

SOUVENIR EDITION.

India's Message ... to America.



VIRCHAND R. GANDHI, B. A.,

Bombay, India.



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India's Message to America

AND OTHER ADDRESSES

*Delivered under the auspices of the Cassadaga Lake
Free Association, Lily Dale, N. Y., at the
Summer Meeting, 1894,*

agharji
By VIRCHAND R. GANDHI, B. A.,
Bombay, India,

*Honorary Secretary and Representative at the World's
Parliament of Religions, of the Jains
Community, India,*

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
W. W. HICKS.

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Delivered August 11, 1894.

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IMPRESSIONS OF AMERICA,

Delivered August 12, 1894.

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SOME MISTAKES CORRECTED.

Delivered August 19, 1894.

INTRODUCTION.

Virchand R. Gandhi was born thirty years ago (August 25th 1864) at the town of Mahuva, Bombay Presidency, India. He received careful home instruction, and attended the Hindoo schools of his native place until he was seventeen years old. At 17 he entered the University of Bombay. Here he pursued his studies with great diligence and at 20 was graduated receiving the degree of B. A.

Leaving the University proper, Mr. Gandhi devoted himself to the study of law, and in due time was admitted to practice and soon attained distinction, not alone in Bombay, but in Calcutta and other prominent cities of India.

Mr. Gandhi is a member of the community of the Jains, which is the strictest and most spiritual of the religious communities of India, and was a Protestant community against Brahminical tyranny with defined purposes and methods, when Buddhism arose with kindred aims, 600 years B. C.

Mr. Gandhi appeared at the World's Parliament of Religions, the duly accredited delegate of the Jains community, and the personal deputy or representative of their chief Monk, Muni Atmaranji, in whose name he addressed the great parliament. A number of distin-

guished Hindoo scholars, philosophers and religious teachers, attended and addressed the parliament, some of them taking rank with the highest of any race for learning, eloquence and piety, but it is safe to say that no one of the Oriental philosophers was listened to with greater interest than was this young layman of the Jains Community as he declared the "Ethics and Philosophy" of his people. Mr. Gandhi is not only well versed in the literature of his native country, but is also familiar with Universal history ; is a student of the classics of Greece and Rome, and is an exceptionally good English scholar.

He has already acquired distinction as an author, both in English and in Guzerati, his native tongue. His recent translation from the French of "The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ," from an ancient manuscript discovered in a Buddhist monastery in Thibet by Nicholas Notovitch, together with an elaborate introduction in defence of the genuineness of the manuscript, is well known to American scholars, and has awakened great interest.

Mr. Gandhi's mission to our country did not end with his official utterance before the Parliament of Religions, but by the desire of his people and at their expense, his stay has been indefinitely prolonged for the express purpose of studying our government and institutions,

and as occasion may offer, to inform our people by speech and pen, concerning India, its civilization, its philosophies, its religions, and the home life of its people, particularly of the community—numbering about 5,000,000, which he especially represents—the community of the Jains.

The Jains, as a religious body, although not as numerous as some others, occupy in some respects the very highest position in India.

The wealth of India is largely found among the members of this community, and a large proportion of the business of the entire country passes through their hands, thus showing not alone leadership in intelligence, but also in business and general progress.

The Jains are also noted for fidelity to their religious principles and lead all others in works of benevolence; are advocates and patrons of liberal education, and extend their charities and humanities toward all the lower creatures, extending even to plant life. They have founded, and are maintaining, hospitals for sick and enfeebled animals—recognizing them as creatures of God—dwelling on a lower plane, but possessed of the same essence of life with man, and entitled to the rights and protections of common brotherhood. The Jain vow not to destroy life, applies with equal force to animals and

man. No Jain has ever been a butcher and no true Jain has ever partaken of animal food.

Until comparatively recent years Western scholars held to the opinion that the Jains were but an offshoot from or a sect of Buddhism, but it is now well understood that while there are many points of contact and resemblance between Jainism and Buddhism, the former antedates the latter in point of time, and has outlived it in India because of reasons inherent in its philosophy, its religious tenets, and its more practical exemplification of life. The vows of the Buddhist and the Jainist Ascetic are much alike and are doubtless of Brahmanic origin.

THE FIVE GREAT VOWS OF THE JAINS.

1. I renounce all killing of human beings, whether subtle or gross, whether movable or immovable. Nor shall I myself kill living beings (nor cause others to do it). As long as I live, I confess and blame, repent and exempt myself of these sins, in the thrice threefold way, in mind, speech and body.

2. I renounce all vices of lying speech (arising) from anger or greed or fear or mirth. I shall neither myself speak lies, nor cause others to speak lies Nor consent to the speaking of lies by others. I confess and blame, repent and exempt myself of these sins, in the thricefold way, in mind, speech and body.

3. I renounce all taking of anything not given, either in a village or a town or a wood, either of little or much,

of small or great, of living or lifeless things. I shall neither take myself what is not given, nor cause others to take it, nor consent to their taking it. As long as I live, &c., &c., as in previous vows.

4. I renounce all sexual pleasures, either with gods or men or animals. I shall not give way to sensuality, &c. The five comments or "clauses" attached to this vow are here given topically :

1. Topics relating to women (in the sexual relations) not to be discussed.

2. The physical forms of women not to be contemplated.

3. Former pleasures and relations with women should not be recalled.

4. Careful diet exacted and abstinence from liquors and highly seasoned food.

5. A bed or couch accepted for sleep should not belong to a woman, nor be in close proximity to that occupied by women.

5. I renounce all attachments (pleasure in external objects) whether little or much, small or great, living or lifeless ; neither shall I myself form such attachments, nor cause others to do so, nor consent to them doing so, &c.*

The above vows are taken by the monks and nuns who are the religious teachers of the Jains. Laymen also take

*For entire text and comment, the reader should consult "Sacred Books of the East," vol. xxii.—*Gaina Sutras*. Translated by H. Jacobi. Max Muller, Editor.

vows of many kinds for periods or for life, vows which are believed to conduce to purity of life, morality of conduct, liberality, brotherly kindness and spiritual growth. The Jains do not recognize the sacred authority of the Vedas, and do not hold themselves to be amenable to the laws of caste, and deny the worship of Idols. They believe in the taansmigration of souls, a re-embodiment, but predicate its necessity upon present conduct under the laws of Karma, but they teach the possibility for each person of fulfilling that law in this stage of existence by practicing the moral and physical austerities and the religious devotions, and so pass into the state of perfect bliss from which there is no return.

The practical creed of the Jains may be summed up in these words: Right Knowledge, right Faith, right conduct, and on these hang all "the law and the prophets."

In determining what *is* right knowledge the Jain prophets and books are particular and luminous, subtle and profound, and differ widely from the Brahman and the Buddhist philosophers and cult.

Right knowledge, they (Jains) say, is five-featured.

1. The right perception. (Mati.)
2. Simple (pure) knowledge based on and limited by the perception. (Semta.)

3. Other knowledge, from sources without and beyond, which may be injected or imported by spiritual (super mundam) powers. (Avadhi.)

4. The knowledge of the thoughts of others, the power to enter into and utilize the thoughts of other minds. (Manahparyaya.)

5. Highest knowledge and power of knowing, omniscience. (Kevala.)

This is the wisdom of the perfected ones—the state of liberation, the virvana of purification and conservation in this life. (Givanmukti.)

“When the Venerable One (Mahaviṛya, the great prophet of the Jains) had become an Arhat and Gina, he was a Kevalin, omniscient and comprehending all objects, he knew all conditions of the world, of gods, men and demons; whence they come, where they go, whether they are born as men or animals (kyavana), or become gods or hell beings (upapada); their food, drink, doings, desires, open and secret deeds, their conversation and gossip, and the thoughts of their minds; he saw and knew all conditions in the whole world of all living beings.”*

The following addresses were delivered by Mr. Gandhi during the month of August of this year under the auspices of

THE CASSADAGA LAKE FREE ASSOCIATION

at their widely known rural Summer University at Lily Dale, New York.

*Akarauga Sutra, Bk 11, Lec. 15.

The distinguished Hindoo scholar could not have been more worthily presented to the American people, and no place so appropriate for the utterance of his interesting and remarkable message could be named.

To this beautiful retreat hundreds of the most advanced thinkers, representing all schools of philosophy and thought, but dominated by the Spiritual philosophy, flock annually from all parts of the Union and from Canada, while thousands of inquirers, students and good citizens from nearby States and communities, make up the great audiences that are attracted by the programme of instruction and entertainment, or by the natural beauties of the place—or both. In the vast audiences that listened to these addresses were intelligent representatives of twenty States of this Union and from parts of Canada, including jurists, statesmen, ministers of the gospel, philosophers, editors, leaders and workers in all fields of usefulness and reform, of both sexes. The greeting which this great harmonious gathering (although representing much diversity of thought and opinion), gave to our “heathen brother,” was inspiring and prophetic to see—a scene possible only in such a place, under such auspices, and never to be forgotten by those who were present.

During his stay at Cassadaga, Mr. Gandhi was the centre of much interest, and all possible respect was

shown to him, not alone because he was accepted as a fraternal messenger from India, but on his own account, for his gentleness of deportment towards all was as impressive and beautiful in the social gatherings as his spirit and words were captivating and convincing from the platform.

