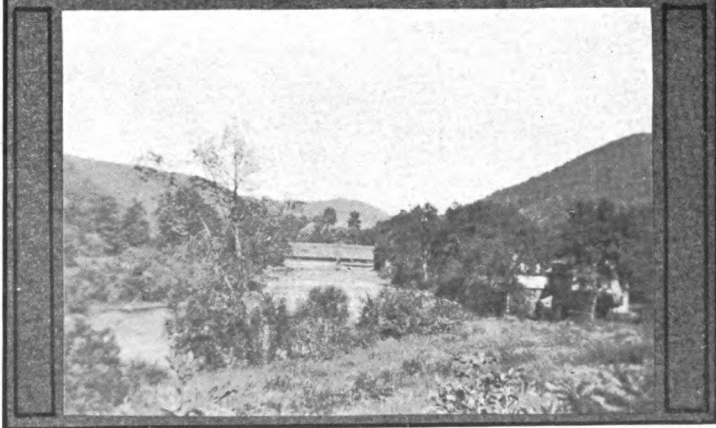
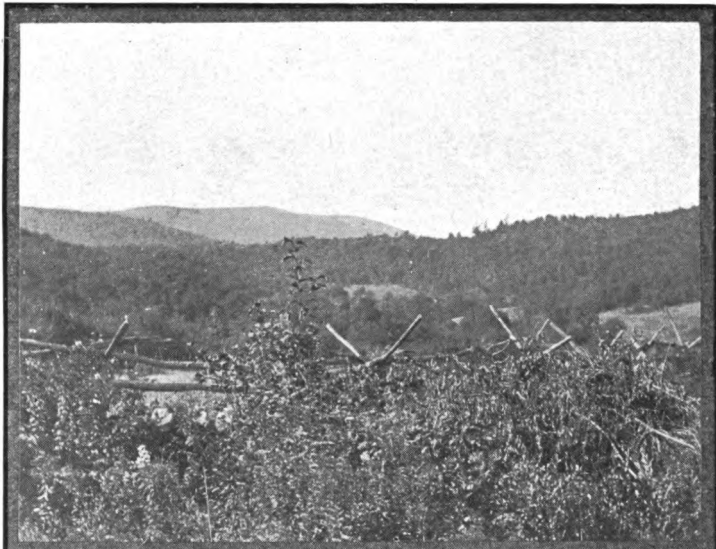


# Vedanta magazine

Vedanta Society



1. Hills on the Ashrama property of the New York Vedanta Society.
2. The Housatonic, near West Cornwall, Conn.

# Vedanta

Monthly Bulletin

Volume III

(April 1907—March 1908)



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# Vedanta

## Monthly Bulletin

That which exists is one; men call it by various names.—Rig Veda

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VOL. III

APRIL, 1907

No. 1

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### “ ECSTASY ”

*Lecture by SWAMI ABHEDANANDA*

THE scientific investigations of the Society for Psychological Research have opened new vistas of our soul life and have unveiled many of the mysteries regarding the powers and possibilities of the human soul. They have given wonderful demonstrations regarding the existence of the soul as an entity, distinct and separable from the physical organism, through which it manifests itself on the material plane. They have contributed scientific explanations of spirit communications and have confirmed our belief in the existence of a spiritual world. Some of these investigators, like Dr. Myers, the author of “Human Personality”, have gone so far as to admit that the embodied spirits, under certain conditions, do vacate the physical organism, either partially or completely, in order to allow a disembodied spirit to enter into and take possession of it, in the same manner as the primitive people of different countries believed in ancient times. The old idea of possession by disembodied spirits is no longer ridiculed by such great thinkers of the present day. They not only admit this, but they maintain that it is possible for embodied souls to leave the body and to wander in spiritual space, while the physical organism remains in a trance-like condition. At this stage, the soul's perception is

not confined to the sense plane or to the objects of the material world; but, transcending them, it perceives the visions of the spiritual world. The seer then enters into associations higher than anything that is to be found on this plane. This passing of the embodied spirit from the physical form into the spiritual world with its spiritual perception is called "ecstasy". It is a faculty distinct from any other that we ordinarily see or hear of. It is a peculiar faculty of the soul, different from that of spirit communication or spirit control or possession by spirit, trance or hypnotic sleep. The outward condition of the physical organism in ecstasy may resemble to a certain extent the sound sleep or the trance-like state, but subjectively the soul reaches a consciousness which is higher than the sense-consciousness, a consciousness of the spiritual realm, while the sense-consciousness remains absolutely in abeyance. Of course, it is true that in the case of spirit control or possession the man's own consciousness is also in abeyance; although on this point there is an outward resemblance between ecstasy and possession, still the latter is distinguished from ecstasy by the fact that another spirit or disembodied spirits invade the organism and utilize every part of the body of one who is possessed. In ecstasy however neither such invasion nor possession by another spirit takes place. The body and senses remain motionless and unconscious of the surroundings, the soul, being freed, obtains glimpses of higher truths and sees spiritual visions.

There have been innumerable instances of individual souls who have reached this state of ecstasy and have realized truths which are transcendental and on the spiritual plane. The religious history of the world is filled with descriptions of the ecstatic visions and experiences of the prophets, seers, and saints of different

countries. In the old Testament we read how Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, and other Jewish prophets saw visions of the spiritual world in ecstasy. In the new Testament is described the ecstasy of Jesus the Christ, of St. Paul, and St. John.

The Koran says that Mahomet was carried in ecstasy to the seventh heaven by the angel Gabriel, and in that state Mahomet saw the truths of the spiritual world and afterwards described those experiences to his followers. Mahomet, although he was an illiterate man, received all revelations in his ecstasy, and these revelations were afterwards embodied in the Koran, the Scriptures of the Mohammedans. Zoroaster became the founder of Zoroastrianism, after receiving his revelations in ecstasy. These revelations formed the Scriptures of the Zoroastrians called the Zend-Avesta. Ahura Mazda, the great God, spoke with Zarathustra in ecstasy, and the latter heard His voice and received His commands. If you read the Zend-Avesta, you will find that Ahura Mazda was the speaker and Zarathustra the enquirer.

Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, went in his ecstasy to all the spiritual spheres or *Lokas* or heavens and experienced those wonderful truths, which he afterwards preached before the world. Many of his disciples and followers reached the state of ecstasy at different times.

In India there have been countless prophets, saints and seers from time immemorial. Each one of these reached ecstasy and realized transcendental truths of the spiritual world. Emanuel Swedenborg is said to have discovered the Law of Correspondences in ecstasy. He saw glimpses of heaven and hell in the spiritual world; he heard the voices of angels and archangels associated with them, and experienced many things which he afterwards described in the



pages of his voluminous works. Some of the great philosophers of ancient Greece, like Socrates, Plato, Plotinus, Virgil, claimed to have seen spiritual truths in ecstasy. Great poets, like Dante, Milton, Wordsworth, Tennyson, saw visions in ecstasy. It is said that Immanuel Kant, the great German philosopher, felt it. The Persian poets Sadit, Hafiz, Jelaluddeen and other Sufi philosophers considered that ecstasy was the state where the soul reached Divine Communion. The Arab philosopher, Al Ghazeli, attained to ecstasy and described it as a state higher than any other state of consciousness. Santa Teresa and Joan d' Arc both enjoyed the bliss of ecstasy. Some of the Christian mystics of the middle ages, like St. Barnard, Eckhart and others, attained to ecstasy and described their experiences.

Thus we can understand how universally accepted is this state of ecstasy. The evidence for it is stronger than that for any other religious state. It is the one spiritual experience of the soul which is common to all religions. All religions may vary in their dogmas and doctrines, in their ideals, but in this state of ecstasy they are one. No one can deny its existence, because it has been the foundation upon which the structure of all great and small religions have been built.

In this state have come all revelations of God, as well as the knowledge of celestial pleasures and happiness; otherwise, how could we know that there is such a thing as Heaven, that the heavenly pleasures are more desirable than the earthly ones, if this knowledge did not come to us in a certain state of consciousness? The aim of all religions is to lead the individual soul to the realization of the Supreme Being through the gate of ecstasy. The particular experiences in individual cases may vary, and the moral and spiritual

interpretations of ecstatic visions may be different in each case and may be governed by preconceived ideas and superstitions of individuals; but at the same time no one can deny the fact,—that the embodied spirit, withdrawing its consciousness from the physical body and from the material world, perceives spiritual and transcendental truths.

Ecstasy is entirely a subjective phenomenon. There is no objective sign other than the trance-like condition of the body. It is true, however, that there are different kinds of ecstasy, and that there are various stages in it. In ecstasy every high emotion is quickened to its climax at the sight of the consummation of Divine beauty and Divine love. There is a kind of ecstasy in which tears of joy and blissfulness run down the cheeks of the seer, the face becomes radiant with divine lustre and a heavenly smile. The seer may talk in an unknown tongue, and, after regaining sense-consciousness, may dance with extreme joy and blissfulness. This state of ecstasy is called in Sanscrit "Bhava". It comes to the soul of the devotee at the sight of his spiritual Ideal whom he worships through love and extreme devotion, to whom he has offered his whole heart and soul and beyond whom he thinks there is nothing greater or higher. These outward signs are visible when the spirit retains a partial connection with the physical organism, but, when the connection is entirely cut off, the body remains senseless like a dead body.

Santa Teresa, the Spanish saint of the sixteenth century, described the different stages of her ecstasy. She states: "In the sixth stage of ecstasy the body grows cold, speech and respiration are suspended, the eyes close; the slightest motion may cause the greatest efforts." Then she describes a state higher

than this; she asks: "What is there beyond ecstasy?" and she answers: "The union with God. This is accomplished suddenly and violently, but with such force that we should strive in vain to resist the impetuous onset. God has now descended into the substance of the soul and has become one with it." Thus she realized the union with God through ecstasy.

In India, the Bhaktas, or those who follow the path of love and devotion, attain to this state of union with God which they call "mahabhava" or the highest state of ecstasy. There have been many in India who have attained to that state. Radha, the consort of Krishna, Chaitanya, the great saint and divine incarnation, who was a contemporary of Luther, and who preached the science of divine love, and Ramakrishna attained to this state of ecstasy. These three are the greatest illustrations of Mahabhava in the religious history of India.

In ecstasy, the eagle of the individual soul, being freed from the cage of the physical body, soars high in the spiritual firmament of the Infinite Being. The freedom and happiness which then come are unbounded, the range of perception becomes infinitely expanded, and the soul then realizes the transcendental environment in the place of the material. In the highest state of ecstasy the liberated soul rising above all limitations enters into the abode of the Infinite and eventually becomes one with it. Plotinus, the great Neo-Platonist, who lived nearly two centuries after Christ, attained this state of ecstasy three times in his life. He says to his friend Flaccus: "You ask how you can know the Infinite. I answer, not by reason. It is the office of reason to distinguish and define. The Infinite cannot be ranked among its objects. You can only apprehend the Infinite by a faculty superior to reason, by entering into a state

in which you are your finite self no longer, in which the divine essence is communicated to you. This is ecstasy." This ecstasy is very rare, but it is the only state in which the Infinite Being can be realized face to face. The old question, whether we can realize the Infinite face to face, and the answer to that question, we find in the old Testament. The Lord says that "no one can live after seeing Me". It is true to a certain extent, because physically one must be dead in that state. The body will remain like a dead body, but the soul will realize the Infinite and afterwards will become one with It.

Here it may be asked, if ecstasy be the condition of the consciousness of the Infinite and of the realization of spiritual truths and if it be so universally accepted, how can it be attained? Is there any method by which one can acquire it? There are various methods by which it can be reached. These methods are fully described in Vedanta. Vedanta analyzes all these methods by which the different souls of different countries have attained to it and have realized the Infinite Being. It also classifies them according to their nature and calls each of these methods "Yoga", or path.

Bhakti-Yoga, or the path of love and devotion, is the easiest of all. Love and devotion are like the two wings by which the bird of the human soul flies out of the cage of the human body and soars high in the spiritual atmosphere of the Infinite Being and enjoys ecstatic happiness. This path was followed by a majority of the great seers of different countries who entered into ecstasy. If we examine the lives of all the great saints and prophets, their religious exercises and the methods by which they attained to ecstasy and realization, we shall find that devotion and love were at the bottom of them all. The fire of true love and devotion for the Supreme burns all earthly ties and consumes everything

which the devotee claims as his own. It is a tremendous fire. Few possibly have realized what that fire of true love is. It acts in the system like high fever. The tongue becomes fever-dry and the blood runs like fire, creating heat and a burning sensation in the body, which can be quenched by no earthly object. The all-consuming fire of love destroys sleep before ecstasy comes. Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna did not sleep for twelve years when his whole soul and heart were burning with the fire of love, and for several months he suffered from that unbearable, burning sensation in his whole body. He used to plunge himself in the Ganges and remain there for hours; but, alas! the cold waters of the Ganges failed to put out that fire of love which was burning upon the altar of his heart within his body; nothing could quench that fire.

Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, the latest Divine manifestation of the present age, showed in his life the various stages of ecstasy that are described in the pages of the religious history of the world. His whole life was like a chain of the different states of ecstasy. It was natural with him, but with others it was a rare accomplishment coming through hard and long-standing practice. The first ecstasy that came to him was when he was four years old after seeing the glorious coloring of a tropical cloud, and that took him out of the body. His body fell motionless and that experience he never forgot during his lifetime. He always used to mention that state, and whenever any one would ask him what ecstasy was like, he would immediately go into that state, and we have seen in him the highest state of "mahabhava" in which his body would remain like a dead body; His pulse and the heart-beat would stop for the time being and his spirit would leave the prison of the body and commune with the Infinite. Once

he fell in a bowl of burning charcoal and a live coal struck him on the shoulder and it burnt almost an inch deep into the flesh. He had no sensation; and that shows how he could separate himself entirely from the body. Yet he was not possessed by any other spirit at that time; it was not an obsession, not a trance; it was a state of ecstasy. When he would remain in that state his soul would leave his body and enter into the abode of the Infinite. Sometimes he would talk in an unknown tongue which no one could understand, and after regaining his sense-consciousness sometimes he would dance with extreme joy and blissfulness and relate his experience. He used to say that the joy and happiness in that state of ecstasy can be compared to the indescribable joy and happiness of a live fish which, after being taken out of the water, finds itself back in the water. Can you imagine the happy condition of such a fish? Ramakrishna used to say that in ecstasy the soul finds its real home where it enjoys absolute freedom from all bondage.

Ecstasy can also be reached through the path of Raja Yoga or concentration upon the Supreme Spirit with higher breathing exercises. The higher breathing exercises will lift the soul above the material plane and will bring ecstasy in the end. The breathing exercises, as practised by the Yogis in India, and which will bring the highest revelations of ecstasy, are different from any other breathing exercises which will produce merely physical results or cure diseases. It is not a different state, another kind of breathing entirely, but through the breathing exercises it can be easily acquired, and this state of ecstasy is described in Raja Yoga as Samadhi, superconsciousness or God-consciousness. Raja Yoga gives the scientific method by which one can attain to ecstasy, and therefore it is safe for everybody. In

Bhakti Yoga, there is a danger of becoming sentimental, erratic and insane, because it is very difficult to control the emotions when the whole heart and soul are flooded by the exuberance of the stream of love. These emotions become so unruly and unmanageable that they unbalance the mind of the devotee. There have been many instances of persons who failed to attain to ecstasy and became insane because they could not control their passions and emotions, but there is no such danger in the path of Raja Yoga or concentration with breathing exercises.

