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In Woods of God-Realization

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The complete works of Swami RAMA TIRTHA

VOLUME VI

*Sight seeing from the hill of
Vedanta*

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Seventh Edition

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Mrs. M. S. Ramesh Narayana, Ad. Delhi, on 18/12/1913, 2/4/14

Appreciation.

by

SWAMI SHRADDHANAND.

SWAMI RAMA

“He rent as under the shackles of wordly temptations and became free as air.” His character was ideally high and was an example for the so-called Sanyasis of the present day to follow. He was model of plain-living and high thinking. He was a staunch advocate of the Gurukula system of education. “Rama paid visits to Japan and America also. His high spiritual character impressed the American people so much that even President Roosevelt came to pay his respects to the Indian Sanyasi. He induced the Managers of several American Universities to give special concessions to Indian students. In Japan he laid the foundation of an Indo-Japanese Society which is still in existence. There could be no two opinions about his being a patriot of a very high order. He sacrificed his all at the altar of his country.”

PREFACE.

The Readers of 'In Woods of God-Realization' are aware of the fact that the works of Swami Rama Tirtha published originally in four volumes were later on brought out in eight volumes in 1930.

Lately a suggestion was placed before the management that these volumes should be of uniform size as far as possible and some of the lectures should be put under the appropriate titles which each volume suggested. Some matter which was not already published in these volumes had also to be brought out.

The Rama Tirtha Pratishtan, therefore, evolved a scheme early in 1947 to publish the complete works of Swami Rama Tirtha 'In woods of God-Realization', in 12 volumes as follows:—

- (1) The Pole Star Within.
- (2) The Fountain of Power.
- (3) Aids to Realization.
- (4) Cosmic consciousness and How to Realize it.
- (5) The Spirit of Religion.
- (6) Sight seeing from the hill of Vedanta
- (7) India—The motherland.
- (8) Forest talks.

- (9) Mathematics and Vedanta.
- (10) Snapshots and Impressions.
- (11) Precious gems.
- (12) Musings of the Poet-Monk.

Now this volume is published under this new scheme and other volumes are in the course of publication likewise. How the lectures have been redistributed would be manifest from a perusal of the full scheme.

I hope the blessed readers will appreciate our efforts in this direction.

The prices of paper and other printing materials have been almost fourfold yet the price of the book remains the same. It is hoped the readers will admire this view point of the publishers and push on its sale.

May Swami Rama guide us, one and all, in following the TRUE PATH!

God-bye. Hari Om.

RAMESHWAR SAHAI SINHA,

M. L. A.,

Honorary Secretary.

IDEALISM AND REALISM RECONCILED

*A Lecture delivered at Golden Gate Hall,
January 13, 1903.*

The Only Real and Ideal One in the form of ladies and gentlemen:—

The subject of to-night's discourse is very abstruse, very difficult. Only those will be able to follow it thoroughly who are already somewhat acquainted with Philosophy. To Rama it makes no difference whether all of you go away fatigued and disgusted, or the whole world comes to listen. Truth stands above all desire for popularity. Scientific laws were governing the world, and are governing the world, and will continue governing the whole Universe, whether people know them or not, whether they

become popular or not. The Law of Gravitation was the same law of gravitation even before it was discovered by Sir Isaac Newton. There are laws which people may not have discovered and yet they are governing the world. A magnificent diamond may be lying in a mine and nobody may go and take it up; the diamond shines in its own glory all the same. Let people pick it up and place it on their foreheads, or let people ignore it entirely, to the diamond it makes no difference.

The subject is difficult, but if you follow it very closely, attentively, you will understand it. You need not say what is the use of speaking upon such abstruse, speculative, philosophical subjects; we require them not; we want hard cash; we want something practical. Rama has been speaking on practical subjects, but theoretical and speculative subjects are also necessary. No fact can be explained without a sound theory to back it; and you know, all your practice is simply your energy transformed into activity, nothing else. When you have to write

anything, before your pen begins to move, the whole subject must come into your mind in theory; theory always precedes activity. When you have to go to any place, your walking is a matter of practice, but no step could be taken without there being a thought to govern your muscles and movements. No student goes to a College without having an idea of the University beforehand in his mind, without being possessed of the knowledge of what kind of training he is to receive there. A thief when he hears constantly about the wealth and riches of a particular neighbour, that continuous information which he receives, that continuous thought that he has, transforms itself into activity, and the thief plucks courage to break into the house of the rich neighbour. No action can be performed without there being some kind of mental activity, some kind of knowledge concerning the act to be performed beforehand.

So, Rama is trying to drum into your ears and instil into the hearts of all the audience the Divinity of the Real Self. Let it

sink deep into your hearts day by day: let it penetrate your minds hour after hour, and you will see, according to the laws of science, this mental energy, this which appears to be vain speculation, this you will see transforming itself into the most noble activity on your part, and this knowledge you will see transforming itself into happiness and bliss for you.

The subject is "Idealism and Realism reconciled in the light of Vedanta." In other words, the subject is—The Vedantic Theory of Perception,—a most important subject for philosophers.

You ought to be told a little about what Idealism and Realism are. We have no time to enter into details upon these topics. In brief, Realism means a belief or theory which looks upon this world, as it seems to us to be a mere phenomenon: and according to Idealism, the world is not as it appears to us: the world is but it is not what it appears to us. But according to Realism, the things are, just as they seem to us, real in themselves. Idealism has several

branches. We have Subjective Idealism, the Idealism of Berkeley and Fichte; we have Objective Idealism, the Idealism of Plato and Kant; we have Absolute Idealism, the Idealism of Hegel and Shelley, and many others of the same sort. Realism has many philosophers like Bain and Mill to support it. We shall not describe these several branches of Idealism or Realism. We shall not criticise in to-night's discourse the Subjective Idealism of Berkeley or the Objective Idealism of Plato and Kant, or the Absolute Idealism of Hegel or Shelley. We shall just allude to these to such an extent that the Vedantic theory about this matter may be easily comprehended by each and all.

Before beginning with the subject two words ought to be explained, the words 'subject' and 'object.' You know these words — 'subject' and 'object,' — are taken in different senses. In Grammar they are used in one sense, in ordinary language they are used in a different sense, and in philosophical language they have a meaning of

their own. The word 'subject' in the language of Philosophy means the knowing one, and the 'object' means the thing known. When you see this pencil, the pencil is the object, and you that perceive the pencil are the subject; the perceiving one is called the subject; and the thing perceived the object. Thus in ordinary language, the word 'subject' means the understanding or the intellect; but, according to Vedanta, this subject, this understanding, intellect or reason, this also should not be called subject; this also is an object. You know, anything that can be perceived becomes an object, and you can perceive the intellect, you can think and reason about the intellect and lay down the laws of the intellect; in so far as you can reason about the intellect and conceive the intellect, in so far is the intellect an 'object' and not a 'subject.' The real subject cannot be conceived; the real subject cannot be perceived. How can the knower be known? You know, the real subject should either be the knower or the known; the very moment

it becomes the known, it becomes an object, it no longer remains the subject. But in ordinary language the word subject implies the understanding, intellect or reason. The real subject or the real knower is, according to Vedanta, the true Atman, the only Infinity, and is one and the same in all the bodies. It would be very kind of you to remember a Sanskrit word also in connection with this. The word 'subject' is called in Sanskrit *Drishta*, the word 'object' is called in Sanskrit *Drishya*, and the real subject in Sanskrit is the *Brahma* or *Atman*. The word *Atman* might be translated in English either to be the Will of Schopenhauer or to be the hard Intellect or Absolute Intellect of Hegel. You know Hegel and Schopenhauer are antagonistic to each other, they are always at daggers drawn with each other, but Vedanta reconciles them. Vedanta tells them that the Absolute Will of Schopenhauer is in reality the same which Hegel calls the Absolute Intellect, and so, for this Absolute Self we have the word *Brahma* which means Absolute Will

Absolute Intellect, Absolute Existence, and Absolute Bliss.

So, the real subject is the true Atman, but the practical subject is the Atman as shining in the intellect or in the understanding; so, the real Atman with the intellect as an agent is called the subject.

What are the arguments the Realists advance on their side, and what are the chief arguments advanced by the Idealists? That is a long subject, but we shall go over it very briefly. We have no time to criticise your Berkeley. Berkeley is one of the principal Idealists. How briskly he starts in his philosophy, and how he soars high so long as he is exactly hand in hand with the Vedanta philosophy, and how he loses his way and falls into a meandering zigzag, path the very moment he departs from the Vedanta philosophy. That is a very interesting subject, a subject which ought to be taken up, if Rama gets any opportunity to lecture before the University students or University professors. What a contrast the latter part of his philosophy

forms with its original part and how he is obliged to believe in so many spirits, and how he is obliged to bring in a personal God to control this universe, and how, according to his philosophy, no object may be present in this world without a spirit present beside it, and what absurdities he brings in. Well, that is a subject which we shall not take up to-night. Amongst the many arguments, advanced by the Idealists, the following two or three are important. The first is: you cannot see or perceive anything without your own activity. It is the subject's activity alone which makes you perceive anything or sense any object in this world. You are writing something, your mind is with the pen, and there passes before you a snake; you perceive not the snake, for you the snake is not a snake, the snake is not there. Now the Idealists say if your activity, if the activity of your mind or the subject's activity is wanting, there is no object there. When you are asleep, the subject is not active, and all the sounds that may be made around are not heard.

Sometimes people, when they are asleep, do not close their eyes, there are some people whose eyes do not close when they are asleep. Now before their eyes all the objects are present, all the objects are being reflected on their retina, but they see not the objects. The Idealists say, your mind is inactive, the subject is not asserting its activity and you do not see the objects. Can you see anything in this world without mental activity? No. Just try to see this table or that wall; try to hear Rama's words; try to perceive anything without the mind being active. Can you do that? Can you see anything without thinking, without your mind's thought? You cannot. Thus the Idealists say, all this world is nothing else but thought, all this world is simply a projection of your thought. How do you know that the world exists? Through your senses. But the senses by themselves cannot perceive. It is only when the mind is connected with the senses that the senses perceive; in other words, the senses do not perceive: the mind perceives

through the senses. Now the mind or understanding is the subject, remember. You cannot hear anything without mental activity: you cannot see anything, you cannot do anything, you cannot sense anything without mental activity. So the Idealists say, "O people of this world, who call this world real and look upon these objects as true by themselves, O forget not yourselves, be not mistaken. All these objects are created by you, or projected by your thought, you make these objects. This is what the Idealists say, and it appears that Idealists are something like Vedantins. But Rama tells you that all these Idealists, Berkley, Plato, Hegel, Kant, Fichte, Shelley, Schopenhauer, have the principles of Vedanta, but the Vedantic theory of perception far transcends all these. These people have fights with each other, they have quibbles and quarrels, but the Vedanta philosophy reconciles each and all of them. These people glorify and aggrandize, and make much of the self, but Vedanta does not defy and lionize the subjective self, which most of

these philosophers do. We have to take the truth for its own sake.

Another argument advanced by these Idealists is that this world, which people ordinarily take to be real, should not be regarded as such, because the world appears to be, as it is, through the senses only, and we depend upon the senses in calling the world true in reality, as it seems to us. Now the senses are not reliable evidences. The senses are not trustworthy witnesses. Take the case of the eye, for instance. The eyes of the ant see different from the eyes of man; to the eyes of the elephant things appear to be much bigger than what they appear to the eyes of man; to the eyes of the frog things are clear when seen in the water, and in air things are all hazy, dim, covered with a kind of mist. Now whose eyes are to be relied upon, the eyes of man or the eyes of ants? If things are to be decided by majority, ants do not stand in a small minority; they have the majority on their side. If your eyes be formed upon the

microscopic principle, if the lens in the eyes be fixed in a different way to the retina, to you the world will be entirely different. If the retina of the eyes be adjusted on the telescopic principle, all the world is entirely altered. You may have seen a toy called "Look and Laugh," or the ludicrous glass, which consists of two convex pieces of glass. If we look through it, all the objects in this world become ludicrous, ridiculous. A most beautiful face when seen through "Look and Laugh" becomes elongated, so that the chin touches the ground and the head touches the star Saturn. If you look at in a different way, then the length of the face remains the same but one ear moves up to East India and the other moves up to China. Well, if the eyes be adjusted upon that principle, the world entirely changed, entirely altered. So is the case with the ears and other organs of sense. If the nerves and muscles be differently adjusted, the whole world is different, the whole world is changed, and you will say that if

the nerves and muscles and sense organs are adjusted in this way, they must remain in this way. It is not so; the law of Evolution tells you that they are undergoing a change. Thus the Idealists say that the world is not what it seems; the world, as it appears to us, false; the world, as it seems to us, is unreal, is illusory, a delusion.

They have many other arguments on their side, but if we enter into details, many nights would be taken up by Idealism alone.

We shall now pass on to Realism. The Realists say, "You are wrong, O Idealists! you are altogether wrong. If your statement be true that everything we see is the creation of own imagination; if that be true, then, O Idealists, please create a horse there where the wall is. Let that wall appear to be a horse. O Idealists, if the whole world is simply the result of this small subject's understanding or mind's creation, then turn this handkerchief into a lion or make this pencil a big house." The Realists say, "O Idealists,

you cannot be 'right ; the world is real. The wall is a wall, and for that reason it always impresses upon your senses as a wall, it does not appear to you a horse tomorrow."

These objections of the Realists are met by the Idealists ; they have answers to these objections, but we shall not take up all the questions on both sides. The Idealists say that it is a question of time ; you can create anything you like by your imagination. When you begin to think of spirits, sprits appear to us ; when we begin to imagine anything, that imagination comes to us. They say, in dreams do we not create things ? Our imagination realises these things. They have answers and these answers have rejoinders from the Realists. We are not going to enter into detail upon these questions and answers.

Vedanta also looks upon the world as My idea, as My creation, but even when Vedanta looks upon the world as My idea or My creation, you cannot call Vedanta Idealism. That seems to be something very

strange from the lips of Rama. It will be repeated again. The peoples in Europe and America think that Vedānta is a kind of Idealism, and almost all the books written by Europeans that have passed through Rama's hand, all represent Vedānta as Idealism; but Rama tells you that these peoples have not understood it. Vedānta is not Idealism in the same sense as the Idealism of Berkeley or Plato. It is far higher, for superior.

The Idealists make the world depend upon the little subject, the little understanding, the little mind, but when Vedānta says that the world is My idea, that does not mean that the world is the idea of the little subject, the little understanding of the little mind. This is something variable, this is something in itself a creation, and Berkeley made a terrible blunder when he said that dreams are the creation of the subject. There the mistake made by him was that he looked upon the subject of the dream land to be identical with the subject of the wakeful state; and you know, as it was

shown last night, that the subject in the dreamland is different from the subject in the wakeful state ; the subject in the dreamland is a thing of the same sort as the objects in the dreamland are. When you wake up, the subject of the wakeful state is of the same sort as the objects of that state ; and so Berkeley took the subject of the wakeful state to be the same as the subject of dreamland. The world is not a creation of the subject of the wakeful state or the subject of the dreamland ; the world is a creation of My Self, the Real God, the Real Atman.

We come now to the subject, the Vedantic Theory of Preception.

Vedant says to the Idealists, "O Idealists! you are right in saying that all the names and forms of this world, all the attributes and qualities of objects could not come about without the action of the subject." It will be repeated again. The subject is very abstruse, and you ought to follow it closely. Vedanta says to the Idealists, "You are right in saying that all

the names and forms of this world could not come about without the action of the subject; all the qualities, attributes and properties of things depend upon the activity and action of the understanding or mind, or the subject. You are right in so far; but you are not right in saying that there is nothing outside this small subject of yours, that there is nothing outside this small mind of yours." Vedanta says to the Realists, "You are right in saying that this phenomenal world could not appear without the sole action of any outside reality." You know, the Realists say, that this phenomenal world is due to some action upon our senses from outside. The objects act upon the senses, and thus we perceive things. Vedanta says, "Yes, without some sort of action from outside we could not perceive things." So far is Realism right, but according to Vedanta, Realism is wrong when it says that all our perception is due solely and wholly to outside action and not to the subject's activity. Let us make this clearer. In this world, take up any subject, take up

any object, take up this pencil for example. To what is the colour of this pencil due. It is due only to the action of the subject together with a reaction from outside, you might say. If your eyes are colour-blind, you will not see this colour in the pencil. The colour of the pencil is a quality or attribute. Again, take the weight of the pencil ; it is changeable, and so is its colour. If our eyes are jaundiced, we might see the pencil to be of a different colour, and if we do not weigh it here, but at a great height, or in the moon, or in a deep mine, its weight will be different, and you know, the weight of every object when weighed in London is different from what it is when weighed in India. The weight is changeable, the colour is changeable.

You know, the same water when you touch it in winter appears to be warm, and when you touch it in the summer, it appears to be cold. Why ? Because the observer or the perceiver is at different temperatures when he touches the water, and the water retains about the same

temperature ; the apparent difference in its temperature is due to the difference in the temperature of our hands. So, according to the difference in the subject, there will be difference in the qualities of the object.

And of what is this pencil made? According to Berkeley and some others, it is nothing else but a bundle of attributes and qualities. Take away these qualities and there is nothing left ; but according to Kant there is 'the thing in itself' behind it, and according to Plato there is the thing in itself behind it, the idea, as he calls it. So, here there are qualities. All these qualities are due to the action of the subject or the action of the mind. But we say that before these qualities were deposited in the pencil by this reaction, some reality was there. This will be made clearer, and it will be repeated again if you ask Rama to do so. Vedanta says that all these qualities in the pencil are due to the action of the subject. It is true, but why was the action of the subject excited ? What excited the action of the subject ? This is the question. There must be something

outside, which acted upon the subject and excited a reaction or action of the subject, and when the reaction of the subject was excited, there were these qualities posited, deposed, put forth or projected there. We cannot say that, before this subject, acted, these qualities themselves acted upon the mind and excited an action or reaction of the mind; we cannot say that, because these qualities make their appearance after the action or reaction of mind; so there must be something outside, there must be some reality in the pencil which acted upon your eyes, which acted upon your ears when the sound was heard, which acted upon your taste when you touched it with the tongue, which acted upon your sense of touch when you touched it. There must be something outside which acts upon the eyes, the ears, and the nose. Eat this pencil and it will tell upon your health. How can you say that there is no reality outside? There is some reality outside too, and when this reality acts upon the senses of a man, they report it to his mind and the mind reacts;

then are the attributes or qualities of the object projected on the scene. It is just like that. Here is one hand; there is another; one hand alone could not make any sound. Here is the sound produced (clapping the hands together). Here was action on one side and reaction on the other, and the result was sound. Here is a violin string; you touch it, you strike it with your finger, and then the sound comes out. There was action from your finger and reaction from the string, or you may say action from the string and reaction from your finger, and then the sound came out. In the same way, one wave came from this side and another from that side, the two waves collided, and foam was produced. Action and reaction from both sides produced foam. Here is a match and here is a piece of sand-paper. Strike the match on the sand-paper and then the flame comes out. Action and reaction from both sides. Here is one positive pole of electricity and there is a negative pole. If they approach each other, we see the electric spark or hear the report.

Thus action and reaction from both sides bring about the phenomenon.

So, according to Vedanta, in your intellect the 'Thing-in-itself' is present, what we call the Atman. The Real Self is living in your intellect, there is the 'Thing-in-itself' or the Reality in every object in this world. In this pencil there is the Reality or you might say the 'Thing-in-itself' which cannot be known, something which is beyond all attributes or properties. There is present the 'Thing-in-itself,' the Reality, in your intellect as well. The Reality outside, the Divinity or the Absolute in the pencil, and the Absolute in the intellect are like the two hands, as it were. The moment they collide, the attributes of the pencil are posited, they make their appearance like foam, one wave from one side, another from the other side, and foam is produced, that is, these qualities are produced. You might say, the positive pole being in the intellect, the negative pole being in the pencil, the two poles approach each other there and we see the attributes, qualities, or the phenomena of this

universe. In the language of Vedanta, the very moment the *Drishya* and the *Drishta* unite, we see the objects. There is *Drishya* and *Drishta*; there is the true Self or Atman in the pencil and the true Self or Atman there in the intellect, and action and reaction between the two produces the phenomena.

Thus the Idealists are right in asserting that nothing can be seen without the action of the subject, but they are wrong in saying that this action of the subject by itself produces this phenomenon, because in so saying they violate one of the most inexorable laws of Science which runs thus: "There can be no action without an equal and opposite reaction." When the Idealists say that all this world is created by the action of the subject, they ignore the fact that this action could not take place without there being a reaction from somewhere. And so the Realists are right when they say that this world has a reality in itself, we should not say that this world simply hinges upon the subject. This world has a reality in itself. In so far they are right. But when they say that the

phenomena of this world are real by themselves and stand by themselves, they are wrong, because the phenomena of this world, the differences of this world, the qualities of the objects of this world, all these qualities and phenomena depend just as much upon the action of the subject as upon the reaction of the reality in the object.

Here comes in a great objection. You talk of action and reaction. How can there be action and reaction in Infinity? Well, we spoke of action and reaction only to be understood in order to use the same language as other people use. We talk of action and reaction when we refer to the Absolute Will or the Absolute Energy as conjoined to the intellect, or as conjoined to the object. The Absolute Entity as conjoined to this object acts or reacts against the Absolute Entity as conjoined to this adjunct, the head, brain or intellect. Take this illustration. There is space in this vessel and space in that vessel. In reality space is one and the same thing, but you might say the space as appearing in

that vessel and the space as appearing in this vessel; as a matter of fact, space cannot be divided or torn into pieces; space is indivisible. Space is not something which you could treat in the same way as you do this handkerchief. Space is one and the same, indivisible; in space there is no idea of division at all, and according to Kant, space is subjective and objective, and cannot be divided or cut. Similarly the True Self or Reality, the Absolute Infinity cannot be divided or cut, but when we are referring it to the objects of this world. We are justified in talking of it as conjoined to the intellect or to any object, and now the same reality is conjoined to this or that object, as action and reaction. Here, for instance, we bring this hand close to the vessel; the space in this hand approaches the space in the vessel, and here the two unite. Now the space in the hand becomes the same as the space in the vessel; even originally it was the same, but now to your eyes the space in the hand becomes the same as the space in the vessel.

Thus Vedanta says that the Absolute Reality underlying the subject, when it becomes identical with the Absolute Reality underlying the object, the subject and the object unite.

Action and reaction take place not in reality in the Atman, but they take place in the Atman as defined by the 'limited.' Look here. Here is one wave of water coming from one side, another from the other side. One wave is water just as much as the other, and even when the waves collide, both will remain water, they do not undergo a change, and yet the action and reaction take place between the waves. Here is water as defined by the waves coming in contact, collision with water as defined by another wave, and this collision brings about the phenomenon of foam. Similarly, Absolute Reality as defined by the intellect, when it comes into collision with the Absolute Reality as defined by the object, there we see the phenomena of attributes, properties and qualities of this world. Just as when this hand collides with the other,

it has the same power in it as the other hand has, and noise is produced.

