

and mathematics; otherwise it cannot be acceptable. It must prove that my God is here, and that He speaks to me. My positivist spirit cannot believe unless it sees and hears. The eye and the ear must bear witness unto the Lord, and then only can I believe. In my creed all precepts begin with a "Thus saith the Lord." There is no moral injunction for me but what He hath Himself said to me. But how do I know His voice? There is a ring, a peculiar intonation, in the spirit-voice of the Lord. Those who have heard it often can recognize it at once. Six, eight, ten times have I heard it, so that when I hear my Lord say, "Thou shalt say the truth to all men," I do not ask in a sceptical spirit, "Who has spoken these words? Is it a phantom of the imagination or the ghost of some departed spirit? Or my diseased intellect?" It was my God who said to me long ago, "Thou shalt become a Theist." It was He who said, "Thou shalt give up all secular work; and take no thought for the morrow." It was He who said to me—"Thou shalt lead a simple life, and devote it to missionary work." He has spoken to me often and often, and every time it was a demonstration, a clear, positive demonstration, of a mathematical character.

If you are prepared to accept these truths and principles, go and accept them. But take them not unless they are demonstrated in your



lives, just in the same way as they have been demonstrated in my own case. I can assure you I have a peculiarly positivist type of faith, and I wish to see that faith established in others. I am myself a positivist in my love of demonstration, and I wish to encourage that spirit in all of you. Never accept anything as true unless it is proved by God Himself to be true. And as regards Jesus Christ, and Paul, and John the Baptist, the Lord will lead you to them, and verify them spiritually, not historically. You speak of history. I hate dead history. I abhor those places where dead men's bones are gathered. Those dismal and dark places I abominate and detest. The Spirit of Christ came to me, and not an abstraction or a thing of the past. I was not reading dead history in the Gospels when these three great prophets came to me, or they would not have electrified me as they did. The Bible has never of itself animated or inspired any one, nor can it. But the Spirit of God converts its dead letters into living ideas. The characters recorded there are dumb and lifeless, but awakened by the Holy Spirit, they start up as living beings. Can things pictured upon canvas or written upon paper give life and salvation? No. The historical characters that came to me were all fire. Their spirits forcibly entered my soul. Could I resist them? Could I cast them away as mere dead men's shadows in history or as

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metaphysical abstractions? There they were. Here they are now with me, in me. Always in my blood and in my bones the prophets dwell. 'Therefore to me it is all demonstration. You may go in the same way to God Himself, and He will reveal to you His Kingdom. If you wish to see God with your own eyes, if you wish to hear Him, pray. I have not heard and seen all that can be heard and seen. But I hope to see more fully hereafter. I trust that all things shall be revealed unto me, and unto you, in the fulness of time. The Lord's inspiration shall satisfy our understanding, and remove all our doubts and misgivings. I am encouraged—more than that, I am satisfied, I am delighted and enraptured. I have the spirit of a mystic in me. But the creed of Mysticism I abjure. Though living in the nineteenth century, I go back to the mystic age to drink of the pure fountain of Yoga communion there. I go to the Aryan Yogis of ancient India to learn contemplation. I go into my inner consciousness, and close the windows of the soul. It is all dark. Absolute silence reigns there. The objects of the outer world I see not. My heart prayerfully leans upon the bosom of the Lord. My friend, the friend of sinners, reveals Himself as the fountain of sweet joy. Oh, the joys of heavenly communion! How the feeble lights of the world vanish! Self and the world are all lost in the sweets of mystic

devotion! I have been asked to protest against this mysticism. I have been asked to banish this mysticism from my soul. Banish heaven from my soul! Shall I banish my happiness from my soul? Shall I make joy an exile—gather together sorrows and darkness in my soul? I cannot do so. I will remain a mystic to the end of the chapter. May God make this mysticism prosper and flourish in my heart! If mysticism is seeing God and enjoying the deepest and the sweetest communion with God, then I am a mystic in the truest sense of the word.

Then, again, I am a scientist. I am for all science—physical, mental, and moral—for a full acceptance of the phenomena and laws of nature. I honour Huxley and Darwin, and all other men, who by their skill are qualified to evolve the latent meaning of the universe. Let them all show the wonders of the Creator. They are aiding me, and my work—the work of the world's salvation. Unconscious of what they are doing, they are only adding to the Theist's faith knowledge, only adding to our joy wisdom. If there is anything in my Church which is opposed to science, I wish rather that my Church should perish and the cherished creed of my life than that science should perish. Let these perish, and perish for ever! May the Lord God Almighty abolish and annihilate this Church if it

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be an enemy of science! I will give up all my mysticism, my daily communion with God, my asceticism, my philosophy if it can be proved that these are opposed to science, and contrary to the revelations of nature. The God of Science is my God—He who in all ages works wonders and continually exhibits His wisdom, power, and love throughout the amplitudes of nature.

All science is religion, and all religion is science. There is as much science in prayer as in the locomotive engine, as much science in inspiration as in the microscope and the telegraph wire, and the latest inventions of science. Thus pantheism and mysticism, science and positivism, are with me. Pantheism and mysticism are things of Asia, while positivism and all the sciences of the day belong to Europe. My Church is an Asiatic Church. I am in my very bones and blood, in the very constitution of my soul, essentially an Asiatic. As an Asiatic, I would encourage and vindicate devotion to the extent of mystic communion. But here you will probably say there is no harmonious development. It is all prayer and contemplation, and no work. I say there *is* harmony. If I am mystical, am I not practical too? I am practical as an Englishman. If I am Asiatic in devotion, I am a European in practical energy. My creed is not dreamy sentimentalism, not quietism, not imagination. Energy, yes, energy—I have that in a

very great measure in my character and in my Church. It is the vigour and energy of the Englishman and the American. My Church is a vast European Church, full of resolution, heroism, strength, and vivacity. My Church has in it all the elements of European practical life. It encourages education, social reformation, political elevation, the improvement of women, the promotion of cheap journalism, the advancement of science, and material prosperity. Like a mighty river, the stream of national devotion comes into my Church from the Vedas and the Upanishads, the pantheistic books and mystic scriptures of ancient India. None can, none should, resist this torrent. But in my Church warm devotion and practical enthusiasm are commingled. Can I forget that I have been brought up in English schools and colleges, and that I have received an essentially Western training? I cannot indulge in dreams. I must work. I cannot be a drone. I must be a busy bee, always gathering sweets from all sorts of flowers in the Heavenly Father's garden. I have shown you my exact position. I have shown you all the elements in my Church. I have portrayed its many-sided character. This Church, I believe, is destined to bring about the reformation and regeneration of my countrymen. The Lord wills thus.

Friends and countrymen, all that I have said can be proved and demonstrated at any time.

Truth harmonizes with all truth, and I am nothing if not a scientist and a philosopher. I have the purest regard for modern philosophy and science, and I have the purest regard for the civilization of the nineteenth century. But I must at the same time try to be true and faithful to all that is great and glorious in the antiquities of my own beloved India. For the last twenty years have I labored in the cause of God and of India. But men have attempted to prove that I have been guided by my own imagination, reason, and intellect. Under this conviction they have from time to time protested against my proceedings. They should remember that to protest against the cause I uphold is to protest against the dispensations of God Almighty, the God of all Truth and Holiness. I will make no secret of this, for I believe that my life is identified with my mission, and that remonstrances and protests cannot make me swerve from it. You may go on protesting against every little thing in my life which seems unreasonable to you; you may protest against my abstaining from animal food; you may protest against my walking bare-footed in the streets of Calcutta; you may protest against my making no provision for the morrow. Go on saying all you have got to say against me. All adverse criticism I shall tolerate. Go and publish in all the newspapers in India my shortcomings and foibles, my errors and

iniquities; proclaim me an impostor, and a man sold to untruth and sin, and to wine and sensuality, and all manner of falsehood and lying. The Lord will vindicate His truth and the character of those who put their trust in Him. As for your hostility, I am not concerned about it. For verily I have no enemy on earth. None, I emphatically say so. Those who profess to be my enemies are advocating my cause, and going about preaching my ideas and principles. They hold in their hands my banners, I see their lives, I watch their movements, and with a smile I say to myself, Why, this is all my own self reproduced. It is curious but true, that my adversaries, those most inimical to me, have unconsciously adopted my principles. The Lord has made them my friends in spite of themselves. There is no serious enmity, yet they will call themselves my enemies. So much the better, because those who would otherwise never accept my truths now readily grasp them. If my friends preach my truths they would not perhaps be welcomed in certain quarters, and hence it is necessary that my so-called enemies should go there, and advocate my cause effectively. My truths, have I said? By my truths I mean the essential truths of my life, which the Lord has communicated to me, and commissioned me to preach to my countrymen. These truths I call my truths. Surely they cannot be *my*



truths in the vulgar sense of the word? I know not *my*. Where is *my*, where is this self? It does not exist. Long since has this little bird "I" soared away from this sanctuary, I know not where, never to return again. My "self" has long since been annihilated by my God. I have nought that is mine. Neither gold nor silver have I, nor is there any truth which is mine as opposed to or distinguished from yours and God's. If it is God's truth I preach, it is in your heart; in the heart of educated India it has found a place. It will not be possible for you now to efface or eradicate it. There, it has gone into the depths of India's nationality, never again to be uprooted. The spirit of truth I have been so long teaching has silently, quietly, and almost imperceptibly leavened the heart of educated India. Men know not whence or how it came.

It is a wonder and a marvel that, in spite of civilization, there is so much spirituality growing up in the midst of young Bengal and young India. Take away this Brahmo Church, take away this grand Theistic organization, and what is left? No spirituality. It is all secular education and material prosperity. Go where you will—to Bombay, to Madras, to Calcutta, to the Punjab, to Assam, and you will find numerous small temples like small lights glimmering here and there. When they gather their forces

together, and concentrate their light, all India shall be illuminated by a general and mighty blaze. This living faith is not contrary to the spirit of Christianity or Mahomedanism or Hinduism. It is religion, pure and simple. It is the religion of Love, the religion of the Living God. I see it flourishing everywhere. Daily it grows with the aid of my friends, as well as my enemies. For twenty years I have been subjected to trials and persecutions of no ordinary kind. Have compassion upon me, my countrymen! Do not trample upon this man. I have told you I am a sinner; yet am I commissioned by God to preach certain truths. To give my country these truths is my life's peculiar mission. So long as I live I must do this work. Shall I disown my mission and perjure myself? To do so would be to sacrifice my life and God's truth. In doing this work I am confident I have not done anything that is wrong. I have tried to do the Lord's will, not mine. I have ever proved consistent with myself, and preserved the integrity of my destiny. The Lord of Heaven knows that I have humbly done all that lay in my power to fulfil the mission imposed by Him upon me. How independently do those around me maintain their ideas and privileges? But I have no religious freedom. I am not responsible for the truths I have to preach. I say this fearlessly, and in the presence of this great

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assembly. Surely I am not to blame for anything which I may have done under Heaven's injunction. If anyone is to blame, the Lord God of Heaven is to answer for having taught me, and constrained me to do most unpopular things for the good of my country. Dare you impeach Heaven's Majesty? Under His command I have done so, and I will do ten thousand similar things so long as I live. The Lord God is our Father in Heaven, and when a sinner, like a little child, says unto Him, "Lord, save me," will the Lord mock his sufferings and sins? and when he asks for bread, will the Lord give him a stone? The Lord cannot do this. You know I pray, and Heaven mercifully gives me the bread of life and saving truth. If you say these truths are mine, and not the Lord's, you insult Him. I have a higher self and a lower self, and I see clearly the line of demarcation between the two. You may hate my vices, but my higher self, implanted in me by Divinity, working, speaking, and moving in Him and through Him, you cannot resist. My mission none can resist, for that is of God. You go into the world to establish schools, to found churches, to distribute alms. As you have your peculiar ideas and vocations, I too have my ideas and my vocation. If you accept these my ideas, then you admit me into your hearts. I have gone there already, and found a place there, and you cannot expel

me. For twenty years you have been with me, and you cannot banish me now. I have taken hold of the muscles and nerves of your frame, of the convictions and sympathies of your heart. Lo! I am in you with the God of truth and mercy. He will bless you and save you.