Furthermore, the students of Raja Yoga can go step by step towards ecstasy under the guidance of an experienced spiritual teacher, and they can thus avoid the various sidetracks in the field of ecstasy which lead to psychic phenomena, visions and hallucinations that are generally mistaken for the realization of the highest spiritual Truth. Here we shall have to distinguish the experience of ecstasy from hallucinations and ordinary visions or any other psychic phenomena. How are we going to do that? I have seen a number of spiritualists and other occultists, who have gone into a state similar to ecstasy, but have not found the spiritual Truth. Why? Because they could not distinguish the highest spiritual Truth from mental visions and psychic phenomena. First of all, we must learn the expressions of spiritual truths, in what way they come, and Vedanta will help us in understanding these different stages; and of course an experienced spiritual teacher is necessary, as in studying either music or art we need an experienced teacher who understands the defects and different side tracks and different conditions which may come along the way. Similarly, we need an experienced teacher also in the practice of Raja Yoga. The science of Raja Yoga claims that this highest state of ecstasy, in which the Divine

Being is realized, in which the consciousness of the Infinite comes, can be attained by any well-qualified man or woman, who has faithfully practiced the teachings and has been favored by direct personal instruction of such an experienced Guru or spiritual master. In Raja Yoga there is no limitation of any kind. It is not confined to any particular sect or creed or doctrine or dogma, but in Bhakti Yoga there are such limitations. In Bhakti Yoga one must have absolute faith in a personal God with a particular name and form, and must worship that personal God through certain forms of worship until the true love and true devotion come. But in Raja Yoga, such absolute faith in a personal God is not necessary. One who has no faith in the Supreme Being can practice Raja Yoga and get the results, and there is another peculiarity in Raja Yoga which is this: That it does not ask you to believe in anything until you have realized it; while in Bhakti Yoga, in the path of love and devotion (as in Christianity, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Hinduism, or any other Dualistic religion), you will have to believe before you realize, to have faith in such a Being, and that may be very difficult for many persons. In Raja Yoga on the contrary if you have faith in yourself—that you are a soul, a self-conscious spirit—that is enough. You know your own self first, and then, by proper practice, if you can separate yourself from the physical organism you will enter into the state of ecstasy. Raja Yoga can be practised by any sectarian of any religion, whether Christian, Mohammedan, Buddhist or Hindu; whosoever follows this path with earnestness and sincerity will surely attain wonderful results in due time.

Concentration will gradually lead to meditation and afterwards through the different stages of ecstasy into God-consciousness. In that state of God-consciousness,



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all doubts will cease; all questions regarding the nature of the soul and the spiritual world will be answered; and the soul will reach that freedom, that liberation, from the physical form, which is considered to be the highest, and will become conscious of its past and future. Omniscience will begin to dawn upon the horizon of the soul and illumine the whole inner nature. Then the individual soul, coming in direct contact with the Infinite, and realizing the Infinite face to face as it were, will remain one with It forever and forever.

### ANSWERS

ALL thoughtful souls, with power of love imbued,  
Need some sweet tender voice to answer theirs;  
We search and live in hope of echoing call—  
How oft may steal an answer unawares!  
Sweet counsel from the running brooklet's song  
Is sung to many a sad and weary heart.  
The stars still shine. In silence do they speak  
Such voiceless lessons, that are keenest art.  
The pages one may gather from the fields  
Are volumes never catalogued in line,  
The birds, the flowers, the sky with sunset hues,  
Are filled with answers that are yours and mine.  
E. P. C.

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“For the little soul, that cries aloud for continued personal existence for itself and its Beloved, there is no help. For the soul which knows itself no more as a unit, but only as a part of the Universal Unit, whereof the Beloved is a part; which feels within itself the throb of the Universal Life; for that soul there is no death.”—OLIVE SHREINER.

**UNPUBLISHED LETTER BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA**

*Dear Madam:*

We have only to grasp the idea of graduation of morality and everything becomes clear.

Renunciation—non-resistance—non-destructiveness—are the ideals to be attained through less and less worldliness, less and less resistance, less and less destructiveness. Keep the ideal in view and work towards it. None can live in the world without resistance, without destruction, without desire. The world has not come to that state yet when the ideal can be realized in society.

The progress of the world through all its evils is making it fit for the ideals, slowly but surely. The majority will have to go on with this slow growth, exceptional ones will have to get out to realize the ideal in the present state of things.

Doing the duty of the time is the best way and if it is done only as duty does not make us attached.

Music is the highest art and to those who understand the highest worship.

We must try our best to destroy ignorance and evil. Only we have to learn that evil is destroyed by the growth of good.

Yours affectionately,

VIVEKANANDA.

13th Dec. '96.

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“In time of trouble go not out of yourself to seek for aid; for the whole benefit of trial consists in silence, patience, rest and resignation. In this condition strength is found for the hard warfare, because God himself fights for the soul.”—M. MOLINOS.

## VEDANTA IN AMERICA

A GENERAL meeting of the Vedanta Society was held at the Society House Thursday evening, March 14, President Parker in the chair. Reports were read by the Secretary, the Treasurer, and a representative of the Ways and Means Committee. The Editor of the Bulletin requested all members to help to make the magazine a success by submitting articles or by suggesting any means of heightening its interest.

The announcement of two recent purchases by the Society was made; one, of a permanent city home; the other of an Ashrama or Retreat in the country near West Cornwall, Connecticut.

The principal business of the evening concerned the question of alterations to be made in the new Society house and the policy to be adopted in house management.

The date for the next general meeting was set for May 16th.

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The most urgent need of the Vedanta Society of New York was filled during the past month when the Society purchased a house for its permanent headquarters. The house is at 135 West 80th St., between Amsterdam and Columbus Avenues; it is in a good block and neighborhood, and easily accessible to the 6th and 9th Avenue elevated roads, and to the subway. It is a four-story house, having two rooms on the first floor which can be thrown together for public lectures. Rooms not needed for Society purposes will be rented.

The Society is already planning a few interior changes, such as the installing of electric wires and the putting up of a few partitions. The right thus to mould the interior is one of the great advantages derived from owning its home. But perhaps the chief advantage lies in the feeling which it gives of the stability and permanence of Vedanta work—a feeling justified by the dignity of the teaching.

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The Sunday morning service with lecture by Swami Abhedananda held at the Society House, 62 West 71st St., will continue through April.

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Swami Abhedananda delivered a lecture in the Society House Sunday, March 17th, on the subject, "Heredity". The Swami showed the absurdity of meaning by heredity the condition whereby *all* characteristics of the parent are transmitted to the offspring. Weismann's reasons for disputing the transmission of acquired characteristics were given and his theory of inheritance through the germ plasm briefly outlined. The Swami concluded by developing the idea that heredity leads to the door of reincarnation and that by it are explained such facts as geniuses and prodigies, which are not explained satisfactorily by heredity.

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THE Vedanta Society of Pittsburg seems to be growing rapidly. The membership was forty early in March with other applications pending. Swami Bodhananda continued to give public lectures on Sunday afternoons throughout the month. The members' classes held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, have been well attended. The Yoga class is especially promising, the students being earnest and enthusiastic.

### THE ASHRAMA

THE Bulletin takes great pleasure in announcing that the plans of the Ashrama Committee of the New York Vedanta Society have been carried out with complete success. The amount necessary for the first payment on the property has been generously donated, and the deed is now in the possession of the Society.

For more than a year the Ashrama Committee has been working to fill a need long felt by the Society, the need for a country home, a retreat where earnest students of Vedanta may enjoy the beauties of nature and find the peace and harmony so advantageous to meditation. A beautiful spot has been selected four miles from the

station at West Cornwall, Connecticut, on the Berkshire Division of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad. The distance from New York is 107 miles and the time required for travelling between three and four hours. The Chairman of the Ashrama Committee describes the place thus:

"Imagine a farm 250 acres in extent, surrounded by hills 300 feet high, some of which are included in its boundary; and located near the heart of it, an old-fashioned farmhouse, a large barn and several smaller ones,—and you will have a bird's-eye view of our Ashrama.

"The elevation of the lowland is 1,200 feet above sea level; of the hills, 1,500 feet. On the property there are level plains and green pastures; sloping hillsides covered with large forest trees of different kinds, as well as some smaller trees and brush; chestnut groves, maple groves, pine groves, several springs and a brook. Besides the present buildings, there are foundations for three houses. Sixty-five acres of tillable land afford ample opportunity for farming, and good water is assured by the position of one spring on the side of a hill, making it possible to pipe drinking water to the level."

The conditions upon which permanent or temporary residence may be secured will be announced in a later issue. Those wishing further particulars may address Ashrama Committee, Vedanta Society, 62 West 71st St., New York City.

### TEAR-DROPS

GENTLY to the earth descending,  
 Comes the rain;  
 Mother Nature's tear-drops falling,  
 In her travail pain;  
 Soon with Spring-time's lovely blossoms  
 Will her great lap fill,  
 While her tears all sparkling gladness,  
 In the songs of birds will trill.

Thus it is that trials and sorrow  
Bring me gain;  
And my tear-drops softly falling,  
Like the blessed rain,  
From my heart bring sweetest blossoms  
Purifying thought, desire,  
While the Spirit-spark within me  
Starts aflame its quickening fire.

### VEDANTA IN INDIA

#### RAMAKRISHNA BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY

UNDER date of Feb. 28, from The Math, Belur, Howrah, we have received the following interesting communication addressed to the Editor of the Vedanta Bulletin:

"One of our friends of Madras writes a letter to the President of the Ramakrishna Mission, from which I quote the following lines describing the festival as it was celebrated in Madras: 'The birthday celebration of Sri Guru Maharaj went off very grandly this day. We fed over six thousand poor sumptuously and also one hundred cows. At the public meeting in the evening a paper on India's Needs and the Ramakrishna Mission was read by Mr. Panchapakesa Sastriar H.A.L.T. There was a large crowd and the lecture was listened to with attention throughout. The Honorable P. S. Siva Swami Aiyer B.H.B.L., who presided, spoke very sympathetically of our Mission and its high aims.'"

"Our friend says that the paper will be soon published. Swami Sivananda, who is in charge of the Benares Centre, writes that the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated at the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama on the 17th inst. There were readings from the late Mr. P. C. Mozoomdar's account of Sri Ramakrishna and Prof. Max Mueller's "The Real Mahatma," which were followed by vocal music and Sankirtan. Then were distributed a life of the Master in Hindu and a Hindu version of the Chicago lectures by Swami Vivekananda. Among those present were noticed a number of educated men belonging to different provinces of the country and also many students who showed much eagerness to have copies of the publica-

tions distributed. The event was brought to a close by the distribution of *prasadam*."

"In Bangalore the celebration was quite satisfactory. About 1300 poor people were fed. There were speeches on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. Mr. Puttana Chetty in his presidential address spoke in eloquent terms of the great Mission of Sri Ramakrishna's life in uniting persons of differing creeds and nationalities under the inspiration of a lofty spiritual ideal."

At Madras, "the seventy-fourth birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was celebrated last Sunday at the Belur Math with usual fervour and devotion. All the elements that impart to the occasion its joyous yet solemn and impressive character were brought together by the fascination of Sri Ramakrishna's name. Under a large pavilion, on an artificial hillock, most tastefully decorated with flowers and ferns by Babu Seetal Chandra Bose, was placed a life-size oil-painting of Sri Ramakrishna, and some of his inspiring sayings written on strips of black oil-cloth were hung around the picture. The festival was opened with special *puja* and *aratrikam* followed by recitation of hymns and prayers. Besides feeding and distribution of *prosodam*, there were *kirtons* and *sankirtans* and songs by separate singers."

### Ramakrishna Home of Service.

THE Sixth Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Home of Service in Benares has just been received and contains a most interesting account of the work accomplished during the past year.

The institution is regarded as a branch center of the Ramakrishna Mission; its sources of income are subscriptions and donations from the public; its work is the relief of the poor, sick, and infirm, of either sex and of any caste or creed whatever, who have no one to help them.

The report is prefaced with a review by Sister Nivedita of the work of the association in relation to the old traditions of the Holy City of Benares. She writes in part as follows:

"If we may compare large things with small, Benares may be called the Canterbury of the Asokan and post-Asokan India. The Vedic city through whose streets had passed the Blessed One (Buddha) became the sacred city of Siva, and to make and set up his emblem there, was held for long ages after the same act of merit that the erecting of votive stupas had so long been in places of Buddhistic pilgrimage.

"But Benares is not only an Indian Canterbury, it is also an Oxford. Under the shadow of temples and monasteries cluster the schools and dwellings of the pundits, or learned Sanskritists, and from all parts of India the poor students flock there to study the classics and the ancient rituals of Hinduism. It is a mediæval type of culture, of course, carried out in the mediæval way. It takes a man here twelve years to exhaust a single book, while under the modern comparative method we are compelled to skim the surfaces of from twelve to a score of books in a single year. It follows that we have here a study of the contents rather than the relations of a given work; significance rather than co-ordination. But for this very reason, the Benares-trained scholar is of his own kind, secure in his type, as fearless in his utterance of that which he knows, as those other mediævalists in a modern world, John Bunyan and William Blake. . . .

"Benares, again, is an epitome of the whole Indian synthesis of nationality. . . . The food of every province may be bought in these streets, the language of every race in India heard within these walls. Surely it is clear enough that as in the Latin Empire of City and of Church the saying grew up, 'All roads lead to Rome,' so also in India, all roads, all faiths, all periods, and all historic developments will lead us sooner or later back to Benares.

"A city in such a position, possessed of such manifold significance, the pilgrim-center of a continent, must always have an overwhelming need of strong civic organization. And that such a need was recognised in the city during the ages of its growth, we may see in many ways. . . .

"The modern age was later, perhaps, in arriving



here than elsewhere. But arrive it did, and its work when it came, here as elsewhere, was to multiply problems, and to discredit the solutions that had been discovered by slow ages of growth. The old self-jurisdiction and self-administration of the civic group was banished. And at the same time, the railways connected Benares with every part of India, and made it possible to pour in upon her daily as large a number of diseased, infirm, and starving persons, as may once have reached her on foot or in boats, in the course of a year.

“Thus a forest of needs has grown up in modern Benares, of which the past generations, with their common sense, their spontaneous kindness, and their thrifty municipal management, knew nothing. The dying still come here to die, but it is now so easy to reach the city that they are often the utterly destitute; and lingering illness, hunger and suffering, on ghats and roadsides, is scarcely compatible with the Hindu love of humanity and decency.

“Poor working-folk come, when the last hope has failed them, trusting that the Great God will be their refuge in His Own City. In the old days when Benares was a wealthy capital, these would have made their way to some house or para inhabited by well-to-do townfolk from their own district, and through their kind offices, work would sooner or later have been found. But now they find themselves amongst strangers.

“Or the poor student comes here to learn. In the old days he would have found house-room, as well as food, in the home of his Guru, or of some wealthy patron, and if he fell ill, he would have been cared for there as a member of the family. To-day the number of so-called students is great, and possibly amongst them the indolent are many. In any case, even amongst the most earnest, some of these poor students have to live in the streets. And when illness overtakes such, there is none to aid, for there is none even to know.

“And finally there is the case of the widowed gentlewomen who come to Benares to pray for the dead. As with others, so here also there is in many cases but slender provision. And yet, now-a-days, they cannot

come to friends, but must needs hire a room and pay rent to a landlord.

"It was in face of such facts as are here enumerated that a group of young men banded themselves together in the year 1900 to form a sort of Brotherhood of mercy for the aid of sufferers in Benares. They ranged themselves under the name of Sri Ramakrishna, and were visited and blessed by the Swami Vivekananda, on that stay in the city which proved to be his last journey, in the year 1902. One of these very men remains yet, faithful to his post, working on steadily day after day for the object he was the first to recognise. And one has fallen by the way, having died of small-pox caught in nursing a patient. But to-day the Home of Service is served, and workers are sent from Belur Math, Howrah, and all are either sannyasins or brahmacharins. The work is arduous. One man acts as secretary, librarian, and compounder. Another feeds and nurses the patients. A third begs rice from door to door, and again at other doors distributes relief or visits the poor. One monk is in charge and responsible for the work as a whole. And there are three servants, a cook, a sweeper, and a visiting house-maid. With these small means, the results arrived at may be judged from the report which follows. They are already such that the need for extension is pressing.

"The Ramakrishna Home of Service, then, represents a spontaneous effort of the higher federation of Hinduism to come to the assistance of the local, or communal, or purely civic consciousness, in an age of crisis and transition. Its birth is in religion, but its goal, as befits the modern world, is civic. Religion inspires but does not limit its activities. The Brotherhood seeks to serve the city. In the fact that such service arises, and arises spontaneously, we find a proof of the undying strength of the Mother-land. And I for one believe with all my heart that that self-same power which had pointed out to these heroic young souls the work so sorely needed at their hands, will not fail to bring also to their door the means of its sure accomplishment. Reader, whoever you are, are you willing to help?"

A report follows of the cases dealt with during the year ending June 1906, the total number to whom relief was given being 1,379, of whom 732 were males and 647 females. Of these, 247 were over fifty years of age, and five were over eighty. Among the benefited were 161 Mohammedans.

The method of relief varied according to the circumstances of the case. Some were sent to hospitals partly or wholly at the cost of the Home. Medical aid and nursing was rendered to outdoor patients, while 155 patients were cared for in the Home. Sixty extreme cases of infirmity and old age were helped with a weekly donation of two seers of rice per head. Thirteen persons were saved from starvation.

