higher must it rise, louder and louder must it sound, until it is merged in the song of the stars and becomes one with the Song of God.

TRANSCENDENCE

Translated from the Swedish by Anna Johnson

Lift thee, my soul, o'er all that weights thy depth with cold and heavy night!
Lights and shadows—these belong to Earth,
But Earth must vanish and its sorrows end.
Lift thee, my soul, lift thee on shimmering wings, spun of Love, Hope and Faith!
Lift thee to those boundless spaces where,
Freed from thy burdens, soaring joyfully, thou shalt pass into peace.
Lift thee above the clouds, and higher still, above the dazzling orb;
For 'twill lure thee and ensnare thee with its glamorous delights.
Know, past the clouds and far beyond the sun is throned that Only One
Who can give peace unto the soul—true peace.
There Hope and Faith fold weary wings, and there at last Love finds its nest.

Shoreless Infinity! I sink in Thee, the whole.
—*Jacopone da Todi.*

The currents of the Universal Being circulate through me. I am part or particle of God. . . . I am the lover of uncontained and immortal Beauty. —*Emerson.*

THOUGHTS FROM MAIMONIDES

Compiled by Rabbi Beryl D. Cohon

(The world of scholarship, medicine and religion paused on the 30th of March this year to honor the sage Moses ben Maimon, better known as Maimonides, whose 800th birth anniversary was celebrated on that date. Maimonides was eminent in the three lines indicated and holds a pre-eminent place in the history of Judaism. As scholar of the law, he sought to systematize the vast store of Jewish legal tradition; as philosopher, he sought to harmonize the science and philosophy of his time with the religion of the Synagogue; and as outstanding physician, he served as private physician to Saladin. Cordova, Spain, where Maimonides fled for his life because of religious persecutions by a Mohammedan sect, and which in 1492 expelled all the Jews, officially celebrated the 800th anniversary. The following article is from the "Evening Transcript," Boston.)

The foundation of foundations and pillar of the sciences is to know that there is a First Being and that He caused the existence of all beings and all things that exist from heaven and earth and intervening space only exist from the reality of His existence. If it could be supposed that He is non-existent, nothing else could possibly exist; yet if it could be supposed that all the things existing, except Himself, did not exist, He alone would still exist and would not cease because of their non-existence. For all things existing are dependent upon Him, but He (blessed be He) is not dependent upon them, not even any one of them. Therefore His reality is not like the reality of any one of them.

This Being is the God of the world, Lord of the whole earth. He controls the Universe with a power to which there is neither end nor limit, with a power unceasing. For the Universe revolves continuously, and it is impossible that is should revolve without one to cause it to revolve. It is He (blessed be He) Who is the cause of its revolution, without a hand and without a body.

God is One: He is not two or more than two, but One. The oneness of any of the single things existent in the Universe is unlike His Unity. He is not one as a species, since this includes numerous individuals nor one as a body, since

this is divisible into parts and sections; but a Unity which is unique in the world.

When you are alone by yourself, when you are awake on your couch, be careful to meditate in such precious moments on nothing but the intellectual worship of God, viz., to approach Him and to minister before Him in the true manner which I have described to you—not in hollow emotions. This I consider as the highest perfection wise men can attain by the above training.

He who serves God from love occupies himself with the *Torah* and the commandments and walks in the paths of wisdom, not for the sake of any worldly advantage, nor from fear of calamity, nor for the purpose of acquiring good fortune; but he practices truth because it is truth, and the good which is its consequence follows in due course. This standard is exceedingly lofty and not every wise man can attain it. This is the standard which the Patriarch Abraham reached, whom the Holy One (blessed be He) called His friend, because he had served Him only from love. This is the standard which the Holy One (blessed be He) ordained for us through Moses: as it is said, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God." For when a man loves the Lord with that love which is due to Him, he will as a matter of course fulfill all the commandments from love.

You must know that the Merciful One demands the heart, and the criterion is the intention of the heart. Therefore the teachers of truth, our Rabbis, declared, "The pious of the gentiles have a portion in the world to come," if they have attained what is due from them to attain relative to a knowledge of the Creator, and corrected their soul with the virtues. And there is no doubt about the matter that whoever corrects his soul with purity of morals and purity of knowledge in the faith of the Creator will assuredly be

of the children of the world to come. On that account our Rabbis stated, "Even the gentile who occupies himself with the *Torah* of Moses is equal to the High Priest."

Man, before he develops understanding and acquires knowledge, is accounted as a beast. He is only distinguished from the rest of the animal creation by the consciousness that he is a living being possessed of intellect—that is to say, by the consciousness whereby he formulates ideas to his soul. And the supreme idea which he has to formulate to his soul is the Unity of God and all the divine concepts which are associated with that thought. On this account, i.e., on account of the divine intellect with which man has been endowed, he is said to have been made in the form and likeness of the Almighty.

The intellect which emanates from God unto us is the link that joins us to God. You have it in your power to strengthen that bond, if you choose to do so, or to weaken it gradually till it breaks, if you prefer this. It will only become strong when you employ it in the love of God and seek that love; it will be weakened when you direct your thoughts to other things.

It is through the intellect that the human being has the capacity of honoring God.

A man should never cast his intellect behind him; his eyes are in front, not behind.

Let the truth and right by which you are apparently the loser be preferable to you to the falsehood and wrong by which you are apparently the gainer.

When I have a difficult subject before me—when I find the road narrow, and can see no other way of teaching a well-established truth except by pleasing one intelligent man and displeasing ten thousand fools—I prefer to address myself to the one man and to take no notice whatever of the condemnation of the multitude.

CHINA'S MINISTERS OF BEAUTY

By Sister Daya

(Concluded from the June Number, with a continuation of an "Introduction to Landscape Painting," by Kuo Hsi of Sung.)

Thoughts on Painting

The men of the world know only that they use their brush, and therefore they paint; but they do not realize that painting is a difficult thing (with the meaning that it lies below technique in a man's character). A true artist must nourish in his bosom mildness, kindness and magnanimity; also he should possess pleasant thoughts and ideas, such as Ichokushi called "oil-like" thoughts, and be capable of understanding and reconstructing in his own mind the emotions and conditions of other human beings, both in pointedness and obliqueness, and in the "standing-side-by-sideness" of things. Having accomplished this understanding of others, he should let them out unconsciously through the tip of his brush. Ku K'ai-chih of Tsin builded a high-storied pavilion for his studio, that his thought might be more free. For if the thought becomes depressed, melancholy and clogged even upon a single point, how can the artists be able to manufacture from such thought, or to feel the mental characteristics of others? . . . Unless I dwell in a quiet house, seat myself in a retired room with the windows open, table dusted, incense burning, and the ten thousand trivial thoughts crushed out and sunk, I cannot have good feeling for painting, or beautiful taste, and cannot create the "yu" [the mysterious and wonderful]. After having arranged all things about me in their proper order, it is only then that my hand and mind respond to one another and move about with perfect freedom. . . .

Always to make one kind of stroke is to have no stroke at all; and to use but one kind of ink is not to know inking. Thus, though the brush and ink are the simplest things in

humanity, yet few know how to manage them with freedom. It is said of Wang Hsi-chih that he was fond of geese, his idea being that the easy and graceful bend of its long neck was like that of a man holding a brush, with free motion of the arm.

With regard to brushes, many kinds may be used,—pointed, rounded, coarse, delicate, needle-like and knife-like. With regard to inking, sometimes light ink is to be used, sometimes deep and dark, sometimes burnt ink, sometimes preserved ink, sometimes receding ink [that is drying rapidly from the ink-stone], sometimes ink mixed with Ts'ing-lu [blue], sometimes dirty ink kept in the closet. Light ink retraced six or seven times over will make deep ink, whose color is wet, not dead and dry. Dark ink and burnt ink are to be used in making boundaries, for unless it is dark the form of pines and rock angles will not be clear. After making sharp outlines, they are to be retraced with blue and ink. Then the forms will seem to come out of mist and dew.

ON POETRY

Here in my leisure days, I read old and new poems, and make extracts of such good stanzas as I feel to be completely expressive of the soul. The ancient sages said that a poem was a painting without visible shape, and a painting is poetry put into form. These words are ever with me. I will now record some of these verses of old masters that I am accustomed to sing.

The End

In spite of the length, of the foregoing and its rather technical appeal, I cannot resist giving a further translation appearing in the work of another Western authority, which is either a slightly different translation of the same matter, or a new portion of the original. It is taken both from Kuo Hsi and from his son and bears strongly on our claim that

the master-creators of China worked with their own minds before they worked with ink and silk, and breathed the very atmosphere of meditation.

From Kuo Hsi.—"In painting any view, whether it be large or small, whether it contain many details or few, the artist must concentrate his powers in order to unify the work. Otherwise it will not bear the peculiar imprint of his soul.

"His whole soul must attend the completion of the task. Otherwise his energies will be dulled. He must have deep seriousness wherewith to dignify his work, else it will lack depth of conception. He must use reverent toil to perfect it, else it will be incomplete.

"If a painter forces himself to work when he feels lazy, his productions will be weak and spiritless, without decision. This is because he cannot concentrate."

Introduction by Kuo Sze.—"I Sze, remember when my father was at work on several pictures, he would often suddenly put them aside and not return to them for ten or twenty days. . . . This was because he felt disinclined. And disinclination what is it but the 'laziness' of which he speaks above? . . . On days when he was going to paint he would seat himself at a clean table, by a bright window, burning incense to right and left. He would choose the finest brushes the most exquisite ink, wash his hands and clean the ink stone, as thought he were expecting a visitor of rank. He waited till his mind was calm and undisturbed, and then began. Is not this what he meant by saying that one should not dash off one's work light-heartedly? 'If I was not seated at leisure in a quiet room, at a bright window, with a clean table before me, with a stick of incense lighted to dissipate the gloom of care, then, even though a fine verse or noble thought was before me, it would not take shape; even though

a subtle feeling or rare mood presented itself, it would not fructify. How then can it be said that the final conception of a painting is easy to reach? When environment is already ripe, when hand and heart correspond, just when one is beginning here and there to find a crossing, now and again to meet with a source, some man of the world arrives, distracts one's thoughts, buffets one's feelings—and all is confusion.' "

Words such as these bridge the gulf between yesterday and tomorrow and transform the fragrance of the past into a sense of living presence. For they tell us not of outer differences, distinguishing one age from another, one civilization from the next, or of customs changing under the erosion of time; but rather of the need of the soul—its need for happiness, freedom, poise and peace; its need for the unbroken atmosphere these create, so essential to true vision; and above all, its need for the power to produce that atmosphere at will and to maintain it in the face of the world's onslaughts. All men need this power, for all men are creators by the very fact of their being, but he who would create immediate beauty—the artist—must have it, at least to some extent, if he is to survive. Unlike the carpenter or the mechanic, he cannot lay his work aside and casually pick it up again. Following every interruption, the delicate task of establishing inward contact has to be begun anew if the creative word is to come whispering over the invisible wires. Every interruption, however trivial, is disturbing enough, but when it is of a nature to cause reaction, especially turbulent reaction, in the artist's own mind, then the inner silence is indeed shattered, the word lost, and the image of his dream blurred and distorted as is a figure seen through water. He can, it is true, by determined effort, and the aid of that concentration which is native to all desire, quiet the inner turmoil and

pour his undivided energy once more toward the goal of his striving. He can burn incense to his right and to his left and seek through the creation of an harmonious environment to preserve his inner sanctity. If, however, one word is enough to destroy it, and plunge him again into turmoil, then it can be seen that his condition is indeed perilous, and his creative output dependent on the fluctuations of chance.

Now it was just this picture of life which the Zen Master and the Master of Indian Yoga behind him, held up for the contemplation of their disciples. The very first of Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms, upon which *Dhyana* (meditation) or Zen is based, covers this ground. "Yoga is restraining the mind-stuff from taking various forms." That is, from reacting to the impact of events and the mental and emotional moods of others. A direct simple statement, which, could it be grasped by the educators of today and be held up by them as the primary essential of true education, would transform the outlook of humanity.

Unfortunately the modern man of the Occident concentrates himself upon the mastery of everything but his own reactions which alone are in his keeping, and the result is our present chaos. Mental control he does not ignore, he extols it as ethic, but he does not pursue it as a science and is unfamiliar with the laws which govern it. Not so the East. China, Japan, and above all, India, have ever recognized it as essential to accomplishment. Kagawa in his writings touches upon it:

"The need of educating the feelings," he comments, "does not seem to have occurred to present day education. The reason Confucius stressed the social code of etiquette and music was wholly in the interest of educating the emotions. The emotions cannot be educated simply through art. I am not opposed to aesthetic and musical education. However,

the unique way of teaching humor, seriousness, mental mettle, composure, gentleness, and benevolence is to provide means of contact with Nature and with God. Until God is recovered, the emotions of the rough-mannered men of our day cannot be restored to a healthy state."

All of which harmonizes with what John Cowper Powys tells us, speaking from the cultural rather than from the religious angle: "The discovery that the mind *can* regulate its thoughts, fostering some and dismissing others, is one of the most important stages in the art of self-culture. It is astonishing to note how little this art is practised among us Westerners. Indeed where our art of culture ought to begin is by taking those concentrated habits of mind which the Orient devotes to mysticism and applying them to rational and imaginative life. . . . Certainly it may be said that if culture can be sometimes a substitute for religion, any beautiful and nobly rounded-off practice of religion renders culture irrelevant. Religion in its most flexible form does for us, in fact, precisely what culture does; and if we have been given a comprehensive and imaginative faith, it does it far better."

China, in its Great Age, achieved this blend of culture and religion and, through the Zen discipline, understood its subtle processes. Not that all men were students of Zen, or even knew a great deal about it. Like the Indian Yoga, it was then and is now a sun-like path too steep for the majority, and even among those who followed its training, few became masters—as witness the confession of defeat in Kuo Hsi's comments. All men, however, were permeated by the ideas which it emanated and accepted as basic the possibility of the transcendence of self which it posited. This very recognition, even when overlaid with ignorance and superstition, helped to still their inner being and made them

receptive to the beauty which flowed through the inspired ones among them. Moreover, it wove itself into the pattern of their civilization, and helped to impose upon the inhabitants an inner reserve and a mental integrity which acted as a barrier to the vulgar and the commonplace, thereby preserving their creative life intact.

The great Chinese artists of that epoch were the natural flowering from—dare I say it?—this fundamental mental fund, and thus made manifest what the mass of the people were sensing in their hearts. With deft stroke they suggested the atmosphere, and the people breathed; their brushes brought mountains into being, and the people wandered on their cloud-wreathed heights; they imbued their landscapes with the Ineffable, and the people entered into them and for a moment lost their little selves in the Primeval Being.

It is not that I would overstate the case for these Chinese Ministers of Beauty or claim that the citizenry were formed of a finer clay than the rank and file on the earth now. Fundamentally human clay is always the same, although the influences that mould it from age to age may differ enormously, at one time darkening the consciousness of mankind, at another time liberating the Godlike within its soul. But everything that comes to us from that particular era indicates a dignity of the spirit, a poise, and a power of self-command which, though expressed in manners and customs, were rooted in something far deeper than mere social etiquette. What that something was—and *is*—it might profit the West to discover, for we look among Occidental people for that selfsame spirit in vain. As Mr. J. Washington Hall (Upton Close) aptly put it in one of his lectures: The moment one puts foot on American soil after a sojourn in the Orient, one is made painfully aware of the "indignity" of Western civilization.

The fact is, in spite of all our advancement, we wander today in a desert of knowledge, needing desperately the assurance that perhaps the East with its great age alone can give, yet too arrogant or suspicious to quench our thirst at such an old well. The water, we say, is brackish and has often proved poisonous. But that is because we have not gone deep enough or have failed to draw from the right source and thereby have missed the vital stream which flows there. And when we do condescend to turn to the Orient, it is seldom with the idea that it could possibly contain anything of practical value for our life and living. The lovely fragments of its culture we have looked upon merely as art treasures to embellish our galleries—aesthetic refreshment so to speak—and have failed to sense the silent depths from which they were born.

In stating thus, I refer to the Oriental world as a whole, but I am thinking more especially of China, balanced so perfectly, at the height of her glory, between the inner and the outer, the natural and the spiritual, with Zen as the connecting link between "Heaven, Earth and Man." The great landscape paintings of her genius—not to mention her exquisite pottery and other arts—can be as proof to us, if we will take it, that the path of meditation far from leading man to a state of passivity and to dreams without issue, is, if rightly understood and followed, the path *par excellence* of full and perfect accomplishment, leading to and from the Chamber of Fulfillment—that still, still Room within—vast as the soul, vast as the universe—from which all true forms of beauty have issued forth.

Unfortunately we are blinded by our false conceptions and insist either upon turning away from all things Eastern or else upon beholding them under a glamour of magic and mystery cast over them by an illimitable past. For no matter how

firmly our feet may be planted in the present, the past will not let us go. It stands aloof on the receding highway of time and draws us, even against our will, by its immutable secrecy. Gazing toward it, we see strange lights which gleam and flicker and die, and we hear an oceanlike murmur of voices. We walk like ghosts amid its dim yet brilliant pageantry, and feel in turn its haunting presence in our life of a day. Its rumour of ancient joy and pain grips our heart with strange poignancy, and we feel the loss of those we have never known. Almost we believe that some day we shall know them and with them walk their busy streets and be present at their secret trystings with the gods. Almost we feel the fingers of those ancient ones twined in our own. But the dream fades, and suddenly it sweeps over us that never never shall we know. Past is past and no man can lift its veil.

Can we be so sure? Can we be so sure that if we could do so, we would be able to uncover its mystery? Is not the present just as mysterious? And our living comrades are they not often as far removed from our understanding as those others who long ago stepped through the gateway of eternity? No, physical contact is not the way. But if we could step through that same gateway, not by means of death but by means of life and the great Stillness which lies at the heart of life, then might we not find them there—the friends known and unknown—in their own world of unchanging reality, along with all that the past held and all that the future shall hold?

"Centuries and centuries ago the greatest painter of China, Wu Tao-tzu, was given a commission by the Emperor, the Son of Heaven. He was bound to no choice of subject. 'Paint me beauty,' was the only command, and a wall of the palace was put at the artist's disposal for the picture

into which the mind of the Emperor should wander free when overcharged with cares of State. So on a certain day, word was sent to the Son of Heaven, with the prostrations of Wu Tao-Tzu, that the work was done. It was a great moment when he entered with his courtiers and was seated, for a veil overhung the picture, and none knew what to expect—though all knew it would be worthy of the royal patron.

"Wu Tao-Tzu stood before it, and drawing aside the veil, disclosed immense spaces vast as the mountain-world itself. Silence in those who saw was his first reward—the silence of men lost in contemplation of a mystery—the Emperor himself leaning his chin on his hand with eyes fixed on the mountains. Time passed, and finally Wu Tao-Tzu said slowly:

" 'Look! In the cave at the foot of this mountain dwells a Spirit.'

"He struck his hands together and a door opened in the base of the rocks.

" 'What lies within is beautiful beyond any words. I ask your Majesty's permission to show the way.'

