

# Prabuddha Bharata

OR

## Awakened India



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राण्य वराणिबोधत ।

*Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.*

Arise! Awake! and stop not till the goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

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## SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

### JNANA AND BHAKTI—IV

MASTER: The love for God is of two kinds. First, the Bhakti which is enjoined by the Shâstras. We are to worship in a certain way or repeat the name of the Lord so many times. All this belongs to Vaidhi Bhakti, i. e., the Bhakti according to the Law. It may lead to Brahmajñānam, or the Knowledge of the Absolute in Samadhi. The self is thus merged in the Universal Soul never to come back. This is the case with ordinary devotees.

But it is different with Divine Incarnations and those that are the Lord's own. Their Love for God is not made up of mere scriptural formulæ. It springeth from within! It welletth up from the Soul! Divine Incarnations (like Chaitanya) and those that are nearest to Him, have within their reach Absolute Knowledge in Samadhi, and at the same time may come down from that height retaining their self and loving the Lord as Father, Mother, &c. Saying, 'Not this,' 'Not this,' they leave behind them the steps of the stair-

case one after another until they get up to the roof. Reaching there, they say, 'It is this.' But soon they find out that the staircase is made of the same materials—brick, lime and brickdust—as the roof itself. So they walk up and down, sometimes resting on the roof and sometimes on the steps of the staircase.

The roof symbolizeth the Absolute realised in Samadhi in which the self responding to the sense-world is blotted out. The staircase is the phenomenal world—the world of names and forms—which after the Roof hath been reached, is realised as the manifestation, to human sense, of the Absolute.

A CERTAIN person said to Ravana, "Why canst thou not approach Sitâ assuming the form of Rama—her beloved husband?" Ravana replied, "My friend, if I once meditate upon that Divine Form—Tilottamâ and other beauties appear to me like ashes of the dead scattered on the cremation ground! In that moment of ecstasy I can spurn the highest position of the Creator if offered to me, what to speak of winning a woman with all her charms!"



## Om Tat Sat

A Happy New Year to you and all.

### A NEW YEAR'S PRAYER

Thou who art Absolute, Supreme, Sublime,  
 Master of Destiny, beyond space and time,  
 Light of the Universe, Life's Central Sun,  
 Incomprehensible, all Things in One:  
 Light Thou my pathway and teach me to know  
 That Thou art the Source from which all things flow;  
 That whate'er exists—whether good or of ill—  
 Proceeds from the Law of Thy Infinite Will,  
 And sooner or later must return to Thee,  
 Death-purged in the waves of Eternity's sea.  
 Endow me with Love, in Faith make me strong,  
 And instead of a dirge let my life be a song,  
 Till Thy spirit divine in the innermost soul  
 Flames forth like a torch and illumines the whole,  
 Thenceforth from earth-life to be free in its flight  
 To the effulgent radiance of Supernal Light.

AMY DUDLEY.



### OCCASIONAL NOTES

**T**HERE was a mood, to which we sometimes obtain a moment's entrance, when we hold in our hands an old book, an old picture, an old jewel, or even things as simple as a padlock, a piece of brass-work, or a fragment of embroidery. It was a mood of leisure and simplicity, to which the work in hand at the moment was the whole aim of life. The craftsman was concentrated upon his labour. The whole of *dharma* lay in the beauty he was bringing forth. His craft was for the moment—or for that moment in the existence of humanity that we call a man's life—his religion.

Great things are always created thus. There is nothing worth having, that has not cost a human life. Men have given themselves thus,

for things that may seem, to the careless eye, to have been not worth the price! Thus a single *viola* or violin—one out of the many required in the course of a year—may have cost all this to make. Patient search of materials, careful seasoning and mellowing, earnest study of conditions, infinite lavishing of work, all these are necessary to the instrument that will be perfect. But having them, there have been some that were as individual as human beings, some whose voices live in history! It has happened, often enough, that a man would give years of labour to the carving of a cameo, or the illuminating of a manuscript. Such things we think of as the possessions of kings, and we speak of them as *mediæval*. That is to say, they are the product of ages like those of the European

Middle Ages. But in India the Middle Ages lasted till the other day. Even yet we may see them persisting in humble streets, and bazaars, and in villages that lie off the line of railway. India is, as a whole, a mediæval country. The theses of the Transition belong to her passage from one age into another, out of the Mediæval into the Modern.

What, then, were the characteristics of the Mediæval Age, that enabled it to produce its miracles of beauty and skill? It may be worth while to examine for a moment into this subject. In the first place, it had a great simplicity. A man lived, ate, and slept, in the room in which he worked. He was not surrounded by the multitudinous objects of his desire. His desire was only one. It was concentrated in his work. At the utmost, by way of ornament, he had about him a picture of some god, and a few specimens of his own achievements. Thus, his thirst after perfection fed upon itself. We do not often realise how much a great workman may owe to bareness and perfect simplicity of surroundings.

To a certain extent, we may see this simplicity, any day, in the bazaar. The shopkeeper lives and receives his friends, amongst his wares. Study, laboratory, living-room, all these are one, to the mediæval man.

Another point lay in the fact that partly owing to the fewness of his wants, and partly to the abundance of food then in the country, the mediæval workman was in no hurry to be rich. He could afford, therefore, to be lavish of time. The thing he made was, to a great extent, his only reward. Nor could he expect that to anyone else it would afford the enjoyment that he could derive from it. None else knew, as did he, the precise reasons why this curve or that colour, had been chosen, rather than something else. None else could

realise the feeling of rest, or gratification, or the sense of successful expression that rose in his mind, when he looked upon it. He himself derived from his own work a pleasure that he never dreamt of describing to anyone, a joy that he could not hope to communicate. The work was done for the work's own sake.

Nothing tells so strongly and clearly, in a piece of work as its *motive*. The desire for fame or money leads to qualities that destroy all true greatness in art. The genuine worker never asks for advertisement. He is contented to do well. Like the farmer of whom Ramakrishna Paramahansa spoke, he returns to the task itself again and again, whatever be the discouragements that meet him in it. He strives with all his might, to bring his own lotus to blossom. What concern of his are the bees?

He works for sheer joy of self-expression, and his work is a joy to all he loves. Even the greatest things in the world have been made out of the happiness of such simple souls, who were contented to work, as a child to play with toys. Cathedrals and temples, pictures and images, cities and kingdoms, have all been toys to the fashioners of them, working out of their own sense of things, even as a bird sings in the sunlight. The modern organisation has upset many things which the ancient organisation laboured to compass. Amongst others, it has made life complex. It has increased our needs. It has confronted us with many temptations, of which, in our old-time isolation, we knew little. The aimless desire for an accumulation of useless objects, has seized upon us, and we do not realise that for this, we have bartered what is infinitely more precious, the power of steady and absorbed work. For pictures on our walls, for sofas and chairs and round tables, for an air of luxury, and an infinite weariness of household drudgery, we have sold



our birthright, of dignified simplicity, and a concentrated mind and heart.

Back to simplicity, and the lofty uses of simplicity! Back to the bareness that was beauty, and the depth of thought that meant culture! Back to the mat on the bare floor, and the thoughts that were so lofty! Let us ordain ourselves free of the means of living: let us give our whole mind to the developing of life itself. Not in the age of scrambling for appointments, and struggling for a livelihood, was Sankaracharya born, was Buddha born. Let the thatched hut at the foot of the palm be wealth sufficient, but woe the day when Indian mothers cease to bring forth, and Indian homes cease to nurture, the lions of intellect and spirituality!

What the Samyasin is to life, that the craftsman must be to his craft, that each one of us to the task in hand. We must have a single eye, to the thing itself, not to any of the fruits that come of it. We must keep ourselves simple, dependent upon no external aid, listening more and more, as life goes on, for that inner voice which is the guide to self-expression. In each line we must seek for that peculiar and partial form of *mukti* which is its

goal. When *mukti* has been piled upon *mukti*, God knows if the Absolute shall be ours.

Five hundred times died Buddha ere he attained the infinite compassion. Shall we grudge a life, with its hour of toil, that we may feast our eyes upon some symbol of perfection? Shall we measure the devotion, that, given without stint, is to make of us the *puja*-flowers, laid before the feet of God? In a world of infinite variety, the vision of Reality ends every road. Let us then push on with brave hearts, not fainting by the way. Whatever we have taken in hand to do, let us make the means our end. Let us pursue after the ideal for the ideal's own sake, and cease not, stop not, till we are called, by the voice that cannot go unheeded, to put away childish things, and enter the city of the soul.