Details are given of some of the cases treated, of which the following are typical:

A young Brahmin student who had come to Benares to study Sanskrit three months before was found lying on the Brahma Ghat, where he had been suffering from remittent fever for fifteen days. He was brought to the Home March 10th and a fortnight later was discharged cured.

Fifty or sixty old ladies are being pensioned by the Home; the workers regard the carrying of help to them as "one of the most important works which they have been privileged to do."

Such splendid service cannot but appeal to all friends of India as a cause deserving a helping hand. A letter from Swami Saradananda states that in order to increase the amount and efficiency of the work they need a home designed for their special purpose; a suitable piece of land has already been acquired, and now contributions, however small, are earnestly requested for a building fund. We should bear in mind Swami Vivekananda's dictum: "Never mind if your contribution is only a mite, your help only a little; blades of grass united into a rope will hold in confinement the maddest of elephants, says the old proverb."

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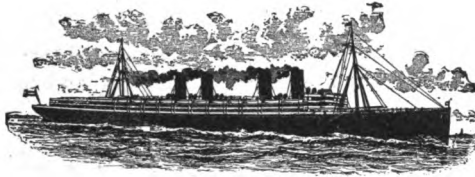
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# Vedanta

## Monthly Bulletin

That which exists is one; men call it by various names.—Rig Veda

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### WORK IS WORSHIP

*(Extract from Lecture by SWAMI ABHEDANANDA)*

IF we examine our own souls, our own inner nature, we shall find that our tendency through all the activities of body and mind is toward one goal, and that is freedom—freedom from nature. We learn from the philosophy of Vedanta that each individual soul is born to be the master of nature and not to remain as a slave of nature; the desire to attain to freedom is the motive power under all the activities of our body and mind. We are constantly struggling to get something to fulfill our ambition, to gratify our desires—for what? Simply to become free from suffering, from the demands that are constantly arising within us. In the Vedanta it is said: “None can live without trying to be free from all these sufferings; without doing some kind of work, propelled by the forces of nature, we are bound to work.”

Nature has made us slaves, but the aim and purpose of life is freedom. To be free from nature, we must live in this world as masters and not as slaves. So long as we are tied down by the forces of nature, we cannot expect peace and happiness, we cannot expect freedom. The wise ones, who have realized the laws of nature and the purpose of life, live in the world not as slaves, but as masters. They hold the torchlight of wisdom to show the path of happiness, peace and

freedom to those self-deluded fools who are chasing the phantoms of hope which appear bright from a distance, but which ultimately lead to the abyss of ignorance, suffering, sorrow and misery.

We must take refuge in that light of wisdom which is held by the wise ones. We must learn from them the way by which we can attain freedom; the way by which we can enter the abode of eternal peace and happiness. These wise ones tell us that this world is like a gigantic stage. Each individual soul is an actor playing the part according to its desire and tendency and consciously, or unconsciously, contributing something to the grand drama of life. There are various scenes; there are many acts—some of them are tragic, some of them are comic, but each one of us is playing our part which we have chosen according to our tendencies and desires.

They tell us we are born with certain tendencies and desires, and these will continue to work until we have gained experience after experience, until we have passed through the different grades of evolution and have reached the highest goal, but so long as they are working within us, they will not make us free. We cannot help ourselves. Each desire, as I have already said, produces suffering, something lacking, something wanting, and, therefore, suffering.

Can we imagine a state of mind where nothing is lacking, but where there is absolute fulfillment of all desires? Very seldom we can think of such a state, but that is the ideal. We cannot remain happy if we do not reach that state. We are struggling for it constantly, day after day, month after month, year after year. Unconsciously we are marching towards that one goal of freedom, but if we move consciously our life will be worth living. We can avoid a great many sorrows,

suffering and misery which arise through ignorance—ignorance of the laws that govern our lives. We must learn the process and march towards that goal consciously. Step by step we shall climb the ladder of evolution and knowingly we shall perform such acts as shall help us in the end. All the acts which we are constantly performing must bring their results and keep us in bondage. The men and women of the world perform the functions of their life through desires. What kind of desires have they? Earthly desires mostly. But is this earth our permanent habitation? Suppose we get all the pleasures and comforts of life, can we hold them? Can we keep them with us always? We cannot. This is not the permanent home. We have a vague conception that this world is ephemeral, transitory, but we forget every moment when a passion arises within us and forces us to do certain acts; then we are self-deluded, we identify ourselves with that passion and feel we are one with it and we must have the fulfillment of that passion. What are we then? A slave—a slave of passion. Similarly, all other desires and tendencies make us slaves for the time being. We lose our discrimination, we lose sight of our ideals, of our goal, and forget the laws which govern our lives. And what will be the end of such acts? Misery, suffering, worry, anxiety.

Can we expect to see peace and happiness in this world, when we have grown self-centered, selfish—when we seek our own rights and disregard the rights of others? Do we think for a moment of other people, that they have just as much right as we have? We think of helping them—when? After depriving them of all the pleasures and comforts, and then we help a little, but we are so selfish that we first keep a lion's share for ourselves, and that is the way the world is



moving. Go to any country and there you will see the same process, the same tendencies among all classes of people. But there are a few who are like the salt of the earth, who do not care to possess anything because they know this world is not their home, who are ready to sacrifice everything for the good of others, because they are not seeking anything in return. They are the great ones. They are truly moral, truly spiritual, who never think of themselves, but think of others. These two tendencies we shall find; the one is centered upon one's own self and the other is centered upon humanity. The one is attraction towards one's own self; the other is getting away from selfishness. It is a state of selflessness, and that selflessness or self-abnegation, self-denial, as Christ said, is the beginning of morality or religion. We should be religious. What do you mean by that? That is, we must not think of ourselves; we must not remain attached to the conditions of the world. Remain unattached to the conditions of the world; unattached to one's own self, then live and enjoy life. Is it possible to remain unattached to one's own self, to the conditions of worldly existence? Yes, it is possible, because we have seen examples like Christ, Buddha and other great sages and saints and spiritual leaders of the world who have set examples for us to follow. Such great souls are worshipped as the ideals of humanity; they are the Saviours of mankind. Why? Because they have discovered a path which is different from the path of the world, and that path leads to absolute happiness, peace, tranquillity and freedom. That path we must not overlook, because otherwise life will not be worth living. Constant drudgery, trying to satisfy selfish desires, to gratify the tendencies of the lower animal nature; why—what for? Why should we live this way? Do we ever

ask this question? We ought to, because if we do not ask such questions, we miss the mark. We forget the ideal and purpose of life, but if we consciously ask such questions, what are we doing? Where are we going? What is the aim of our life? Then our souls will be awakened. We shall begin to get glimpses of that which is eternal, that which is permanent, that which will be our constant companion when we get out of this mortal body. But to-day if we remain in the darkness of ignorance, forgetting our ideals, we have not any good companion. What is our companion? Our character. No matter what we do, our character remains with us. What is character made up of? All the desires, ideas and impressions which we have gathered during our lifetime. This character lasts even when the body is dead and gone, and being the sum total of all the works which we have performed, all the forces which we have manifested, all the impressions and ideas which we have gathered in our life, being the sum total of all these, it contains the germs of future desires, future tendencies and future works. You may not believe that there is a future, but when you begin to see things in a different light, when your perception of finer forces of nature will come to you, you will not be able to deny it. There is nothing lost in this universe. If we have our identity, our individuality, our character to-day, it will continue to exist in the future. And if it is there to-day, it existed in the past. Otherwise it will have come into existence all of a sudden, which is impossible. Science has proved to us that something can never come out of nothing. If our individuality, our character did not exist in the past, we could not live to-day. We must have existed in some form somewhere and we shall exist in some form somewhere after the death of the body, but all

the time we must not forget that we are tied down by these desires and tendencies and they will force us to work; they will bring the results to us and keep us in bondage.

Such is the law of nature. This law of nature is so relentless, so inexorable that nothing can escape. It does not stop for orphans' cries or widows' tears—it is always there; but the wise ones tell us how we shall work to get out of this law, to be free from this law, and if we follow their instructions we find that self-denial, self-abnegation, self-sacrifice is the method. We must not stop working, we must continue to work, but at the same time we must remain unattached to the results of the work, and then all the acts of our daily life will be like acts of worship. Acts of worship produce what? They produce the purification of the heart. All these devotional exercises, ritualistic performances, ceremonies, meditations, prayers, purify our hearts. That is the immediate result of these acts of worship, whether you worship an imaginary form of deity or a great soul like Christ or Buddha or any other ideal of a higher nature.

By worship is meant that you open your heart and your soul and direct your thoughts to that ideal. Try to remember that ideal and live up to it. That is the real worship—constant remembrance of the higher ideal is the true meaning of devotion and worship. Now, if we do not forget that ideal when we are deeply absorbed in the works of our daily life, then we shall perform those works, not for results, but for the purification of the heart; and that purification of the heart is the first thing necessary in the realization of the higher truth. Purification of the heart will come when we are not attached to the results of our works; because if we know that law, that every act will produce its own

result, which is bound to come to us, whether we are attached to it or not, then why should we think of it? Let us perform our duties to the best of our ability and never think of the results. The results will come to us. If we are attached to them and worry about them, we shatter our nerves and do not gain anything. But if, after performing our duties with our best ability, we exercise patience, the result is bound to come. If it does not come, we cannot do better. How can we do better if we have done our best? We may make mistakes, but in the future we may do better and not make mistakes and get better results.

If in the meantime, however, we remember the higher ideal, the ideal and purpose of life, and try to deny our lower self—abnegate ourself, seeking the good of others, then we are purifying our own hearts; we are opening the gates to spiritual realization, to spiritual truths, and we are progressing towards the highest ideals—the goal of life.

If we believe in the existence of a personal God, then we can offer the results of our works to the deity we worship. We can leave the results of our works at the feet of the Almighty and work simply as an act of duty. Such acts of worship will make us happy in this world; make us free from worry and anxiety and bring peace and comfort in the end. Then we shall be able to understand the true nature of our souls; the true nature of our souls is already divine. It is eternal; it is birthless; it is deathless. Our present life is the minutest point in the eternal line of absolute existence. Our soul life is eternal; if we once remember this, the whole attitude toward our earthly existence will be different. We shall not remain selfish; we shall not seek earthly comforts and pleasures all the time; we shall not seek material prosperity, but we shall seek freedom, peace, happiness and bliss.

There is such a thing as absolute happiness and a blissful state, but very few can get it because the majority of people are driven headlong by the forces of nature, by earthly conditions. They are extremely selfish, but to be free from selfishness is the teaching of all the scriptures of the world. If we boil down all the commandments of God we get the simplest truth,—Do not be selfish—be unselfish; and that unselfishness we can accomplish even in this life. When we remove our attachment to our lower self and to all the conditions connected with this lower self, if we are unattached to the results of our works, then we have become unselfish. We do not have to go to churches or to places of worship, we do not have to go through special devotional exercises once in a week simply to become unselfish, but at every moment of our life we can act and every act of our daily life we can make an act of worship.

There is no such thing as great or menial work. For instance, a man who washes dishes—if that man does not forget the ideal and does not work simply for a few cents, but if he thinks of the purification of the heart as he is doing this thing because he is placed here, and lets the result of that work go to the Almighty Being, then that act is a true and sincere act of worship. But if, on the contrary, we go to a church and perform devotional exercises for social recognition or for the sake of tradition, that act is worse than washing dishes. The whole thing depends upon the motive, upon the mental attitude. If we have the highest ideal before our mind, if our attitude be unselfish and unattached to the results of our works, then we have made that menial work an act of worship.

Each one is great in his own place. The man who sweeps the street is just as great as the clergyman who preaches from the pulpit. Where is the difference?

Each act is an act of worship. We can make it so, and the whole world would be like a heaven if we lived that way. There would be no more immoral acts, no need of police, no robbery, theft, murder,—all these proceed from selfishness, from ignorance, and ignorance is the mother of selfishness and all evil. All evil comes to us—Why? Because we are not true to ourselves, neither are we true to the laws which govern our lives. From the very moment that we are true to ourselves, true to the laws that govern our lives, all evil will vanish from this world. But if we wish to see that in our own world or in our own community, we must set an example first. If we cannot do this we shall not be able to help mankind. Helping mankind is a thing which is the ideal of great souls, and such great souls are purely unselfish. They do not think of themselves. Humanity is their God. God is not away from humanity. If we serve a man, thinking that God is dwelling within him, if we try to help him, to make him happy and comfortable, then we are serving God. God is dwelling in each individual soul. Who can see it? They only whose spiritual eyes are open, but others grope in the darkness of ignorance and grovel in selfishness and in all the desires that proceed from selfishness. They are blind and we must not follow their example, but we should follow the example of that man or woman who is conscious of divinity as it is manifested in human beings. God is not sitting up in the clouds. How can we serve Him, that Almighty Being who is present everywhere? By making our acts of daily life acts of worship, by remembering Him, thinking of Him constantly at every moment of our daily works. Such worship is very rare, but at the same time it is very desirable. We must learn to live that way, otherwise there is no remedy for all this suffering, sorrow, disease that are

constantly waiting upon us. Think how Buddha, after enjoying all the luxuries and comforts of an Oriental prince, became tired, and seeing that poor suffering humanity needed help, needed comfort, needed freedom, he renounced his wife and child and went in search of that remedy which would bring peace and happiness to humanity. He did not care for the comforts he denied himself, but he went through all struggles and sufferings, austerities and penances; he sat under the tropical sun without any cover over his head; he was in rain and in cold without any hope, but constantly searching for that remedy which would bring peace and happiness to mankind. And at last when he found that remedy he distributed it to all freely and became the Saviour of mankind. What was that remedy? The remedy of making every act an act of worship, without seeking the result of the daily labor. So long as we are living in this world, he said, remain unattached to the conditions of the world. Remember that these things are constantly passing away. Nothing is permanent, but behind all these transitory and ephemeral things that we are constantly perceiving with our senses, there is a permanent substance, a permanent state, and that is the reality. There is no sorrow or suffering there. That he called "Nirvana." What is Nirvana? That state of absolute unselfishness where there is no sorrow, suffering, disease, and where there is absolute freedom from the bondage of nature, where there is attainment of perfection. That state exists always, but those alone who have transcended the laws that govern the lower animal nature, the laws that make one selfish and self-centered, those who have transcended the laws of action and reaction, the laws of cause and sequence, have attained to that state of Nirvana. It is the same thing as divine communion. In that state all desires are ful-

filled, all tendencies cease to exist, and peace and happiness reign forever.

The soul attains enlightenment. What is that enlightenment? By it the soul can see the reality which is the background of all phenomenal appearances. That enlightenment makes us realize that we are souls; that we lived in the past and shall live in the future. That enlightenment will make us see that the true soul is divine. We need it, otherwise if we remain in the darkness of ignorance, what have we gained? By the process of evolution we are bound to reach that state of enlightenment sooner or later. Each one must reach that state, otherwise the purpose of life will remain unfulfilled, but the sooner we get it, the better it is for us. The sooner we realize that state, the more quickly we can avoid all these troubles, anxieties, this suffering and sorrow which proceed from ignorance. Therefore, Vedanta tells us that whatever we perform, we must perform through a sense of duty—through love, through unselfishness, through non-attachment; if we can do that, we can purify our heart. The purification of the heart is the first condition of God-vision. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Unless our hearts are purified from the stain of selfishness we cannot realize the God-consciousness. We cannot attain to freedom and, therefore, the easiest way is for us to work through love, to make all the acts of our daily life acts of worship. In the Bhagavad Gita the Lord says that "whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever sacrifice thou performest, whatever thou givest, do thou perform all these acts for the sake of the Lord."

How are we going to perform all our acts for the sake of the Lord? He does not want any act, He does not demand anything from us, He is absolutely free, He has no desire. God is not a big person sitting like an em-



peror above the clouds and desiring that His children do certain things. No, God is free from all desires, free from imperfection—He is absolute, eternal love. He does not demand anything. What can we give Him? Some people think that by thanking the Lord on Thanksgiving Day they have done a great thing, but they have done no great thing at all. God does not desire any thanks. Why should He desire thanks? The ritualistic idea produces that kind of doctrine, but we are all potentially divine—when God is dwelling in each individual soul and is working through us there is no need for thanksgiving.

But if we offer the fruits and the results of our works to God, then we purify our hearts and make ourselves rise above the laws of time and space and causation. If we examine our own being carefully, we shall find that all the forces and will power that we possess are not ours. We might call this body or mind ours, but in reality the forces and powers that hold these molecules together exist in the universe. They do not belong to any individual. Suppose I say that the air which is in my lungs is my air, the force that is acting through this body, is my force—how foolish would I be.