Hundreds of eager students attended his private lectures upon the different schools of philosophy of the Orient, and his frequent conversations upon the home life of his people.*

The addresses now presented are worthy of wide consideration and acceptance. Certain statements, directly opposed to popular opinions respecting the civilization and religion of the Hindoos, will, doubtless, awaken discussion, and probably provoke denial. But it is always worth while to know the truth, and to know it, if possible, from those who are most affected by its denial. And Mr. Gandhi is well able to defend the appeal and thesis of his brethern, whose spokesman he is. In the meantime all must admire and commend the

*Before leaving Cassadaga, and on the 30th anniversary of his birth, Mr. Gandhi was presented with a beautiful souvenir in the name of "The National Association of Spiritualists," in a very felicitous address by President H. D. Barrett. The souvenir was of wrought gold appropriately inscribed—representing in perfect symbolism the union of the Orient and the Occident, from an original design by Prof. A. C. C. Pfuhl.


spirit of gentleness and brotherhood pervading these addresses—a spirit which is supposed to have home-stead authority on the Christian heart, but which, alas ! is too often ignored by the Christian dogmatists.

Oct. 5, 1894.

W. W. HICKS.

216 East 70th Street,
New York City.





India's Message to America.

MY brothers and sisters of America: I greet you in the name of India and her three hundred millions of sons and daughters. I recognize in you my brothers and sisters, from whom I seem to have travelled away, ages ago, to visit the Orient, and now I return to you with a message from that country—a message of peace, of love, of universal brotherhood and therefore of universal fellowship. I stand before you on a common level, not on the relationship of master and servant nor of the conqueror and the conquered. I hail you, my brothers and sisters, with all my heart and with all my soul, and while I stand before you with that feeling, I represent not myself alone, but the voiceless millions of India. I come to you at your invitation and at your courtesy. It is the first time in the history of nations that this vast country, the American country, sent a cordial invitation to the farthest country, India, on the other side of the globe. It is a crown of glory in the

history of this new nation, the nation so progressive, so intellectual, so tolerant. It is an honor to India to partake of the festive board, the intellectual, the religious, the philosophical board which you have spread for her entertainment. You did invite us, not because you are kings and emperors who have authority to command us, but you bid us as brothers of the same family and as progenitors of the civilization which you now enjoy. It is a commemoration of the completion, so to speak, of one cycle of life, a picture of the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega, because the first representative of race is invited to commune with the last and best in opportunities of races. That this new American nation, the youngest child in the history of nations has wisely and hospitably invited the aged and well-preserved nation from the farthest country to the entertainment, is without precedent in the history of the world.

It is a pleasing thought to my country that she finds parallels of epochs or stages in the development of human lives and races. While you Americans tell of your Washington, who was "first in peace, first in war, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," so we, also, have our Washington, who many centuries ago embalmed himself in the institutions of my country. No greater man than King Ashoka has ever reigned in India and no

succeeding monarch has equalled his glory. He was inspired by a liberal and catholic spirit in his internal administration and in his foreign policy, and the profound love of truth and the desire to spread the truth, have made his name a household word from Siberia to Ceylon.

You have had your Abraham Lincoln, who was the regenerator of your country, a second Washington. We had also our Abraham Lincoln, the victor of a great and patriotic war, the patron of reviving Hindooism, the center of all that is best and most beautiful in modern Sanskrit literature, and the subject of a hundred legends. Vikrama the Great, is to the Hindoo what Charlemagne is to the French, what ^{Frederic?} Albert is to the English, and what Harun-Er-Rashid is to the Mohammedan. To the learned as to the illiterate, to the poet as to the storyteller, to the old man as to the school-boy, his name is as familiar in India as the name of any prince or potentate or mighty leader in any country. Tender recollections of Shakuntala and Urvashi rise in the minds of Hindoo scholars with the name of that prince in whose court Kalidasa flourished. Hindoo astronomers cherish the memory of that great patron of Varaha-Mihira, and Hindoo lexicographers honor the name of the potentate who honored Amara-Sinha, and, as if the true claims of

glory were not enough, a hundred tales familiarize his name to the illiterate and simple, so that in this sense history does repeat itself and teaches that after all, nations are preserved, regenerated and liberated to higher planes of realization, achievement and prosperity in material and spiritual things, by human embodiments of those divine forces which are universal, and which, when rightly understood, are answerable for human destinies. You Americans are living in the realization of the ancient dreams of the philosophers of India and the East. The means of growth and human uplifting are great here. Our prophets and philosophers of the East have laid the foundations of them and it is now for you to build on those foundations. This is the message of India, which she delivers to you and through you to the whole American nation. With this message, also, come more than simple greeting and recognition. The young American nation is in a condition to rightly appreciate the treasures of the ancient lore and sublime philosophy of India and the Orient, because, intellectually considered, this is virgin soil, and with the message which I bring to America comes also the fraternal invitation to you to study and understand this philosophy.—The key to the archives of our ancient history and lore is placed, in confidence, in your lap, and you are invited to unlock for yourselves,

with our permission and co-operation, this vast storehouse which contains the treasures of our ancient philosophy and achievements. Why? because you are young; because you are studious, unbiased, free—and these are the conditions which answer for receptivity.

Certain of your missionaries have informed you wrongly of our history and condition, of our moral stature and of our religion. It is because they have studied us from the outside, and with eyes blinded by prejudice, the result of limited view of the universal cult, the universal law of brotherhood and love. We attribute these wrong impressions and wrong conjectures not to spite, malice or evil purpose, but to ignorance, to a lack of knowledge, which a larger plane of universal brotherhood will cause to disappear. When missionaries who are sent from this continent to our country and to our people shall learn that we are children of the same family, that we inherit the same perceptions, the same rights, the same inspirations and the same relations to the Infinite, and when they seek to fraternize with us on that plane and with this recognition—then, and then only, antagonism and injustice will cease and the bonds of common brotherhood will unite us in a mutual recognition of reasons for a perfect fellowship. You can bring us no new revelation, but you can recognize in us the old and everlasting

truth which is the common birthright of all souls, which is only new to you because you are the latest born. If, in the freshness and innocence of your zeal and limited knowledge of us, you conceive us to be idolators, bowing down to stone and metal gods made by our own hands, it is because you have as yet failed to grasp our conception of the simple and natural aids to faith, to contemplation, to apprehension and to duty, through which all souls must climb, as up the eternal stair of progress, from height to height, from lowest conditions through all grades to regeneration and liberation, and up to the perfect state. But despite all this, to you we confidently look for that recognition of truth in us which shall lead to the universal fellowship which the law of universal brotherhood implies. 3

We come gladly, at your invitation, for another reason. You are the most tolerant and liberal nation in the Western world, and tolerance is the first article in the faith of every Hindoo, Buddhist or Jainist. No man can point to any instance in the history of my people where any man was ever persecuted for religious opinion's sake. Our very language does not contain an equivalent word for the English word "persecution." We have words in our language in the ancient Sanskrit, that cover the whole ground of justice, of purity, of goodness, of love and of

all the sweet beatitudes of the soul's attainment, but not one word that means malice, persecution or tyranny for religious opinion's sake.

It may be objected to this statement of mine, which objection may be founded on statements of distinguished ecclesiastics, such as Bishop Caldwell, who has lived in India for many years, that the Hindoos worship gods of destruction, but acquaintance with us will prove that we do not worship gods in the sense conveyed, but they represent to us ideas of retribution and penalty and destruction for the wrongdoing and misdoing of man, and we seek to appease wrath and propitiate justice by approaching the methods of a holy life. This same Bishop says: "The people of India worship as gods, Vishnu, Shiva, Krishna and various similar gods. The very names of these divinities are unknown in any other country—Shiva, Vishnu and the rest of the Hindoo divinities are worshipped as gods by the people of India alone. If they were really gods, they would certainly be gracious to the people of India. They would certainly give proof of it by abasing the white men, who do not worship them, and by exalting their worshipers; they would bestow on the Hindoo unbounded wisdom, power and prosperity, and would probably give to them the government of the rest of mankind. How widely different is the condition

of the Hindoos, the supreme government of every part of India is in the hands of Christians."

This is the sheet anchor of the argument of Christian superiority in India. But that is an old, old argument. The Mohammedans, for 800 years, have presented the same argument with the sword in one hand and the Koran in the other. Where are they to-day? Echo answers, where? Every person has his day. This is the Christian's day, and he is producing the same argument at the point of the bayonet. The so called disciples of the Bible believe in "power" as the supreme manifestation and demonstration of the truth. So do we, but we go one step further and are declaring and have declared for thousands of years to the world that power, indeed, is the test of truth, but goodness is the highest power in the world. If it is powerful to do, it is a hundred times more powerful to suffer. Outpourings of cruel savages over the land of Bharata, and "civilized" scourges of the human race have been let loose upon the plains of beautiful India over and over again, but, like meteors coming out of eternal darkness, flashing for a moment across her horizon of view and plunging back into darkness, all these oppressors and tyrants, with all their claims of truth and power to subdue, civilize and christianize, must, in the long run, melt like morning mist on the river and the

Hindoo will live on, firm in his faith that goodness is the highest power in the world and not oppression.