The Absolute Reality is the same in the intellect as in the object, but when the intellect or the subject comes into contact with the object, there is the Atman, the same Reality behind them. This part is not made quite clear that all the objects in this world have the same Reality behind them. Here is a pen. This pen consists of some qualities or attributes and also the underlying Reality. You know, we have a good reason to assume the existence of this underlying Reality, because these qualities could not come about by themselves without there being an action upon the intellect to which the intellect reacted and the qualities were produced. Here is this pen. It consists of some qualities, which we will call Q, and of the underlying Reality which we will call X. The pen is equal to the qualities which make it a pen. There we have a table. The table has the same qualities which make it a table, QT plus X, the absolute Reality. Here you may ask why you assume this X to be the

same as the previous. It may be suggested that this pen has some other reality underlying its qualities than the reality which underlies the qualities of the table. Again it may be suggested that before the qualities of the pen were projected, some reality may have acted upon our senses, and the qualities which make this a table were projected by our subject, *i. e.*, some other reality, we might call it X, it may have acted upon our senses. You know, we have no right to look upon this X to be the same as the other X. Here is a piano; we will call it X', in order to distinguish it from the previous X's. This may be something different from what was underlying the table or the pen. Here we have man, "X".

Here, mark the mistake made by Plato. He looks upon these underlying realities as different, which apparently they are, and you have also taken them to be different. But there is a fallacy in this argument by the method of *reductio ad absurdum*. We can show that this assumption is wrong. The qualities and attributes of the pen, its

colour, weight, softness, and other qualities were the result of the reaction of your intellect or mind, so all the attributes here are the result of the reaction of your intellect. All these attributes or qualities follow the reaction and we have assumed that the Absolute Reality in this pencil precedes the projection of these attributes or qualities. Thus the Absolute Reality transcends all qualities, all properties, or all attributes. This X', also transcends all qualities or attributes. X'' also transcends all qualities and attributes, etc.

To what then are differences due? Reflect a little please. All differences in this world are due only to qualities. Could you distinguish between this piece of chalk and that pencil without referring to their qualities? How do you know that this piece of chalk is different from that pencil? Through qualities alone. This chalk is white, that is a quality; it is brittle, that also is a quality. All differences are due to qualities. If you make this X different from that X, there you bring about differen-

tiation, there you project differences, in other words, you make this Absolute Reality subject to qualities again. You see, being subject to differentiations, being distinguished from each other, they are all subject to qualities and here was the mistake made. You began by taking them to be beyond qualities, and you end by taking them to be with qualities. If you look upon them as different and distinguished from each other, you make a blunder. You began by taking them to be beyond qualities, to transcend attributes, and you end by contradicting yourself, bringing them within the meridian of qualities and attributes. That is the mistake.

You have no right to say that the underlying Reality in this pencil is different from the Reality that underlies this piece of chalk. You have no right to say that the Reality which underlies the mind, subject, or intellect, is different from the Reality which underlies a cow or bull; you have no right to say that the Atman which underlies this table is different from that.

No, you have no right. It is One, and the same Infinity, the same Absolute, unchangeable Reality.

It might be made more clear by an illustration. Here is a beautiful white wall. All of you are sitting here; one of you is tracing upon that wall beautiful diagrams, geometrical triangles, circles, ellipses, etc; another is tracing upon the same wall, suppose a picture concerning a great war; another one of you is tracing upon the same wall a picture of his wife; friends, and relatives; yet another is tracing something else. All of these pictures have the same Reality behind them. Similarly, all the things that you see in this world have the same Reality behind them. Here, suppose, you see a horse, you observe a cow, here a dog, there an elephant, and there a man. All of these pictures are traced upon one and the same Absolute X, the X of that illustration, the same white wall. Thus the same Atman, the one Infinite Rama underlies each and all, the same, the same, the same. In your dreams you see an ox, then you

see a dog, then a man, then a woman, but you know that in your dreams the ox, the dog, the man, and everything, all these are pictures upon one and the same Absolute Reality, the true Atman. When you wake up, you know the horse, the mountain, or the river, that you saw in your dream, are nowhere.

What about these qualities which make up the world? The phenomenal world consists of these qualities, and they depend upon the Absolute Reality. Here is a very subtle point which you will not be able to understand just now, but still you had better hear it; you will understand it thoroughly in some of the succeeding lectures. All these qualities depend upon the Absolute Reality; all of them hinge upon the Absolute Reality. According to these qualities, the Absolute Reality has a quality too, namely, the quality of supporting them, the quality of keeping them up. The Absolute Reality supports all these qualities. If so, the absolute Reality is not absolute, because the Absolute Reality has at least

one quality of supporting all these qualities. How then can we say that such a Reality is absolute? We say this from direct experience. Just as you say that this world is real on the authority of your personal experience; so, on the authority of the higher personal experience, on the authority of the supreme personal experience, we say that when the Absolute Reality is realized, all these qualities, all this time and space vanish. Thus from the stand-point of the Absolute Reality, these qualities never existed, but from the stand-point of the qualities, these depend upon the *Adhishthan*, the Absolute. Here is an antinomy to be solved; here is a great problem. It is called the problem of Maya. In fact the Absolute Reality is absolute, is beyond all qualities, but these qualities depend upon the Absolute Reality from their own stand-point. Here is the one chief problem, the solution of which solves all the difficulties in this world.

These are not mere subjects of speculation; these are not mere matters to be

talked about. European philosophers make these subjects simply matters of speculation, but it is not so with the Indian philosophers. With them any subject which is proved theoretically is half proved only if it is not verified through experience, if it is not realized and experimented upon. This is a subject which is so sweet when we hear it intellectually, oh! but it is the quintessence of sweetness and all joy when we once realize it. It is worth while to realize it. If you live this idea, namely, that you are that One Infinite X which underlies all the bodies in this Universe, that you are that Absolute Reality, then you are above the body, above the mind; this body is not the subject, it is a mere object brought into existence by one wave coming into collision with another from another side. This foam of a body you are not. You are the Absolute Reality, in which all this world, all the phenomena of the universe are mere waves or eddies. Realize that, and become free, *Absolutely free*. Is it not the wonder of wonders that you, the true Reality, the Real

Absolute, do not realize it? Oh, be that.
What good tidings; what a blessed Gospel.
You are that Absolute Reality, the real X
you are; realize it and become free.

Let that be your state,
The body dissolved is cast to the winds,
While Death, Infinity me enshrine;
All ears my ears, all eyes my eyes,
All hands my hands, all minds my minds.
I swallowed up death, all difference I drank up,
How sweet and strong and good I find.

REALISM AND IDEALISM

*A lecture delivered on Monday,
April 4, 1904.*

How do we perceive that there is a world? By the senses. Are they to be depended upon? Suppose, for instance we say the world is such and such, the way we see it. Now, how would the elephant see it? He too has eyes. How would the fish see it? Also it has eyes. and the ant? To the ant everything would be like a great cloud of dust, that is the way it sees it. To the elephant everything would be very large, that is the way he sees it; and to man it appears this way. How do we know that that is the way it is? To one whose eyes are affected by being crossed or otherwise, it would appear different. Take for instance the ludicrous glass which little children play with, and see how do things

appear. By looking through one of them it would seem as though face were very very long ; the chin extending down, down, and the top of the head very high up, leaving the ears in about the same position as they usually are. Of course this is such a ridiculous picture that one would surely have cause for laughter. Then again one could look through a glass of this kind and the length of the face remains as usual, but one ear would be flying off a great distance. Thus we see that the senses are not to be depended upon. Similar is the case with other senses as that with the sense of sight.

The child has eyes, ears, nose, etc., and yet it does not perceive things, it does not know of the walls and it is only after it is hypnotized by the mother constantly suggesting to it that this thing is a wall and that is a book, etc., etc., then the child realizes how things are.

There are five elements. As long as we have the five senses we will have the five elements. Evidently then, the elements corresponding to the senses are:—

Fire	....	Sight
Ether	....	Sound
Water	....	Taste
Earth	....	Smell
Air	....	Feeling

People, who believe thoughts are real, say that Idealism is a reality and they have much proof on their side. For instance, how could the wall be perceived without the perceiver ? They say, there is no reality in the wall, but that the thought created the wall, that if a person were hypnotized in any direction, he would see it as something else, or if he were hypnotized in other direction, he would see it as still something else. If I should say to a person whom I had hypnotized that this floor was a lake, he would immediately begin to fish in it. But here comes the Realist and says that the wall is quite real, independent of your thoughts. You see it, you feel it, you can hear it, and if your sense of smell were acute you could smell it, and if you should eat it, your stomach would tell you that it was a reality sure

enough. So you see, he too has plenty of arguments on his side. But I want to tell you that it takes both the *object* and the *thought* to make the thing. Granted that it is something different to the hypnotized person from a wall, still I must have some object there, on which to suggest him, even if I call it a horse or a lake or what not. It takes the two, *subject* and *object*.

Once, two men in India were quarrelling. They were called *dervishes*. One went by the name of Mr. Wood and the other by the name of Mr. Axe. Mr. Axe was enraged and said to Mr. wood, "I will slash you to pieces." Mr. Wood replied, "But my dear sir, you must have me behind you, otherwise you can do nothing." You see, the handle of the axe is made of wood. So it is that Idealism and Realism go hand in hand, they are *interdependent*.

I strike a match on a sand-paper and a flame is produced. Now the flame was not in the match, nor was it in the sand-paper, but the coming together of the two produced the flame. I strike my hands together and

a sound is produced. The sound is neither in the right hand nor in the left, but is the result of the two coming together. The SELF is the same in both hands. Here I want to tell you about the crow. It is said that the crow has two eye-sockets but only one eye ball, and that when he looks to the right, he turns the eye to the right socket, and when he looks to the left, he turns the eye to the left one. Now, it is the identical eye, but it is turned in different places. Two great waves come together and we have a white crest. The water is the same in the wave on the right and the wave on the left, and when they come together, we have what is called the white crest. A child is not born of one parent, but of the mother and father, call them God and Holy Ghost.

Now, let us call the subjective, the perceiver, and the objective, the perceived, and we see all through that it is these two which are interdependent and which, thus brought together, produce the phenomena which we witness. Neither of itself produces it, and thus it is clear that the idealist

and Realist must come together to account for the phenomena, for neither can possibly do it alone.

In India some houses have many mirrors, in fact the walls and ceilings are covered with mirrors. Once a dog entered such a house and on all sides of himself he saw hundreds of dogs. When he looked up, he saw them on the top of him and thus being very much frightened he began to jump, and immediately all the hundreds of dogs began to jump also, then he barked and scampered about and they too scampered and opened their mouths. He behaved in this way until he became so tired that he lay down and gave up the chase, gave up the body, and the owner of the house came in and removed the remains of the dog. Now a handsome young prince entered this room and admired himself very much in all the mirrors, first he admired his hair, then his mouth and other features, then his dress, and so on. He was very happy with all these pictures and knew that these many hundred people were him-

self. It is only when we know that there is only one Self and that all the shapes and forms we see under the various names are really our Self, then there is rest; otherwise it is like the case of the dog. We are afraid, this one is going to deceive us; that one is going to harm us; the other one is going to take something from us, and there is a continual struggle against the forms which we imagine to be different, but ONCE WE REALIZE THE TRUTH and sit quietly as did the prince, we know that nothing can deceive THE SELF, for it is immutable and free. While we jump about as the dog did, we merely live on the surface, but when WE REALIZE THE SELF, we dive below the surface into the realms of ABSOLUTE TRUTH.

Suppose, the subject in a dream were to climb mountains and meet a lion which tore him to pieces, or he were to fall into bogs which he could hardly escape from, or the Ganga were to overtake him. Now if the subject was true and real, he would realize that the things of the dream were

nothing and he would feel no pain. He would not weep and cry out with pain when being torn to pieces by the lion, nor would he fear the depths of the bog, but we see it is only a thought and not truth. Now, suppose the object of this dream, to be true. If that were the case, the water would flood the bed in which the subject was sleeping, the lion would actually destroy the subject, and so on. But we see this is not so. The object is not real either. The two combined make up the dream, but neither is a reality.

$$\text{Table} = Q_T + X$$

$$\text{Board} = Q_B + X$$

$$\text{Rose} = Q_R + X$$

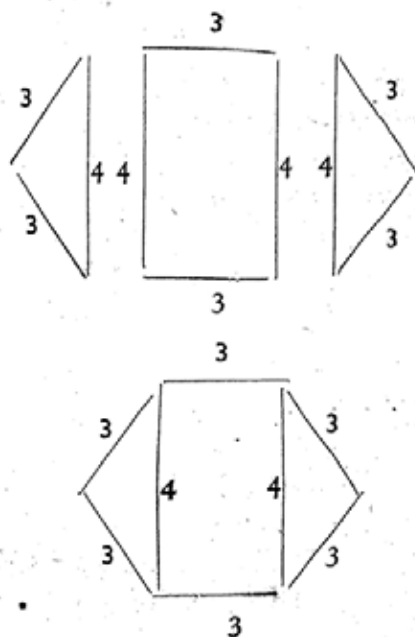
The qualities of the table plus the unknown equals the table.

The qualities of the board plus the unknown equals the board.

The qualities of the rose plus the unknown equals the rose.

The rose is red, has petals etc., and plus the unknown equals the rose. The unknown is the same in all, and it is the Self which is the Reality of them.

Here we have two isosceles triangles, and a rectangle.



Now, by putting these figures together we have a hexagon, which is like neither of the figures we put together. In the isosceles triangles and in the rectangle all the sides were not equal, but all the sides of the hexagon are equal. In the isosceles triangles

we could produce acute angles, in the hexagon we cannot.

Here we have put together figures which produce an entirely new figure in every respect.

Similarly we have $H_2 O$. Now it is easy to breathe oxygen and hydrogen, but put together, they produce water, $H_2 O$, which is entirely different. Hydrogen and oxygen are combustible, but this is not true of water.

This explains the phenomenon which is apparent and also shows that neither is the subject real nor the object real.

Vedanta says, all this is a mere play on words. What is the use of fighting over words? There is in reality **ONLY THE ONE SELF WHICH WE ARE, NOTHING BESIDES IT**, and since there is nothing besides the **SELF, YOU CANNOT CONSISTENTLY SAY THAT YOU ARE A PART**, but it must follow that **YOU ARE THE SELF ENTIRE. THERE IS NO DIVISION IN TRUTH. YOU ARE THE TRUTH NOW.**

OM! OM!

REPLIES TO SOME QUESTIONS ON VEDANTA

*At the Academy of Sciences,
on December 23, 1902.*

To-night there will be no regular lecture on any particular subject. Many people have been coming to Rama with all sorts of questions. Sometimes they are queer questions. Some of these questions will be taken up and a brief reply given to them. If any one of you, or any one in any part of America, has any question to ask on this subject, he may write his question on a bit of paper and send it to Rama. His question will be brought into this hall or some other place, where Rama may have occasion to speak, and will be dealt with in detail.

Before beginning these questions, it is

necessary to make a general announcement with respect to all sorts of questions that people may have in their minds. You know, the way with Indian philosophers is quite different from what it is with Europeans or Americans. When Indian philosophers take up a subject, they first give an exposition of it, and then all sorts of questions imaginable, all sorts of questions that could be asked, are taken up by them. Rama himself had to pass through all these stages; Rama had all the questions before him which any body could have before him; there is a sea of such questions and quibbles. Some of them are Rama's questions when he was five years old; some questions that you bring up are questions which puzzled him when he was fifteen years of age. Others are the questions which engaged Rama's attention when he was twenty-five years of age.

Another thing is to be stated in reference to these questions. Some of them pertain to the most elementary stages of the development of the philosophical spirits; others pertain to the secondary stage of

religious development ; others pertain to some other stage. Here comes to you a man who wants you to explain to him the 47th Proposition of the First book of Euclid. If you take up the Proposition at once and begin to explain it to him, and the man to whom you are explaining does not know the 46th, th 45th, or even the first Proposition, and is unacquainted with the axioms or postulates of Euclid, how is it possible for you to explain to his satisfaction the 47th Proposition ? If you take up the task and begin to explain, then in the very beginning, you will have to apply the 46th, you shall have to describe a square and the fellow does not know that, and then you will have to apply the 32nd Proposition, and the fellow does not know even that, and so you begin to explain to him the 46th and the 32nd. In order to prove them, you fall back upon the 16th, the 22nd, and so forth ; this will lead back to the first Proposition, and thus you are led back to the axioms and postulates. Every thing is in a state of confusion ; nothing is proved.

A science should not be attacked in a state of confusion ; it ought to be attacked systematically, with method, with order. This Vedanta Philosophy, this Religion, is a religion as well as a science. In Europe you have a conflict between Science and Religion, but this teaching which Rama brings to you reconciles them ; in fact it reconciles Philosophy, Science, and Religion.

This being the science of sciences, it ought to be approached systematically, with method and order. The few speeches that you have heard did not enter into this Philosophy at all. Not a single lecture has been delivered on the Vedanta Philosophy as such ; only the side issues have been considered ; preliminary or introductory speeches have been made. If Rama gets time to give you a clear explanation of this wonderful Science and Religion, all your doubts, all your questions will subside of themselves.

Some people are very impatient, and want to have an answer to their questions.

All right. We will take up a few of them. They are queer questions.

● Last night, or the night before last, a man came, with this question. "What do you teach, sir?" "Have you got a soul? Do you teach the existence of a soul? Do you believe in a soul?" Rama said, "No; I haven't got a soul." He was astonished.

"Oh! this is a diabolical religion; he has not got a soul." What does Rama's answer mean, "I have no soul"? In America and in Europe, what is religion? It is something to furnish and decorate the drawing rooms with. Here are my wife, my children, a grand superb mansion; here is my property and so many millions of dollars in my Bank; all this I have, but I want something more. Being actuated by this spirit of accumulation, being given by this idea of grasping, accumulating and gathering, they want to accumulate, gather and grasp one thing more; as a room could not be well furnished without the portraits of relatives, so I cannot be satisfied to be a man who has a fortune,

without having a little of religion. Let me have religion also along with the other things, but the other things must come first and this last of all.

You will excuse Rama if from his lips such words escape, as will not be relished by some. Rama respects Truth more than persons, and in respecting Truth he pays you real respect, because according to him ye are the Truth, and not this false self or body. The Truth compels Rama to make such statements. In the ordinary prayers, offered in this country, what use is made of God? How do people approach God? When the child falls sick, when the property is going to be damaged, when the body is going to suffer, then they come to God, roll their eyes, lift their hands:—"O God, That art in heaven, O God, That art on the skies," not even pitying God lest He should catch cold if he be in the clouds. "O God, That art there, have mercy on me and let my property be saved, let my body be restored, let my child be brought to health". Oh, is that religion? Is that religion? Here is

God believed in simply with the object that whenever there is anything wrong in the house, when the house becomes a little dirty, when the house is out of repairs, then this poor fellow comes down and sweeps your house. Is not that the use made of God? Is not religion kept only for low objects here? Is that religion? Here the primary thing is the body, the little self, the wife and the children; God is simply meant to be brought down to rub and scrub the rooms. Is this not really so?

Not in the whole of India, but with the really religious men at least, I will say in the light of these teachings, this Vedanta, it is different. Here in India the teaching of Christ which is faintly heard by the people, "Seek ye the Kingdom of Heaven and everything else will be added unto you," that teaching is most forcibly, with unmistakable emphasis, inculcated. It means the body, the mind, the connections, the property, the world, all these are renounced at the feet of the Beloved One. The wide world becomes the home, and to do good the

religion. Here the one thing needful, the one thing necessary is made all in all, and all other things are looked upon as accessories or the things of a foreign land. There in God is home realized. These outside homes are simply like inns or hotels. These people also have to attend to the needs of their wives and children, oh, but they take them at their worth. See the answer to the question, "Have you got a soul?" It is an irrelevant question. I have got a body. Then he says, "Have you got a soul?" Rama says, "I am the soul. I am that." What nonsensical stuff it is to say, 'Have you got a soul,' as if I were the body and the soul was my property. I AM the soul; I have a body, and I have the whole world.

Another man put this question to Rama, "Do you believe in God?" Rama says, "I know God." We believe in a thing we do not know, we believe in a thing which is simply forced on us, we believe in a thing which is not known to us. To believe in God, what does it mean? What do you know of Him? "I know God. I am He, I

am He." Then he says, "God is within you." Rama says the body and the world are within Him. I AM the God; that makes the whole difference. When a man dies, people say in this country, he gave up the ghost; Indians say he gave up the body. That illustrates the difference in the two different points of view. He gave up the ghost; as if his real self was the body and the ghost or the spirit was something tacked on; as if his self was the body and the spirit or the ghost was something foreign. The Indians say I am that, and I give up the body. Just as I change the clothes, I give up the body.

Here is another question:—"If God is all in all, why is there so much misery and affliction in this world?" You know, Vedanta says that God is everything. God is all in all; you are God, I am God. People ask, are you a part of God? No, no; God cannot be divided, God cannot be cut, God cannot be rent asunder, God cannot be scissored. You are no part of God; if God is infinite, then you must be the whole God, not a part of God.

Now the question is, if God is all in all, why should He put Himself in a state of affliction in one body, in a state of poverty in another body? Why should He bring plague and poverty in India and political freedom in America? Why should God make some body the possessor of four or five billions of rupees and another body poor, in a famishing, hungering state? Why should He do that? How unreasonable is He! Attempts are made even in this country, and in India, to satisfy the questioner, and most people resort to the doctrine of Karma, the doctrine of cause and effect, the doctrine that everybody is the master of his own destiny; that everybody creates his surroundings and environments of his own accord, and thus God is just; people make their own destiny, create their own fortune. Rama need not enter into the doctrine of Karma. This doctrine of cause and effect comes from India; and it is countenanced by Vedanta, but it concerns only the empirical universe; it concerns only the *phenomenon*. It does not go to the root of the question.

According to the doctrine of Karma, which explains transmigration and all that, the circumstances of your present condition are the outcome of your past desires and past actions. Thus, whatever circumstances, whatever environments, whatever fate or destiny you have, that is made by your past desires, past wills or wishes and your past actions. If you examine it, you will see that this doctrine simply shifts the difficulty. It does not answer the question thoroughly. Rama is not going to repudiate or demolish this doctrine. Rama approves of it and supports it, but he wants to bring out the other side of the question, the other phase, which is altogether ignored by people in America, or perhaps not altogether ignored, but kept in the background.

*According to this doctrine of Karma, past actions have created the differences in your present circumstances. Then from this it follows that even in your past births, in your past lives, there was a difference in your actions, desires, and whims. There were some who were sick, some who were

poor, and some who were rich. To what cause were the differences in your past life due? The answer is that the differences in the circumstances in your past life were due to similar differences in the life before that. And to what cause were due the differences in the third life from this? They were due to the corresponding differences in the life preceding that. This doctrine makes the difficulty a million times more complex, because, according to this doctrine, we see that all your past lives, all your past births, even back to eternity, even up to the beginning—if there be a beginning—differences are even there; there is variety and conflict all along. Now the question is not answered, it is simply made more complex. Now the question comes with a multiplied force, it stands like this: "How is it that God from eternity should have kept up this difference? How is it that God from eternity should have made one rich at one place and another poor at another? Why should He have made one diseased at one place and another in perfect health at another? How unreason-

able it is! How is this difference justified?" Vedanta says this was a question which it had to put to you, not you to Vedanta. This is a question which you have to answer. The burden does not lie on Vedanta. It believes in unity, one-ness and at the same time explains this apparent variety.