All these forces exist in the universe; they belong to nobody. But those who are self-deluded center their thoughts upon "I and mine." The will power that is working through me is a portion of the universal power. The mental force and will power and all the forces which exist in the individual do not belong to that individual. They exist in the universe. They are parts of the universe, and the whole universe is the body of the Almighty Being. So why should we claim anything for ourselves; and if all these forces are working through a particular form or center, and if they produce the results, the results do not belong to the individual. They

must go to the source from which all the forces have emanated. Therefore it is our duty to send all the results of our works to that Almighty source of all energies and forces, because they naturally belong there; and if we claim those results as ours, we are self-deluded, we are in the path of selfishness, we are not in the path of spirituality or religion. Therefore it is our duty to think that all the results performed by the forces of nature must go to the source from which all the forces of nature come into existence; and if we do that, we have done the natural thing. Vedanta tells us, therefore, "live as simply as possible; live in harmony with nature, let your will, your mental functions be in perfect harmony with the Cosmic will, the functions of the Cosmic mind." If we can tune our own minds and thoughts and make them harmonious with the thoughts that are constantly rising in the Cosmic mind, then we shall have nothing to worry about or to fear. We shall live as children of nature, children of the Omnipotent Being, who is eternal and infinite. Then we shall have performed all our duties, because that is the highest duty in life, to harmonize our will with the Cosmic or universal will; we shall be able to feel that our bodies and minds are nothing but playgrounds of the Almighty will, and we shall be able to say from the bottom of our hearts, like Christ, "Thy will be done," or "Whatever is thine is mine and whatever is mine is thine; I and my father are one."

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So long as the heavenly expanse of the heart is troubled and disturbed by the gusts of desire, there is little chance of our beholding therein the brightness of God. The beatific vision occurs only in the heart which is calm and rapt in divine communion.

Sayings of SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

## HUMANITY, THE GREAT ORPHAN

AN understanding of the origin and destiny of man reveals the fact that man, in this earthly life, is an orphan. It is only the outer sheath of the soul or the physical body that can lay any valid claim to possessing a human father and mother; but, it is more because man has lost sight of the "Father in Heaven" and is unconscious of the "Divine Mother", that he is an orphan. Hence it is that humanity, the sum of all the units, is called the "Great Orphan".

The derivation and evolution of the word "humanity", brings it into direct relation with its philological ancestors, "humane" and "homage", born of the Latin words—homo, man, and humus, earth. A record of man's origin is thus preserved in our very language, pointing to the fact that the man of earth has a Lord to whom he owes fealty, respect, and reverential regard—homage. Also, that from the relationship between this Lord and the man of earth, have been born humane qualities: kindness, sympathy, benevolence, compassion, gentleness, tenderness and mercy; the exhibition of these attributes, doubtless, depending upon the extent to which the indwelling Lord manifests. "Who is this Lord?" is the question which naturally arises.

From one standpoint all is spirit or spirit-matter, coexistent and eternal; only the Absolute Self is unchangeable—beyond time, space and causation; but within these latter limits nature holds sway. The individual soul, or the real man—the Lord of whom we are in search—is caught within the web of nature during a period of manifestation, and it is the struggle of this spiritual entity to return to the source from which it sprang—the Absolute Self—which causes evolution.

Passing through the lower kingdoms the soul finally

reaches the human stage and its ray, becoming incarnated in an earthly "castle of illusion", is known as the human ego. It is essentially an orphan, for it is at this point in the struggle for freedom that that principle which makes the soul feel distinct from all else is awakened; an intellectual quality causing the feeling of separateness. Thus deluded it does not realize a unity beyond the ken of the senses.

Physical birth is the metaphorical "fall" of the spiritual entity, man, into matter and by and through this "fall" other elements come into being. The passions, desires and emotions of material life with slow and subtle force, through the lapse of years, weave themselves with the divine ray projected at birth, forming a new essence which becomes the apparent man we sense; that is, the personality. Forgetting its divine birthright, amid the clouds and fogs of physical life, and unable to recognize brothers and sisters behind the masks of selfishness, all have assumed in the personality of each, the soul's plight is truly wretched; nor does the education of the twentieth-century man improve conditions, since the tendency, from the cradle to the grave, is to accentuate the sense of separateness; to exalt the personality and to encourage the aggrandizement of the little self.

This sense of separateness is selfishness personified and is the product of ignorance. From this mistake arises the love of the personal self and hence the desire for the continuance of the personality, engendering envy, jealousy, avarice, fear, doubt and sorrow, pain and death.

Here we have a clue to the reason why the Lord of the mansion, the divine ray in the human heart, is pictured blind. He, the Lord, lies supinely in his own temple without sight, while his servants, the senses, have usurped his authority and he remains a prisoner within

his own castle; but, when the scales fall from his eyes, when he realizes his forlorn condition of orphanage and arises to seek his divine parent, the fight begins. The giant little-self springs in his path with armies of auxiliaries, guarding the passes to the bridge over which he must speed to gain his liberty. The armed warriors sprung from the dragons' teeth, sown in prior incarnations, bar the way. To triumph in the good fight, it is necessary to follow the advice of the Hindu sages, repeated by the Delphic Oracle and by the wise Socrates, "Man, know thyself." The key to this knowledge, too, lies within man himself.

It is the personality, the apparent man, which must yield to the soul, the real man, in this fight to regain the lost kingdom of heaven, and the return of the prodigal orphan to his divine parents. Understanding this, we catch a glimpse of the meaning of the Biblical admonition: "If thou eatest of the fruit of the tree of knowledge thou shalt surely die." That is, when knowledge has been assimilated, the old personality will die; the regenerated man lives a new life. To become free from the bondage of personality or separateness, it is necessary to fully realize the oneness of all humanity, which, it would seem, can be best accomplished through meditation upon the unity of all beings. To establish an attitude of mind and heart leading to union with the Supreme or realization, it has been recommended by a modern teacher to mentally state: "I am not separate from anything. I am that which is; that is, I am Brahman and Brahman is everything; but being in an illusionary world I am surrounded by appearances that seem to make me separate. So I will proceed to mentally state and accept that I am all these illusions. I am my friends and then I go to them in general and particular. I am my enemies; then I feel them all. I am

the poor and the wicked; I am the ignorant. The moments of intellectual gloom are the moments when I am influenced by those ignorant ones who are myself. All this is my nation; but there are many nations, and to them I go in mind; I feel and I am them all with whatever they hold of superstition or of wisdom or of evil. All, all is myself."

That is, we must place ourselves in mental harmony with all that exists, and love for all beings establishes harmony in the human heart. The same laws which govern musical composition prevail in the human constitution, producing harmony or discord. Hartmann says, "When two or more things contain the same elements these elements are attracted to each other and seek to unite, because they are constituted alike; they vibrate as one. This tendency to unite is love, which manifests itself on all planes of existence. Man and woman can only truly love when they are either consciously or unconsciously attracted by the same ideal. This ideal may be high or low, but the higher it is the more permanent will it be and the greater will be their mutual happiness."

Why do some notes when sounded together produce harmony if not on account of the similarity of the elements (vibrations) of which they are composed? Mutual recognition among friends causes joy, and joy is harmony, happiness and content. If two or more notes of exactly the same tone are sounded together they produce neither harmony nor discord; they simply increase their own strength; but if different tones are sounded together, each containing an element of the other, each sees its counterpart represented in the mirror held by the other, and this recognition is joy, is harmony. When the fifth note of the musical scale is in accord with the first and third, harmony is the result.

“When man’s body (the first) is in accord with his instincts (the third), he may experience pleasant sensations, but harmony is only attained when his intelligence (the fifth) assents to the union of the first and third. Every man’s life is a symphony in which either harmonies or discords prevail. Love produces harmony; hate discord. Love is the tendency of dis-united parts to re-unite. This tendency presupposes the power of mutual recognition. Recognition is a manifestation of consciousness; consciousness is a manifestation of life. Life, love and consciousness produce harmony; the opposite of each is discord and death.”

When we listen to beautiful music, the air is filled with life. If harmony exists within ourselves, we recognize it in the music singing in our souls. This is why when we place ourselves in harmony with the one truth, “the light in the sound and the sound in the light,” and realize for one brief moment the meaning of selflessness, that we hear the divine music of the akasic heights, for the music of the spheres is not a chimera. This divine harmony seems to roll and swell and is well expressed by the words of the Hoosier poet:

“By the splendor in the heavens, and the hush  
upon the sea,  
And the majesty of silence reigning over Galilee,—  
We feel Thy kingly presence, and we humbly bow  
the knee  
And lift our hearts and voices in gratefulness to  
Thee.”

In each human being are elements which are identical with those existing in every other human being, and the fundamental principle which constitutes humanity being one, a person who injures another injures himself

and the good or evil he does will return to himself. "He who prominently notices the faults of another has the elements of those faults in himself. A vain person is repulsed by the vanity of another; a liar demands from others the truth; a thief does not want his own property stolen. Virtues attract virtues but vices repulse vice."

The Absolute (Freedom) is the goal; conquering nature, internal and external, is the path; the weapons or the means are many, they vary with the individual warriors; while love and sympathy are the shield and buckler of the daring soldier. Eventually all will win the fight. The conviction is soul stirring and brings balm to the weary heart. Some day Humanity will cease to be the "Great Orphan".

Fight on, oh, thou of dauntless heart, the goal is yours! As you rise, the horizon broadens and undreamed-of bliss, like the dove of peace, descends upon you. Whenever an individual human (soul) drop merges into the Universal ocean, "All Nature thrills with joyous awe and feels subdued. The silver star now twinkles out the news to the night blossoms, the streamlet to the pebbles ripples out the tale; dark ocean waves roar it to the rocks surf-bound; stately pines whisper, and scent-laden breezes sing it to the vales."

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Do not identify yourself with anything. Hold your mind free. All this that you see, the pains and the miseries, are but conditions of this world; poverty and wealth and happiness are but momentary; they do not belong to our nature at all. Our nature is far beyond misery, or happiness, beyond everything of the senses, beyond the imagination; and yet we must go on working all the time. "Misery comes through attachment, not through work."—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.



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### VEDANTA IN AMERICA

THE last Sunday lectures in the former house of the Vedanta Society were delivered by Swami Abhedananda, on April 7 and 14. The Swami chose as his subjects "Human Affection and Divine Love" and "Power of Concentration." These were the best-attended lectures of the season.

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ALL regular meetings were temporarily suspended during the last two weeks in April while the Society was moving to the house which it has bought and now occupies at 135 West 80th Street. In this new home the regular schedule of lectures and classes will be continued through May. The first public service with lecture will be held Sunday, May 5, at 11 o'clock, the subject being "Mystery of the Soul."

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SEVERAL members of the Society have gone to the Ashrama, the newly purchased country home, near West Cornwall, Conn., to superintend the making of alterations in the house, and to get it in readiness for occupation during the coming summer.

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THE Vedanta Society of Pittsburg, which has been successfully conducted through its first year by Swami Bodhananda, will close its season on the first of June.

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SWAMI SACHCHIDANANDA has just finished a course of Monday evening lectures on the Yoga Aphorisms before the Vedanta Society of Los Angeles. From now until the close of the season he will expound the Sandilya Sutras, the authoritative writings on Bhakti Yoga. This course will continue through the spring and early summer.

### VEDANTA IN INDIA

THE Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Students' Home in Mylapore shows an encouraging advance in its second year's work. This institution, managed by a committee of which Swami Ramakrishnananda is president, was started in February, 1905, its object being to help poor students in Madras by providing them with board and lodging. It is supported entirely by voluntary contribution, and this year's report shows not only generous gifts of money, but of medical advice, stationery, cloth, vegetables, and other articles of consumption. The money value of the entire receipts during 1906 were more than double those for 1905.

The boys in the Home range from fourteen to nineteen years of age. At the beginning of the year nine members were on the roll; seven were later admitted, and four withdrew, leaving twelve when the year closed. The progress of these boys in school is closely watched; and in addition they receive instruction in Sanskrit, Vedic pronunciation, and recitation of the Sandhya mantras and Purushasukta.

The Managing Committee expresses the hope that larger funds may be available during the current year, so that the Home may extend its opportunities to a larger number of boarders and so that some of the students may be sent to schools for special religious or technical instruction.

### A RAY OF LIGHT

Out through the mist of morning air  
 A ray of sunlight beamed.  
 A man, his heart bowed down with grief,  
 Walked, as if he dreamed,  
 Gray were his thoughts, more gray than mist,  
 Until in sudden sight,  
 The golden ray across his path  
 Streamed like an arrow bright.  
 His eyes looked up—his whole heart woke  
 To the gladness from above,  
 The Ray became a note divine,  
 And Grief then bowed to Love.

E. P. C.

## NOTES

EVERY thoughtful person knows how necessary it is to guard against estimating unjustly the tenets of another's religion; sometimes we totally misunderstand; and sometimes we wrongly suppose the beliefs of some of its followers to represent them all.

In a recent book by A. V. Williams Jackson entitled "Persia, Past and Present," the author tells of his visit among the Zoroastrians of Yezd, Persia. His account of conversations held with their leading priests touches upon just this point of misinterpretation; and the following quotations will perhaps to some show Zoroastrianism in a new light.

"They (the Zoroastrians) designate themselves as Zardushtian, 'Zoroastrians', sometimes as Bah-Dinan, 'those of the Good Religion', or again Farsis, i.e., 'Parsis', from Fars or Pars, the old province of Persia Proper. As for the name 'Fire-Worshipper' (Atash-Parast), the Zoroastrians in Persia as well as in India object to that title. They claim that they regard fire as a symbol or manifestation of Ormazd, as an emblem of purity and power, and not as a divinity. It would be equally logical, they urge (and I was prepared to hear this argument), for Christians to be called 'Cross-worshippers', after the symbol of their faith." (p. 274.)

"The discussion led to the problem of dualism, the relation of Ormazd and the arch-angels and angels to Ahriman, and the arch-fiends and fiends, who war against the soul of man. I found that the most enlightened of these Zoroastrians look upon Ahura Mazda as comprising within himself the conflicting powers of good and evil, designated respectively as 'Holy Spirit' and 'Evil Spirit,' and that their views in this respect, and possibly under the influence of Bombay, would agree with the monotheistic tenets upheld by the Parsis of India to-day, who stoutly deny the allegation that Zoroastrianism teaches pure dualism." (p. 363.)

"Neither through wealth, nor through progeny, but through renunciation alone, is immortality to be reached," say the Vedas.

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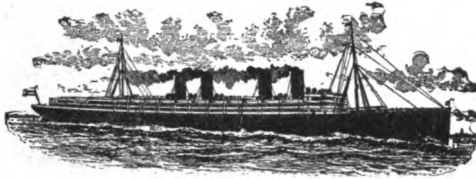
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# Vedanta

## Monthly Bulletin

That which exists is one; men call it by various names.—Rig Veda

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### EVOLUTION AND RELIGION

MAY we hear that which is auspicious to us, may we see divinity in all living creatures, and feel the presence of the almighty everywhere as within ourselves, may all the acts of our bodies, and the thoughts of our minds be directed to the service of that almighty Being, may we have peace in our souls; peace, peace, peace be unto us all.

The subject for this afternoon is Evolution and Religion. If we study the scriptures of the different religious systems of the world, we find that from ancient times human minds have tried to trace the origin, cause, and source of this world; these scriptures have recorded the experiences of human beings in their attempts to find out the proper solution of the problem of creation, and to know from what source the phenomena have come into existence. When the primitive man found himself surrounded on all sides by huge walls of high mountains, the snow-capped peaks of which, piercing the clouds and defying the changes of weather, stood like gigantic pillars to support, as it were, the blue canopy overhead. When the same primitive man watched the ever-flowing, never-resting streams of mighty rivers, which poured into their beds volumes of water every moment, rushing headlong to meet, as it were, some distant ocean. When he saw

around him tall trees with spreading branches, and beautiful foliage, bearing fruits delicious in taste, plants with flowers and variegated foliage, and when his eyes were dazzled with the sight of the grand harmonies of the heavens overhead, he exclaimed with faltering voice and trembling heart: "How grand! how majestic! how beautiful! how powerful are all these things around me! What are they, why do they exist, whence did they come?" These questions of the primitive man were the beginning of all questions about nature; they were the beginning of all researches and investigations in the domain of the universe.