I have indulged in egotism this evening, gentlemen, but I ask your pardon and indulgence. It is only the pressure of public opinion that has brought me here to explain my character and conduct. Am I a prophet? No. Am I a singular man? Yes. Can you wrest India from me? Can you violently wrest away from me my glorious and beloved fatherland? That is impossible. I hold my ground, and with my valiant co-adjutors around me—my proved and tried co-adjutors—I will hold the citadel of Truth, and will not give it up. Can I give it up, my Lord? Can I give up India, and still live? I cannot. The whole of my life-blood that is in me will dry up in a moment if I am cut off from my mission. I have no life apart from my Father's work. I have no earthly concerns to attend to, no property to manage, no source of income to look to. My family and children are all in the hands of my Church, and all my earthly possessions. Either India or death. Either patriotism or infidelity. I have no other alternative. Do you wish to transform me into an infidel by your



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remonstrances? Would you have me reject God and Providence, and listen to your dictates in reference to His inspiration? Keshub Chunder Sen cannot do it, will not do it. I must do the Lord's will. Man's creed, man's counsel, I will not follow, but will trust and serve the Lord.



CSL

INDIA ASKS : WHO IS CHRIST ?

I DESIRE to speak of Christ. The sacred theme is eminently appropriate to this week of solemn devotion, known in Christendom as the "Holy Week." But what right have I, it might be asked, to speak of things concerning him crucified? I am not a Christian; none of the numerous sects into which the Church of Christ is divided would allow my creed to be identified with its own. I have not been nursed on the laps of Christian parents, nor have I been brought up under Christian teachers. The country in which I dwell is not a Christian country, nor is my home a Christian home. I am not well versed in the Christian scriptures, nor am I skilled in exegesis. Yet must I speak of Christ. My love for Christ constrains me to speak of him. My loyalty to Jesus is my apology. If any other apology were needed I would invite your attention to India's earnest and impassioned solicitations. Most eagerly and most earnestly she asks—Who is Christ? On all sides there are indications and signs which clearly and unmistakably prove that this question

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emanates from the very heart of the nation. It is no wonder that India should ask this question. For is not a new and aggressive civilization winning its way, day after day, and year after year, into the very heart and soul of the people? Are not Christian ideas and institutions taking their root in the soil of this vast country? Has not a Christian Government taken possession of its cities, its provinces, its villages, its hills and plains, its rivers and seas, its homes and hearths, its teeming millions of men and women and children? Yes, the advancing surges of a mighty revolution are encompassing the land, and in the name of Christ strange innovations and reforms are penetrating the very core of India's heart. Well may our fatherland ask—Who is this Christ? Not like Pontius Pilate, but in the earnest and serious spirit of a true and candid enquirer, does India ask who this Christ is, who is coming every day nearer and nearer to her heart? You must not think, my countrymen, that any secular power, however formidable, has conquered and holds this great country. Who rules India? What power is that which sways the destinies of India at the present moment? You are mistaken if you think that it is the ability of Lord Lytton in the cabinet, or the military genius of Sir Frederick Haines in the field, that rules India. It is not politics, it is not diplomacy that has



laid a firm hold of the Indian heart. It is not the glittering bayonet nor the fiery cannon of the British army that can make our people loyal. No, none of these can hold India in subjection. Armies never conquered the heart of a nation. Muscular force and prowess never made a man's head or heart bow before a foreign power. No. If you wish to secure the attachment and allegiance of India, it must be through spiritual influence and moral suasion. And such indeed has been the case in India. Gentlemen, you cannot deny that your hearts have been touched, conquered, and subjugated by a superior power. That power—need I tell you?—is Christ. It is Christ who rules British India, and not the British Government. England has sent out a tremendous moral force, in the life and character of that mighty prophet, to conquer and hold this vast empire. None but Jesus, none but Jesus, none but Jesus ever deserved this bright, this precious diadem, India; and Jesus shall have it. If then India is encompassed, on all sides, by Christian literature, Christian civilization, and a Christian Government, she must naturally endeavour to satisfy herself as to the nature of this great power in the realm which is doing such wonders in our midst. It may seem strange, but it is a fact, that India knows not yet this power, though already so largely influenced by it. She is unconsciously

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imbibing the spirit of this new civilization—she is unconsciously succumbing to its irresistible influence. Therefore India ought to be informed as to the real character of the source of this dominant moral influence, Christ.

It is not the British army, I say again, that deserves any honour for conquering India. If unto any army appertains the honour of holding India for England, that army is the army of Christian Missionaries, headed by their valiant chief, their invincible captain, Jesus Christ. Their devotion, their self-abnegation, their philanthropy, their love of God, their attachment and allegiance to the truth, all these have found, and will continue to find, a deep place in the gratitude of our countrymen. Therefore, it is needless, perfectly superfluous, for me to bestow any eulogium upon such devoted friends and tried benefactors of our country. They have brought unto us Christ. They have given us the high code of Christian ethics, and their teachings and examples have secretly influenced and won thousands of non-Christian Hindus. Let England know that, thanks to the noble band of Christ's ambassadors sent by her, she has already succeeded in planting his banners in the heart of the nation. God's blessing and India's gratitude will, for ever, belong to men such as these—men of character, men of faith, men who in many instances have been found ready to sacrifice even



their lives for the sake of bearing witness unto the truth.

Perhaps you will tell me that this question has been answered already. Look at the flood of Christian literature that has swept over the length and breadth of the country. There are heaps of books and numberless preachers and teachers around you, all ready to give, each in his own way, a complete answer to the question before us. Doubtless from these sources India has gathered some knowledge of Christ of Nazareth. But such knowledge has not given her complete satisfaction. It is true the people of India have been satisfied in some measure with what they have heard and read of Jesus, but they have been disappointed in a much greater measure. For England has sent unto us, after all, a Western Christ. This is indeed to be regretted. Our countrymen find that in this Christ, sent by England, there is something that is not quite congenial to the native mind, not quite acceptable to the genius of the nation. It seems that the Christ that has come to us is an Englishman, with English manners and customs about him, and with the temper and spirit of an Englishman in him. Hence is it that the Hindu people shrink back and say : Who is this revolutionary reformer who is trying to sap the very foundations of native society, and establish here an outlandish faith and civilization quite incompatible with

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oriental instincts and ideas? Why must we submit to one who is of a different nationality? Why must we bow before a foreign prophet? It is a fact which cannot be gainsaid, that hundreds upon hundreds, thousands upon thousands, even among the most intelligent in the land, stand back in moral recoil from this picture of a foreign Christianity trying to invade and subvert Hindu society; and this repugnance unquestionably hinders the progress of the true spirit of Christianity in this country. When they feel that Christ means nothing but the worst form of denationalization, the whole nation must certainly as one man stand up to repudiate and banish this acknowledged evil. But why should you Hindus go to England to learn Jesus Christ? Is not his native land nearer to India than England? Is he not, and are not his apostles and immediate followers, more akin to Indian nationality than Englishmen? Are not the scenes enacted in the drama of the Christian dispensation altogether homely to us Indians? When we hear of the lily, and the sparrow, and the well, and a hundred other things of Eastern countries, do we not feel we are quite at home in the Holy Land? Why should we then travel to a distant country like England, in order to gather truths which are to be found much nearer our homes? Gentlemen, go to the rising sun in the East, not to the setting sun in the West, if you wish to see Christ



in the plenitude of his glory and in the fulness and freshness of his divine life. Why do I speak of Christ in the West as the setting sun? Because there we find apostolical Christianity almost gone; there we find the life of Christ formulated into lifeless dogmas and antiquated symbols. But if you go to the true Christ in the East and his apostles, you are at once seized with inspiration. You find the truths of Christianity all fresh and resplendent. Recall to your minds, gentlemen, the true Asiatic Christ, divested of all Western appendages, carrying on the work of redemption among his own people. Behold, he cometh to us in his loose flowing garment, his dress and features altogether oriental, a perfect Asiatic in everything. Watch his movements, and you will find genuine orientalism in all His habits and manners—in his uprising and down-sitting, his going forth and his coming in, his preaching and ministry, his very language and style and tone. Indeed, while reading the Gospel, we cannot but feel that we are quite at home when we are with Jesus, and that he is altogether one of us. Surely Jesus is *our Jesus*. But I have spoken as yet only of the visible Christ. The outward Christ is evidently an Asiatic, and as such he comes home to us, and rivets our national sympathies.

But can we say the same thing of the invisible Christ: the soul of Christ? Is that oriental? Can you as Asiatics appreciate and

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accept the spirit of Christ as that of a fellow-Asiatic? At the very threshold of the inquiry, we find the ethics of Christ asking us to accept it, and give it a place in our hearts. And we readily acquiesce in it. The sublime and marvellous ethics of Christ who can condemn, who will not honour? Its rules of forgiveness and love, meekness, humility, charity, justice, sincerity, and simplicity, the rules of poverty, self-restraint, and asceticism, constitute the highest standard of true ethics, which must find acceptance in all parts of the world. Though we are Hindus, we cannot help admiring the superior and exalted ethics which Christ brings to us. You cannot deny it, you cannot set it aside. It is from God. Your consciences attest it. Ancient philosophy bows before it. A greater than Socrates has taught us this lofty ethical code, and we are bound for truth's sake to accept this legacy from Christ. We are all agreed, irrespective of differences of creed and caste, as to the supremacy of the ethical law embodied in his teachings and character. If you Indians hesitate or refuse to accept Christ, it is not because you dislike his ethics. It is not Christ's humanity that is a stumbling-block in your way, but his so-called divinity. His heavenly spirituality, not his human morality, stands in the way of your accepting him. The divinity of Jesus—yes, that is the great subject



on which I desire to discourse. Christ is a good man, a great man, we have learnt to love, honour, and esteem. Christ as a moral teacher of the highest order we are at this moment ready to enshrine in our hearts. For the exemplary purity of his character, we would at once give him the heart's allegiance and loyalty. But that is not the whole of Christ's character or mission. It is not here that we find the real excellence of his life. Have not teachers beyond number appeared in all ages to teach morality, self-restraint, and rectitude, humility, and self-sacrifice? There are ethical rules of a high order to be found in the scriptures of all religious denominations. But Christ aspired to a higher position than that of a moralist in the affections and attachment of his followers. Yes, a higher and heavenlier position—that of a divine power. To that position he is entitled, and that he demands. The question now is, are we Indians prepared to give him this high position in our hearts? Do we believe that he is altogether human? Are we satisfied that there is nothing but earthly humanity in him? Have we given him all honour he is entitled to, when we have settled for him a place next to our conscience as a monitor? Verily there is such a thing as divinity in Christ. But what is this divinity? Gentlemen, this is a delicate and difficult subject,

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and though I may run the risk of being unpopular, I must proceed to give you some of those ideas and sentiments which for many long years I have cherished in the depths of my heart.

It appears to me that Christ held earnestly and consistently what I should, in the absence of a better expression, call the doctrine of divine humanity. He not only believed this, but he carried it theoretically and practically to its uttermost logical sequence. I am satisfied that in Christ Jesus there was an abundance of philosophy and logic, before which even the proudest philosophy of modern times must hide her face in very shame. From his very early life he seized this great and philosophical idea of divine humanity, and throughout his career he carried it out, with wonderful logical consistency, in all its bearings, speculative and practical. This doctrine he realized in its fullest measure in his own consciousness, and therefore he never made a secret of it, but fearlessly proclaimed it in the streets, and tried to make converts to the new doctrine wherever he went. How did he enunciate this principle? Christ struck the keynote of his doctrine when he announced his divinity before an astonished and amazed world in these words: "I and my Father are one." I can assure you, my friends, that I love Christ and honour him more for the sake of these words



than for anything else. For these memorable and imperishable words furnish an index to the mystery and glory of his real character. Were it not for this bold assertion of identity with the Godhead, I would not honour Christ so much as I do. Half the beauty of Christianity would be marred and obliterated if the principles involved in this important doctrine were eliminated from Christian theology. Christ really believed that he and his Father were one, or he would not have said so. He spoke the truth, unmixed and pure truth, when he announced this fact. "I can of mine own self do nothing." "I am in my Father, and my Father in me."

These and similar other passages abound in the Gospel, and they all remind us of this essential and central principle of Christ's life and ministry, this corner-stone of his theology.