Wouldst thou fashion for thyself a seemly life?  
Then fret not over what is past and gone;  
In spite of all thou mayst have lost behind,  
Yet act as if thy life were just begun.  
What each day wills, enough for thee to know;  
What each day wills the day itself will tell.  
Do thine own task, and be therewith content.

—Goethe.

## THE ONE IN THE MANY

**③** OUR senses are always active, bringing us sensations of sight, taste, smell, touch and sound, each according to its natural function. These sensations we develop into perceptions and perceptions again gradually develop into conceptions. It is in this way that we come to have, with our advance from childhood to boyhood, a distinct notion of a world which exists outside us, though the correlation of objects and ourselves is too much of a riddle to solve then. As we grow older and older, the naive mental outlook of the boy is replaced by the keen observation

of the scientist, and we come gradually to see that what appeared essentially distinct and separate to ourselves in tender years, are now grouping themselves into certain classes, these again are being generalised into higher and broader categories and thus we make a well-ordered system, out of the hitherto conflicting chaos of things.

We find out that there are two kinds of entities—Matter and Force—which make up the world of our senses. The former has been analysed into elements numbering seventy-three and new ones are being discovered now

and then. Force again has been shown to have different manifestations such as Heat, Light, etc., and the conservation and correlation of forces are now indubitable truths. Besides, there is the department of Mind, which is curtly defined as *not-matter*, and this definition has got its adherents by thousands and as many opponents too. But true knowledge consists in finding out the unity, if possible, amidst the heterogeneity that appears to an uncultured mind. The above is the result of modern investigation into the true nature of things. Hindu scientists however reached the Truth at an age of which history keeps no record, with far more daring and certainty than the scientists of the present day. According to their analysis, the universe is evolved out of *Akâsha* (matter) and *Prâna* (force). The *Prâna* acting on *Akâsha* has brought about the *Bhutas* or elements which have been, with remarkable consistency, grouped under five broad divisions, such as earth, water, fire, air and ether or space. Earth, water and air stood for the three possible states of solid, liquid and gaseous, respectively; heat was the necessary condition of this transmutation from one state to another, and space was the fundamental postulate, as it were, which made their existence possible. These ancient Aryan seers did not stop short here, but soared higher up into the spheres of *Manas*, consciousness, and discovered that it was also *matter*, but a very subtle form of it; finally they conceived the *necessary* existence of *Spirit*, as distinct from matter and mind, but as their only substratum. This accession to the idea of unity was, of course, the slow growth of ages in which thousands staked their body, soul and intellect, to solve the problem of life once for all. All succeeding researches into the domain of Truth have but reached the same goal in diverse ways and have sought to interpret that Truth in a multiplicity of forms and expressions.

They called this Truth, *Brahman*, the Su-

preme Self. One of the ways of realising It was through analysis, an intrepid sifting of the Real from the unreal, unflinchingly casting aside the claims of the body, and the *Manas* even, which being within relativity, prevent our enquiry beyond, into the Self, for the Self alone is the Real and therefore remains changeless in the midst of changes. Modern Psychologists and Philosophers also hold that our perception of a thing is not what the thing *in itself* is, which is always unknown and unknowable. All knowledge comes from reaction. The external world coming in contact with the senses acts upon the mind, and the mind reacts through the brain, and as such the knowledge must vary according to the medium through which it shines. So the Indian Rishis of old found out that they must go beyond the limitations of the finite *Manas*; the English word 'mind' is ambiguous, as standing alike for the Self, and consciousness which is Its lower manifestation) to view the Truth face to face, so to speak. This they attained in *Samadhi* or super-conscious state, the real nature of which cannot be expressed in words. To convey any idea of it by metaphors would be like making one have the taste of the luscious mango by applying a quantity of tamarind and sugar to some fibrous substance like hemp, and asking one to eat it, or making one see what Kashi is like by pointing it on a map. Of that super-conscious state the *Sruti* says:

यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह ।

"Whence speech returns baffled, with the mind, without being able to reach." In fact it is not mere *knowing* the Reality, but *being* the Reality, which makes a vast difference, for knowledge consists in objectification and localisation and is obviously *limitation*, whereas the *Brahman* is beyond all limitations, Infinite. The Aryan Seers were *Jnânis*, for they had known the Reality and they were *Vijnânis* too, for they had become the Reality Itself. But with our present psychological knowledge we can, by deep contemplation, get a



faint glimpse of what they, these mighty minds of old, actually realised. The thing in itself, as stated above, is something distinct from the manifestations with which alone it is possible for us to be concerned. A rose has its shape, its smell, its richness of colour, its delicate velvety touch, and many other attributes, which present themselves to the senses and the mind. It is these which we feel and *reason* as inhering to, or manifesting a something, which we cannot directly know. If we can conceive this totality of attributes—let us call it by “rose-ness,”—then we can mentally abstract this “rose-ness” from the rose-substance as it is *in esse*. As it is with the external so it is with the internal. The internal thing-in-itself, the free Soul, getting mixed up with the mind-stuff becomes individual existence. The totality of attributes or manifestations, internal and external, is what the Hindu Philosophers called Sakti or Maya, by differentiating which we get the one Absolute Reality, the Brahman. The Sages reached that goal by the process of “Neti, Neti”—“Not this, Not this,” and realised at last that all this is Brahman without a second. That is to say, on the One Absolute Existence, the noumenon or the thing-in-itself, has been superimposed all this phenomenon, the name-and-form, which makes diversity possible. When we are able to take out the latter i. e., know its unreal nature, then what remains is Brahman, the One.

According to Vedanta, the Soul is, in its nature, Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, and Bliss Absolute. But these are not the attributes of the Soul; they are *One*, not three, the essence of the Soul. If they were attributes, then the soul will be a compound and hence subject to change and decay. The fundamental factors of consciousness are, I exist, I know, and I am blessed. These ideas are the immortal principles of our life, the very core of our existence. Try however we may, we cannot get rid of any of them,

only, in our present limited aspect of consciousness we manifest them through the phenomenal, and make them our all-in-all. When the real existence becomes limited, by being viewed through the mind, it becomes individual existence, as the all-pervading air is shut up in a room or a jar. When the real knowledge is blurred by the faculties of the mind and the senses, it degenerates, and according to its degree of limitation, it manifests itself as intuition, reason, instinct and so on. That eternal bliss which we strive to make our own, knowing in our heart of hearts that it is ours by right, when it is idealised in gross or fine bodies or objects or ideas, expresses itself in love, attraction, and so on.

We all want to possess unalloyed and unbroken bliss, whatever may be its form, and we seek it in the phenomenal. And as we go on we find out that there is no such thing as unalloyed happiness here below, for every pleasure is inseparably linked with its correlate, misery. When after being buffeted by fortune at every step we come to the conclusion, that whatever happiness we may get, it is but like a wave which goes hand in hand with a depression, the two together making up, as it were, one whole, and this is life, we turn from the pursuit—we then long for that which is beyond all little happiness, composed of joy and sorrow. For we learn by hard experience that once we take in the so-called sweet pleasure, we must gulp down the bitter concomitant pain too, and the wiser we become the more we give up the former, so that we may escape the latter, and clearer stands the vision of our Ideal, as something which is not phenomenal, which is beyond this realm of the finite, which is the birthless, deathless, everlasting Self, by knowing which we grieve no more. When we realise the Self, the thing-in-itself in everything, the One in the Many, by entirely divesting It of all attributes or phenomenal manifestations, when we reach this Reality behind all existence

phenomenal, knowledge phenomenal, and love phenomenal, we become one with Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute and Bliss Absolute,—we become *Sat-chit-ānandam* Itself.

BRAHMACHARI NIRMAL.

## THE SUN AND THE SEER

**T**HE sun, as is his wont, shone with all the splendour of all the centuries. Far, far, above the circling earth his rays flashed forward. Warmth, health, life itself, vibrated through these rays into the body of humanity. All life, conscious or unconscious, came into being, continued in being, because of the sun-shining and because of his unceasing steadfastness in his appointed work. Beyond this steadfastness, beyond the warmth, beyond the light, mingling with them, transfusing Itself into them, the Power of Powers played with Its own transcendence. As the prophet-poet sang—

“Verily the Sun is He, His the ray;  
Nay! the Sun is He, and He is the ray.”

(Vivekananda.)

Another poet, one of British birth, wrote how “during our ignorance,” men took “the symbol for the symbolised,” literally worshipping the sun as God. Continuing, he says—

“Yon orb that we adore,  
What is he? Author of all light and life;  
Such one must needs be somewhere: this is he!”

Next he asks, and answers, a question, interesting to himself, no less interesting to us:

“Like what?”

If I may trust my human eyes,  
A ball composed of spirit-fire, whence springs  
All I enjoy on earth. By consequence,  
Inspiring me with—what? Why, love and praise.