"And so saying, before their eyes, he stepped into the picture and through the open door. It closed behind him. The court rose angrily to rebuke his insolence, but he was gone, and while the Emperor remained silent, his chin resting on his hand, the picture faded slowly before them like a landscape slowly forgetting its selfhood under approaching dusk, and before them only the empty wall was left."*

So man is shown Beauty age after age; but if his soul is not attuned to it, then though genius may point out the way and be itself the guide, he cannot follow: the music dies, the colors vanish and the creator departs, leaving him alone to

*Retold from the Chinese by L. Adams Beck.

stare at the blank wall of his own consciousness. Plotinus, the immortal, with golden, glowing word, has summed up this law of perfect vision and understanding for all men and for all time:

". . . This is the only eye that sees the mighty Beauty." If the eye that ventures the vision be dimmed by vice, impure or weak, unable in its cowardly blenching to see the uttermost brightness, then it sees nothing, though another point to what lies plain to sight. Never did eye see the sun unless it had first become sunlike; never can the soul have vision of the First Beauty unless itself be beautiful. Therefore, let each become godlike and beautiful who cares to see God and Beauty: The Primal Good and the Primal Beauty have one dwelling-place, and thus, always, Beauty's seat is there."

ON THE CREATION

From the "Laws of Manu"

Manu sat reclined, with his attention fixed on one object, the Supreme God; when the divine sages approached him, and, after mutual salutations in due form, delivered the following address:

"Deign, sovereign ruler, to apprize us of the sacred laws in their order, as they must be followed by all the four classes, and by each of them, in their several degrees, together with the duties of every mixed class;

"For thou, Lord, and thou only among mortals, knowest the true sense, the first principle, and the prescribed ceremonies of this universal, supernatural *Veda,* unlimited in extent and unequalled in authority."

He, whose powers were measureless, being thus requested by the great sages, whose thoughts were profound, saluted them all with reverence, and gave them a comprehensive answer, saying: "Be it heard!

"This universe existed only in the first divine idea yet unexpanded, as if involved in darkness, imperceptible, undefinable, undiscoverable by reason, and undiscovered by revelation, as if it were wholly immersed in sleep:

"Then the sole self-existing power, Himself undiscerned, but making this world discernible, with five elements and other principles of nature, appeared with undiminished glory, expanding His idea, or dispelling the gloom.

"HE, whom the mind alone can perceive, whose essence eludes the external organs, who has no visible parts, who exists from eternity, even HE, the soul of all beings, whom no being can comprehend, shone forth in person.

"HE, having willed to produce various beings from HIS own divine substance, first with a thought created the waters, and placed in them a productive seed:

"The seed became an egg bright as gold, blazing like the luminary with a thousand beams; and in that egg HE was born HIMSELF in the form of *Brahma,* the great forefather of all spirits.

"The waters are called *Nara,* because they were the production of Nara, or the Spirit of God; and since they were His first *ayana,* or place of motion, He thence is named Narayana, or Moving on the Waters.

"From THAT WHICH IS, the first cause, not the object of sense, existing everywhere in substance, not existing to our perception, without beginning or end, was produced the divine male, famed in all worlds under the appellation of *Brahma.*

"In that egg the Great Power sat inactive a whole year of the Creator, at the close of which, by His thought alone, He caused the egg to divide itself; and from its two divisions He framed the heaven above and the earth beneath; in the midst, He placed the subtle ether, the eight regions, and the permanent receptacle of waters.

"From the Supreme Soul he drew forth Mind, existing substantially though unperceived by sense, immaterial; and before Mind, or the reasoning power, He produced consciousness, the internal monitor, the ruler;

"And, before them both, He produced the great principle of the soul, or first expansion of the divine idea; and all vital forms endued with the three qualities of goodness, passion and darkness; and the five perceptions of sense, and the five organs of sensation.

"Thus, having at once pervaded, with emanations from the Supreme Spirit the minutest portions of six principles immensely operative, consciousness and the five perceptions, He framed all creatures."

REPORT

Swami Paramananda who returned from India in May, lingered on in Boston during the summer months. As always, there was vital response to his presence, the large attendance at Services and Classes attesting the deep response to his unvarying message of unity, love and peace, more than ever needed in this critical hour.

The Saturday afternoon gatherings at the Ananda-Ashrama, Cohasset, were resumed with the coming of the warm weather, and many found fresh life and inspiration from these quiet hours, with their rhythm of a meditation under the pines, supper also often out of doors, and a final benediction on the great rock at sunset.

These constant meetings are creating an out-door centre of palpable peace, most precious in this land where summer days are like precious jewels.

July 4, Independence Day for young America, has a most sacred and special significance for all devotees of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda; for on that day, in the year

1902, the great Swami, during a deep meditation, gave up his body and passed beyond physical contact.

It has become a custom for Swami Paramananda and his workers to commemorate this profound event by a day's retreat at the Cohasset Ashrama, when all members are invited to share, not noise and exuberance, characteristic of this date for most people, but silence—three hours of silence—beneath the trees of this woodland shrine.

This year, Swami Paramananda's presence helped to enhance the atmosphere of sanctity which pervades this lovely and blessed spot. He arranged the out-of-door altar, presided over the meditations in the "Nature's Sanctuary," and prepared with his own hands the Hindu dinner which terminated the day.

ANANDA-ASHRAMA, CALIFORNIA

The Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, has patiently awaited the Swami's return, and, in the meantime, has carried on steadily under the inspiration of the ever-abiding spirit which ensouls the work. There have been real beauty and inspiration in the Classes and Services conducted by Sister Achala, and all the other members have likewise contributed their share of consecrated service. The Swami plans to be with his Western workers toward the close of the summer months.

ANANDA-ASHRAMA, DACCA

The Dacca Ananda-Ashrama continues to grow and thrive in spite of serious obstacles financial and otherwise. It now numbers approximately 45 resident and 150 non-resident women students, all of whom are being trained not only scholastically, but also along the line of self-supporting industries. Charu Shila Devi, acting head, reports that the Inspector of Education for Bengal recently visited the Ashrama and was delighted with the work it was doing. He pronounced it unique in its field.

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

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East



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What is Discipleship

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Message of the East

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

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

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THE LORD'S LITANY

From the Bhagavad-Gita

HE who hates no creature and is friendly and compassionate to all, who is free from attachment and egotism, equal-minded in pleasure and pain, and forgiving,

Who is ever content and meditative, self-subjugated and possessed with firm conviction, with mind and intellect dedicated to Me, he who is thus devoted to Me is dear to Me.

He by whom the world is not afflicted and who is not afflicted by the world, who is free from elation, envy, fear and anxiety, he is dear to Me.

He who is free from all external dependence, pure, efficient, unattached, undisturbed, and has given up all (selfish) undertakings, he who is thus devoted to Me is dear to Me. . . .

He who is the same to friend and foe and also in honor and dishonor, the same in heat and cold, pleasure and pain, free from all attachment,

He who is alike in praise and blame, is silent, content with everything, homeless, steady-minded, such a devoted soul is dear to Me.

Those who follow this immortal Dharma (Teaching) as declared (by Me) and who are possessed with faith, regarding Me as the Supreme Goal, such devotees are exceedingly dear to Me.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. —*Jesus the Christ.*

Wonderful is the teacher, wonderful is he who can receive when taught by an able teacher. —*Upanishads.*

If you are in right earnest to be good and pure, God will send you the Sat Guru, the right teacher. Earnestness is the one thing necessary. —*Sri Ramakrishna.*

Know, O disciple, that those who have passed through the silence and felt its peace and retained its strength, they long that you shall pass through it also. Therefore, in the Hall of Learning, when he is capable of entering there, the disciple will always find his master. —*Light on the Path.*

When you meet the true Guru he will awaken your heart: He will tell you the secret of love and detachment, and then you will know indeed that He transcends this universe.

—*Kabir.*

The man who knoweth God is the most exalted of the exalted; yet his mind is the most humble of all.

—*Adi Granth.*

The quality of any man's work depends ultimately upon the quality of his character. Right development of character opens the door to higher standards of workmanship and service. —*Thorvald Solberg.*

WHAT IS DISCIPLESHIP

By Swami Paramananda

Every one of us, I think, has a conception of what discipleship means, but generally we think that it means merely becoming a follower of someone or something. It does; but it means more. Discipleship implies discipline; not chastisement or self-mortification—it goes deeper than that and has to do with the moulding of character. It does not interfere with freedom. On the contrary, it teaches a person how to become free. In India, the whole educational system was based upon it. I have often told you how in the past, education there was not complete until the pupil was sent to the house of an illumined Teacher, a Guru. This was not only for the purpose of secular training, but also, and even more, for the forming of character. The Teacher was the specialist who knew how to give proper direction to the thoughts and habits of the pupil so that he might learn how to control his rising emotions, temper and misguided zeal. Of course this necessitated a certain amount of bodily and mental discipline. But it was recognized that until this control is learned, no one ever accomplishes anything.

When the pupil went to live with his Master, one of the first tasks given him to do was in the nature of a menial service. Everywhere we find that he was asked to gather fuel and was expected to do it regularly. If he had to be reminded, it meant that he was failing in his discipleship. Thus it was needful for him to be on the alert. He could not have someone to awaken him; he had to train his mind to awaken him at a certain hour. In the days of my own training, I was expected to get up at four o'clock, but I used to rise before that and I have ever been grateful for these early days. I would not exchange them for anything. This form of discipline cultivates habits that are essential to true accomplish-

ment and abolishes certain bad habits which create bondage.

Looking at this subject from both angles, that of the Teacher and of the taught, we see that every Teacher has been a disciple, but it does not necessarily follow that every disciple is fit to become a Teacher. India has a slogan, almost a classic, that only one who is willing to sacrifice himself is worthy to hold the position of Master, for no one but a Master can conquer himself and forsake himself. At once we connect this with the words of the Christ: "He who would be first among you, let him be the servant of all." Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "In this world, especially in the present day and age, everyone desires to be a teacher. There are plenty who want to command, but very seldom you find anyone who wants to follow." The whole of the spiritual life depends upon how well we can follow a principle and dedicate ourselves to it. That was the main reason for discipleship.

An interesting story is told of Swami Turiyananda, a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. This Swami was of a retiring nature and used to live in a remote retreat, but he was always ready at the call of the Master to sacrifice his very life. Certain disciples gathered round him, and one day one of these, a new-comer, was questioning him concerning the duties of the Master and of the disciple.

"What are the qualifications for the Teacher?" he asked.

"He instructs and guides," the Swami answered, and then went on to explain at length what it was needful for the disciple to do in the way of service, in order to conquer egotism and physical lethargy.

The young man listened intently and finally said, "I think I would rather like to be the Teacher." He did not want to follow the arduous path of humble service and the denying of self. He wanted to start from the top. It was as if some-

one should go to the head of a business corporation and say, "Here, sir, give me your place!" Naturally no place will be given to him. If, however, he goes with the idea of serving in any capacity, that in itself means he has taken the first step. Discipleship means taking this step and the steps that follow. For, of course, no one can be a true disciple who has not in his heart, humility, truth, and a desire to follow the right at any cost.

Humility is the first principle. As long as you think you know everything and do not need to learn, you cannot learn. If you merely pretend humility and play the role of a disciple for a few moments with the secret desire of assuming the position of Teacher, it will avail nothing. One has to be genuinely humble, true, and full of such yearning for that great goal that he is willing to do anything to attain it. Determination like this enables him to overcome every obstacle. There are many things that we think we cannot do that we find we can do. The body yields; the will becomes strong, and we surmount all difficulties. In this way character is moulded. Great disciples are great men. Christ was a disciple of the Lord. He did not want anything for Himself, name or fame. "Not my will but Thine be done!" Herein lies the definition of discipleship.

In the Bhagavad-Gita—a scripture which contains the solution of all our problems — Arjuna, the prince, overwhelmed with doubt and bewilderment, says to his Master, Sri Krishna, "O Wise One, I know not what to do in this terrible situation which confronts me, therefore, as a humble disciple, a Truth-seeker, I come to Thee, I take refuge in Thee. Do Thou instruct me."

Until we can take this attitude, Truth does not unfold itself. The great men of India do not accept disciples on any other terms. If a seeker, inspired with earnestness and

humility, approaches them, they will open their hearts. On the other hand, if someone says, "Teach me—I will pay thee for it!" they are not interested. Often a Master will refuse any instruction unless he is pleased with the pupil. A person must make himself fit for the conditions of discipleship.

Let me give you an interesting account of something that occurred thousands of years ago in the period of the Vedas. It is told in one of the great Vedic Upanishads that a young lad, Satykama, once came to an illumined Teacher, saying, "I wish to be a pupil in your house." Now it was the tradition at that time that unless one were well born, a Brahmana—which means literally one whose background is Truth—he could not enter the home of a great Teacher as a *Brahmacharin* or religious aspirant. So the Teacher asked him, saying, "Of what family are you, my friend?"

"I do not know, sir," he replied, "of what family I am. I asked my mother, and she answered, 'In my youth when I had to move about as a servant, I conceived thee. I do not know of what family thou art. I am Gabala by name, thou art Satyakama.' I am therefore Satyakama Gabala, Sir."

He said to him, "No one but a true Brahmana would thus speak out. Go and fetch fuel, friend; I shall initiate you. You have not swerved from the truth."

We see here that the first qualification was truthfulness. One must be truthful all the way through, even when the truth makes one stand absolutely bare, as it did Satyakama. Not only was he true; he was humble. But his situation was unlike that of the other pupils, so the Teacher gave him four hundred cows, saying, "Go and care for these, and when they have multiplied to a thousand, return to me."

Satyakama found that the Truth came to him with this humble act of service. One day the bull of the herd spoke

to him, "We are a thousand now, why not take us to the Teacher? Time has come for you to claim your reward. He will now instruct you." And in the morning when Satyakama started to light the fire, a spark from the fire said, "Satyakama, you can now go to your Teacher, for your mind is ready for wisdom." So on the morrow, Satyakama turned his face homeward. Finally he approached the Teacher's house, and the Teacher, beholding him from a distance, said as he drew near, "Friend, your face shines as one who has already found the Truth. You have all the indications of one who has experienced Reality!" And opening his heart, the Teacher completed his disciple's spiritual training.

Let us learn something from this story. Only one who has realization of Truth, who lives with Truth, can radiate it. For he alone, being absolutely sure, and free from all ulterior motive, has the power to transmit Truth and interpret it. Truth comes when we have renounced the ambitious attitude, the selfish and the small. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "Not I, not I, but Thou—O Lord, O Mother of the Universe—only Thou!" and in Christ's utterances we find the same spirit. It may seem incongruous to you. You may say, "If we give up everything we shall lose everything!" But just the opposite is true. Take the Christ, His disciples did not come to Him with University degrees or anything in the way of luxury. On the contrary, they were mostly very lowly people. It may be hard to prove this historically, but let us take the humility of the whole thing. Unless a person has humility in his heart, he cannot be a disciple and receive the Cross of God.

If we could follow the call of Truth even for a single day, if we could silence our own egotism, we might begin to understand a little of the spirit of discipleship, with all its qualifications. One of the very first of these qualifications is

service. A true disciple wants to do things for others; he does not want anything for himself. What a different world it would be if this spirit prevailed! Everyone would be calm and contented, not pushing his way to get front place. There would be no harsh competition, but spiritual vision. Such a world would not seem crowded. No one would want for anything; there would always be plenty, and a place for everyone. No doubt this seems an impossible dream, but only to the man of the world, not to the disciple.

Discipleship should not be taken casually. It is a cleansing process of the soul, and it means more than merely calling another "Master." It means that a man is freed from selfish striving; that he can sleep at night; that he can really love others and does not feel that he must get ahead of them. "Why should he have more than I have?"—that bitterness would be gone. Think how the social order would be improved by such a spirit!

Megasthenes, ambassador from the Greeks to the Court of the great Chandragupta, left a record concerning the India of that time and its social order. He described a people who were self-governing, peaceful, free from vice,—a people in whom there was no element of mean competition and who trusted in one another so wholly that they left their homes and property unguarded, and very seldom had to go to law. We can hardly imagine it today in our material civilization. A spiritualized world, however, gives a different administration, and it is reassuring to know that life can be so conducted.

The ancient art of education disciplined man to be true to himself, knowing that one who is true to himself is never mean about the remainder of the world problems. Man had to learn to control his anger, his selfishness, his vanities. For control of these things leads to greatness.

Today the entire educational system is specialized and

seems to lay more stress on giving students degrees than on helping them to build character and discipline their thoughts. Anyone may be capable of vicious or destructive thoughts, at least in the beginning. Look into your own mind. Someone, perhaps, has offended you and you are roused to anger. As we know, in the world these feelings are legitimate. If a person hates you, you are justified in hating him. But the disciple must learn how to endure such things, for by learning to endure he overcomes everything.

Until we have humility, we cannot be happy. Proud people, arrogant people, are unhappy all the time. Not only are they never really successful, but they suffer seeing other people successful. The real abode of peace, the real spiritual kingdom, cannot be entered until we have learned to be disciples, full of humility, purity and truth.

Conduct represents character. Primarily people must have character. Everyone admires character, and, as I have said, discipleship makes for character. It is like moulding raw material. The Teacher with no ulterior motive, who desires only to see a fine thing produced, moulds this unformed clay in the form of the student. If the clay is brittle, it will not mould. That is, if we come with brittle mind, rigid and unyielding, even the greatest Teacher can do nothing for us. So you see, our discipleship depends upon our resolution, our desire, in other words, upon our mental attitude. Let us remember that discipline is never for the purpose of bringing pain, suffering or disappointment. Its purpose is to lead our mind and thought through certain channels, thus directing our conduct until our character becomes established and strong. I have seen people remain absolutely even under all circumstances. A great Swami I know, when someone did him physical violence, did not even change his expression. These are the things which make for spirituality.

Do not think that Christ was called a Master merely because He gathered a few disciples—or Buddha. They were not conscious of having followers; they were only conscious of the great need of people and of their desire to fulfill that need. By their lives they taught them to conquer through love. Without a living example, the disciple is unable to follow, so the Teacher becomes the living example.

Come hither, O friend, I shall tell thee the secret of this unknown land.
Let us shut the outer gates and the inner doors.
Have no fear or doubt, for the strange Guide to this unknown land is marvelous wise.
He knoweth our unacted acts, nay, even our unformed thoughts, our life's pulsation and every heartstring in his grasp.
So be thou sober, yet not cunning, for he loves the guileless most and it is the helpless that he helps.
This perfect land of unbroken life, so near to the inward sight, yet far removed from mortal light!

I close my eyes in utter trust:
Lead me on, Thou Guide divine
To where lies that inmost Shrine.

This little poem which I once wrote seems very appropriate. The spiritual Guide—the Guru, as we call him in India—is like one who removes a veil from the eyes of the disciple. For when we start out on the spiritual path, it seems like night about us; our feet are faltering, and we feel that we must take hold of the Master's hand. But he says, "My child, be patient, be noble, and never think that you cannot succeed."

A real Teacher, an illumined soul, one who has given his life, dedicated it on the Altar of Truth, and is literally a disciple of Truth, has only one thought and that is to help others. He has only one motive, and that is love. He does not recognize anything else. He is inundated, bathed, sanctified in that beautiful essence. It fills his whole consciousness.

The discipline we receive is because of our lacks. Man

does not want to go in a straight line. He is full of fear and doubt and these things create hardship. That is why we cannot follow the spiritual path without a guide. The Teacher through his love and wisdom helps us to steady our feet. Thousands of years ago, the great Incarnation, Sri Krishna, helped his disciple by reminding him of his true nature: "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."