In the whole animal kingdom, human beings alone are asking such questions. In the Rig Veda (the most ancient scriptures of the world) similar questions have been preserved in their original sense, and have been handed down to us; the Vedic poets asked again and again: "Where is the first? who is the 'I'? from what grew the heavens and the earth? whence this manifold creation? who knows the secret?" Do we not ask the same questions to-day? Is it not true that all the scientists, and all the great thinkers and philosophers of the world, have asked similar questions from time to time? The human mind cannot rest satisfied with simple perception of surrounding objects, it must ask "From whence do they come?" "Whither do they go?"

Various answers have been given to these questions by different thinkers and inspired seers of truth. Some of these answers were merely grand imagery, some were mixed with poetical imagination, mere poetry, others were mythological stories and descriptions. Thinkers in some countries said water was the cause of the phenomenal universe; others said fire was the cause, from fire had proceeded the sun, moon, etc. Some other poets imagined that there must be a maker of

the heavens and the earth, a maker who had fashioned the world, like a carpenter who makes a chair or table, or a potter who fashions a jar. That maker must be like a human being with human qualifications and attributes, only infinitely bigger in size, and more powerful than any ordinary mortal. From this anthropomorphic conception of an invisible maker, grew this theory of creation.

The ancient Semitic tribes had a theory of creation by which they explained the origin of the phenomenal world, and it has been accepted for two thousand years by millions of Jews, Christians and Mahometans of different countries. This theory was based upon the belief that the maker of heaven and earth by his supernatural powers produced the world out of nothing, at a definite period of time and it was considered to be a miracle; the same creator was supposed to have lived for an eternity before he made up his mind to create the world, and ever since the six days of creation were over he has been resting; he created not only the worlds, the planets, and everything of the universe, but also their contents, those of the inorganic world first and then the organic world. A similar description of the world of creation we find in the Zend Avesta, the scriptures of the Parsees, but the errors of this theory are apparent to many thoughtful minds. In the Middle Ages men could not express their opinions freely, or write in scientific terms what they thought, and in fact all scientific investigation ceased.

It was the nineteenth century that gave birth to the science of evolution in Europe; although in the eighteenth century Kant, the great German philosopher, and Laplace attempted for the first time to explain the origin of the creation of the universe by Newtonian laws and for the first time tried to trace the beginning



of the world into the vast mass of nebulous matter. Although they tried by this nebular hypothesis to explain the mechanical formation, and the separation of the different planets, still the theory of evolution was not fully established before the time of Darwin and Haeckel who were the pioneers that advanced this theory in the proof of their search after the true solution of the problem of creation; they tried their best through observations and experiments to discover the laws that govern the universe, and they succeeded.

This theory of evolution has demolished the structure of the belief in supernaturalism and many of the miracles, and has established the unity of nature and made evident the uniformity of all natural laws. We know now that this universe is infinite and unbounded in extent; it is empty in no spot, but everywhere filled with some substance; however fine and attenuated that substance may be, still it is there. The facts of evolution have opened our eyes to the truth that this world was not created six thousand years ago, but that it is beginningless and endless; it is eternal.

The material of the world goes through various transformations as liquid, gaseous, solid before a planet or a cosmic body becomes habitable, either by vegetables or animals; a large mass of the vegetable substance, or whatever it may be called, passes through the gaseous state, liquid state, solid state and when it is cooled becomes the home of various plants and animals of different kinds; this process may take millions of years and then, in course of time, the solid body begins to dissolve and gradually involves into its original nebulous material, or ethereal substance. Ascending through the process of evolution, matter gradually passes from one form to another until organic life is possible. Every period of evolution is followed by a cycle of involution

or dissolution, as it is called by some of the scientists. Dissolution means disintegration of the solid mass and the reversion to the primordial condition.

All these planetary systems, the suns, moons, stars and all other cosmic bodies are subject to this evolution and involution. Our mother earth, millions and millions of years ago, was formed out of a portion of the substance of solar systems and now it is habitable; we find many plants and flowers; but the time will come when she will grow cold and lifeless and will eventually fall back into the sun, but do you think the material, the substance of this earth will be destroyed, annihilated? No, it will remain and in course of time another form will appear.

By this theory of evolution we can also explain the origin and growth, step by step of all human beings; we know that human beings are not the effects of special creation by some supernatural being, or extra-mundane God, but the results of the evolution of the germs of life which existed from the beginningless past, either as animals or vegetables; so we have not come into existence out of nothing, but we existed before this body was formed, in some form or other; now we are living; after death, which means disintegration of the body (that is, the individual involution), we continue to exist, taking fresh forms again and again. The difference between lower animals and human beings is not of kind, but is one of degree.

Such being the conclusions of modern science we find ourselves utterly helpless when we try to harmonize these conclusions with the old-fashioned ideas of creation, Judaism, Christianity, Mahometanism and Zoroastrianism. Several attempts have been made by various thinkers in different countries to show the harmony that is supposed to exist between theology and

the conclusions of modern science. No religion can stand unsupported by logic or science; in fact the theories of special creation that had been given by religions were supposed to be revealed truths; but in the light of modern science they are now regarded as irrational, untrue and unscientific.

The result of all this is: "How shall we think?" This is the most difficult thing to do, we must think in our own minds; some of those who think have lost their way; they study science and there they stop; many of them have said, "What is the use of studying religion, let us be contented with the study of science, that is all there is; we do not know there is an eternal energy out of which all this matter, mind and everything have come into existence; matter is indestructible, uncreated energy is indestructible, uncreated.

The question arises, is it possible for a religion to have its foundation upon this theory of evolution as well as upon the truths that have been discovered by modern science? has there ever been any such religion which does not teach special creation, but the existence through the doctrine of evolution, or the origin, growth and dissolution of the universe in the same way as modern science does? The answer to this question is in the affirmative, yes, it is possible for a religion to have its foundation upon the doctrine of evolution and upon all the truths that have been discovered by modern science, because the object of religion is to discover the Truth. Science also tries to discover the truth and to explain it in terms of logic. And it is also true that there has been such a religion that does not advocate any theory of special creation out of nothing, but which exists through the doctrine of evolution; this needs explanation.

India has given to the world a religion which explains

through evolution, the origin, source of the phenomenal universe; it is a religion which is not based upon any dogma or doctrine which is not supported by reason or science; it is a religion which has been in existence for ages and which has stood the ravages of time and brought consolation to the souls of millions, answering all the questions that have disturbed their minds; a religion which is not based upon any book but upon Truth and nothing but Truth. As early as seven hundred years before the birth of Christ, there appeared in India scientists and philosophers who studied nature; through observations and experiments they discovered the laws of nature and for the first time, logically established the theory of evolution.

The first of these scientists and philosophers was Kapila, who is called the father of the evolution theory in India. His theories spread all over India and even outside of India; all the immediate nations who came in contact with India were influenced more or less by the system of scientific philosophy by this great Kapila. His system was known as the Sankhya system. The idea of religion found amongst the Greek philosophers and neo-Platonists has been traced back to the influence of the Sankhya school; they came in contact with India and it is now proved that India had communication with these countries; also in ancient times philosophers came to the school of Socrates.

Plato knew some of the philosophers, Alexander brought many of these great thinkers with him. Well has it been said by Sir Monier Monier-Williams in his "Brahminism and Hinduism" that "the Hindus were Spinozites more than two thousand years before the existence of Spinoza; and Darwinians many centuries before Darwin; and Evolutionists many centuries before the doctrine of Evolution had been accepted by the

scientists of our time and before any word like evolution existed in any language of the world." Huxley knew this—he said in several places that "the doctrine of evolution was familiar to the Indian sages and philosophers ages before Paul of Tarsus was born."

In ancient times, long before it was known in any other country, this Kapila, the ancient philosopher, denied the existence of a personal creator, that is, a creator who sits outside the universe and fashions the universe as a potter fashions a jar; he declared that something cannot come out of nothing; this is known as a scientific fact, and he explained the building up of the cosmos by the gradual evolution of one eternal energy, called in Sanskrit Prakriti; and he discovered the unity and eternity of nature as well as the uniformity of the laws of nature; wherever light and heat exist, that law is universal: if you can discover any law that governs your body, that law must be everywhere under similar conditions, and he also proved that dissolution or destruction of a thing meant nothing but the reversion of an effect to its original causal state; when an effect goes back to its causal state, that is what we mean by destruction or evolution.

These truths which were discovered in India centuries before the birth of Christ have now become established facts, standing upon the rocks of the fundamental principles of modern science. The ancient seers of truth preached a religion which explained, through reason and logic, the origin, growth and dissolution of the universe, not by assuming any particular supernatural being, but by discovering the law of evolution that exists in nature, a natural law. This religion is known as the Vedanta religion; it teaches: "Before the beginning of the manifestation of this phenomenal world there existed one infinite, absolute, universal

Being, upon whose bosom rested the whole phenomenal universe in the germ state, or in the form of a potential energy. We know the laws of correlation of forces and persistence of energy; they have shown us that the various forces, like heat, light, electricity, magnetism, attraction, repulsion and all others, are nothing but so many manifestations or expressions of the universal energy; this energy can neither be increased nor diminished, the sum total is always the same; it is the source of all forms existing in the universe; innumerable suns, moons, stars and planetary systems have come out of this one eternal energy through the process of evolution."

Again we find in Vedanta: "From this undifferentiated energy has come the vital force, mind, all the sense powers, powers of perception, intellect, as well as ether, heat, light, water and all that is liquid, gaseous and solid." This energy is described as insentiate; it is not intelligent energy, but the supreme Being, that absolute Being upon whose bosom that energy rests, is the source of all intelligence, consciousness, knowledge; all knowledge comes from that source; having received the spiritual influx of that supreme Being, this universal energy begins to evolve and manifest itself in various forms of force and matter, and having gone through different stages of evolution, it is sometimes latent, sometimes manifest; at first it was undifferentiated, now it is differentiated.

After the dissolution of the entire universe, if we can imagine such a thing, darkness exists in heat and light, so there will not be any darkness.

In order to fulfil the desires of the individual souls which rest latent in the cosmic mind at the time of the dissolution, the mother energy produces this phenomenal world, clothes these souls with various forms, whether animal or human, and makes them go onward

from stage to stage in the wheel of evolution; this wheel of evolution is rotating from the beginningless past and will continue until the endless eternity, there is no rest. How many times have we taken bodies? Have we existed in different forms, and how many times shall we do the same? Who can tell? Do you know how many times you have come into existence on this earth or on some other planet? You may say some scriptures have said you did not exist before; what proof is there that you did not exist before? When everything is indestructible and uncreated, human souls must have existed; if matter be uncreatable, force or energy be uncreatable, do you think human souls will be creatable?

Some souls go to heaven, and after reaping the results for a certain length of time, and enjoying the pleasures of the celestial abode, come back perhaps to this earth to fulfil other desires which existed in a latent state in their souls. They all are subject to the law of evolution. These heavens are in the domain of the phenomenal universe. Vedanta is the only system of philosophy that teaches that heaven is also subject to change, and it leads human minds to go beyond heavens.

Some people go through different sufferings, both here and hereafter, and all these sufferings are the result of acts, either vicious or virtuous, but the ultimate aim of the Religion of Vedanta is to have perfect liberation of the individual soul from this wheel of evolution and to be free from the causes that make you go through the different stages of evolution. As long as you have desires you must find some way of fulfilling those desires; find out how many desires you have at present, and you will see how strong they are. If you can draw a line and say "I have so many desires" you will find in three days you have other desires.

According to Vedanta, each soul must struggle for liberation, freedom from this wheel; the aim is to get out of this course of involution and evolution as quickly as possible. (Of course you cannot lose your individuality and identity, even when you are out of this wheel.) It also tells us that when you have attained to that liberation you have attained perfection with eternal rest, peace, unbounded happiness. Freedom from sickness, sorrow, birth and death, the soul is absolutely free.

This being the ideal, we must try to realize it; as it is said in Vedanta, "This world can be realized by knowing the supreme which is called Brahman, that absolute, infinite source of intelligence, consciousness and bliss; by knowing *that* we can be free from the wheel of evolution and involution, for that infinite Being remains always unaffected by it."

The supreme Being is free from the wheel of evolution and gives us freedom; we can attain to that liberation through this knowledge or realization of the supreme Being. Modern science cannot be called religion, although it explains the theory of evolution, or the process of the formation of this world by discovering the laws of nature. Science is not religion, there is a great deal of difference between these.

We must not forget the true meaning of religion, "The perception of the infinite under such conditions as are able to influence the moral character"; then we shall see the difference that exists between science and religion; then we shall be able to know how a religion can be based upon scientific truths, and how the Religion of Vedanta fulfils all the intellectual, moral and spiritual demands and aspirations of the human soul. In the first place, we already see that the ideal of Vedanta is the perception of the infinite or the realization of that supreme source of intelligence, consciousness and bliss,



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being and becoming conscious of the infinite within ourselves and perceiving the finite within the infinite and the temporal within the eternal, therefore it is religion.

Second, the duty of religion is to teach us not to do what our animal or selfish nature urges us to do. Vedanta philosophy also tells us we must renounce our attachment to sense-pleasures and comforts of the body; you must curb your desires and direct them toward the realization of that supreme Being, and create an extreme longing for freedom, and liberation of the soul. Science, whether it is modern or ancient, has no such ideal, therefore it cannot be called religion, but Vedanta is both a science and a religion: a science, because it accepts all the truths discovered by modern science, and explains, through logic and reason, how the evolution of the universe has come and is going on. It is a religion because it directs our energy toward the realization of that freedom; it has fulfilled all the conditions of science and religion. The condition of science is, there must be supremacy of reason over belief, and that is fulfilled in Vedanta, because it tells us not to accept anything upon hearsay or the decisions of others, not to believe in anything which does not harmonize with the scientific truths, and does not appeal to our reason; therefore it is science. I have already explained why it is religion.

It also explains the origin and future of the individual souls, which modern science cannot do, because science must be based upon sense-perception and it can never go beyond sense-perception, and when it tries to go, it is no longer science, it is in the realm of metaphysics, or philosophy. It also explains the relation of the finite to the infinite, what relation exists between the temporal and the eternal, and why we should seek the finite in the

infinite and the infinite in the finite; infinite cannot be limited by finite but is pervading and existing in and outside of it.

It is said that that Supreme Source of existence, intelligence, and bliss called Brahman, is worshipped by all nations under different names, Jehovah, Jahveh, Father in heaven, or Allah, or Ahura Mazda, or Christ, or Buddha; no matter what name we give or what attributes we ascribe to him, he is beyond human conception, beyond the reach of our thoughts, our mind and intellect, but at the same time he is near to our bodies, minds, and souls—he *is* the soul of our souls, the life of our life, the ultimate basis and foundation; in him we live, through him we exist and without him there can be nothing, therefore it is said: "Thou shalt realize that supreme infinite Being in every form whence all the animate and inanimate objects of the world have proceeded, by which they live and into which they return at the time of dissolution; knowing that alone thou shalt attain perfect freedom and liberation from the wheel of evolution and enjoy everlasting happiness, eternal peace, even in this life."

#### AN ARABIAN PROVERB

He that knows not, and knows not that he knows not,  
is a fool; shun him.

He that knows not, and knows that he knows not, is  
simple; teach him.

He that knows, and knows not that he knows, is asleep;  
wake him.

He that knows, and knows that he knows, is wise;  
follow him.

---

"I give nothing as duties, what others give as duties  
I give as living impulses.

(Shall I give the heart's action as a duty?)"

WALT WHITMAN.

### WISDOM'S GOAL

*By Mutsuhito, His Majesty, the Emperor of Japan*

The water placed in goblet, bowl or cup  
 Changes its form to its receptacle;  
 And so our plastic souls take various shapes  
 And characters of good or ill, to fit  
 The good or evil in the friends we choose.  
 Therefore be ever careful in your choice of friends,  
 And let your special love be given to those  
 Whose strength of character may prove the whip,  
 That drives you ever to fair Wisdom's goal.

### FRAGMENT FROM THE UNPUBLISHED WORKS OF CHARLOTTE BRONTË

*Edited by her Sisters*

No coward soul is mine,  
 No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere.  
 I see heaven's glories shine,  
 And faith shines equal, arming me from fear.

O God within my breast,  
 Almighty, ever-present Deity!  
 Life, that in me has rest,  
 As I—undying Life—have power in Thee!

Vain are the thousand creeds  
 That move men's hearts—unutterably vain;  
 Worthless as withered weeds,  
 Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,

To waken doubt in one  
 Holding so fast by Thine infinity,  
 So surely anchored on  
 The steadfast rock of immortality.

With wide-embracing love  
Thy spirit animates eternal years,  
Pervades and broods above,  
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates, and rears.