\* \* \* \* \*

So, more and ever more, till most of all  
Completes experience, and the orb, descried  
Ultimate giver of all good, perforce  
Gathers unto himself all love, all praise,  
Is worshipped—which means loved and praised  
at height.”

Carrying us with him through the symbol up to the

Eternal Agency symbolised, he proceeds with his argument,—

“Prime Cause this fire shall be,  
Uncaused, uncausing; hence begin the gifts,  
Thither must go my love and praise.”

(Browning.)

Such, then, is the sun. Such was he, shining, gracious and resplendent, reflecting the benign countenance of God Himself. Yet, to a lamentable but visible extent, “darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people.” Men became immersed in strenuous struggle for wealth, or fame; they “sought out many inventions.” Others adopted an attitude of carelessness and whispered, “Let us eat and drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die.”

Darkness and disbelief covered the majority of mankind as with a garment. It is true that remembrance of prayer caused some to prostrate themselves before this symbol and that, petitioning for success in one or another of the earthly honours or delights, indulging in blind prayer to an unseeing because, for them, non-existing deity. They conversed with one another, learnedly enough, of all the gods that men had devised or dreamed of. They analysed the experience and labour of saints of past times and many places. As folk who knew they chattered of much of which they knew nothing, thinking that they knew. Some “shibboleth,” some form of words satisfied, or seemed to satisfy, their souls. Ritual, ornate and difficult, pleased their mental palate; even while officiating, priests performed ceremonies relating to a more actual worship of earlier times.

To others, even the semblance of religious expression had lost all meaning. Darkness had literally fallen. The world swung on upon its accustomed course, maintained in its balance by the sun which they no longer appreciated. Thick banks of cloud engendered for the most part by persistent misbelief and unbelief, caused, too, by ignorance of good, fostered by uncanny callousness, obscured the glorious sunshine overhead. Here and there, in one quarter or another, a voice sounded in the wild wilderness of unfaith. Now and again the crowd of gold-seekers or fame-hunters heard such a voice striking through their clamour; a voice insisting upon the Presence of a Being superhuman, divine; but they gave it no



heed. On the contrary, they shrugged their shoulders, muttering, "All that is a myth fit for little children of some olden time, not for men of to-day." Paralysis of religious appreciation prevailed. The beauty of holiness had hidden itself awhile, and the few faithful mourned and prayed in secret, strangely uplifted by those occasional voices that told of a life beyond and a life above.

Suddenly, or so it seemed, another Voice made Itself heard through the turmoil and the tumult. This Voice, sonorous, musical,—as though steeped in the music of the spheres,—resonant, forced Itself upon all ears that heard. There was, at the moment, a mighty assembly of the learned and the clerical schools of the creeds. Speakers stood there, renowned for erudition and eloquence. These, generally, advocated the claims of one "religion" or another, and, so far, this advocacy of theirs was good. Stillness fell upon the assembly when there arose among them "a graduate of the Calcutta University with a shaven head, a prepossessing face, wearing the garment of renunciation, fluent in English, with uncommon powers of repartee, who sang with full-throated ease, as though he was attuning himself to the spirit of the universe, and, withal, a wanderer on the face of the earth." (K. Vyasa Rao, B. A.)

At that moment they who saw the speaker saw the Sun. It was as though, by the energy and clarity of his eloquence, the veil, that had developed between created and Creator, was rent in twain. It was as though the Voice had compelled a hearing for Itself through the gladly willing lips beneath that shaven crown.

The owner of those lips had learned of the Light from other lips possessed by a prophet, a seer, gracious, wonderfully wise. One author, describing this prophet as he was longtime understood, if rightly understood at all, writes of "a puzzling personality to most, a kind of indefinite Entity, half real, half mythical." Our shaven-headed orator, with his appealing soul-ful eyes vocalised in burning words a vivid portrait of the prophet and his personality. The mantle of the Seer had fallen upon, and been aptly adapted by the speaker. The latter never failed to acknowledge that he owed his own vision of the Sun to the spiritual touch of the former, "All I am is because of Him," he declared over and over again.

So, the Sun began once more to shine with perceptible, palpitating radiance. The breath of brotherhood filled the men of the nations with the aspiration of fraternal love. Hand held itself out to grasp hand in the fulness of friendship. Differences between peoples paled. Differences of creed and of caste, whether of the East or of the West, faded away. Man met man on one common platform, moved by a universal joy in the consciousness of one real parentage.

No longer did one man exclaim, "You belong to that confession or that country. Believe as I do. Live as I do; for I am in the right." Rather, he sought to show by word and by act that a certain creed, even the dwellers in a certain country, represented, manifested, a phase of that something which we call life and that other manifestations needed other climes and other presentations.

All this, because, through the speaker, they had caught a glimpse of the Sun. That glimpse signified the coming of Love, Lord of the sun. By means of that glimpse the hearts of men began to beat in tune with the heart of the Lord of Love. The reign of the Lord, now, became dreamed of, discoursed of, as a very possible thing; nay, as a thing which was bound to be. Other souls caught the speaker's sacred contagion. In all lands his voice was heard, all the more clearly, all the more penetratingly, because the body that had clothed him and embarrassed him had been thrown aside, having fulfilled its purpose. For the speaker still lives and the Seer lives also; and on them and us the Sun shines.

ERIC HAMMOND.

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### I WILL—

I'll stand alone,

Though men may laugh and mock my loneliness;  
I'll think my thoughts,

Though Fate may flood my ways with bitterness;  
I'll fight my fight,

Though enemies be strong and struggle great;  
I'll face the world,

And laugh to scorn the scoffers of my state.  
And I will conquer;

With my head still gory from the strife  
I'll find my rest,

And thank my God for strength throughout my life.

( Author Unknown. )

## CONVERSATIONS WITH THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA—XV.\*

( From the Diary of a Disciple† )

**THE DOCTRINE OF AHIMSA—THE SATTVA, RAJAS, AND TAMAS IN MAN—DISCRIMINATION OF FOOD AND SPIRITUALITY—‘AHARA’—THE THREE DEFECTS IN FOOD—DON’T-TOUCHISM AND CASTE-PREJUDICES—PLAN OF RESTORING THE OLD CHATURVARNYAM AND THE LAWS OF THE RISHIS.**

Disciple :— Pray, Swamiji, do tell me if there is any relation between the discrimination of food taken, and the development of spirituality in man.

Swamiji :— Yes, there is, more or less.

\* \* \* \* \*

Disciple :— .....Why do Buddhism and Vaishnavism preach अहिंसा परमो धर्मः—“Non-killing is the highest virtue” ?

Swamiji :— Buddhism and Vaishnavism are not two different things. During the decline of Buddhism in India, Hinduism took from her a few cardinal tenets of conduct and made them her own, and these have now come to be known as Vaishnavism. The Buddhist tenet, “Non-killing is supreme virtue,” is very good, but in trying to enforce it upon all by legislation without paying any heed to the capacities of the people at large, Buddhism has brought ruin upon India. I have come across many a ‘religious heron’ ‡ in India, who fed ants with sugar, and at the same time would not hesitate to bring ruin on his own brother for the sake of ‘filthy lucre’ !

Disciple :— But in the Vedas as well as in the laws of Manu, there are injunctions to take fish and meat.

Swamiji :— Aye, and injunctions to abstain from killing as well. For the Vedas enjoin न हिंस्यात् सर्वभूतानि—“Cause no injury to any being,” and Manu also has said निवृत्तिस्तु महाफला—“Cessation of desire brings great results.” Killing and non-killing have both been enjoined, according to the individual capacity, or fitness and adaptability,

\* An Extract from “The Complete Works of the Swami Vivekananda,” Mayavati Memorial Edition. Part V.

† Sri Sarat Chandra Chakravarti, B. A.

‡ Meaning, religious hypocrite. The heron, so the story goes, gave it out to the fishes that he had forsaken his old habit of catching fish, and turned highly religious. So he took his stand by the brink of the water and feigned to be meditating, while in reality he was always watching his opportunity to catch the unwary fish.

of those who will observe the one practice or the other.

\* \* \* \* \*

Swamiji :— .....Brightness in the face, undaunted enthusiasm in the heart, and tremendous activity—these result from *Sattva*; whereas idleness, lethargy, inordinate attachment and sleep are the signs of *Tamas*.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Rajas* is badly needed just now! More than ninety per cent. of those whom you now take to be men with the *Sattva* quality, are only steeped in the deepest *Tamas*. Enough if you find one-sixteenth of them to be really *Sattvic*! What we want now is, an immense awakening of *Rajasic* energy, for the whole country is wrapped in the shroud of *Tamas*. The people of this land must be fed and clothed,—must be awakened—must be made more fully active. Otherwise they will become inert,—as inert as trees and stones.....