For example, if there was a tyrant, and he had before him five different persons, different from himself, that man being in the place of God, and those persons being his creatures, servants, slaves, and if this man put one of these slaves into a dungeon, the second one into a beautiful garden, the third into a magnificent palace, the fourth into the toilet room, the fifth under a very heavy burden, and placed on his breast the mighty Himalayas, and kept them on his bosom all the time, and so on. What would you think of such a master? Cruel, unjust master! If God be different from his creatures, and makes one nation very happy and another very wretched, and if He makes one man very wealthy and another very poor, what will you think of

such a Master? Cruel, cruel! unjust, unjust! This is now the question which those, who believe God different from Mankind have to answer.

Vedanta does not believe God to be far away; one has only to close his eyes and see Him within.

Now see. Here is a master who goes into the garden at one time, into the mansion at another time, into the dingy dungeon at one time, and into the toilet room some other time, goes into the kitchen himself, and lives also under a burden himself. What will you call him? Is he unjust? No, no. He would be unjust if the people whom he kept in the dungeon, in the garden, in the mansion, or in the toilet room, had been different from him; but if it is he himself who resorts to the toilet, if it is he himself who goes into the other places, if it is he himself who does all these things, then he is not unjust. All the blame is taken off him.

Thus Vedanta says, this apparent variety, this apparent conflict, will be a

blame and blot on the face of God, if God were different from the people who suffer and from the people who are rich and poor. It is God Himself; it is Rama himself; it is I myself that am rich at one place, it is I myself that am in the dungeon, it is I myself that am fair and it is I myself that am ugly, in the garden I am, and in the deserted palace I am. Whom will you blame? Even the blamer I am. There is another thing to be said in relation to it.

It is very hard to preach Vedanta in this country where the word 'I' is used to denote the body or mind; the people in this country are accustomed to say, "I have a soul," and they understand by 'I' the body, the mind, the intellect, the incarnate soul, or the reincarnated self. Never, never does the man who has realized Vedanta understand by the word 'I' the body, the mind, or the reincarnated body. This I am not; If I am anything, I am God.

Here is a statement, I am a King, I am a master of horse, I am a Swami, I am an American, I am a Hindu. These state-

ments are of a different nature from the statement "I am God." Mark the difference. In the statement 'I am a king' the word 'king' is like a title; 'I am a master of horse,' the title 'master of horse' is like a robe put on. When we say 'I am poor' poverty is something and I am something else; poverty is like a robe put on. Well, the Hindus say I am God; but beware, the word God is not a title, it is not a robe, it is not an attribute, that you put on keeping yourself the same little false ego, and putting godliness on yourself like a robe. The Indian does not mean that, when he says "I am God." His statement is like this. This snake is a rope. Here is a man who in the dark mistook the rope for a snake. There was a coiled rope lying on the ground and he took it to be a snake, got frightened and fell down. Somebody comes and says. "Brother, brother, your snake is a rope." What is the meaning of that? The meaning is that what you mistook to be a snake is not a snake, it is a rope. This is not a statement of the same sort as I am a king. Here the word

'snake' is not an attribute; the word 'rope' is not an attribute; if you had made the statement 'this' snake is black,' the word 'black' would have been an attribute of the word 'snake'. But when you say that the snake is a rope, the rope is not an attribute. Mark it please. It seems to be a little difficult to grasp, but understand it once and then you have no right to bring in objections; understand it aright. 'The snake is black' is one kind of statement, and 'the snake is a rope' is quite another kind of statement.

Similarly, 'I am godly,' 'I am an angel,' is one kind of statement, and when the Hindu says, 'I am God,' that is another kind of statement. When he says 'I am God,' it means that I am not the body; what you are taking me to be, that I am not. You mistake me to be flesh and blood, bones and muscles, but it is not so. I am not the bones, not the muscles, not this little three-and-a-half cubits (quarantine), I am not the mind, nor the intellect. I am the Fountain-head, I am the real Force, the real Thing-

in-Itself, the real God, the real Power. That alone I am; I am nothing else.

Again the people wish to bring God before their tribunal, to say, God did that, as if He were an ordinary person like themselves and could be brought before them and taken to task just like an ordinary person.

The cause of all these doubts and objections may be illustrated by a story.

There was an oil-vendor in India. He kept in his house a very beautiful parrot. One day this oil-vendor left his shop and went out to some place. His servant also went out on some other errand. The parrot was there in the shop. In the absence of the oil-vendor, there came up a big cat. At the sight of the cat, the parrot got frightened. It was in the cage, but it got frightened and jumped up; the parrot fluttered his wings, and jumped this way and that way until the cage, which was hanging on the wall, slipped down and fell upon a jar full of very precious oil. The jar was broken and all the oil was spilt. After a while came up the oil-vendor, and being very

angry, he lost his temper, seeing that his precious oil was spilt. He got annoyed with the parrot; he thought that it had done some mischief, he was beyond himself with rage and could not keep his temper because the parrot had thrown down the cage upon the jar and had caused him a loss of about 50 Sh. He opened the door of the cage and just snatched all the plumes from the head of the parrot. The parrot was made bald; no crest was left on its head. The head of the parrot was bleeding. The parrot did neither speak nor entertain the master for two weeks. The master was very sorry for what he had done. After two weeks, there came a customer to the oil-vendor's shop. This customer was bare-headed at that time, and he was also bald-headed. The parrot laughed a hearty laugh; it was very happy to see another companion. Then the master asked the parrot what was the cause of his hilarity, what made him full of joy, and the parrot said, "Oh, I thank God I am not the only servant of an oil-vendor. This man also

must have been the servant of an oil-vender, otherwise how could he lose the hair on his head, and how could he become bald, if he had not been the servant of an oil-vendor?’

Exactly the same kind of reasoning some people employ. They think that all the works they perform, all the duties they discharge, everything they do, is with some kind of motive or other. They do with some kind of selfish desire or premeditation. They say that God created the world; He also must have done that with some kind of motive or other, some kind of desire or other, some kind of premeditation or other. This is a mistaken way of arguing. This is making God limited. Why, you call Him Infinity and yet you want to drag Him to the level of an ordinary human being. It won't do.

This same question, Why did God cause this difference, was put to Rama in different language by another man, “If I am everything, why should I suffer?” Rama simply asks you this, “In your dreams,

are you not everything around you?" You are everything. In your dreams, the mountains, the rivers, the forests and the sandy deserts, are all your own doings, your own working, your own handiwork, your own workmanship, and yet in your dreams a lion comes up and begins to devour you, there comes up a snake and bites you, there comes up a some thing like bugaboo and that frightens you. Is it not so? And yet you are the lion, you are the tiger, and you are the snake.

There was another question put:—"If I am God, why do I not know every thing?"

You know, Rama preaches that you are God. Rama asks, "Brother, if you are not God, what are you? Let us know." He said, "I am this body." Alright. If you are simply the false personality, if you are this body, let us know the number of hairs on your head. Is not the head yours? He said, "Yes." If the head is yours, please do tell us the number of hairs you have on your head. Do tell us how many bones you have. (This man knows nothing about

Anatomy). How many muscles? Did you not take food this morning? Then let us know where is the food that you took this morning. Is it in the bowels? Is it in the kidneys, stomach, lungs? Where is it? He could make no answer. Then Rama says, you cannot tell the number of hairs on your head, and yet the hair are yours. Whether you can tell the number of bones and muscles you have or not, the bones and muscles are yours. Whether you can tell where the food is that you took this morning, whether you can tell that or not, the body is yours. You have taken the food, nobody else has taken it. Similarly, whether your intellect be able to tell the number of stars in the skies or not, all the stars are yours. Whether or not your intellect be able to tell what is passing in England at this moment, still England is yours. Whether you be able to tell or not what is going on in the planet Mercury, the planet Mercury is yours. If you cannot tell these things, it does not follow that they are not yours. Who is to tell these things? To tell these things is

the work of that which is finite. You can tell what that picture is (pointing to a picture on the wall), because you are aware the picture is here. You are not the picture; the subject and the object are different. You tell what is that picture because it is different from you, the word 'you' being taken in its false sense. But if you are that, if you are everything, if there is nothing else beside you, if you are Infinite, if there is nothing else which can limit you, who will tell about you? Thus telling and seeing stops there. It cannot reach there. No words can reach there.

Another man put this question, "What denomination do you belong to? Are you a Hindu, a Brahmin?" Rama said, "No." "Are you a Christian, a Jew; what are you? To what denomination, to what religion, to what creed do you belong?" If a thing belongs to somebody, it is his property; an inanimate thing or an animal belongs to somebody, and these things are the property of somebody, or belong to somebody. Oh, Rama is not an inanimate something; Rama

is not like property that he should belong to anything; he is no animal. Why should he belong to anybody? The wide world belongs to him, America belongs to Rama, Rama is your own Self. All of you belong to Me, and India also belongs to Me. Christianity, Mohammedanism, Judaism, Hinduisim, Vedanta all belong to Me.

Small souls may sell their liberty but never shall you.

People say that in this country they are free; political freedom perhaps they might have, but Ah! the religious slavery, the social slavery of America!! Rama brings to you independence, freedom, freedom of thought, freedom of action. The religion that Rama brings, some people nickname Vedanta; but no nickname ought to be applied to it. The true Vedanta is not confined to the Vedas only. It is in your hearts. So once for all Rama wants to let you know that Rama is not an Indian only; Rama is also an American; take not Rama as a Hindu alone, Rama is also a Christian; take not Rama

as a slave of this creed or that dogma. Rama is your own Self, Independence itself.

Another man came and said, "Well, if you are God, if you are like Christ, Christ did this and that; Christ worked this miracle; please do this miracle for us, then we will believe in you." Rama says, "Brother, Brother, Christ worked miracles and was not believed in; He was persecuted, nailed to the cross. Can miracles make you believe? Not at all."

Again, what is miracle working? What is all that? If this body worked all the miracles in the world, that would not add an iota to My Godhead. I am not this body; I am your own Self. What; if this body works miracles? That body is not working miracles, but I am that also. If this body works miracles, you will make a God of this body, which is the worst part of it; you should not do this. Rama wants you to make a God of your own Self. Do not make a God of this body. Rama does not wish to take away your freedom by working miracles, and imposing this

particular personality on you. Rama should not enslave you and take away your independence, as was done by the previous prophets.

You want this body to work miracles, but this body I am not; I am the same God that has already brought out this whole miracle of the world; the same am I. This wide world is my miracle, the same am I whose workmanship this whole universe is.

There was a boy who used to serve in the house in which this body used to live in India. That boy remaining all the while in contact with Rama, was one day walking on the top of the high mansion, and was shouting aloud, "I am God, I am God, I am God." There were some people in the other houses next door to the house, on the top of which he was shouting. They spoke to him, "What are you raving, what are you saying? Do you say, you are God? If you are God, do jump down from the roof and let us see whether you are hurt. If you are not hurt, then we shall believe in

you as God; if you are hurt, we shall kill you; we shall persecute you. Why are you speaking that way? This profane language you have no right to employ."

The boy, full of Divine madness, spoke out, "O my own Self, I am ready to jump down; I am ready to take a leap into any abyss that you may point out; I am ready to jump into any ocean that you may indicate, but kindly let me know the place where I am not present already, because in order to jump down, we ought to have some spot where we can jump down and where we are not present already. Let me know the place which is void of Me, where I am not present already. I am the God of gods. Do point out to Me the place where I am not present already and I will jump. How can He jump who already permeates the whole? He alone can jump who is limited, who is present here and not there."

Then the gentlemen who had asked him to jump down said, "Oh, are you that God? Are you that God? You are the body." The boy said, "This body is

made by your own imagination; this body I am not. Your questions and objections cannot reach Me; they reach only your imagination. Similarly, how can He jump, or how can He do such things who is already all-permeating? There is not a single spot where He is not present already. The same am I. The same am I. If I be present only in this body and not in that, then of course I ought to work worldly miracles through this body in order to make good my claim to Godhead. All the bodies are Mine; ready made they are Mine. I have simply to take possession; I have to make nothing, everything is made by Me.

Another man came with this question. "What is your attitude towards the Vedas? What do you think of them? Rama says, "We approach the Vedas in the same way that we approach Chemistry." "Do you believe in the Vedas?" Rama says, "I know the Vedas. I recommend them to you." "Shall we regard the Vedas in the same way as we do the Bible? Rama says, "You are making a wreck of the

Bible. Do not approach the Vedas in the same way; approach the Vedas as you approach a work on Astronomy or Chemistry. Do not believe in everything implicitly, with a blind faith, as some Hindus do." Rama says, "As you take up a book on Chemistry, you do not believe in the results of Chemistry because they are laid down by Lavoisier or by Liebnitz; do not take these things on authority; a faith that is founded on authority is no faith. Try the experiments yourself; verify them yourself and approach them in a true scientific way, not selling your independence, keeping your own freedom; read them in this way, and then alone will you be able to enter into the spirit of the Vedas, otherwise you will always miss the point. The teaching in the Vedas is not afraid of any criticism, of any questions or doubts. Let all your Western Science examine them; let your Western light (light always comes from the East you remember, but suppose this is Western light) come with its startling rays and let a flood of this light bath the fairy

face of the Shruti; there is not a single dark spot, there is not a single black mole to be found on the fairy face of the Shruti. The Vedas are not in conflict with Science; your present day discoveries and inventions are simply washing the feet of the Queen of Shruti. They are serving the cause of Vedanta more and more.

All the people who have studied the Vedas with an unprejudiced mind have paid their tribute unto them. Schopenhauer, a philosopher who was never prone to praise any other philosophy, Schopenhauer, who poured forth all sorts of abusive language on all the philosophies but his own, that Schopenhauer when speaking of the Vedas says, "In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads (Vedas). It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death."

Max Muller, while commenting upon this assertion of Schopenhauer's, says, "If

* That Part of the Hindu Scriptures which is believed to be revealed by God or whatever is heard from a realised soul.

the words of such an independent philosopher require any endorsement, with my life-long study of all the religions in this world, and all the systems of philosophy of Europe, I am ready to humbly endorse this experience of Schopenhauer's."

"If Philosophy is meant to be preparation for a happy death, I know of no better preparation for it than the Vedanta Philosophy (*viz.*, the Philosophy of the Vedas).

Another man came with this question. "Look here. Your Vedanta is confined only within the narrow limits of India." These questions that are now to be discussed are very important and very interesting. He says Christianity has spread over the whole world. Christianity prevails over the whole world, while your Vedanta is confined within the narrow limits of India, and is only the religion of the educated classes, not of the masses. Rama says that it would have been a great deal better if Christianity had really ruled the nations, if Christianity were really prevalent in Europe; it would have been a matter of

great delight to Rama; but it is not Christianity that is prevalent in Europe or America; it is Churchianity. It is Churchianity and not Christianity.

And again, if you think that real Christianity has spread over the masses, and that is a great argument in its favour, then brother, be not misled. Satan's religion has more adherents to it than Christianity. Vice, evil desires, enmity, hatred, passion, sensuality, this is Satan's religion you know, and Satan's religion is more prevalent than Christianity is.

A man in the House of Parliament in London, who was a great orator, was hooted. Do you know what words he spoke afterwards? He said, "What, if you have the majority on your side." He spoke to the opposite party, "Opinions ought to be weighed, they ought not to be counted." Majority is no proof of truth.

There was a time when Galileo upheld the doctrine of Copernicus; he said that the Earth revolves, not the Sun. He was in an awful minority, alone he was. The

whole wide world was against him, all the majority was against him. But what is the truth now? Is the truth with the minority, or with the majority? Majority and minority are nothing. There was a time when Roman Catholicism had all the majority on its side; there came a time when the majority fell on the other side. There was a time when Christianity was confined to a small minority of eleven disciples. There came a time when this Christianity or Churchianity had the apparent majority on its side. Majority and minority are nothing. We stand on the rock, we stand on the truth, and the truth must out.

Another man said, "Look here, why are the Christian nations making all the progress in the world? The Christian nations are the only nations that have progress and civilization." Rama says, "Brother, if Europe and America are ahead of India and China and Japan in political and social matters, that is not due to Christianity. Use no false logic. If all the civilization and all the scientific progress

were to be attributed to Christianity, then please let us know when Galileo made that little discovery, how he was dealt with by Christians? How he was treated by Christians? Bruno was bunt. Who burnt him? Christianity, Christianity. Huxley, Spence, and Darwin lived in the very teeth of your Christianity. Their discoveries and progress and independence of spirit were not engendered and encouraged by Christianity; they are living inspite of all the crushing influences of Christianity. What was the fate of Schopenhauer? Do you know how he had to live? Schopenhauer had to make just as great a sacrifice as Christ. Christ died for his convictions and Schopenhauer lived for his convictions and you know, to die for your convictions is easier than to live for them. Do you know what it was that checked the independent spirit of Schopenhauer? In his later books he lost that force and vigour which characterized him in his earlier writings. The feebleness and weakness in the philosophies of Hegel and Kant were due to the influence

of Christianity. Do you know how Fichte had to give up his Professorship and was driven out of his country? How was it? That was Christianity. From the very beginning all progress has been made in spite of Christianity and not by Christianity. Do not misjudge things.

An Anglo-Indian who had lived in India for some time, on coming back to England, was boasting to his wife about his valour and strength. They were living at their country house, and there appeared a bear on the scene. This Anglo-Indian jumped up to the top of an adjoining tree. His wife took up a weapon and killed the bear, and then he came down. Some other people came to where they were, and asked, 'Who killed the bear?' He said, "I and my wife have killed the bear." But it was not so. Similarly, when the thing is done by others, to say that it is done by me, or it is done through Christianity, is not true.

All progress in Science, all progress in Philosophy in Europe and America, all these discoveries and inventions are due

to the spirit of Vedanta being put into practice. Vedanta means liberty, freedom. They are due to the spirit of freedom, the spirit of liberty, the spirit of independence, the spirit of standing above bodily needs and wants. All this progress is due to that, and that is Vedanta unconsciously put into practice. You might call it true Christianity also. True Christianity is not different from Vedanta, if you properly understand it. They say, we have wiped slavery from the face of the Earth, and we have made many reforms. Rama says, 'Brothers, brothers, slavery was removed; oh, how much does Rama wish that slavery had been removed. If we accept this statement that slavery is done away with, then the removal of slavery is not due to Christianity. If there were something in Christianity which would remove slavery, why did not Christianity remove slavery during the previous 1700 years? There was something else. People had come to America; European nations were going from place to place; they were coming in contact with other

nations, they were being educated, and they were being made broader-minded. This is practical Vedanta. That was the cause of removing slavery, and not Christianity. The political and social circumstances stirred up the hearts and souls of men. If you ascribe good things to Christianity, then Inquisitions, the burning of witches, guillotine,—and you know what Inquisition is, it reigned supreme even in San Francisco at one time, oh horrible! horrible!! taking out the blood from the breast, Rama need not enter upon all that—to what are these to be ascribed?

Rama is going to skip over many questions and answers. We will take them up at some other time.

One more question, “Why is India politically so low?” They say, the cause of India’s fall is Vedanta. Far from it. The cause of India’s fall is lack of Vedanta. You know, Rama has told you that he belongs to every country. Rama does not come as an Indian, as a Hindu, as a Vedantist. Rama comes as Rama, which

means all-prevading. Rama does not want to flatter you or to flatter Indians. Rama does not take a stand on India or America or anything; Rama stands on, "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth," and on that ground, from that stand-point, Rama says whatever he says. Rama does not want to flatter India or to flatter America. The truth is that so long as Venanta was prevalent among the masses of India, India was at the highest point of her glory; she reigned supreme, and was prosperous. There came a time when this Vedanta fell into the hands of a particular class, and then it was not allowed to reach the masses of India, and there began India's fall. Vedanta was not allowed to reach the masses; the Indian masses began to believe in a religion—"I am a slave, I am a slave, I am Thy slave, O God." This religion was imported into India from Europe. Here is a statement which will astonish the so-called historians and philosophers, which will astonish Europeans, but this is a statement which Rama does not make without

thought. That is a statement which can be proved, demonstrated with mathematical certainty. The religion which wants us to look down upon the Self and to condemn the Self and call ourselves worms, vermins, wretches, slaves, sinners, was imported into India, and when it became the religion of the masses, there began the fall of India. And what about the Europeans and Americans? The Europeans believe also in their slavery,—O God, we are Thy slaves! Why did they not suffer the same degradation as the Indians suffered from the political and social stand-points of view? This will be illustrated by a story which is often referred to by Naturalists and writers on Evolution. They say that sometimes weakness becomes the cause of survival; it is not always the fittest that survive, OM.

A large number of locusts were flying in a certain direction, and some of the locusts lost their wings and fell down, and the remaining locusts that were healthy went on, but when they reached a hill, the hill was on fire, and all the locusts perished.

Here the weak survived and the fittest perished.

When the Indians say a thing, they mean it; they are sincere, and they made religion everything. They were the same inside and outside; when they prayed, "O God, O God, I am Thy slave, O God. I am Thy wretched slave, O God, I am a sinner." When the masses in India began to pray that way, they were sincere, and according to the Law of Karma, the inexorable, unrelenting law of Karma, they had to see their own desires and wishes fulfilled; and their desires and wishes were fulfilled. They were made slaves. By whom? They were made slaves by God, you say. Has God any shape? Has God any figure? This God in His shapeless form could not come and rule them. God came. What God? The Light of lights, the White One. The White One came in the fair skin of Englishmen and made them slaves; thus it was. It was misunderstood Christianity, or misunderstood Churchi-anity that wrought the downfall of India.

Go and see the state of affairs in India, and you will be convinced of what Rama tells you. If you believe only what other Swamis or what other Sadhus of India tell you, you will be misled. The cause of India's fall is simply want of Vedanta. And why did not the same slavish feeling bring about the slavery of Europeans? The Europeans care more for riches than for religion. In their prayers, in their religious matters, as was shown to you before, God is meant simply as an extra. He has to sweep and cleanse their rooms; religion was meant only to serve as a picture or portrait to decorate the drawing rooms. The prayers that came from the heart and from the real soul were not the prayers for slavery but for wealth, prosperity and worldly gain. So they rose. This is according to the law of Karma. History tells us that so long as Vedanta was prevalent among the masses of India, she was prosperous.