One cannot be a Teacher without first being a good disciple. It is better to be a disciple than a Teacher. It is better to be a follower, provided you follow the right person, than to have ambition to command. By learning to be true disciples—followers of Truth—we not only benefit ourselves, but others learn through us. Live the life! One true person inspires others to be true. One strong person inspires others with strength. Remember the essential qualities of a disciple—love of Truth, resolution, humility and strength. If you are weak you never can achieve discipleship.

Do not be discouraged by what you are today. The body can be disciplined, the mind so trained that tomorrow you will no longer be able to connect yourself with your past defects. In order to make this progress, however, you must live and not just theorize. That is why it is necessary to have Incarnations. They teach us how to live the life. Before their humility, we understand true greatness; in the face of their greatness we become truly humble and all our little self-importance falls away.

I have heard people say, "Why should we bow before anyone?" Let them not think that they honor the great souls by doing so. Christ, Buddha, the saints, they are not anxious to receive our homage; it is we who need to give it. Unable at once to find our contact with the Supreme Spirit, we kneel

to someone who has dedicated his heart, whose mind is clarified, and by coming to that one, we learn our closeness to Divinity.

COMPASSIONATE ONE

From the Sutta Pitaka

(Selected from "Psalms of the Early Buddhists," translated by Mrs. Rhys Davids, with an ancient descriptive commentary of Dhammapala. These Buddhist Psalms which collectively have been termed "the most important literary production of early Buddhism," carry the mind back to the time of the Buddha and bring us the fragrance of his personality. Through them we hear the beat of his all-loving heart and sense the benediction of his living presence.)

SUNITA'S STORY AND PSALM

Reborn in this Buddha-age as one of a family of flower-scavengers, he earned his living as a road-sweeper, not making enough to still his hunger. Now in the first watch of the night, the Exalted One, attaining that mood of great pity so largely practised by Buddhas, surveyed the world. And he marked the conditions of Arahantship in the heart of Sunita, shining like a lamp within a jar. And when the night paled into dawn, he rose and dressed, and with bowl and robe, followed by his bhikkhu train, walked to Rajagaha for alms, and sought the street where Sunita was cleaning. Now Sunita was collecting scraps, rubbish and so on, into heaps, and filling therewith the baskets he carried on a yoke. And when he saw the Master and his train approaching, his heart was filled with joy and awe. Finding no place to hide in on the road, he placed his yoke in a bend of the wall, and stood as if stuck to the wall, saluting with clasped hands.

Then the Master, when he had come near, spoke to him in voice divinely sweet, saying: "Sunita, what to you is that wretched mode of living? Can you endure to leave the world?" And Sunita, experiencing the rapture of one who

has been sprinkled by ambrosia, said: "If even such as I, Exalted One, may in this life take orders, why should I not? May the Exalted One suffer me to come forth."

Then the Master said "COME BHIKKHU!" And he, by that word receiving sanction and ordination, was by magic power invested with bowl and robes. The Master, leading him to the Vihara, taught him an exercise, and he won first the eight attainments and fivefold abhinna; then, developing insight, the sixth. And Sakka and the Brahma gods came and did homage to him, as it is written:

Those deities, seven-hundred, glorious,
Brahma's and Indra's following, drew nigh
And gladly paid Sunita homage due,
As high-bred victor over age and death.

The Exalted One saw him surrounded by gods, and smiled and commended him. . . .

Now many Bhikkhus, desirous of raising their lion's roar, asked Sunita: "From what family did you come forth? Or why did you leave the world? And how did you penetrate the truths?" Then Sunita told them the whole matter thus:

"Humble the clan wherein I took my birth,
And poor was I and scanty was my lot;
Mean task was mine, a scavenger of flowers.
One for whom no man cared, despised, abused,
My mind I humbled and I bent the head
In deference to a goodly tale of folk.
And then I saw the All-Enlightened come,
Begirt and followed by his bhikkhu train,
Great Champion entering Magadha's chief town.
I laid aside my baskets and my yoke,
And came where I might due obeisance make,
And of his loving kindness, just for me,
The Chief of men halted upon his way.

Low at his feet I bent, then standing by
I begged the Master leave to join the Rule
And follow him of every creature Chief.
Then he whose tender mercy watcheth all
The world, the Master pitiful and kind,
Gave me my answer: "COME BHIKKHU!" he said.
Thereby to me was ordination given.
Lo! I alone in forest depths abode,
With zeal unfaltering wrought the Master's word,
Even the counsels of the Conqueror.
While passed the first watch of the night
Long memory of the bygone line of lives.
While passed the middle watch, the heav'nly eye,
Purview celestial, was clarified.
While passed the last watch of the night, I burst
Asunder all the gloom of ignorance.
Then as the night wore down at dawn
And rose the sun, came Indra and Brahma,
Yielding me homage with their clasped hands:
'Hail unto thee, thou nobly born of men!
Hail unto thee, thou highest among men!
Perished for thee are all th'intoxicants;
And thou art worthy, noble sir, of gifts.'
The Master, seeing me by troop of gods
Begirt and followed, thereupon a smile
Revealing, by this utterance made response:
'By discipline of holy life, restraint
And mastery of self: hereby a man
Is holy; this is holiness supreme!' "

CULA-PANTHAKA'S PSALM

Sluggish and halt the progress that I made,
And therefore was I held in small esteem.
My brother judged I should be turned away,

And bade me, saying: "Now do thou go home."
So I, dismissed and miserable, stood
Within the gateway of the Brethren's Park,
Longing at heart within the Rule to stay.
And there he came to me, the Exalted One,
And laid his hand upon my head, and took
My arm, and to the garden led me back.
To me the Master in his kindness gave
A napkin for the feet, and bade me thus:
"Fix thou thy mind on this clean thing, the while,
Well concentrated, thou dost sit apart."
And I who heard his blessed word, abode
Fain only and alway to keep his Rule.
Achieving concentrated thought and will,
That I might win the crown of all my quest.
And now I know the where and how I lived,
And clearly shines the Eye-Celestial;
The Threefold Wisdom have I made my own,
And what the Buddha bids us do is done.

A WESTERN DISCIPLE

(An interview with Miss Madeleine Slade, reprinted from the "New York Times" at the time of Miss Slade's brief visit to America.)

Ten years ago an English woman turned to the Orient in search of happiness; recently—an ardent disciple of Mahatma Gandhi—she came back on a visit to the Occident, more firmly convinced than ever that the ways of the West are wrong.

Sitting on the floor, with her legs crossed under her, dressed in fabrics which she herself had spun, Madeleine Slade spoke of the serenity which she has found in the mysterious East. The sunlight, reflected from a nearby building, filled her little hall bedroom in the Henry Street Settlement with an almost

unnatural glow. It added a note of eeriness to her words and touched with golden glint the white scarf about her head. . . . As she sat there, a Mona Lisa smile on her lips, she might have been a nun instead of a devotee of Brahma and Vishnu.

"I was born outside of London," she said, "and I was brought up as millions of other English girls are. I went to the same kind of theatres they did, met the same kind of men, rode the same kind of horses, lived the same kind of life. There was a frightful affectation about everything. The dull, dead parlors re-echoed to the same vain chatter and even the laughter at garden parties was forced. The flowers and the trees took on an atmosphere of artificiality, everything was constrained and the well-trimmed hedges seemed but more barriers. There was nothing in the England which I knew that reached the inner spirit. The heavy, stodgy food sated the body, yet the soul hungered. One was a stranger to one's friends, for all was outer contact. Dissatisfied and unhappy, miserable and alone, I sought for something which I knew existed but which I did not know where to find. Occasionally I caught a glimpse of the satisfaction which I was sure was somewhere. Sometimes I found it in a painting, sometimes I felt I had almost grasped it in a poem, and then again a few bars of music would seem to hold what I was looking for. But all too soon it was gone and I was as miserable as ever.

"I suppose that the war only intensified my feelings. It is all a horrible dream now, but the memory of those marching men, leaving never to return, the heartless hum of the Zeppelins over London, the cheering throngs who completely forgot the human sacrifices attendant upon a victory, convinced me more than ever that somewhere there must be a philosophy of life that would set this topsy-turvy world

aright. But I felt more sure than ever that I would never find it in England.

"Then one day I ran across Romain Rolland's book on Gandhi. The very day, the very hour I read it, I knew I had found what I had been floundering after. There was no uncertainty on my part. It was not a question of weeks or months of deliberation; then and there I was certain in what direction my future lay. I felt at last, Here is the light.

"I went to see Rolland. Although he had never met Gandhi, he had grasped the full import of his teachings. Without knowing him he had painted a lifelike portrait of the inner man. There was only one thing for me to do, and that was to serve the cause. In doing this I felt I would fulfill the longings of my soul. I did not go to India at once, for I did not feel worthy to serve. I spent a year in preparing myself for my mission. I devoted a large part of each day to contemplation and reading and adhered to a strict regime in eating and drinking. I soon found that my body could do well on much less food than that to which I had been accustomed, and that this sparseness of diet made for a clearer perception of the things that really count in life.

"I had always had an inclination to work with my hands, but except for trivialities I had done nothing. I immediately learned to spin and to weave. I put away the so-called luxuries which had never enriched my soul, but had always been a hindrance to my true happiness. And then, at the end of a year, I went to India, met Gandhi and joined the Ashram." . . .

Having served her novitiate, Madeleine Slade was accepted as a full-fledged disciple. She became Mira. Gandhi himself gave her the new name. It was that of an ancient Indian princess, who had left her home and husband to roam over India, helping the poor, and writing hymns which to

this day are sung throughout the land. To the Indian people Miss Slade is known as Mirabai, meaning Lady Mira; Gandhi himself calls her Mirabehn, which is translated in English as Sister Mira.

"I had always been a stranger in the West," Mira said, "But I immediately felt at home in the East. I am no more of an orthodox Hindu than an orthodox Christian. Yet I am firmly convinced that in a former incarnation India was my home.

"It is very difficult to describe the God of the Hindus," she said, in reply to a question concerning the Hindu religion. "They believe in a Supreme Being Who is above everything and in everything. One God manifest everywhere. The other gods are but essences of the Eternal Verity. The soul of man is part of that Verity. Encumbered at first with a body, it passes through various stages of evolution—of rebirth after rebirth—until at last it escapes from its mortal bonds and rejoins its original Essence. The better the life one leads, the sooner it can escape."

Notwithstanding her Oriental appearance, there is little of the mystic about Mira. A lightness of manner, accentuated by rippling laughter, lessens the feeling of fanaticism which her words would otherwise convey. . . . While her beliefs have changed her entire life, they have not changed her personality. Yet it is evident that those beliefs have given her a contentment and a surety of purpose which one looks for in vain among most Occidentals. . . .

Mira's life in India is a strenuous one. Between four o'clock in the morning, when she arises, and ten o'clock in the evening, when she retires, she is unceasingly at work. There are long daily marches over hot and dusty roads, practised until her sandaled feet ache and burn; there are continual talks with villagers in the country through which the

journey is taken; there are the duties of preparing food and editing a paper. Asked if she read much, she replied:

"I am too busy reading the book of life to find time to read anything that man has written. Besides, Gandhi is a sermon in himself.

"From age to age," she continued, "great prophets are born in this world. There were Christ and Buddha, and now there is Gandhi. They all repeat the essential truths of life and offer to man an opportunity for achieving happiness. Because the people have not the facility of responding to these teachings, they must be continually expressed in modern perspective. The fundamental truths of Gandhi's philosophy are similar to those of other prophets. They are the essential truths of the West as well as of the East. Gandhi practices his beliefs. The Occident has forgotten the eternal truths that it learned two thousand years ago. The only thing for society to do is to get back to them, and by doing this it will do away with the complicated structure which now makes for nothing but unhappiness.

"Mankind would be much happier if it worried less about the material side of life and took more thought of the spiritual. The less a man owns, the happier he is. I know this sounds strange to Western ears. For no one who has not experienced the joys of voluntary poverty can understand what I mean.

"European civilization is founded on the acquisition of material things. You talk a lot about freedom. How can anyone enjoy freedom when he is tied down by endless possessions? Has the successful business man, who makes a score of appointments every day in order to conserve his possessions or to acquire more, any freedom? The freedom to do what one likes is really the enslavement of the spirit to the lower self.

"Poverty alone bestows freedom, because it emancipates the soul from longings and disappointments. It finds its expression in devotion and service, for its only desire is to get nearer to its Maker. In serving the poor one serves God, and that is the only essential happiness. If, in order to accomplish this, one feels that the vows of celibacy are necessary, let him take them. But when I speak of celibacy—*Brahmacharya,* as we call it in India—it means something more than it does in the West; it means subjugating not only the sexual side of man, but also all his other material desires. For those who do not take these vows, moderation is essential. Gluttony of any kind is wicked. God has made enough to go around. If some take more than their share, then others will starve. This is what has happened in the world today. We have reared an enormous structure and called it civilization, but we have not built upon the Truth. . . .

"Throughout the world the machine has become man's master. I was in Lancashire only last month. There, with great pride, the mill owners showed me an invention which would do the work of six men—of six men who had become dependent upon doing a certain kind of work. For each new machine installed, six men not fit to do anything else are turned out.

"It is from the East that the West must learn its lesson. The East is contemplative, the West impetuous. Things happen in the West at such a pace that people do not have time to realize where they are, until they are encompassed in destruction. Modern civilization seems to me a gigantic tragedy."

"The East and West will meet?" I inquired.

"The East and West have met before," she said. "To say they have not met is to deny Christianity, for Christianity came from the East."

THE COURAGE TO LIVE

By Sister Devamata

Life is not a pastime. Those who try to glide through it indolently, evading its responsibilities and its opportunities, do not live; life escapes them. The eminent German psychologist, C. C. Jung, writes in a recent book: "The art of life is the most distinguished and the rarest of all the arts." In so far as it calls for grace, beauty, harmony, rhythm, and right proportion, it is an art; but it is also a science, a science that impels to tireless exploring of unknown areas of experience. The life which does not carry us to ever new regions of being, degenerates easily into a mere bodily function.

We must be careful not to wear ruts in our daily living. Regularity is good; but when it drops into somnolent routine, it becomes dangerous. At every moment we must be alive and fully aware of the privilege and meaning of existence. We must guard against growing automatic and mechanical in what we think and do.

To be fruitful, life must be more mental than physical, more moral than mental, and more spiritual than moral. All these factors must be present, but each must be stronger than the preceding one and overshadow it. The spiritual must dominate all. We need not profess a fixed creed or belong to a religious organization; if we are more open on the God-side than on the world-side, spirit will govern and beautify our daily living and pervade it with a radiant peace.

Our life must evolve. We should not end where we began. Our course must widen and ascend. We must have the courage to live nobly, casting off all that is petty and belittling. We cannot do this without the sustaining power of a lofty purpose which will break down the barriers of our little self and release our higher nature. Then we shall rise from peak to peak, gaining an ever expanding vision. The

unattainable of today will be the attainment of tomorrow. "Creation still goes forward," Herbert Spencer declares, "and to what supreme heights man may yet attain no one can say." He spoke of the evolution of the race but his words apply as aptly to the evolution of the individual life.

If we will go beyond ourselves, "wax stronger than ourselves," even a little each day, soon we shall reach a high point; but we must equip ourselves lightly for the ascent. We cannot weight ourselves with material possessions. They add neither to our strength nor to our glory. How little do we know of the rich men of Athens at the time of Pericles! Socrates and Diogenes have outlived them:—Diogenes, who threw away his mug when he saw a boy drinking from his hand; and Socrates, who exclaimed, as he gazed at the countless articles on display at a fair: "How many things there are I do not need!"

Many possessions cannot enrich us or add to our importance, rather they obscure us. They lead men to value us by what we have, instead of by what we are. The accent is laid on acquiring more than on being and we sell our birthright for that which is quickly lost or spent. The thirst for things cheapens effort and coarsens the character. It fosters an insatiable greed and ends in weariness. Contentment in every circumstance is vital and fundamental in daily living. We would have greater courage to live if we did not look upon life as an enemy,—as something with which to do battle. We are constantly fearful lest it cheat us of our rights. In reality, however, it cannot take from us anything that is truly ours. If it seem to deprive us of what we consider to be our rights, it is that we may earn them; because only by striving for them do we learn the proper use of them.

No life is a punishment. Even the most difficult life is rich in opportunity. Men sought hardships in earlier times,

that they might strengthen their endurance and add fervor to their spirit. Today we do not need to create disciplines; modern life gives them to us in abundance. Let us not turn from them or cry out in complaint. Let us seize upon them with zeal and transmute them into character. "If we will endeavor like brave men to stand in the battle, surely we shall behold the help of God coming from above. For He Himself who giveth us occasions to fight, to the end that we may gain the victory, is ready to succor those who strive and who trust in His grace." These are the words of Thomas a Kempis.

Life is inherently beneficent. It is the expression of the highest wisdom, bringing to us at every moment what is best for us. It may strike or it may caress, but always it strengthens and unfolds. Its disciplines are as kindly as its indulgences. It is the sculptor chiselling out a faultless statue, giving perfect form to that which was inchoate and ill-formed. It shapes us, we do not shape it. We belong to it, it does not belong to us. The universe governs and directs it.

Our individual life is an inseparable part of a Great Life. When we live our life in fullness, we partake of the strength, the wisdom and the power of that mighty Existence. It protects us, it upholds us, it guides and cherishes us. Realizing this, we gather fresh courage to live and also courage to die. Death loses all its dread. We look upon life as a vast, flowing river, moving seaward between ever-changing banks, itself unchanging save as it grows in majesty and grandeur. It sprang from that infinite ocean of being and returns to it, not to lose itself but to mingle with its waters in joyous union.

No man can be brave who considers pain the greatest evil. No man can be temperate who considers pleasure the highest good. —*Cicero.*

WHEN I MET THE MASTER

Author Not Known

I had walked life's way with an easy tread,
Had followed where comforts and pleasures led,
Until one day in a quiet place
I met the Master face to face.

With station and rank and wealth for my goal,
Much thought for my body, but none for my soul,
I had entered to win in life's mad race,
When I met the Master face to face.

I met Him and knew Him and blushed to see
That His eyes, full of sorrow, were fixed on me;
And I faltered and fell at His feet that day,
While my castles melted and vanished away.

Melted and vanished, and in their place
Naught did I see but the Master's face,
And I cried aloud, "Oh, make me meet
To follow the steps of Thy wounded feet!"

My thought is now for the souls of men;
I have lost my life to find it again,
E'er since one day in a quiet place
I met the Master face to face.

Put thee ever at the lowest and the highest shall be given to thee: for the highest cannot stand without the lowest.

—*Selected.*

For what any man is in Thine eyes, Lord, so much he is and no more.

—*Imitation of Christ.*

FLOWER OF THE SPIRIT

By Swami Vivekananda

(Extract from his Address, "My Master," delivered at the Madison Square Garden, New York City.)

"When the lotus opens, the bees come of their own accord to seek the honey; so let the lotus of your character be full-blown and the results will follow." This is a great lesson to learn. My Master [Sri Ramakrishna] taught me this lesson hundreds of times, yet I often forget it. Few understand the power of thought. If a man goes into a cave, shuts himself in, and thinks one really great thought and dies, that thought will penetrate the walls of that cave, vibrate through space, and at last permeate the whole human race. Such is the power of thought. Be in no hurry, therefore, to give your thoughts to others. First have something to give. He alone teaches who has something to give, for teaching is not talking, teaching is not imparting doctrines, it is communicating. Spirituality can be communicated just as really as I can give you a flower. This is true in the most literal sense.