I concede, my brothers and sisters, that in India, as elsewhere, men may combine together for wrongdoing, and have done so, but when they did so it was in contravention of the sacred truths, ignorantly interpreted and ignorantly applied, and not in accordance with the dogma of religion nor the inspiration of philosophy or civilization. Under the highest forms of the Christian religion, you will bear me witness, these things also have been done, but do we hold Christianity rightly responsible for the cruelty, injustice and wrong? Some may, but we do not. No more can you hold our philosophy and our religion responsible for abnormal conceptions and perpetrations.

You know, my brothers and sisters, that we are not an independent nation, we are subjects of her Gracious Majesty, Queen Victoria, the "defender of the faith," but if we were a nation in all that that name implies, with our own government and our own rulers, with our laws and institutions controlled by us, free and independent, I affirm that we should seek to establish and forever maintain peaceful relations with all the nations of the world. We would seek neither to lessen your dignity nor to encroach upon your rights or domain, and we would ask for

that recognition in the family of nations which you already concede to us in the family of man. The Sanskrit poet says : "This is my country, that is your country, these are the conceptions of narrow souls : to the liberal-minded the whole world is a family."

For your inventions, and for whatever is just in your methods of industry, for whatever is humane and wise in your forms of education, and for whatever is pure and useful in your government and in your civilization, we would offer you in exchange the sublime teachings of our prophets and our poets, and for all the people cordial fraternity and perfect reciprocity.

I have heard your orators speak on many questions, among them the so-called vital question of money, which is above all things the most coveted commodity, but I, as a Hindoo, as a Jainist, in the name of my countrymen and of my country, would offer you as the medium of the most perfect exchange between us, henceforth and forever, the indestructible, the unchangeable, the universal currency of good will and peace, and this, my brothers and sisters, is a currency that is not interchangeable with silver and gold, it is a currency of the heart, of the good life, of the highest estate on the earth, and it is the currency of heaven. The civilization whose highest badge is the perishable symbol of corruption and greed, silver

and gold, is not to be compared to that civilization whose highest symbol is the image of peace, and whose highest expression is good-will towards man and all living beings. Our Jain poet says : "Spirit of peace and perfect bliss, devoid of impure and destructive parts, Glory be to Thee."

Because of these principles and doctrines underlying our lives as a people, from the earliest ages, we have been the victims of misgovernment and tyranny through oppression, from the first Persian invasion to the latest Christian invasion and conquest, but through it all we have borne ourselves with a patience, a patience of hope without a parallel in history, firmly adhering to our ancient faith, believing that in the end goodness will triumph over all oppression, all tyranny, for it is an axiom with us that goodness is the highest power and will eventually prevail. Here, you may say, that such is not the history of India. I will, therefore, confirm my own statement by that of one of the greatest Oriental scholars in Europe, Prof. Max Muller :

"I confess it has always seemed to me one of the saddest chapters in the history of the world to see the early inhabitants of India, who knew nothing of the rest of the world, of the mighty empires of Egypt and Babylon, of their wars and conquests, who wanted nothing from the

outside world and were happy and content in their own earthly paradise, protected as it seemed by the mountain ramparts in the north and watched on every other side by the jealous waves of the Indian Ocean to see these happy people suddenly overrun by foreign warriors, whether Persians, Greeks or Macedonians, or at a later time, Scythians, Mohammedans, Mongolians and Christians, and conquered for no fault of theirs, except that they had neglected to cultivate the art of killing their neighbors. They themselves never wished for conquests, they simply wished to be left alone and to be allowed to work out their views of life which was contemplative and joyful, though deficient in one point, namely, the art of self-defence and destruction. They had no idea that a tempest could break upon them and when the black clouds came suddenly driving through the northern and western mountain-passes, they had no shelter, they were simply borne down by superior brute force. They remind us of Archimedes imploring the cruel invader not to disturb his philosophical circles, but there was no help for them. That ideal of human life which they had pictured to themselves and which to a certain extent they seemed to have realized before they were discovered and disturbed by the 'outer barbarians,' had to be surrendered. It was not to be. The whole world was to be a fighting and a

huckstering world, and even the solution of the highest problems of religion and philosophy was in future to be determined, not by sweet reasonableness, but by the biggest battalions. We must all learn that lesson, but even to the hardened historian it is a sad lesson to learn."

Such has been the case of the people of India from earliest times. Our physical resistance in every instance has been spasmodic under the goadings of injustice, for the reason that in our philosophy and religion there is no curriculum nor science of war, only the holy breathings of lessons and principles that make for peace and brotherhood. Cruelty and reprisals have been charged upon us, which charge we do not fully deny, since the worm will turn under the remorseless tread of the ruthless invader; but even in the paroxysm of such madness, overborne by greater power and cruelty and in the agonies of undeserved death and extermination, we still clung to the prayer of our holy faith, "We forgive all living beings. We ask all living beings to forgive us."

To my American Christian brothers and sisters who are before me and through them to the whole of Christendom, I have to say a few words:

I have learned since coming to this country that the great shibboleth of the host of Christendom is, "The whole world for Christ." What is that? What do you

mean? Who is that Christ in whose name you propose to conquer the world? Is there a Christ of oppression? Is there a Christ of injustice? Is there a Christ of misinterpretation? Is there a Christ of denial of all rights? Is there a Christ of destruction of all holy aims and humane immemorial institutions? Is there a Christ of unjust and exorbitant taxation for the support of a government, foreign to our knowledge, our thought, our religion and our consent? Who of these Christs has inscribed his name on the banner of your conquests? If you seek to conquer us under such banners and in the name of such Christs, we refuse to be conquered. But, if you come to us in the name and spirit of the Christ of Education, of Brotherhood, of universal love, or in the name of that Christ, who, in the valley of the Ganges and on the shores of the sea of Tiberius, more than 1800 years ago, taught and said: "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another;" then I say, we will welcome you, for Him we know and of Him we are not afraid. But all this must be understood in the full freedom of it. We cannot recognize a creedal Christ, a limited Christ, an emasculated truth, whether it is viewed from an educational or from a moral and spiritual point of view, but the universal idea, without limit, without fetters—free.

I have learned since here in this country why it is that in my own country different missionaries and Christian teachers antagonize one another. It is because the disciples are no better than their masters ; because I find in this country many Christianities and the multiplied disagreements amounting to mutual oppression and excommunication, teach me that, either there be many Christs or that the one Christ is dismembered and torn, and divided up among many factions, who in quarelling over their several possessions accomplish nothing but the destruction of the real truth.

We heathens of India recognize the many-sidedness of truth, and are divided into schools of philosophy and truth for the promulgation of truth as we see it, but nevertheless we are united very deep in one thought, one conception, one adoration and one worship of the true and only infinite source of perfection, the Christ of all humanity. From this point of view he may be called Bramah, Vishnu, Shiva, Buddha, Jina, or the Christ of Nazareth, we have no objections, but in the deep and true appreciation of Him, these names must signify one life, one source, one manifestation and one universal expression of love. The Jain poet says : " I praise him who has destroyed the seeds of physical death and birth, be he Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva or Jina." These prayers

were composed before the birth of Jesus or of Buddha—had they lived before their composition, their names would have been added.

I have borrowed from the Christian scriptures what was spoken by the mouth of Jesus and is called a “new commandment,” but in truth it is an old, old commandment, which in the beginning came from the lips and loving natures of our great prophets and teachers, and is not new to us, and is, therefore, easily recognized. When the old and the new truth are appreciated and conformed to, then will come to pass that vision of the ancient prophets and seers, in the daily opportunities and methods of man, the principle in the active work of what you call “co-operation,” which is the first proof of brotherhood. From this point also we may truly study and certainly obtain some knowledge of that condition of perfect bliss for which we yearn, and the conditions of which in the lessons I have tried to express are founded, and this for all souls and forever.

On this ground also, we stand to learn and to know the purpose and the methods of true worship. That worship is not to a person a mere existence who may be conceived as a supreme being only, but it extends to all holy, worthy, pure and perfected ones, who by this method have attained a perfect state and who by their

example and virtues and the achievements of their austerities and devotions have made the way for us simple and sweet. We, the Jainists of India, say every day in our prayer: "I worship all perfected souls ; I worship all spiritual masters ; I worship all spiritual instructors ; I worship all holy men and women in the world." You will say my Christian brothers and sisters, that this act of homage and worship should be directed to the Supreme being only, whom you call God ; but you also worship the name of Christ, and who is he if he be not a manifestation and accommodation of some element, especially—Love, that is the worshipful in the divine being. And in the recognition and devout worship of that same manifestation which is the cause of our conquest and of all perfected lives, do not we bring ourselves into closer relations, and is not, therefore, our worship truer and worthier to be accepted. And this also is the universal worship, the tribute that all life makes in spontaneous gratitude and devotion to the Infinite. In this act of worship we are in fellowship with all living things and with all living beings. This worship may have no voice, no particular ceremony and no outward expression cognizable to the senses, but it must be and it is, the prostration of the soul before the Supreme in adoration, and in the conformity of love, the lesson of life. In all nature,

animate and inanimate, of all grades and forms and expressions, from the spire of grass protecting the lowly violet in the vale, to the songs of birds which rise on graceful wings in the pulsing atmosphere, whose pulsations are notes of worship, to the stately forest, bending under the pressure and expanding in the light of nature's growth, up to the vaulted heavens, "singing as they shine, the hand that made us is divine," and still up into the higher sentient life, the souls of men, and still up to the perfect life—to the dwellers and realizers of the perfect bliss—through all the same spirit inspires and leads, and makes the worship one.