I am, therefore, bound to admit that Christ really believed that he and his Father were one. When I come to analyze this doctrine, I find in it nothing but the philosophical principle underlying the popular doctrine of self-abnegation—self-abnegation in a very lofty spiritual sense. "I and my Father are one." These words clearly mean—if you would only exercise the smallest amount of reflection, they would clearly appear to you to mean—nothing more than the highest form of self-denial. Christ ignored and denied his self altogether. We, on the contrary,

have each our hard selfishness, and it is our desire and interest to serve and gratify it heartily. All the pursuits of our lives, our affections, our associations, our daily thoughts and feelings, our hopes and aspirations gather round this central self. *I think, I preach, I am a true man and a right man.* This is *my* virtue, this is *my* holiness, this is *my* charity, that is *my* prayer. You have given this unto *me*. You cannot take it away from *me*. These are selfish ideas which prevail universally among mankind, and constitute the real danger of society and the root of all our sins and wickednesses. Upon these shoals many a life has been wrecked, and many a life is being wrecked every day. Self must be extinguished and eradicated completely. Christ said so, and Christ did so. He destroyed self. And as self ebbed away, Heaven came pouring into the soul. For, as you all know, nature abhors a vacuum, and hence as soon as the soul is emptied of self Divinity fills the void. So it was with Christ. The Spirit of the Lord filled him, and everything was thus divine within him. His wisdom, his love, his joy—these were not his, but the Lord's. The world has ascribed unto thee, O Christ, praise and glory beyond measure, but thou wouldst not have it. Thou wouldst give all to the Lord. "It is not I who do it," Christ always used to say, "but the Lord doeth all through me." Though the wisdom



of the Gospel has been propagated among millions and millions of men, and has reached the uttermost parts of the earth, and though it is only Christ's wisdom, he disclaims it altogether. And though he had abundance of holiness and joy, he denied his right to regard them as his own. He saw in that holiness the holiness of God, and in that joy the joy of heaven. If ever there was a thing he did with his own hand, he would never say it was his doing. The Lord did it all. If he ever spoke truths which went forth like thunder and lightning into the very foundations of human society and overturned and revolutionized it, even then he did not take credit unto himself. For the humble and self-denying Jesus looked upon all truth as God's truth. Therefore he gave unto God all honour and credit. He lived, moved, and had his being in God. Not a breath he drew, but it was from the Lord. Not a drop of life-blood that gave him vitality, but it came from the very fountain of life and vitality in heaven. He saw, heard, and touched, as we see, hear, and touch. But he always felt that the root of his being was God Himself—a fact of which we are not always conscious. He had his life rooted in Divinity. He felt always that the Lord was underlying his whole existence. And, therefore, without equivocation, and with all the boldness and candour of conscious simplicity, he proclaimed unto the world

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the fact that he was one with God. The world wondered and marvelled, as it saw this strange man, and heard this strange doctrine. Men comprehended him not, and repeatedly exclaimed—What manner of man is this?

You are no doubt aware that this mysterious man had no distinct individuality, no property on earth—no, not even a penny that he could claim or reckon as his own. Whatsoever distinguishes and demarcates human individuality was clearly wanting in his case. The son of Mary had not a distinctive earthly designation. He had no home to dwell in. He had no endearing family tie to fascinate or fasten him. When the message came to him one day that his mother and brethren wanted to speak to him, he said—“Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.” Ah! Christ, the poorest of the poor, had no self, no home, no family, nothing on earth, yet he had a home in the Lord; and he had a vast family and countless children on all sides; he was bound by the sweetest ties which can bind one soul to another. Christ having nothing yet had everything. The world was his inheritance. But he had not this one thing; he had not this self, which is, in us all, the prolific source of all temptations and evils. This corrupt self, which estranges us from God, and is the root



of all iniquity, is indeed the great danger against which we should all guard ourselves. Christ saw this, and therefore from the beginning to the end his life was one continued protest against self. By his teachings as well as example he declared emphatically that man shall live in God, and not in self. To manifest this divine life in humanity was his mission, and the unvarying burden of his exhortations. That was the object for which he came down from heaven to dwell on earth, and nobly did he accomplish this mission. He manifested this divine life in man as no other man had ever done before. There is Christ before us as a transparent crystal reservoir in which are the waters of divine life. There is no opaque self to obstruct our vision. The medium is transparent, and we clearly see through Christ the God of truth and holiness dwelling in him. When Jesus was asked by one of his disciples to show the Father, he wondered and said: "You have seen me, and yet you venture to say you have not seen the Father!" He felt that the Father's spirit was gushing out in fresh and unceasing streams from his inmost soul through his words and actions. Those who saw him were therefore reminded that it was not his life, for he had no self, but the divine life in him that they saw. We see in Jesus perfect self-surrender and perfect asceticism. For if a man has renounced self what more will he renounce? Compared to



Christ the poorest and humblest ascetic seems possessed of abundant wealth. The son of man verily had not where to lay his head, and, as regards provisions, his "morrow" was always uncertain. Therefore, I say this wonderful man had no thought whatever of self, and lived in God. This unique character of complete self-surrender is the most striking miracle in the world's history which I have seen, and which it is possible for the mind to conceive.

If, then, this is the fundamental principle of Christ's life and character, we now find why it is that he almost instinctively felt that he had a spiritual pre-existence. Pre-existence! Be not startled, gentlemen. I proclaim Christ to-day before this assembly as the Prince of Idealists, and his religion supreme idealism. He believed in idealism, he loved idealism, he fed upon idealism. But the truest, the highest, the purest type of idealism was that of Christ, and not what generally passes under that name. He was all idealism. His disembodied spirit he saw resting in God's bosom long before its earthly existence. He dwelt with his Father and in Him before he came to dwell here. And to that dwelling-place he felt he would return after finishing his earthly career. The life of Christ is like a circular stream, whose rise and fall may be traced to the same sea. From it the stream rises, and into its broad expanse it finally discharges its waters.



So the life of Christ springs from Divinity, and into Divinity it goes back. As his spirit rolled backward and forward, up and down this circular stream, he found himself in the past, dwelling in God, even before creation, and in the future, rewarding believers and rebuking unbelievers assembled after death before the judgment seat. He saw himself abiding eternally in God, before creation and after death. His thoughts and sentiments, his wisdom and light, his energy and vitality, emanate from the Divine Spirit, and return to the Divine Spirit. He is born of the Father, and after his earthly sojourn is over to the Father he goes back. Thus it is that he existed in heaven long before he had an earthly existence. Did not Christ say that he existed long before Abraham lived? Did he not say distinctly, "Before Abraham was, I am"? How then, and in what shape, did he exist in heaven? As an Idea, as a plan of life, as a pre-determined dispensation yet to be realized, as purity of character, not concrete but abstract, as light not yet manifested. That was the form in which Christ dwelt from all eternity in the bosom of the Father. Looking at himself in this light Christ could not but believe in his pre-existence. His earthly life had certainly a beginning, but the divine life in him could not possibly have had a beginning. Holiness assuredly has no beginning; wisdom has no beginning; love can have



none; truth can never commence to exist. For these existed through all eternity in God Himself. Whatsoever is good and true is co-eternal with God. Though the human Christ was born, all that was divine in him existed eternally in God. In fact, Christ was nothing but a manifestation on earth, in human form, of certain ideas and sentiments which lay before in the Godhead. Let me explain this more fully in two or three words. Before the world was, the Eternal God existed, and in His bosom slept Jesus, or rather the Ideal Jesus. Yes, Christ was there with all his disciples, and all his apostles and prophets were there—yea, the whole picture of the economy of Providence as was subsequently developed and realized in the Christian dispensation.

The future tree lies potentially in the small acorn. The small seed planted by the Almighty hand, out of which came forth this marvellous universe, with its varied forms of beauty and sublimity, contained the life and character of Jesus. In the fulness of time he was evolved out of that seed. Christ is but an evolution. He is only a manifestation. Manifestation of what? Of the Father? No. The Father existed already as the Infinite Creator, and was already manifest in creation. The universe had trumpeted forth in all ages the praise of the Almighty God, and revealed His wisdom and power and mercy.



The heavens above declared His handiwork, and the earth below showed the riches of His love and wisdom. In His works the Father was manifest. Judaism had sung, with sweet and touching accents, the glory of the mighty Jehovah, as exhibited in the vast universe, and Hebrew prophets had chanted again and again the economy of the Father's Providence. There was, therefore, no need of manifesting the Father. The light already revealed needed no revelation. The Lord of the universe did not mean to come and dwell on earth among men, women, and children. There was the necessity of some manifestation indeed. Manifestation of the son, and not of the Father. The world wanted to see the son. An example of true sonship was needed.

The abstract principles of morality and religion and human duty had, it is true, been unfolded in various forms by teachers and prophets in ages gone by, but the world had not lived in conformity with them, and men had proved undutiful children of the Lord. There was disobedience on all sides. It was, therefore, urgently and absolutely necessary for the salvation of man that an example of filial obedience should be manifested. And, therefore, the Lord took away, if I may use the expression, the lower half of His holy nature, that much of it which related to the position and character of the son,

and He invested the same with flesh and bones and blood, and sent unto the world. Perfect holiness dwelt in the Father, the eternal fountain-head of all that is true, and good, and beautiful. It comprehended all manner of holiness. It had in it the germs of all forms of virtue and righteousness. Purity of life dwelt in Him in its fulness and integrity. Out of this substance the Lord took out only one form of purity, that which applies to the son in his relations to the Father and his brethren, and comprises the whole round of human duties and virtues, and having given it a human shape, said—Go and dwell thou in the world and show forth unto nations divine sonship. In the Old Testament of the world's history you see man's fall through disobedience; the New Testament shows the birth of the obedient child of God, who ever rejoices in doing his Father's will. And so came down Jesus in all his glory from heaven to teach us sonship, or true loyalty to the Father. He received his commission from the Father, and he took counsel from Him so to say. He was filled with the glory of God, and with as much of His power and wisdom and purity as the son needed for manifestation on earth. Thus was the son incarnated, and not the Father. The heavens and the earth rejoiced because a son was born and true manhood was revealed. It was not the Father that came to dwell amongst



us, but His beloved son, who was one with Him because he was made of divine humanity. Not the Father was made flesh; but the "word" that was with Him, the life, the truth of the son that was in Him, was made flesh.

Thus it is that Christ existed in God before he was created. There is an uncreated Christ, as also the created Christ, the idea of the son and the incarnate son drawing all his vitality and inspiration from the Father. This is the true doctrine of incarnation. Take away from Christ all that is divine, all that is God's, no Christ remains. The residuum is a volatile ethereal something which will not bear even the gentlest touch. Touch it and lo! it evaporates. Touch the human, bodily Christ, Christ as a self and a distinct individuality, and it vanishes, so unreal it is. The divine idea, the divine life, which is embodied in Christ, that is his substance, and that alone liveth and abideth for ever, and that we love and revere. When he came forth from heaven into this world with his sacred commission, how did he live and preach? He lived and preached in this world as one whose life was God, whose wisdom was God, and to whom God was all in all. He did not go about teaching dry ethical rules. He taught only one doctrine—divinity in humanity. He preached the highest form of spirituality, the truest type of idealism, when he declared himself

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one with God. One in what sense? Did he say unto the world that he was himself the Father? He never said that. He always spoke of himself as the son of God, the son of man. He never aspired to be equal to the Father, for he only occupied the subordinate position of the son. The glory of the Father he never coveted, he never claimed. All honour and goodness he ascribed to the Father, and said: "There is none good but the Father."

I do not think the so-called doctrine of Trinity is properly understood or comprehended in Christendom, and there are doubtless imperfect and incorrect notions about the true position of the son of God. I do not pretend to understand that position fully. For I am not only intellectually, but morally unfit to realize it. The subject of my discourse and the speaker differ as widely as heaven and earth, the one so exalted and pure, the other so low and vile. How can I understand Jesus? Two thousand years have not shed enough light upon the mysteries of his life and relation to God, and I certainly should not consider the world has waited too long if another two thousand years should fail to throw further light upon the subject. For centuries have men plied their understandings and exercised their intellects to solve this great problem, but the nineteenth century, in spite of its boasted intelligence and



wisdom, stands far, very far, from the proper comprehension of the relation in which Christ stands to his God. Whatever the final solution may be, it seems to me to be beyond all doubt that Christ's religion was pure, natural, and perfect idealism. He was not a materialist, but a true idealist. He saw his own spirit, and he saw the Divine Spirit also, and in deep communion he found the two identified. He felt he was but a drop lost altogether in the vast ocean of the Divinity. Never did he think of self. There was no life at all in him apart from Divinity. He dived deep into the Supreme Spirit, and there he lay immersed. So long as he was on earth he taught this doctrine of idealistic communion, and went about saying that he continually dwelt in the Father and the Father dwelt continually in him.

But if mysterious are Christ's relations to his Father, are not his relations to mankind equally mysterious? Here, too, we find evidence enough of that idealism of which I have spoken. He asserted the doctrine of spiritual oneness not only with reference to the Godhead, but also with regard to those around him. He was present not only in God, but also in the hearts of his disciples. What was his prayer to his Father regarding his people before he allowed himself to be crucified? Some time before that event occurred, Christ went to his Father and

prayed—"As Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us." Thus in comprehensive unity he sought to include God, his own self, and all mankind. This doctrine of spiritual identity is indeed grand and glorious. Addressing those around him Christ said—"He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in him." The language is strange indeed! Christ's body should enter into his disciples; his very flesh and his very blood should be tasted by his chosen and beloved disciples? Those who loved him were called upon to partake of his flesh and blood! The thing seems absurd. How could men eat Christ and drink his blood! That was possible in one sense only. In the sense, already indicated, of spiritual identification. All those who accepted Jesus with thorough fidelity were identified with him in truth, in love, in wisdom, and in purity. As Christ was one with God, he wanted others to be one with him, and one with God, so that all might dwell together in the glory of Heaven, enjoying everlastingly a life of purity, and holiness, and joy in God Himself. That indeed was Christ's mission, that was the great object of his life. He did not seek to place himself before his followers as a dogma or a doctrine, or a theoretical truth. He wanted to *live* in them with all his ideas and feelings and principles, his piety



and godliness, his life of mystic absorption into the Deity.