This idea is very old in India and finds illustration in the West in the theory, in the belief, of apostolic succession. Therefore, first make character—that is the highest duty you can perform. Know Truth for yourself, and there will be many to whom you can teach it afterwards; they will all come. This was the attitude of my Master. He criticised no one. For years I lived with that man, but never did I hear those lips utter one word of condemnation for any sect. He had the same sympathy for all sects; he had found the harmony between them. A man may be intellectual, or devotional, or mystic, or active: the various religions represent one or the other of these types. Yet it is possible to combine all the four in one man, and this is what future humanity

is going to do. That was his idea. He condemned no one, but saw the good in all.

People came by thousands to see and hear this wonderful man, who spoke in a *patois,* every word of which was forceful and instinct with light. For it is not what is spoken, much less the language in which it is spoken, but it is the personality of the speaker which dwells in everything he says, that carries weight. Every one of us feels this at times. We hear most splendid orations, most wonderfully reasoned-out discourses, and we go home and forget them all. At other times, we hear a few words in the simplest language, and they enter into our lives, become part and parcel of ourselves and produce lasting results. The words of a man who can put his personality into them, take effect; but he must have tremendous personality. All teaching implies giving and taking, the teacher gives and the taught receives, but the one must have something to give, and the other must be open to receive. . . .

The only true teacher is he who can convert himself, as it were, into a thousand persons at a moment's notice. The only true teacher is he who can immediately come down to the level of the student and transfer his soul to the student's soul and see through the students' eyes and hear through his ears and understand through his mind. Such a teacher can really teach and none else. All these negative, breaking-down, destructive teachers that are in the world can never do any good.

In the presence of my Master I found out that man could be perfect, even in this body. Those lips never cursed anyone. Those eyes were beyond the possibility of seeing evil, that mind had lost the power of thinking evil. He saw nothing but good. That tremendous purity, that tremendous renunciation is the one secret of spirituality. "Neither

through wealth, nor through progeny, but through renunciation alone is immortality to be reached," say the Vedas. "Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and follow Me," says the Christ. So all great saints and prophets have expressed it, and have carried it out in their lives. How can great spirituality come without that renunciation? Renunciation is the background of all religious thought wherever it be, and you will always find that as this idea of renunciation lessens, the more will the senses creep into the field of religion, and spirituality will decrease in the same ratio.

That man was the embodiment of renunciation. In our country it is necessary for a man who becomes a Sannyasin to give up all worldly wealth and position, and this my Master carried out literally. There were many who would have felt themselves blest if he would only have accepted a present from their hands, who would gladly have given him thousands of rupees if he would have taken them, but these were the only men from whom he would turn away. He was a triumphant example, a living realization of the complete conquest of lust and desire for money. He was beyond all ideas of either, and such men are necessary for this century. Such renunciation is necessary in these days when men have begun to think that they cannot live a month without what they call their "necessities," and which they are increasing out of all proportion. It is necessary in a time like this, that a man should arise to demonstrate to the sceptics of the world, that there yet breathes a man who does not care a straw for all the gold or all the fame that is in the universe. Yet there are such men.

The other idea of his life was intense love for others. The first part of my Master's life was spent in acquiring spirituality, and the remaining years in distributing it. People in our country have not the same customs as you have in visit-

ing a religious Teacher, or a Sannyasin. Somebody will come to ask him about something, some perhaps would come hundreds of miles, walking all the way, just to ask one question, to hear one word from him. "Tell me one word for my salvation,"—that is the way they come. They come in numbers, unceremoniously, to the place where he is mostly to be found. They may find him under a tree and question him, and before one set of people has gone, others have arrived. So, if a man is greatly revered, he will sometimes have no rest day or night. He will have to talk constantly. For hours, people will come pouring in, and this man will be teaching them.

So men came in crowds to hear him and he would talk twenty hours in the twenty-four, and that not for one day, but for months and months, until at last the body broke down under the pressure of this tremendous strain. His intense love for mankind would not let him refuse to help even the humblest of the thousands who sought his aid. Gradually there developed a vital throat disorder, and yet he could not be persuaded to refrain from these exertions. As soon as he heard that people were asking to see him, he would insist upon having them admitted, and would answer all their questions. When expostulated with, he replied, "I do not care. I will give up twenty thousand such bodies to help one man. It is glorious to help even one man."

So he went on preaching to the people, and the news spread that his body was about to pass away, and the people began to flock to him in greater crowds than ever. You cannot imagine the way they come to these great religious Teachers in India, how they crowd round them and make gods of them while they are yet living. Thousands wait simply to touch the hem of their garments. It is through this appreciation of spirituality in others that spirituality is produced.

Whatever man wants and appreciates, he will get, and it is the same with nations. . . . When the people heard that this holy man was likely to go from them soon, they began to come round him more than ever, and my Master went on teaching them without the least regard for his health. We could not prevent this. . . . One day he told us that he would lay down the body that day, and repeating the most sacred word of the Vedas, he entered into *Samadhi* and passed away.

His thoughts and his message were known to very few capable of giving them out. Among others, he left a few young boys who had renounced the world and were ready to carry on his work. Attempts were made to crush them. But they stood firm, having the inspiration of that great life before them. . . .

Today the name of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is known all over India by its millions of people. Nay, the power of that man has spread beyond India, and if there has ever been a word of truth, a word of spirituality, that I have spoken anywhere in the world, I owe it to my Master; only the mistakes are mine.

This is the message of Sri Ramakrishna to the modern world: "Do not care for doctrines, do not care for dogmas, or sects, or churches, or temples; they count for little compared with the essence of existence in each man, which is spirituality, and the more this is developed in a man, the more powerful is he for good. Earn that first, acquire that, and criticise no one, for all doctrines and creeds have some good in them. Show by your lives that religion does not mean words, or names, or sects, but that it means spiritual realization. Only those can understand who have felt. Only those who have attained to spirituality can communicate it to others, can be great Teachers of mankind. They alone are the powers of light."

The more such men are produced in a country, the more that country will be raised; and that country where such men absolutely do not exist is simply doomed, nothing can save it. Therefore, my Master's message to mankind is, "Be spiritual and realize Truth for yourself." He would have you give up for the sake of your fellow-beings. He would have you cease talking about love for your brother, and set to work to prove your words. The time has come for renunciation, for realization, and then you will see the harmony in all the religions of the world. You will know that there is no need of any quarrel, and then only will you be ready to help humanity. To proclaim and make clear the fundamental unity underlying all religions was the mission of my Master. Other Teachers have taught special religions which bear their names, but this great Teacher of the nineteenth century made no claim for himself. He left every religion undisturbed because he had realized that, in reality, they are all part and parcel of the one Eternal Religion.

THE QUEST OF WISDOM

An Editorial from the London Observer
(of a recent date.)

On the same day that men of affairs assembled with foreboding at Geneva, men of science opened their annual discussions at Norwich in the usual serenity. The realm of knowledge has rid itself of destructive passion. Its members can differ without malice, and the author of a new hypothesis fears no taunt of heresy. It was not ever thus. Even when the British Association held its last meeting in the same city sixty-seven years ago, Evolution was in some quarters a still resented novelty, and Darwin, who has so enhanced our conception of the universe in majesty and wonder, was dreaded by worthy people as an enemy of faith and

morals. In science there are today no enmities. Truth is so vast that none can claim its monopoly, and honest error plays its part in sending discovery back to the right path.

Under these fostering liberties the harvests of reflection and research have increased beyond reckoning. In the last two generations there has been such a raiding of the unknown, such a forcing of nature's secrets, such an unveiling of the marvellous, as no other age has seen. Nor has it ever been so clearly attested that "Knowledge is power." In the might of science, the earth's riches are exploited, time and distance are reduced to vanishing point, and hidden forces whose existence our fathers did not even suspect are turned into our implements and messengers. We are only at the beginning of this transformation. The conquest of matter (or whatever it really is that we used to call "Matter") promises to be carried by our near descendants to lengths that baffle forecast. Man seems on the point of becoming master of everything—except himself.

Ay, there's the rub. Where is this stupendous equipment going to land us if we have not the wisdom to use it aright and for the general good? In the sphere of human relations we are far from the harmony and concord that have so widened the borders of science. Mutual ignorance and primitive jealousy still divide nation from nation; rivalry and suspicion, untamed by the most terrible slaughter in history, are not incapable of repeating the tragedy of destruction. Until political ideals can be brought to the judgment-seat of reason, like the issues of the learned world, there will always be the lurking possibility of our elaborate civilisation hacking itself to pieces and its triumphs passing away like the baseless fabric of a vision.

Why has moral growth fallen so far short of intellectual advancement? Is it because education, in attending to

knowledge has forgotten feeling? Feeling is the very core of life. It is the deciding factor in every practical crisis. The trained mind is powerless over the undisciplined heart. And most of all in collective action does emotion hold the casting vote. It is a truth that may be put to perversive as well as to salutary uses. But there is nothing that more urgently claims attention from those who pray for the maturing of human society into a real commonwealth. The intelligence of the young may be raised to the highest level of which it is capable without making them good citizens either of their own State or of the world. Without self-control, power can easily turn into suicide. "The heart's aye the part aye that maks us richt or wrang." It is the fallibility of that organ that contains the hazard of catastrophe for the century in which we live.

REPORT

After an absence of eight months, Swami Paramananda returned to the Ananda-Ashrama, California, in time to celebrate on September 2, the occasion known as Labor Day which according to his custom, he transformed for his friends and followers into a day of silence and meditation, for which he struck the keynote with words of beauty and exaltation. Later he prepared a Hindu feast with his own hands, to which all were invited and which many remained to enjoy.

On Thursday evening, September 19, a moonlight Service held in the Temple patio reëstablished the charm which these Services have ever possessed for the Swami's friends in California.

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

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East



NOVEMBER, 1935

Hidden Powers of the Soul

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Message of the East

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

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

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AT THE FEET OF ISIS

HER feet are set in darkness—at Her feet
We kneel, for She is Mother of us all—
A mighty Mother, with all love replete;
We, groping 'midst the shadow's dusky pall,
Ask not to see the upper vision bright,
Enough for us Her feet shine clear—all virgin white.

Her wings are tipped with golden light, but we
Ken but the shadow at her pinions' base—
We kneel before Her feet, we cannot see
The glory that illuminates Her face;
For he who towards the vision gazeth up
Finds first the stricken breast—the sacrificial cup!

Her feet gleam in the darkness—at Her feet
We lay the price of those twin pearls of Heav'n—
All that man hath. An offering incomplete
Is his who yet his best would leave ungiv'n;
And as she stoops Her guerdon to bestow,
His life's blood in Her cup, outstretched there, needs must flow! . . .

Her feet are in the darkness, but Her face
Is in high Heav'n—all Truth inhabits there,
All Knowledge and all Peace, and perfect grace;
And in the wonder of Her joy they share
Who, blindly clinging to Her feet erstwhile,
Obtained the priceless gift—the vision of Her smile!

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Egotism is like a cloud that keeps God hidden from our sight. The sun can give heat and light to the whole world, but it can do nothing when the clouds shut out its rays. Similarly, so long as egotism is in the heart, God cannot shine upon it. —*Sri Ramakrishna.*

It is not our struggle to be happy that is mistaken; it is our false idea that we can find happiness anywhere but in ourselves. —*John Cowper Powys.*

There is no other true happiness in the world except that of a soul content with its condition. This is the way to carry heaven about with you. —*Alphonsus de Sarasa.*

Without imagination there can be no greatness.

—*Einstein.*

O mystic sense of sudden quickening!
Hope's lark-song rings, or life's deep undertone
Wails through my heart—
And then I needs must sing.

—*W. J. Dawson.*

There is but one temple in the world, and that temple is the body of man. Nothing is holier than this high form. We touch heaven when we lay our hands on a human body.

—*Novalis.*

The perfecting of life is a power residing in the soul.

—*Marcus Aurelius.*

How can an answer be given to him who does not comprehend his own spirit, any more than it is possible to inform a blind man respecting the figure of an elephant.

—*Prabodh Chandrody.*

My beloved Lord is within. —*Kabir.*

HIDDEN POWERS OF THE SOUL

By Swami Paramananda

"Unto every intelligence there is a door which is never closed." Emerson said this in a moment of exaltation, and to those who have discovered that open door of the soul how true his words are. It is the door which leads to enrichment of consciousness, to the source of inspiration, yet for man to find it—that is indeed a most difficult thing to achieve.

> Inspiration, thy coming is like the falling of noiseless dewdrops on unopened flower-buds, not conscious of their heavenly heritage.

When that unfoldment comes from within, it may come so silently that it is like noiseless dewdrops falling. But how potent it is! How it opens up secrets that are hidden, faculties which from the surface we do not perceive! We see this occasionally in the case of an individual,—of the man, for instance, who after faltering, doubting and cursing his destiny, suddenly becomes a vital factor. There have been marvelous transformations which have produced poets, musicians, prophets. In India, we have many such records —Valmiki, the saint, for example, who when he uttered the first lines of the immortal Ramayana, did not realize what was flowing through him.

Some definite touch seems to unlock that secret, hiddenmost avenue of the immortal Soul, and what comes forth is more than mere music or poetry or art; it is something eternal and sublime. Well we may ask: Where lies that immortal soul? Prophets, mystics, seers, wise men, tell us it lies within. In India, they say it is in the "cave of the heart." You may not see it, but you must believe in it until you find it. If you do not believe in it, you will go away from it. Sometimes we go round and round in a circle without finding the thing which is nearest to us. Man sets out in quest

of happiness or perfection and in the end discovers that the road to that great kingdom has led him in a circle back to his innermost Self. "Strange!" he says, "I looked far away, when all the time it was here, so close, the nearest of all things!"

Truth-seekers have ever had a passion for finding that place of fulfillment. Lord Buddha described it to his disciples as "a land of infinite happiness, infinite delight, aloof from disease, sorrow and death."

"Sire, tell us where that land is; we want to find it!" the disciples exclaimed, and the Buddha replied, "It is not a location with geographic boundary lines; it is within you!" and at once a great discouragement fell upon them. Man is willing to set out on a journey, even risking his life, but as soon as he is given the task of unlocking that door which hides his own inherent power, he loses heart. The reason is, he does not think there is anything within him. His faith, his confidence in himself, is all based upon the surface, therefore he cannot rely upon it, and he looks upon the statement of the great mystic souls, that "the Kingdom of God is within," as a poetic fancy. As he becomes more thoughtful, however, as he goes deeper down in his own soul, his real Self, these words become living.

The thing is, man has to forget the little self which in one way or another makes him so full of restlessness, and so unhappy. He has to forget it and transcend it. This does not mean that in order to release himself from this disturbing element, he has to annihilate himself; it means that there comes a greater revelation, a grasp on something beyond, that is just as definite, if not more definite, than his hold on the material—something that releases the mind from bondage and draws it inward. The great Upanishads of India give us this picture:

"The Infinite is indeed below; the Infinite is indeed above; the Infinite is indeed behind; the Infinite is indeed before; the Infinite is indeed right; the Infinite is indeed left. It permeates all. It is above, right, left, before, behind. It is indeed all." It is whatsoever we can see and feel, observe and find, and the things we are not able to observe; because Infinitude means all. It is all-pervading. He who sees this, he who grasps this, possesses all.

Here is a tremendous statement. You may like to take a moment to visualize its immensity, to try to realize that there exists in the soul of man a power, a potentiality, a deathless entity, that cannot be altered even though the bodily life may go through all changes and afflictions. We begin to understand that the Kingdom of Heaven is something which happens within us. At the present moment we cannot see it or feel it, therefore we have no faith in it, because we do not place our trust in something that we do not feel or see and are not able to grasp.

At one time we gave the excuse that we did not believe in it because science was unable to prove it. Our minds were so sure that science could prove everything, that things not proved we felt were not worth considering. We thought science would give us a new God, a new Truth, when, as a matter of fact, science has never interfered with our finding the old one. The thing is, how to use it when we find it. Take, as an example, field glasses. They permit you to see a long distance. Through them you can either focus your gaze upon an ordinary object or look at something far less casual and more interesting. Science has invented instruments which have the power to connect us with distant points, which make for quicker transportation or for instant communication from one place to another; also it has invented remarkable machinery with deadly qualities. Its value

to us depends on how we use these things that it has given us. Science can construct and it can destroy. Man may use it for a good purpose or through it he can block his progress. There are those who worship science, and there is a class of people who say it is materialistic. I say that it is a beautiful instrument, an efficient instrument, which we can use for one purpose or another.

It cannot be denied that if a man is bent upon the nobler achievements of life, he will use the contributions of science to better advantage for more constructive upbuilding both for the individual and the world than does one who is entirely absorbed in his lower nature. If he has not noble instincts he does not see these greater things. That requires a man's emancipation from himself, with purity of thought and consciousness.

No man can rise above himself. That is, we never can do anything greater than our mind can conceive. This is why we need to cultivate the spiritual, to make our research within as well as without. How many know the undiscovered country of their own being—the hiddenmost secrets, the subtle principles of existence? We live, and therefore we utilize these principles to a certain extent; but how much more we could do so if we were acquainted with our true entity. What in reality do we know about the mind? There are people who think that this mind is the product of the body, and there are others who believe it to be the basis of matter; all, however, agree that man can guide the mind into higher channels or be instrumental in letting it fall to lower levels. Experiment upon this. As Ruskin says, it—the mind—can create fairylands for you, built of wonderful thoughts and experiences, or it can quickly destroy things, bringing you the picture of gloom, the conviction that you are no good whatsoever. As soon as the mind takes that turn you find

nothing but darkness; all things crumble before you. Are these fanciful stories? Look at what has happened in the world—this terrible tragedy that we have called the depression. Do we not find a tremendous play of the mind in it? Or take the case of a man, healthy, full of ambition, full of hope and aspiration, who suddenly becomes paralysed, as it were, throughout his whole being. He grows sick not only mentally but physically, for naturally the physical conditions soon follow. Is this the way of life and self-expression? It is a living death.

The trouble is, we limit ourselves, and look upon ourselves as mechanical beings, all having to follow a certain course. When we go to work we feel it is drudgery, and we count the days and years till the time comes to retire. There is for us no scope in life, no interest. Such an attitude instead of giving us something vital, robs us of our vitality. We see this illustrated in our everyday life. On one morning we rise up with a feeling of interest, we begin our tasks with understanding and appreciation, and do them because we love to do them. We speak and think in larger terms than those of momentary fulfillment, and when our day's work is over, we find that instead of being discouraged and weary, we feel like singing and have a surplus of energy at our command.

On another morning, we arise with heaviness as though we carried a weight, and go through the day feeling as if we were trapped by circumstances. By the time night comes, we are worn out and broken by the duties which life, so it seems to us, has imposed upon us. Sometimes we think that it is Divine Providence which gives this discipline; but these things are not imposed by a higher Power.

This brings us to the great question of social injustice. People feel that they must fight against it; but merely fight-

ing avails nothing. We have to come to the great Principle which all seers ancient and modern have proclaimed, which Christ taught, and which Buddha expressed in the slogan, "Hatred is not conquered by hatred; it is conquered by love." We have to come to it in reality and not just talk about it. Man may speak of peace, of God, of love, but until his real power is released from within, he cannot take his stand with faith and fervor of spirit.