This is the true idea of Hindoo worship. How do you like it? Does it not touch the cord of sympathy and acceptance in your heart? My American brothers and sisters, it is not a propagandism that I speak of, but a spirit, a universal spirit of love and power and answerable for the practical realization of brotherhood, the brotherhood not only of men, but of all living things, which by the prophets of all nations is indeed taught, but which by the practice of the world is yet ignored.

This is the message of India to America. I have delivered it, conscious of my own weakness and inability to do justice to the spirit in which it was sent, and gratefully conscious also of that charity and brotherly love

characteristic of your nation, in which it will be received.

I will now conclude with a prayer, which in India, we daily offer :

“May peace rule the universe ; may peace rule in kingdoms and empires ; may peace rule in states and in the lands of the potentates ; may peace rule in the house of friends and may peace also rule in the house of enemies.”





Impressions of America.

MY brothers and sisters of America : By your indulgence and brotherly kindness, I have been permitted to deliver to you the message which I was commissioned to bear from my people in India to you, and it has been received in the spirit in which I endeavored to present it. For this not unexpected reception, but none the less therefore grateful to me, I do not find words at my command to express my gratitude.

My subject to-day may be properly called "Impressions that I have received during my sojourn in this country," the impressions of various characters which may or may not be correct.

In presenting these impressions I shall not be able to do so in as connected and perfect a manner as more mature consideration would enable me to do, therefore, you will be prepared to overlook what may appear to be a desultory or fragmentary discourse. I deem it my duty and feel under obligations to give utterance to the impressions which I have received, but I must beg you, my

brothers and sisters, to acquit me in the very beginning, of approaching this subject in any particular, in the spirit of criticism. It might seem to be the most politic and the politest thing to do, to refrain from uttering an opinion that might be construed adverse in any direction, and to give my impressions only of the delightful and pleasureable things that have come under my notice. In the main this will be true in all I may have to say, for what I shall say will be said in sincerity, and because in the immaturity of my thought, I cannot do otherwise.

My first impression concerns the hospitality of the American people. This is an impression that has grown with every day's and with every hour's acquaintance. I do not mean by this that what I have been permitted to say on all occasions, respecting the people of my own country, their philosophy and their religion, has met with unchallenged acceptance. What I mean to say and do say, is, that in every instance I have been received with perfect cordiality, and have been listened to with the friendliest attention. I came to America with liberal expectations, and when I say (which I gladly do) that thus far my fondest expectations have been more than realized, I only state the truth in moderate terms; for this is true in America as in India, that back of all outward expressions of welcome, of tolerance and of reciprocity,

there is the spirit which is larger and deeper, and prophetic of greater expressions than a short acquaintance can give. Whatever permanent lessons, favorable or unfavorable, I may carry away with me, I am sure that this impression will not be weakened, but deepened and heightened. What I have said refers to all portions of the country that I have visited, and to all classes of people that I have had the honor to meet, but it is due to you who are before me, the representatives of and believers in Spiritualism, dwelling temporarily in this beautiful Cassadaga, which I have heard called the "Mecca of Spiritualism in America," that I should say, that the welcome you have accorded me and the interest you have shown in my mission, and the attention you have given to my feeble words, intensify the impression that I have referred to and touch my heart in a way I shall never forget. It is impossible for me to put in words the permanent effect these delightful spiritual and intellectual communings will have upon me after I return to my native land—only this—I know it will be good and only good and that continually. When I shall speak to my family and my people of all this and then show them pictures of you until your faces shall become familiar to them, the bonds of sympathy that shall unite us will

strengthen and strengthen, and vibrate in mutual and in increasing fellowship.

The next thing that impresses me with peculiar significance is that system of popular education which you call the "common school." Through the hospitable facilities afforded on every hand, I have learned much of your great institutions of learning, universities, colleges, gymnasiums, schools of art, schools of music and of applied science, and standing in the fresh morning of your national life, I have gazed upon these monuments of your intellectual progress and industry with wonder and amazement and also with gratitude : but when I come to study that system of education, which is in a way, peculiar to your country, and which brings the school and the school-master to all the people, to the children of the humblest and the lowest on equal terms with the children of the wealthy and the proud, my admiration and my wonder yield to a sense of appreciation that I may call devout and religious. For, although I and my people in the narrow view of a mere sectarian, may be esteemed ignorant, superstitious and idolatrous we, the people of India, especially those who have been permitted to pass through the curriculum of education, hold to the doctrine that at the bottom of all progress and answerable for all happiness is universal education. Also, that this education

must be free ; also, that it must be necessary, that is, that it must include those lessons that pertain to physical life, its relations and perfections, as well as to the cultivation of the intellectual faculties and the moralities of life. It is possible that what I now say for my own people on this subject will surprise a few of my hearers, but I am proud and honored to be able to say that this prime requisite of human progress, the education of the masses, is a doctrine held and taught and enforced, and practiced by the Jain community to which I belong, from the very beginning, as is proved by our history, and without interruption. In respect of my Hindoo people, other than Jains, including the Brahmans and the believers in the Vedas, candor requires that I should say that with the exception of particular schools for the education of Brahmans only, this doctrine has not obtained since the innovation of priestly exclusiveness, which made the privilege of education the right of one class only. This admission, which I freely make, ought not to weaken what I have said on this subject on behalf of the Jain community. It was a member of the Jain community who contributed 400,000 rupees for the purpose of erecting a university building and the creation of a library in the same, in the city of Bombay ; this same gentleman endowed the University of Calcutta for purposes of scholar-

ship with 200,000 rupees. The munificence on the part of this same gentleman and many others of our community, has established schools in different parts of our country for the education of girls as well as boys, which education is also free. It is the hope which has been bequeathed to us by our forefathers, and which is also a factor in our civilization, and it is our purpose also, to extend the work of education with all of our abilities, with or without governmental aid, on that principle which is found in your Christian Scriptures, that "a little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump." Time must elapse before we shall realize the great consummation, but patience and perseverance, with the encouragement of all enlightened people, and especially of you, the liberal Americans, will eventually triumph. What I have learned of your great system of the education of the masses, which I admit cannot be very great or particular for the reason that my observations have been necessarily limited, is to me an encouragement beyond words to express, if my impressions are just and true.

If my understanding of your institutions and your form of government is correct, and if I might be permitted to express an opinion, I would say that that education which is now offered to the people free, to be accepted or rejected, must soon become compulsory, as a measure of

preservation of those very institutions. Of the different systems adopted by you, I may not speak with certainty, but the impressions which I have received concerning these methods, from the kindergarten to the university, are both pleasing and profitable in my thought. What lessons we, the people of India, may be able to receive from deeper acquaintance with you and your institutions, I may not even attempt to express or enumerate. I can only speak of the gratitude which I feel in the fact that it has been my privilege to examine, to learn and to witness the effects of this system of education which you call free, "common," and which is so popular with you.

The third impression to which I must refer concerns the vastness of your material resources and the innumerable institutions of industry, together with the greatness of your home or interstate commerce. From this point of view, the material side of your civilization is almost beyond grasp. The difficulty of appreciating this view of your great country is not small to one who comes from a country of quieter activities and more contemplative methods, and the first thought is that your civilization's first achievement is the multiplication of wants and necessities, of cravings and luxuries, and of material means to questionable ends. This may be a superficial view to be set aside and substituted by a better, upon a better

acquaintance. It would also seem impossible from the same point of view, to understand how the physical, the moral and the intellectual sides of civilization can keep pace with the activities, the demands and the luxuries of the material. This problem, however, belongs to you, and only time can solve it. But whether or not the essential equilibrium is now realized, or may ever be, it remains true that your industrial progress on all lines of materiality, in the arts also, and in certain sciences, and in inventions and other things which go to aid the energy and labor of man, is marvellous to see. I have learned also that this question does not alone propose itself to me, who have not had opportunities to study it sufficiently. It is also disturbing the thought of this nation. The unrest, the unequal condition apparent in industrial society, the growth of monopolies, the concentration of wealth and its many encroachments, creating antagonisms where there should be harmony, and prophesying dangers where there should be security, are factors, which if true, threaten that peace and prosperity which it is the wish of all right thinking people all over the world that you may always enjoy.

In the name of India and her people, I offer the prayer that the evil which many of your wisest statesmen foresee, and which vast portions of your population seem to

fear, may never, never overtake you. If the evils and dangers to which I have referred do really exist, then, it will be the part of wisdom and humane method in the industrial life, and in the social life, and in the patriotic government, to allay apprehensions, to destroy antagonisms, and to restore confidence by mutual concessions and the just application of the universal law, which you call the "Golden Rule :—" "Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you."