He wanted his followers to eat him and assimilate him to their hearts, and incorporate him into their very being. He did not mean that they should be gathered in this fold or that fold, under the banners of this sect or that denomination, in the name of this creed or that creed, but he wished simply to abide for ever in the consciousness of all his followers. There was no self-consciousness in him, for he himself was absorbed in God. He wanted to establish this principle in the hearts of all his disciples and of all mankind. It was his wish that men should enter into the highest communion with the Deity, and dwell with Him in the inmost recesses of their hearts; nay, dive into the depth of the Divine Essence, and there enjoy bliss, blessedness, and beatitude everlastingly. His thoughts and deeds, his life and teachings, all point to this as his mission. He showed the world how he lived and rejoiced in this in-dwelling Lord; and this in-dwelling Spirit he wanted to communicate to others; and as self is the great enemy of communion, he always warned men against taking care of self. Never think of self, said he. Take no heed of what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, or what ye shall put on, but seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteous-

ness. Surrender and resign yourselves completely to Him, and He will take care of you and feed you.

Men have put different interpretations upon this great doctrine, and the result is we have countless theories and sects before us. But the spirit of Christ remains ever the same. You may interpret it in your own way, and I may interpret it in my own way. Opinions may fluctuate and change; the sun and moon may be swept away from the firmament; yet this precious truth of unity preached by Christ shall remain and abide unchanged throughout all ages. Christ himself valued this central truth of his life so greatly that before leaving the world he not only offered his prayers unto God that all his disciples might continue to live in him, but he also instituted the sacramental ceremony, making it incumbent upon his followers to taste his flesh and blood, and be incorporated with him.

On the occasion of the Last Supper, Christ commended himself to his disciples and the world at large as mere bread and wine, to be assimilated to the soul, as mere leaven that would in time leaven the whole mass. As leaven he lives to-day. He is not dead. For two thousand years men have tried to find out the dead Christ under the stone. But the Spirit of God has marvellously rolled away the stone,



and Christ is not there. Even for three days Christ would not consent to live on earth as a dead Christ buried under the stone. So the Lord took His Christ unto Himself, and has in all ages discomfited and disappointed those that have searched for a dead Christ on earth. Where, then, is Christ now? He is living in all Christian lives, and in all Christian influences at work around us. Of the dead Christ I speak not. Of what use is a dead Christ to us or to our nation? It is the living spirit of Christ which you should put into your hearts and affections, your daily life and character. Do you not see Christ spreading throughout Christendom, like all-pervading leaven, mysteriously and imperceptibly leavening the lives of millions of men and women? You cannot resist his influence; you may deny his doctrines, you may even hate and repudiate his name, but he goes straight into your hearts and leavens your lives. He does not care to enquire what doctrine you believe or what dogma you accept, nor even what sort of a life you lead. You may be basest of sinners. You may be intellectually opposed to many of his doctrines. Yet the truth that is in Christ will perforce overcome and penetrate your souls in spite of your perverseness, and secretly influence your character. Truly the kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven. Now

the question is—Is all Christendom already leavened? In some measure, no doubt, Christ's spirit has leavened it. In Christian literature, laws, and institutions we see Christ's living influence as a reality. This living influence, which is advancing in all directions, has touched India, and hence the question she asks—Who is Christ? The genius of the nation has asked this question, and you are bound to answer it. As one of India's humble children, I have endeavoured to answer it according to the light which is in me. If you think my answer is not acceptable to you, try to answer it in your own way. In the interests of the country, in the interests of truth, the question must be answered in one way or another, now or hereafter. To India's solemn and thrilling cry, you must some day return a response.

Meanwhile, I must beg your acceptance of the truly national solution of the problem I have presented to you. You will find on reflection that the doctrine of divine humanity is essentially a Hindu doctrine, and the picture of Christ's life and character I have drawn is altogether a picture of ideal Hindu life. Surely, the idea of absorption and immersion in the Deity is one of those ideas of Vedantic Hinduism which prevail extensively in India. From the highest sage to the humblest peasant, millions



of men in this land believe in the pantheistic doctrine of man's identity with the Godhead. The most illiterate man is heard to say he and the Lord are one! The doctrine of absorption in the Deity is India's creed, and through this idea, I believe, India will reach Christ. Will he not fulfil the Indian scripture? I am reminded of the passage in the Gospel in which he says—"I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." The Mosaic dispensation only? Perhaps the Hindu dispensation also. In India he will fulfil the Hindu dispensation. The earliest scriptures of our nation are full of pantheism, and though there are errors therein, the truths of pantheism will be fulfilled and perfected in Christ. The religion of our ancestors was pantheism from the beginning to the end. But what is Hindu pantheism? Essentially it is nothing but the identification of all things with God. I do not mean that you should adopt pantheism as it exists in Hindu books. Far from it. Oh! there are mischievous errors and absurd ideas mixed up with it, which you must eschew. Christ's pantheism is a pantheism of a loftier and more perfect type. It is the conscious union of the human with the Divine Spirit in truth, love, and joy. The Hindu sage realizes this union only during meditation, and he seeks unconscious absorption in his God, with all his faults and shortcomings about him.

His will is not at one with the will of God. But Christ's communion is active and righteous; it combines purity of character with devotion. Hindu pantheism in its worst form is proud, being based upon the belief that man is God; it is quietism and trance. Christ's pantheism is the active self-surrender of the will. It is the union of the obedient, humble, and loving son with the Father. In the midst of activity, Christ was absorbed in God. Eating or drinking, preaching or going about doing good, his spirit always enjoyed serene communion. There was no pride in him, for he was dead to self. There was no dreamy mysticism in him, for he was ever engaged in doing the will of his Father. In Christ you see true pantheism. And as the basis of early Hinduism is pantheism, you, my countrymen, cannot help accepting Christ in the spirit of your national scriptures. You have already seen how in his outward form and appearance, with his flowing garment, he is acceptable to you. Now, you find that even the spirit of Christ draws you through your national instincts. You have a national affinity to the invisible as well as to the visible Christ. Can you deny it?

Behold Christ cometh to us as an Asiatic in race, as a Hindu in faith, as a kinsman and a brother, and he demands your heart's affection. Will you not give him your affection?



He comes to fulfil and perfect that religion of communion for which India has been panting, as the hart panteth after the waterbrooks. Yes, after long centuries shall this communion be perfected through Christ. For Christ is a true Yogi, and he will surely help us to realize our national ideal of a Yogi. India must, therefore, honour him. You have learnt to give the homage of your hearts to dear Chaitanya, the prophet of Nuddea, and you have also learnt to give honour unto Guru Nanuk, the prophet of the Punjab. These are your national prophets, and you do well to love and revere them. And if you look upon Asia as your home, you cannot but regard Christ, too, as one of your Eastern prophets, entitled to your loyalty and attachment. He comes to you after all as a Yogi, full of Hindu devotion and communion. How he often went to the mountains to offer solitary prayers to his Father, how the Father listened to and answered his prayers, and how the son rejoiced in loving communion—all this deeply touches and interests the Hindu mind. The devout Christ, like your Yogis and Rishis, lived a life of sweet devotion, and loved to dwell always in the Supreme Spirit. He lived, too, in purity, in the obedience of the will, which unfortunately is undeveloped in this country of ours, and is not always associated with devotion. He gave his Father not only his soul, but also his will

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In accepting him, therefore, you accept the spirit of a devout Yogi and a loving Bhakta—the fulfilment of your national scriptures and prophets.

Let all people in this country who bear the Christian name remember that it is not by presenting a Western Christ to our countrymen that they will be able to regenerate India. If you like, present the English side of Christ's many-sided character to the English nation. If you wish, present a German Christ to the Germans, and an American Christ to the American people. But if you wish to regenerate us Hindus, present Christ to us in his Hindu character. When you bring Christ to us, bring him to us, not as a civilized European, but as an Asiatic ascetic, whose wealth is communion, and whose riches prayers. This horrid form of asceticism, which prevails in this country and which consists only in self-mortification, is indeed most harmful and pernicious. True asceticism, as inculcated by Christ, means simply this—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all things shall be added unto you." Go forth, my Christian friends, from one district to another, from one province to another, dispensing the riches of Christ's asceticism. Go forth as apostolical missionaries, as did those of olden times, full of inspiration and the ascetic spirit of your Master, and you may be sure you shall go forth conquering and to conquer.



One word more, and I have done. The time is coming, and now is, when India shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The time has come when you can no longer be inimical or indifferent to Christ. Say unto Christ, as unto your best friend—Welcome! I say emphatically, and I say before you all, that Christ is already present in you. He is in you, even when you are unconscious of his presence. Even if your lips deny Christ, your hearts have secretly accepted him. For Christ is “the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” If you have in you the spirit of truth, and filial devotion and self-sacrifice, that is Christ. What is in a name? My Christ, my sweet Christ, the brightest jewel of my heart, the necklace of my soul—for twenty years have I cherished him in this my miserable heart. Though often defiled and persecuted by the world, I have found sweetness and joy unutterable in my master Jesus. Jesus is to me not a hard doctrine. He never was to me a hard doctrine. I am thankful to say I never read anti-Christian books with delight, and never had to wage war with my Christ. The mighty artillery of his love he levelled against me, and I was vanquished, and I fell at his feet, saying—Blessed child of God, when shall others see the light that is in thee? Therefore, I say, countrymen, be not as the unbelievers are, do not throw yourselves into the vortex of materialism



and scepticism. Christ, your friend, is walking through the streets of this country, carrying the banners of God, the Most High. He exhorts you to renounce self. My countrymen, bravely throw off the scabbard, unsheath the sword, and cut down this abominable self, and establish the kingdom of heaven in your lives. When you have achieved the triumph ye shall rejoice, for the bridegroom cometh. Young men of India, who are so jealous in the cause of reformation and enlightenment, turn your attention to this point. Believe and remember what Christ has said, and be ready to receive him. He is coming, and in the fulness of time he will come to you. He will come to you as self-surrender, as asceticism, as Yoga, as the life of God in man, as obedient and humble sonship. For Christ is nothing else. The bridegroom cometh. Do not, like the foolish virgins, fall asleep. But trim your lamps, put on your best apparel, and go forth with the enthusiasm and joy which all oriental nations display upon such occasions, to receive the bridegroom. Oh! the bridegroom is coming; there is no knowing when he cometh. Let India, beloved India, be decked in all her jewellery—those “sparkling orient gems” for which this land is famous, so that at the time of the wedding we may find her a really happy and glorious bride. The bridegroom is coming. Let India be ready in due season. And you, my



friends, rest assured that if there is any truth in Christ, it will overtake and conquer you. In your own hearts ye shall find testimony, the testimony of the Lord. For has not Christ himself said, "The Father which hath sent me hath borne witness of me"? The Father will reveal unto you His dear son. And who can be a better witness and guide, who can teach you better the mystery of the son's nature than the Father who sent him? In response to your anxious inquiry and earnest prayer the Lord will manifest unto you, in your individual and national consciousness, what truth there is in Christ. Seek, then, the true light of heaven humbly and prayerfully, and the Lord will vouchsafe it unto you in the fulness of time.



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GOD-VISION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

I AM here to-day to tell you the marvellous secrets of God-vision. I purpose to answer the pressing question of the age—Is it possible in these days of outward refinement and growing materialism to see the very Living God of the universe?

And while I try to unravel this sacred mystery, do Thou, O Light of ages, O Eternal Reason, enlighten my heart and strengthen my soul, that I may bear witness unto Thy truth, and faint not.

Gentlemen, it is a matter of universal rejoicing that the dark age of dreams and visions has gone by. How grim and dismal was the time when the world was enveloped in superstition, and men readily swallowed the most absurd theories and doctrines which the imagination could invent and carnal interests suggest! As in the history of individuals so in the history of nations, night is the time to sleep. "To sleep, perchance to dream!" Yes, night is the time for strange dreams. The world has slept for many long ages, dreaming dreams and seeing visions.