No weakling can follow the path of spirituality. Many of you think that a man who follows that path must be a spineless creature. On the contrary, he has to have a tremendous amount of strength in order to stand by his ideal. If he has not, he will be thwarted. Only recently some gentlemen were discussing this with me, and they asked about some of the recent happenings in the world. They asked about Mahatma Gandhi. I said to them, "There is a wonderful example of a man who has strength and firmness of conviction behind his spiritual faith." To stand unshaken and unshakable when people insult you and do physical violence upon you requires strength. No weakling can do that. Within the soul of every man there is strength, but he does not find it, and because he does not find it he is afraid. He weeps and makes others afraid. Today we need the cultivation of inward strength; we must revive that strength.

Do not think that quarreling and fighting will bring order and safety. It is only when man stands on the pinnacle of spiritual understanding that he is safe. Such a man is neither Hindu nor Christian. There is a class of manhood which belongs to the Universe, and he is of that. His family is the entire humanity: all are his kinsmen; and he comes to this consciousness not by merely repeating some religious slogan, but by finding his own inherent value.

Today, instead of boasting of our present civilization and

the stride it is supposed to have made toward progress would it not be better to ask ourselves why the world is rent asunder through hate and distrust? Traveling today is a nightmare. You cannot leave the country without obtaining complicated documents; and though you may go all around the world, it will be difficult to find one single person who believes in another. That is why there is such conflict in life. In place of advancement, we have created a condition which entangles the minds of men. That cannot be right. There must be a raising of the mind of man and an illumination in the soul of man, in order again to simplify the order of humanity. We must follow the path of faith and love—the path that leads to God, instead of to ever greater and greater confusion. It will require strength, and strength comes through wisdom, through divine faith. When we are convinced of anything, we are strong concerning it. We say, "I know it, as I know that you are sitting there." That is how we become imbued with the Truth, our Soul-nature, or what we call God. Therein lies man's inherent power.

You may say, "We know all this. Christ taught it; our religion is based upon it." In India, we have a saying that a donkey may carry a heavy load of precious sandalwood on his back without knowing its preciousness. All he knows is the weight, and he is anxious to be rid of it. Same way we may be loaded down with all kinds of religious teachings and feel only the burden of them. People quote from the Bible about love, but until they know the truth of love it is merely a load which they carry. Is it not so? Is not this the trend of humanity? We are cultured; we have literature; in our cities we have tremendous electrical illumination. That is the standard of our living. Everything seems so wonderful; man's life should be complete. Yet how heavy is his heart and how unsafe he feels! There are those who will

say at once, "Not so!" But they are not quickened to the fact; they are thinking only of their self-interest.

Where lies the remedy? One of these same gentlemen to whom I was speaking said, "What right have I to peace when I see people suffering and sorrowful?"

I answered, "What good will it do merely to join your tears with theirs? It will only increase their suffering. If, however, you have the power of understanding, if you have strength in your soul, you may be able to wipe away those tears."

Sometimes people like to make martyrs of themselves. When you try to brighten them, they say, as did this gentleman, "While so many are suffering what right have I to enjoy?" It is not that we enjoy with selfish motive, but if through our depth of feeling we have discovered the secret of happiness, we are an asset. I do not believe we should sit down and see how much we can cry for the sadness of the world. We should never be unfeeling; but we should find the remedy. The remedy for weakness is strength; the remedy for sorrow is cheerfulness; for darkness, light; for all the evil in the world, increased amount of good. Are we ready to work in this way? It will mean that when we see a tremendous wave of sorrow, depression or evil coming toward us, we are not going to wait until it strikes us. Our mental genius, what we have within us, will show us the way to counteract it. Man has this genius. Within his depths he shall find it. If he keeps on drawing out the best in himself, his stature will grow. That is why spiritual personages teach us never to let our spirits sink down. They give us encouragement. Christ came to try to draw men out of their terrible state of degradation. He lent a helping hand and sought to free the world for spiritual regeneration.

As man discovers his own inherent value, his whole stan-

dard changes; he lifts up his head, and as his head is lifted he becomes stronger, better and more trustworthy. Therefore if there are things at the present moment which are not to your liking, things which you feel you cannot tolerate, do not give way to violence or sink into depression. Look for strength and not for weakness. Govern your own life and conduct, remembering always that you are an avenue for that great Power. Without a knowledge of That, I do not think that we can have any religion. One who does not believe that he has that Power within himself—Power of God, Power of Truth—who has no real faith that we are all children of Divinity—of the One we call mighty and omnipotent—never can he have closeness of vision nor relate himself to That.

So perhaps we shall take time to look within and more within, instead of accepting the evidence of our senses only. Science tells us that we cannot altogether rely upon our senses. Recently I listened to a radio talk by an astronomer, in which he said that all these things we see with our eyes are not as they seem—sun does not shine; fire does not burn. You may think that he is crazy, but from the point of view of science, he is right. For this reason we should try to cultivate the inner, the spiritual sense of observation, and that is what we are asked to do by those who know. It is not that they ask us to believe in anything and everything, or to take things on hearsay. We cannot have absolute faith until we see and realize the Truth, as I see you before me and you see me before you. Then if someone, trying to destroy our faith, says, "There is nothing!" we can reply, "I believe because I see." We no longer merely listen to great utterances, we begin to feel their reality within ourselves. Once we have formed this definite belief, then in sickness, sorrow, even in death, we do not lose our grasp on our immortal Soul.

This Soul—this vital part of our being—where is it? If hidden, we must look for it, and the process is given. The Creator gave man his sense faculties; therefore he looks without and he reaches without for everything. Let him now close the gates, and see if he can enter within himself. Christ says, "When ye pray, do it in secret. Enter your closet and shut the outer door." Only in the spiritual world shall we find what we are seeking. One who retires within himself without desiring any distraction or seeking to make a show of his innermost feelings, as he goes deeper into his soul, if he is ignorant he becomes illumined, if he goes in deaf he comes out with hearing, if blind, with sight.

This may seem but beautiful poetic fancy, yet we cannot ignore it, because it holds out hope for us. Man always hopes for the highest. Therefore keep on hoping, and to your hope add practical sense, which means that you can find what you hope for. When you do find it, no one can make you doubt your spiritual heritage—your own inward feelings. It is a blessed moment in our existence when our spiritual values become established and conviction of our eternal nature dawns in our heart.

That soul that is accustomed to direct itself to God upon every occasion, that, as a flower at sun-rising, conceives a sense of God in every beam of His, and spreads and dilates itself towards Him, in a thankfulness, in every small blessing that He sheds upon her; that soul that as a flower at the sun's declining, contracts and gathers in, and shuts up herself, as though she had received a blow, whensoever she hears her Saviour wounded by . . . an execration; that soul who, whatsoever string be struck in her, base or treble, her high or her low estate, is ever tuned toward God, that soul prays sometimes when it does not know that it prays.

—*John Donne.*

ULTIMATE VALUES

By Prof. S. R. Sarma, M. A.

(Mr. S. R. Sarma is a professor of history in a college in the Bombay Presidency, India. He is also a well-known journalist and author. This article is reprinted from the "Vedanta Kesari.")

One of the symptoms of desperate diseases is that the patient craves for just the things he ought to avoid studiously. On the other hand, an indescribable feeling of happiness might be taken as an unmistakable indication of health. Judged by these criteria, what is usually called Modern Civilization falls into the former rather than the latter category. A little examination will prove that this is not an exaggerated view.

Those who are enthusiastic over the achievements of our modern world have a firm belief that we are progressing But are we really? Few have the patience to pause and think. The whirling of modern life allows us no time to consider the real Reality behind its so-called realities. No sooner than we have come into one experience, we are whipped into another; then the third and the fourth, and so on endlessly. Novelty is the one thing to be sought after, for sameness is boresome. And yet is man never satisfied, nor woman either. They crave for happiness but do not find it. Chasing shadows at every step, they cry out, "Not this. Not this." But they cannot stop. To do so is death. It is to be stagnant. It is not *progress*.

Progress is an indefinable modern catchword. No one would like to be called unprogressive. Every one willy-nilly must enter the race and try to run faster than all others. Whither? Why? It is not relevant to ask. Or even if one —"for action too refined"—should ask, those that are bent on the competition will not care to answer. A feverish and increasing restlessness is the most striking characteristic of

this modern life. But where has it landed us? At least the serious-minded few might pause to examine even at the risk of being condemned as unprogressive.

No. Mankind is not happy now: neither the individual nor groups of men. The individual is stricken with restlessness. The groups are engaged in class conflicts and international warfare or preparation for war. Man is busy everywhere preparing for unhappiness, and craves for happiness. This surely cannot happen; you cannot prepare for war and expect peace—neither in society nor in the individual.

The machine is the most typical product of our age. It is its very embodiment and supreme symbol. In past ages they used to talk of God coming in a machine. In the modern, God has disappeared leaving only the machine in our midst. But what a wonderful thing it is! All modern progress has issued out of it. All our comforts are due to it. But alas, also our ills. This discovery of this marvelous instrument has been the veritable opening of a Pandora's Box. We have been caught up in it and find no escape even if we would.

There is a beautiful story in Belgian folklore, explaining how the sea came to be salt. There were two brothers, one very rich and the other extremely poor. At Christmas time, the indigent brother . . . went to move his fortunate kinsman, expecting help. But the latter, in his pride of pelf, drove him out of his house. The poor fellow, ashamed to return home empty-handed, wandered about and soon strayed into a forest. There he met a dwarf who took pity on him. Getting to know the cause of the poor man's grief, the dwarf presented him with a magical instrument which could produce all he wanted and more. The secret of its manipulation was also imparted to him.

In course of time this man, with the help of this machine, grew extraordinarily rich. His fame and the secret of his

sudden wealth spread far and wide. A greedy salt merchant, hearing of this, became covetous of the machine and managed to steal it away. No sooner did he take it to his boat than he wished it to produce salt; (what else could a salt merchant desire!). The machine responded immediately and the merchant's heart was filled with delight. His boat was soon filled to overflowing with precious salt. "Ah, what a boon!" he exclaimed with joy. But the joy soon turned to sorrow and utter ruin. He did not know how to stop the machine. The boat was sinking with the weight of this magical salt, and yet the machine would not stop. All sank! But the machine is still under the sea producing salt.

How typical of our modern machine-begotten civilization! We are sinking under its weight, but we have been so caught up in its wheels that we cannot escape despite our desperate desire and struggles. Like the drowning man, we have more faith in our own kicking and striving than in the thin rope thrown to us by the static man on the shore. But those who would be saved must catch at it or be lost. The seemingly static land is more productive of stable good than the restless and turbulent waters whose depths we cannot plumb except at the peril of our lives. Of course water is essential even on land; but we are not to drown ourselves in that element because it is good.

This is therefore the one thing we moderns lack: moderation, a balanced and sober view of life which can come to us only through viewing life as a whole, and not being engrossed in any of its partial manifestations. For this we want Vedanta and the wholesome attitude it develops in us. A sense of ultimate values is necessary for those who would catch hold of stabilizing Reality as against the maddening rush of the disturbing so-called realities of our modern distracted life.

PERMANENCY IN TRANSIENCY

By Rose Noller

"Earth, water, flame, air, ether, life and mind,
And individuality—those eight
Make up the showing of Me, Manifest.
"These be My lower Nature; learn the higher,
Whereby, thou Valiant One! this Universe
Is, by its principle of life, produced;
Whereby the worlds of visible things are born
As from a Yoni. Know! I am that womb:
I make and I unmake this Universe."

—*"The Song Celestial," Sir Edwin Arnold.*

Spirit is permanent, although it manifests always in transient form. Because form is transient does not mean it is mortal. Nothing dies. Forms die only to become fresh, new forms, verifying the truth that Life is infinite in capacity and expression.

The breaking up of old forms is often a disturbing one to human beings, as indicated in the present world chaos. It is difficult to see that out of the forms in process of disintegration, new and better forms shall arise and the old forms must be destroyed in order to make room for the new, better forms. This understanding of the beneficence and permanency of the underlying creative life makes grief an old-fashioned emotion. Grief is always lack of understanding, comprehension. Grief is not love or mind or poise and power, which are the wellsprings of ordered and beautiful living. The actual signs of the greatest grief are often the signs of the greatest joy to those who are able to grasp their meaning. Even Jesus would not have suffered in his earthly life if he had understood what he later clearly saw on the Cross and which perfect understanding compelled him to make that compassionate plea, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." The crucifixion was not death. It was the

sign of the death of the idea of death. It was the pure Spirit merging fully with the life of form, revealing that flawless understanding which conquered the last enemy. Having conquered that last enemy, Jesus knew, then, Life has no enemy but incomplete understanding.

How comforting to know, no life can ever be less than Life. It is we who falsely interpret. And how comforting also to know that in ourselves lies the perfect solution, which shall make earth the true mirror of the still too distant concept of heaven. Therefore, the only sign of understanding which should ever be recognized is the victorious one. We should never complacently suppose we have gained understanding unless perfection manifests.

The separation of the Spirit from form causes the deficiency in human formula and dogma. It is human weakness which cries for artificial support. It dares not stand alone with the infinite. Its vastness terrifies the human being who has not yet felt that vastness to be Love. Did not Peter, the rock upon whom the Christian church was first built, deny the Christ, the pure Spirit, at the crucifixion, the moment of greatest trial? It is good to remember this, when we are tempted to look without, unrelated to inner guidance, for the solution of a problem or for understanding of Life. We may understand and appreciate Peter's mission, but to gain perfect understanding, we shall have to go farther than Peter. Jesus and his perfect understanding remains the exemplar. He alone stood against the whole world's resistance on the Permanent Spirit.

Religion, in its true meaning, finds its worship in the possible beauties of every day, and every day is pervaded with the meaning of the Sabbath. The true worship comprehends no statement of Truth as final, no matter what its source. The infinite may never be finally stated. Although its many

aspects and expressions can be understood and appreciated, the authority of Spirit alone is forever final. And so every religion, which had its origin in some pure, original idea, dies in the inflexible body of dogma. The transient is not understood in relation to the Permanent and has caused, and still causes, manifold grievous conditions. If the transient were understood in relation to the permanent, dogma would be impossible. As Ouspensky says in "Tertium Organum".

"If in reality we were to collect these system-destroying facts, they would be so numerous in every department of Knowledge as to exceed those upon which existing systems are founded." Another's solution and understanding of Life would no longer postpone the necessity of each individual's making his own solution. The cure for dogma is appreciation. Appreciate what all creative individuals have done. But do not follow them. Follow your own Spirit. Make your own desire out of Life. And when Life dictates a new design, be yielding like autumn trees. Let the leaves of wine and gold fall to the ground to nourish the ground, from which roots search for the nourishment of another garment of spring. Your last year's accomplishment has achieved its purpose. It has made the soil of your environment richer, so that next year's fruition might be richer.

The lack of understanding of the relation of transiency to permanency pervades not only religion, but also business, science and art. How human beings cling to some old law of business conduct, fearful of being hurt by Life! How science and analysis limits itself to the world of appearances and seeks to find Life in these only! How art dictates right and wrong and crucifies its fresh originators of form, which forms it later sets up as standard and out of which it makes a new dogma of right and wrong!

Pure Spirit is above right and wrong. The Spirit's living

presence in any form is indicative of final authority. Its pure understanding sees through and disregards imitation and upholds the original. That is why, even though some courageous originator in science, art, philosophy or religion is at first maligned, he later becomes appreciated and understood. Life has that victorious power. The error lies in the human being's contentment to be a mere follower, thinking in some *form* he has discovered finality, that which is infinite. He, therefore, stops thinking and ends his search.

Earth will never be heaven's perfect mirror until each individual "finds himself" and obeys the pure Spirit, not in one detail, but in every detail of his life. Then there would be no unhappiness through deficient human relations, through "square pegs in round holes," through weakness and debility. This is the true Self-confidence, the confidence in the Permanent Spirit. It makes, breaks, and remakes and sustains all its transient life. For could it not make new forms, it would not be infinite. It would be limited. If form were fixed and permanent, then life would not be free. If love were not new every day, it would be dull. If joy were not inspired by fresh, new images of beauty, it would be bored. If strength were not given new tasks to do, it would grow weak.

For the transient is the living representation of Life's mighty, everlasting permanency!

Dare to believe in the Truth, dare to practise the Truth! The world requires a few hundred bold men and women. Practise that boldness which dares know the truth, which dares show the truth in life, which does not quake before death, nay, welcomes death, makes a man know that he is the Spirit, that, in the whole universe, nothing can kill him. Then you will be free. Then you will know your real Soul.

—*Swami Vivekananda.*

EVOLUTION AND MYSTICISM

By Sir Francis Younghusband

(Compiled from the Introduction to his book, "Modern Mystics," Published by E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc., New York.)

From time to time in different countries there appear men and women who have experience in rare moments of a more exalted state of living than we know of in the common everyday life of our time. Such persons are not necessarily better, or more heroic, or more saintly than many of their fellows who have never been favored with such an experience, though they are always men and women who undoubtedly have set their affections on things above, on the higher things of the spirit, and have striven and suffered and sacrificed in order to attain their goal. But they have had the good fortune, through some happy combination of circumstances, to have been caught up in a rapture and to have experienced in a supreme moment a mode of living intenser, more joyous, more assured, and far more vivid than ordinary life. Their experience has been to them so sacred that they have recoiled from speaking of it to a single other soul. And even if they would, they fear that to put it into words would be at once to lose its precious fragrance. Yet, with all their hesitation, they would long to proclaim their discovery to all the world, that others may share it with them.

The persons who have enjoyed this experience are usually known as mystics. The experience itself is known as the mystical experience. The state of life which is experienced is called the mystical state. The Hindus call this experience *Samadhi*. It is a well-recognized condition among them, though anyone who has attained to it feels it too sacred a matter to speak of except perhaps to a few fellow-seekers after the higher things of the spirit.

Among Moslems those who have this experience are

known as *Sufis*, though as a rule no Moslem who had enjoyed it would call himself a Sufi. With the same religious reserve as characterizes all true mystics he would not refer to it even among his friends.

These mystics . . . have had experience of direct correspondence with the Power behind the Creative Activity—with the Spirit of the Universe—with God. They reveal to us the conditions of that higher mode of life into which the human race is evolving. Their experience is the peak experience of the race, and a pointer of the direction in which it is developing. Their consciousness has reached a higher pitch of awareness of the world about them than ordinary men attain. What they have to tell is therefore specially worth hearing. . . .

Now when mystical experiences are examined in the dry light of every day, they may very easily be brushed aside as unimportant or even as harmful. The passionless scientist might dispose of them as mere hysteria, hallucinations, pathological symptoms of no validity or worth whatever. This is perfectly possible, and in fact has been done. And it may be admitted that there are cases which resemble but are not the true mystical experiences which might be so condemned. But the higher mysticism, the real mystical experience, cannot be so airily disposed of. It is scarcely probable that men of great intellect like St. Thomas Aquinas in ancient times and Father Poulain and Dean Inge in the present day would have devoted so much intellectual energy to its interpretation if in their opinion it had not possessed real worth. Nor would the keen minds of India, Persia and Arabia during long centuries have discussed its manifestation among Hindus and Moslems, and devised systems and codes and rules of life by which others might acquire it, if they had not regarded it as a supremely valuable experience.