The next impression that I shall speak of concerns the social state and the family life of the American people as it has come under my observation. In some particulars this impression is unfavorable, in others very grateful. In all thought, both in India and in America, as I can conceive it, the establishment of the family is at the base of the whole social structure, and is essential to social and material happiness, and should be, and I hope is, held to be sacred. A nation of families in the right view, must be (other things being equal) a happy nation, although that happiness may not include great material wealth or commercial achievements, for the home where the family is, is the heaven on earth if it is constituted and preserved within the sacred meaning of the word itself.

But I find in this great country of yours, not unity of conception and practice, but great diversity, and that

diversity—if my impression is correct—is a diversity of unhappy contradictions. I do not understand how it can be that home relations, which answer for family, by which I mean the ties and the children of our love, can be so easily broken. In your country when the son marries he leaves the paternal roof, the home in which he was born and reared, and separates himself from that circle, and establishes a different home beyond the limits of the old home ; he creates as it were, (if I understand it) a separate, a distinct home for himself. This fear of living in the same family for a generation is very prevalent, I think, in this country. This feature of your social life is peculiar in my view and is not realized nor desired among us. There seems to be a dread of enlarging the home circle by bringing into it the wife of the son or of the brother, with you. Perhaps you are afraid of the mother-in-law, as I have heard. With us it is different. The home of the father of the son who marries the daughter of a different family, is, from that moment, the home of the daughter who is now the wife, and she loves not her husband only, but her mother-in-law, her father-in-law, her brother-in-law—in fact, all the members of the family into which she is adopted or brought, and her rights and privileges are equally sacred and as inviolable in the family, as the son's whose wife she is. In y

country, if the husband dies leaving the wife a widow, it is often the case, if not always, if my impression is right, that she is left to provide for herself unless the estate of her husband is left to her and is sufficient. Perhaps, it is this which necessitates remarriage and the establishment of new ties of the same nature in a different direction, and with a new mother-in-law who may be appreciated in the same way, so that now she is related by marriage to two families, and is, in our conception, a member of neither. You will, therefore, ask me, what is the difference in my country? It is this: the daughter-in-law becomes a member *bona fide*, not legally; *per se* not incidentally, of the family into which she marries. If she is left a widow she does not need to remarry in order to obtain the comforts and the protections of home, but the home in which she is, is her home, with all that the word implies, so long as she lives, and it is the duty and the sacred pleasure of the members of the family to provide for her, to love her and protect her just the same as if her husband were by her side. I do not mean to say that under no circumstances is remarriage permissible. On the contrary there are certain classes of people and religious communities who live on the lowest plane of spirituality whose widows do remarry, but we say that the reasons for that remarriage are un-

worthy and pertain entirely to that nature which we call "animal." I do not pass judgment on either of these modes of life at this time. What I desire to do is to present the contrast which will account for the unfavorable impressions which your system has made upon me. It may be that your philosophers and socialists can present many reasons for this state of things and many arguments in its defense, but to the Hindoo mind, the basic principle of the family and the ties which bind into unity its several members, are violated by you, and that for this reason it must be impossible for you to attain the highest social state.

Another thing that I have learned is that divorce is a common and sometimes a coveted feature in your social civilization. I will say that this feature also impresses me unfavorably. It would seem that there is a lack of something—you may call it wisdom, love, power of selection, or what you will—lying at the bottom of this fact. The truth, however, must be conceded, that thousands of persons who marry and start out in the separate and independent way of which I have spoken, apart from the family of the husband, soon, for some cause, grow tired of each other, and are separated by the strong hand of your legal civilization by divorce. With us, what you call divorce is not known, except in the lowest class of

society, which class is not of the Aryan origin—in other words, not real Hindoo. What I mean to say, with more explicitness, is, that Hindoo jurisprudence and sacred books do not provide for or recognize divorce. The reason of this, which I may not do more than state, is found in our conception of the ground and reasons for marriage and the family tie. These are sacred and inviolable, and they hold through all circumstances, and cannot be weakened nor set aside. Marriage in our view is spiritual as well as physical matehood. The husband and wife are one and indivisible in this view ; they have not two roads, and two methods, and two destinies, and separate attractions, and different objects, whether of desire or of devotion. They are one in thought, in purpose, in religious devotion, in sacred relations, with a destiny in the true light, that is also not divided. It is, of course, impossible to bring before our limited view in this earthly state, the full and perfect relations, and the blissful conditions of the perfected souls of men and women, but the Hindoo widow is forever a wife, and prays every day that in that future of perfect bliss, she may join her husband, and believes that she will. This does not mean in any physical sense, but that the perfection which is attained by the religious observances and soul growth of the husband shall also be hers, so

that the unity in the marriage relations, in the spiritual interpretation of them, is perpetual. But we, the Jains of India, also teach that in the perfect condition, soul is without sex, there is no man-soul or woman-soul in the sex sense, in that perfect state. In the perfect state recognition obtains and the individuality in the real sense of it is not lost. If you can conceive of the souls of husband and wife in the perfect state, looking back to the human state with its physical relations of sex, you may also conceive of their saying that that human condition was true, and just, and holy, and necessary within its horizon, but that those relations were means to an end, also sacred, and that the true relation which now we realize in the perfect state, where sex does not enter in, is the true and permanent relation.

I must also speak of the impressions that I have received in relation to the government and politics of your great country. I will say that as far as I have been able to grasp it, your theory of government is also among the monuments of Western civilization. I cannot command words to express my admiration of that theory, if I take the theory from the undying words of that great man, Abraham Lincoln, who said that "this is a government of the people, for the people, and by the people." That statement is too great to be discussed in one hour, or in

one year or in many years. It is a statement that opens up possibilities and realizations which imply a perfect condition in the outcome of the human society. I, a Hindoo, interpret it to mean self-government in the highest sense. I must own to some anxiety for the future of the theory in the practical realization, when I consider the political contentions and extremes which seem to co-exist. Perhaps my view is superficial, perhaps these outward demonstrations and irreconcilable political antagonisms on party lines and for party supremacy, may be mere excrescences or breaking waves upon the bosom of a deep sea whose unity and unific power shall abide undisturbed, unvexed and supreme. This is my hope.

Finally, my brothers and sisters, with your kind indulgence, I will speak somewhat of my impressions regarding the religion and the religious condition of the American nation. I will ask you again to consider what I may say as the expression of impressions which I have received, subject always to revision and correction, and in no sense spoken in a spirit of criticism. The opinion which I had formed from contact with Western civilization in my own country, and with missionaries and missionary methods among my people, was not of a nature to contribute to the emotion of admiration for what may be called your "religion." Upon coming to this country

and viewing you from a higher and closer point of view, my first impression was in the nature of an agreeable surprise, because I, as a heathen, so-called, was received at the great Parliament of Religions, yours included, and by you especially, in the spirit of that brotherly love which is one of the fundamental principles of the universal religion. This great welcoming spirit of brotherly love, of absolute tolerance, of illimitable fraternity, is the real expression of your national religion, in my impression, and differs in nothing from the spirit of my own religion, and therefore, I wonder why this spirit does not control in all directions. The spirit is true, it is universal, but its expression in dogmas and creeds and contending churches. seems in conflict with itself. How can narrowness, and bigotry, and limitations, and worldliness, and worship of mammon, and oppression and extortion, and enmity, and unbrotherly attitude and conduct, be the natural expressions of the universal holy spirit of brotherly love? Can you tell me, since I cannot enlighten myself? If you say these expressions or outward signs mean nothing, I answer : Whence do they come ; whither do they tend ; why do they have place ; why have they not been banished? If they mean nothing, they can have no mission, and are not the influences and children, and powers and reflections of that great spirit of goodness

which is, love to all living beings. I do not claim superiority, I do not arrogate to myself or to my people the right to judge or to criticise. But you say to me, you are our brother, and some of you say you are our *elder* brother, and therefore, if I am your brother (and I *am* your brother) I ask you why do you persecute, condemn and devour one another in the sense in which one form of Christianity antagonizes another, and one sect of Christians excommunicates another, and why, in some instances, in your conception of missionary duty, do you even excommunicate me? Only this I will say, because I am your brother, me you shall not excommunicate; my people you shall not relegate to the "uncovenanted" mercies of God! It is the spirit of your religion, as well as of my own, that the Supreme Being is the source and essence of goodness, and that all living beings are in a sense, the children of that Supreme Being, therefore, all men are brothers, therefore, the tie that binds us in this brotherhood is not difference, nor hate, but love; and what is love, my brothers and sisters? Is it a sentiment merely? An expression merely? Is it only a word that can be interpreted in many ways or not interpreted at all? We say in our sacred books, "Love is only of one kind, which binds together all the universe and which

destroys all differences, without creating any quarrelsome opinions and jealousies and other wrong states of mind."