Night is the time when the magician waves his mysterious wand, and fascinates and enthrals the senses with fantastic tricks. Night is the time when interested priests and hierophants hold the human soul in hopeless intellectual bondage and spiritual servitude. But that night of darkness, that dismal and hideous night of superstition and priestcraft, has gone by, never to return. The world of thought seems to have just awakened to the stern and sacred realities of truth. Behold the great luminary of the day appears in the East, riding in his chariot of light, drawn by two splendid milk-white horses—the science of mind and the science of matter.

Verily this age is eminently an age of science. Everywhere science flourishes ; it flourishes most luxuriantly. Not one science alone, but all sciences are growing rapidly and steadily on all sides. The physical sciences, especially those which admit of proof and demonstration, are striking their roots deeper in men's minds, never to be eradicated. The greatest thinkers of the day are absorbed in science. It is their meat and drink, their study during the day, their joy at night. Nothing interests the mind so much now-a-days as science. The spirit of the age will not take things upon trust. Let them come hallowed by antiquity or sanctified by sacred associations of names and places, they are sure to be rejected and eschewed, if they cannot be



proved. Prove all things and hold fast that which is true—this is the principle which is being fearlessly and fully carried out in all departments of thought and speculation. But it is not merely in the field of theory, but in the field of practice, too, that we see the successful cultivation of science. Who does not rejoice to see the wonderful application of science to the varied wants and necessities of our daily life? In short, the signs of the times give unmistakable evidence of the fact that the present age is thoroughly scientific and philosophical, and none is accounted wise in these days but the man of science. In an age so eminently scientific, why talk of God-vision? Is it not an anomaly and an anachronism in the nineteenth century? Has not enlightenment closed for ever the age of dreams and visions? Why drag out from their graves the grotesque visions and the wild and delirious reveries of diseased brains, which have perished for ever? Why resuscitate and revive the dead bones of decayed mysticism? Why call forth apparitions from the grave? Gentlemen, I mean to do no such thing. I am not going to indulge in dreamy speculations regarding the Godhead. I am going to present to you, not a painted divinity, but the Real and Living God, as seen in sober philosophic vision. I will not soar into the ethereal regions of fairy dreams, nor spin out romantic fables and myths under the influence

of morbid sentimentalism. By vision I mean not delusion, but perception, the perception of the stern realities of the spirit-world, the direct apprehension of God and Heaven in consciousness. Is such a vision possible in these days? I emphatically and readily say, yes, it *is* possible. It is surely possible for many in the nineteenth century to see the Living God with the naked eye. How this is so will appear to you when I tell you briefly the philosophy of spiritual perception. You will then be convinced that what I speak of is not the visionary's vision of God, but the philosopher's perception of God? Yes, perception. The task which devolves upon the modern priest in the Temple of Science is not to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream, nor to decipher the mysterious hand-writing upon the walls of Belshazzar's palace. No, it is a much easier task, and yet more marvellous, more philosophical, more sober, and more scientific. Every believer in these days feels called upon, in the interests of truth and science, to read and decipher the hand-writing of God upon the walls of His vast tabernacle, upon every object in the heavens above and the earth below. As apostles of nature and votaries of science, we are commissioned to interpret the soul's vision of Heaven, and explain and vindicate its perception in broad day-light of the True and Invisible God. Perception, I say again, as opposed to, and contra-



distinguished from, Imagination on the one hand, and Abstraction on the other. I am not going to deal with imaginary deities. You know the world in all ages has imagined and adored false gods and goddesses by the thousand and by the million. With these I have no concern. My object is not to conjure up before your eyes that strange and fantastic group of deities which man's imagination has chiselled and painted in the course of ages. I am not going to revive the vast pantheon of Egyptian, Grecian, and Roman gods. Rest assured, my friends, I am not going to draw upon my imagination. The world has had enough experience in that direction.

Imaginary deities, deities of all shapes, sizes, and colours, angels, saints, monsters, birds, beasts, and creeping things, hills, rivers, and trees, have all had their day. The imagination, albeit so fertile, seems to have exhausted its resources. And woe to him who ventures in these days to add to the already overcrowded pantheon of the world's fabled gods! Far be it, therefore, from my heart to revive the worship of imaginary deities. Even their very memories I will dismiss from this assembly as most unwelcome. But if I warn you against imagination, against the worship of unreal gods and goddesses, I must at the same time guard you against being carried away by imagination in the opposite direction. For,

believe me, man can by imagination create things which are not ; and by imagination, too, he can dismiss and banish, ignore and deny, things which really exist. By imagination the mind brings in that which is not ; by imagination it sends away that which is. We may imagine false deities, and we may, on the other hand, imagine away the true Deity from among us. I would remind you of the man in the fable, who accidentally stumbled and fell down on the ground, but would not allow his neighbours to help him to rise, for he said he considered their efforts to restore him futile, as he was made altogether of fine crystal, and having fallen down he had unfortunately broken himself into pieces. I may also call to your mind that other Indian story, in which a man is represented as having persuaded himself to believe that somehow his eyes had left their proper place and got transferred to the posterior part of the head, and when this man's friends came to see him, he seriously asked them to go behind, as he could not see things which were before him ! Now this man's imagination doubtless deceived him. To imagine that things really before us are not before us argues indeed a dangerous species of idiotic imagination, and a lamentable type of mental derangement, from which every sane man ought to be free. Can you for one moment believe that your God is not present here ? Can you banish Him from the



mere fiat of the will? You can no more banish God from your minds than you can banish the pillars of the Town Hall from the field of your vision. Verily, the Lord your God is an omnipresent and immanent Spirit, Whom it is impossible to imagine away. Neither shall ye imagine into the mind unreal deities, nor shall ye imagine away the True God. How many, alas! turn away from His presence! Man seems unwilling to see God face to face. Whether it is because of his worldly habits and carnal propensities, which shun the very presence of the Lord, or in consequence of a sense of inability to realise Infinity, I will not undertake to determine. But so it is, and thousands and tens of thousands of men to-day seem content to believe that the Lord is a hidden reality, and never reveals Himself, and that no man, however devout, can at all see Him. They look within and without, and see nothing but an extensive void, in the midst of which they prefer to adore an unknown and absent Thou. They admit that the Lord is omnipresent, but do not care to feel or realize Him as such. Seers and prophets may have seen Him, but they think they are for ever debarred from His presence. What, then, does omnipresence mean? Shall humanity imagine away the Present and the Real into the regions of the shadowy and unreal? And shall I flatter such dreaminess, and humour such fancies? God

forbid. Gentlemen, if I do not blindly serve Imagination, neither do I idolize Abstraction. My Divinity is equally removed from either. Neither the painted fiction of ancient mythology nor the polished abstraction of modern metaphysics finds a place in my philosophy of vision. I abjure both as false. If you wish to see God, you should take care that in giving up the creations of gross imagination you do not plunge into idealism, the worship of pure abstraction. Are you going to accept as your God the mere idea of Divine power, the idea of infinite Wisdom, the idea of Love, or the idea of immaculate Holiness? Is an idea God? Is thought Deity? It is one thing to think of attributes, and cognize separate and abstract qualities, and quite another thing to perceive an object. Your knowledge of Divine attributes may be thoroughly correct. But in thought you abstract those qualities and take them piecemeal.

What are these Divine attributes, wisdom and power, love and holiness, but broken lights? They are the results of a severe and crucial analysis—the fragments of a divided substance. You have broken the nature of the true God into small bits for the sake of convenient apprehension. Not being able to take in the whole, you divided it by sharp analysis, and try to think of separate attributes and qualities one after another. This, indeed, is no vision. Synthesis is essential to

perception. In order that you may see God face to face, you must concentrate in a focus all these scattered and broken lights, and apprehend them in synthetic unity. Not fragments of abstract notions flitting before the student of philosophy, but the perception of the Living God, the Personal One, Centre and Substance of the highest conceivable attributes, that is God-vision. In it humanity sees the indivisible and undivided Deity as a whole. In all acts of perception there is an immediate and direct realization of a real entity, an object or a being viewed not as multiform phenomena, but as a substantial unity. When we see outward objects, we do not deal with abstractions. When I see you, ladies and gentlemen, I see not ideas, I see not fancies; I see realities present before me. I am surrounded on all sides by real persons, not ideas of persons. It is not a sheet of canvas spread before me, upon which are painted in life-like colours figures of men and women. It is not an ideal projection of my own consciousness that I see before me. I am sure I am not addressing so many ideas and notions seated before me. No. These are all stern external realities, which meet me at every turn, and leave an image upon my eye and upon my mind. I cannot believe that these are so many notions and ideas drawn out of my own mind. In perception we do not deal with the thoughts of our inner consciousness,

but we directly and immediately apprehend and seize outward objects and realities. It is true that the senses take cognizance and can take cognizance only of phenomena and qualities. But these are intuitively and immediately referred to an abiding substance, and viewed as a totality. There is a substratum or substance beneath all these phenomena to which these phenomena belong. There is something to which these qualities and properties appertain, something in which they reside. Whenever we speak of things we have seen, we speak not of mere colour and shape and other properties, but of objects possessed of these qualities. In perception we apprehend a unity of substance under a multiplicity of phenomena. This is true of God-vision. When I talk of the perception of God, I do not mean abstract attributes, but I speak of the Divine Person as He is; not multiplicity of attributes, wisdom and holiness and power and love; but the aggregate of all these attributes in the unity of the Godhead. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, the same immutable and unchangeable God, in whom there is no variableness, no vicissitude or change, a permanent substance, a Personal God in the midst of an endless variety of phenomena and attributes. Gentlemen, I do not mean to decry or depreciate abstraction. It is good in its own way. Doubtless it is essential to science.



It is an indispensable and valued instrument of thought. But it falls within the province of logic. Its uses are in the domain of metaphysics. Whoever wishes to philosophize concerning the attributes of God must deal in abstraction. Our present concern is not philosophy or reflection, but perception. We desire not to think of particular attributes of the Deity, but to behold him as a complete unity, comprising all His attributes. Shun, then, both imagination and abstraction. If ye wish, my brethren, to enter the haven of beatific vision, let the mind steer clear of the Scylla and Charybdis of unreality and abstraction. Let synthesis, not analysis, be your watchword. Do not break, but unite. Unite in a personal unity the various fragments of a divided Deity, scattered broadcast over the world, and adored separately in different ages by different schools of religion and philosophy. Bring all these broken units into one focus, and you will see in this beautiful synthesis a perfect and harmonious whole, the very Living God of the universe, neither imagination nor abstraction, neither the one thing nor the other, neither fetish nor idol, neither man nor angel, neither superstition nor metaphysics, but the true God of heaven and earth. Not the pantheist's God, not the idolater's God, not the visionary's God, not the metaphysician's God; but the true, personal God, full of wisdom and love, full of power and



holiness, and perfect. This is the God of all eternity, the God of the entire universe. Now, in order that we may realize in vision this personal unity, we must keep clear of all fancies and delusions, and proceed directly to His tabernacle and there behold the light of His face. We must turn straight to this Divine Person and see Him as He is, without any medium. For in God-vision we see with the naked eye, and not through coloured glasses. Assuming nought, imagining nothing, we shall in plain perception seize a plain reality with the aid of the naked eye. This is all that I propose to do. I have only to invoke optics. May the science of vision enable us to see the True God in the light of day !

Between God-vision and the spirit of science in the nineteenth century there is no discord, but rather concord. The scientists of the present day ardently love unity. Their very vocation is to evolve unity out of variety, method and order out of confusion and disorder. In fact, science is nothing but a striving after unity, the reduction of multiplicity of phenomena into unity, the unity of law or force or whatever else it might be. What is it that you see in modern times but the evolution of unity in all departments of science, physical, mental, and moral? What are Astronomy, Geology, Botany, Chemistry, Anatomy, and Physiology, but the observation of certain classes of phenomena and their reduction



to unity and order? Place a mass of plants or fossils or bones or metals before the scientist of modern times, and he will say—"Science abhors multiplicity, and must evolve unity out of it. I can have no rest till I have succeeded in reducing this confused and ill-assorted variety to order and method. This is my sacred mission." The scientific man goes through the laborious processes of induction, generalization, and classification, and goes on till he has discovered one law, one force, beneath a multitude of phenomena. One, not many, is his guiding principle. Like true religion, science, too, abhors plurality, and will have unity at the root of all things. Both rejoice in the creed of unity. The cry all over the world of modern science is unity of force. The Darwins and Huxleys, the Tyndalls and Spencers of modern times are all engaged in the work of unification. They find many species, many forces, and they try to reduce them to one. Whatever the merits of their theories may be, they challenge admiration and merit sympathy as unconscious labourers in God's vineyard, and lay ministers in Nature's tabernacle in so far as they are mightily endeavouring to evolve unity and advance the cause of science. How many apparent anomalies and conflicts in nature have been explained and harmonized, how many seemingly discordant phenomena traced to identical principles! Year after year we see



complexity is giving way to simplicity, plurality to unity. The number of forces in nature is being gradually reduced, and there is a strong desire to reduce all to one simple and ultimate force. It may be that two thousand varieties of phenomena have been reduced to half-a-dozen forces; yet the true scientists of modern times are not content, and they anxiously hope that in the course of time all these forces will be reduced to one only. Whether in the human mind or in outward nature, there is but one force they say, to which all nature is subordinate. All physical, mental, and moral energies are traceable to one primitive force.