Disciple :— Does a liking for fish and meat remain when one has fully developed the *Sattva* quality ?

Swamiji :— No, it does not. All liking for fish and meat disappears when pure *Sattva* is highly developed, and these are the signs of its manifestation in a soul :—Sacrifice of everything for others, perfect non-attachment to lust and wealth, want of pride and egoism. The desire for animal food goes when these things are seen in a man. And where such indications are absent, and yet you find men siding with the non-killing party, know it for a certainty that here there is either hypocrisy or a show of religion.....

Disciple :— But in the Chhandogya Upanishad there is this passage—आहारशुद्धौ सत्त्वशुद्धिः—“Through pure food the *Sattva* quality in a man becomes pure.”

Swamiji :— Yes. I know. Sankaracharya has said that the word ‘*Ahara*’ there means, ‘objects



of the senses, whereas Sri Ramanuja has taken the meaning of 'Ahara' to be 'food.' In my opinion we should take that meaning of the word which reconciles both these points of view. Are we to pass our lives discussing all the time about the purity and impurity of food only, or are we to practise the restraining of our senses? Surely, the restraining of the senses is the main object; and the discrimination of good and bad, pure and impure foods, only helps one, to a certain extent, in gaining that end. There are, according to our scripture, three things which make food impure. (1) *Jati-dosha*, or natural defects of a certain class of foods, like onions, garlic, etc. (2) *Nimitta-dosha*, or defects arising from the presence of external impurities in it, such as the dead insects, or the dust, etc., that attaches to sweetmeats bought in shops. (3) *Ashraya-dosha*, or defects that arise by the food's coming from evil sources, as when it has been touched and handled by wicked persons. Special care should be taken to avoid the first, and the second classes of defects. But in this country men pay no regard to these very two, and go on fighting for the third alone, the very one that none but a Yogi could really discriminate! The country from end to end is being bored to extinction by the cries 'Don't touch,' 'Don't touch' of the non-touchism party. In that exclusive circle of theirs, too, there is no discrimination of good and bad men, for their food may be taken from the hands of anyone who wears a thread round his neck and calls himself a Bráhmāna! Sri Ramakrishna was quite unable to take food in this indiscriminate way from the hands of any and all such. It happened many a time that he would not accept food touched by a certain person or persons, and on rigorous investigation it would turn out that these had some particular stain to hide. Your religion seems nowadays to be confined to the cooking-pot alone. You put on one side the sublime truths of religion, and fight, as they say, for the skin of the fruit and not for the fruit itself!

Disciple:— Do you mean, then, that we should eat the food handled by anyone and everyone?

Swamiji:— Why so? Now look here—you being a Bráhmāna of a certain class, say of the Bhattacharya class, why should you not eat rice cooked by Bráhmanas of all classes? Why should

you, who belong to the *Rárhī* section, object to take the rice cooked by a Bráhmāna of the *Bárendra* section, and why should not a *Bárendra* do the same? Again, why should not the other sub-castes in the west and south of India, e. g., the Marhatti, Telingi, Kanouji do the same? Do you not see that hundreds of Bráhmanas and Káyashtas in Bengal now go secretly to eat dainties in public restaurants, and when they come out of those places pose as leaders of society, and frame rules to support non-touchism! Must our society really be guided by laws dictated by such hypocrites? No, I say, on the other hand, we must turn them out! The laws laid down by the great *Rishis* of old must be brought back, and be made to rule supreme once more. Then alone can national well-being be ours.

Disciple:— Then, do not the laws laid down by the *Rishis* rule and guide our present society?

Swamiji:— Vain delusion! Where indeed is that the case nowadays? Nowhere have I found the laws of the *Rishis* current in India, even when during my travels, I searched carefully and thoroughly. The blind and not unoften meaningless customs sanctioned by the people, local prejudices and ideas, and the usages and ceremonials prevalent amongst women, are what really govern society everywhere! How many care to read the *Shástras*, or to lead society according to their ordinances after careful study?

Disciple:— What are we to do, then?

Swamiji:— We must revive the old laws of the *Rishis*. We must initiate the whole people into the codes of our old Manu and Yajnavalkya, with a few modifications here and there to adjust them to the changed circumstances of the time. Do you not see that nowhere in India now are the original four castes (*Cháturvarnyam*) to be found? We have to redivide the whole Hindu population, grouping it under the four main castes of Bráhmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras, as of old. The numberless modern subdivisions of the Bráhmanas that spilt them up into so many castes, as it were, have to be abolished and a single Bráhmāna caste to be made by uniting them all. Each of the three remaining castes also, will have to be brought similarly into single groups as was the case in Vedic times. Without this, will the Motherland be really benefited, by your simply crying, as you do nowadays, "We won't touch you," "We won't take him back into our caste"? Never, my boy!

## THE KING AND HIS GURU, OR BOOK-LEARNING AND REALISATION

( A story )

It was a fine afternoon. A certain King, foremost in position, power and wealth, after finishing his state-affairs for the day, was sitting in his chamber. He had a looking-glass before him, and was parting his hairs carelessly, when he noticed some white hairs peeping through his jet-black locks. Moreover, he observed some wrinkles in his face. As he was a man of religious disposition, the appearance of these wrinkles and white hairs were suggestive enough to bring to his mind that his old age was fast approaching. He mused within himself thus—"I have come to a different chapter of my life. I have worked out to the best of my powers my duties as a King. Besides, I have long enjoyed material prosperity to its fullest. So it is the proper time now to train up my eldest son to the arduous responsibilities of my position, so that I may transfer my kingdom to him, in the near future. It is my primary duty now, to gradually accustom myself to retire from the busy life as much as I can and resort for some hours every day to a beautiful hermitage, at a solitary place away from the haunts of men. There, with my senses under control, I shall devote myself entirely, to realise the highest knowledge of God."

Thus resolved, he ordered for a suitable hermitage to be built at once and called for his Guru, a Bráhmán of much learning and reputation. Hearing the King's proposal, the Guru was pleased and suggested that he would read to him also from Srimad-Bhagavatam all about sages and the doings (Lilá) of the Lord Sri Krishna, which will greatly help him in his meditations. Thus both the King and the Bráhmán used to resort to the hermitage together in the afternoon, and pass the rest of the day happily in sacred study and divine contemplation.

Many days passed away in this way. The strong attachment which the King formerly had for his wealth and dominion, and for the nearest and dearest in life, began to fade away gradually by the practice of Yoga and meditation. So he engaged himself more and more to it, and would daily listen with rapt attention to every word that fell from the lips of the Bráhmán, about the Lord Sri Krishna. Our King had had the idea that the reali-

sation of Truth was a matter of a very short time. But years rolled on and he had not yet any glimpse of God-vision. Finding no tangible help from the Scriptures to satisfy the yearnings of his heart for realisation, he became more and more dejected.

One evening the King, while having his usual walk, was occupied with thinking of his unsuccessful struggle, and finding no solution resolved to ask his Guru, how long he would have to wait to obtain God-vision, and what was the quickest way to it. Casting his looks about he found at a distance the Bráhmán engaged in his *Sandhyá* on the banks of a running brook. Full of hope and reverence he approached him and stood waiting at a respectful distance. Having finished his evening prayers the Guru looked up and told him to take his seat before him. Seeing his troubled and care-worn looks the Bráhmán addressed him thus: "What ails thee, O virtuous monarch? Being relieved to a considerable extent of thy kingly duties by thy worthy son, thou spendest half of thy time at least, in sacred study and meditation nowadays. Surely thou shouldst feel blessed." Bowing to his Guru the King replied, "Thank you, my revered sir, for the trouble you daily take for me, to bring peace to my mind by reading the Bhagavatam to me. I shall never be able to repay my debts to you by any means. And it is true that I have less care now as I have trained my son well in his duties, by devoting my best thoughts and ripe experiences to him. But alas, Sir! my mind is as restless as before, and up till now I have not had a ray of divine light to dispel the darkness which clouds my mental vision. You have spoken that the King Parikshit attained illumination by listening to the Bhagavatam only for a week and calmly waited for Death to come at the end of that time, in fulfilment of the curse of the Rishi's son. But I have been hearing the Bhagavatam for so long a time and such is my misfortune that I have not got even a spark of realisation. Please enlighten me as to the reason why, and have pity on my poor soul."