I conclude, dear brothers and sisters, by saying that standing on this foundation, looking into one another's faces in the spirit and realization of true religion, if the past is glorious, the future, both for you and for us, will be more glorious. We need but to become better acquainted with one another and with the holy truths of universal religion, to enter upon paths of progress and spirituality, which, leading us out of the material and transitory, shall bring us into the perfect state where conflict and antagonisms and evil passions shall never enter. To aid in bringing about this needful condition, and to discover the true methods of its attainment, we may be missionaries to one another in a truer sense, in a better sense and even in a holier sense, than that word has ever been interpreted to mean. By recognizing the right relations we shall come upon the right method, and in the unity of the spirit, we shall have the bond of peace which is brotherhood, out of which shall come communions, spiritual especially, which shall increase unto the perfect day and the perfected life, for all living beings.





Some Mistakes Corrected.

DEAR brothers and sisters, this is the last time that I shall appear before you in the regular programme of this great gathering. Since coming among you I have been busy, as you know, acquainting myself with your methods of thought and distinctive lines of public discussions on this free platform, and also in discussing in a limited way before select classes some of the philosophies of my own country. It is gratifying to me to find that on fair acquaintance we are not so far apart as probably many of you have been led to suppose. I have yielded to your solicitations, not without much distrust of my ability, to discuss with some freedom differences in religious life and in civilization, which mark our two nations. In my last public address from this platform I was permitted to give you in a brief manner some of the impressions that I had already received respecting your great country, its people and its institutions. I confess to some surprise at myself, in venturing to give those impressions, but you drew me on by your kindness and

respectful consideration, and I could not resist the desire to gratify what seemed to me a reasonable proposition. I did not come to this country to propagate the philosophy of my community or the religion of my people. I did not deem it part of my mission to assume that role which distinguishes the missionaries for the most part, which you in your religious zeal, send to my country to enlighten our benighted minds. The spirit in which you have received my words emboldens me to take a further step in the line of removing obstacles in the way of a better understanding. In attempting this task I approach it in the spirit of fraternal love and will endeavor to present my cause in a manner to deserve at least your approval, if you do not fully agree with me.

I do not forget that in a sacred sense I am your guest, and it would pain me, and my people also, if I should inadvertently utter a word to rankle in your thought. I have received so much from you, and am so deeply impressed with the fair mindedness and tolerance of the American people, that I will even venture to correct what I conceive to be grievous mistakes in the public estimate of my people from certain points of view.

In seeking to correct certain mistakes, as I conceive them to be, I may be pardoned if incidentally I can show what India can give in return for your tolerance and

noble consideration on the subjects already discussed in your hearing. I deem it proper to say that I have learned very much thus far in my intercourse with you that will serve me well when I come to report to my own people the lessons of America to India. One of those lessons I cannot refrain from mentioning here. It is this : that good and only good must come from a freer and fuller communion, correspondence and reciprocity, not in philosophy only, but in the material factors of civilization, between you and us. I am impelled to predict that we are in the beginning of material, intellectual and spiritual unfoldings and relationships, in the spirit of brotherly recognition and love, which will do more for our mutual good in one decade than a cycle of sectarian missionary propogandism can accomplish.

The first mistake which I desire to notice is the very common one that the Hindoos have no history worth considering prior to the Mohammedan invasion which began in the early part of the Eighth century of the Christian era, and ended in conquest one hundred and fifty years later. This mistake has been emphasized recently in certain leading magazines of America by some distinguished writers. What is the truth? The truth is that the history of ancient India is a history, even by the concessions of most eminent European Oriental scholars,

of at least 2,000 years before the birth of Christ. But in the Hindoo thought our history goes back thousands of years beyond that period.

Western scholarship has given priority in date and in character to the records and monuments of Egypt and of Chaldea. Those records and monuments give simple information and are confined for the most part to the names of kings, the accounts of war and dynasties, and the builders of pyramids. These are interesting to scholars, but shed uncertain light, and little of that, on human progress and civilization. The contrary is true in relation to Hindoo history. It does not abound in the records of thrones, of wars, and the incidents of conquests, but are connected recitals of the advancement and successions of civilizations, the progress of the human mind, and the sacred permanency of religious thought and devotion. There are many periods in this history, carrying us back into remotest ages, not inscribed on stones or papyri, but abounding in hymns that embalm the religious thought and aspirations of the people, and in profound works and systems of philosophy, reflecting each era of civilization. This history to which I refer was not committed to stone or to writing of any kind, but was transmitted with particularity and exactness from generation to generation, from century to century,

by oral teachings and repetition. I grant you that it is difficult to consider this fact, but it stands indisputable, and since the scholars of the Western world have entered upon the systematic study of our history and our literature, they stand confessing this fact with expressions of wonder and amazement. You will see, therefore, without enlargement upon a matter too vast to enter upon, that the mistake to which I have referred is a serious one and reflects little honor upon those who persist in it. The character of this mistake may be further seen when you consider the antiquity of the written history of Hindoo progress, literature, religion and civilization. It is conceded by some learned scholars, such as Prof. Max Muller, Prof. Weber and Prof. Whitney, not to mention others, that the Vedic hymns of India date from 1500 to 2000 before Christ, whilst the distinguished doctor, Martin Haug, gives credit for the earliest of these sublime productions to remoter date. It is true that this mistake is pardonable, when we consider that it is only within the memory of the present generation that the scholarship of Western civilization has been able with systematic ability to trace their history with exactness of method.

I have spoken of the transmission of historical events from generation to generation by oral tradition, from

memory to memory, through many centuries ; before history began to be written in the Sanskrit language, the oldest language in the sisterhood of languages. On this point I beg to quote a single paragraph from a lecture delivered by Prof. Muller before the University of Glasgow, in 1892. He says : “To those who are not acquainted with the powers of the human memory when well disciplined or rather when not systematically ruined as ours have been, it may seem almost incredible that so much of the ancient traditional literature should have been composed, and should have survived during so many centuries before it was finally consigned to writing. Still, we have got so far (and I beg to call your attention to this remarkable concession) that everybody now admits that the poets of the Veda did not write their hymns, and that Zoroaster did not leave any written documents. The truth is that there is no equivalent word for writing or to write in the Vedas.”

But my American brothers and sisters, the argument for the more ancient history of India than the date of the Vedas, that is to say the committal of the Vedic hymns to writing which is conceded to have been done two thousand years before the birth of Christ, will be found in the study and comprehension of the Vedas themselves. In their composition, in the fullness of

expression, in the sublimity of thought, in the perfection of imaginary, and in the simplicity of detail, they show a lineage and point to evolutions, gradations and acquired perfections, that imply untold centuries of human development in thought, in speech, in art, in religion, in philosophy, and in all the considerable factors of great, but unrecorded civilizations. Such monuments of learning, both subtle and simple, suggesting a knowledge of nature and of man which only centuries upon centuries of growth can answer for, cannot be considered as modern, even as similar monuments of Egypt, of Greece, or of the Hebrew nation, but must antedate them all and in a sense which will yet be appreciated, prove to be their motherhood. In closing this part of my utterance to you, I will quote one more passage from the same distinguished authority that I have already named. Prof. Max Muller says: "If I were to look over the whole world to find out the country most richly endowed with all the wealth, power and beauty that nature can bestow—in some parts a very paradise on earth—I should point to India. If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of the choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problem of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied

Plato and Kant—I should point to India. And if I were to ask myself from what literature we, here in Europe, we who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans, and of one Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human, a life, not for this life only, but a transfigured and eternal life—again I should point to India.”

The second mistake which I desire to correct relates to the origin and purpose, and supposed sacred character of the caste system prevailing in India. Those of you who have honored me by attending my private lessons at this place on the philosophies of India, need not be told that I set up no defence of the cast institution as it obtains there. The popular explanation of this system accepted by the people of the Western world I will give in this way : The four great divisions of caste are named the Brahmin, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya and the Shudra, and their origin and meaning in this view, are these: The Brahmin sprang from the head of the God, and represents exclusive privilege of intellectual progress and learning, including priestly functions and religious superiority constituting therefore, an exclusive monopoly of right,

privilege and enjoyment of intellectual development and religious cult.

The Kshatriya sprang from the arms of the God, and represents the soldier element which stands for the defence of material and national rights, but without the privileges pertaining to the Brahmin.

The Vaishya or third class sprang, in this view of caste, from the loins of the God, representing wealth, commerce, business and the activities and monopolies of trade and industries, or the result of industries, with still more limited privileges and rights pertaining to the classes above, namely the Brahmin and the Kshatriya. The fourth, or Shudra caste, sprang from the feet of the God, representing servitude and all menial pursuits and labors, with still more restricted rights and privileges, yet with one larger privilege, which pertains to the condition which the origination of this caste implies, namely, abject servitude. As a compensation for the loss of privilege and the denial of certain rights pertaining to knowledge and development, the myriads composing this class are permitted to travel in their own country without let or hindrance, but under the bond of servitude, being the servant class of all the rest. This is the common interpretation and explanation of the caste system briefly stated, given by your writers. But it is

not our understanding, nor a fair statement of the truth. What then is that truth?

In the first place, the ancient Vedas give no record of such an institution as caste, and therefore, it is not in any view an integral part of our ancient religion, or of our philosophy. How then did it come to be instituted?