What that is, men are trying to determine. The problem is yet far from being solved. Nay, the strife of opinions is still most bitter and the antagonism inveterate. Nevertheless all are working hard to bring about the harmony and unity of forces, and hopefully looking forward to the day of fruition. All the grand discoveries of the age are but precursors of that much-desired consummation. Whenever anything like unity of force is discovered in the chaos and confusion of phenomenal irregularities, the man of science is sure to shout forth in joy, "Eureka, I have found it." And every time minor forces are traced to a higher force he enthusiastically exclaims that the reign of unity is drawing near. Even the master minds of the age, the most

enlightened thinkers, are wholly in the dark as to what the character of the ultimate force is to be, material or spiritual. Of course, the materialistic philosopher would materialise it, and seek in a primitive physical force an explanation of the whole universe. Some even go so far as to predict that all phenomena in the universe, physical and mental, will hereafter be referred to electricity as the one ultimate force. Let it be electricity or any other force. Let it be any thing. So long as there is no positive light, no absolute demonstration, let us not quarrel in the midst of shadows and uncertainties. I only contend for the fact that all scientific men are agreed as to the possibility and desirability of evolving unity of force. All are seeking that one force. All hearts are set upon the anticipated unity. There is a general consensus of opinion that the whole universe is upheld and sustained by a single force and not a plurality of forces. Upon one single pillar rests all creation. From one primary source, called by whatever name, flows all the vitality and all the activity in creation. The circle of the universe is vast, but one is its centre, only one. What is that one? What is that single force to which both mind and matter may be ultimately referred, and which will fulfil the desire of ages, and the hope of the scientific world? In these walls and in these pillars, in the men and women



assembled in this hall; in the earth below and the heavens above, in the light and the air, in the sea and the ocean, in the hill and the mountain, in the world without and the world within, in history and in biography, what is the single force which pervades all and guides all, supports all and quickens all, and which gives to both mind and matter all their vitality and energy? What is it that lies at the root of all the movements of matter and thought in the world? Is it electricity? So be it. Does electricity keep up this vast multitude of forces, this vast multitude of objects and persons and living beings in their endless varieties of form? One force there is beneath all and behind all, even beneath electricity, which gives to it its peculiar force. What occult force is that which nourishes and quickens all the known and undiscovered forces in nature, the light of light, the electricity of electricity? This mysterious primary force, underlying all secondary forces, I unhesitatingly call God-force. A personal creative force, an intelligent will-force at once furnishes the long-desired key, and unravels and explains the whole mystery. Behold a transfiguration all around! The earth and heavens are unveiled, and their hidden glory bursts upon our view. The *Sanctum sanctorum*, the holy of holies, clearly reveals itself to our eyes, and we see how Divinity, far away in the solemn stillness and solitude of



that inmost sanctuary, is secretly working out His wise and benevolent purposes, and moving the vast machinery of the universe. It is no longer the old world, with its endless diversities of phenomena, small creeping things here and gigantic beasts there, dead inorganic matter here, and life and vivacity there—a world which perplexed us by its hopeless complexity, its hideous mass of anomalies. Lo! how the heavens and the earth are now changed! How bright, how sublime this spectacle of a transformed universe!

What do we now see before us? A Living Deity in everything. A sacred halo encircles the face of creation. A heavenly hand upholds all things. Do you not see that Divine hand in all things below and in the heavens above? Behold sparks of fire on all sides, little forces lit up by the touch of Divinity! All nature ablaze and aglow! Everywhere shines the same celestial fire, God-force acting and interacting through the various forces in the world. Grasp this pervading and immanent force in every active force in creation. O thou, my right arm! I feel within thee the measured beat of the pulse. What a mystery! What is it that lies concealed within the fold of thine arteries, that causes this strange thing called pulsation? Is it a dead physical force, and nothing more? I feel within thee a living force emanating from God, and keeping up and sustaining the entire body.



Here it is, I feel it, I see it. I accept it as a fact and an undeniable reality. O heart of mine! as I lay my hand on thee I feel a mysterious throbbing and excitement within thee. What causes this upheaving and this strange sound? Whence this fresh stream of vital fluid incessantly passing from thee through the arteries to the remotest parts of the body? In this forcible propulsion of blood through its natural channels, which I feel most distinctly in thee, do I see only blood-force? No; beneath that force I feel, as distinctly, the hand of the Living God plying the machinery of the blood system in the human body. And now my lungs, whence comes this breath, so essential to life? Who moves this curious respiratory apparatus within? What makes you breathe? Is it your own force that makes you inhale and exhale air? Can matter breathe? O lungs, it is given to you to breathe! Not in your own strength, but with a higher power do ye give out noxious air and take in such air as brings life and vitality. You do not move. You are moved. Beneath your respiratory agency, your muscular force, is the living force of God, that supports the ceaseless activity of ever-recurring inhalation and exhalation. Gentlemen, do you now see what the body is? Though dead and dark, it becomes, when lighted with the light of God-force, the very Temple of the Living God. It does not creep on earth, but



it stands erect, and moves and speaks and works in the strength of heaven. The whole body is the sanctuary of the Living God, who is seated on His throne of glory in the centre, and is dispensing from the inexhaustible store-house of His will-force all the quickening and strengthening influences, all the muscular and nervous forces that keep up the bodily organism. Verily He is the heart of heart, the life of life, "the eye of the eye." It is only when you peep within and look into your inmost consciousness that you see the resolution of all your dead human forces into the ultimate Living Force. In clear vision you apprehend the Force of Forces. Lo! what was veiled has been revealed. What was concealed has been laid bare. You have removed the dial, and the beautiful machinery within, which was so long concealed before the atheistic eye, reveals itself in Theistic God-vision. So with regard to the whole universe, all that you are required to do is to take off the huge dial from its face. Then you will see the secret springs of the machinery which keep the universe in working order. Each wheel is in its place, and the primary force quickens and regulates the movements of all the wheels, and gives them law and method, force and harmony. Put the dial on again. You see only outside nature. The hour-hand and the minute-hand move with the strictest regularity. Beyond this you see nothing. You



perceive movements and phenomena only, but you do not comprehend them. You have no access to the hidden secret. The force is there, but you see it not. Take off the dial again. Lo! how beautifully those wheels work! You rejoice as you see those wheels revolving. What is the motive power, the primary agent? There is a force behind, a hand inside moving the hands outside, a mainspring moving the whole machinery. It is only by moving the dial that you see within, and all things reveal themselves unto you. You see a huge tree. It grows; the branches and leaves grow, spread, and multiply month after month, year after year—a gigantic tree which has lasted for hundreds of years. Men have been wondering how the thing grows. Fresh foliage and fruits in abundance! Now the tree seems to be dead; it pines and sinks in winter; but lo! with the return of spring it is again clothed with life and beauty. Why is this, I wish to know. I at once unearth the roots. There I see the secret causation. There is the working of the hidden cause, that keeps the branches, the leaves, and the fruits in freshness and continued growth. Here is the secret of the inexplicable vitality of the tree. Oh roots! you have explained the uprising and growth of the splendid tree. You send up the vital juice into the branches and the leaves of the tree, and you transmit nourishment to its re-



motest parts. Is not the universe a mighty tree, the wonder of ages? Who supplies it with life? Uncover the root, and you at once see how it supplies sap and strength. The root explains the tree. The root-force upholds the universe, and explains it.

Another illustration, gentlemen, another vision in which we directly realize God-force. You see little children clinging to the mother's breast. Who keeps them alive? Thou criest and weepst, O little child, thou castest about thy tiny fingers and thy little arms, and thou seemest to tell me that there is life within thee. Beloved child, sweet and lovely, how helpless art thou! Yet thou livest, O child! What a mystery! Ah! I see someone behind thee. It is thy mother. Thy mother explains thee. Thou art not able to explain thyself. Thou art a babe; thou canst do nothing of thine own power. It is thy mother, to whose breast thou art so tenaciously clinging, it is she who explains thee. She is thy philosophy, the reason of thy life and its nourishment; her tender arms thy home, her breast thy food and drink. Who supplies the blood which sustains thee? Does not thy mother put into thy mouth this living nourishment? Yes, the mother's breast explains the little child. Reflect on these simple and homely illustrations, think of the picture I have drawn—the dial thrown off the clock, the root nourishing the tree, the mother

suckling the little infant—and you will understand the true philosophy of God-vision, the science of life and force in the universe. Behold the universe held on the arms of the Supreme Mother, Who is incessantly pouring, through secondary forces, the milk of life and strength into all objects and beings! Are you not prepared to admit that this is a truly scientific vision, not the vision of a deluded idiot, but the modern philosopher's daylight vision? Every little child is nourished by its mother; every tree is sustained by the hidden root; the mainspring causes and sustains the movements of the wheels in every time-piece. Is not each of these truths most scientific? Believe me, I have no other God-vision than is implied in these simple truths, which none can controvert. View the universe as a vast machinery, the Lord is the mainspring. Regard it as a mighty tree, God is the root. Look upon it as a child, the Lord is the Mother. It is thus that science enables you to realize your God. Science, yes, science it is which teaches us how Divinity lives in us and everywhere as an immanent and in-dwelling Spirit-force. Surely man does not sustain himself; he does not nourish himself. The blood in your system cannot go forth without God's command; neither can your hand rise without His command. The Lord is in the muscles of your arms and in all the muscular forces of your body. Take off the



outward veil which covers the universe, and then you will see the immanent and living God with your own eyes. Men who have neither faith nor science see nothing, but those of you who honour faith and science must see through the veil, impenetrable to others, and feel that the Lord is here and there and everywhere.

How grateful must we feel to science for what it has done in this age! It has achieved wonders not only in secular matters, but also in religion. It has brought heaven nearer to the earth, and shortened the distance. Formerly men used to ascend a long line of causation, inferring a cause from every effect, and from that cause a higher cause, and from that again a still higher cause. There was not one cause, but an interminable series of causes, and men had to go through the tedious logical process of hunting cause after cause till they reached the First Cause. The journey was really most tedious, slow, and irksome, and many there were among the pilgrims who stopped half way in sheer disgust, and failed to reach the destination. They stopped at some intermediate seventh cause, and had neither the patience nor the good sense to proceed further. But in these days science has killed distance—in the physical world by steam and electricity, and in the spiritual world by introspection and immediate vision. The true Benares with its shrine of Mahadeo, Supreme God,

is now within easy reach of us all. A long ladder of many steps led to God's sanctuary in days gone by. Science has cut it short. Instead of many steps there is but one step from earth to heaven. One step from mind and matter to God; one step now from the muscles and the nerves, from the eye and the ear to God. From the summit of the Himalayas and from the bottom of the vast deep, there is but one step to heaven. In whatever part of creation we may be, whatever force, material and spiritual, we may arrive at, from there one solitary step leads us into the very presence of First Cause. We are no longer required to climb up the long ladder of sequence and causation, but move only one step in advance to reach the Godhead. He is so near to us, we can almost touch Divinity. Look with eyes wide open, and you will see beneath every secondary force that immanent Divine force; that living force, the source of light and heat, of wisdom and power, sustaining all things and keeping up this vast universe. You see a thousand earthly forces; immediately beneath them and directly connected with them is the central causative power or God-force. So there is one link alone in the chain which binds creation to God. In God-vision we see not a long casual chain, connecting objects and beings with a distant Divinity through a series of causes, but a circle in which everything in creation is directly



and immediately connected with the central force. Thus it is that we see our God here and there and everywhere. What a glorious and beautiful transformation! The world is full of God, full of the fire of Divine Force. I cannot act, I cannot talk, I cannot move, I cannot think, except with the power of God, directly and immediately received from Him. Take away the central force, in a moment creation disappears. A mighty and universal deluge sweeps off the length and breadth of the universe. The glory and beauty of all created works vanish for ever into that primeval nothingness from which they came, because God has pushed away His right arm. Eliminate God-force and there is an end of all things. Talk of idealism and pantheism. What you see is neither idealism nor pantheism, but the very Living God sustaining the whole world of matter and mind by His Almighty hand. Oh! that was a fancy, a delusion of ancient time—I mean the popular story of creation. A mere creative power does not explain the universe. An enduring, all-pervading power, that keeps up this vast creation, must be recognized. Where is that power? Verily creation and preservation are essentially one. He who creates also preserves. The very force that created the universe upholds it. He who said to the sun, “Rise,” says the same thing every morning. He who created the planets, still says to them—“Turn neither to the

right nor to the left, but keep your respective orbits." The Lord commandeth, and all objects, from the largest to the smallest, obey the command, for the Lord is mighty above all, and who can defy His authority? His force rules all things. His Omnipotence governs the universe. Behold the fishes, how joyfully they play and move about in the sea! And those fowls, how they sing and soar in the sky! So do the sons of men. The Lord says—Go and play your parts in the theatre of the world, and play your parts well and honourably, for they that do so shall be richly rewarded. Hence it is that men and women run in diverse ways, each going about his or her business. This is all you do in the world. The power of your intellect and the power of your arm are both Divine, and all the work you do under the normal instincts and impulses of the heart is the Lord's, whether you admit it or not. Why, then, boast of your strength and resources? Know ye not that every moment ye are at the mercy of that primary force that created you, and that ye can do nothing of yourselves? Tell me not that an unknown Divinity, after creating the universe, left it to itself and went to sleep behind the clouds. Tell me not that mind and matter work with independent force, and have no connection whatever with the Creator. An absent deity is a fiction. A self-moving universe is a dream of

sceptical minds. There is not an object, not a single creature, not an inch of space in creation which is godless. Nothing is unhallowed, nothing profane in nature. The whole universe is the tabernacle of the Living God, and everywhere you behold His bright face. Neither is matter God nor is man God, but the Lord as the Personal First Cause dwelleth in all, animating the myriad forces in nature, and brightening its whole face with a heavenly beauty such as no man can fully conceive, no poet can fitly describe.