Now, the Bráhmán was not a man of realisation himself. Erudite as he was in the scriptures, he



had only mastered the art of explaining the texts in various ways, but he never seriously attempted to make the truths taught therein his own. It was on this account that he could not find any satisfactory answer to the question of the King. So he artfully tried to evade it, and divert the mind of his pupil to other matters of interest. But the King was not to be deceived, as his heart was full. When he repeatedly urged him for a solution on the point, the Brâhman asked for a month's time to satisfy his pupil. Earnest, sincere and persevering, as the King was, he patiently waited a whole month which seemed an age to him, and then approached his teacher and reminded him of his promise. Though the Guru had been all the time ransacking his brains over the question which seemed too impertinent for the King to demand of him, he could not arrive at any satisfactory conclusion; so he tried to excuse himself by all plausible means by saying that the dilemma will be solved from within, when the proper time for it comes, and that the King should in the meantime possess his soul in patience and make further progress in spirituality.

Though blighted with bitter disappointment and exasperated, the King, who was noted for his patience and forbearance, controlled himself, and resolutely demanded for a speedy solution of his query. The helpless Brâhman begged now for only three days' time, and to be allowed to go home and consult his friends and relatives on the point. The King consented to his requests, on the express understanding, however, that the Brâhman would have to pay dearly with his life at the expiry of the term, if he failed to set at rest the doubts which were preying on his heart. So saying the proud monarch left for his palace, and the poor Brâhman had to curse his stars and return home.

Pale and frightened out of his wits with the constant thought of the impending death, he shut himself up in his room and would neither eat anything nor exchange words with anybody. At the anxious enquiries of his friends and relations, he only spoke of his sad plight, but they could not help him out of his difficulty, though they tried their utmost. All their best efforts to console the frightened Pandit, were in vain. Thus two days passed in extreme suspense and agony, for the more he tried to unravel the mystery, the more blurred

and confused his intellect became. On the morning of the third day, the Brâhman lost all hope of his life, and resigned himself to the tender mercies of the Lord.

Now, this Pandit had a widowed daughter at home. She was a young, beautiful and accomplished lady, and had a deep insight into the sacred literature. Moreover, she was a woman of wisdom herself. But her father and relatives were unconscious of her inner spiritual attainments and regarded her to be but a queer, crazy girl. So they did not care to reveal to her the secret of her father's misery, even at her repeated entreaties in the matter. Unable to bear herself up any longer in suspense, she fell at the feet of her father on the fateful day and implored with tears in her eyes to be told the cause of his grief, adding that otherwise she would drown herself in the river. The affectionate father looked up and heaved a deep sigh, and related the story of his hard ordeal. She smiled a little, and remarked why he had not spoken of it to her on the first day, for he would have been saved of all this worry and fright. She requested her father to take her to the King, assuring him that she would easily and fully satisfy the haughty pupil and bring about a happy ending to it all. She uttered these words in such a manner as to carry conviction. Anyhow, as a last hope the Brâhman agreed to her proposal and reported the matter to his royal pupil. Eager and anxious as the King was, he ordered the girl to be brought to the palace at once.

Accordingly the damsel was taken by her father before the King, who was greatly struck with her personality. She said she could solve his doubt on condition that he obeyed her without questioning. On the King assenting, she asked him and her father only to follow her to the hermitage with two ropes and a sword. So the three repaired to that secluded spot. Arriving there she drew near the King and without the least ceremony, bound him tightly to a tree. This, to be sure, was a thing which the King had never bargained for, and was not altogether flattering to one who was an object of worship to his subjects. However, he thought there must be some meaning in it; so he readily submitted to the ordeal and waited to see what would come next. The father, who stood silently watching this silly performance, with fear and

trembling, was greatly astonished as he also was tied to a tree opposite to the King. There they stood looking at each other vacantly, expecting some strange developments.

Now, to their utter dismay, they saw the damsel approaching the King with the drawn sword in her hand; but she did nothing worse than meekly request him to cut his bonds with the sword and be free. "O noble lady!" replied the poor King, "bound fast as I am, how can I make myself free?" "Well and good!" remarked the lady smiling. Then turning to the other she said, "Do, dear father, release your disciple from this miserable plight and set him free." The Brâhman, who had by this time faintly realised what his daughter was after, roused his drooping spirits up and exclaimed, "Bound as I am, my beloved, I cannot even free myself; how can I make another free?" Then she cut asunder their knots with the sword and addressed them the following words pregnant with wisdom: "My dear father and my noble King, I beg your pardon for acting in the way I have done; but perhaps your problem would not have been better solved in any other way than this. Truly the King Parikshit attained spiritual illumination within a week by his listening to the Bhagavatam. But, O noble King, you should also bear in mind that the young Sukadeva, who read the Scripture to the saintly King Parikshit, was himself a man of perfect realisation, and was a *Jivamukta* Sâdhu. How can a man, being himself bound to the world by its many ties, like my father, give freedom to another who is also in the same state? The mere knowledge of the Shâstras cannot bring us face to face with the Truth which alone gives Mukti and solves all our doubts, and which only a *Siddha Guru* can lead us to. Blessed, indeed, are those that have come across such *Siddha Gurus*! But their grace falls on those only who renouncing everything think of the Lord always. The King Parikshit had been informed of the curse of the Rishi's son, whose father he had in a moment of false provocation and forgetfulness insulted, that he would die of the bite of the Takshaka (serpent) on the seventh day. So, knowing for certain that the words of a pure-hearted Brahmacharin who had never uttered an untruth, were to come true, he was all the time thinking on Death, while listening to and medi-

tating on the supreme glories of the Lord. While you, though sincere, have your heart still weighed down with all the cares and worries of your position, and its attendant greed, egoism and selfishness. How can you then expect to realise God? But do not despair, O noble sovereign! Your sacred study, penance, Yoga and meditations shall have their desired effect in right time. But if you aspire to reach the Supreme Goal, renounce everything for the Lord and persevere on the Path, with firmness and devotion."

Pure hearts work wonders. Their burning words enter the heart with the power of a thunderbolt, and destroy the dark dens of desire and selfishness, filling it with spiritual illumination. So it happened with the King. He bowed reverentially to his eye-opener, begged pardon of his Guru for all the agonies he had endured for his sake, and abdicating his throne to his son, retired into the forest to pass the remainder of his life in solitude and Divine contemplation.

The Brâhman was overjoyed at his sudden and unexpected escape from death, and felt great pride in his daughter's triumph, and blessed her heartily. Though he had been offered handsome presents by the King to put him beyond the bounds of avarice, he declined them, and with the approval of his daughter he also took to hermit life with her.

The above story is an illustration of the insufficiency of book-learning without Realisation, to confer peace on the soul. The study of the scriptures does, at the best, purify the intellect, widen our sympathies, enable us to view life in its true perspective, give us a theoretical knowledge of Truth and create a longing for it, but the real knowledge—which is called the *Paravidyâ*—begins only with Realisation and that alone brings eternal peace to our mind.

The story also emphasises the truth that a purified and freed soul alone can make others free, and that none need aspire to the exalted position of the Guru who has not realised the Truth himself.

The story brings home to us another great lesson: Without *Viveka* (discrimination of the Real and the unreal) and *Vairâgyam* (renunciation), the practice of penances, meditation and Yoga is like rowing the boat with the anchor cast down into the water.



# The Paramahansa Upanishat

## परमहंसोपनिषत्

The word *Upanishat* is formed by Upa + Ni + Sad + Kvip, and means that which destroys ignorance by revealing the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit and cutting off the bonds of Avidyá which is the cause of Samsára, and hence knowledge of Brahman, and secondly, that which helps us to approach or attain Brahman. Many European scholars explain the word to mean, knowledge derived from sitting at the feet of the Preceptor. The Upanishads belong to Sruti or revealed knowledge and constitute the Jñánakánda, the knowledge portion, as opposed to the Karmakánda, the ceremonial portion, of the Veda. Though they are said to be the source of the six Darśanas or Aryan systems of philosophy, yet by them is meant, primarily, the Vedanta philosophy. According to the Muktikopanishat and the Mahāvākyamuktāvali, there are 108 Upanishads, but many more have been added to this number. The more important Upanishads are,—Isa, Kena, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Māndukya, Taittiriya, Aitareya, Chhândogya, and Brihadâraṇyaka. We shall take up, first, a few of the so-called minor ones,—which though less recognised contain, none the less, illuminative discourses on the Supreme Self and the knower of Brahman,—so that they may serve us as an introduction to the study of the main Upanishads.

The present one forms a part of the Sukla Yayur Veda, and elaborately portrays the characteristic marks and ideals of the knower of Truth when he reaches the highest stage of life.