Whatever authority may be traced to the Vedic writings on this subject will be found to be the result of innovations, without any more authority or sanction than that which pride and priestly arrogance can give to perpetuate themselves, contrary to the ancient spirit and the true doctrine which inspire and underlie the universal religion, which recognizes a common fatherhood, and a universal brotherhood, with equal privileges and possibilities. It would weary you if I should attempt the history of this innovation and the origin of the sanctions which may be found in later Puranic writings. My object is simply to stimulate in you the spirit of independent and impartial investigation, well knowing that you will find that my statement is true, and that the institution, shorn of its sentimental incidents, is not an unyielding or cast iron factor in our civilization founded in that authority which we bow to with religious awe and obedience. In truth, it has come to be considered more as a social institution rather than one sanctioned by religious

authority. From this point of view it may be conceded to possess certain advantages which minimize the restrictions of the social order, which restrictions will melt and disappear as education advances to universal sway. Under another name, if my observations are not at fault, a system of equal rigor and more marked distinction is forcing its way even in this free land of yours, born also of the same motherhood of pride, monopoly, and the centralization of wealth and power. For I find even here great social distinctions, and even religious exclusiveness, lifting their banners and building their walls with a zeal and a pertinacity of purpose and visible results, that are almost equal to the observable decay of the system as it is popularly believed to exist, in India. I will conclude my observations on this point by quoting a paragraph or two from a very high authority in Her Majesty's India Civil Service and an Honorary Secretary to the Royal Society—Mr. Robert Needham Cust : *

“How has society dealt with caste? I can only give an opinion based upon experience acquired in a solitary life among the people of Upper India for weeks and months together without any European companion. I never found caste an obstacle to social intercourse, nor did the subject ever press itself forward, and yet the

* “*Pictures of Indian Life*,” R. N. Cust. Scribner & Co.

population of the villages and towns visited each day, differed considerably. Few villages were absolutely without Mahometan, none without men of the lowest caste, and in the thronging of an Indian crowd there must be indiscriminate contact. In my establishment there was the Brahman, with whom I transacted ordinary business, the Rajput, who carried my messages, the Khatri and Kayat, who engrossed my orders. Mahometan and Hindu sat upon the floor working side by side, in constant contact, and handed papers from one to the other; and, if the half caste Christian sat at a table to write English letters, it was only because the method of English correspondence required this distinction. My own tent was daily thronged by men of all castes and positions in life, and my visits to the male apartments of the notables was considered an honor, and yet of all outcastes the European is the worst, as he asserts his right to eat both beef and pork. Thus, professors of different castes mingle in social life without any unpleasant friction: each man respects his neighbor; he has no wish, indeed, to intermarry with the family of his neighbor, or share the cup and platter of his neighbor, but he does not consider himself in the least superior or inferior.

In one sense, and in one sense only, caste may be said to be religious. All that remains to the non-Mahometan

population of the religious idea and instinct, has centuries ago shrunk into the notion of caste, just as in Europe in the Middle Ages, all that to many men remained of religion, was a keen sense of personal honor. Now, both caste and honor restrain a man's actions from what is contrary to the rules of brotherhood, is dishonorable, and often from crime, in a way, in which nothing else will restrain them, and in that sense caste and honor may be said to be religious sanctions, but in no other. No wise legislator would venture to do aught to weaken such sanctions, the existence of which marks a certain progress in civilization, until other higher sanctions have been substituted.

With all my recollections of valued friends left behind me in India, whose features live in memory and whose portraits in some cases decorate my walls, it is amazing to me to hear on my return to England, that this good, easy going people, amiable and ignorant, tolerant and docile, accommodating and affectionate, is, in the opinion of wise and good men, "enslaved by a custom which annihilates fellow feeling and eats out human sympathy, and makes one portion of the community slaves to the other." I could multiply quotations of this kind, but it is not my object to aggravate this difficulty, but rather to compose it. I cannot see, that caste is an evil of the

kind and degree, which it is imagined by many good men to be. In an exaggerated and self-asserting form it would certainly be an evil under a Hindoo system of government of the stiff and intolerant forms of modern religious creeds, but tolerance has ever been of the essence of the Hindoo system, and in British India the claws of caste have been cut by a strong and impartial government, and the social pressure of a population, made up of various elements which would not submit to oppression. I remark that in Europe classes lie in strata horizontally, and that in India the separation is by vertical fissures. I have known men of good caste and social position as gentlemen, who were not ashamed to have in their families near relations in the grade of menial or cook. Now, such a state of affairs would be impossible in Europe, and marks the enormous divergence of social customs."

The next mistake that I must refer to concerns the women of my country. This mistake is many-sided and time will not permit me to consider it in detail. In a general way it may be stated, thus :

The women of India, from time immemorial, have been and are, the abject slaves of their husbands, without rights, without privileges, without education, without authority, and even (as I have heard said) without souls,

except perhaps as they may blindly serve the whims, the behests and the lusts of their masters. To all this statement and to every particular definition that may be given to it, I am proud and honored to interpose a downright denial. I do not mean by this that woman's place and work in India are the same as I am led to believe as are found in this country : whether lower or higher or equal, in a genuine sense, I will not attempt to decide. In the Vedic times, as may be learned from the numerous hymns, many of them composed by women, a pleasing picture of woman's estate may be seen. In that early age the father of the family was the priest, and his home was the temple.. The sacred flame was kindled in every house, and the hymns were chanted with simplicity and devotion by the entire family. When sacrifices were to be offered, religious devotions performed, prominent in that picture is seen the woman who is the wife and the mother. In those early days and down through all mutations, and at the present time, the most worthy households from every point of view are those households in which grand parents, parents, sons and their wives, dwell together in unity and in the bonds of love, each doing his and her part for the comfort, instruction and happiness of the home, not alone in domestic industries, but in the rights and ceremonies of religious devo-

tion. I will give you a few of the prayers of the Rigveda pertaining to this exalted condition.

“Oh, ye gods, the married couple who prepare oblations together, who purify the Soma juice and mix it with milk—may they obtain food for their eating and come united to the sacrifices (religious service), may they never have to go in quest of food. They worship you with the best offerings, blest with youthful and adolescent offspring, they acquire wealth and they both attain to a mature age. The gods themselves covet the worship of such a couple who neglect not religious sacrifices and duties, and offer grateful services of worship and gifts to gods, and who embrace each other to continue their race, and they worship their gods.”

Again, a beautiful picture is that of highly educated women who, themselves, Rishis (sages), because of their learning and devotion, compose hundreds of hymns and perform the sacred services, the same as men. In those days before my country knew the demands, the tendencies and the restrictions of other civilizations against women, there were no restrictions of an unwholesome character, nor were they kept in seclusion, denied education, or excluded from the highest positions in society. Wives and brides were veiled often, not through any law or custom imposed upon them, but in obedience to the

modest impulses of their own hearts, but they had unrestricted liberty to go and come within the limits of self-imposed propriety. Prominent among the names of distinguished dames whose examples and wise precepts are embalmed in the sweet and holy measures of many hymns composed by themselves, is that of Vishavavara, the interpretation of which name is itself a commemoration of her virtues and learning—which is, “the elect lady.” Whoever will study the composition of this exalted woman will be inspired to know and to keep inviolable the mutual relations of husband and wife. Indeed, in the ages to which I refer, the wife was the queen of the household, whose word was law to the members of the same, and who, like the mothers of this age, would arouse the household at the early dawn and set everyone from the oldest to the youngest to his and her proper task, and whose example was the bright light to which all eyes were turned. I do not mean to say that all women and maidens in that age, any more than now, were virtuous and true. My object is to truthfully set forth the foundation facts, and the dominant grace and purpose. Contemporaneous testimony before the days of Christ, but also now extant, of highest authority, prove that the women of India were noticeable for their modesty and chastity. Megasthenes, the Greek ambas-

sador, three hundred years before Christ, found in India two reasons for great admiration. The first was the absence of slavery, and the second the chastity of the women. In a previous lecture, and to my classes also, I have given you in some detail a true account of the marriage customs of my people, and the constitution of the Hindoo family, and will not, therefore, at this time enlarge in this direction. But I will describe to you in a short way, the sacred ceremony of marriage, leaving out the mere secular, social and incidental exercises. Among the hymns recited at that ceremony are such as these.

“May the husband and the wife be well united,” turning to the bride the priest would say, “Oh, maiden, the graceful sun had fastened thee with ties of maidenhood” (which means that up to this time she had lived free from the carnal knowledge of any man.) “We release thee now of these ties, we place thee with thy husband in a place which is the home of truth and the abode of righteous action.”

These words and all others are repeated by the parents who give away their loved daughter to the husband. The hymn continues,—“Go to your husband’s house and be its mistress, be the mistress of all, and exercise your authority over all in that house, let children be born

unto thee and blessings attend thee there, perform the duties of thy household with care, unite thy person with the person of this thy husband, and exercise thy authority in this thy house until old age."

Addressing the married couple, the priest and parents continue,—“ Oh, bridegroom and bride, do you remain here together, do not be separated, enjoy all proper food, be content to remain in your own home, and find and enjoy happiness in the company of your children and your grandchildren."