Though earth and man were gone,  
And suns and universes ceased to be,  
And Thou were left alone,  
Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is no room for Death,  
Nor atom that his might could render void.  
Thou—THOU art Being and Breath,  
And what THOU art may never be destroyed.

THE OPENING OF THE

**VEDANTA ASHRAMA**

AT

WEST CORNWALL, CONNECTICUT

NATURE seemed to show a desire to lend every help she could to consecrate the day when the Ashrama, at West Cornwall, Conn., was first visited by one Swamiji Abhedananda.

Though the weather when we started from New York City was gray, the train had not traveled many miles when it seemed to leave the mist and clouds behind, and the beautiful Berkshire hills rose with their noble outlines against a blue sky. The Housatonic River wound its way through the country and everywhere bushes and trees were beginning to show signs of summer.

West Cornwall is situated on the Berkshire division of the New Haven railroad. Arriving at the station, we—there was a party of six—went to a little country inn called the "Mansion House." There we had a real mid-day Connecticut dinner, everything well cooked and clean and an atmosphere of quiet and simplicity. When our repast was over, we prepared for the drive over to the Ashrama. Before starting we gathered as a group on the porch of the "Mansion

An interesting conversation took place the other day between a church member and a member of Vedanta:

*C. M.*: Is the Vedanta Society a Sect of Agnostics?

*V.*: The philosophy of Vedanta does not believe in having any sect, dogma or creed.

*C. M.*: Is it possible that good church members could belong to your Society?

*V.*: The doors of Vedanta are open wide enough to admit all who are sincere and desire the knowledge of Truth. Vedanta does not teach doubt, it teaches certainty. It answers the question so many ask, Why are we here?

---

“BRING body and mind under domination of will, so as to detach yourself from what you do not wish.”

“Sincerity of purpose brings its reward, and satisfaction and joy are by the way.”

“Every human soul has celestial energy which can attract power.”

“Plant flowers and tread in their pathway. Try to make others happy, and capacity to enjoy follows.”

### FROM SAN FRANCISCO

May 4, 1907.

THE work in our city is going on nicely, our membership is growing, and is now on a par with our pre-earthquake figure. Two such strong and earnest workers as Swamis Trigunatita and Prakashananda certainly deserve the success they are attaining. Swami Trigunatita, together with Mr. and Mrs. Wollberg and Mrs. Petersen, left to-day on a trip to the Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Big Trees, and will be gone about two weeks—the outing will certainly do Swami much good after the strenuous work of last year.

I forgot to say that we now have two lectures every Sunday: one at 11 A.M., delivered by Swami Prakashananda, and one at 8 P.M., delivered by Swami Trigunatita, both lectures being very well attended.

With the best of wishes for the New York Society.

## INDIA

THE sensational news circulated by the American Press during the last few days, about the efforts of the Indian people towards political freedom, has created quite an interest and anxiety throughout Europe and America. Although the Hindu admits that in many respects British administration in India is beneficial, yet the native thinks, rightly or wrongly, that the whole object of Lord Curzon's policy during his tenure of office as Viceroy was to leave the people as small a chance as possible of influencing the course of affairs. Lord Curzon has left India, but his policy is still pursued in many instances and has contributed to the present state of unrest. The native knows that while he may assist to govern, he is really ruled from afar and without his consent. A rule as in the days preceding our Republic rests upon British bayonets. This may grate on one's sensibilities, but it is nevertheless true. The Indian of high and low caste is, therefore, dissatisfied with the conditions, especially the educated native, as he is always aware that he must bow down to foreign constituted authority: they demand equal opportunity with Australia and Canada to protect industries even from the competition of England. They ask the right to make their own trade treaties with the United States and other nations. In the present state of government rule the industrial and commercial interests of India are considered second in importance to the British manufacturing interests. In short, the Indian product must not compete with the British market. Then the partition of Bengal fanned the existing discontent into a blaze. England, however, has great confidence in Lord Minto, and we trust in this connection the teachings of Swami Vivekananda and others, whose philosophy has furnished a religious basis for the political ideas of the educated Hindu, will bear fruit throughout India, and let us remember prudence, gratitude and patience can accomplish more than great noise and angry words.

but divergent in their later growth. Reincarnation has kept its original meaning, that of progress of the Soul through thousands of lives, ever tending upward, though bound by its own Karma, or Law of Cause and Effect,—reaping that which we sow, until we rise triumphant at last. Transmigration permits the Soul to choose its own housing, that of animal or human being, according to its desire, ignoring the laws of Causation and Evolution, which are as binding in spiritual growth as in physical. The theory of Evolution, known to the Western world but a few years, has been known and taught by the Hindus for thousands of years in a completeness as yet unrealized by Western Science, for, as Darwin taught it, it has to do with the physical alone, the effect, ignoring the spiritual, the cause.

This doctrine of Reincarnation brings into harmony what has seemingly been impossible to the Western mind, accustomed as it has been to considering scientific and religious beliefs as absolutely incompatible. So in equally lucid fashion the subjects of Heredity and Resurrection are dealt with, showing the fallacies of the present beliefs, yet how in each there is a germ of truth which attaches it to the Reality.

It will come to many as a revelation, a truth long sought, and deeply needed—helping, simplifying, rendering pregnant with meaning many seemingly opposed Truths, or aspects of Truth. It is a work which will appeal to the novice for its simplicity and definite quality, and to the student for its wealth of knowledge and suggestion.

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CULTURE is the power which makes a man capable of appreciating the life around him, and the power of making that life worth appreciating.—MALLOCK.

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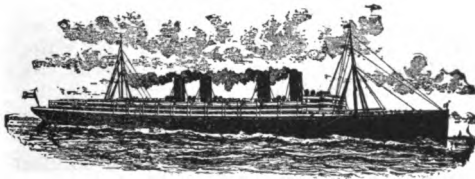
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# Christian's New Food Cure

¶ Do you know that over 92% of all disorders of the human body are caused by errors in diet, and do you know that if you correct these errors, Nature will cure you? Do you know that all stomach and intestinal troubles are caused by errors in eating, and **the only possible cure is to correct these errors?**

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R E A D

## DIVINE HERITAGE OF MAN

By SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

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## AN APPEAL

*THE VEDANTA MONTHLY BULLETIN* desires to enlarge its scope and increase the number of its pages, which will enable it to give a greater amount and variety of reading matter. Only by doubling the subscription list, however, will this be possible. It therefore makes appeal to every old subscriber to secure within the current month at least ONE ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTION.

The BULLETIN fills a unique place. It is the only publication in this country which gives the lofty teachings of India in their purity direct from the Hindus themselves. Each number brings to its readers the solution of some problem vitally concerned with the daily life of every one, whatever his creed or nationality; and it is the only medium through which the outside world can be kept regularly informed of the progress of the Vedanta work in India and America. Its value is therefore undeniable, and all who recognize it should give it their support.

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The Swami gave a general and clear idea of India and her various conditions, touching briefly on the subject of the Immortality of the Soul, Reincarnation, the doctrine of Karma, etc., ideas which have long been known in India. He spoke of the scriptures of the Hindus as being the oldest of all scriptures of the world. The Rig Veda shows how highly civilized the Hindus were as early as 5000 B.C. The theory of evolution was developed by Kapila, who lived about 700 B.C. The world owes to India the first lessons in geometry, algebra, trigonometry, decimal notation, and medicine. Hippocrates, the father of medical science, who lived about 400 B.C., borrowed his *Materia Medica* from India.

Of 'caste' the Swami said: Though the caste system has protected the purity of the national blood \* and the scriptures from destruction, the evil effect has been shown in the seclusion and isolation of the different communities from close intercourse and cooperation for national good. England could not have ruled over three hundred millions of people if there had been unity among the isolated communities and freedom from caste distinctions. Well has it been said by Sir Monier Monier Williams: "And certainly the antagonism of these caste associations and trade leagues has helped us to govern the country by making political combinations impracticable." But now the conditions are changing very rapidly. Even to-day India is different from the India of fifty years ago.

The English education which was introduced by the British Government has opened the eyes of the educated classes who now realize that if such conditions be allowed to continue, the absolute disintegration and

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\* See for significance of 'Caste' system, "India and Her People," by Swami Abhedananda, page 101.

**REASON IS WEAK**

complete annihilation of the national life will be the inevitable result. The thinking people of India at present are not satisfied with the seclusion and isolation of the different communities by iron barriers of superstition. They wish to unify all these communities into one homogeneous whole; and to make every member feel that he is part and parcel of the Indo-Aryan nation.

The hard competition for bread and butter, introduced by the commercial spirit of the English nation, has forced the members to disregard the rules of their caste and color. If you go to India to-day you will see thousands and millions who have no occupation. No industry of the country has been encouraged by the government. People live entirely by agriculture. It was England's great policy to turn the prosperous manufacturing country into an agricultural country. She has succeeded in ruining all the native industries and making India produce raw material for the English manufacturers, and thus has forced the natives of India to depend entirely upon foreign goods manufactured in England and elsewhere. As a result the laboring classes have small wages and are obliged to live and support their families on from two to five cents per day, and to pay taxes out of that small income. The poverty of the people is appalling.\*

No Hindu can eat a pinch of salt without paying two hundred per cent duty to the government. All the petitions by the natives to the House of Commons, signed by hundreds of European and Indian merchants, have been rejected by the British Government in England. Famines began almost immediately after the East India Company of British traders got the administrative power over Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, three

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\* See "India and Her People," pages 141-151.

provinces of India, from the last Mogul Emperor (the Great Mogul), who gave a charter to Lord Clive in 1765.\*

Terrible famines began for the first time in 1770, in which about one-third of the population of Bengal died of starvation. But the revenue from land tax was exacted with such tyranny and oppression, that even during that famine it was larger than in previous years.†

The people of India have no votes and are not even represented in the executive councils of India. They have no voice in the matter of taxation or expenditure. Taxation exceeds all reasonable limits, and the proceeds of this enormous income are not spent in India. A large sum, between twenty and thirty millions sterling, is annually drained from India to England, without any return. Is it, therefore, any wonder that, after such an extended period of time, the financial conditions of India are in such an appalling state? India pays for all England's wars. The war in China, Afghanistan, Tibet, etc., all were charged to India.

The land and income tax of India is higher than that of any other civilized country in the world. The great poverty forced upon the people by the British domination results in the natives dying off like flies. Millions die there every year from destitution, while the English become richer. People are filled with despair; is it surprising that they are on the verge of rebellion? India to-day under British rule realizes the true meaning of what John Stuart Mill said: "The government of a people by itself has a meaning and reality, but such a thing as government of one people by another does not and cannot exist. One people may keep another for its own use, a place to make money in, a human cattle farm for the profit of its own inhabitants."

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\* See "India and Her People," page 138.

† See "India and Her People," pages 141-144.

Before I conclude I appeal to you true Americans, lovers of freedom and justice, to lend a helping hand, your moral support, to the down-trodden millions of human beings who are groaning under despotism which is worse than that of Russia, to the helpless Hindus who need the aid of the civilized world.

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A GENEROUS prayer is never presented in vain; the petition is always, I believe, rewarded by some gracious visitation.—THE MERRY MEN.

## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

### AN APPRECIATION

ON Saturday, January 25th, a memorial service was held in the Vedanta Society House, to celebrate the birthday of Swami Vivekananda.

The lecture-room had been beautifully decorated in oriental fashion, with flowers and fruits, by Swami Paramananda, who conducted the simple and impressive service.

Directly one entered, he was impressed with a solemnity that compelled a lowering of the voice, and this was deepened as one gazed at the large photograph of Swami Vivekananda, which, almost as a living presence, occupied the centre of the platform. To right and left, upon the walls, the pictures of Christ, Sri Ramakrishna, and Swami Vivekananda were adorned with fresh fern, while the picture on the altar was hung with garlands of roses, red and white carnations, and ferns. Before it, too, stood vases of these flowers, sacred lilies, great bunches of grapes, and an orange-tree laden with fruit. In a small tripod were burning spears of incense, whose fragrance, with that of the flowers, combined like silent music in exquisite harmonies to bring to our spirits the realization of the poignant sweetness of that Great Spirit whose advent we celebrated. It took us all away from the hurry and noise of the troubled care-worn world, to a Peace, vast, blessed, in which Time ceased to be of moment, and we felt the needlessness of our thousand worries, and rested content in the knowledge of a Power, not outside ourselves, but within, mighty to achieve the utmost of which we can conceive.

After all were silently seated, Swami Paramananda came slowly into the room, clad in the salmon-pink robe of the Sannyasin, and prostrating himself before the dais, as though he would salute the feet of his

FAITH IS OMNIPOTENT

beloved Master, he knelt silently for a few minutes, then, raising his head, he chanted in Sanskrit, in a low voice of great sweetness, a little song, as if so near to his Beloved that to raise his voice were sacrilege.

When he rose, he seated himself at the right of the dais and asked that all join in meditating upon the spirit of Swami Vivekananda, that we might feel the beneficent Presence. He then asked two of the students to recite the "Song of the Sannyasin," that soul-stirring poem composed by Swami Vivekananda, and appealed to those who knew the Swami personally to say a few words. As no one seemed to feel competent to do so, Swami Paramananda, in a simple and feeling manner, gave an outline of the life and teachings of the man who, to him, is Master and dearest Friend, though no longer in physical life.

He told how the parents of Swami Vivekananda, who lived near Calcutta, had no child, but, dearly longing for one, his mother prayed earnestly and offered sacrifices before the image of Shiva, and finally a vision came to her of Mahadeva (Shiva), saying that because of her earnestness and deep longing, He would incarnate through her as her son. She was overjoyed, and in due time a son was born to her, whom she called after the local name of Shiva, by which name Swami Vivekananda was known to his friends and playmates.

Even from a little child he was known for his absolute fearlessness and truth, and for his gentleness and courtesy, which made him beloved by all. While yet a young boy, came that event which was to crystallize and form his life—he was taken by a relative to see Sri Ramakrishna, whose greatness was hardly realized at that time by ordinary people; nor did Swami Vivekananda then know the wonderful qualities of this man, but Sri Ramakrishna perceived his, and spoke lovingly, asking him to come again to see Him.

Some one had told Sri Ramakrishna that Vivekananda sang beautifully, so the saint asked him to sing, and almost immediately entered into Samadhi. So it was always when Vivekananda sang. The Master told the boy of many things in store for him, but Vivekananda refused to believe, saying he was only a boy of Calcutta—how could these things be?

Day after day, as he returned to visit the saint, he felt the wonderful manifestation of Love and Divinity, and that was the influence which took him nearer to his Master. Sri Ramakrishna would talk of Vivekananda, telling how wonderful he was, and how, one day, the whole world would recognize his greatness. Swami Vivekananda would often tell, later, how he did not believe the marvelous things prophesied of him, but in time all proved true that Sri Ramakrishna had told of him. Sri Ramakrishna lived but a few years after Vivekananda first went to

REASON IS WEAK

Him, and when He passed out of His body, He left Swami Vivekananda in charge of all His disciples, and to them the Swami gave their Sannyasin names. He thus founded the Order, and, renouncing all possessions, journeyed all over Northern India, then went South, and to-day, in hundreds of villages and towns where he paused even for a day, he is remembered with love and veneration for the blessings he shed even in his passing.

While traveling he went through great discomforts, passing many days and nights without food or sleep; but he never wavered in his faith in the Lord and himself.

During this time he had many experiences, through which he came into a realization of God that he had not attained before. His faith and love for God and humanity were boundless, and all who knew him, both in the East and in the West, felt the greatness of the Love and Sympathy, the inspiring Courage and Energy, which incited to heroic actions.

He endured great privations gladly to serve his Lord, and the hardships he faced when he came as delegate to the Parliament of Religions in Chicago were many. This, to us, is the most familiar part of his life, and Swami Paramananda spoke feelingly of his struggles against seemingly overwhelming odds, and how, after making the speech before the first audience he had ever addressed,—that roused thousands to enthusiasm,—he closed himself in his room, saddened to feel he was no longer unknown and free, but a public man!

Thus was the Vedanta movement begun in this country,—a movement which owes its origin to the divine love and faith of this man who gave his whole life freely and joyously to the service of humanity, and who has inspired thousands with a like desire, towards whose fulfillment they strive patiently and tirelessly. His last days were spent in the Monastery near Calcutta, where he played with the animals and birds, like a child, with his child-disciples, with whom he talked and played as one of themselves, they adoring him in return. He passed out of this life July 4, 1902.

At the close of Swami Paramananda's address, he pronounced a benediction; again all sat silently, communing with that Great Peace.

The Swami, when the service was over, invited every one to take a flower and some fruit, which had been blessed by being on the altar.