Every Upanishad begins and ends with *Santipátha* or invocation of Peace, or an expiatory prayer to the Deities for the purpose of averting all evil and to be in peace with the universe, which alone is conducive of perfect calmness and concentration of the mind needed for the study of such a subtle subject as the Self. So let us repeat :—

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवा भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः । स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवाꣳ  
सस्तनूभिर्व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः । स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्ति नः पूषा  
विश्ववेदाः । स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्यो अरिष्टनेमिः स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु । ॐ  
शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः । हरिः ॐ ॥

Om! O Devas, may we hear with our ears what is auspicious; may we see with our eyes what is auspicious, O ye, worthy of worship! May we enjoy the term of life allotted by the Devas, praising them with our steady limbs and body! May the glorious Indra bless us! May the All-knowing Sun bless us! May Garuda, the Thunderbolt of evil, bless us! May Brihaspati grant us well-being! Om! Peace! Peace! Peace! Hari Om!

अथ योगिनां परमहंसानां कोऽयं मार्गस्तेषां का स्थितिरिति नारदो भगवन्तमुप-  
गत्वावाच । तं भगवानाह । योऽयं परमहंसमार्गो लोके दुर्लभतरो न तु बाहुल्यो

1. "What is the path of the Paramahansa Yogins (a) and what are their duties?"—was the question Narada asked on approaching the Lord Brahmâ (the Creator). To him the Lord replied: The path of the Paramahansas that you ask of, is accessible with the greatest difficulty (b)

(a) *Paramahansa Yogins*: The Yogins are those who have controlled all the outgoing faculties of the mind and attained concentration by the practice of the eightfold means of Yoga, viz., Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pránâyâma, Pratyâhâra, Dháranâ, Dhyâna and Samádhi. The Paramahansas are those who have attained the Super-conscious state in which all illusion of the World has vanished in the direct realisation of Truth, the Oneness of existence. They belong to the highest order of Sannyâsins.

The word is put here to qualify Yogins because of the fact of the latter's being sometimes attached to the applying of their powers or Siddhis to worldly ends, however great, which bring on their downfall.

(b) *Is accessible...difficulty*: Because this Paramahansa path called Turiyâshrama (Super-conscious Order) is reached through the force of highest merits acquired by the strenuous exertions of many previous births.

यद्येको भवति स एव नित्यपूतस्थः स एव वेदपुरुष इति विदुषो मन्यन्ते महा-  
पुरुषो यच्चित्तं तत्सर्वदा मय्येवावतिष्ठते तस्मादहं च तस्मिन्नेवावस्थीयते । असौ  
स्वपुत्रमित्रकलत्रबन्धादीञ्छिखायज्ञोपवीते स्वाध्यायं च सर्वकर्माणि संन्यास्यायं  
ब्रह्माण्डं च हित्वा कौपीनं दण्डमाच्छादनं च स्वशरीरोपभोगार्थाय च लोकस्यो-  
पकारार्थाय च परिग्रहेत्तच्च न मुख्योऽस्ति कोऽयं मुख्य इति चेदयं मुख्यः ॥१॥

by people, they have not many exponents, and it is enough if there be one such (c). Verily, such a one rests in the ever-pure Brahman (d); he is verily the Brahman inculcated in the Vedas,—this is what the knowers of Truth hold; he is the great one (e), inasmuch as he rests his whole mind always in Me (f), and I, too, for that reason, reside in him (g). Having renounced his sons, friends, wife and relations etc. (h), and having done away with the *Sikhā*, the holy thread (i), the study of the Vedas (j), and all works (k), as well as this universe (l), he should use (m) the *Kaupina*, the staff and just enough clothes etc. (n) for the bare maintenance of his body, and for the good of all (o). And that is not final (p). If you ask what this final is, it is as follows:—

न दण्डं न शिखां न यज्ञोपवीतं नाऽऽच्छादनं चरति परमहंसः । न शीतं न  
चोष्णं न सुखं न दुःखं न मानावमाने च षड्भ्रमिवर्जं—

2. The Paramahansa carries neither the staff, nor the hair-tuft, nor the holy thread nor any covering. He feels neither cold, nor heat, neither happiness nor misery, neither honour, nor contempt (a). It is meet that he should be beyond the reach of the six billows of this world-ocean (b).

(c) *One such*—at any time in any country.

(d) *Rests...Brahman*: Is firmly established in the consciousness of "I am the Brahman."

(e) *The great one*: Not conditioned by anything, though living in the body.

(f) *In Me*, i. e., in the Paramâtman.

(g) *I, too...him*—in My own essence, there being no distinction between him and Me.

(h) *Having renounced...relations &c.*,—with a view to attaining the perfect and undisturbed peace of mind, without having anything to identify his self with. &c. implies servants, cattle, home and fields, indeed all worldly possessions.

(i) *Sikhā* (the tuft of hair on the crown of the head) and *the holy thread*—which mark one as belonging to the Three Varnas, and entitled to the performance of Vedic rites.

(j) *The study of the Vedas*—which is useful only so long as Truth is not realised. Mark, it is the Veda only of all the Scriptures of the world, which calls upon its believers to go beyond it.

(k) *All works*: Such as secular, Vaidic, obligatory, ceremonial, forbidden, and those performed with a motive to gain prosperity either here or hereafter.

(l) *This universe*—which by its various threads of desire binds the soul and charms it by its endless deceitful sports of Maya.

(m) *Use*: Accept, but not with the idea of "These are mine."

(n) *The Kaupina...clothes &c.*: The Kaupina, for decency's sake; the Danda or staff, to ward off wild cows, snakes, and the like; clothes, just to protect himself from heat and cold; &c. implies shoes to protect the feet from the thorns or to avoid directly touching unclean spots.

(o) *And for...all*: Though he does not care for those things for himself yet he may use them for the good of those who are devoted to their Svadharma, who by seeing the outward signs of the Danda &c. will recognise him as a Sannyâsin, and approaching him with reverence, will earn religious merit, by the gift of Vikshâ (food) (i. e., by the cultivation of the faculty of charity), and dispel their Ajnânam (nescience) by hearing his words of wisdom.

(p) *That...final*: Using those things are not, however, for the Paramahansa of the highest stage.

(a) *He feels...nor contempt*: Why he stands in no need of carrying the Danda &c. is told in this sentence. He being a Yogi rests absorbed in the Paramatman and has no consciousness of heat and cold, and because of his seeing no other self but his own in all, he does not feel elated by honour paid to him by others, nor grieved by being disrespectfully treated.

(b) *Six billows of the world-ocean*: Hunger, thirst, grief, delusion, decay (by bodily disease) and death. Of these the first two belong to the Prâna, the next two to the mind, and the last two to the body.

(To be continued).



## GLEANINGS

In a strange country I sat by the roadside heavy with grief.

Then along the way three maidens danced, their arms intertwined, their eyes aflame, all beautiful as the sunlight.

'Who are you?' I cried, 'O Radiant ones?'

They answered softly, 'We are called Life and Love and Death.'

'And which is Life, which Love, and which Death?' I asked.

'Ah,' they answered, 'that we do not know, and they twined their arms the more lovingly.'

'But whither go you?' I cried again.

'That we do not know,' they answered, and joy flamed in their eyes. I arose and went with them.

—*Bolton Hall.*

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"Readiness," says the Rev. S. Baring Gould, writing in the "Guardian," "demands great agility of mind, quickness of apprehension, and promptness of resolve; and it is this quality that is not largely developed in Englishmen.

"Their maxim is—Slow and sure, and too often they stand on the river brink waiting for the water to run away before venturing to cross over. In conversation it is readiness that gives sparkle. Our wit is so deep down that it takes time to rise to the surface, and when it is up the chance of giving it vent is gone.

"Readiness enables us to extricate ourselves from difficult positions. The fifth Earl of Berkeley often declared that he would never yield to a single highwayman, though he did not profess that he could hold his own against numbers. One night, when crossing Hounslow Heath, his travelling carriage was stopped by a horseman, who put his head in at the window, and said, 'I believe you are Lord Berkeley?' 'I am.' 'And I have heard that you have boasted that you would never surrender to a single highwayman?' 'I have.' 'Well—presenting a pistol—'I am a single highwayman, and I say: Your money or your life.' 'You cowardly hound,' said Lord Berkeley; 'do you think I can't see your confederate skulking behind you?' The highwayman, who actually was alone, looked hurriedly round and Lord Berkeley shot him through the head. That was readiness."

## LIGHT THE LAMP.

\* \* The religion of Persia says, "Whatever road I take joins the highway that leads to Thee, broad is the carpet God has spread, and beautiful the colours He has put into it."