And if some psychologists disparage the mystical experience there are others of the highest eminence who regard it as normal and healthy and who note this much in favor of the mystic that he is the better and not the worse for his experience. A drunkard certainly delights while he is drunk. But the next morning is the worse, not the better for it. So also is the person with an hallucination. The mystic, on the contrary, finds his whole being saturated with the joy he has felt. It has become a lasting possession to him. And it alters his whole attitude to life. The mystical experience has stood the test of centuries of criticism and opposition among Hindus, Christians, and Moslems in every country; and if it is still valued today by men of acknowledged sense, it may fairly be presumed that there is something in it worth serious consideration.

As to the objection which has been made to the mystical experience that it is purely subjective—a mere excogitation of the person's own self—it may be replied that no mental state whatever is purely subjective. Every mental state is produced by outside stimulus as well as by internal urge. The external and the internal go together—the internal responding to the external. For every man exists in relation to his fellows and to the whole universe. No man, no living thing, no stone or speck of dust is isolated. All are bound up in one whole, as integral parts of that whole. All are necessary to that whole. And all are affected by that whole. That whole being, of course, the whole universe. Not this Earth alone or the solar system alone. But that totality of things, the entire universe. The mystic, like everyone else, is thus a working part of the universe as a whole. He is in relationship with the whole universe. The mystic's state must therefore be due not only to what is going on within himself, but also—and perhaps chiefly—to the impacts on

him of influences from outside. . . . And the "outside" to whose influences mystics, like the rest of us, are exposed, is the whole universe—nothing less. . . .

The most primitive people sense a Mysterious Power at work in the world about them. They have odd ideas as to the nature and mode of operation of that Power. But this impression on their minds cannot be brushed aside as nothing but superstition. Some superstition there may be. But there may be more truth at the core than cooped-in townsmen may think. . . . They may not have been able to form a clear intellectual conception of that which they sensed. But they may have reached nearer the truth when they believed it to be a living Power than the sceptic reaches who can see nothing but chance behind the happenings in this world or than the man who sees the world as a machine and nothing more. . . .

Science tells us that life on this Earth may last for many millions of years yet, and presumably develop. In round figures it has existed on this planet for about a thousand million years and in all probability it will last for another hundred thousand million years. But out of the thousand million years during which life has existed on this planet, man has existed for only about one million years—for only one out of a thousand. He is a very recent product. He is only in his babyhood. He may develop into something beyond our utmost imaginings. Yet just as we can trace in the simplest form of life faint inklings of ourselves; for example, a tiny power to choose what it will absorb, what it will reject, what it will respond to, what it will repel, so may the most developed of ourselves have in us delicate indications of those beings into which man may develop a thousand million years hence.

And we may be aided in making our forecast by consider-

ing the stages through which animal life has gone in arriving at the human stage. During the course of development upward from amœba to man there have been certain very definite steps taken. One particularly we will dwell upon: the step from the water on to land. During by far the greater period of life-development, living beings were found only in the water. None—either plant or animal—existed on the land. The land was bare and uninhabited. Then, gradually, there emerged from the waters living things who adapted themselves to life on land, in the air, and the sunshine. They had entered upon a new state of being. . . . The sunshine entered their souls. Instead of being cold and fishlike, they became warm-blooded. Their eyesight developed till it pierced to farthest horizons. And their hearing developed as their eyesight. . . . In the last hundred million years they accomplished more than they had in the whole of the previous nine hundred million years. Life became infinitely more vivid and intense.

A like change is now before the human race. As living things came out of the water on to land so are they now coming out of planetary life into universal life. They are emerging into the air and sunshine of the universe as a whole. They will not go about the universe in the body. They will live the life of the universe on the wings of the soul. But they will embody and manifest in ever higher and completer degree that Central Living Power of the universe of which we ourselves are just faintly becoming aware.

It is into this higher state of being that a few of the more finely developed human beings are delicately feeling their way—throwing out tentacles, reaching upward, scarcely able to endure the higher conditions yet irresistibly attracted to them. These are the great poets, the great musicians, the great thinkers, and most especially the men of sensitive in-

tuition who divine their way ahead, the great religious leaders, the great mystics. All these in their most exalted moments have caught glimpses of a higher and far more beautiful state of existence which we Christians have been taught to speak of as the Kingdom of Heaven, and which may be experienced even here and now. . . .

The mystic has had experience—direct and immediate experience—of the inmost working of the universe. His soul has been in actual correspondence with the soul of the universe. Having entered deeply into the spirit of the universe and having been even more deeply penetrated by it, he has known something of what the essential nature of the universe really is. And if he knows what is the essential nature of the universe, he knows also what it must eventually become. For all things in the end become what they at bottom are.

And the progress which mystics disclose may prove to be something very different from what is generally considered to be progress. To most men, not only of the present day but of every age, progress is looked upon as synonymous with the improvement of material conditions. A civilization which can produce motor cars, æroplanes, railways, steamships, telephones, telegraphs, radios and cinematographs is generally regarded as advanced. But the enlightened few in every age have seen that true civilization is something more than material development—that it is spiritualization—that all these material things are only instruments for giving the leisure and opportunity for the development of the spirit. Just as the progress of a plant is towards something more than the very necessary and useful stalk and is towards the fulfilment of its essential nature in the flower, so the progress of the human race must be towards the fuller actualization and manifestation of the Central Spirit of the universe. And

the value of the mystical experience will be found in showing us that towards which we should aim at progressing.

WHOLENESS OF LIFE

By Sister Devamata

Life is universal, it is not individual. It cannot be portioned out or possessed. Like the sunlight or the atmosphere about us, when we would shut it in, we shut it out; when we would tighten our hold on it, we lose it. To try to partition it off is as vain as to build a fence round running waters. They will flow over it, under it, or through it; or break it down. So will life elude all barriers. It cannot be confined or bound.

We live in life, it does not live in us. It is undivided and one with a mighty ocean of being. The law it obeys is made by a higher Power than man. Even our body which seems so intrinsically to belong to us, is not ours. It is the work of universal forces and all the materials used in its building are borrowed from the universe. The universe also repairs and maintains it. It appears to be solid, but in reality science has found that even its bony frame-work is fluid. There is a constant ebb and flow; a constant casting off and replacing; a ceaseless mingling with the universal ocean of Life about it.

These processes are carried on without awareness on our part. We are little conscious of the interior functioning of our organism. We do not know when or how our food is broken up into its component elements and distributed according to the need of each organ. We cannot surprise the body at its task of growing or of renewing worn-out tissue. If we could, we would not have either the skill or the knowledge to cooperate.

Could we offer any suggestions to those marvellous tiny

engineers, the bone-builders, who understand without mathematical calculation how strong and how large to make our supporting structure; how much marrow to leave in each bone, what material to replace and how to repair every injury? The most efficient bridge-builder or mechanician is powerless to accomplish his task with such unerring precision.

The work is done by our own subconscious mind, it may be said. That is true, but the subconscious mind is the instrument of the universal Intelligence. It is the instinct-mind which operates through all Nature. It fashions the pearl through the oyster; it gathers honey and organizes the hive through the bee; it directs the opening of the flower, the swelling of the fruit, the running of the sap. Wherever there are exactitude, skill, proportion and rhythm, we may know that the instinct-mind is at work.

Man becomes a rebel only when his self-consciousness unfolds. Then he withdraws from the universe, creates a little world of his own, and seeks to govern it in his own way. Thus begins a long struggle between the universal Will and the individual will, between the part and the Whole, between the finite and the Infinite. There can be no doubt as to the issue. The lesser cannot conquer the greater, the part cannot vanquish the Whole. When defeat is inevitable, why continue the battle? Why fight so fiercely and stubbornly when we know we must lose in the end?

So long as we remain at war with the universe, we are cut off from our source of supply—from the source of our sustenance, our power and our strength. We are like a plant severed from its root. The reserve we have stored up may carry us for a time; but sooner or later disaster will overtake us. The widening of our consciousness should

make us co-workers with the Whole, not rebels. The instinct-mind is inherently submissive, the conscious mind should be coöperative. It should lead us to consider the interest and advantage of others before our own and to forget ourselves in a larger vision.

If our relation with the Whole is kept true and unblemished we shall not fail in any lesser relation. Christ taught men to seek first the kingdom of Truth and all things else would follow. To live in conscious union with the Great Life is to partake of its pure and exalted qualities and to receive its support and protection. Epictetus says of this: "If all things that grow, nay, our own bodies, are thus bound up with the Whole; is not this still truer of our souls? And if our souls are bound up and in contact with God, as being very parts and fragments plucked from Himself, shall He not feel every movement of theirs as though it were His own, and belonging to His own nature?"

To attain conscious union with the Supreme Source our effort must be uncompromising and genuine; it cannot be intermittent or faltering. Confucius declares that a superior man "is truthful even when he does not speak;" equally consistent must we be if we would manifest greater largeness in our daily living. Our every thought, our every word, our every impulse, must be measured up to the Whole, not to any part. We need not destroy our small self-created world, but we must merge it in a vaster world; and as the raindrop mingles with the sea, so will our lesser life mingle with the Supreme Existence. When this takes place, all pettiness and littleness dissolve and our nature becomes purified and expanded.

Loyalty to the Whole is vital. Without it we cannot grow in strength or wisdom, nor can we attain enduring happiness. Basho, a Buddhist monk of the 17th century and one

of the foremost poets of Japan, symbolizes this faithfulness to the Origin of all things in a subtle couplet thus:

"A rainy day in June; yet
The sunflow'r bends to the sun's course."

So should we turn our faces always toward the source of being. It will transform our mind, heart and life. Self-importance will die; self-assertion will grow mute; a new sweetness will come in the voice, a new gentleness in the manner, a new dignity in the bearing.

Even the conception of Deity will alter. God will seem less personal and more a mighty Presence, enveloping and infilling all creation with Its power, Its wisdom and Its love. Those only who yield themselves up utterly to that all-pervading Presence, losing their littleness in Its vastness, will enter into wholeness of life and live truly. Thomas a Kempis writes: "He to whom all things are one, who draweth all things to one, and seeth all things in one, he alone can be steadfast in heart and remain united with God."

Tools? Thou hast no tools? Why, there is not a Man, or a Thing, now alive but has tools. The basest of created animalcules, the Spider itself, has a spinning-jenny and warping-mill and power-loom within its head: the stupidest of Oysters has a Papin's-Digester, with stone-and-lime house to hold it in: every being that can live can do something: this let him *do*. Tools? Hast thou not a Brain, furnished, furnishable with some glimmerings of Light; and three fingers to hold a pen withal? Never since Aaron's Rod went out of practice, or even before it, was there such a wonder-working tool. —*Carlyle.*

I would fain be to the Eternal Goodness what his own hand is to a man. —*Theologia Germanica.*

EVERLASTING TAO

From the Tao-Teh-King

TAO is infinite.
If we use It, we find It inexhaustible.
Deep! It appears to be Ancestor of all things. . .
Consider the TAO of old in order to arrange the affairs of Now. . .
The Name of Inner Life is Everlasting TAO.
If only he is pure, though he may be small,
The servant of TAO dares to stand against the world.
TAO is able to retain the unity of prince and people;
It subdues and binds all beings with each other. . .
The activity of Everlasting TAO is in the Inner Kingdom,
It does not act except through the Innermost.
If prince and people can maintain it together,
All beings will be transformed from within themselves.
That which men have taught, I also shall teach:
"He who is strong and violent shall not meet with easy death."
I shall in this way teach fundamentals.
In the world when we arrive at gentleness, we press forward to overcome all hardness.
When TAO was manifested to men, horses were used for cultivating the fields.
When TAO was hid with Itself, war horses were reared on the borders.
Great TAO is very straight, but the people love by-roads.
The palace may be well kept, but the fields may be uncultivated and the granaries empty.
The princes take more land; at their girdle they carry a sword.
They eat dainty food; they take possession of much gold.
That is called glorification of robbery.
It is not TAO.

REPORT

ANANDA-ASHRAMA, CALIFORNIA

After an absence of nearly eight months, Swami Paramananda returned to Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, California, the 29th of August. The same day, he held a Service in the Temple, and a warm reception was accorded him by the members and friends of the Ashrama. On Labor Day, the 2nd of September, he held a period of silence in the Temple, lasting nearly four hours. About sixty people were privileged to participate in this. At the conclusion of the silence, those present were permitted to witness the devotional Vesper Service with holy chant and supplication. A Hindu dinner was served in the Ashrama Cloister patio, and everyone felt it was indeed a holy and impressive day. For several years Swami Paramananda has been giving these experiences of silence to his immediate group of faithful followers both on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts.

DIVINE MOTHER'S FESTIVAL

During October 4th, 5th and 6th, Divine Mother's Festival, corresponding to the Indian Durga Puja, was observed at the Temple of the Universal Spirit of Ananda-Ashrama. Sunday, the 6th, in addition to the regular public Services, held at eleven o'clock A.M., and at three o'clock P.M., a Hindu dinner was served to about one hundred persons, at one o'clock. The Swami himself prepared the feast. It was indeed a happy sight to see so many earnest souls associated together on such an occasion. The subject of the Swami's Sunday morning discourse was "Motherhood of God," and for the afternoon Service, he chose as his theme, "Loving our Enemies." This was peculiarly appropriate as the spirit of this festival is one of love and forgiveness. During its celebration, even the greatest enemies are called upon to forgive and forget, and even embrace, remembering that all are children of the Divine Mother.

An unusual dramatic presentation was given in connection with Divine Mother's Festival on October 10th,—a portrayal of the character of Mirabai, the great woman saint of India. The play was given by the Hindu sisters and other Ashrama members. Along with meditation and studies, Swami Paramananda encourages all manner of artistic expression, and every year at this season a play is given. The entertainment consisted of scenes from the life of Mirabai. The large audience was transported into another realm and all experienced great exaltation from the beautiful performance.

TWELFTH ANNIVERSARY

On October 15th, the Ashrama observed its twelfth anniversary. Due to Swami Paramananda's absence, it was not celebrated at the regular time, April 29th. At the public Service, a glowing tribute was paid to the Swami and the Ashrama by Dr. Frederick Kettner, head of the Biosophical Society, who was guest-speaker for the afternoon. There was also spontaneous tribute from the many friends who were present.

VEDANTA CENTRE, BOSTON

During the month of October, Srimati Gayatri Devi infused her ardent spirit into the Services and Classes at the Boston Centre. Not only was the regular rhythm of the work maintained, but in addition, there was the celebration of the Divine Mother's Feast. The public responded warmly and shared the blessing of devotional Services in honor of the occasion, and also of a feast prepared by Srimati's own hand. There was warmth of response and a glowing atmosphere.

Swami Paramananda returned to the Centre in Boston on October 19th where he hopes to remain till the middle or end of November.

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Message of the East

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

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

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SERMON ON THE MOUNT

BLESSED are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they that shall hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.

Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

THOUGHTS FROM A GARDEN

By Swami Paramananda

(From notes taken at the Summer School conducted by Swami Paramananda out of doors at the Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, California, August and September, 1926.)

May the stillness of the morning bestow upon us its healing power, its soothing beneficent calm. May our bodies be refreshed, our minds invigorated by inhaling the breath of the morning. Om!

When the world distracts us and makes us forget God, that is the greatest misfortune. The world can only distract us if we make ourselves susceptible to its distractions. It cannot distract him who is self-fortified. We must not leave any room for the world and its distractions, and in order to block the world's entry, we must form the habit of infilling. It is better to fortify ourselves beforehand and not look for aid after things have gone amiss. How can we make anything productive till our life is filled with illumination, strength. If our inner life is not filled, our outer life will be empty.

Many times we have the touch of the Holy Hand upon us, but we are not able to feel it. We are wrapped in so many layers of thought and consciousness. It is just like a shell around us! How Lord Jesus cried out when He was not able to help others because of this shell of brooding thoughts. His blessing is like a shower of blossoms, full of fragrance, but when our minds are hard and harsh, we are not able to feel anything that is subtle or of spiritual significance. Sometimes fog prevents our seeing the sunshine. There are days in our life when we feel lost in the haze of the world. This is spoken not only of ordinary people, but even of great souls. It is probably one of the disciplines of the spiritual life. But to be able to remain steadfast, not

giving up life's ideal,—that is a very great achievement. Steadfastness and tranquillity. If we always swing with our moods, we shall have very little steadfastness. Sometimes we do things hastily and miss our opportunities. Impatience always comes to those who are shallow, who live on the surface. Unless we can maintain calmness of mind, we lose all our blessings. Many people feel an impetus, make a little progress, but lacking steadiness, they fall back again. Steadiness is the greatest possible benefit to us in our inner life. Every day that we are steady, we make a gain. We should strive when we speak, to be steady; when we walk, to be steady; in all things, to be steady. Even our mishaps are blessed moments in the light of wisdom, for they teach us steadiness and how not to be affected by outer conditions.

In all our efforts, we must seek the Divine aid, and all our efforts will be fruitless unless we have the Divine aid. In order to enjoy peace, we must give peace, and we must always keep our hearts humble and full of faith. Doubt is darkness. It is absence of spiritual light. Though our mind may be peaceful like the clear sky, one little doubting element can overcloud it. It is better to have faith than to doubt. Suppose you trust people who fail you; even then continue to trust them. If one has faith in God one can never be anxious.

It is a tremendous thing in our life when we can give without being afraid. Fever of the body is not half so dangerous as fever of the mind, fever of selfishness, and the only thing that can quench that fever is the blessing of God which comes only to those who are full of humility. Humility is the first step towards spiritual life. Sri Ramakrishna gives the illustration of the rain-water, which settles only in the low places. So the blessing of the Lord is always falling

upon mankind, but it settles only where there is humility. It is only when we have humility in the soul that we learn to receive and retain it. The greatest misfortune for man is when he feels he has no need of God, no need of Truth. If body or wealth causes us to forget this, then they both are misleading us. Renunciation—renunciation of self—the cleansing process of life—makes it possible for us to receive the Divine grace, the Divine blessing.

" He who regards pleasure and pain in self-comparison, that person is highly esteemed." We feel our own pain keenly, also our pleasure. The one, however, who can feel for others in the same way that he feels for himself has transcended his self-interest. Such a one cannot say anything harsh to another, because quickly he thinks, "How would I feel if that were said to me?" He can never be indifferent. Unless we possess this consciousness, we shall have glimpses of Truth but we cannot retain them. We believe in unselfishness, we believe in love, yet we become unloving. Nevertheless, love is the natural instinct of the human heart, harmony is the most natural state of mind and body, and when these two principles flourish together, they form the most natural background for the individual. Possessing them, our life blossoms forth. They bring fruition; they bring strength and courage. Plant them just as you would plant a seed in the ground and then cherish, water and watch over it. Life of devotion is just like that: it is like the little seed that we plant. Our duty, however, does not end with the planting. We must watch it, water it and keep the weeds away from it—the weeds of wrong thoughts and alien influences. Then, some day, even when we are not watching, we shall find that it has become a plant which will infill our life with fragrance. Through our thoughts and feelings, we can make our inner life very fragrant; so much so that

it penetrates the density of the flesh. There are some people who carry with them the fragrance of a flower. Just by entering a room, they make us feel as if a light had burst forth. They have it within them.