The Phoenicians were very powerful at one time, but could not march against

India and conquer it; the Egyptians were very high, but they could not bring India under their sways. Persia reigned supreme at one time, but did not dare to cast one inimical glance at India; the Romans whose eagle flew over almost all the world, the Romans who had the whole of the known Earth under their sway, those Roman Emperors did not dare bring India under their sway. The Greeks, when they rose to power, for centuries and centuries could not cast one evil eye upon India. There came up a man called Alexander, miscalled Alexander, the Great. He went to India. In those days the spirit of Vedanta was yet prevalent among the masses, it was not taken away from them. He had conquered, before going to India, the whole of the world that was known to him. The mighty Alexander who had all the Persian forces to reinforce him, had all the Egyptian forces on his side, that Alexander goes to India and is encountered and frightened by a small Indian prince called Porus. This Indian prince brought this Alexander, the Great,

low, and made all his armies go away. All the forces were worsted and Alexander, the Great, was compelled to retreat. How was it? Those were the days when Vedanta was prevalent among the masses of India. Do you want to have proof of that? As a proof of that, read the accounts of India left by the Greeks of that day; read in History what the Greeks of that time, the companions of Alexander, wrote about India. You will see that practical Vedanta was prevalent among the masses and the people were strong. Alexander, the Great, had to turn back.

There came a time when an ordinary robber, called Mahmud Gaznavi, seventeen times plundered India; seventeen times he took off all the wealth that he could lay his hands on from India. Read the accounts of the masses in those days, and you will see that the religion of the masses was exactly at the opposite pole to Vedanta. Vedanta was prevalent, but, only amongst the chosen few. The masses had given it up, and thus was India brought low.

They say that you preach Renunciation, and Renunciation must make us poor. Oh, far from it. It is true that in order to learn Vedanta, you have to retire into the forests, you have to go into the deep recesses of the Himālyan woods. But never does Vedanta inculcate that you should lead the life of an ascetic. Never, never. Their retiring into the woods is just like the going of students to a College. Is it not true that in order to learn any Science or Philosophy, you should isolate yourself, you should live at a place without any harassing circumstances about you? You ought to live in a place where quietly and silently you may prosecute your studies. Thus if the Indian retires into the forest, and if he goes into the woods that is simply to keep himself in such places where he may thoroughly master the Science of sciences, where he may thoroughly realize the true spirit of Vedanta. You know Vedanta is an Experimental Science like Chemistry. In Chemistry you cannot make any progress unless you make corresponding experiments.

Similarly, what can a man know of Vedanta who does not perform spiritual experiments alongside the intellectual training that he gets. Thus in order to try these spiritual experiments and gain the intellectual knowledge, people have to retire into the forest. The forest are like the Universities and Colleges. Having acquired this knowledge, they come down into the world and preach it, and apply it in everyday life, and let people know how they can work this system of Philosophy into practice. They come down to teach it. You know during the five years every Brahmin, or Hindu had to pass in the forest, he acquired this knowledge, and having acquired it, he had to come down into the world and work there, and some of them had to take up the ordinary worldly duties. Not everybody has to take up the order of monks after acquiring full knowledge of Vedanta. It is just like many a student who passes the Master of Arts Examination or who takes the Doctor of Science Degree, but all of whom are not expected to become

Professors. Some become Magistrates, some great Merchants, and some of them become Professors also.

Similarly, to acquire Vedanta, to acquire and thoroughly realize it is to put you in a state where the whole world may become to you a heaven, a garden, where the whole universe may become to you a paradise, that life may become worth living for you. They misrepresent Vedanta who say that it wants every body to become an ascetic. No, no. The outward order of monkhood is like taking up the Professor's profession after passing the Doctor of Science Examination.

We see again that this Vedanta was preached by men who were actively engaged in wordly life. Brother! Vedanta is no pessimism. They misrepresent it, who say that this religion is pessimism. Far from it. It is rather the highest pinnacle of optimism.

Vedanta tells you that if you launch your body into the ocean of the world without a rudder, without a compass,

without oars or without sails, without steam or electricity, you will necessarily make a shipwreck, of your life. You throw yourself at the mercy of all sorts of winds and storms. Vedanta says that the world is full of misery and wretchedness because of Ignorance. Ignorance only is sin; Ignorance is the cause of all your wretchedness. So long as you are ignorant, you are miserable; and Vedanta says if you remove this Ignorance, if you acquire the perfect knowledge, if you know the true Atma, all the dungeons become paradise for you. Life becomes worth living, never worrying, never bothering about anything, never thrown off the balance, never losing your presence of mind, never crest-fallen or sad or wearing a long face. Is not that desirable? Is not that the very Truth? Vedanta is not pessimism. It says, "O people of the world, you are making a veritable hell of this world. Acquire knowledge, acquire knowledge." That is the position of Vedanta. No pessimism at all.

And you see, this Vedanta has been

preached by people who lived in the world, people who were far from being ascetics; but who were still men of Renunciation.

Once a great Indian prince was going to give up his worldly duties and was about to retire into the forest. His preceptor, an ancestor of this body, preached this Vedanta unto him, and having acquired the secret of Renunciation, after becoming a true man of renunciation, lived in the world as a mighty Emperor.

A great warrior, Arjuna, who was the hero of the battle of Kurukshetra, was about to give up his worldly action, his duty required him to fight, and he was going to give that up, he was going to retire, he was going to become an ascetic, he was about to do that, and there came Krishna. Krishna preached Vedanta to Arjuna, and it is this Vedanta properly understood, which braced up the courage of Arjuna, which infused energy and power into him, which breathed a spirit of life and activity into him, and he rose up like

a mighty lion, and there he was the mighty hero.

Vedanta fills you with energy and strength, and not weakness. In the Vedas is a passage which says that this Atma, this Truth, can never, never be achieved by a man who is weak. It is not for the weak; the weak-hearted, the weak of body the weak in spirit can never acquire it.

A great king gave up his kingdom and retired into the forest where he acquired true knowledge, and after acquiring perfect knowledge, he went back and took possession of the throne. The throne was decorated by his presence only after he had acquired this perfect knowledge, and not before.

If by renunciation is not meant asceticism, what is renunciation then? That is a sublime subject. It will be taken up at some other time.

Here is a passage from the Hindu Scriptures. Some people say that the Hindus do not eat meat because they think that God is everywhere. The Hindus

do not eat meat, the Vedantins do not eat meat, it is true, but this is not the reason. The reason is something else. There is no time left now to enter into that.

In the Upanishad (Katha) there is a passage. It is translated into English thus:—

“If he that slays thinks ‘I slay’; if he
Whom he doth slay, thinks ‘I am slain,’ then
both know not aright! That which was life
in each cannot be slain, nor slay?”

MAYA OR THE WHEN AND THE WHY OF THE WORLD

*Lecture delivered in January, 1903.
Golden Gate Hall, San Francisco*

The Ruler, Governor, Controller of
Maya in the form of ladies and gentlemen:—

The subject of to-night's discourse is
Maya. This is a subject which superficial
critics look upon as the weakest point in
the Philosophy of Vedanta. To-day we
shall take up that weakest point. All those
philosophers and thinkers, who have
studied the Philosophy of Vedanta, say
unanimously that if this Maya could be
elucidated, then everything else in Vedanta
would be acceptable, everything else in it
would be so natural, so plain, so clear, so
beneficial and useful. This is the one [hitch,

the one stumbling block in the way of the students of Vedanta. This is a vast subject. In order that we may exhaust it thoroughly, about ten lectures ought to be devoted to this subject alone and then can the subject be placed on such a clear, lucid basis that no doubt or question under the sun or on the face of the earth would be left unanswered and unmet; every thing can be made plain, but it requires time. Hurrying readers and hurrying listeners are not expected to understand that thoroughly.

The question is, 'Why this world? whence this world? or to put it in Vedantic language, 'Why this ignorance in the universe?' You know, Vedanta preaches that this universe is unreal, is merely phenomenal. Ignorance is not eternal. All these phenomena are not real or eternal. The question comes, 'Why should this ignorance be?' Why should this ignorance, which is the cause of these phenomena, or this Maya, which is at the root of all this *meum* and *tuum*, difference and differentiation, why should this Maya or ignorance

overpower the true Self or Atma? Why should this Maya or ignorance be more powerful than God? This is the question.

In common language, in the language of other philosophers and theologians, the question is, 'Why should this world exist at all?' Why should God have created this world? Vedanta says, "No, brother, you have no right to ask that question. There is no answer to this question." Vedanta plainly says, there is no answer to this question. Vedanta says, we can prove it to you experimentally and directly that this world, that you see, is in reality nothing else but God, and we can show to you conclusively through experiment that when you advance high enough in the realization of the Truth, this world will disappear for you; but why does this world exist at all? We desist from answering that question. You have no right to put that question. Vedanta plainly confesses its inability to answer that question, and herein all the other theologians and dogmatizers and all superficial philosophers

come forward and say, "Oh, oh, Vedanta Philosophy is imperfect, imperfect, it cannot explain "the why and the wherefore of the world." Vedanta says, "Brother, examine the answers that you yourself give to the question 'the why and wherefore of the world,' examine them carefully, and you will see that your answers are no answers at all. It is mere waste of time to dwell upon that question, sheer waste of time to dwell upon that question, sheer waste of time and labour. It is letting go a bird in the hand in search of two in the bush. They will fly away before you reach them and you will lose the bird in your hand. That also will fly away. Vedanta says, all Philosophy and all Science must proceed from the known to the unknown. Do not put the cart before the horse; do not begin from the unknown and then come to the known.

There was a river flowing, on the banks of which some people were standing and philosophising as to its origin. One of them said, "This river comes from rocks,

from stones, from hills. Out of hills, water gushes in spring, and that is the cause of this river." Another man said, "Oh, no, impossible. Stone are so hard, so tough and so rigid and water is so liquid and soft. How can soft water come out of hard stones? Impossible, impossible. Reason cannot believe that hard stones are giving out soft water. If stones could give out water, then let me take up this piece of stone and squeeze it. Out of this no water flows. Thus the statement that this river flowed from those mountains is absurd. I have a very good theory. This river flows from the perspiration of a big giant somewhere. We see every day that when a person perspires, water flows from his body. Here is water flowing; it must have flowed from the body of someone who is perspiring; that is reasonable, our intellects can accept it. That seems to be plausible, that is all right." Another man said, "No, no, it is somebody standing somewhere who is spitting and this is the spit." Another man said, "No, no. There is somebody who

is vacating his water, making water, and this is the cause of the river.'

Now, these people said, "Look here, look here, all these theories of ours are feasible, all these theories of the origin of water are practical. Every day we see such things. These theories about the origin of the river are very plausible, are very feasible, seem to be good and grand, but the theory that water flows from stones, the ordinary intellect of a man who has never seen water gushing out from stones, who has never been on the mountains, will not accept, and yet it is true." And on what does the truth of this theory rest? On experience, on experiment, on direct observation.

Similarly, the origin of the world, why this world and whence this world, the origin of the stream of this world, the origin of the stream of the universe, the river of life, the origin of this is described differently by different people. The origin of the world, according to people of that kind of intellect which ascribed the origin of the river to spittle and to perspiration, is

taken to be something of the same sort as they observe every day around them. They say, "Here is a man who makes boots, the boots could not be made without somebody with some intention or design of making. Here is a man who makes a watch. Now the watch could not be made without somebody with some intention or plan or design of making it. Here is a house. The house could not be made without somebody having the plan and design. They see that every day, and then they say, 'Here is the world. The world could not have been made without some kind of person of the same sort as the shoemaker, the watchmaker, the house-maker, and so there must be a world maker, who makes this world, and thus they say that there is a personal God, standing upon the clouds not taking pity upon the poor fellow that he might catch cold. They say some personal God must have made this world.'"

Their argument seems to be very plausible, very feasible and very reasonable. It seems to be of the same sort as the

arguments of those people who said that the river flows from perspiration of somebody, who looks upon the origin of the river to be of the same sort as the water coming out of the bodies. The world also must have been made by somebody.

Vedanta does not propose any theory of that kind. No, no, it does not. Vedanta says, see it, make an experiment, observe it, through direct realization you see that the world is not what it appears to be. How is that? Vedanta says, so far I can explain to you that the water is coming out of those stones. How the water comes out of the stones, I may or may not be able to tell you, but I know the water comes out of stones. Follow me to that place and you will see the water gushing out of the stones. If I cannot tell why the water comes out of the stones, do not blame me; blame the water, it is coming out of the stones. I am unable to tell you how the water comes out of the stones, but it remains a fact, you can verify it yourself.

Similarly, Vedanta says whether or not

I am able to tell you why this Maya or ignorance is, it remains a fact. Why it came I may not be able to tell you. This is a fact, an experimental fact. The Vedantic attitude is merely experimental and scientific. It establishes no hypothesis, it puts forth no theory. It does not claim to be able to explain the origin of the world; this is beyond the sphere of intellect or comprehension. That is the position of Vedanta. This is called Maya, Why does the world appear? Vedanta says, because you see it. Why is the world there? Vedanta simply says, because you see it. If you do not see, there is no world. How do you know that the world is there? Because you see it. Do not see, and where is the world? Close your eyes, a fifth of the world is gone; that part of the world which you perceive through your eyes is no longer there. Close your ears and another fifth is gone; close your nose and another fifth is gone. Do not put any of your senses into activity and there is no world. You see the world and you ought to explain why

the world is there. You make it there. You should answer yourself. Why do you ask me? You make the world there.

There was a child. It saw in a mirror the image of a little boy, his own image, and somebody told the child that in the mirror there was a very beautiful dear little child, and when he looked into the mirror, he saw a dear little boy, but the child did not know that it was his own reflection, he took it to be some strange boy in the mirror. Afterwards, the mother of the child wanted to persuade him that the boy in the mirror was only his own reflection, not a real boy; but the boy could not be persuaded, he could not understand, that in the mirror there was not really another boy. When the mother said, 'Look here, here is a mirror, there is no boy in it,' the child came up to it and said, 'O Mamma, O Mamma, here is the boy! why! the boy is here.' When the boy was saying, 'here is the boy', in the very act of saying, 'here is the boy,' he cast his own reflection in the mirror.

Again the mother wanted to persuade him that there was not a real boy in the mirror; then again the boy wanted to have a proof or demonstration. The boy went up to the mirror and said, 'Look, here is the boy,' but in the very act of proving that there was no object in the mirror, the boy put the object in the mirror.

Similarly, when you come up and say, 'why the world, whence the world, how the world,' the very moment you begin to investigate the origin and the why and wherefore of the world, that very moment you put in the world there, you create the world there. So how can you know the origin and wherefore of the world? How shall we know its origin? How shall we know beyond it? How shall we transcend it? This ought to be made more clear, from both the microcosmic and metaphysical standpoints. Some say that a mundane god created the world, that there is a creator standing somewhere. If they see a house, they know that it was made by some one; so they say that this

world was made by some body. Now the question is, this creator in order to create the world must have stood somewhere. Where did he stand? If he stood somewhere, if he had a resting place, then the world was already present before it was created, because the resting place must be somewhere in the world. The word was present before it was created. When you begin to examine when the world began, you want to separate two ideas, the idea of when, why, and wherefore on one side, and the idea of world on the other; and the words why, when, and wherefore, the Ideas of time, space, and causation, are they not a part of the world? Are not they worldly? They are certainly. And here, you mark, you want to know the origin, the why and wherefore of the whole world. This question centres round the why, when and wherefore. Mark it. Time, space, and causation are also in the world, not beyond the world. Time is not beyond the world you know. The very moment you begin to say, 'when the world began,' the world is on one side

and the idea of when on the other side. There you keep the world before the world. This is very subtle and very difficult, and you will kindly attend closely, most carefully.

The world began, when? There you want to take away the world from itself; you want to separate the idea of when from the world; you want to measure the world by when and why, but you know that when and why are themselves world. You want to transcend the world, go beyond the world, you want to jump up beyond the world, and there you place the world.

Once an Inspector came to a school and put this question to the boys. 'If a piece of chalk is allowed to fall in air, when will it reach the earth?' A boy answered, "In so many seconds." 'If a piece of stone is allowed to fall from such and such a height, in what time will it fall?' The boy answered. "In this time." Then the Inspector said. 'If this thing is allowed to fall, what time will it take?' The boy

answered. Then the examiner put a catch question, 'If the earth falls, what time will it take to fall?' The boys were confounded. One smart boy answered, 'First let me know where the earth will fall.'

Similarly, we can put the question when this lamp was lighted, when this house was built, and when this floor was set. etc. But when we ask the question, 'When was the Earth created. when was the world created? This catch question is of the same sort as the question, 'What time will the Earth take to fall?' Where will the earth fall?' Why, when, and wherefore are themselves a part of the world, and when we are speaking of this why, when, and wherefore of the whole world, then we are arguing in a circle, making a logical fallacy. Could you jump out of yourself? No Similarly, why, when, and wherefore being themselves the world, are part of the world, they cannot explain the world, the whole universe. That is what Vedanta says.

It will be explained in a different way now.

Here is a man asleep, and in his sleep he sees all sorts of objects. He is the subject and the object; the subject of the dream, I will say, the bewildered subject of the dream, and the woods, rivers, mountains and other things. There the object of the dream and the subject make their appearance simultaneously, as was shown the other night. Could the subject in a dream, the traveller in the dream, tell when these rivers, mountains, lakes, and other landscapes came into existence? So long as you are dreaming, could you tell when these objects came into existence? No, never. When you are dreaming, to you the rivers, dales, mountains and landscapes will appear to be eternal, to you all these appear to be natural as if in existence from eternity. As the dreaming subject, you will never suppose that you ever commenced your dream, you will took upon that to be real, and all those dales, rivers, landscapes will seem to be eternal; you can never know their origin; you can never know the why, when, and wherefore of the

dream so long as you are dreaming. Wake up, and the whole is gone, wake up and all disappears.

Similarly, in this world you see all sorts of objects; they seem to be real, and there seems to be no end to them, just as in a dream there is no end; you cannot know when the dream began. Can you tell when Time began? This is an antinomy pointed out by Kant also. When did Time begin? When you say time began at that time, you posit Time. This question is impossible. Where did Space begin? The question is impossible. Beyond where Space began, you place a point where it began; the beginning of Space is surrounded by the idea of 'where' and the idea of 'where' includes that of place. The question is impossible. Where did the chain of Causation begin? The question is impossible. Why did the chain of causation begin? This question too is likewise impossible, Oh, if you point out any beginning of the chain of Causation, there you see that the idea of why is itself causation. It goes

beyond you. This is a question which is unanswerable. There is no end to Time, Space, or Causation whether on this side or the other. Schopenhauer proves it; Herbert Spencer proves it; every thinker will show to you that there is no end to it, no end, no end. In dreams also, there is no end to the particular kind of time which you perceive in the dream, whether on this side or the other; in dreams there is also no end to the particular kind of space which you perceive in your dreams; in dreams there is no end to the particular kind of causation which you see in them.

So it is in the wakeful state. All those people who try to answer this question empirically are losing their way, reasoning in a circle and confounding themselves. Thus all the empirical solutions of the problem are impossible. When the dreaming subject wakes up, the whole problem is solved. And waking up, the dreaming subject says, 'Oh, that was a dream, there was no reality all along. Similarly, on waking up to a realization of the Truth,

on achieving that perfect state of liberation which Vedanta holds up before every body, you can see that all this world was a mere joke, [mere plaything, mere illusion, nothing else.

The same question of Maya is put in this way also: "If man is God, why should he forget his real nature?" Vedanta answers, "The real God in you never forgot its real nature; if the real God in you had forgotten its real nature, it would not have been all the time controlling, governing and ruling this universe; the real God has not forgotten at all. It is still controlling, governing and ruling this universe. Then who has forgotten? Nobody; nobody has forgotten. It is just like a dream. In the dream, when you see different kinds of objects, in reality it is not you that see these things, it is the subject in the dream, which is created along with the other objects in the dream, which finds all that, which sees all those scenes, and dwells in those dales, mountains, and rivers. The real Self, the Atma, the true God, has never forgotten

anything. This idea of a false ego is itself the creation of Maya, or an illusion of the same sort as the other objects are. The true Self has not forgotten anything. When you say, 'Why did God forget himself into a man, into a little egotistical self, Vedanta says, in this question of yours there is what logicians call the fallacy of *circulus in probando*, the fallacy of a circle in the proof. To whom are you putting this question? Are you putting this question to the dreaming subject or to the wakeful subject? To the dreaming subject you should not put the question because the dreaming subject has not forgotten anything. That is a creation like the other objects it sees, and to the real subject in the wakeful state you cannot put the question. Who will put the question? You know the questioner in the dreams must be in the dream itself, and when the dreaming subject is removed, then who will put the question? All duality of questioning and answering is possible only so long as the dream of Maya continues or lasts. You can put the questions

only to the dreaming subject, and the dreaming subject is not responsible for it; let the dreaming subject be removed and the whole panorama, the whole dream vanishes, and nobody is left to put the question. Who will put the question to whom?

Here is a beautiful boat, and here is the picture of a boatman, who ferries the boat across the river. The boatman is a very good man and he is the master of the boat, only so long as it is looked upon to be real; the master of the boat is the master in the same sense as the boat is a boat. In reality the boat is nowhere and the master of the boat is nowhere. Both are unreal. But when we point out to a child, "Come along, come along, what a beautiful master of the boat," both the master of the boat and the boat are of the same sort. We have no right to call the master of the boat more real than the boat itself.

Similarly, according to Vedanta, the Controller, Governor, Master of the world, or God, the idea of God or Creator is related

to this world as in that picture the boat-driver, or I say, the boatman is related to the boat. So long as the boat is there, the boatman is also there. When you realize the unreality of the boat, the boatman also disappears.

Similarly, the idea of a Controller, Governor, Creator, Maker, is real to you so long as the world appears to you to be real. Let the world go, and that idea also goes. The idea of the Creator implies creation, why, when, and wherefore. The question of the why, when, and wherefore of the world is related to this world like the boatman to the boat; both of them are parts of one whole picture. If they are both of the same value, both are illusions. The question "the why, when, and wherefore" also is an illusion. The question—why, when, and wherefore—is the driver the boatman, or the leader of this world. When you wake up and realize the truth, the whole world becomes to you like the boat drawn upon canvas, and the question why, when, and wherefore, which was the

driver or the boatman, disappears. There is no why, when, and wherefore in the Reality which is beyond Time, beyond space, beyond Causation. People say that the world is due to one personal Creator. Vedanta says, nay (Neti). This world "Neti" appears frequently in Sanskrit and has been corrupted by the Americans to 'nit,' not that. The question is impossible and unanswerable.

Another man comes and says, "God fell in love with Himself and He made this world. He made this world like a mirror house, and He wanted to see Himself in all these forms and He made the world." Vedanta says, 'Neti' nit, not that. You have no right to put such an hypothesis here.

Another man comes and says that the world was created so many years ago. Vedanta says 'Neti, nit, not that.' The real meaning of the 'why' is Maya. *Ma* means *not* and *ya* means *that*, and *Maya* means *not that*. The question is such as you cannot formulate. Not that. Now the question is, 'Is

the world real?' Vedanta says, *Neti, Maya, not that, nit.* You cannot call it real. Why not? Because reality means something which lasts for ever, which remains the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. That is reality. Now does the world last for ever? It does not last ever, therefore it does not satisfy the definition of reality. In your deep sleep it disappears; in your state of realization, perfection or liberation, it disappears. So it does not last for ever, consequently you have no right to call it real. Is the world unreal? Vedanta says *Neti, not that, Maya, nit.* This is very strange. The world is not unreal. Vedanta says, "No, it is not unreal, because unreal means something which never is, according to the definition of Vedanta, like the horns of a man. Did a man ever possess horns like a cow? Never. That is unreal, and the world is not unreal because it appears to you to be present just now. It appears to you to be present, therefore you have no right to call it unreal. Is the world real? *Neti, nit.* Is the world unreal? *Neti, nit.*

Then is the world partly real and partly unreal? Vedanta says, 'Maya, Neti, nit.' Not that even. Unreality and reality cannot subsist together. These answers to these questions are called the Maya theory of Vedanta. Such answers to these questions have another name, 'mithya,' it is a word which is cognate with your word mythology. It means something which we cannot call real and which we cannot call unreal, and which we cannot call both real and unreal. Such is your world.