It is impossible in a report such as this to do justice to the simple dignity and feeling with which Swami Paramananda spoke, or to convey the sense of nearness of a beautiful spirit, which was potent to one who had never known Swami Vivekananda in person; so how close must he have been to those who knew him! It was, indeed, not the

**FAITH IS OMNIPOTENT**



worship of a personality, but communion with a spirit which is universal, which will strengthen and inspire us to live as he did,—for the service and elevation of our common humanity.

A. W

ONE touch, one glance, can make a whole life change.  
—VIVEKANANDA.

### NEWS AND NOTES

THE birthday of Vivekananda, so tenderly dwelt upon by a member, in the above account, has not passed without saddening and illumining reflections. Vivekananda was beloved and is beloved by a great company. Yet he did not escape calumny while he was among us. Those very near to him, certain of them, betrayed him utterly when the cock crew. He was falsely branded as base, by disciples who should have known of his divinity; who, previously, had professed to know of it. And this is the fate of all great leaders. At the outset they appear to us as Very God, yet we may perceive the human shape. In time the merely human elements also manifest themselves, and some of us lose faith. Cheated of the completeness of the idol, like children we try to cast it from us, to break it altogether. We have demanded of a fellow-being utter love of our unworthy selves, and if he seems to fail us, we do not extend to him the ordinary courtesy of a district court, where no man is guilty until he has been tried!

Is it asking too much, that those who meditate on perfect love should practise something of it? Has a man done anything wrong? We should ask him. His own idea about it is important. Much could be said of a divine obligation to extend love and blessings to those from whom we expect to get them.

REASON IS WEAK

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HE is a saint whose heart, soul, and inner nature have turned towards God; he who has renounced woman and wealth.—RAMAKRISHNA.

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SWAMI PARAMANANDA'S lectures during February are as follows: 9th, God-Vision; 16th, Spiritual Life; 23d, What is a Saint? On Sundays, 11 A.M. The course on the Bhagavad Gita continues on Tuesday evenings at 8 o'clock. The Yoga class, for members only, is held Thursday evenings at 8 o'clock. On Wednesday afternoons Swami Paramananda receives visitors, any one desiring to talk with him personally, between 3 and 4.

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ON Wednesday, the 29th of January, Swami Abhedananda sailed for England, where he will continue his work, begun there last summer. It is gratifying that his leadership is appreciated in so many quarters. Various requests for his personal work have come from the four winds of this continent. In his absence, Swami Paramananda will conduct all meetings and meet visitors. Before departing for England, Swami Abhedananda concluded a notable course of lectures before the Brooklyn Institute, and finished the noble task of putting in order "The Gospel of Ramakrishna." This remarkable work, which will be reviewed more fully at another time, gives a composite picture of the daily life of that "Saviour," as those who knew him called him and believed him to be.

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ON Wednesday, March 4th, the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna will be celebrated at the Vedanta House.

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MANY requests for the significance of the symbol of the Vedanta Society have been received; it follows: The Snake, enclosing the Sun, Water, Lotus, and Swan,

. FAITH IS OMNIPOTENT

means Brahman, the One Existence, the Absolute. The Sun represents Wisdom, "Jnana Yoga"; the Water, Activity, "Karma Yoga"; the Lotus, Heart, "Bhakti Yoga"; the Swan, Serene Soul (above all activity), "Raja Yoga." All the Yogas, therefore, are united by or in Brahman.

The inscription in Sanskrit under the lotus says: "May that Swan lead us to the goal!"

THE inner life begins when the soul becomes good, and not when the intellect ripens.—MAETERLINCK.

THE only true teacher is he who can convert himself, as it were, into a thousand persons at a moment's notice.—VIVEKANANDA.

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. If we start out with a pure spirit and that spirit does not need to learn anything, why do we need to learn how to become pure?

A. We start out with a pure spirit plus mind.

Q. If we return to purity or the original state of the spirit plus mind, where have we gained anything, when we started with purity plus mind?

A. We have gained the truth that mind itself knows that mind is not the spirit. At present the mind mistakes that it is spirit. At present I am mistaking that I am the son of So-and-so; but when I shall realize that I am not the son of So-and-so, but the son of God, that is a great gain. When we realize that we are sons of God, we do not make mistakes. When we can say "I am in my Father and my Father in me," then we do not feel that our will is separate from the Divine Will. Then we are in a position to say "Thy will be done." At present we are saying that with our mouths; in heart we are really saying: "My will be done."

REASON IS WEAK

### A NEW CHILDREN'S CLASS

THE Pittsburg Vedanta Society added a new feature to its work by opening a children's class at the beginning of this season. In view of the steady increase in attendance since its start and the interest shown by the parents and guardians of the children, the class seems likely to succeed. The children are taught elementary lessons in morality, posture, breathing, and concentration. The class is held on Monday afternoons at 4 o'clock in the house of Dr. Harry Sheppard, the kind host of Swami Bodhananda.

As soon as the children assemble in the parlor, the Swami meets and sits with them on the floor. For the first 5 minutes a short meditation is held with a (salutation) prayer. During meditation the children sit straight, closing their eyes and remaining still and silent. The Swami then asks them a number of questions, tells one or two instructive tales from the scriptures, inquires about their behavior at home and at school, and closes the class with a short meditation and a peace prayer. Through the courtesy of some members of the Society, cards and candies were given to 24 children as Christmas presents. The class is open to all children between the ages of 4 and 14 years. Prizes are given occasionally to encourage the children.

#### SOME OF THE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Who are your earthly gods, children?

A. Our parents, teachers, and superiors.

Q. What is a bad day?

A. A rainy day is not a bad day, but that day is bad on which we do not pray and meditate and do not do good deeds to our fellow-beings.

Q. How do you know whether a man is good or bad?

**FAITH IS OMNIPOTENT**

A. A man is known by the company he keeps.

Q. Who is a good child?

A. A good child is he who does what his parents and teachers tell him to do and makes them happy.

Q. Who is a good student?

A. A good student practises what he learns.

Q. What makes a child more attractive than dress or jewelry?

A. Humility.

Q. Would you go to heaven with bad people or rather live on earth with good companions?

A. I would stay on earth with good friends.

Q. There are two flowers—one is fine looking, but has no good odor; the other is not so fine looking, but has a delicious fragrance. Which of these two flowers would you like to have?

A. I would have the one with delicious odor.

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IF you have not found a Guru, a true spiritual master, earnestly pray to God. He will show you what He is like.—RAMAKRISHNA.

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WITH regard to the mode of prayer, all are good provided they are sincere. Turn your book upside down and be with the infinite.—VICTOR HUGO.

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ONE loses fear, one ceases to worry about one's friends and to suffer for wrongs which one is powerless to prevent, when this realization becomes a fixed habit of thought, for if God, and not man, is behind events, we can safely trust the universe to him, and not only the universe, but our friends, our suffering and ignorant fellow-beings, and our own souls.—HORATIO W. DRESSER.

REASON IS WEAK

### THE PATH OF DEVOTION

THIS little volume consists chiefly, as the preface tells us, of "Letters written solely to meet an individual need, and with no thought of publication." Its aim is to help the sincere seeker for spirituality in his devotion to an ideal; to help him find and make that ideal the ruling passion of his life. The book teaches that a spiritual character is the necessary basis of spiritual insight and knowledge. The qualities of character which the Vedanta philosophy holds to be the highest are grouped about the subjects "Devotion," "Purity," "Steadfastness," "Fearlessness," and "Self-surrender." The Swami gives many helpful suggestions for strengthening the spiritual life, and emphasizes especially the value of looking for help not from the world without, but from "deeper and deeper within yourself." The conception of God as the Mother of the universe, a thought associated especially with the teaching of Sri Ramakrishna, is beautifully developed. All subjects in the book are treated in a manner that is simple, direct, intimate, and convincingly earnest.

J. B. A.

*The Path of Devotion* (with an appendix containing Sanskrit salutations and prayers with translations). By Swami Paramananda. 105 pp. Portrait of the author. New York, The Vedanta Society, 1907.

REASON is weak. Faith is omnipotent. — RAMAKRISHNA.

IN the evening fireflies think that they are lighting the world; but when the stars begin to shine, their pride is subdued. — RAMAKRISHNA.

GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS does not come so long as there are three things in the heart,—shame, hatred, and fear. — RAMAKRISHNA.

FAITH IS OMNIPOTENT

### VIVEKANANDA REVERED IN INDIA

A NEW hall in memory of Swami Vivekananda lately was opened and dedicated at Mylapore, Madras, India. There were processions with music, discussions in Sanscrit among Pundits, and a public meeting in the hall, which was presided over by the Hon. Mr. P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer. The *Madras Mail* of Nov. 18 says, in part:

“Proceedings at the evening meeting began with a statement by Mr. G. A. Natesan, Joint Honorary Secretary of the Vivekananda Memorial Committee. He pointed out in an eloquent speech how the present Memorial Hall was a humble testimony to the universal feeling among the late Swami’s disciples and admirers that something should be done to perpetuate his great work. It was the great ambition of the Swami that an organization should be formed and an institution founded in Madras, with ramifications throughout the country, to advance the spiritual and material needs of the people Swami Vivekananda was never tired of preaching the doctrines of his universal religion. On behalf of the Committee, Mr. Natesan stated that the subscriptions collected amounted to Rs. 4,327, whereas the building cost them Rs. 5,794; thus leaving a deficit of Rs. 1,467 to be met. In conclusion, Mr. Natesan requested Swami Ramakrishnananda to take charge of the hall, wherein he hoped that the Swami would continue his beneficent work.

“Swami Ramakrishnananda thanked the people of the Presidency for giving a home to the Ramakrishna Paramahansa Mission. He was glad to take charge of the building and to look after it, though as a *Sannyasin* nothing belonged to him, but everything to his Master.

#### THE CHAIRMAN’S SPEECH

“The Honorable Mr. P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer then delivered an address. He said that it was a little more than five years since Swami Vivekananda passed away from their midst and since they had passed a resolution at a public meeting to perpetuate his name and work amongst them.

“There were many elements in his (Vivekananda’s) teaching which appealed to the educated classes with great force. In the

REASON IS WEAK

teachings of many great men there was a tendency to lay undue emphasis upon certain points, upon certain aspects of improvement and reform. The great merit of Vivekananda's teachings was that he insisted upon all-round development of individuals and nations. He was not content with merely religious development. The Vedanta philosophy that he taught was not a philosophy to be read by the student in his closet, not a philosophy to be practised by the hermit in the forest or the recluse in his cell, but a philosophy which he proved to be quite compatible with active practical work in life. His own life was a remarkable vindication of the compatibility of the Vedanta philosophy with the requirements of practical life. He did not believe in faith alone; he believed in good works as much as in faith and there was no man who was more devoted in his faith or more self-sacrificing in the work he did. Added to his supreme intellectual gifts, he was endowed with a highly emotional temperament and was consumed by a passionate love of freedom, a passionate longing for the regeneration of his countrymen and for their improvement in all departments of life. He was not one of those who in their pursuit of the hereafter neglected the needs of the present. He was not given to despising material civilization or industrial advancement. He insisted upon the absolute necessity of raising the material condition of the people, especially of the masses, as much as upon their religious improvement. It was too often forgotten that a high degree of intellectual culture could not be attained without a certain minimum of physical well-being. He clearly perceived this and always insisted as a fundamental part of his teachings upon the necessity of elevating the masses in all respects—economically, socially, intellectually, and spiritually—and the object which overshadowed all others in importance in Vivekananda's estimation was the imperative necessity of educating the masses. There was no greater social reformer than he and the greatest of all social reforms was that which insisted upon the elevation of the masses of this country. The work he himself did in his lifetime was of a most valuable character. He was no mere preacher, but had always endeavored to put his ideas into practice every moment of his life. In the case of a great preacher or moralist, the work that he did was not to be measured by the part he might have taken as a member of the Society, but must be judged by the test as to whether he had been able to kindle in the people enthusiasm for what was good, religious, and noble. That was the function of a great teacher, and that function was fulfilled by Vivekananda in a splendid manner."

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# Vedanta

## Monthly Bulletin

That which exists is one; men call it by various names.—Rig Veda

VOL. III

MARCH, 1908

No. 12

### THE FUTURE OF THE BULLETIN

THIS number, March, is the last of the third year of the life of this magazine. The Bulletin will continue, and subscribers are invited to renew their subscriptions with confidence and without delay. The interest expressed by the readers of the Bulletin warrants not only its existence but the belief that it will grow, to serve better the highest purposes of those who endorse it, and any who may be reached by it.

Will you who read this paragraph have the goodness to respond to it? Will you write to the editor telling something of what you like about the Bulletin and something of what you do not like? Do you know of any way in which it may be made more helpful to living, contemporary humanity, frequently, at best, as Vivekananda says, "Poor slaves of duty, with no time to think of anything else, no time to say prayers, no time to bathe, at last dropping down in the street and dying in harness, like a horse."

There is spiritual alchemy by which "duty" is transformed into devotion, labor lightened by love, life transformed into joyous realization. "Christ and Chaitanya both have taught us to love all mankind."

And that is what students of Vedanta try to do. Just as it is easier to talk of moving mountains than to lift the hand which is before us, so is it more simple to love all mankind at an æsthetic distance than to do a

**BE AT REST, BE FREE, AND WORK**

kindly act for the first unfortunate outside the door. For this reason there are societies, there are fraternities, there are churches, magazines, there are multitudes of means by which we may help one another along the road to the hill-top whereon we may see and know that we live in God's fair world, and that while it is very large and varied, it is undivided. The Vedanta Bulletin has a place among these helps to realization; some say that it is a unique place, that of keeping periodically before the world the thought that God is One, although men call Him—Her—by many names. The Bulletin is not, should not be, the organ of any one man or any group of men. It should be the result of the effort of certain of those who aim to serve the Highest through the consecrated work of their daily lives. It is hoped that the Societies in other cities will feel that the Bulletin is theirs, also, and will help, in any way possible to them, to render the periodical in the highest degree useful.

It is not desirable continually to beg for subscriptions. The Bulletin does need means of support, however, and individual efforts to increase the list of subscribers will be appreciated. Money for the payment of the publication will have to come from somewhere. It is believed that sufficient funds will be received. And what especially is asked of the friendly reader, is that he help to make the magazine as nearly as possible worthy of the philosophy for which it stands, in any way which may seem practicable. If it be a subscription, good. If a novel suggestion about conducting the magazine, excellent. If one can send only a message of Good-will, that would help to keep the Bulletin alive and courageous.

OUR first duty is not to hate ourselves.—VIVEKANANDA.

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**NEWS AND NOTES**

"THEY are enthusiastic and doing splendid work in London," writes Swami Abhedananda of the members of the Vedanta Society in that city, where Swami Abhedananda is giving lectures and lessons on the Vedanta philosophy. The lectures are held at 41 Wigmore St.; on Wednesday evenings the Bhagavad Gita is interpreted, on Thursdays at five o'clock the course is on Yoga philosophy. The *Daily News* of Feb. 14, 1908, gives the following account of a meeting:

Clad in a red robe girt with a crimson sash, the Swami (Master) Abhedananda discoursed last night to a crowded audience in the smaller Caxton Hall, Westminster, on the religion of Vedanta, which, says Max Muller, "Is the most sublime of all philosophies and the most comforting of all religions." The Swami is a handsome, well set-up man, with jet-black hair and eyes, and the dark face of a Hindu. He spoke in excellent English, and was listened to with profound attention. His lecture was given under the auspices of the newly formed English Vedanta Society, of which the secretary is Miss Bowles, 63 Clifton-hill, N.W. In America flourishes a larger Vedanta Society.

Mr. H. D. Harben presided, and said he did not see why the philosophies of Greece and Rome should be studied and not the philosophy of India. The Swami devoted a large part of his discourse to the assertion that India was the mother of civilization and philosophy, and the Greek and Roman philosophies were largely the same as that taught in India hundreds of years before. He was evidently also of opinion that much of the teaching of "Jesus, the Christ" was similar to the old Hindu philosophy. India was a highly civilized country, he declared, 1500 years before Christ, and he claimed that it gave to the world the highest ideal of a

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universal religion and moral philosophy under the name of Vedanta. He also claimed that Darwinism was known in India centuries ago, and some of Herbert Spencer's teachings anticipated. Some of his sentences sounded like echoes of recent City Temple teachings, as: "What is sin but selfishness?" The aim and end of all religions and philosophies was, the speaker contended, the same; to cause one to become unselfish, and to become unselfish was to become spiritual. He proceeded to speak of several ancient philosophic systems. He told a story of his experience in America. "Has India ever produced an Emerson?" he was asked. "America has produced only one Emerson; in India there is an Emerson at every five miles."