But stop. I have said enough concerning the Living God, who reveals Himself unto us in all the ruling and active forces in nature, as the transparent source of their vitality and energy, as the Parent of the universe, suckling and nourishing it. But does this Living God manifest Himself alone? God Almighty, art Thou alone? I have ventured to take the dial off this universe, and the wondrous things that lay concealed therein have been revealed. Now I ask Thee, O Spirit Supreme, is there any one else with Thee, or art Thou alone, sitting in solitary glory? Methinks I see another being there. It is my Christ. Yes, it is my Christ who is there. There! Where? On the right hand side of God? No, God has neither a right hand nor a left hand. When I say, Christ is there, do I mean the bodily Christ? No. Science tells me that the body is altogether decomposed in a few



days after death. Surely the body cannot rise up; yet my Christ is there. Ah! it is the Spirit of Christ who is there, reclining on the bosom of the Lord. But the man Christ, they say, was cruelly and ignominiously persecuted and crucified unto death by his enemies, and then he was buried, and heaps of stones were placed upon his body. But there was such a thing as Resurrection subsequently. So we are told in the Gospel narrative. Are you sure of it? Are you sure that Christ after he was buried soared up to the high heavens? Where is the testimony? Who are the witnesses? I am proud to be one of them, for I do verily believe, and am prepared to testify, that Christ has risen from his earthly grave. Do I speak with the authority of an eyewitness? Yes, I do. If you think Christ is in the grave, you are certainly dreaming. For where is he to be found on earth? Nowhere. Christ dead and decayed is a deception. Christ risen is Christ indeed. The Spirit of Christ has risen and returned to the Father. Search the place where Christ's body was laid. He is not there. But he is somewhere. In heaven, sitting with his Father, or rather in Him. If he is not in heaven, where is he? Is he dead and gone? My sweet Jesus; art thou really no more? Art thou dead? Oh Jesus, Jesus, is thy sweet soul for ever lost to us after only three years' ministration? Child of God, short chapter of thy noble

life and teachings, is this all that is left of thee? Is the great history of thy life a passing dream, a shooting star? O Christ, it is hard to believe thou art no more. Surely thou livest. Thou art in heaven with thy Father, clinging to His bosom. Thy spirit is in thy Father's Spirit, O Jesus! I again say Christ has risen. It is no delusion, no dream, but a reality, a reality which you can all behold and see. Try and test it for yourselves, every one for himself. Christ is no longer on earth, but he is where he ought to be. Christ is with his Father, indissolubly united. That glorious fact, the resurrection of Christ, every true believer can feel and realize within himself even to-day, aye at this very moment. Whoever has the spirit of Christ in him must feel a heavenward and Godward tendency. It is Christ drawing the believer's soul towards himself and the heaven where he is. There is a desire to soar upward, to jump up to the heaven above where Christ is living with his God. Who is there that does not feel this?

Whenever our hearts are drawn by Christ-force, we are drawn towards heaven, for Christ is not buried, but risen. Not only has he risen, but every one can rise with him and in his spirit to the highest heaven. Christ has justly been regarded as a typical man. Every prophet who came down from heaven, as an emanation of spirit-force from the Almighty, went back

to him, as Christ did, after fulfilling his mission. Where is Moses? Dead and gone! The evangelists record a very strange and wonderful scene in the life of Christ. I mean his Transfiguration. Marvellous vision indeed! Moses and Elias on either side of Jesus, as he stood on a high mountain, and they were talking with him. "His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow." The soul is lost in amazement as it looks upon this picture. It is said that eye-witnesses saw the event. What does all this mean? Are we to believe that Moses, after so many centuries, returned to this world? Did the prophet of the old dispensation come all the way from his mansion in heaven to do honour to Christ Jesus, the prophet of the new dispensation? Did he really talk with Jesus? Is it a picture that we see before us with the eye of imagination—two prophets greeting and honouring their elder in the middle? No. It is a reality. No flesh, no bones do I see, but three spirits, side by side, three noble souls holding communion with each other. The incident happened on this earth of ours. Strange, very strange indeed! On earth came Moses—the true Moses, the veritable Moses, and he talked with Jesus! Behold a trinity of spirits, and among them a deep spiritual affinity! Do you not believe that all true spirits have a mutual affinity, a close kinship towards each

other, and that they always abide together in the Lord, and together they eat the bread of life and drink the nectar of joy in heaven? What wonder, then, that where Christ's soul was, Moses and Elias were also present, and that in deep communion he saw them and heard them and conversed with them? It was altogether a spiritual interview, a meeting of three great spirits in the spirit-world. Behold a whole family of saints and prophets, all united with each other, and united in the Lord! Not only is Christ there, but there are also Moses and Elias, and all the Jewish prophets of olden times, and Paul and all the apostles. And Chaitanya, too, the blessed prophet of India, and the immortal Sakya Muni and Confucius and Zoroaster too. All our masters are there assembled. Seated on smaller thrones, they surround the throne of the Great Spirit, whose glory is in them and in whose glory they dwell. Oh blessed confraternity of disembodied souls! How they all shine in the light of the Central Sun and reflect His glory. Celestial spirit-forces animated by the Supreme Spirit. None lives apart, none can live apart from God. In Him they live and move and have their being. The son has no life apart from the Father. As here all terrestrial and material forces, so above, all celestial and moral forces we call prophets are vivified by the Primary Moral Force. This



is no delusion. The picture of this saintly family is a reality. If these saints have departed from this world, they must have been translated to the regions above, where they surround the throne of God Almighty. The venerated founders of all the systems of religion which prevail in the world are assembled in heaven. There they do not disagree, there they do not contend with each other, but they are all as one in their God. Whatever differences there may be among their followers here, they know no contention above, but are as one united family in heaven. Christ-force and Moses-force are indissolubly connected with the root-force in God. Thus it is that heaven, the dwelling place of departed saints and prophets, is included in God-vision. In true vision we do not see an abstract solitary Deity, wholly separated from the universe, but a Living Force in which all great moral forces are held together. All the prophets dwell in God, and draw their spiritual nourishment and inspiration from Him. Jesus cannot be dissociated from the spirit of truth in the Father, from the spirit of love and wisdom in the Father, for Jesus' purity was God's purity, his wisdom was God's wisdom. The son of man had no power of his own. Try to separate God and Christ if you can. O ye rationalists of the present day, prove if you can that Christ-force was independent of God-force. There can be no

Christ apart from God. Verily, verily the son liveth in the Parent, the second force in the First Force, the two united in one.

This is the philosophy of God-vision in modern times. It is a vision in which Divinity and heaven are realized together. As you open the spiritual eye the glory of heaven bursts upon the view, and you see all the blessed martyrs and saints clinging to the Lord their God as so many secondary spirit-forces clustering round the primary force. As on earth, men and women, beasts, birds and creeping things, and myriads of inanimate objects are kept up and constantly quickened by Divine force, so in heaven all departed spirits are sustained by God's animating force, the source of all things here and above, the fountain of all life and vitality. He is heaven itself, for in His living force is held the entire confraternity of blessed saints and martyrs of ancient and modern times. It is impossible to conceive any prophet-spirit apart from God. He has gathered unto Himself every prophet's soul, and whoso sees Him may see in Him Christ shining in all his glory, and the smaller saints and martyrs according to the respective measure of their merits. Whenever the Father presses you to His bosom, do you not feel that there are others also in His bosom? Whenever He appears in the temple of the devotees' hearts, He comes with His children. Such is the vision of God

and heaven, which men in these days are privileged and permitted to see. The heaven I hold up before your eyes is not the fabled heaven we used to hear of from the lips of our old grandmothers, a fairy palace hid above the clouds, but a heaven near to us all, a present reality, a city of enfranchised spirits, a family of loved saints in the inmost recesses of the soul, dwelling in the loved Father. This is no dream; the whole thing is as palpable and clear before your eyes as anything can be. Lo! the God of heaven and earth is before you, with all the martyrs and prophets and saints reposing and reclining on His bosom. He is resplendent in every prophet you honour, every saint you love, and every martyr you revere. As truly, though less brightly, does he dwell in all living beings and in all inanimate things. He is in that object and in this. He is in all space; here and everywhere. Remember, I have told you, He is a Person—our Father and Mother—present in all things, suckling all martyrs, saints, and prophets in heaven, and suckling all men, young and old, poor and rich, humble and great, feeding even sinners—the very nourishment and vitality, the strength and energy of the universe. There is not one drop of blood in you, but it cometh from the Lord; not one breath you draw, but the Lord is in it. Thus you see a burning God everywhere, a devouring fire in heaven above and on earth below.

How erroneous are the popular conceptions of Deity which prevail here and in other countries ! They deal with separate attributes of God, which are personified and made into separate deities. In the East as well as in the West, different attributes of Divinity, different forms of goodness and purity have been embodied in symbols, and have formed the subjects of exclusive adoration and worship among different sects. But there is no unity. There you see multiplicity ; in vision, unity. There men lose themselves in an endless maze of phenomenal multiplicity ; here we have a complete personal unity apprehended in perception. There fancy paints many gods, each representing a particular attribute ; here you have One God, One Person, in whom all ancient gods and goddesses seem to have melted away and crystallized in a Supreme Person. Here you have no prophet-god, no incarnate deity, no polytheistic pantheon, no pantheistic absorption, but all the root ideas of these are seen personified and unified in the Living God. Men of all religions see their conceptions realized in Him, the sum and substance, the complete personification of their varied ideas. Let me say emphatically that the true and scientific vision of the Supreme God excludes no attribute, no force, but realizes the unity of all creation in the Creator.

Is such vision possible ? We have heard of



prophets and seers of ancient times who saw the Lord, often and often. Let us believe that we too can see Him in these days. But there is this difference. The measure of vision is unequal. Even the best among us cannot be likened to the master minds of antiquity, to such men as Abraham and Moses, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Paul. These great names have no parallel in these days. We have no prophets, no apostles like them now. The least among them has no equal in our age. Instead of greatness we have mediocrity. This is true both of the intellectual and the religious world. Whatever the conceited might say, there is no Homer, no Socrates in our midst. Nor is it possible to reproduce in modern history such exalted characters as Jesus or Moses. How many Shakespeares, how many Miltons are there among you? Alas; towering genius is rare in modern times. In these days of levelling and leavening, education has spread over a wider area, and we have a greater number of enlightened men and women now than in any former period of the world's history. But extraordinary greatness is hardly to be found among a multitude of wise men. Thousands of stars shine in the firmament, but no great luminary like Jesus shines now. In our days there are men who see their God, and hold communion with Him. But is there any one among us who can venture to say, I have



seen God, as they in ancient times did? No one can say so. Yet I believe there are thousands who can see God to-day, and who do see Him. It is indeed a privilege for minds and souls like ours to hold communion with God, and see Him as we see each other, with all the immediacy and vividness of direct vision. Unto the least among us Heaven has mercifully vouchsafed the joys and benefits of such vision. I say without the least hesitation we can see God face to face. We do not make any pretence. There is no conceit, there is no arrogance in the assertion, though it may seem very bold. We do not see as the prophets saw, we see in a much smaller measure. Our vision, sinful and unworthy as we are, is nothing compared to their beatific vision. Yet I say we see God. We may not be Homers or Shakespeares; we may not be great geniuses. Yet we may put forth reasonable claims to be ranked among educated men. For we know a little of the literature and grammar, arithmetic and philosophy comprised in the standard of popular education, and we may fairly claim to be ranked above the masses of uneducated and illiterate men and women in the world. The very little that we possess in the shape of knowledge we cannot despise. Rather do we rejoice. So we may not be able to see God as Moses and Jesus saw. We may not have the eyes of prophets.