Atheists say, there is no God. Vedanta says, 'Neti, nit, Maya.' They are wrong, for they have no argument for saying that there is no God. Some people say, there is a personal God. Vedanta says, 'Neti, nit, not that.' You have no right to make a statement of that kind. Vedanta says, here is a realm where you ought not to tread; here is a realm upon which you cannot bring your intellect to bear. Your intellect has work enough to do in this world; let it work there. "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and render unto

God what is God's." Your intellect has work enough in the material plane, in the empirical; realms, but in the realms of metaphysics you have to come only by one way, and one way only, and that one way is: way of realization, that way is the way of love, feeling, faith, rather knowledge. Strange kind of knowledge, strange kind of God-consciousness. When you come to this region through the proper channel, all questions cease, all problems are solved. In the Kena Upanishad of Sama (Veda), we have a passage which translated into English is something like this:

"I cannot say I know It:

Nor can I say I do not know It;

Beyond knowing and not knowing It is."

This is exactly what the thinkers of to-day say. Herbet Spencer in the first part of his *First Principles*, "The Unknowable," comes to the very same conclusion as that at which Vedanta arrives. Rama need not read to you what he says, but a small passage might be read. "There must exist some principle which being the

basis of Science cannot be established by Science. All reasoned-out conclusions, whatever, must rest on some postulate. There must be a place where we meet the region of the Unknowable, where intellect ought not to venture, cannot venture to go."

All the philosophers have something to say to the same effect on this point. Just mark. What a fallacy is committed by the people when they ascribe motives to God, when they say God must have done this, God must have mercy, God must have love, God must have goodness, God must have this attribute or that. What a fallacy is committed by such people, for all classification is limitation. You call God infinite and finite in one breath, you say on the one hand that He is infinite and on the other hand you say, "Oh, He possesses this quality and he possesses that quality." When you say that He is good, He is not bad, then He is limited. Wherever there is bad, good is not. When you say He is the Creator, He is not the creature, then you limit Him; there you

point out a place where He is not. He is the all. And again, when you say God created the world for this and that object, you make God a somebody who can come up and give an account of his doings, just as a man comes before a magistrate and gives an account of his doings. Similarly, when you hold God responsible for anything or attribute to Him any motives, designs, or plans, you practically make yourself a magistrate or judge, and God a person who has done certain deeds, who has come before you to give an account of His works. There you limit Him. Vedanta says, you have no right to bring God before your tribunal. Give up this question; it is illegitimate.

The word Vedanta means slavery to no particular individual. The word Muhammedan depends upon the name of Muhammad. Whatever Muhammad has done or said we must believe. The word Christianity is slavery to the name of Christ. The word Buddhism is slavery, to a particular name, Buddha. The word Zoroastrianism is

slavery to the particular name, Zoroaster. The word Vedanta is no slavery to any particular personality or individuality. The word Vedanta literally means the end or goal of knowledge. The word Vedanta means the Truth and thus it has nothing of sectarianism in it. It is universal. Do not be prejudiced against it, because of its being a name which is unfamiliar to you. You might call it the truth as preached and understood by the Hindus. You know all truth, wherever investigated, whether in Germany, or in America, comes to the same conclusion. Wherever a man looks at the sun, he sees it to be bright and brilliant. Whoever throws aside his prejudices and frees himself from them will concur with the conclusions of Vedanta. These are your own conclusions, these are your own arguments and results, if you approach the question freely, liberally waiving all prejudices, predilections and preconceptions.

Now Rama will explain to you this problem of Maya in the way of the Hindus and how they have described and explained

it in their old Scriptures. They explain it practically, experimentally. They call this Maya अनिर्वचनीय (Anirvachaniya), the limited meaning of which is illusion and the explanation of which word is something which is indescribable, which cannot be called real and which cannot be called unreal, and which is not a combination of reality and unreality. This whole world is Maya or illusion, and this illusion is of two kinds. We might call it *extrinsic* and *intrinsic* illusion.

Suppose you see a snake in the dark; it frightens you to death; you fall down and are hurt. What was the snake? Was the snake real? Vedanta says the snake is not real, because afterwards when you approach the spot where the snake was, it is not there. But is the snake unreal? Vedanta says, 'No, no.' You have no right to say that the snake is unreal. Had the snake been unreal, you would not have received the injury. The snake is an illusion, and an illusion is not a reality and it is not a non-reality either, because unreal

means something which never appears to exist. You see a rainbow. Is the rainbow real? The rainbow is not real, because when we approach the spot, we do not find it, and if we change our position, we will find the position of the rainbow changed. Is it unreal? No, no, because it appears to exist there, it produces some effect on us. It is not unreal either. It is an illusion.

You see in the mirror your picture. Is your picture unreal? Vedanta says, 'No, it is not unreal, because it produces an effect on you; you see it.' Is it real? No, it is not real either. You turn your face this way and it disappears. This is an illusion. Now this illusion is of two kinds, intrinsic and extrinsic; intrinsic illusion as is, in the case of the snake, seen in the rope. A peculiarity of intrinsic illusion is that when the illusory object is there, the real object is not seen; and when the object is seen, the illusory object is not there. Both cannot co-exist. In an intrinsic illusion the reality and the illusion cannot co-exist. The illusory object which is the

snake, and the real object behind it, the rope, we cannot see them together. If the snake is there, the rope is not there; and if the rope is there the snake is not there. The one or the other must perish. The one or the other must exist.

But in the extrinsic illusion both co-exist; the reality as well as the illusion, both can co-exist as in a mirror; in the mirror, the object, the image is unreal, or in the terms of Scientists, it is a virtual image, unreal image, illusion. The face is the real object. Now the face as well as the image co-exist; the illusory object which is the image and the real object which is the face, co-exist. This is the peculiarity of extrinsic illusion, and we see another thing about extrinsic illusion, a medium is seen, a medium like the mirror. The mirror is the medium and the illusory object is the image and the real object is the face. So in fact in an extrinsic illusion, three things are present for the time being; in an intrinsic illusion, only one thing is present for the time being.

The experiments of Vedantins which prove to you the unity of the whole universe are of this kind which will be pointed out to you. Their experiments, experiences, and their religious development and realization of the truth prove this world to be made up of both kinds of illusions, extrinsic and intrinsic. When a man begins religious life and to realize the Divinity within himself, he overcomes only the extrinsic illusion. All the religions on the face of the Earth. Christianity, Mohammadenism, Budhism, Zoroastrianism, all those excepting Vedanta have done a great deal, in overcoming the extrinsic illusion. So far as they overcome the extrinsic illusion, Vedanta says they are all right, but Vedanta goes one step further. It overcomes the intrinsic illusion also, and other religions as a rule stop short of it. There they say Vedanta is opposed to us. No, no, it is not opposed; it simply fulfils what they began, it supplements them; it is not in contradiction to them, it is not opposed to them. But you will say this is talking

Sanskrit to us, this is talking Greek to us. What do you mean by that?

Now something very subtle is going to be told. So attend most carefully. A rope is mistaken for a snake or a serpent. In the rope there appeared a serpent. To what kind of illusion was the serpent due? The serpent was due to the intrinsic illusion. You know if the serpent is there, the rope is not there; if the rope is there, the serpent is not there. Only one thing is seen at one time. That is intrinsic illusion. Again you mark, this snake or serpent which appeared, is an illusory object which owed its existence to intrinsic illusion. This snake serves the same purpose to the underlying rope as a mirror serves to you when you look into it. It is to be proved to you. You know that the mirror serves as a medium to you, and the mirror being the medium, you see in the mirror an illusory object, I say, an image. You have in the case of the mirror an extrinsic illusion. Now it will be shown that in the rope the serpent appeared on account of

intrinsic illusion; this serpent will serve as a medium or as a mirror to the underlying reality, or rope, and we shall have an extrinsic illusion also on the spot.

A boy comes to you and says, "Papa, papa, I am frightened; there is a snake there." We ask, "Child, how long was the snake?" and the boy says, "The snake was about two yards long." Well, how thick was the snake? And the child says, "It was very thick. It was as thick as the cable I saw the other day in the ship which was leaving San Francisco." We ask, "Well, what was the snake doing?" He said, "The snake had coiled itself round." You know that the snake was not there; the snake was unreal, only the rope was lying there. The rope was about two yards long, and was as thick as the cable which he saw on the day when the ship was leaving San Francisco. The rope was coiled around on the floor, and there the properties of the rope,—its thickness, length, and position—have, as it were, mirrored themselves in the illusory serpent. There the

rope casts its thickness, its width, and its position into the illusory serpent. The serpent was not so long, the length only applied to the rope; the serpent was not of that thickness, the thickness only applied to the rope, the serpent was not in that position, the position only applied to the rope. So you mark that originally we had the serpent as the result of intrinsic illusion, and subsequently we have in the serpent created another kind of illusion, which we might call extrinsic illusion, the properties of one attributed to the other.

This is the second kind of illusion. In order to remove these illusions what process is to be adopted? We shall remove one illusion first and then the other. The extrinsic illusion will be removed first, and then the intrinsic illusion.

According to Vedanta, all this universe is in reality nothing else but one indivisible, indescribable Reality, which we cannot even call reality, which transcends all language, which is beyond Time, Space, and Causation, beyond everything. In this rope

of a reality, in this underlying substratum, substance, or whatever you might call it, appear names, forms, and differentiations, or you might call it energy, activity, or vibrations. These are like the serpent. There, we see that after this intrinsic illusion is completed, the extrinsic illusion comes up, and on account of the extrinsic illusion, we look upon these names and forms, these personalities and these individualities as having a reality of their own, as subsisting by themselves, as existing by themselves, as real on their own account. Here is the second or extrinsic illusion put forth. You will understand it now when we reverse the process.

What have religions done? Be it said to the credit of beloved Christianity, beloved Mohammedanism, be it said to the credit of these religions that they have done a great deal in removing extrinsic illusion, they have shown to mankind that if they live a pure life, a life of universal love, a life of divine ecstasy, if a man lives a life of hope, faith, and charity, unbounded love

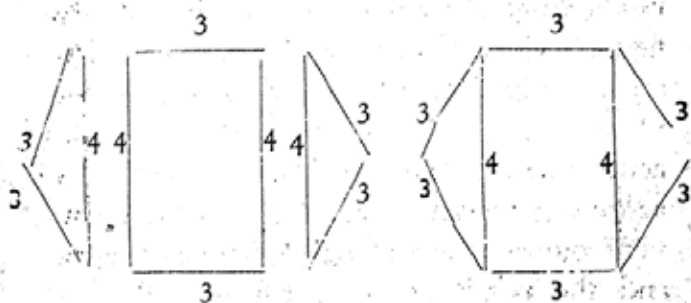
gushing forth from him in all directions, filling the whole universe with Divinity, then we find God in everything. Just mark. The real saint or sage, the true Christian, the beloved Christian finds God even in the names; he hates not the enemy, but loves the enemy. Oh! "Love your enemy as yourself." That blessed saying of Jesus! He finds the same God in the flowers. Have you ever realized that state? The truly religious people have. Flowers speak to you; and you find sermons in stones, books in the running brooks, the stars speak to you; where the Divinity looks at you through a man's face. Does Divinity require any intellectual proof? No, it carries its own proof with itself. It rests on a proof which transcends all worldly logic and worldly philosophy. A person, who feels God everywhere, lives, moves, and has his being in God, in Divinity. Through this kind of religious life, through practice and through experience, through experiments, overcomes the extrinsic illusion. How is that? You know, you say that God is in

all these forms, God is in all these phases and forms and differentiations. All these are like the serpent; still if you look behind them, you see, beyond them the underlying rope beneath the serpent. The length, breadth and thickness you attribute not to the serpent but to the underlying rope. There you dispense with one kind of illusion only. You see God behind everything and when you realize this state of religious life, you do not impute motives to your friends or foes, but you see Divinity in them and you observe the finger of God, or the finger of Providence behind them, and you say that the one Divinity, or the one All, which is God, is doing all these things and I should not impute motives to my friends. There is one kind of illusion, the extrinsic illusion, overcome. This is one step in your advancement, but Vedanta goes beyond that, and tells you, "Brother, if you say that God is in all these, that is not the whole truth; go beyond that." All these forms and all these images and differences or differentiations themselves contain

God, but at the same time all these different illusions and forms are unreal and they are like the serpent in the rope; go beyond that, and you reach the state which is beyond all that, beyond all ideas, beyond all words. This is unreal even. There you see Vedanta is the fulfilment of all religions. It does not contradict any religion in this world.

It will be shown that it is unnecessary to say that this world must have been created by this God or that God. It will be proved that these forms and figures, these different figurations and situations are this world and nothing else.

Here are two triangles and one rectangle—



Both these triangles are isosceles, two sides are equal. The two equal sides are marked 3, and the third side 4. In the rectangle the shorter sides are marked 3 and the longer sides 4. These figures are cut out of paper or cardboard, or anything. Place them in such a way that they may form one figure, or the bases of the triangles may coincide with the longer sides of the rectangle. What will that become then? We shall get a hexagon of which all the sides are 3. You know the sides marked 4 have come within the figure, and they are no longer sides. How do we get this hexagon? We get this from a different position or a different combination of the triangles and the rectangle. What about the properties of the original figures and of the resulting figure? The properties of the resulting figure are entirely different from those of the component figures. The component figures have acute angles; the resulting figure has no acute angle whatsoever. One of the component figures (the rectangle) has right angles, and the resulting figure has no right angle

whatsoever.

The component figures have sides 4 in length; the resulting figure has no side of that length. None of the component figures were equilateral. The resulting figure is equilateral and it has also all its angles equal. Here we see a creation, all properties entirely unknown before. Wherefrom have these entirely new properties come? Just mark, these entirely new properties have been created by no creator. These entirely new properties have not come out of the component elements; they are the result of a new form; they are the result of a new position, a new configuration, of what Vedanta calls Maya. Maya means name and form; they are the result of names and forms, mark that. Again see. Let each of these two isosceles triangles represent H, Hydrogen, and the rectangle O, Oxygen; this gives you H_2O . water. These original elements, hydrogen and oxygen, have properties of their own, and the resulting compound is an entirely new something. Hydrogen and oxygen give us

water; hydrogen is combustible, but water is not. Water has a property entirely unknown to hydrogen. Oxygen aids combustion, but water does not. It has a property of its own entirely new. We see again that hydrogen is very light but oxygen does not possess the same lightness. Hydrogen fills balloons and takes you up to the skies; but water, the resulting compound, does not. The properties of the component elements are entirely different from those of the resulting compound. Wherefrom does the resulting compound get its properties? Does it get these properties from the creator or from the component parts? No, they come from form, from new form, from new position, new configuration. That is what Vedanta tells us. It tells you that what you see in this world is simply the result of name and form. You need not posit the existence of a Creator for this and that, which are the result of name and form.

Here is before you a piece of charcoal and there is a brilliant diamond, dazzling, bright diamond. The diamond has proper-

ties entirely different from those of the piece of charcoal. The diamond is so hard that it can cut iron, the charcoal is so soft that it leaves its mark upon a piece of paper when you scratch it on the paper. The diamond is so priceless, so precious and so brilliant, and the piece of charcoal is so cheap, so ugly, and so black. Mark the contrast between the two, and yet in reality they are one and the same thing. Science proves that. Oh! you will say, "My intellect will not grasp it." Whether you accept it or not, it is a fact. Similarly, Vedanta tells you, here is something bad and there is something good. The diamond is good and the charcoal is bad. Here is something which you call bad, and there is something which you call good. Here is something which you call friends and there is something which you call foes. But in reality there is one and the same thing underlying them, just as the carbon appears in charcoal as in diamond. So in reality it is only one and the same divinity that appears in both places. In name and form lies the difference, in nothing else.

The Scientists tell you that the atoms of carbon in the diamond are differently situated, have a different form in making molecules from what they are in charcoal. The difference in the diamond and charcoal is due only to name and form, or to what the Hindus call Maya. All these differences are due to name and form.

Similarly, the difference between good and bad is due only to Maya, to name and form, nothing else; and these names and forms are not real because they do not last for ever. They are unreal because we see them at one time and not at another time. This phenomenon of the universe is nothing but names and forms, nothing but differentiations, variations, and combinations. And these different variations and combinations are due to what? They are due to intrinsic illusion. In these names and forms which are due to Intrinsic illusion, the One Divinity manifests itself. God manifests Himself in these names and forms of the world, which are called Maya: This is due to intrinsic illusion. Get beyond that and you

The patter of the tiny feet,
 the laughter of the crowd,
The golden beam of the Sun,
 the twinkle of silent star,
The shimmering light of silvery moon
 shedding lustre near and far
The flash of the flaming sword,
 the sparkle of jewels bright,
The gleam of the light-house beacon light
 in the dark and foggy night,
The apple-bosomed Earth
 and Heaven's glorious wealth,
The soundless sound, the flameless light,
The darkless dark, and wingless flight,
The mindless thought, the eyeless sight,
The mouthless talk, the handless grasp
 so tight

Am I, am I, am I.

WHEN DID THE WORLD BEGIN?

Delivered on Wednesday, April 6, 1904.

The Loving Divinity in the form of
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The question is asked—"When did the world begin?" Now on looking up the definition of 'when' we find that it means 'what time.' So the question is—"At what time did the world begin." But time being the part and parcel of the world, it means at what time did the Time begin? Put this way, it is ridiculous of course. Where did the world begin? Where did Space begin? There is also the question 'How did world begin?' Some bright ones may attempt to answer these questions. But I will leave it for them to do; it is more than I care to undertake. There are those who will spend

their days trying to find a solution of these questions but what of it; they get just so far and then they stop as though confronted by a stone wall absolutely impenetrable.

Now, here I have a pair of tongs; the tongs can pick up this and that and other things, but cannot turn back and grasp the hand which holds and guides them. So the trio,—Time, Space, and Causation—can hold the phenomena of the world, but cannot grasp, what is behind it, the Self.

Once, four men were taken to a hospital because of cataract of the eye, which they hoped to be operated on there. Now naturally all these men suffering from cataract were stone blind and had only the four senses left to them. One day, they began to dispute as to the colour of the window glass. One said, "My son who is a student at the University was here and told me 'the glass is yellow.' It must be yellow." Another said, "My uncle who is a Municipal Commissioner was here the other day and told me 'the glass is red.' He is very smart and he knows." Then the third said that

a cousin of his who was a Professor at the University had called on him, and while visiting him told him, the glass was green. Of course he ought to know. Thus they quarrelled as to the colour of the glass. Then they began to try and find out for themselves what the colour of the glass was. First they put their tongues on it and tried to taste it, but colour was not to be known that way. Then they rapped it and listened to the sound, but colour could not be distinguished even that way. They tried to smell it and they felt it. But alas! their senses of touch, smell; taste and hearing could not tell them what the colour of the glass was. Similarly, we cannot know the Infinite through the senses. Now see how impossible that would be, if you could know the Infinite through the senses; the Infinite would necessarily have to be smaller than the finite. Absurd. It is only through the Cosmic-consciousness, the God-consciousness, that we know the Infinite. Here I take this match-stick in my hand. Now the match-stick is smaller than the hand in

which it is held. Do you see how the finite could not perceive the Infinite? The senses cannot perceive that which is beyond them. Do not depend upon anything outside of you to reveal the SELF to you like the blind men who were told the colour of the glass, but did not know for themselves what the colour was, and were taking for granted that it was red because the cousin said so, that it was yellow because the son said so, and so on. I am told that $H_2 O$ produces water. Do I know it? No, in spite of the fact that all chemists tell me this is true. I only know it when I have gone into laboratory and tried it for myself then alone it becomes an actual fact to me. You cannot depend upon any authority outside yourself, whether it be Krishna, Christ, or Buddha. In order to know it, you must know it yourself. You might be told by good authority, by the Professor, for instance, that the glass was red, but you would have to see it in order to know it. A young man says, "My father has a good stomach, he can digest my dinner for me,"

Can he? No, the son must digest his own dinner. I bow to those great souls, the world has known, but they cannot digest my food for me, that I must do for myself. They cannot convince me of my ONENESS WITH GOD, I must do that for myself. It is through the Cosmic-consciousness alone that we know the Truth. This I will tell you about later on.

The agnostic and the freethinker each says, 'I will investigate for myself', and we see how far he gets on. He says that light is in this match. Now where shall we discover it? So he cuts the match into little pieces, but cannot find the light. Then he pulverizes it, still he cannot find the light. He then says that life is in this body. He takes the body and pulls it to pieces, life cannot be found, he crushes the bones, but life is not there. He says if there is a REALITY, I must be That, but it is unknowable. That is true so far as he has gone, but he has not yet developed the Cosmic-consciousness; he has used the local consciousness entirely to know the Infinite,

but that he can never know it in this way is plain. Now let us see, if by reason we can reach up to the Infinite and know that there is Infinite, but what it is we cannot tell. As when a person comes up from behind and blindfolds me, I know there is some one and that it must be a friend, for no stranger would dare take the liberty of doing that, but who it is I cannot tell. It is like a ball being thrown against a wall, the ball will reach the wall, but it will rebound. Reason does not penetrate the Infinite. Now if the Infinite could be known, we would have duality established immediately instead of oneness, and neither the knower nor the known would be Infinite. But by the Cosmic-consciousness, we see Universality is established.

Now, as to the development of this God-consciousness. First I will tell you a little about the child. The child does not have Cosmic-consciousness, nor does it have local consciousness. Now we have this little tiny baby. What does it know? Do we wait until it knows about itself

before we talk to it? No. Do we wait until it knows about the objects with which it is surrounded before we speak of the child? No. When the baby is very small, it is given a name, we will say Johnnie. Now the parents call the baby by his name, they talk to it and tell it about different things; tell it how sweet it is, how beautiful, how dear. They tell it about mamma and papa. Now, as the baby gets a little older and plays about by itself, it will make sounds, most of which are unintelligible; but hearing ma and pa so frequently, the little thing also imitates those sounds, and then the mother says to the father "Oh, the baby is calling you," when it says pa. The father says to the baby, "Come here." Does the child know what that means? No, it is only by the extended arms and coaxing of the father that the child is impressed with the fact that it is to come to him. So we see this *local consciousness is developed by association with those in whom it is alive.* So the Cosmic-consciousness is developed by associating with those who

have it, who realize their Godhead. You need only associate with those in whom grief is strong, to feel heavy laden; you need only associate with those, who are full of sunshine and life, to feel joyful; and so by association is this consciousness kindled. Whether association be with nature, with the illumined, or with the writings of the illumined, matters not, but association kindles this within. The parent calls Johnie, Johnie, until the child becomes Johnie, it might just as well have been a Willie. Is that not so? Again three or four children may be sleeping in the same room. Johnnie is called. Johnnie is the one who responds to the call, not Willie. Willie does not awaken in spite of the loud call; it was not he who was called.