The bride and bridegroom offer this prayer—“ May the Lord of Creation bestow on us children and may Aryman (the law of life-preservation) keep us united till old age ;” To the bride is then said, “ Oh, bride, enter with auspicious signs the home of thy husband, let thine eye be free from anger, minister to the happiness of thy husband, and be kind to all living beings, cultivate a cheerful mind and may thy beauty be bright ; be the mother of heroic sons, and be devoted to the gods. May thou have influence over thy father-in-law, and over thy mother-in-law, and be as a queen over thy sister-in-law and thy brother-in-law.” And lastly, the bridegroom and the bride say to each other—in the full realization of the new relations in which they stand, henceforth to proceed with one heart and one mind,—“ may all the gods unite

our hearts, may the god of maternity and the spirit of proper instruction and goodness, of wise and pure speech, unite us together."

This, my American brothers and sisters, in brief, is the marriage ceremony of the Hindoos. It is longer and more tedious perhaps than your short, and as it would seem, not over-binding ceremony which I have witnessed since coming to your country and also on this platform. In your ceremony words pass between the bride and bridegroom, some of which words, as you have seen, are conspicuous for their absence in the "Heathen" ceremony which I have declared to you. Your priest would say to the man — "Wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife, wilt thou love, honor and keep her in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others cling only unto her so long as life shall last." And to the bride he will say— "Wilt thou take this man to be thy wedded husband, wilt thou love, honor and obey him and forsaking all others cling only to him so long as life shall last." To these propositions the man and the woman are expected to answer each, "I will." But, if what I hear from you be the truth, this is said in many instances, with a large reservation. The absence of the pledge to obey the husband in the religious marriage ceremony of my people, ought of itself, to save us from certain strictures and

unjust criticisms, and our women from consignment in your belief to a state of abject chattelhood, degradation, and groveling subserviency to their husbands. I hope you will understand that I do not assume to sit in judgment upon your institutions, nor for one moment to institute invidious comparisons; as a Hindoo, I honor womanhood throughout the world and bow in proper worship to those sacred qualities which constitute wifehood and motherhood. The greatest of all honors are those that cluster about the name and character of mother and wife.

Oh, my brothers and sisters, whatever privileges and rights may seem to be denied the women of your country, and whatever duties of a more public nature may seem to demand their attention and their care, let nothing be said or done or thought, that shall detract from the crown of motherhood and wifehood, the glorious lustre that is found only there. But this I must say, that no Hindoo woman in all the history—the sorrowful, sad and changing history of my race,—has ever sought relief from the holy vows of marriage in divorce. We, of India, do not forget that we are under the government of a woman—her Gracious Majesty, Victoria, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland and Empress of India, whose birthday and coronation day are national holidays, and who by our

people is more frequently called, not the Empress of India, but the mother. I will say that the designation of wife in India, of the Hindoo wife, is higher and grander than that of Empress. She is called Devi, or Goddess.

If you can reconcile these facts and deductions to the mistaken notions which you have received, from whatever sources, respecting the condition of women in my country, it is your task, to which I cheerfully leave you.

In the lectures which I have had the honor to deliver to you in the class room, I have spoken largely concerning the early marriages among my people, and will not at this time do more than state the reasons therefor. The first reason is that the giving in marriage at the early age to which reference is made, does not imply in any case the consummation of marriage. The ceremony that I have given you, which is the real marriage, is performed among the Jains at the proper age of maturity, and the wife proceeds at once to her husband's home, and this was the custom in the earlier ages, before India became the coveted land of the invader. The second reason is that the early betrothal was necessary in the Hindoo thought as a measure of protection, which includes time and the duty of education on the part of the young persons thus betrothed. If, between the time of the betrothal and the marriage ceremony, the betrothed

shall die, the betrothed wife may be married to another. The protection to which I have referred, which this early betrothal gives to the girls of India can be as well understood by you as if I were to go into a detailed statement, for among the perquisites and spoils of the invader of all times must be reckoned, not alone lootings of perishable possessions of the conquered, but the possession and ravishment of unprotected women. Indeed, this measure of protection has not always proved adequate any more than your laws of prohibition of the liquor traffic have always, or may ever really, prohibit. A third reason may be given that womanhood is reached in our country at an earlier age than in your own.

Another mistake that I must briefly notice is the prevalent misconception of the moral status of the Hindoo people at large. I cannot go into this subject farther than to affirm that the basis of morality, its laws and rules, differ in no essential respect from those that obtain throughout the universal world. The rites of our religion, the relationships obtaining throughout the whole social structure, both as to private and public conduct, answer for the highest moral character. Justice, truth, purity, are words meaningful to every Hindoo, sacred to his thought, not only parts of his speech, but essential elements in his daily devotions.

“Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not covet, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not lie,” are commandments with us as with you, and thou shalt practice virtue, good will, right conduct, not toward men only, but toward all living beings, are also parts of our moral code, which no Hindoo can forget or deny without bringing down upon him corresponding evils and retribution. These are the straight lines in which we are instructed and required to walk. If men grow lame and weak and sometimes fall by the way in India, as in America, we know the source of that weakness and that failure, and should bequeath our commiseration and helpful brotherly pity. But this must be said in justice to my people, that the statistics of crime in India, as ascertained by Government scrutiny, are but one-fourth in extent of those of England itself.

In concluding this part of my subject, I will refer you to the fact which with you is familiar, that what is said sometimes of the moral status of the Hindoos, which is the outward expression of the moral law which they adopt, is also said of you, who are spiritualists, by some of your ill informed Christian brothers. The same argument that you present in meeting the objection I also can and do adopt as my answer, since, if I should seek to formulate an answer it could not be more pertinent or

more just. I find that answer in a book which I have considered for the first time on these grounds, and the author of which, well known to you, for he is on this platform, is not only my brother, but my friend, whom I have learned not only to admire but to love. The book is entitled "Angels' Visits to my Farm in Florida." The author's name is "Golden Light," but the pronunciation would be different. In that book I find this paragraph which I will now read, and in the translation of it to my own people, I should substitute for Spiritualism, Hindooism. The author says to the objector to Spiritualism, as I would say to the objector to Hindooism.

"I suggested that perhaps public opinion in many things was based on misconception, and ignorance of the real truth, principles and facts underlying and constituting the philosophy of spiritualism. It is of the very first importance, in the first estimate of this philosophy and its adherents and advocates, to know whether or not its principles and teachings are in themselves moral, judged by the highest standards. Is the morality of this philosophy different from that which all pure minds accept, whether it be called Christian or Jewish, Moham-medan or Hindoo, Greek or Roman.

Are there several codes?

Is the essence of morality one everywhere or various, as men conceive it?

Is morality a creature of rules and regulations and human formulations?

Is it not rather the soul of right, or the conscience of right, implanted or breathed into humanity and into the universe by the Infinite Creator?

What is moral law?

Who shall define it?

What authority shall interpret it?

It goes without saying that whatever it is and wherever it is, it is obligatory on all. But where will you search for it outside of yourself?

Is it something independent of your consciousness, lying somewhere hidden, waiting to be discovered?

If it is not found within you, where shall you look for it?

Fichte, the German philosopher, says that "the formal law of morals," is this :

"Always act in conformity with your convictions of duty (obey your conscience).

"This rule includes two others : first, try to understand clearly what is your duty in every matter ; then, when you are convinced what your duty is, do it, for the sole reason that you are sure that it is your duty."

Spiritualism, as I understand it, adopts and emphasizes this law, even as Jesus did—in his sermon on the mount—and as all good Christians do when they truly interpret him.

The criterion of morality is the conscience, not another man's, but your own.

I do not mean that one should not take counsel of other men's consciences in arriving at right conclusions, but I assert the very contrary, that he should do so. Not for the purpose of lessening the sense of responsibility, but for the confirmation of truth and right.

This is the common practice of mankind, and so it is that certain things are settled, because universal, or concrete conscious of mankind through ages, has made them so."

Having thus noticed some of the mistakes prevalent in respect to my people and our religion, history and morality, and conscious of doing scant justice to each matter, and also conscious of the purpose to be just and true, I must now close this lecture by expressing, as I may, my conception of the future that awaits us in this world, where the thought and the conduct of men make and mar their future. To me the outgrowths of religions, civilizations and governments, are the expressions of human progress and development from one motherhood

of law, of nature, of man. We of India do not arrogate to ourselves superiority and authority, noting as we do along the ages, the rise, decline and fall, of empires and civilizations, to lecture you for your faults or to condemn you for your failures. No. We in the old home of the great mother of the nations, the civilizations, the philosophies and the religions of the wide world, would extend to you the mothers' blessing, the home greeting, and express, not the hope only, but the firm belief, that when you shall have compassed all seas and all lands, and all methods, and have exhausted all resources and discoveries in literature, in art, in the sciences, and in the worship of God, you will by degrees, by slow, perhaps painful but sure progress, turn your faces and direct your steps toward the old home, the old mother, and your brothers and sisters in India, the blessed. There you will find the old hospitality, the old sweet life, and the dear old mother, unchanged in her devotion and in her love, capable of recognizing you all, and in her ample lap you shall nestle, as your progenitors did in the earlier times, amid the caressings and benedictions of love—love—love ! Better than science, better than art, better than power, better than wealth, because it is love which answers for the usefulness and right work of all these, and "which passeth understanding."