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ALL service ranks the same with God.—BROWNING.

SWAMI PARAMANANDA was called upon to undertake a unique ceremonial in connection with the cremation of the body of a young Hindu, Wallabh Hira, native of Alimedabad, India, on March 7, at the chapel of Fresh Pond Crematory. The young man was one of a considerable number who have come to this country and city in the hope of obtaining such education as shall fit them to help in establishing the industrial freedom of India. He was especially devoted to the common cause of his countrymen. Although the Swamis do not perform such rites in India, friends of the dead patriot were eager that Swami Paramananda of the Vedanta Society should undertake the burial service, and he consented to do so. Selections from the Bhagavad Gita were read, there were silent prayers and intonations of Vedic hymns, and addresses by Hindus, Mohammedans, Zoroastrians, and various other natives of India. The Rev. John M. Scott, a Unitarian minister, recited the Lord's prayer and spoke of the universality of the

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divine nature. Mr. S. L. Joshi, an Indian Christian from Bombay, secretary of the Pan-Aryan Association of New York, told of the reality of the spiritual world and the inspiration that may come from such occasions. Members of the Vedanta Society who were present were impressed with the spirit of unity among representatives of so many creeds. Swami Paramananda finally prayed that the God of All might grant unto the departed soul peace, peace, peace.

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REGULAR services, at 11 o'clock, are conducted on Sundays at 135 W. 80th Street, New York City. Swami Paramananda's subjects follow: March 22d, Reincarnation; March 29th, Self-Surrender; April 5th, Right Discrimination; April 12th, Aim of Religion; April 19th, Self-Mastery; April 26th, Immortality. Swami Paramananda receives visitors on Wednesdays between 3 and 5. The Yoga class, for members only, meets on Thursday evenings at 8 o'clock. The Bhagavad Gita is studied on Tuesday evenings at 8 o'clock: admission for non-members is 25 cents.

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THE Ashrama at West Cornwall, Conn., is ready to receive members of the society who are prepared to do their own work. Word comes from the retreat that visitors of that order will be more than welcome. The country begins to look alive.

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MRS. CORY gratified a number of friends and members of the Vedanta Society by inspirited readings from the Song Celestial at the society's rooms on March 2d.

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TALENTS are nurtured best in solitude, but character in life's tempestuous sea.—GOETHE.

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### ANOTHER VIVEKANANDA MEMORIAL

DISCIPLES in India of Swami Vivekananda are impressed with a peculiar coincidence. On the same day upon which the Vivekananda Memorial was dedicated at Mylapore, Madras, November 17th last, the newly rebuilt ashrama at Ulsoor, Bangalore, was "Dedicated to the memory of our beloved master, Swami Vivekananda." Neither body of men knew of the intention of the other. A writer in the Mysore *Standard* for Dec. 14 says: "Incredible as it may seem, when all was over, it was discovered that on the self-same day and perhaps during the same hour, the devout hearts of worshippers and admirers were united in a common band of enthusiasm across the gulf of two hundred and odd miles. And their voices united in singing the glories and praises of one who had come to them with the inexplicable charm and majesty of a new avatar, almost. We had something like a demonstration of the old truth which Swamijii so often tried to bring home to us—that in the sincere and unselfish pursuit of an ideal, humanity transcends its limitations and realizes in ultimate unity."

The ashrama at Ulsoor, the dedication of which was attended with special celebrations and rejoicings, is the gift of Mr. T. P. Aroonachalem Pillai. Something over two years ago, a "handful of men," who had learned from Swami Vivekananda that "Religion is being and becoming," leased a little cottage which might be used daily as a retreat. One of the Swamis from the Sri Ramakrishna Mission was engaged to give informal instruction in such religious practices as Vivekananda would have approved, and the work was begun and carried on quietly for a year and a half, in one room. A part of this room was curtained, and the pictures of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna were hung

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in the recess. At length it was decided to enlarge the cottage. Mr. T. P. Aroonachalem Pillai was consulted, and greatly to the surprise of those who visited him, he offered to rebuild the ashrama at his own expense. New rooms and a veranda have been added to the first floor, and a new room has been added on the second floor. The place has been leased for twenty-five years, with the hope of making it permanent. Now that the ashrama has become valuable property, it has been decided to vest all rights with the Sri Ramakrishna Mission. An attractive photograph of this sanctified retreat may be seen by any visitor, at the Vedanta Society's rooms in New York.

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THE law of progress is the law of sacrifice—no sacrifice, no progress. The secret of sacrifice is love. Without the self-sacrificing love of the mother, life itself would disappear from the earth.—REVIEW OF REVIEWS.

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A COMMON basis for religious truth is the only means that will bring peace and harmony among individuals, as well as among nations.—CHRISTINA G. KELLY.

### THE SOUL

ONLY by Soul itself  
Is soul perceived—when the Soul wills it so!  
There shines no light save its own light to show  
Itself unto itself!

None compasseth  
Its joy who is not wholly ceased from sin,  
Who dwells not self-controlled, self-centred—calm,  
Lord of himself! It is not gotten else.

EDWIN ARNOLD.

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### BOOKS

THAT unique document, the Gospel of Ramakrishna, wherein are recorded, "For the first time in the history of the world, the exact words of the Master," is receiving considerable attention from the secular press. The New York *Herald* of March 8 publishes a picture of Panchavati, where Ramakrishna attained Divine Communion with the Mother of the Universe, and this review of the gospel:

#### THE GOSPEL OF RAMAKRISHNA

(Translation of the Recorded Sayings of a Famous Philosopher of India)

It was Max Müller who first drew the attention of the Western World to the Hindu saint whose gospel now for the first time appears in an English translation by a fellow countryman, Swami Abhedananda (the Vedanta Society, New York).

Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was born at Kamarpurkar, in Bengal, in the year 1833, and died at a comparatively early age in 1886.

He was the youngest son of a poor Brahmin family. At the age of sixteen he attended the school kept by an elder brother at Calcutta, and followed him when he was appointed priest to the Temple of the Goddess Kali. Becoming a devotee of Kali, he began a course of twelve years of asceticism. The fame of his humility, sanctity, and wonderful teachings spread, and crowds of people of all classes, including Keshub Chunder, soon fell under his spell.

From his childhood, the translator tells us, Sri Ramakrishna fought against all sectarian doctrines and dogmas, but yet at the same time he showed that all sects and creeds were but the paths which lead sincere and earnest souls to the one universal goal of all religions. "Having realized the highest ideal of every religion by following the methods and practices of the various sects and creeds of the world, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna gave to humanity whatever spiritual experience and realization he had acquired. Every idea which he gave was fresh from above and unadulterated by the product of human intellect, culture, or scholastic education. Each step of his life from babyhood to the last moment was extraordinary. Every stage was like the unfoldment of a chapter of a new scripture especially written out by the Unseen Hand to fit the minds of the East and the West and to fulfil the spiritual needs of the twentieth century."

BE AT REST, BE FREE, AND WORK

The following is a significant extract from the saint's autobiography: "I practised austerity for a long time. I cared very little for the body. My longing for the Divine Mother was so great that I would not eat or sleep. I would lie on the bare ground, placing my head on a lump of earth and cry out loudly, 'Mother, Mother, why dost Thou not come to me?' I did not know how the days and nights passed away. I used to have ecstasy all the time.

"At that time whatever I desired came to pass. Once I desired to build a small hut in the Panchavati for meditation and to put a fence around it. Immediately after, I saw a huge bundle of bamboo sticks, rope, strings, and even a knife, all brought by the tide in front of the Panchavati. A servant of the temple, seeing these things, ran to me with great delight and told me of them. There was the exact quantity of material necessary for the hut and the fence. When they were built nothing remained over. Every one was amazed to see this wonderful sight.

"When I reached the state of continuous ecstasy I gave up all external forms of worship; I could no longer perform them. Then I prayed to my Divine Mother: 'Mother, who will now take care of me? I have no power to take care of myself. I like to hear Thy name and feed Thy Bhaktas and help the poor. Who will make it possible for me to do these things? Send me some one who will be able to do these for me.' As the answer to this prayer came Mathura Babu, who served me so long and with such intense devotion and faith! Again at another time I said to the Mother: 'I shall have no child of my own, but I wish to have as my child a pure Bhakta, who will stay with me all the time. Send me such an one.' Then came Rakhai (Brahmananda).

"Those who are my own are parts of my very self."

In referring to the time of joyous illumination which immediately followed his enlightenment, he exclaimed:

"What a state it was! The slightest cause aroused in me the thought of the Divine Ideal. One day I went to the Zoological Garden in Calcutta. I desired especially to see the lion, but when I beheld him I lost all sense-consciousness and went into Samadhi. Those who were with me wished to show me the other animals, but I replied: 'I saw everything when I saw the king of beasts. Take me home.' The strength of the lion had aroused in me the consciousness of the omnipotence of God and had lifted me above the world of phenomena."

**BE AT REST, BE FREE, AND WORK**

EASTER editions of "Kali the Mother" and Mrs. Emily Palmer Cape's "Oriental Aphorisms" have been prepared. They are uncommonly attractive, in their bindings of spotless white, and may be found at some of the department and book stores, or ordered directly from the society.

It is sometimes difficult to understand what is meant by "Attachment." Vivekananda, in his essay on "Freedom," says: "Everything that you do under compulsion is attachment."

### FAITH IN THE HIGHEST

Most people suffer because their prayers are fulfilled and their prayers did not proceed from right knowledge, from the right attitude of heart. We must be careful when we pray. We must not ask for that which appears to bring a great deal of comfort but which in the end will bring great sorrow and lead to unhappiness. The Bhagavad Gita says: "He who has faith, true faith, the highest kind, has subjugated his senses, gained self-control over the mind, and is intent upon wisdom." It is not enough to have faith; that faith must be directed towards the highest or we shall not get the highest results. Very few people in Christendom consider what sort of faith they should have: whether it proceeds from passion, from ignorance, or from goodness. He who understands the right kind of faith, finds peace.—ABHEDANANDA.

ALL the world is an utterance of the Almighty. Its countless beauties, its exquisite adaptation, all speak to you of Him.—PHILLIPS BROOKS.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE, self-reverence, self-control,  
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.

—TENNYSON.

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### VEDANTA SOCIETY OWNS ITS HOME

Organization gets Title to the Site in West 80th St., which it Occupies

THE Vedanta Society took title yesterday to No. 135 West 80th St., a dwelling house, on a lot 21 X 102.2 feet, which it has occupied for several years. It mortgaged the property to the Title Guarantee and Trust Company for \$15,000. Professor Herschel C. Parker, of Columbia University, is president of the society, Mrs. E. Palmer Cape,\* secretary, and William T. Partridge, treasurer.

One of the objects of the society is to unite "the best foundation or structural parts of all religions," it is said. The society takes its name from a system of philosophy among the Hindus, founded on scattered texts of the Vedas, and thence termed the *autā* or end or substance. The Vedanta Society is growing rapidly.—*New York Tribune*, March 5.

### FAIRIES, CHILDREN, AND MOTHERS

"FAIRY SURPRISES FOR LITTLE FOLKS," a new volume by Mrs. Emily Palmer Cape, is well described. The book, bound in ripe cherry-colored cloth, printed in large type, with wide margins, is full of such strange happenings and quaint imaginings as will delight young minds fresh from that other world where wonderful things no doubt are of regular occurrence. The poets account for the credulity of small folk in this way, and Mrs. Cape's children in the book are like those in real life; nothing is more probable than that fairies can explain the talk of the flowers, that a clam-shell can go on a journey and have adventures, that butterflies are able to take you to the Land of Sunsets, that there is a kind snake on whose back you may ride to the mouth of Fujiyama, and much more. "It made me feel like a fairy myself," said a young girl who read it. Incidentally, the book is novel in a charming respect; it is the real mother who is godmother to the children, who almost seems to believe in fairies herself. Swami Abhedananda says: "There is much between the lines for grown people in this little book for children."—G. D. A.

For sale at the Vedanta Society, New York, Brentano, and other shops. Price 75 cents.

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\* Mrs. Cape is not now secretary of the society.

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**TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN HELPED BY THE  
VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY**

DEAR FRIENDS:

IN the January number of the VEDANTA BULLETIN, your attention was called to our need of assistance in maintaining the Headquarters of the Vedanta Society in New York City. It is true that the membership includes "A number who have been pleased to give generously of their abundance, but it would be deplorable if these fortunate ones were to be allowed to supply all the varied needs of a new city house for a society which is world-wide in its interests."

Recently, large payments have had to be met, and, as usual, friends have come forward lovingly and willingly, to give towards the object, and our home is assured.

The running expenses of the Society's house are small compared with those of other religious organizations, when it is considered that we have rooms for classes, and lectures, a library accessible to all who are sincerely interested in our work, a room for the publications, and last but not least, a home for our wise ones from the East. If the work done at the house of the Society does not appeal to you personally, certainly the publications which are sent to all parts of the world should continue to attract your attention. It is well expressed "A society world-wide in its interests." "Vedanta" is a religion and a philosophy which knows no bounds, and so is the work which radiates from the centre at No. 135 West 80th Street, New York. It is a privilege, a sacred trust, to help along such work.

We have hoped that the membership dues would be sufficient to maintain the house; this, we find, is not possible, and we beg all our friends to try to put aside a small sum, a few cents every day (it would mean something by the end of the month), for this purpose,—the

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running expenses of the home in New York. Many of us have the skill to make small articles which we can sell to our friends; I am sure that we ourselves would be richer in the end. Now that the dawn of a new era in religion is at hand, let us hail it with delight, considering ourselves as did the crusaders of old, a band of faithful workers in behalf of Truth, Justice, Fraternity, and Love.

Sincerely yours,

CHRISTINA G. KELLY.

NEW YORK, March 26, 1908.

THE only "scientific" reason for calling God "God" is that we are all sailing the same sea and ought to have the same code of signals.—THOMAS R. SLICER.

THE thing that seems to you essential is the business of your life. Work at it as if it were essential for all time.—THOMAS R. SLICER.

### RAMAKRISHNA DAY

AT the rooms of the Vedanta Society, 135 West 80th Street, on Wednesday, March 4th, were held the annual memorial services, celebrating the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna, who is regarded as one of the Divine Incarnations, and who lived and gave to the world his teachings in the nineteenth century. The day was one to be long remembered—a day not only of fasting and prayer, but of feasting as well—feasting on the "bread of life."

The decorations were altogether oriental and seemed to be a reflection of the exquisite harmony which prevailed throughout the day and evening.

The altar, over which was placed a portrait of Sri Ramakrishna, and beneath which rested one of Swami Vivekananda (his dearly beloved disciple), was literally covered with many kinds of fruits and flowers, roses, lilies and carnations which, with masses of ferns, trans-

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formed the room into a beautiful house of worship. The simple service, conducted by Swami Paramananda, was especially impressive. Clad in the robe of the Sannyasin, the rare color and graceful lines of which, with the oriental turban, greatly added to the mystic beauty of the scene, he entered, and, kneeling before the altar, softly chanted in Sanskrit. This ceremonial was followed by meditation, salutations, and prayers, with selections from the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna. After both morning and evening services, flowers and fruit from the altar were distributed among those present.

Most of the day was passed in meditation, in which the voice of the silence breathed forth its wondrous secrets, purifying and uplifting the heart, which chanted back its song of joy and praise and devotion. In the evening Swami Paramananda delivered an address—"The Latest Divine Incarnation"—giving the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, with simplicity, tenderness, and dignity. He referred to many of the Divine Incarnations and explained that Sri Ramakrishna, after first attaining spiritual realization, desired to test that same reality and truth in all religions, and that he practised and lived in sympathy with the devotees of all the great saviors of the world including Krishna, Buddha, Christ, and Mahomet. And he fully realized that perfection can be attained through each or all. By attaining this knowledge he was enabled to rise to that comprehension of supreme wisdom through which he could serve all mankind by worshipping *with* all mankind.

The benediction which followed was so broad and all-embracing, one felt that not a single hair could be left unnumbered—that no soul could go so far astray that it could not find the way—*some* way—through some path into the kingdom.

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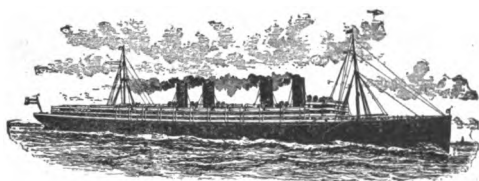
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