It is through ignorance that a person might ask one who realized his oneness with the SELF to make a blade of grass. The questioner might say; "Now see here, you call yourself God, what can you do? God made the universe and you cannot even make a blade of grass, still you call

yourself God. Show me, what you can do." Was not Jesus tempted in the same way? He did not heed the taunts of satan who urged him to leap from the mountain, but said to him, "Get thee behind me." All power was his, but why should he perform for an unbeliever. Myriads upon myriads of miracles would not make the doubter believe. He would not realize the Self unless he too had the Universal Consciousness in him brought forth. Now when I say "I am God," what do I mean? This little personality? No, not that. This mind? No, not that. It is like this. Suppose a man were Master of Arts and received the degree, suppose he were a king and had the title of king, that would be something external to the personality, something tacked on, as it were. Similarly I might say the snake is black; that is not the snake but something outside the snake, an attribute of the snake. But when I say snake is rope, that makes an entirely different proposition. I am a king, king is a title, a position, but I say I am God, that

does not mean the little ego you see any more than the rope was the snake. That was an illusion. In your ignorance you took the rope for a snake, but that was not the truth, it was really a rope. So this personality is a hallucination—I am GOD and GOD alone, THE ETERNAL ONE, THE ALL, there is no rival at all.

To explain this a little further, here we have two waves. Is the water any different in one form what it is in the other? No, the water is just the same. The water in entire ocean is just the same. Here we have one form and there another. Is the SELF different in this one form what it is in that? No, the One only is ALL; THAT is without a second. These bodies are all bodies of the Self. They are all mine; there is no difference. In different languages, we call 'light' differently. In English it is called 'light,' in German 'licht' and so on. It is light in every case, is it not? The light is just the same, even though we know it by different names. Names do not make any difference to the

Self IT must be ALL.

This body is one continuous body. How would it be if the hand undertook to live by itself and say, "I am the bread-winner, I want all I earn"? Instead of putting the food into the mouth, letting the stomach digest it and the nourishment be distributed, the food would be injected into the hand. Ridiculous, isn't it? If the dollars are fastened to the hand or a yellow wasp stings it there would be swelling and pain. But if the hand were cut off, there would be constant pain and misery; for it belongs to the whole. So when the food is digested by the stomach, the hand gets its due share of nutrition. The whole works together. So it is that when we cut ourselves off from the whole, we suffer and suffer until we realize our universality. There can be no rest in this performance. When the Universal consciousness is developed, we see that all bodies are interdependent; they are all mine, there is no separateness.

Once a Sawami went to a goldsmith and said to him, "Bring out your best ring and

put it on the finger of God." Then he went to the shoemaker and said to him, "Bring your best shoes and put them on the feet of God." Then he proceeded to the tailor and to him he said, "Put your best suit on the body of God," thereby meaning his body. When the people heard this they called him a blasphemer and said, "Away with him, he must be put in prison." Before they took him away, the Swami asked for an audience, saying that he wanted to tell them something before he was thrown into prison. He said to them, "Whose world is this?" They answered, "God's." "Whose are the stars and the Sun?"—"God's." Whose are the fields and all they contain?"—"God's." Do you believe this? They answered, "Most certainly, that is the truth." He then said, whose body is this? and they said, God's—whose feet? God's—Whose—finger? God's. It was God's indeed. Since by their own reasoning he brought them to see that what he had said was right, of course nothing could be done to him. They were ignorant

ones and had not looked as deeply as had the Swami.

In India, when a person is dying they say he gives up the body; here they say he gives up the ghost. The expression there is more correct than the one used here, for it would indicate that the ghost was something other than the body. They also say there, "The breath went out of him." Once there were three men sitting together and drinking a great deal; they all became very intoxicated. One of them said; 'Let us have a little picnic,' and so they sent one of the party for meat and other things that they might all have a good time of it. While he was gone, one of the two remaining began to feel peculiar and said to his partner, "The breath is going out of me." The other said, "No, no; the breath must not go out of you," and he held the nose of the sick man that the breath might not escape; he stopped up his ears and held his mouth shut, thinking thereby to keep the breath in the body, but we know full-well what he could accomplish thereby. They

did not realize the truth and the inefficacy of such a performance.

Kirshna was to give a feast. All the ministers were invited, but he had not invited his sweetheart, Radha. The prime minister urged him to send her an invitation, but he would not listen to him and said, "No." However, the prime minister did not heed him and went to Radha to inform her of the feast which Krishna was to give. She said to him, 'When you have a feast, you send invitations to your friends, but you do not send an invitation to yourself, do you? I know that Krishna is to have a feast. We are one.'

One day the sweetheart of Majnun said that she did not feel well and nothing seemed to do her any good. So the Doctor was sent for. As was the old custom, he immediately proceeded to Laili to draw out a little blood, that is, he cut a little gash in the arm thinking thereby to draw out blood, but no blood came from Laili. From Majnun however it streamed forth; such was the oneness of these lovers.

THE WORLD

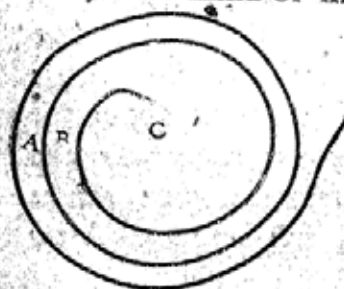
I saw, I studied, and learnt it,
This Primer well did Me describe,—
Its letters were hieroglyphic toys,
In different ways did Me inscribe—
This Alphabet, so curious one day,
I relegate to the waste paper basket,
I burn this booklet leaf by leaf
To light my lovely smoking pipe ;
I smoke and blow it through my mouth
Then watch the curly smoke go out.

HYPNOTISM AND VEDANTA

1. Emerson says, "Call one a thief and he will steal." In other words, make any kind of suggestion and you will see the corresponding result in action. This statement is true in some cases, but not universally. A suggestion can produce a direct effect in certain cases, but in other cases it may produce quite the contrary. Thus those who lay undue stress upon the direct applicability of suggestion are aware of half the truth only. According to Vedanta, suggestions produce their effect in the same way as electricity does, viz; by induction and conduction. In those cases where our suggestion can directly touch the subject, the result is direct and homogeneous with the suggestion, but in cases where our suggestion cannot reach the patient directly,

vjz, the state where the reason of the patient has antipathy against the man who makes the suggestion, intervenes and does not allow the suggestion to come in direct touch with the causal body of the subject, the result produced is quite the contrary to the one intended. This is hypnotism by induction, the former being hypnotism by conduction.

2. The Causal Body is the subconscious storehouse of all the impressions and latent energies of man. All the actions, movements, behaviour and circumstances of man are simply the working out of the hidden material in the Causal Body, and the corresponding result is sure to follow. The causal body is the core of man, the very centre, the king, or you may call it, subjective mind of man.



- C—Causal Body.
 B—Subtle Body or
 Mentality and
 Reason.
 A—Physical Body.

Any act done by the physical body is immediately transformed into mental energy or thought, and after dwelling for a time in the mental plane, which is represented by B in the annexed figure, passes on into the Causal Body, represented in the figure by C, and all those ideas that spontaneously appear in the mental plane B, without having come from the physical world, are simply the old stored-up energy of the Causal Body making its appearance on the lower plane B. Thus the relation between A, B, and C or the three bodies, is something like the relation between air, water, and aqueous vapour, or is analogous to the relation between the snows, the mountain-stream and the same stream on the plains, in fact, a relation of continuity.

Supposing you see a sick man lying on the road. Instinctively you go up to help him, and when you are attending to his wants, you do not think anything about the deed, but you are doing everything you can to relieve the suffering man, all your senses and organs being in full activity. After

you have finished your attention to the man and your physical organs and senses are brought to rest, you will naturally see that the activity and energy which was at first working in the plane of the senses, the plane A, passes on into the plane B. In other words, your mind begins naturally to reflect upon the act you have done and are consciously dwelling upon the virtue or heroism of the deed. After a while this energy which operated on the plane B will be observed to be no longer there. Where has it gone? Has it disappeared? That could not be, because nothing is lost in nature. According to Vedanta, this energy has become invisible, and passed into the subconscious state C, the Causal Body, and it is this energy stored up in the Causal Body in such ways that will appear on the plane B in our dreams, or in our inner emotions, inner inclinations, tendencies and propensities. This explains the rationale of inclinations according to Vedanta.

Experimental Proof.

Let the Causal Body of a man be

reached directly or indirectly in his wakeful or hypnotized state. The inclination or tendency imparted there will manifest itself undoubtedly in due time. When a person is hypnotized, a post-hypnotic suggestion which requires him to do a particular thing at a particular time after waking up, will unfailingly bear fruit at the proper time in the shape of a strong inclination to do the deed. Thus, as in this act, which can directly be brought about by a suggestion entering the Causal Body, so in all the acts that a man does, the Vedanta points out the presence of previous suggestions having entered the Causal Body. Those suggestions may have been due to the hypnotism of the senses, to the hypnotism of inner impressions or any form of hypnotism of which the whole world is made according to Vedanta. Let the Causal Body be instilled with the suggestion of health, and the physical body is bound to be healthy. Let the Causal Body be saturated with the suggestion of Godhead, and the man is bound to be a prophet.

Let the Causal Body be imbued with the suggestions of slavery and weakness, and the physical body must be weak and slavish. A man is the architect of his own product, in as much as it is his own Causal Body that is responsible for all his environments.

As in a somnambulistic or hypnotic state, a man sees a lake where there is no lake for others, he sees a fish-pond where for others there is none, and he sees things which never existed for others; all these phenomena are sustained and borne out by his own Self. Similarly, according to Vedanta, all the world seen by a man is purely and simply sustained by his own Self, the difference between the worldly and somnambulistic phenomena being that the latter are comparatively short-lived and of less duration. It is just like a man being put in a hypnotic state and being forgotten to be dehypnotized. All the people in the world are thrown into a queer hypnotism of the world and they will take a long, long time to be dehypnotized till there comes a free man of God Consciousness, and he

dehypnotizes them to their Real Godhead and they wake up. That which is substantial and which underlies all the phenomena must be the Reality, and all that which is imposed upon it must be the hypnotic phenomena. Now the substratum of the Causal Body remaining the same under all states,—the state of hypnotism, the state of wakefulness, the state of dreaming and deep sleep etc.,—is the Real Self or one Reality. Everything else is imposed upon it and is a hypnotic phenomenon. Self-Realization means to get rid of the helplessness, the hypnotism, and merge the phenomena into this final Reality. Through the suggestion of mother and father, borne out by the suggestion of the senses, was the hypnotic sleep of the world brought on and through the counter suggestion in the right way it is shaken off.

Why did the Real Self start wrong?

This why and wherefore and all anxiety are a part and result of hypnotism; they are the children and subjects of the Real Cause. To put question means

the hope of mastering the cause through the effect, to place the child before the father, to put the cart before the horse. This whying tendency and this querying inclination and all this questioning propensity is a part or manifestation of the inductive hypnotic state. In the dehypnotized state none of these is present. In the real original state none of these is present, no questions are possible. All this chain of causation is an unending spiral drawn upon a piece of paper. This chain of causation will never stop, will go on winding round and round, but the one Reality is like the piece of paper supporting all these convolutions and revolutions. That is beyond the chain. Thus to try to put the question, why and wherefore etc., is like making the paper this end or that end of the spiral, as if the paper was not present in all the convolutions, involutions and revolutions of the spiral. So Rama's command to the whole world is not to think yourself to be involved in the chain or in the spiral, or in the coils of the snake. Feel, feel and

realize yourself to be the controller, governor and master of the coils of the snake, and you are sure to be above causation. Verily, verily. Om!

VEDANTA AND SOCIALISM

First of all as to the name Socialism, Rama would prefer to call it Individualism. The word Socialism gives prominence to the idea of the rule of society, but Rama says, the right spirit of Truth is to assert the supremacy of the individual against all the world, all the universe. No botheration, no worry, no anxiety. This is what Rama calls Individualism, let people call it Socialism, if they wish. This is Vedantic teaching from the stand-point of the individual.

We see again that the end of so-called Socialism, being simply to bring down Capitalism, is so far identical with the end of Vedanta, which means simply to strip you of all sense of possession, and to cast to the winds all sense of property, accumula-

tion, all selfish possession. That is Vedanta and that is Socialism. The ends agree.

Vedanta preaches equality, and so must the end of true Socialism be, no deference, no respect, no regard for any outside possession. Nothing of the kind. This seems to be rather terrible and something very severe but there can be no happiness under the Sun unless a man gives up all sense of property and possessions, clinging and attachment. Socialism simply wants a man to give up all this, whereas Vedanta furnishes a great reason for doing the same. So called Socialism has been merely a study of the surface of things and comes to the conclusion that mankind should live on terms of equality, fraternity and love. Vedanta studies the phenomena from the intrinsic and indigenous point of view. According to Vedanta, the possession of any individual property is the most sacrilegious deed against one's Atma or inner Self. According to Vedanta, the only right that a man has is to give and not to ask. If you have nothing else to give, give up

your body to be fed upon by worms. That which you keep is nothing, for that nobody calls you a rich man. You are rich just by what you give. Everybody works not to possess anything, but to give away everything. The greatest mistake made by the world is that it attributes the sense of pleasure to receiving. Vedanta wants you to recognize the truth that all pleasure lies in giving, and not in asking or begging. The very moment you allow the asking or begging spirit to enter, you narrow and contract yourself and squeeze out the happiness that may be in you. Wherever you may be, work in the position of a giver and never in the position of a beggar, so that your work may be universal work and not personal in the least.

The Vedantic monks of India are living to-day this Socialistic life on the Himalayas, and this life they have been living from pre-historic times. They work the hardest, they are no drones, no men of ease and luxury, it is through their efforts that all the great literature of India has come out.

It is these people who have been the greatest poets, dramatists, scientists, philosophers, grammarians, mathematicians, astronomers, chemists, doctors, and yet these are the very men who never touched money. These are the very men who lived the hardest possible life. This wipes out the blame laid at the door of Socialism, the blame that socialism will make people cowards, lazy, and dependent upon others. He alone can work well who feels himself free.

According to Vedanta as well as Socialism, you have no right to possess your children, wife, house or anything.

It is a great blemish on the face of civilized society that woman is made a mercantile commodity and is possessed and belongs to a man in the same sense as a tree, house or money belongs to him. So a woman is given the position of an inanimate object in civilized society, whereas a man is free in his ways and a woman is kept bound hand and foot. She becomes the property of one man, then of another. According to Socialism as well as Vedanta,

this seems to be very astounding, but a woman ought to recognize her freedom in the same way as man does. She is as free as man is. Then if man is not to possess anything, woman also ought not to possess anything; in order to secure her happiness she will also have no right to possess her husband. Here arises a serious objection against Socialism. If Socialism allows perfect freedom to woman and man, it will reduce society to a state of animalism and make a world of libertines. Rama says, for woman and man from the sexual standpoint nothing better can be desired. Animals like cows or buffaloes are very reasonable in their intercourse, seasonable and rational in their behaviour. If men behave in the same manner, all the lust and passion of civilized society would be at an end.

Wonder of wonders, what a terrible blunder is made by man in calling a licentious man an animal, whereas animals are decidedly less licentious than man. They have no trace of any

unreasonable passion. They have intercourse only when they have to bring forth children. It is not so with man. A man who is sober and tranquil lives more the natural life of animals than licentious man. A licentious man should not be called an animal, he is a civilized man. This is peculiar to civilization and not to the savage state of society, they are reasonable and natural; everything is done in time and in season. According to Vedanta and according to Socialism, the more sobriety, sedate and tranquil state of nature will be secured, there will be less of this itching passion, but at the same time there will be no sense of possession as husband or wife and father or child.

It is this constant burden upon the heart to feel that we have to look after this child, this wife or this sister which does not allow a man to prosecute his studies, does not allow a man to realize the Godhead. Socialism or Vedanta wants to remove the burden from your heart to make you free. When you launch into the ocean of

investigation, you come out with flying colours, and when you enter the arena of research, you come out successful because you work freely, unshackled, not bound or hampered by ties or worries of any kind. Free you feel all the time, for you are sure that the wide world is your home.

All that we have to do is to make people see that the one cure for their maladies and diseases lies in discarding the idea of possession. Once this idea is realized by the vast majority of people, Socialism will spread like wild fire all the world over. This is the only cure of their ills, Vedanta-Socialism. Once this Vedanta-Socialism is heard in the world, the millennium is here and all the objections arising out of a distorted vision and a limited study of the circumstances around them will vanish. Under this Socialism, no Kings, no Presidents, no Priests are wanted, no armies needed. No Universities will ever be needed, as each man will be his own University. Libraries we shall have, to which anybody can come and read. No Professors, except for little children. No

Doctors needed, for by living a natural life, as preached by Vedanta, you can never fall sick, you require no Doctor. People may do whatever they please, may walk all over creation or wherever they like, not being afraid of their brother, as they are now, but doing good and devoting their time to really beneficial studies, philosophy and metaphysical researches, living and realizing to the fullest extent their Divinity and Godhead.

OM! OM!! OM!!!

MAN, THE MASTER OF HIS OWN DESTINY

*Lecture delivered at the Golden
Gate Hall, January 24th, 1930.*

OM

The Master of the whole Universe in the form of ladies and gentlemen,

To-night's subject is "Man, the master of his own Destiny." We have been treating of man in his real nature. The real man, the true man is the Divinity, God, nothing else but God; the real man is the master not only of one body's destiny, but of the whole universe, the wide world.

To-night we shall take the word 'man' in the same sense in which the subtle body of Vedantins is taken, you might say the desiring, willing, yearning man. Even in

this limited and narrow sense, man is the master of his own destiny. There are different sides to the question. We cannot take them up all in one night; we shall only take up the question from the micro-cosmical stand-point to-night.

Perhaps it is easier to believe that when a man is born, he can change his circumstances to a large extent. Admitted that a man is placed under certain circumstances, it is easier to believe that he can control his circumstances more or less, he can become the master of the circumstances, he can rise above them, and educate himself. From the poorest boy he can make himself the richest man in his country, as some people have done. Paupers have succeeded in raising themselves to a position of renown and honour in this world. Men born under most ignominious and lowest circumstances have succeeded in raising themselves so high. Take the case of Napoleon Bonaparte; take the case of Shakespeare; take the case of one of the Lord Mayors of London, Whittington; take the case of one

of the Prime Ministers of China who was at one time a poor farmer, a poor peasant. It is easy to prove that once being in this world, we can in our lifetime change our circumstances. This is easy to prove, but the harder part of the question comes when Vedanta asserts that even your birth and even your parents are made by yourself. The child is father to the man, but not only that, the child is father to the father. This is hard to prove, but Vedanta says, "Look at the question from any side, you are the master of your own destiny. If you are born blind, you are the master of your destiny, you have made yourself blind; if you are born of poor parents, you are the master of your own destiny, for you have made yourself to be born of poor parents; if you are born under most undersirable circumstances, you are the master of your own destiny, you have done that also. Even when you are born, you are the master of your own destiny." We shall take up this phase of the question to-night. How does man select his own parents? In other

words, we shall consider to-night the law of transmigration of the soul, to some extent; we shall not dwell upon it thoroughly but only a part of it we shall take up.

Some people believe that when a man dies, he dies entirely; some people believe that when a man dies, in order to account for his inherent, inborn, native idea of immortality, in order to account for our own inherent desire that our relative should not die, and in order to account for our reluctance to see our friends die, some religions and some people think that it is necessary for us to posit the existence of an imaginary other world—of a world of which we can give no positive proof in this world. Some people believe that way, and even these people have some truth on their side, and the truth which these people have on their side, was discussed in this Hall, the other evening. But this is not the whole truth. After death your going to hell or entering heaven is not the whole truth we have to explain matters on this plane, on the plane of material existence.

The laws of your spiritual world have no right to infringe upon the laws of your material world. Here is one man who is buried underground; "Earth to earth returneth" is spoken at his grave. But let us see. The body indeed returns to earth, but the body has not perished, the body has simply undergone a change. The material elements of the body are existent in a changed form, in an altered state; they have not perished. The same body of your friend will reappear in the form of a beautiful rose on the grave and will reappear in the form of fruits and trees one day. It has not perished.

Now, what is it about which we feel some doubt? Is it the spirit, the Truth, the real God that has perished? No, no. That can never perish. The real individual, the true man could never perish, could never be destroyed. Then what is it about which we are doubtful? It is the subtle body in other words, the mental desires, the mental feelings, emotions, the cravings of the heart, the wishes of the mind, the

willing and yearning of the soul, as you might say. This is what makes up the subtle body. What about that? The man is buried, are these things also buried? No, no. They could not be buried. But what has become of them? All the question is about this subtle body which consists of your mental energy, the inner activity or inner emotions, feelings and desires. The resultant of this energy, emotions, inner desire, etc., the combination or aggregate of these, what becomes of that? To say that this goes on to the spiritual world,—and here I refer to a plane which you cannot prove by the mechanical laws may be all right from your stand-point, but Science wants a proof on the material plane of what becomes of this energy. You know the inevitable, universal Law which Science has placed beyond all doubt, namely, that nothing in this world can be destroyed. Here is the Law of the Persistence of force, the Law of the Indestructibility of Matter, the Law of the Conservation of Energy; it tells you that

nothing can be destroyed. Oh, well. If the body was not to be destroyed, but was simply to change its state, and if the Divinity in us was not to be destroyed, but was permanent, immutable, then should these mental desires, mental energy, inner life be destroyed? Why should they be destroyed? The irresistible Law of the Conservation of Energy tells us that they can never be destroyed. You have no right to say that they are destroyed. They must live on, they must live on. They may change their place, they may change their state, but they must live on, they can never be destroyed. Just as when you take a candle and light it, in half-an-hour we see that everything is lost, the wax, wick, and all, all gone. But Science proves, Chemistry shows that it is not destroyed, it is not lost. By means of a bent test-tube, containing caustic soda and another chemical, it is shown that all that was apparently lost of the candle, is present, is caught in that bent test-tube. When we have a saucer full of water, and all the water in it

has evaporated, the ordinary man will say, oh, the water is lost, the water is gone, but Physics tells us that it is not gone. By experiments it is shown that it is present in the air; it cannot be destroyed.