Our mind is like a lamp—we never need to remain in the dark. The man who carries the torch of Truth—the cheerful spirit of God-consciousness—even if he were taken to the darkest place, that spirit would enlighten him. The one who has real wisdom carries light and lightness—lightness in expression, lightness in speech, lightness in deed and bearing. *Anandam*—bliss! If we can become partakers in this surely we can fill our little dwellings, our little homes with light!

Om! Tat Sat Om! That Absolute alone is real! This is the greatest mantram we can ever repeat. If you can retain just one little particle of what you receive every day, just one fraction, you will be blessed and others will be blessed through you. It takes courage to live the spiritual life—moral courage! No weak person can attain.

"O Mother, everything is Thy Will!
People think they are doing, but it
is really Thy Will!"

Christ realized this and so have all the great souls.

"Thou canst capture an elephant in a
little mud-puddle;
Thou canst make a lame man to cross
the mountains!
We speak as Thou makest us to speak!"

This consciousness is the only thing that matters. It doesn't make any difference what happens in the outer world. People may distract you and disturb you, but you always remain fixed. This is the idea of surrender. The man of

the world knows too much. Why should he surrender his life into Another's hands? But a little child is so helpless. He knows there is a father and a mother, and he puts everything in their keeping. "May I always be led!" Merely saying this, however, from a negative aspect might deprive us of our strength. Therefore let us say, "In all things may Thy Will be done!" People who are of lowly disposition follow the path of non-resistance, of great spiritual principle; no one can quarrel with them. Endurance! Have endurance like a tree. A tree withstands the weather. It even withstands the blow, giving shelter to him who would cut it down.

Not a father, not a mother, not friends or learning—nothing can compare with what we receive from the Spirit when we learn to look upon life with wisdom. The power of the soul transcends all limitations, but the weakling falls under the sway of ego. Power comes from only one Source, and more and more, as we learn to ally ourselves with that Source, do we enhance our efficiency, our poise and our peace.

The one thing needful is to learn to love. As soon as love dawns in our heart, we become one-pointed. We cannot concentrate our mind on the Infinite sky, but if there is a star shining there, something that marks its vastness with concrete form, then we can focus our gaze. Same way it is in the spiritual life. God is omnipotent, all-abiding, but there must be a point of contact. We can always love something that is definite. It makes everything simpler. In the spiritual life, however, whatsoever form we contemplate must be absolutely related to the Infinite. In this way, through the finite we approach the Infinite. And that is the idea of worship; that is the idea of prayer.

Boundless, Boundless—Thou art Boundless! Thou art the beginning, the Ancient One, and Thou art our goal.

The whole universe is permeated and pervaded by Thee.

When this dawns in our soul, when that Highest Holiest reigns over us and controls all that we do and say, then the fetters of the heart are broken, all doubts are dissolved, and all the bonds of Karma are burned to ashes.

May the wind of His blessing blow away all our heaviness, all our selfishness, all our imperfections, giving us fresh inspiration. May we ever be guided by Him in all our thoughts, words and actions.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

The day spring from on high shall visit us, to shine upon them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death; to guide our feet into the way of peace. —*St. Luke.*

One is nearer God's heart in a garden than any place else on Earth. —*Selected.*

Be as strong as a leopard, light as an eagle, quick as a goat, and brave as a lion to do the Will of thy Heavenly Father. —*Talmud.*

The humble man is like the earth which alike kisses the feet of the king and of the beggar. —*From the Persian.*

There is but one virtue—the eternal sacrifice of self. —*George Sand.*

They come gathered together from the East to the West, by the Word of the Holy One. —*Baruch.*

Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above! . . . Let the earth be opened, and bud forth a Saviour. I the Lord have created him. —*Isaiah.*

Blessed be he who becomes the harp of Thy praise. —*St. Ephraim.*

And the plants and the trees bend in adoration. —*Koran.*

JESUS AHATONHIA

America's First Christmas Carol

(Written for the Huron Indians in the 17th Century by Father Jean de Brebeuf, a Jesuit Missionary, and set by him to a 16th Century folk-song, "La Jeune Pucelle.")

Once in the Moon of winter-time when all the birds had fled,
The mighty Gitchi Manitou sent Angel choirs instead.
Before their Light the stars grew dim,
And wand'ring hunters heard the hymn:
Jesus your King is born! Jesus is born!
In Excelsis Gloria!

Within a lodge of broken bark the tender Babe was found;
A ragged robe of rabbit-skin enwrapped His beauty round;
And as the hunter braves drew near,
The Angel song rang loud and clear:
Jesus your King is born! Jesus is born!
In Excelsis Gloria!

The earliest Moon of winter-time is not so round and fair
As was the Ring of Glory on the helpless Infant there,
While chiefs from far before Him knelt
With gifts of fox and beaver pelt.
Jesus your King is born! Jesus is born!
In Excelsis Gloria!

O, Children of the Forest Tree! O Sons of Manitou!
The Holy Child of Earth and Heav'n is born today for you!
Come kneel before the radiant Boy
Who brings you Beauty, Peace and Joy!
Jesus your King is born! Jesus is born!
In Excelsis Gloria!

In the year 1642, a letter was sent by Father de Brebeuf to his superiors in Quebec. He wrote:

"The savages have a particular devotion for the night that was enlightened by the birth of the Son of God. There was not one who refused to fast on the day that preceded it. They built a small chapel of cedar and fir branches, in honor of the manger of the Infant Jesus. They wished to perform some penance to prepare themselves for better receiving Him into their hearts on that Holy Day: and even those who were at a distance of two days' journey met at a given place to sing hymns in honor of the New-born Child."

The hymn which we now print was written originally by Father de Brebeuf in the Huron tongue, and was entitled "Jesus Ahatonhia," or "Jesus is Born." It probably was the first Christmas Carol ever to be heard in Ontario. In 1649 and 1650, the Hurons suffered terribly under the attacks of their enemies the Iroquois. Only a remnant survived, but these faithfully guarded their carol, and when they settled at Lorette, near Quebec, shared it with the Catholic Father in charge there, Father Etienne de Villeneuve, who wrote down the text of the four stanzas. At his death, in 1749, the manuscript was found among his papers, along with a statement of its authorship. We are happy to be able to reproduce it in the "Message of the East."

Wakonda is the Unknown Life—unchangeable, exalted, very near—mysterious—too great for the mind of man. Many things be godlike—for are they not all from Him?—but He alone is God. —*American Indian.*

His is this boundless earth, and His is yonder sky whose confines lie afar. These two oceans are His loins, yet in this shallow pool He is contained. —*Rig Veda.*

BALANCE IN LIFE

By Sister Devamata

Balance is a fundamental requirement of Nature. Root must be commensurate with branch; hollow must equal wave; heat and cold, light and darkness, pleasure and pain, must measure alike. If one side of the scale dips, something must happen to bring the needle back to centre. The universe will not allow its equilibrium to be destroyed. It demands balance of us. Our individual life forms an inseparable part of the Whole and must be lived for the welfare of the Whole. If our balance is disturbed, it will affect the Whole and a sudden readjustment must follow.

This will explain the unexpected disasters and misfortunes which overtake us apparently without reason. They are the effort of the universe to restore equilibrium in that part of itself which is our life. The reaction, however, is not always from pleasure to pain, the law of balance requires that quite as often joys come to us as correctives of our sad moments.

The French poet, Sully Prudhomme, tells, in one of his poems, of waking to unexpected joy after a night of grieving. He wonders whence and why its coming, and he concludes: "C'est une joie qui s'est trompée de coeur." (It is a joy that has mistaken the heart.) That cannot be. Joys and sorrows do not go astray and enter the wrong heart. They rise in us as the inevitable rebound of our own thoughts, emotions, and actions. The whole drama of life is played within ourselves; outer environment and association provide merely the scene and the scene-shifters.

May we never hope then to escape from the relentless alternation of pleasure and pain and all the dual forces of existence? Will the scales be constantly in process of adjustment, will they swing up and down perpetually? No; we

can be free at this moment, if we wish to be, but too often what we desire really is to eliminate the pain and hold to the pleasure. This is no more possible than it is for a pendulum to swing on one side of the perpendicular only. If it swings at all, it must swing the full arc. So with pleasure and pain, victory and defeat, good fortune and ill; they are the two halves of the same arc and by a law as inevitable as that which regulates the swinging of the pendulum, we cannot separate them, taking one and leaving the other.

This play of opposing conditions occurs only in the realm of the physical universe, however. Through the practice of detachment we can transcend it. When we study our experience, we find that pain is more beneficent in its effect on us than is pleasure. Pleasure softens and betrays us into indulgence; pain ripens our powers and gifts. No great achievement was ever accomplished without countless fatigues and struggles. It is in the soil of suffering that the seed of greatness attains its fullest flowering.

The history of great men and women is the history of misinterpretation, antagonism, scorn and weary failure. Realizing this, we do not shrink from the darker experiences of life or reach out greedily for the bright ones. Like a dispassionate witness, we look upon both unmoved. The needle of the scales swings to centre, we maintain our balance and a serene contentment fills our heart. Contentment and balance are closely interwoven; the greater the content, the more stable the balance; the more stable our balance, the deeper our content.

Why should you not be contented? Epictetus asks. "Have you not received powers wherewith to endure all that comes to pass? Have you not received greatness of heart, received courage, received fortitude? What care I for aught that comes to pass, if I am great of heart? What shall cast me

down or disturb me? What shall seem to me painful? Shall I not use the power given me to the end for which I received it, instead of moaning and wailing over what comes to pass?"

A serious menace to both balance and contentment is "the mania for owning things," as Walt Whitman calls it. The man who accumulates more than he needs, merely for the joy of possession, or who takes more than his share from the universal store, must expect a painful rebound. The reaction of greed may not be immediate, but it is always disastrous. It comes in the form of destructive habits of living, ill-health, constant anxiety, disgrace even. The law of balance does not permit us to have more, without at the same time having less. More materially means less morally and spiritually nearly always. The wise course to follow is to choose the middle path of moderation and simplicity, reducing our desires rather than striving to increase our income, caring less for things and more for Spirit.

Our part in safeguarding the cosmic equilibrium should not be a purely passive one. That we cease to disturb it is not enough, we should actively protect it. The nobility of our life should offset that which is ignoble in the world. We should strive by our daily living to counterbalance the evils of society,—greed, ambition, selfish competition, injustice, persecution and crime. We can do this only by the practice of self-denial, generosity, love and justice. We must cultivate a willingness to share and make room for others. Principle must count with us more than self-interest; and the good of the Whole, before our personal advantage.

When this broader outlook comes to us, our entire attitude changes. No longer are we annoyed by the trifles which once troubled so easily the calm of our spirit. Our vision has expanded. Nothing daunts or shakes us. The universe has become our unit of measurement; an individual life seems

too small a portion of time and space by which to measure the world and our experience. We establish ourselves in the Whole, thus our balance is sustained by the Whole, and we become invulnerable to the shifting conditions of circumstance and environment.

THE SWEET BIRTH OF JESUS

Compiled from the Writings of Richard Rolle

(Hermit of Hampole—14th Century.)

I went about by covetousness of riches, and I found not Jesus. I ran by the wantonness of the flesh, and I found not Jesus. I sat in companies of worldly mirth and I found not Jesus. In all of them . . . I found Him not; for He let me know by His grace that He is not found in the land of softly living. Therefore, I turned by another way, and I ran about by poverty, and I found Jesus, poorly born into the world, laid in a crib, lapped in cloths. I went by sharpness of suffering, and I found Jesus weary in the way, tormented with hunger, thirst and cold, filled with reproofs and blame. I sat by my love . . . and I found Jesus in the desert, fasting, in the Mount, praying alone. I ran by pain and penance, and I found Jesus bound, scourged, given gall to drink, nailed to the Cross . . . and dying on the Cross. Therefore Jesus is not found in riches but in poverty; . . . not among many, but in loneliness. . . .

Thou art oftentimes waking early; why then findest thou not Him? Certainly if thou seekest Him right thou shalt find Him. . . .

The herdsmen who sought found Him lying in a crib between two beasts, that thou knowest: if thou seekest Him verily, it behoves thee to go in the way of poverty, not of riches. . . .

The star led the Three Kings into Bethlehem; there they

found Christ simply in swaddling cloths like a poor child. Understand thereby that whilst thou art in pride and vanity thou findest Him not. . . .

Now, dear friend, before Matins thou shalt think, at the first, of the sweet birth of Jesus Christ, and then afterwards of His Passion. . . . Concerning His birth, thou shalt think busily of the time and the place and the hour that our Lord Jesus Christ was born of His Mother Mary. The time was in mid-winter, when it was most cold; the hour was at midnight; . . . in clouts was He wound, like a child was He bound, and in a Crib before an ox and an Ass that lovely Lord was laid, for there was no other place void. . . . Thou shalt think also of the herds who saw the token of His birth, and thou shalt think of the sweet fellowship of angels, and raise up thine heart and sing with them, *Gloria In Excelsis Deo!*

LAO-TSZE

By Maurice Magre

(Translated from the book, "Confucius and His Quest," by Eliot Fay.)

Straight as an arrow stood Lao-Tsze while Confucius bowed, straight as the soaring cypress, straight as winged thought, straight as the upright figure of a man.

He had been wretched in his childhood; he had been a herdsman on the desolate plains of Thsoo; he had tramped the highways and waited at the gates of towns for the sentinels to fall asleep, that he might enter. But always he had stood erect.

He had walked in the desert when his feet were those of a little boy, walked for whole days without food or drink. And he had perceived in the sadness of the sands the Kwei, who had transfixed him with the gaze of their milky eyeballs, and tried to seize him with their insect-like antennae.

He had confronted these demons boldly; between the low-hung clouds and the shifting sands he had always held himself erect.

A dealer in buffaloes conceived a hatred of him because of his kindly nature, and chained him to a stake for purposes of ingenious torture. For if the good attract the good, and if evil men are attracted by evil men, it is also true that the good exasperate the evil and render them exquisitely vindictive. Yet in the presence of the buffalo-dealer and beneath the blows of his bamboo cane, always he remained unbroken.

As a youth he had known the deepest human suffering; namely, that of wishing to learn, of feeling one's mind ready, like a blossom, to unfold, and to be without books. To have no books, and therefore to be kept down to the level of inferior men, away from the beautiful things one loves. But even after peeping over the garden-walls behind which scholars with high foreheads sat discussing lofty subjects, he had not let his heart be broken, but had continued to stand erect.

For since the world began, it has been an inexorable law that he who is to travel fast and far must first suffer in lowly places. He must cleave upward like a grain of sprouting wheat that pushes through the soil from which it gathers sustenance. He must run the gamut of human contacts without the protection of a father and a mother. He must himself distinguish, by means of the touchstone of his own soul, between the impure and the pure. In this world of changing shadows, he must seek out the true light which, when it is discovered, nevermore goes out. He must learn without a teacher, find his trail without a guide. Ugliness may be his bride, he may be marked with beggars' pox or have a skin disfigured by the mange. But always he must stand up straight.

Through his desire to read the books of men, he was inspired to read another book, which was wide open before his gaze. Innumerable were its characters. But one might decipher them without being a scholar. He read the text of the clouds in the sky. He harkened to the mutterings of hoary mountains. He listened to the fresh grass whispering in the valley. By wading in the river he learned that the whole world is but a moving mirror.

He became the possessor of secrets only to be known by those with minds uncluttered by the specious science of men. In the eyes of animals are to be found some of the deep thoughts that are the basis of ultimate Truth. The appearance of certain plants, the sad aspect of certain stones, taught him that there are no differences save those of form, that all living things are essentially the same, though placed at different points of the vast cycle.

And he read so deeply in this great illuminated book whose pages one was not even obliged to turn, that when at last he obtained access to the bamboo tablets bound with silken thread, he perceived that their science was merely what he had already studied, traced in plainer characters; and then he knew that the only real wisdom is that which one discovers for oneself.

For I was hungry and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, "Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? or athirst, and gave thee drink?" . . .

And the King shall answer and say unto them. "Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me." —*Jesus Christ*

A GREAT SON OF JAPAN

By Gayatri Devi

(The facts and quotations in this article are taken from the book "Kagawa," by William Axling, published by Harper Brothers, New York.)

As I read about Toyohiko Kagawa, I was reminded of the simile often used in India. It is that of the lotus, the most beautiful of all flowers, symbol of the soul in its purest essence. The lotus blooms upon the clear surface of the water, but its root lies deep in the mud and muck below, while its long stem rises upward through the water and supports the flower, so that it may gather fragrance and delicacy from the light and air. In like manner, this far-famed personality of Japan stands against a background shadowed by dark and sordid realities, but his life brings forth an atmosphere pure and beautiful like the mystic flower. Japan has recognized the greatness of her profound and powerful writer, has heralded him as a peace-loving champion of Labor and Peasant Movements, while the unprivileged masses have acclaimed him as their emancipator and as a mystic, an idealist and a lover of humanity. Kagawa's place is amongst those who in all countries, in all ages, have shed their beneficence and peace upon our world torn by dissension, inhumanity and warfare.

The genius of man is not always a respecter of heredity, surroundings or circumstances. In the case of Kagawa we find this to be true even from his birth. He was born of a father whose social, political and financial eminence could not be questioned, but whose morals were of the lowest order. Kagawa's mother was but an ordinary dancing girl, and he their illegitimate child. He speaks of his human birth being a great miracle. However, out of a sinful, lustful world, came forth one of pristine purity and of untarnished moral ideals. Even today, after forty-five years of his earthly

existence, Kagawa's purity is that of a child. How refreshing are the words carved out of his own soul:

"O to be a child once more! . . . the child speaks to the stars, it makes friends with the violet, it talks with the spirit of the pool; in the woods it makes comrades with the trees; the dragon-fly, the butterfly, the locust, manifest toward it a special kindness. Such a child . . . I would be once more! Forever, I would be a babe. I would feel an eternal friendship for the raindrop, the camellia, the bleeding heart and the flake of snow. As long as I have a yearning to be a child, I will find delight in this earthly life. Forever, I would be guileless. Forever, I would be inquisitive. Truly, only a child can enter into the Kingdom of God."

Here Toyohiko reveals his heart and it is the heart of a poet who finds his kinship with Nature and all her living things. This attraction to Mother Nature was Kagawa's compensation for loveless, lonely childhood. For him, there was no real home, for it was without tenderness, without sweet companionship, without the loving presence of motherhood. His father's ancestral dwelling accepted him after his parents' death at the age of four years and it offered him only hardship and maltreatment. Kagawa was of innately gentle nature, even then a pacifist, and his spirit did not revolt against these conditions in bitterness. The little boy sought his comfort and comradeship elsewhere. He learned to speak to the river that flowed by near the house, he communed with the bamboo bush that sang at the touch of the wind, he understood the silent language of the dwarf trees, and the friendly tall pines and the sand dunes by the sea felt his need. When the workmen at his father's estate tilled the soil, Kagawa labored with them. He stood by them, watering the paddy fields, and fed with his own hands the little silk worms and thus grew an affection for the sweet

scented earth, the golden rice plants and all the little things that shared his childish life. From that time the alluring Goddess of Creation fondled him and made him her very own. Throughout all his writings Kagawa revels in her glory and offers her his heart's devotion.