New Year Days are founded on different causes. Some of them have political, some social, some commercial and some religious basis... A religious New Year Day is full of Transcendental Harmony in it. \* \* \*

The New Year is always conveyed by the idea of a new leaf. Let us turn a new leaf in our great book of life; the faults and frailties of others are to be forgotten while the bright actions of the past to be brought before the mental eye. The past had two sides, the bright as well as the dark. They are the two sides of one and the same thing; they are the obverse and the reverse of the same coin.

How do we feel when the dark side of the past is brought to view? It causes us a tear. Similarly, what joy do we feel at the memory of a bright incident making the heart beat joyfully and sparkle! The New Year Day is not a day to shed tears for past memories, which cannot be remedied. It is a day when joy, harmony and happiness are to be expressed and this can be done only through the recalling of the bright incidents of the past. Let each one read the following lines and find out which of them fits him:

"Somebody did a golden deed;  
Somebody proved a friend in need;  
Somebody sang a beautiful song;  
Somebody smiled the whole day long;  
Somebody thought 'Twas good to live;  
Somebody said, 'I am glad to give';  
Somebody fought a valiant fight;  
Somebody lived to shield the right;  
Was that somebody you?"

In itself, it is a bright idea to scour the field of memory to find out "Was that somebody you?" and brighter still to ponder over it, *ad libitum*. It makes you happy, as well as those around you. Cheerfulness and happiness are contagious. The contagion is passed from one to the other pervading all space. Not only it makes those near by cheerful and happy, but also those with whom you come in contact, your home, your environment and everything with which you are connected either personally or otherwise. It is the day—the Happy New Year, as it is called—of cheerfulness, happiness and peace, inside and out.

It is a day of service, to assist those really needy and deserving. Let each and all of us extend our

\* Extract of an article by Mr. D. K. Rêlê, translated from the *Sânj Vartman* by Mr. Khurshidji Manekji for *Theosophy in India*.

hand, head and heart, the three "H's," to the needy and deserving. There are plenty of them in our metropolis. Each one of us is the "Prince of Wales," to the Kingdom of Heaven. Let our watchword be "Ich Dien," from this day forward. "I and my Father are one."

The Sage Zoroaster left the Court of King Darius a young man in robust health. He went alone to a solitary place and dwelt for many years in a cave, meditating on God's transcendental glory. When he returned to the court of Darius he was an old man and was created the High Priest. The spark of Divinity, when he left the brilliant court, was glowing in him, but he was not satisfied with it. He wanted to rouse it into a flame. And that he achieved in solitude, meditating on the One of transcendental glory. From that time, in the long past, to this, the name of Zoroaster is glorified, by all those who have faith in his high teachings, as an inspired man, a Sage.

Somewhere an anecdote is related of Zoroaster, which gives his whole teaching in a nut-shell. It is as follows.

Zoroaster was once approached by a well-dressed person, who said, "Teach me Wisdom."

Asking the man to follow, Zoroaster led him into his hut. There he gave him a lighted lamp and said, "Ignite this other lamp which stands before you." The man tried several times to light it, but in vain.

After carefully examining the lamp, he turned to Zoroaster and said, "Why, the wick will not light, because there is no oil but water in the lamp."

Zoroaster replied, "Then pour out the water and put oil." The man did as he was bid, and tried again, but failed, for the wick was still soaked with water.

"Dry the wick," said Zoroaster.

The man did so and then found it easy to ignite the lamp.

"Now farewell," said Zoroaster, "I have satisfied your wish that I should teach you Wisdom."

At this statement the seeker expressed dissatisfaction, whereupon the wise man continued, "You are the lamp which refused to be ignited, but if you produce yourself in the right condition, then the Light of Wisdom will be lighted within you."

This is a grand teaching Zoroaster has left for those who would follow. He has asked us, those who have faith in his teachings, to fan the spark into a glow and then raise it into a flame. Let each and all of us, from this day—the Happy New Year—onward make a serious study of fanning the spark into a flame. Let us "empty the water from the lamp," all malicious, jealous and envious passions, and fill it with the oil of cheerfulness, love and peace, and dry the wick with faith. Meditate on the ONE, as Lord Zoroaster meditated without giving any thought to other things. \* \*

## THE VEDANTA WORK IN WASHINGTON

The Vedanta Centre of Washington has moved to other quarters at 7 Iowa Circle, nearer the heart of the city, in order to be more accessible to its growing number of students. The new home was formally opened on Saturday evening, October 22nd., by a reception given by Swami Paramananda to all friends of the work. The Swami, in entertaining his guests, tried so far as possible to conform to Hindu custom. An altar, ornamented with flowers and fruits, was arranged in the Lecture Room before the place where the pictures of Sri Ramakrishna, Christ and Swami Vivekananda always stand. When the guests had all assembled and taken their seats, there was a short time of silent meditation, after which the Swami delivered a brief address dwelling on the universal character of the Vedanta teachings and explaining the purpose of the Centre,—not to interfere with anyone's religious conviction, but to give to each one such broad spiritual training in the daily practice of religion as to enable him to advance more quickly along the path already chosen by him. The Swami then performed *Arati*, closing with the chanting in Sanskrit of the Litany to Sri Ramakrishna, and *Prasad* was distributed. Everyone was deeply impressed with the service as well as with the purely social portion of the evening which followed.

The Washington Centre, it will be remembered, was established last January by Swami Paramananda and lectures and classes were held here regularly until July 1st. The Swami again returned to Washington on September 14th. and reopened the work, delivering a course of six public lectures on Sunday, a series of Class Talks on the Bhagavad-Gita on Wednesday, and holding a Meditation Class every Friday evening, the last being especially prized. The subjects of his public lectures were: "What India can Teach," "Work is Worship," "Idols and Ideals," "Law of Karma," "Faith and Superstition," "Yoga and Psychic Power." An unusually large number of people attended the last lecture and listened with rapt attention to the Swami's earnest insistence that the true practice of Yoga consisted in living the highest spiritual life with humility and sincerity, not in striving for powers, which, though they might come, would hinder a man's progress if he set any value on them. In the previous lecture, he defined Superstition as belief in the potency of matter and dependence upon material conditions, while true Faith meant firm belief in the transcendency of Spirit as the one omnipotent Reality.



While expounding the Law of Karma, always an especially popular subject in this country, the Swami said: "Modern science has proved to us that nothing happens accidentally, that everything occurs in accordance with a law or system, which is called the law of cause and effect. But modern science deals with outer phenomena only and has to do with life in the visible world, while the Law of Karma explains life here and hereafter. It is this law which is the dominant factor in every individual life as well as in all the happenings in the world around us, because nothing occurs by chance.....It is also this law which explains the striking inequalities which we see everywhere. The Hindus do not account for these by blaming an invisible Providence, but they find the source of all inequalities among people in the law of cause and effect. What we sow we must reap--this is inevitable....All our thoughts, words and actions in this life produce an effect which is the cause of the conditions we receive in our future life. As the effect, furthermore, is merely the cause reproduced in visible form and therefore must be of similar nature, it follows that our future life, being the result of our present, must be the continuation of the present life. This gives great consolation, because it shows that we are not helpless, but that we can counteract all future and most of our past conditions by our present good deeds."

"Reward and punishment are also brought upon ourselves by our own actions. But the Hindus do not believe in any eternal heaven or hell, for finite action cannot produce a permanent or infinite result. No soul can be eternally doomed, however great the blunder he may have committed. A soul goes through all these varying experiences of suffering and happiness in order to attain its original state of perfection. This is the Law of Karma, which completes the theory of evolution by applying it to all planes of manifested life and leading man to a realisation of his inherent freedom and divinity. 'The vision of the Supreme enables one to cut asunder all the knots of the heart, removes all doubts and frees one from all the bonds of Karma.'"

Swami Paramananda has now returned to Boston, and on October 30th. began his winter course of lectures and classes at the Centre there, established by him two years ago and also under his charge. He will come to Washington again for two months in the early spring, and during his absence the work will be continued by Sister Devamata. The Centre in Boston remained open throughout the summer and two meetings a week were held there. In August the Swami was invited to deliver a course of lectures before the Conference of Religions at Greenacre, Maine. He also paid a visit to the Bermudas and while there was asked to deliver a lecture on the religious teachings of India. Some

200 people were present and it was an occasion of special interest, since it was the first time that the Philosophy of Vedanta was ever expounded in those far-away Atlantic Islands.

Washington, D. C., U. S. A.

November 4, 1910

S. D.

## GLIMPSES

Endurance is the crowning quality  
And Patience all the passion of great hearts.  
—*J. R. Lowell*

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Let high heavens roar forth in thunders, let the wide ocean swell forth in storm, let the forest blaze forth in flames, let the whirlwinds tempestuous blow, ah! even then I will seek the Lord by one-pointed meditation.—*Tirumantram*.