Similarly, when a man dies, his mental energy, the desires, emotions, feelings apparently suffer a loss, and seem to suffer death, but Vedanta comes up with its Chemistry of soul, as it were, and proves to you experimentally that it is not destroyed and could not be destroyed. Then if it is not destroyed, what becomes of it? We shall solve this question in the same way as we solve mathematical problems. We take up a problem and we look at the data as well as the *quisita*, the hypothesis as well as the required conclusion. We meditate upon both sides. Sometimes by meditating upon the hypothesis or the data alone, we succeed in proving the whole thing, and sometimes we have to take up the conclusion or *quisita* and reflect upon *that*, and to think and think, and to connect the *quisita* with the data or connect the conclusion with

the hypothesis. Well, what is the data and what is the *quisita*? Life and death. These are the data and *quisita*; the phenomena of birth are like the data and the phenomena of death are like the *quisita*, or *vice versa*; it is one and the same thing. Here are so many people being born into the world, and there are so many people dying. Those people who are apparently dying, if their mental energy, or their desires, etc. die with them, then by assuming anything like that, you will be positing something against the established laws of Science. If our mental energies pass away, then there will be something passing into nothing, but you know that it is impossible. Something can never pass into nothing. To avoid that fallacy, you must believe that after death, mental desires, mental energy and mental activity do not pass into nothing; you must assume that first, you must take that for granted. You must accept that, and the next question will be, 'What becomes of it?'

Now the next question, what becomes

of the mental desires, etc., we shall consider by reflecting upon the phenomena of birth. So many people are being born into this world with different capacities, with different inclinations, different propensities, different physiognomy, different phrenology, different constructions of the brain, some people with a heavy brain, others with a very light brain, some people with a round head, others with an oblong head. People in this world are being born with different potentialities and different capacities. How is that? Children of the same parents with diametrically opposite inclinations, how many parents are giving birth to Cain and Abel in the same house, Joseph and Joseph's brothers in the same house? Students going to College, living in the same Boarding House, reading with the same Professors, and yet with different inclinations altogether, with entirely different tastes, one liking Mathematics, another liking History, one a poet, another a dullard. Is there any difference in the inclinations or propensities of people or

not? There is a difference. You cannot deny that. Some people are born precocious, they are smart even in their childhood; others are very lazy even in their childhood. To what is this difference in taste or inclination due? Vedanta asks what is this difference of inclinations or this inherent difference of propensities, which we mark in different people, due to? How do you explain that? If you explain it by saying that it is God's will, that it is His work, that is no answer, that is simply evading the question; evading the question is unphilosophical; that is declaring your ignorance. Explain it by the established Laws of Science. If you say that it is God's will 'that they are being born with these different desires from their childhood', there again you are violating the established Law of Science. Here you are practically asserting that something is coming out of nothing, and that is absurd, you know. In order to escape this difficulty, you will have to assume or accept that the child brings this difference of inclinations and propensities

with him, as it were, from the other world. Children do not bring these different kinds of desires from nothing, but these desires are also coming from something; they do not come into existence from nothing; they have been existing before. In other words, all these desires which people bring with them at their birth are brought from previous existent form. These desires lived, existed, were present a short while ago; here we are considering the quisita of birth and also the data of death. Vedanta connects the two and says, when a man dies, his unfulfilled desires at the time of death could not be destroyed. Here was a stranger born with different pronounced desires. His desires could not come out of nothing. Could it not be that the desires which were buried with the man in the grave reappear with the new man that was born in a house? If you assume that, you escape from the terrible fallacy which you committed by saying that something is lost into nothing, and that something comes out of nothing. You escape that terrible difficulty

by accepting this Law of Karma, as the Hindus call it, and the whole phenomena of Death and Birth become so natural, become exactly in accord with the laws of nature, with the established laws of harmony in this universe.

And again you see you will have to accept this Law of Karma through another law of logic, what the philosophers call the law of parsimony. When a thing may be explained by natural and usual rules, we should not resort to far-fetched, unnatural and hypothetical explanations. The Law of Karma gives you the most natural explanation, the plainest and the most scientific. In preference to this you should not resort to any extra or mundane explanations.

Here comes a question. Scientists say, "Oh, no; oh, no, we will not explain the different propensities in new-born children by the Law of Karma, we ought not to resort to that; we can very easily explain all that by the Law of Heredity. The Law of Heredity will explain all that," but Vedanta says, the Law of Karma is not opposed

to the Law of Heredity. It covers that, it explains that, but at the same time the Law of Karma, in addition to explaining the Law of Heredity, also explains the apparent loss of mental energy at the time of death; the Law of heredity does not explain that. So this Law of Karma has a greater claim on the attention of all scientists, all philosophers than the Law of Heredity by itself. How does the Law of Karma explain the Law of Heredity? When a man dies, all his desires are apparently lost, cast to the winds. Vedanta says they are not lost; as when a candle is burning, the wick and wax are not lost, but when apparently lost, the law of chemical affinity, as we call it, by chemical affinity the carbon combines with the oxygen, the hydrogen combines with the oxygen, is attracted to it by affinity. So these desires, this mental energy, or the subtle body of man, after death, by a law of affinity, spiritual affinity, or we might call it material affinity just as well, by a kind of affinity, these combine; all your mental energy is drawn to a soil

where the environments, the circumstances will be congenial to its growth, helpful to its fruition, and of great aid in its development. In other words, the compound or resultant of your desires or mental energy is drawn to a place where you will find congenial soil, where all unutilized energies and unfulfilled desires will fructify, will be realized.

Thus does everybody select his own parents. We see again that when a man is alive, he is full of desires; most of his desires are satisfied in his life-time, but some are not. What will become of these? Will they be altogether ignored and lost? No, no. When a bud is seen in a garden it gives a promise of flowering and blooming; the promise of the bud is carried out, is satisfied. We see that even the desires of ants and lower creatures are satisfied. Why should the desires of man be frustrated? Why should Man be mocked at by Nature or Providence? He is not to be made fun of. His desires also must bear fruition. Most of our desires do bear fruition in our life.

Thus we see that it is the desires that become our acts, they are the motive powers. But many desires are not fulfilled. What will become of them? Vedanta says, "O man, you are not to be mocked at by God. All your unfulfilled desires and unsatisfied energy must bear fruit, if not in this world, then in the next."

Here is a question now. If we were existent in some previous birth, and if after death we have to reincarnate, how is it that we do not remember our past births? Vedanta asks, "What is Memory?" Here is Rama speaking to you, for instance, in a foreign language. Rama never lectured in India in the English language. While talking to you in English, not a single word of the mother tongue comes to Rama's mind, but is that Indian language entirely lost? No. It is there, but if Rama likes Arabic, Persian, or the other Indian languages, they can come to his memory at a moment's notice. Then, what is Memory? Here is the lake of your mentality; all the Indian languages, Persian, Arabic, and

Sanskrit are settled at the bottom of this lake in Rama's case. We can stir up the lake and bring up all these things to the surface at a moment's notice, and that is remembering the thing. You know a great many things, but all of them you are not conscious of. You can become conscious of them this moment by stirring up the lake of your mentality; by bringing them to the surface, they come into your mind or brains.

Similarly, Vedanta says, all your births and past lives are there in your inner lake of consciousness, inner lake of knowledge. They are there; at present they are settled at the bottom, they are not on the surface. If you wish to recall your past births, that is not a difficult task. You may stir up the very bottom of the lake of your knowledge and you can bring to the surface anything you like. You can remember even your past births if you like, but then it is not worth while to try the experiment, because, according to another law, the Law of Evolution, you have to go onward, you have to go ahead. Let the

dead bury the dead, let the past bury its past. You have nothing to do with that. You have to go ahead.

Again, according to the Law of Karma, all these things that you see in this world, all these things in which you are so much interested, which you like so much, by which you are attracted, Vedanta says, you like them, you are interested in them, you love them, you recognize them, only because you have been all that at one time. You have been rocks, you have been asleep in the rocks, you have glided with the streams, you have grown with the plants, you have run with the animals, and you recognize and see all of them. We can prove that by another argument now.

This is an adaptation of the argument of Socrates, or Plato rather. What is reminiscence? Reminiscence implies the knowledge of a thing beforehand, which we remember now. For instance, suppose to these lectures some persons came together, always an inseparable pair. They came to the seven lectures that were delivered in

this hall, but to the eighth lecture, only one comes, the other does not. The friends will put this question to the separated man, to the the separated companion, "Where is your friend, your dear one? Where is he?" Why will this question be put? This question is caused by the Law of Reminiscence, which is the Law of Association also. We saw the two together always, the two became familiar to us, the two became, as it were, one in our mind, the two were united; and when afterwards we see one of them, this one at once reminds us of the other. This is how association in the brain was established, this is how reminiscence was brought about. This very reminiscence implies a previous knowledge of the thing which we remember.

Now here is your syllogism. All men are mortal; John is a man; therefore, John is mortal. All your logic, all your argument, all your reasoning depends upon these premises—"all men are mortal", 'John is a man'. Speak only these two premises, hold back the conclusion, and at once in our

mind comes up like a reminiscence the conclusion—'John is mortal.' How is this conclusion brought about? Is it not brought about by the Law of Reminiscence as defined by Plato? It is. The three Propositions, 'all men are mortal,' 'John is a man,' and 'John is mortal,' are there. Out of these, two are placed before you, 'all men are mortal,' 'John is a man.' These two are placed before you, and all at once, by the laws of thought, as philosophers call it, the third proposition comes to your mind. It will come up in the mind of each and all, in the mind of every body. How is that? This is brought about in the same way, as when we see one of the friends, we are reminded of the other that used to be always in the company of this friend. Well, how could this reminiscence come about, how was this law of thought inherent in the brains of each and all? How was this law of thought which brought about this kind of reminiscence present in the minds of each and all? By a kind of reminiscence. Now reminiscence implies previous

knowledge. Every child that has a brain is capable of reasoning, we can argue with every child. When he begins to reflect a little, we may present to him this syllogism, and he will accept it.

Here we are proving a Proposition of Euclid. We arrive at the conclusion at once. This conclusion is brought about by reminiscence. This reminiscence, being inherent in the brains of each and all, is a sure proof of the fact that you have already been acquainted and familiar with the things which are revived in your brains by reminiscence. Now, in order that you should have been cognizant, familiar with the things which are revived in your brain by reminiscence, you must have learned and acquired them at some time or other. But you are sure that you did not learn or acquire them in this life. Where then did you get this knowledge? Vedanta says, in the previous birth.

Here is another question. Well, if we are the masters of our own destiny, none of us ever desires to be poor. How are we

born poor then? All of us desire to be born rich, none of us wants to be poor, and yet we are poor, we are born poor, most of us. How is that? Vedanta replies, you should look at matters in their proper light, you ought to study them thoroughly. Do not count on half truths. Look at the facts from all sides. It is not true that everybody desires to become the Lord Mayor of London. It is not true that everybody wishes to become a millionaire. Here is a man who gets \$ 4'00 a week; his ambition is only to be promoted to a position where he may get \$ 7'00 a week. Never does the idea enter his mind to become the Lord Mayor of London. No, it is not true, you see.

And look at the matter from another standpoint. People are inconsistent and unreasonable in their desires. They do not adjust their desires to the circumstances, they become slaves to desires. They are not masters of their desires, and thus despite themselves, by their own desires they are led into straits and difficulties, they are led into trouble and anxiety.

Now comes the interesting part of the talk for each and all. Suppose, here is a man who wants to satisfy his animal passions; he does not want to have anything to do with knowledge; he wants to meddle in no way with spirituality, with religion, with morality, with name or fame. He wants to have nothing to do with these things; all that he wants is to satisfy his animal desires, his sensuous appetites. This man dies. (This is an hypothetical case, but this is to illustrate the matter.) Now what kind of parents will he make for himself? His desire does not require him to be born of learned parents, the kind of energy which is in him does not demand any rich parents for its congenial soil. It does not demand any educated or civilized parents. No, Vedanta says that if this man is entirely made up of animal passions, he will get a most proper and befitting body in the form of hogs or dogs, because there he will inherit a body which is not tired of eating, which is not tired of gratifying animal desires, a body which is fit for making a fool

of himself. He will get a body of that kind. In order that his desires may be fulfilled, he must be born as a hog or dog. Thus is he the master of his own destiny, even if he is a dog or hog.

When the people of this world desire anything, they do not see what the consequences will be, they do not see to what they will be led, and afterwards when they receive the consequences of their desires, they begin to weep and cry and bewail their destiny, bewail their stars, they begin to weep, gnash their teeth and bite their lips. So even while you are desiring, see what the consequences will be. It is you yourself that bring about this misery, and nobody else.

Rama will tell you now the story of a poet in East India. He was a Mohammedan poet, a very good man, a clever man. You might call him a very clever and witty man. He was living at the court of one of the native princes who was highly interested in him. One night, the native prince kept him long in his company, and

this poet amused the prince with all sorts of poems, witty stories, and most amusing tales. The prince went to bed very late on account of being amused by the witty poet to such a degree that he forgot all about his sleep. The queen asked the prince what was the cause of his delay, of his unusual delay in retiring to his rooms. The prince replied, "Oh, we had a wonderful man with us this evening; he was so good, so splendid, so witty and amusing." Then the queen enquired more about him, and her curiosity made the king expatiate upon the capability and attainments of the poet to such a degree that they had to sit until a late hour, so that it was near dawn when they retired. Now the curiosity of the queen being excited to the highest pitch, she asked the prince to bring this witty poet before her some day. Well, the next day this witty poet was brought before the queen. You know, in India the customs are quite different from those in the West. In India, females live in separate apartments and do not mix much with

males, with gentlemen. They live apart; especially Mohammedan women, not Hindus, wear heavy veils and do not let anybody see them excepting their husbands or those who are very pure, noble and pious. Well, this poet was brought by the king into the harem, as we call it, into the private apartments of the ladies. There he sang his poems and recited his stories; the ladies were highly amused. Then the poet gave out that he was blind, he was suffering from a disease of the eyes, but he was not blind in reality. Now the wicked intention of this poet was to be allowed to live in the private apartments of the ladies, so that they might not mistrust him, and the ladies thinking him to be blind might be free in their walks and talks, in going from room to room, and might not keep any veils on their countenances when passing by him. Now, believing him to be blind, the prince allowed him to remain in the apartments of the ladies. But you know, truth cannot be concealed.

“Truth crushed to earth shall rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers.”

It cannot be concealed, it will be out one day. One day this poet asked, one of the maid-servants to bring something to him. You know, those people who become a little rich in India become very lazy. The sign of riches is looked upon to be laziness. You are a very noble man if you can do nothing yourself; if some body has to come and help you to get a seat in the carriage, you are a most noble man; if somebody else has to help you to dress yourself, then you are a most noble man; if somebody else has to come and help you even in your walks, then you are a most noble man. Thus dependence is the sign of honour. Independence and self-mastery are looked upon to be dependence and servility. When this poet got an honourable position in the house of the prince, he thought it beneath his dignity to leave his seat and bring a chair to where he wanted it. So he ordered one of the maid-servants to do it, but she replied harshly, bluntly that she had no leisure, she could not spare the time. After that there appeared another servant and he beckoned

to her to come forward to him and asked her to move the chair, but she said that there was no chair in the room. He said, "Bring that basin of water to me." She said, "There is none in this room; I will go into the other room and bring it to you." He said, "Bring it, there is one in the room, do you not see it, there it is." In his anxiety to get the thing done, he forgot himself. That is what happens. This is how truth plays a joke with liars. You know Lady Macbeth perpetrated that deed, but she could not conceal it. The truth made her mad and she confessed it to the Doctor, of her own accord. That is what happens. This is the Law of Nature. When this poet said, "Here it is, do you not see it" the maid, at once, instead of doing that job for him, ran straight to the queen and divulged the secret, and said, "Lo! that man is not blind, he is a wicked man, he ought to be turned out of the house." He was turned out of the house, but about three days after he actually became blind. How is that? Why, the Law of Karma comes and tells

you that this man becomes blind by his own will. He is the master of his own destiny. Blindness is brought on himself by his own self, nobody else makes him blind ; his own desires, his own cravings make him blind. Afterwards, when blindness comes, he begins to weep and cry, to gnash his teeth and beat his breast.

There was a man carrying a heavy weight upon his shoulder ; he was old, weak, and feverish, and lived in a hot country, India. He sat down under the shade of a tree and threw off his burden from his shoulders and rested a while, and cried, "O Death, O Death, come, O Death! Relieve me, relieve me." The story says that the God of Death appeared to him on the spot. When he looked at him, he was astonished, he trembled. What is that hideous figure, that monstrous something? He asked the God of Death, "Who are you?" The God of Death said, "I am he, whom you called ; you have called me just now and I have come to satisfy your wish." Then the old man began to tremble and said, "I did not call you to

put me to death, I called you simply to help me to lift this burden and put it on my shoulders."

That is what people do. All your difficulties, all your troubles and what are called sorrows are brought about by your own self; you are the master of your own destiny, but when the thing comes, you begin to cry and weep; you invite Death, and when Death comes, you begin to cry. But that can-not be. When once you bid the highest price in an auction, you will have to take the thing. When you make the horse run; the carriage follows the horse. So when once you desire, you will have to take the consequences. How is it that people usually die in their old age and very few die in their youth? Vedanta says when people become old, their bodies become diseased? They are harrassed by sickness and then they begin to desire death; they begin to ask for relief and relief comes. Thus your death is brought about by your own self. Everybody is a suicide according to Vedanta. Death comes the moment

you wish it to come. How is it that people die in the prime of life? You will not, perhaps, believe Rama at present, but if you make correct observations, you must concur with what Rama states just now. Rama has observed many people dying in the prime of life; Rama entered into their private life, enquired into the whole matter, and came to know that these young men in their heart of hearts sought death, they were sick of their circumstances, and wanted to change the surroundings. That is always the case. There is no time now to advance any concrete illustrations, but this is a fact.

There was a bright young man working as a Professor in one of the sectarian colleges in India. In one of the public meetings, he declared his life to be given to that cause, he dedicated himself to that cause. He worked there most zealously for a time and then his opinion changed, his thoughts expanded, his mind broadened, his views enlarged, and he could no longer work with these sectarians; and these

sectarians could not sympathize with him in their heart of hearts, yet he had to pull on with them, because he had committed himself, because he had bound himself to their cause; there was no escape for this young man. His heart was in one place and his body was somewhere else, the heart and the body were disunited. This could not be, this could not go on. The man died; he could not change his circumstances by any other means than by death; by death were the circumstances changed. Thus even death is not the bugaboo that it appears to be.

You are the master of your circumstances, you are the master of your destiny. How is it that people are made miserable? How is it that difficulties are brought about? By the conflict of desires. You have one kind of desire which wants you to do one kind of act, and then you have other desires which want you to do differently. Both desires are there. One desire wants to raise you to a certain position: as a writer, a speaker, a professor, a lecturer, or a

preacher ; one kind of desire wants you to go that way ; another kind of desire comes and wants you to become a slave to the senses. Here are conflicting desires which cannot go together. What happens ? Both must be fulfilled. While one is being fulfilled, the other suffers and you are in pain. While the other one is being fulfilled, the first one suffers and you are in pain. This is how people bring about suffering on themselves. Even your suffering shows that you are the master of your own destiny. Rama will illustrate this by a very pretty story.

A man in India had two wives. You know the Hindus never believe in polygamy, but the Mohammedans do. It was a Mohammedan who had two wives. One of them used to live upstairs and the other on the lower storey. One day a thief broke into the house. He wanted to steal all the property, but the members of the house were wide awake, and the thief could not get an opportunity of stealing anything. Near dawn, the members of the house saw the thief, and they caught him

and took him before a magistrate, or to the police magistrate. Nothing was stolen, yet the thief had broken into the house. That was a crime. The Magistrate put some cross questions to the thief, he at once admitted that he had broken into the house with the intention of stealing something. The Magistrate was going to inflict some punishment upon him. The man said, "Sir, you may do whatever you please, you may throw me into a dungeon, you may cast me before dogs, you may burn my body, but do not inflict one punishment upon me." The magistrate being astonished, asked, 'What is that?' The man said, "Never make me the husband of two wives. Never inflict this punishment upon me." Why is that? Then the thief began to explain how he was caught, how he had no opportunity to steal anything. He said that all night long the master of the house had to stand upon the stairs, because one wife was pulling him upstairs and the other was dragging him downstairs. The hair of his head was pulled out and the stockings on

his feet were torn off; he was shivering with cold all night long, and thus it was that he had been caught, and had no opportunity of stealing anything.

So it is, all your sufferings come through your conflicting desires, and your desires are not in harmony, but are at war with each other; and you know a house divided against itself must fall. So, examine your own hearts and minds and see if there is peace there. If you have singleness of aim and unity of purpose, you will have no trouble, you will have no suffering, but if there is conflict and discord, the house must be pulled down, you must suffer.

This is the cause of your suffering, and it is brought on by yourselves. You are the masters of your own destiny. A man has lower desires as well as higher. There is warfare between the two, but according to the universal Law of Evolution, in this strife and struggle, the fittest must survive; the survival of the fittest is the plan of nature. Thus in harmony with this universal law of the survival of the fittest, in this warfare,

those desires carry the day which have the most strength in them. But whence does this strength come? Strength comes from truth, and truth only. Those desires alone which have more of the truth in them, more of righteousness, justice, godliness or purity, will carry the day. You will have to improve and progress at the bayonet's point. You cannot stagnate in sensuality all the time. You cannot stagnate in selfish greed and avarice. You will have to rise, slowly but most surely. Here is Happiness before you. Here is the Law of Karma holding out Happiness to each and all.

Why must desires be fulfilled? Vedanta says: your real nature, your real Self is immortal; Rama is immortal God. Now all your desires, mind and body being only ripples and waves in the ocean of Truth, in the waters of Eternity, partake of the nature of the substance of which they are made up. The true God, Divinity or Self makes the world as His breath. The world is my breath. In the twinkling of the eyes; I create the world. In the twinkling

of your eyes, the world is created; (I am yourself). All these desires partake of the nature of the Divinity as well as of the little selfish ego. Now, that phase of the desires which depends upon the Divinity or the Immortality within, obliged all the desires to be fulfilled. Now, those elements in the desires which rest upon Maya, cause a delay in the fulfilment of the desires. This delay in the fulfilment of your desires is caused by the Maya-element of your desires, and the certainty of the fulfilment of your desires is due to the inherent godly nature of your desires. Well you will say how are desires godly? All desires are nothing else but Love, and Love is nothing but God. Is not Love God? All desires are of the same sort as Gravitation. What is Gravitation? Here is the Earth attracting the Moon. Here is the Sun attracting the Earth. Here are the planets attracting each other—'universal love,' here is the law of affinity, one atom attracting the other. What is the force of cohesion in molecules? One molecule attracting another molecule.

Attracting is desiring from your standpoint. Why this attraction, this force, this cohesion, or chemical adhesion, gravitation? All this is desire. All your desires are godly. Thus the godly nature of your desires insists upon their fulfilment; but when you make them selfish or personal, their selfish character makes the desires partake of the nature of Maya and thus they are delayed in fulfilment.

In order that your desires may be fulfilled smoothly and easily, and may be realized to your entire satisfaction, you have to lessen the Maya-nature of your desires, you have to bring into predominance the godly or unselfish nature of your desires, and they will bear fruition.

Well, what is the philosophy of prayer? How are prayers heard, we shall take up the subject some other time.

OM! OM!!

We will read a poem and then stop.