We understand and appreciate Toyohiko's many sided personality when we discover the influences that played upon his life. His passion for books is one of his outstanding characteristics. His keen and expanding intellect could not be satisfied with the mere texts and courses of school and college. Even at the age of seventeen, he had read some of the profound works of Kant, Goethe, Darwin, Ruskin and Max Mueller. His interest was many branched and he was considered by his fellow students a maniac for books. They called him a "transcendentalist". He devoured volume after volume dealing with religion, sociology, theology, biology, astronomy, and science. His nature was too deep to enjoy superficial reading, for he chose only books that stimulated his thinking and gave him a grasp of higher idealism. It is beautiful to hear his own words:

"I want to tramp over the Alps of the world's thinking. As in mountain climbing, one scales peak after peak, so in the mountain ranges of thought there is a scaling of the highest peaks. I wait for Autumn's revel, fully determined to scale the high mountain ranges of the history of human thought."

A new era dawned in Kagawa's life as he came in contact with the Christian missionaries. They offered his love-starved nature a taste of home, comradeship, friendship, opportunities and education and above all the greatest of all gifts,—one that transformed his future life. Through them Toyohiko became acquainted with Christ and the Bible. His sensitive, receptive soul responded with passionate zeal

to the teachings of gentle Jesus and with flaming enthusiasm, he embraced the new faith. This was no fleeting evanescent interest on his part. It brought about disinheritance, poverty and perpetual struggle. But Kagawa had chosen his course and was not to be turned back.

The real great men are not believers in high sounding theories. Their one aim is to put into practice all lofty ideals. As Kagawa read and re-read the Bible, he became imbued with the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount, and his whole being cried out for the fulfillment that was Love—Love that was God, Love that could give shelter even unto the fallen, the down-trodden, the unworthy. Out of deep inner conviction and with a sense of dedication, Kagawa marked out for himself his path and destiny.

He was still a student, still immature in years when he started out on his mission of service to humanity. As if hearing a higher call, he walked into a world where ugliness, cruelty and sin played freely, and there found his home. It was in the slums of Shinkawa where he occupied a room measuring six by six, with one door and no window, without light, without air and surrounded on all sides by filthy alleys. To live there was to live among people who were either beggars, robbers, murderers or cut-throats. To live there was to cope with disease incurable and deadly. To live there was to inhale the air polluted by insanitation, sin and prostitution. Gambling and murder were common vices at Shinkawa. None of these terrible conditions could thwart Kagawa's determination. He had come there to practise love, to mend the lives of these under-privileged outcasts of humanity, to study their problems and to pour out on them his strength, his compassion, his all. The little room whose only adornment was his library of books was infested by vermin and by diseased beggars, but it remained his sanctuary for

fifteen years. Many times he unhesitatingly shared his bed with those whose only contribution to him was some deadly disease. Many times he went hungry so that some half human creature would not starve. Many times he was robbed, beaten, threatened with murder and forced to fly, yet he would not forsake his post. He did not come to Shinkawa to be an exalted preacher of a Gospel. He ministered to the sick, he pacified the quarreling, he brothered the moral degenerate and he shared the lives of the destitute and decrepit. In all his struggles with the bullies and the murderers, he used only one weapon. It was love and love alone. Its subtle influence and its gentle might saved him from the jaws of death and gradually undermined the dark forces of evil around him.

Kagawa could erect no temple to enshrine his Deity, his pulpit was the open street surrounded by humanity—ugly, insensate and fallen, but his living gods. In each man and woman, he saw his beloved Christ and he tried with soul's passion and burning words to arouse their unawakened Divinity. His was a daring task and he was willing to sacrifice his all—even his health—on the altar of unfortunate mankind. Today Kagawa is almost blind because at Shinkawa he contracted trachoma, one of the most infectious and deadly diseases that has afflicted mankind. His own physical limitations have created obstacles in his path but his spirit has recognized no defeat. Lying low, barred from outside life and activity, he speaks as one on wings of inspiration:

"At the center of things, there is a heart. On the yonder-side of darkness, there is light; deprived of sight, I discern that light flooding through the darkness. . . . Prayer continues! Prayer continues! Daily my prayer continues! Back of the blinded eyes, prayer continues. Be the sky

clouded or clear, my prayer continues. Given the gift of life, I must pray, pray for God's kingdom, pray for the world. . . . In the darkness, I meet God face to face. In the darkness, my soul is clothed in white raiment, and purified, ascends to the Holy of Holies, into the very Presence of God. The darkness itself is a Holy of Holies of which no one can rob me."

Kagawa's experience at the Shinkawa slum opened his eyes to the fact that poverty and unfair labor conditions were the root of major evils. As a student, he studied the problems there and called the slum his human laboratory. To reform the slum was to raise the economic standard of the peasants and laborers and to offer them better livelihood and wages. He had already risen to great height as a literary master and he used his pen to rouse the consciousness of the Empire to the existing, deplorable conditions of the slums surrounding large cities. He was by no means an ordinary reformer. He set in motion his energy and will to destroy the cause of evil and not to cover it by temporary change. He says:

"I am an industrial scientist. I am researching life at one of its out-breakings in the social order. Humanity by rights should not degenerate to such a state; . . . they did not drop to this depth of their own desire. They cannot eat without working, and working with their hands brings but a pittance of ten or fifteen cents a day. On this, they must live. To throw away their chastity means money without toil. Facing starvation, the simple-minded women barter their souls and discover a means of livelihood."

He became the leader of the laborers and the peasants in their struggle for rights. Hours were long and wages were low. He was called an agitator and was imprisoned. There were strikes and conflicts and struggles and through them all, Kagawa, the idealist, the pacifist, attempted to inspire

the masses with the principle of soul-force and to refrain from hatred. Even when those for whom he was shedding his life's blood misunderstood him and his purpose and called him a traitor, he remained unshakable. He would not compromise his principle for the sake of any party supremacy. His mission was not to overthrow either industrialism or the Government. He was intensely human and was actuated by one supreme motive—it was to restore the men of the soil to their wholesome existence and to redeem the laborers from the scourge of gambling and drinking by rousing their self-respect and teaching them their worth as working men. Again and again Kagawa of Japan reminds one of Gandhi of India. For both are the leaders of the masses and believers in the power of the Spirit. Toyohiko's character reveals the harmonious blending of the idealist and the practical worker. Like Gandhi, he would spiritualize the political and the social order of humanity. Here he speaks with the assurance of his vision:

"Some people say that social and religious movements are two different things. This, however, is said by those who fail to think of religion as an art concerned with the whole of life. If the material and the spiritual are separate entities and there is no relation between God and the world, this contention might be true. To him, however, who makes life the realization of the supremest good, it is impossible to separate social and religious effort. If religion is the whole of life in action, how can social movements exist apart from religion. . . .

"There are those who argue that brute force will solve all problems. . . . The evolution of the social order is not governed by militarists or militaristic dictators, or anarchists who rely on force. . . . A world built by force will be destroyed by force. Ask me not to live in so precarious a

world. I place no hope whatever in force, no matter what form it takes. Nothing lifts us upward except the power which comes from within. Science, invention, discovery, art, drama, morals, religion and exertion directed toward the supremest good, if these forces which issue forth from within, are omitted, outward forces are powerless. My reliance is on the unseen, inner forces!"

In these utterances of Kagawa, one can almost hear the echo of Mahatma Gandhi's aspiration and idealism. Like him, Kagawa mingles prayer with action, silence with pacifistic conflict and challenges the brute force by the might of the soul. Both claim they owe their non-violent ideas to the great sage of Russia, Tolstoi. Kagawa and Gandhi are the two great leaders of the spiritual Orient. They are men of absolute renunciation and unquestioned selflessness. Gandhi is the general of Truth and Kagawa the apostle of Christ.

Kagawa's towering renunciation brings to my mind that noble and exalted saint of Christ, Francis of Assisi. This spiritual hero was wedded to Lady Poverty and pronounced that property and power were the two great impediments against the freedom and happiness of man. Like him, Kagawa remains at a safe distance from our so-called civilization of grandeur and refuses to own property and possessions. One can never question his sincerity and conviction when he says:

"I enjoy poverty. Many possessions are to be deplored. If one has nothing, one's troubles are few. By this, I do not mean that I want to lack the bare necessities of life. If, in some way, I can manage to live, a grand house is no attraction. Rather give me a hut among the trees where the snail, the killifish and the lotus leaf are my friends. I have no desire to be rich. . . .

"This civilization of steel and concrete separates mankind

from the soil. The soil is God's foot-stool. The scent of the soil heals me. I have no desire to become a civilized man. I want to live close to the soil."

During the years 1930, 1931 of economic depression in Japan, Kagawa was asked to be the head of the Social Welfare Bureau, formed to cope with unemployment and poverty. He was offered a salary of $9,000 a year. He accepted the service but refused the sum offered. He could well have utilized his legitimate earning toward his own organization on behalf of the laborers and peasants, but he would not. Tokio was in distress financially, therefore he would not accept money which would further impoverish her. High office, honor, recognition throughout the Empire,—nothing has touched his simplicity and renunciation. Kagawa is always poor and the friend of the poor. Japan has addressed him as the modern, hundred-handed Goddess of Mercy.

His untiring zeal and persistent service have not been in vain. He has been instrumental in destroying the slums of six large cities of his Mother-land. He has seen the improved lives of the laborers and the peasants, and he is still working for their welfare. His powerful human, soul-stirring writings have brought him fame from far and wide. His love has drawn to itself, the devotion, loyalty and affection of hundreds of hearts. Kagawa is a victor, a dreamer, a singer of divine miracles and mercies. Although his mortal frame is battered by the strong hand of nature, he sings his songs of love and inspiration to rouse slumbering mankind to the consciousness of divinity. He struggles, he suffers, he tastes sweet ecstasy, and through all, finds the gentle hand of the all-loving Spirit leading him unto Himself.

Will Kagawa's dream come true? Will his vision flower into being? It is to establish a Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, a Kingdom where love, brotherhood, humanity, service and

renunciation will flourish. Where love will wipe out the individual greed and selfishness. Where men will barter their all for the common good. Kagawa has instituted communities to enhance such ideals and to produce true Christians, not those who theorize but those who would lose their lives for Christ's sake.

Kagawa is not the first teacher or prophet to dream of Golden Rule living. Throughout the march of centuries, we hear the voices of sages and Saviours, of Sri Krishna, of Lord Buddha, of the Christ, of Sri Ramakrishna calling unto humanity to arise from the ways of self and offer all for Truth. Cloisters have produced many saints. The forest depths have resounded with wisdom and revelation. From the mountain top, men have sung the glory of immortality, but Kagawa's mysticism mingles with the humdrum notes of our everyday life. His light illumines the narrow and dingy corners and the dark alleys of human existence. His calm rests upon the rushing noise, the turmoil and the chaos of our modern world. He has attained his peace through deprivation, through suffering and through pain such as every man may meet on the path of destiny. May we gather courage and strength from his benign, triumphant life and carry in our hearts that precious peace which will not fail us or our fellow men in the hours of need.

Peace! Peace! Peace be unto us and unto all living beings!

By the contemplation of the glorious Immortals, on whose raiment is no speck of dust, and whose heads are crowned by garlands of undying flowers; by the recital of the deeds wrought by their invincible might; by the history of their bounteous gifts and heroic lives, the soul of man must be elevated. —*Ramayana, as told by Frederika Richardson.*

OUR LADY'S TUMBLER

A Legend from the Old French

(Translated by Isabel Butler.)

In the lives of the early fathers we are told this tale. . . . Now speak we of a certain minstrel and what befell him.

He came and went for so long in diverse places, and so wasted his strength, that at last, weary of the world, he withdrew into a holy order. His horses, his garments, his money, and all that he had he put therein, and left the world, for he would follow its ways no more. Thus, then, he came into the monastery which men say was that of Clairvaux. Now, though the youth was of much worship, and fair and well made and goodly, he yet knew no craft of which the folk there stood in any need. For he had lived only by tumbling and leaping and dancing; and though he knew right well how to leap and to spring, he knew naught beside, for no other lesson had he ever learned, nor knew he either Pater Noster, or chant, or Credo, or Ave, or aught else that might work for his salvation.

Now, when he was come into the monastery and saw the tonsured brethren who let no word fall from their lips, but spoke among themselves by signs, . . . the minstrel was much abashed and ill at ease, for he knew not how to share by word or by deed in that which was the practice of the place; so was he dejected and heavy at heart. He saw the monks and the lay brothers each serving God in his place and after the manner appointed to him. . . . One recited a psalm, and another the lesson for the day; the young clerks were at their psalters, and the lay brothers at the litanies, while the more ignorant said their Pater Nosters. . . . Then he said: "Holy Mary, alas, and woe is me! . . . What do I do here? There is no one so base in all the convent but strives to serve God in his own manner; but I have no trade that is

of service to me here. . . . Truly a poor creature am I in a goodly place." Then he wept to relieve his grief, and wished he were dead. . . .

When he had bemoaned himself thus, he went away through the cloister, looking this way and that, until he came into a crypt; there he crouched down by an altar, drawing himself as close to it as he might. Above the altar was a statue of Our Lady, the Holy Mary, and he did not go astray when he came into that place. . . . Anon, when he heard the mass begin, he sprang up dismayed. "Ah, how am I brought to shame!" . . . he cried; "I am as a tethered ox, for I do naught but browse, and I eat my bread to no purpose. . . . I will do what I have been taught to do, and I will serve the Mother of God here in Her monastery by my own trade; the others serve by singing, and I will serve by tumbling." He took off his cloak and disrobed himself, and laid his garments beside the altar. . . .

Then he turned to the image, and looked up at it very humbly: "Lady," said he, "into your care I commit me, body and soul. Gentle Lady, Sweet Queen, do not despise that which I know, for I would serve you in all good faith, and so God may help me, without offense. I know not how to read or to sing, but right gladly will I show you my most chosen tricks of tumbling."

Then he began to leap and to spring, now up and now down, beginning first with small capers, and then leaping higher and higher. . . . Anon he bowed before the image and worshipped her, and honored her with all that he had. Then he did the French trick and the trick of Champagne, and the tricks they do in Brittany, and then the trick of Lorraine; and he did them all with great travail. . . . "Lady," he said, "this is good disport; and I do it for no other save for you and for your Son before all, so God may help me,

I do not. . . . Lady, despise not your thrall. I worship you with my heart and my body, my feet and my hands, for I know not how to worship you in any other way. Henceforth will I be your minstrel. . . . In God's name despise me not." Then he turned away and made a spring. "Lady," he said, "so God may save me, this thing did I never before. This trick is wholly new, and is not for common folk." . . . And as long as the mass lasted, so long did he leap and skip and dance, and never ceased till he was so spent that he could no longer hold himself upright, but sank down for very weariness, and fell to the ground exhausted. . . . "Lady," said he, "I can do no more now, but in sooth I will come again."

The good man continued long in this way of life, but at length he was thrown into much trouble. For a monk took note of him, and blamed him, that he came not to matins; and he marvelled what became of him, and what was the service that he did, and how he earned his bread. Now the monk so followed him, and so watched and spied upon him, that he saw him perform all his tricks. . . .

He went to the abbot and told the whole story, and the abbot arose and said to the monk: "Now do not spread this abroad, but be silent, for by your vows I command you." . . . And the abbot and monk watched all the convert's devotion, and all his leaping and dancing; and they saw how he bowed before the image, and how he skipped and sprang till his health failed him. . . .

And the Abbot watched and straightway saw a Lady come down to him from the vault, . . . and with her came angels and archangels from heaven, who came about the minstrel and gave him comfort and consolation. . . . Then they hastened to serve him, for they longed to reward him for the service that he had paid to their Lady, that most Sweet Wonder. . . .

The holy fathers tell us that thus it befell the minstrel. And now let us pray to God, who is above all, that He grant us to serve Him so well that we may deserve His love.

GOD'S GRANDEUR

By Gerard Manley Hopkins

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil,
It gathers to a greatness like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reck His rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared
with toil;
And bears man's smudge, and shares man's smell;
the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.
And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights from the black west went.
Oh, morning at the brown brink eastwards springs,
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast, and with, ah,
bright wings!

REPORT

After a visit of only two weeks, Swami Paramananda unexpectedly returned to California in response to a sudden need, leaving Srimati Gayatri Devi in charge of the Boston work.

The Swami, as is his custom, broke his trip at Cincinnati and Louisville, where old friends and new never fail to give him enthusiastic welcome. This visit was no exception. At Cincinnati, November 9, there was an intimate gathering, with entertainment by the faithful group there, while at

Louisville, where he was taken by motor, hundreds of people flocked to the Truth Centre to hear him on the three occasions he spoke there. His visit extended but from Sunday to Monday, but it was packed with activity and goodwill.

ANANDA-ASHRAMA, CALIFORNIA

The Swami reached Ananda-Ashrama, California on November 14. He was greeted with a real rain storm which made attendance at the Sunday Services on November 17 difficult. But the weather caused only a temporary set-back to public activity, which is always stimulated by the Swami's presence, and the cooling drops of moisture, after the devastating brush fires which recently menaced the Ashrama, were "life-saving and life-giving" to the parched trees and the flowers on the Ashrama grounds.

Thanksgiving Day drew not an inconsiderable number of devoted hearts to the Special Service which was conducted by the Swami in the Temple of the Universal Spirit, at 11 A. M. The Swami's words, the altar, beautifully decorated with fruits on top and produce and flowers at the base, in royal offering, all created a feeling of profound thankfulness for spiritual bounty.

November 30 saw the opening of the Ashrama Christmas Bazaar, unusually rich this year with a lovely assortment of Ashrama arts and crafts and donated articles. Mrs. Haggarty presided graciously over the tea-table, and the day was most successful from every point of view. The Bazaar will stay open until Christmas.

VEDANTA CENTRE, BOSTON

The Vedanta Centre—in regard to its important events for November—followed largely the rhythm of the California Ashrama. Thanksgiving Day was marked by an eleven o'clock Service Thursday morning, faithfully attended by all those who were able to be away from their household

engagements. Gayatri Devi spoke beautiful and inspired words before an altar glowing with light, fruit and flowers, striking a vibrant key-note for the day.

The Centre's Christmas Bazaar opened earlier than the Bazaar in California, its first tea—presided over by Mrs. Palfrey—falling on Saturday, November 16, which unfortunately was marred by one of New England's famous (or infamous) North-East storms, as was also the second tea on the Saturday following, at which Miss Sherwood was hostess. Even so, the response of those who came compensated for lack of numbers, and as the days passed, the interest steadily grew, so that by the third tea on Saturday, November 30, the rooms of the Centre were crowded. The results so far have been most satisfactory. Both the Centre and the California Ashrama take this opportunity of expressing their deep appreciation for the generous aid that members have given through their donations, their talents and their coöperative spirit.

Just before leaving Boston, the Swami reinaugurated the Thursday Evening Meditations, to the delight of those to whom these wonderful gatherings have been a profound spiritual experience. As before, membership has been limited to those who have proved their interest and their sincerity, thus eliminating any superficial or alien element which might mar the atmosphere created.

In addition to the regular Services and Classes at the Centre, Gayatri Devi, during the latter part of October and through the first half of November, engaged in important outside activities, speaking to groups of young workers, men and women, at the Boston and Cambridge Y.W.C.A. In this way, by means of her bright spirit, she has been able to awaken in these eager fresh minds a better understanding of India and a genuine interest in her culture and her people.

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