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If you give a grain of sesamum seed to a saint, you get prosperity here and bliss hereafter; if you give the earth's weight of gold to a fool, you lose all here and get nothing in the hereafter.—*Ibid*.

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I play not marches for accepted victors only.  
I play marches for conquered and slain persons.  
Have you heard that it was good to gain the day?  
I also say it is good to fail, battles are lost in the same spirit in which they are won.

—*Walt Whitman*.

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The very universe in which we live is the result of the thought energies of God, the Infinite Spirit that is back of all. And if it is true, as we have found, that we in our true selves are in essence the same, and in this sense are one with the life of this Infinite Spirit, do we not then see that in the degree that we come into a vital realisation of this stupendous fact, we, through the operation of our interior, spiritual, thought forces, have in like sense creative power?—*Ralph Waldo Trine*.

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Labour is discovered to be the grand conqueror, enriching and building up nations more surely than the proudest battles.—*Wm. Ellery Channing*.

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The improvement of the understanding is for two ends: first, for our own increase of knowledge; secondly, to enable us to deliver and make out that knowledge to others.—*Locke*.

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He who has brought his entire nature into conformity and harmony with the law of righteousness, who has made his thoughts pure, and his deeds blameless, he it is who has entered into liberty. He has transcended darkness and mortality, and has passed into light and immortality.—*James Allen*.

## NEWS AND MISCELLANIES

(CULLED AND CONDENSED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES)

REUTER telegraphs from Boston announcing the death of Mrs. Eddy, the founder of Christian Science.

His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala has contributed one lakh of rupees, and made other valuable gifts to the King Edward Sanatorium which has been established by Mr. Malabari at Dharampore. His Highness will also equip the institution with a dispensary for indoor and outdoor patients.

SRIJIT Jogendranath Chatterjee has submitted an exhibit to the Allahabad Exhibition, in the form of a post-card written by him containing 320½ lines (including the name of the writer). There are 9,380 words comprising 40,991 letters. The card can be deciphered with the aid of lens.

THE Asiatic Society of Bengal is about to purchase a copy of the *Tengyur* or the Buddhist legendary encyclopædia in 225 volumes at a cost of Rs. 5,000. from a Tibetan merchant. The book is about two feet by four inches size, the impression on each page having been taken from wooden blocks in Indian ink.

THE worship of Voodoo, the snake god, is still persisted in, in the Negro Republic of Haiti, where a woman named Esters Liberis aged 24. High Priestess of the cult, is in prison awaiting trial on a charge of killing and eating five children who were sacrificed to Voodoo. In her home was found a barrel containing pickled human flesh, the remains of a child aged about twelve. In name these people are Christians, but in secret they remain devotees of their snake god.

Mr. Thomas Edison has given an exhibition of a device upon which he has been working for years, which makes moving pictures appear to talk. Thus an orator, singer, or actor is reproduced simultaneously to the eye and to the ear. The result is attained through the use of two separate machines, a phonograph and a kinoscope, exactly synchronised in operation by electricity. Mr. Edison declares that the machine is now practically perfected and will soon be ready for general use.

IN Korea, needle and thread are unknown to tailoring. Their place is taken by glue—a peculiarly fine, strong glue made from fish. The Korean tailor does not bring two edges of cloth together and then slowly and painfully unite them with fine stitches of the needle. He overlaps the edges slightly, brushes on a little glue, presses the seam together and sets the garment away to dry. "I wore glued clothes in Korea," says a correspondent, "and found that they lasted almost as well as if sewed."

A WOMAN of great beauty, the Countess Kluzinska, has just been arrested after passing eighteen years as a man in the monastery of Solowestsk, known throughout Russia for the extreme piety and disciplinary austerity of its Brotherhood, where she was known as Brother Arsene. The countess who is a highly educated lady of about forty years of age, and who was regarded as one of the most exemplary inmates of the monastery, had been the heroine of a much-discussed love affair. A duel between her lover and her husband ended fatally for the latter, and the lover, conscience-stricken retired to the monastery of Solowestsk. The countess, unable to bear the separation disguised herself, and, to be near her lover, gained access to the convent, and lived there unsuspected during all the eighteen years.

A very interesting region for speculation has been opened up by a suggestive article which Mr. Kanwar Sain has contributed to the *Hindustan Review*, on the "Influence of European Science on Indian Thought." It is, of course, beyond dispute that in the matter of metaphysics the Oriental mind is supreme. All the philosophers have admitted the debt that the West owes to the East in this direction. The Vedanta and other Eastern philosophies exhibit a keen vision and large grasp. Their vivid imagination has inspired even the deepest and most unromantic of German thinkers to admiration. All religious philosophy comes from the East. But philosophy, whether religious or purely mental and moral, does not move with the same strides as science. Philosophy is, of course, subject to periods of flux and change, but it seems to be true that all the great thoughts were uttered centuries ago and no one seems to be



able to improve on them. In the domain of natural science, however, there seems to be no end to progress. The Western world has gone on from one tremendous achievement to another, and, as in the past Eastern thought modified the whole outlook of the Western world, profoundly influencing it in directions of humanity and religion, there is certainly reason for speculation as to whether or not the eager absorption of Western knowledge now proceeding among the myriads of the East will influence in any remarkable degree the future of the world.— *The Englishman*.

In putting forward a strong plea in favour of Lohaghat (3 miles from Mayavati), as the best suited locality for establishing the contemplated King Edward Memorial Sanatorium of U. P. for consumptives, Major D. C. Hennessy of Lohaghat writes to the *Pioneer*, among other things, as follows:—

I cannot do better, under existing circumstances, than quote a high medical authority, who visited Lohaghat some years ago, and described it in the following terms.—He declared that nothing he had seen in the Himalayas ever impressed him so much as did the salubrity and romantic picturesqueness of Lohaghat. I may add that this small hill-station in the Almora district is sheltered snugly from the chill blasts of the Tibetan Boreas, by a phalanx of snowy peaks that like weird white-robed Titans keep watch and ward over the little settlement. It is a delightful expanse of verdant downs fringed here and there by low forest-clad hills and copses of oak, chestnut, fir and deodars, falling away in easy gradients to a silvery network of perennial streamlets. Its open yet protected situation, the purity of air and water, and the nature of its soil and varied vegetation all combine to render this locality an ideal site for the proposed sanatorium, and I verily believe, that for the cure of pulmonary diseases, no better resort could be recommended..... *Au contraire* (to Almora) Lohaghat is blessed with a network of perennial streams and fresh-water springs which have seldom, if ever, been known to fail....As regards space at Lohaghat, there is sufficient to accommodate all the consumptives in the United Provinces and Oudh, with ease.

...Lately, the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, officially visited Lohaghat, and apparently was favourably impressed, and I may also mention that

the Commissioner of Kumaon, a gentleman of undeniably far-sighted intellect, also passed through Lohaghat last winter, and he also, it appears, formed a high opinion of the place.

A MEMBER of the Calcutta Vivekananda Society escorted Madame Calve accompanied by three gentlemen and a lady to the Belur Math on the afternoon of 2nd. December. After visiting the Sama Bhi (Memorial Temple under construction) of Swami Vivekananda the party came to the lawn in front of the Math buildings, from whence they were much pleased to see the splendid view of the river and the distant glimpse of the Dakshineswar Temple. After visiting the different parts of the Math they were taken next into the Chapel or the Worshipping-room of the Math. The Madame knelt before the altar and remained absorbed for a while in silent devotion. Then she requested one of the Swamis to chant some texts from the Upanishads and the sacred words "Hari Om" with it, as she heard them chanted by the Swami Vivekananda. The chant finished, she was herself asked by the monks in turn to sing a hymn, to which she readily acquiesced, and in her splendid voice sang for a few minutes with the deep ardour of her soul.

The party were then entertained with light refreshments and Indian music, vocal and instrumental. The Madame especially appreciated the playing of Esraj and Clarinet by Mr. Dutt (Haloo Babu, a cousin of Swamiji) whom she declared to be a "great artist." The Madame expressed her admiration for Indian Music and said that she was going to learn a few pieces of them for singing them herself before a London audience.

The Prima Donna was very simply attired and her manners were most cordial. She was full of life and enthusiasm. Indeed the Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission who had the pleasure of making her acquaintance at Boston, U. S. A., in the summer of 1897, remarked, that time had not made much change in her appearance within this long period of about fourteen years.

Madame Calve expressed a deep veneration for Swami Vivekananda and cordially thanked the Swamis of the Math for the warm welcome accorded to her. At sun-down the party motored back to Calcutta.