Once realize that you are the master of your destiny, and how happy you do feel. When you are chanting OM, and when you

feel that you are the master of your own destiny, there is no longer any need for crying and weeping, and feeling miserable. You have made your circumstances different. Realize your mastery, do not feel yourself to be a slave of your surroundings, realize this truth, feel this truth that you are the master of your own destiny; and whatever be your circumstances, your surroundings, whether the body is put into jail, or is being carried away by a swift current, or crushed under the heels of somebody, remember "I am He." Who is the master of the circumstances. "I am not the body, I am He, the master of destiny." Your friends are made by you. It is your own desires that place around you those whom you call friends. It is your own wish that has placed around you those whom you call your foes. O foes, you are made by me. O friends, you are my creation. Realize that idea and feel that, and how happy you become.

Oh, brimful is my cup of joy,
Fulfilled completely all desires;

Sweet morning's zephyrs I employ ;
'Tis I in bloom their kiss admires,
The rainbow colours are my attires,
My errands run like lightning fires,
The smiles of rose, the pearls of dew,
The golden threads, so fresh, so new,
All sun's bright rays, embalmed in sweetness,
The silvery moon, delicious neatnees,
The playful ripples, waving trees,
Entwining creepers, humming bees,
Are my expression, my balmy breath,
My respiration is life and death,
What shall I do, or where remove ?
I fill all space, no room to move.
Shall I suspect or I desire ?
All time is me, all force my fire.
Can I be doubt or sorrow-stricken ?
No, I am verily all causation,
All time is now, all distance here,
All problems solved, solution clear.
All ill and good, all bitter and sweet,
In those my throbbing pulse doth beat.
All lovers I am all sweethearts I,
I am desires, emotions I.
No selfish aim, no tie, no bond,
To me do each and all respond,
Impersonal Lord, in foe and friend,
To me doth every object bend.

AFTER DEATH
OR
ALL RELIGIONS RECONCILED.

*Lecture delivered at the Golden
Gate Hall on January 15, 1903.*

The Immortal, the Object of all religions, in the form of ladies and gentlemen:—

So far the lectures delivered in this hall have been very hard, the subjects were tough, a little abstruse; but to-night's discourse is comparatively easy.

A few years ago, when Rama was in East India, a book by a Reverend Doctor, an American gentleman, a Professor in a University in East India, came into Rama's hands. The subject of this book was "After Death." By a very beautiful allegory it was shown that this world is like

one station and the other world is like another station, beyond the bay, beyond the seas; and all those who have to go beyond this bay have to purchase tickets. Those who do not possess the right kind of tickets will be thrown overboard into the deep abyss. Those who have the right kind of tickets will be allowed to pass on to the goal, to the destination. Tickets are of several kinds first class, second class, third class; etc. Then there are some counterfeit tickets.. They are white, black, yellow, green, etc.; but the real, genuine tickets, the right kind of tickets which have to take you to the destination are red, besmeared with the blood of Jesus, the Christ. Those alone who have such tickets, will be allowed to reach the destination successfully; others never, never. The white, black, yellow, and other kinds of tickets were the tickets of other religions, so to say, and the red tickets bore the blood of Christ; they were the Christian tickets. This was the subject of the book, and it was very beautifully brought out.

The Reverend Doctor had lavished all his ingenuity and all his knowledge of English literature in writing that book.

Something like this is the belief, not only of Christians but of men of all other religions. Mohammedans say that after death, the ticket collector, the great station master, or the Examiner of Accounts, is Mohammed, and those who do not bear the sign of Mohammed will be cast down into hell. Other religions also have ideas of the same sort, and they say that all the dead, whether they died in America, Europe, Africa, Australia, or Asia, will be subjected to the disposal of a single man, let it be Christ, Mohammed, Buddha, Zoroaster, Krishna, or anybody; and this is the cause of all the warfare, strife and struggle between religions. This superstition, this dogmatic view, is the cause of most of the bloodshed in this world, the bloodshed that has been carried on in the name of religion.

The view of the Vedanta Philosophy on this subject is to be laid before you. Vedanta

reconciles all these religions, and tells them that each of them may be right without encroaching upon the rights of others. In order that you may be right, it is not necessary that you should wrong your fellow brothers. This is a vast subject, and in the short space of an hour or so, we can only dwell upon the most salient features of the subject, as treated by the Vedanta Philosophy.

All progress in this world is in a line of beauty; all the evolution and progress in the universe is in a rhythmic line; all vibration in this world is harmonic; we have rise and fall, ups and downs, in regular order. As Mathematics shows, for every maximum there must be a minimum; maximum and minimum points alternate; day and night we have rhythmic motion. When you have to move, you move one foot and then the other. The seasons of the year follow in regular succession, the same seasons over and over again, periodic motion as it is called. We have periodic motion in this world; every day you wake up

and go to bed, you go to sleep and you rise. Just as sleep and wakefulness succeed each other in regular succession, similarly, according to Vedanta, life and death, death and life, also succeed each other in regular order. In this whole universe, never, never, at any place we had an abrupt stoppage. Time, does it ever stop? No. Do you know when Time began? Does Space ever stop anywhere? No. There is no end. Do rivers ever stop? You say they do. No, they do not. The rivers that enter the ocean rise up in the form of vapour, go back to the mountains, and again they flow to the sea, and from the sea go back to the mountains. Suppose here is a candle; it burns away in an hour or so, wick and all. You say it dies; no, it does not. Chemistry shows that it does not die. It simply undergoes change. The carbondioxide and water, that are produced out of it, appear again in vegetables. Nothing dies. All progress is in a circle, or rather spherical, in this world. See here, you are alive, you die. Will this state after death continue

for ever? You have no right to say that ; to make a statement of that kind is against the laws of nature. There you begin to defy the most stringent laws which govern the world, when you say that after death there is eternal damnation, and no more life ; you have no right to speak that way. If God, after a man is dead, casts him to eternal damnation, then what a revengeful God He is. A man works for his three score and ten years and dies ; poor fellow, he did not have the opportunities of receiving the right kind of education, he did not get the right means to elevate himself, he was born of poor parents who could not impart to him education, who could take him to no Church, and he died. This man did not possess a ticket besmeared with the blood of Christ. Now this man is to be cast into hell for ever and ever. Oh, is that not a most revengeful God, Who does that? In the name of justice you have no right to make a statement of that kind. According to Vedanta, when a man dies, he should not remain dead for ever. After every death

there is life, and after life there is death, and in reality death is a mere name, death means, change of state and nothing else. Death has nothing abominable, nothing horrible in it. It is a big mistake when we make a great bugaboo of it; there is nothing terrible in it, it is simply a change of state.

Well, so long as you are alive in this world, suppose for 70 or 80 years, you are enjoying a long, long wakeful state; the life in this world is a long, continued wakeful state, and after life the so-called death is, according to Vedanta, simply a proportionately long sleep. This death, according to Vedanta, is a long sleep. Just as in every 24 hours, after enjoying some three or four hours of sleep, you get up again, so after enjoying the rest of death, you have to be born again into this world, you are reincarnated or re-born. Rebirth or reincarnation is like waking up again after enjoying a nap.

According to Vedanta, after a man dies, he is not reincarnated on the spot at once.

When a seed falls from a tree, the seed does not spring up into a new tree all at once, it takes some time. When a man leaves one house, he does not immediately enter another; it takes him some time. Similarly, after a man is dead, he is not reincarnated immediately. He passes through an intermediate state which we call the state of 'death,' or the state of long sleep. Now what about this state? What kind of state is this, the state between death and the second birth? It is a state of sleep, and it has all the properties of sleep. You know when a man goes to sleep, in his dreams he sees about the same sort of things which he has been working at in his wakeful state. That is the common rule. There are sometimes apparent exceptions to it, but usually a man in his dreams sees the same sort of things as he does in his wakeful state. Those people who study in Universities for examinations will bear Rama out in this statement, that when their examination is very near and they are preparing

for it most laboriously, in their dreams they often see the same sort of things and they keep doing the same sort of work as kept them busy in the daytime. After they have gone through the examination, and are expecting the results, and wish that they shall come out successful and head the list of successful graduates, in those days when they are in a state of suspense, they keep dreaming about the result of the examination. The people who love a particular subject or object, cannot but dream about it at night.

When Rama was a student preparing for the Bachelor of Arts Examination, a fellow student used to live in the same room with him. This fellow-student was a very playful young man. He used to while away his time in singing, dancing, and playing. One day a gentleman asked this friend, how many hours he used to devote to his studies. He smilingly said, "Full 18 hours." The friend said, "What does that mean? You waste four or five hours in my presence, before my eyes; I know that you sleep about

8 or 9 hours out of the 24, and that leaves you only 10 or 12 hours, and yet you say that you read for full 18 hours." The young man said, "You have not studied mathematics. I can prove that I read for full 18 hours." The gentleman said, "Well, how is that?" The young man said, "I and this Rama live in the same room; as a matter of fact, I read for 12 hours and he reads for 24 hours, that makes up 36; strike the average, 18 falls to his share and 18 to mine." The gentleman said, "Well, admitting that you read for 12 hours, but I cannot admit that Rama reads for full 24 hours. How is that possible? I know that Rama is a very hardworking student, I know he is preparing so many subjects, and he is not only doing the University work, he is doing four times as much work extra and preparing many other subjects, and doing all sorts of work, but still the laws of nature will not allow him to work for 24 hours." This fellow student began to explain. He said, "I can show you that when he is taking his dinner, he never allows his mind

to idle away a single second ; I can show you that he always has with him a paper on which there is some scientific problem to reflect upon, some mathematical or philosophical subject, or some book or poem which he may commit to memory ; he may be writing a poem or doing some sort of work or other ; he never wastes a moment when he is taking his meals. When he is in the toilet room, he is drawing with a piece of chalk, figures on the wall ; when he goes to sleep, he is working at some problem or other, he is always dreaming of the same subjects which occupy his mind during the day. Thus his 24 hours are devoted to study."

Well, there was some truth in his statement. The man who devotes full 18 hours of his time to study, in his dreams can do nothing else but the same kind of work which he has been doing in the daytime. Sometimes people say that they see in their dreams such things as they never saw before. Vedanta says, "No." Here comes a man ; he says that he saw in his dream a monster. He had the head of a lion, the back of a

camel, the tail of a serpent, the feet of a frog. He says that he never saw an animal of that kind before. Vedanta tells him, "Brother, you have seen a man, you have seen a serpent, you have seen a camel, you have seen a frog; and the tail of the serpent, the head of the lion, the back of the camel, the feet of the frog, you have united together in the dream and made a new object. So, in reality everything that you see in your dream, this apparently new kind of monstrous animal, even this you have seen in your wakeful state."

A man who has never been in Russia, and has never heard about it, never finds himself in his dreams in St. Petersburg. Never, never. Does a philosopher in his dream do the work of a cobbler? Even if he lives next door to a cobbler and sees the cobbler frequently in his dreams, he never finds himself engaged in that work of cobbling or mending shoes.

This being the case, in your long sleep of death, what should you expect; the period between the death and the next birth, the

period of long sleep, how is that to pass? Vedanta says this will pass in your hells or heavens, this will pass in your paradises or in your purgatories. What are these paradises, these hells and heavens? These are the dreamlands which pass between one death and the next birth. Here is a man, a true Christian, who has been living a most pious, religious and devout life, who has been attending Church every Sunday, who has been offering his prayers every evening. He has been invoking the grace of God at every meal that he has taken, and has been keeping the Cross of Christ on his breast all his life, he has been meditating upon Christ all the while that he was awake, from his birth until his death; he was all the while living, moving, and having his being in the holy presence of Jesus, the Christ. This man has devoted his wakeful state of 80 or 90 years to the love of Christ, he has devoted all his thought to Christ, he has been expecting after death to find himself seated on the right hand side of Jesus, the Christ, and he has been dreaming and

thinking all his life about the angels, seraphims, and cherubims that will greet him after death. According to Vedanta, a devout Christian of this kind will find himself after death on the right hand side of Jesus, the Christ. Verily, verily, after death, during that long, long sleep, between this death and the next birth, he will find himself surrounded by the cherubims, the seraphims, and the angels who are singing hallelujas all the while. There is no reason why he should not find himself in their midst. Vedanta says, 'O Christians, if you are devout, if you are really in earnest and faithful, you will get the promises in your books fulfilled. But find no fault with the Mohammedans and the Hindus. If a Mohammedan is a true Mohammedan, if he has been devoting all his wakeful state of 70 or 80 years of his life in the same way as prescribed by Mohammed, and has been thinking of and looking upto him and been offering prayers five times a day, in the name of Mohammed, (you know Mohammedans offer prayers four or five times in every

24 hours, and they are very strict, very devotional), if he has been all the time living in the name of Mohammed, and if he was always ready to lay down his life in the name of Mohammed, (these Mohammedans are very earnest, most zealous, and you might even say, sometimes bigoted fanatics), then what will become of a Mohammedan of this kind, the dream of whose life has been to serve the cause of Mohammedanism, to make the name of Mohammed resound from one end of the world to the other? Nothing will happen to him which is contrary to the Laws of Nature. The Law of Nature is that what we are dreaming in our wakeful state, the same we shall dream when we go to sleep. He has been dreaming of Mohammed, of the Paradise, of beautiful gardens and damsels; the rivers of wine that are promised by his Prophet after death; he has been dreaming of magnificent palaces and objects of luxury in heaven, after death. Vedanta says, there is not a law or force in nature, which can prevent his enjoying the kind of heaven about which

he was dreaming. He must see a heaven of the same sort, he must find himself after death, in a paradise of the kind promised by his Prophet.

But Vedanta says, "O Mohammedans, you have no right to place all the people in this world, after death, at the disposal of your own Prophet, at the mercy of one Mohammed only. Let Christians enjoy their thoughts; make them free, do not want to subject all these, whether they die in Europe, America, East India, Japan, or China to the mercy of Mohammed. "If they believe in Mohammed, all right, otherwise they are damned," you have no right to speak that way, to be so cruel. If you are a follower of Mohammed, you will have a heaven of the kind which you desire, and so with all religions. If you are true to your dogmas or creed, after death you will have a heaven of the same sort as you are expecting. In reality, hell or heaven after death is dependent upon yourselves. You make the heaven after death and you make the hell after death.

In reality the heaven and hell are simply your dreams, nothing more, dreams which appear to you to be real at that time. You know dreams appear to be real when we are dreaming. So these hells or heavens will appear to you to be real after death, but as a matter of fact, in reality, they are nothing more than dreams.

One thing more might be said. People say that if the promises held out to us by our Scriptures, are to be true after death, we shall have Eternal Happiness. Our Scriptures hold out the promise either of eternal happiness or of eternal damnation after death. What about that? Vedanta says, "What is Eternity"? You know, Eternity is something pertaining to time, long long time, infinite time. You know that the time of the wakeful state is different from that of the dreamland. In your wakeful state time is of one kind, and in your dream state time is of another kind. In your dreamland, sometimes an object appears before you which you look upon as being of 5,000 years standing. Suppose in dreams

you see a mountain; that mountain has been posited by you on the spot instantaneously, from the standpoint of the wakeful state, but from the standpoint of the dreaming state, it was posited 5,000 years ago. Vedanta says that in your dreams, you find your self in your paradise from eternity; you will live in heaven or hell from eternity, from the standpoint of the dreaming subject, but not from that of the wakeful subject.

It is true that you will find the promises held out to you by the Bible to be right, because in that state you will think that you have been living in that state for ever and ever. It will be eternal to you. That which is eternal from the standpoint of the dreaming self is nothing from the standpoint of the wakeful self.

This gives you some idea of how Vedanta reconciles different religions after death.

But what about Transmigration? What about the people who are called *Mukta Purushas*, or liberated souls? Vedanta says that it is not everybody who after

death has to undergo these stages of heaven and hell, or who is reborn after death. It is not everybody. There are what are called liberated souls. Who are they? These are not to be subjected to reincarnation; they are free; these are not to find themselves imprisoned in hells or heavens; all hells or heavens are in them; all the worlds are in them. A few words be spoken about these.

In your dreams you have two sorts of phenomena, the subject and the object. All these rivers, mountains, hills, by which you find yourself hemmed in, are the object; this dreaming self which finds itself hemmed in, this traveller, this pilgrim, is the subject. In your dreams you know there are many things. One of them is what you call 'myself,' and the other things are what you call "the objects," different from me. This which you call 'myself' is the 'subject,' and the other things which you call "not self" are the 'object'; usually in your dreams there is this division, the subject and the object. Vedanta says that

the subject as well as the object are your creation, the creation of the real Self, the creation of the wakeful Self. Dr. Johnson, the lexicographer, who, you know was called the Prince of Talkers, could not suffer himself to be defeated in argument, he would always have the last word on his side. Somebody said about him that if his pistol missed fire, he knocked you down with the butt end of it. He must always have the victory on his side, and if anybody ever got the better of him in an argument, he would move heaven and earth to avenge himself. He dreamed once that Edmund Burke, the orator, defeated him in an argument. For a man of Johnson's nature, this dream was like a nightmare; it startled him, it woke him up, he was in a state of restlessness, and did not know how to get to sleep again. You know the property of mind is that it always seeks rest and wants peace. When it is disturbed, it hankers after rest, the reason being that real peace is its home, it must seek its home. He must seek peace

somehow or other. He consoled himself with this thought; I go to Edmund Burke and say, "Burke, Burke, by what argument did you defeat me in my dream?" Burke will not be able to reproduce the argument. I know the strong arguments he advanced when I was asleep, and I know the weak arguments which brought about my defeat. I know both, I know the victorious as well as the defeated side; but Edmund Burke does not know anything about it. Thus it is my own brain that furnished the arguments on both sides, it is I myself that appeared as Edmund Burke on one side and as the defeated Johnson on the other.

So Vedanta tells you that in your dreams, it is you yourself that appear as the object on one side and as the subject on the other. It is you yourself, it is the real Self in you that appears as mountains, rivers, forests, as birds, beasts and animals on one side and as the bewildered pilgrim on the other. You are the object and you are the subject.

So, according to Vedanta, in your long sleep of death, you are hell and heaven, and you are the man who is enjoying heaven or suffering in hell. Realize that and you become free.

There was a woman who possessed this knowledge of Vedanta. She was going through the streets with fire in one hand and cool water in the other. People came up to her and asked, "What do you mean by carrying cool water in one hand and fire in the other?" The man who put this question was a great Missionary. She said, "With this fire I am going to set your paradise and heaven on fire, and with this water I am going to cool down your hell." To a man who possesses this knowledge that he himself is hell or he himself is heaven, to him your heaven and hell lose all their attractions and fears. He stands above them. What about this world of yours, what about this wakeful state which you enjoy so much? Vedanta proves that even this solid seeming world, this rigid, stern world, is unreal, not different from your dreams. There is a

difference only of degree and not of kind. Your wakeful world is also a dream, a solidified dream; and in this solid seeming world of yours, Vedanta says that the object as well as the subject are the creation of your real Self and nothing more. It is your real Atma that becomes cities, towns, rivers, and mountains on the one side, and the forlorn traveller, a pilgrim in this world on the other side. The same that appears as the subject is the object and the same that appears as the object is the subject, even in your wakeful state.

Death means only the subsiding of the subject and not of the object. You are dreaming; suppose in your dreaming state, you find yourself in Berkeley, but in reality you are asleep in San Francisco. There in your dream; what was Berkeley and what were all the scenes connected with it? They were the object and you that were in Berkeley were the subject. Now you know that sometimes we have double sleep, sometimes we sleep in sleep, just as we have compound interest, and so here

is dream in dream, or double dream. If you go to sleep in Berkeley, then this is an example of double sleep. What happens? You wake up again. Sometimes in dreams we fall asleep at one place and get up again in one continuous dream, so here you were lying down, and in the dream you find yourself in Berkeley. Berkeley was the object and you were the subject. The subject fell asleep: the object Berkeley remained the same, the subject subsided and got up again. You found yourself again in Berkeley but your sleep continued just the same; from Berkeley you went to Los Angeles. In Los Angeles you put at the house of one of your dear friends and went to sleep again. There Los Angeles, the house of your friend, etc. were the object and you were the subject. there the subject subsides or goes to sleep and gets up again. After enjoying a nap in Los Angeles, you go up to the Lick Observatory. There at the Lick Observatory you enjoy a nap; the Lick Observatory was the object and you were the subject. The subject subsides

for a time and gets up again. From the Lick Observatory you get to some summer resort, and while there, some one of your family comes and wakes you up. Here you were the summer resort as well as the man who was enjoying the summer resort. When you make up, the subject as well as the object go away, both of them disappear; the subject as well as the object both disappear, but when you are dreaming, the subject alone subsided and the object remained; you were not really awake.

Now for the application of this illustration. According to Vedanta, this universe, this wide world, is also a dream. In this dream of a wide world, all time, space, and causation, all this universe which you see outside is the object, and what you call "my body," "my little self," is also the subject. When an ordinary man dies, what happens? The long dream of Maya or Ignorance is not destroyed, but remains just the same. He dies. Death simply means the subsiding of the subject, the object remaining the same, unaltered; so when a man dies here, he wakes up again in

the next birth. He finds the same world around him as he loved when he died; suppose in the second birth he lives for a period of 80 and 90 years, and then dies again. Then again we see that in the second birth which was like Berkely or Los Angeles, the object remained the same and the subject only subsided for a while; the result is that after a time he is reborn. In the third life, he lives for a period of 70 or 80 years, then again he dies. The object which was like the Lick Observatory, remains the same, the subject subsides and makes its appearance again. In this way, it is birth and death, birth and death, which will continue until the subject and object subside together. So long as the world appears to you to be different from you, you are an imprisoned personality in this world, you will always remain bound to this wheel of transmigration, birth and death; it will go on revolving around you and crushing you down, bringing you up and taking you down. You will never find any rest or peace.

Now Vedanta says, he who escapes, finds the subject as well as the object in himself.

When we make up like Dr. Johnson to the realization that we are the subject and the object of the dream, we are free. The world is my body and he who can say the whole universe is my body, is free from transmigration. Where can he go? Where can he come? There is no space which is not already filled with him; he is the infinite one. Where will he go? Where will he come? The universe is in him; he is the Lord of lords, free from transmigration. The one desire which is sucked in with the mother's milk by every child in East India, is to get himself to such a realization that he may no longer remain subject to transmigration, that he may escape, and in God-consciousness find perfect happiness and full bliss.

In Milton's life there is a very beautiful story told about a lady who was his wife. In her dream she saw her husband, and her heart was leaping in her bosom for him. She embraced him and said, "My lord, I am wholly yours." Just at that moment, she woke up and found that a dog that had been sleeping in the same bed with her had been

pressing its body to her; that dog leaped out of the bed to the floor, and in reality it was the pressure of the dog that appeared to her in her dream to be her lord, her husband. Had the dog pressed its body more and more, she would have felt a mighty Himalaya on her breast. And Vedanta says, so long as the dog of ignorance, the dog of Maya remains pressing you down, your dreams are continually changing from good to bad, and from bad to good, sometimes a husband and sometimes a mighty Himalaya presses on you. You will be always like a pendulum oscillating between a tear and a smile; the world will weigh heavily upon your heart, there will be no rest for you. Vedanta says, "Get rid of this dog of ignorance, make yourself God Almighty, make yourself That, realize That, and you are free."

"In thousand forms must those attend surprise
 Yet all beloved one, straight know I Thee,
 Thou mayest with magic veil Thy face, etc."

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