Yet not the less true and real is our God-vision. Because God does not manifest Himself to us as vividly as He did to ancient prophets, does it, therefore, follow that we do not see Him at all? No. To every humble believer, to every man and woman who believes in the Living God, He reveals Himself in these days. Whoever can with the force of faith remove the mantle from the face of creation, and apprehend God-force, immanent in himself and in all surrounding objects, as a Real Person, may be said to see Him. We may not be able to see a great deal, but the little that we see is real. The vision I speak of, and which the humblest believer is privileged to enjoy, is eminently scientific and philosophical, and at the same time most sanctifying and gladdening. Therefore, let us rejoice, let all the scientific and enlightened men of the age rejoice that such wonderful God-vision is not only possible in these days, but is a veritable fact.

Now I will tell you how we see God every day. Every morning the believer sees and hears God when He knocks at the door, and says, "Rise up, slumbering child." It is no uncertain sound. It is the voice of science. It is well known to you all that science commands us, in the interests of our health, to rise early every morning. The voice of science is the voice of God. If you hear attentively, you will find that it is Heaven that

speaks, and no fantastic creation of our own brains. It is not man, but God, that commands us in all matters concerning health and life. The law of health you dare not defy or disregard. It is not human, but Divine law. It is engraven upon the tablet of the heart. Who can ignore it? Dare you say, O sluggard, "A little more sleep and a little more slumber?" Would you roll about your bed longer? Lo! there is the Lord before you. He speaks imperiously, and says, "Rise immediately: no more sleep." You can sleep no longer, but must wake, and go about your business. Later on in the day when the body feels hunger, you are apt to say, "I feel hungry." You see nothing Divine in hunger. You say it is all carnal, and indicates merely a certain condition of the human body, of corruptible matter. The body craves and longs for food. The bodily organism, weakened and exhausted, yearns for food, and man eats. This is the popular theory of hunger. But what is the real truth? The Lord, Who lives always in the human body as in His living tabernacle, reveals Himself, and speaks through the empty stomach—"Go and satisfy your hunger, O my child. Go and take those things I have gathered for you, and put them into your stomach." A man of faith is sure to see the vision and hear the voice. He would see the Living God in his system exciting his appetite and demanding food. No

deception, but here, too, as in the case of early rising, it is science that commands us, and urges on us the necessity of filling the stomach, whenever it is empty, with nourishing food. Nature becomes desperate and frantic through excessive hunger, and runs wild after food to escape the horrors of starvation. And what is nature but the voice of God in nature? Verily, it is God who makes us feel the force of hunger, and it is He who feeds us. Suppose a man gets Rs. 200 per mensem. How complacently he thinks that his own energy fetches the money, and that he himself uses it for his own subsistence! He sends his servant to the municipal market, to purchase things for his dinner. His own servant cooks the dinner, and places the dishes upon the table. As the man eats the delicious viands, how heartily does he congratulate himself upon his success, arrogating to himself the credit and glory of the enterprise! He can never be persuaded to question his assumed independence or rebuke his own pride. Disdainfully he scouts the idea of sharing the credit even with God Himself. "Shall I," says he, "unwisely, foolishly, and in an unmanly spirit ascribe to God, whom no eye hath seen, the things which have been achieved by myself with the aid of my own servant and with my own money? This I never will." How untruthful and impious are such notions! Let us believe that no man has ever cooked a dinner, and no



man can ever do so with his own unaided human energy. The hand of man can do nothing without Divine force. It has no power of its own wherewith to transact business, acquire money or use it for purposes of subsistence. Unto the Lord belongs all power.

You talk of the power of wealth. But what is this force? Do you not see the Lord's force in it? If you say your money does everything for you, I say it is the Lord who does all things for you with His money. There is not a rupee in your possession but it appertains to the Lord. Your money, your energy, your daily bread, these are not yours, but the Lord's; even the blood in your system is His gift. Who provides you with rice and bread? Who converts these into blood? He. You cannot. There is no assimilation, there is no digestion unless the Lord God goes down into the stomach, and changes the food you eat into the vital fluid, the source of all your power and energy. Unless He does so, all that we eat would produce only disease and death. I never saw a man convert food into chyle or chyme by his own authority or power. Does gastric juice obey you? Who works the digestive apparatus within you? Who quickens the forces which digest and assimilate? Behold the Heavenly Father seated in you, nourishing you with food, and by a mysterious process

transforming it into life-blood. Proud man, how very little *you* do! Your Father, your Guardian, does all things for you. Not a single hair grows on your head but the Lord makes it grow. You eat not, but the Lord feeds you. Not through your power, but through God-force do you become rich and healthy. Realize this fact fully, and you will see before you in all His glory your Father and Protector, giving you money and food, health and strength, comfort and happiness. Thus you can see the Living God throughout the day, every time you eat and drink and drive your trade. Then, again, when you retire into your bedroom after the day's work, do you not see your God? The eyelids become heavy and leaden and droop. It is time they should go to sleep. Can you resist them? You try to read with a view to keep off drowsiness; but they will not submit. The more you persecute them the more hopelessly do they hang down. The head bends forward and backward, and reels continually. You cannot keep it up. The whole body fast sinks into unconsciousness. Do you see the Hand that stretches your body upon the bed, closes your eyelids, and lulls you to sleep? It is the God of Providence. He assuredly it is who says—"Dear child, if you have no sleep, you will be unable to do your appointed work to-morrow.



The weary limbs require rest. Therefore, let them have at least seven hours' rest. Child, do you hear? It is your Father that tells you to go to bed." Thus you see from morning till night the Lord our God is with us, in our uprising and downsitting, feeding and nourishing us, and leading us by the hand through the path of life. Our God is an indwelling, encompassing reality, present in every force and illumining all space. Not only in contemplation and prayer, but in all the secular details of our daily life, in all our social and domestic duties, yea, in our eating and drinking, there is God always speaking to us and showing Himself to us. But unbelievers have ever ascribed to human agency things which belong to God. They rob the Eternal King of His sceptre and crown, and use them as if they were their own. In God-force they live; yet they boast of their own independence, and their self-sufficiency makes them blind. It is not these unbelievers that see God. Those that have eyes see. The man of faith, the man of science, the man whose heart is true to nature, perpetually lives in God-vision, and sees and hears God ever and anon. Nay more; he touches Divinity. When I try to do something wrong, someone touches me on the back. I turn round to see who it is that touched me. Who can it be? Is it an earthly friend that came up quietly and

touched me on the back to warn me against evil? No, I see nothing with the outward eye; but the eye of faith sees the hand of God. The All-Holy saw me harbouring and hatching a foul and nefarious design, and instantly touched me and warned me, saying, "What are you about to do?" I was frightened by the mysterious touch, which electrified the whole body and mind. Prophets in olden times, we are told, were touched by the fingers of God's angels. Say rather the unseen fingers of God Almighty. There are times when we feel, not only the gentle contact, but the violent pressure of the Divine hand. We are caught by the hairs of the head. We are in the clutches of the Almighty hand, from which there is no possibility of escape. The Lord has taken firm possession of my head; He has taken firm possession of my heart. I cannot wrest them from Him. Always my sustaining force, He is at times an overpowering and pressing force, that holds me bound hand and foot in firm possession. Held fast in His encircling arms, I cannot move, but am moved; I cannot speak, but I am made to speak. This is heaven's electricity. Those who have felt it know how utterly impossible it is to quench it.

Shake off this encompassing Divine touch! You cannot. Put down this mysterious influence! No, you cannot. Say unto this Pervading Presence—Roll back; it will not obey your



voice. An irresistible force has gone deep into your whole system. You cannot pull it out. I would fain disentangle my muscles and nerves, my arteries and veins from this intertwining and pervading presence, but I cannot. In vain do I say to my lungs and heart, my eyes and ears and lips—Be ye separate from this Unseen Hand. No such separation is possible. I may as well try to tear away my heart from myself, as well separate the tree from the root, the clock from the mainspring, the infant from the mother's breast. Right and left, everywhere is this omnipresent spirit, to which my life tenaciously clings, and from which nothing can separate it. What is this spirit? A Mother's spirit. Yes, our beloved Mother is here present. Behold a huge breast, the infinite breast of the Mother, overflowing with the milk of life! O Mother, Mother! Universal Parent! present everywhere, present here before me, Thou art encircling us with Thine arms and suckling us all. Thine unseen face, beloved Mother, so sweet, so beautiful to the eye of faith! How Thy breast is pouring into us nourishing milk! Charming vision! My Mother have I seen. See how the Lord of heaven and earth is revealing Himself. He reveals Himself unto us to-day as He revealed Himself three thousand years ago to Moses. For forty days and nights, we are told, he enjoyed communion with Jehovah. He saw a "devour-

ing fire." Yes, in those days of rigid monotheism, when idolatry was regarded as an abomination, and Israel looked up to one God, that great prophet, Moses, actually saw a burning bush, and the invisible Divinity spoke to him through it. Fire was it? Yes, resplendent spirit burning in the bush, yet not consuming it! And as Moses saw we see, too, though less brightly, yet as truly, a burning bush everywhere, yea, all creation ablaze. The Living God is, indeed, a burning fire in every home, not only in the Parsi's temple, but in the Hindu's home, too. Put it out you cannot. The fire burns from day to day. It is an everlasting fire which fills all space and time. It is no supernatural fire, but simply the glory of the Ruling Will-Force, the effulgence of the Holy King, the light of the Divine Mother Who reigns everywhere. We are going to enter into the domain of a new dispensation, that of science and faith harmonized. Under its banners we, too, shall have our inspiration, though only according to the small measure of our faith. The Lord will surely vouchsafe unto us the light and power of His inspiration. In the light of true science the Lord our God will reveal Himself to all His children, and unite us in God-vision in one blessed family. How desperately you, my brethren, Christians and Hindus, are fighting with each other! What awful wranglings and jealousies separate you!

Know ye not that your leading representatives are united above in the Father's home? We are incessantly quarrelling here, but the founders and elders of our sects and churches are joyfully united in the Father's inmost sanctuary. There they are all drawing the milk of life and vitality out of the breast of the Infinite Mother, merging all their differences in heavenly beatitude. There they are all united as one family. What a blessed sight! Children of God, be of one heart. See how the holy prophets and saints above are sitting around the Father's throne, the Queen Mother's throne, and enjoying the bliss of communion in the blessed synthesis of Divine Force. Blessed are they, a holy family in which all disputes and conflicts are lost, and broken lights commingled in the unity of a Central Personality!

Why should you then differ, little men, when your revered elders differ not in heaven, but rejoice in unity? Ah! my friends, you do not care to see this living God-vision, but you boast of your theology, and care more for your endless dogmatic differences. Your analytical conceptions, your abstract notions, your broken fragments of Deity must cause differences. In the God-vision I have presented to you there is not theology, but religion, pure and real. No analysis, but a beautiful synthesis, in which all souls on earth and in heaven are, in spite of their separate individuality, recognized as



one in the Parent. In this holy synthesis of Divine unity, as revealed in God-vision, all the gods and goddesses of the many churches of the East and the West are gathered and unified. The various Divine attributes which India has from age to age personified and worshipped are fused into One Living Personality, even that which we realize to-day in scientific God-vision. Abandon the controversies of dead theology, and accept the fire of living and burning faith. Leave the battle-field of dogma, where superstitious and priest-ridden men fight blind-folded, and accept the banners of the True God, Whom we can see and hear in real vision, and Who says in every force in nature I AM. Accept Him, my countrymen; and all India, now disintegrated and dismembered, will become one in the Lord. Yea, the whole world will be one in Him. Rejoice and sing, O Zion, for I am coming, saith the Lord. Sing, then, all India, the glory of the Lord. Sing, oceans and seas, hills and mountains, the glory of God. He has come, and is coming to all of us on the wings of living inspiration, and India shall see her God in a marvellous vision, and drink the waters of salvation from the Living Fountain. Ye sons and daughters of India, let faith and hope fill your souls and hearts. Rejoice, for the good and golden age of beatific vision is coming. Yes, the time is coming when



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not only will the Living God reveal Himself to man's immediate vision in all parts of the world, but the disembodied saints and prophets in heaven will hold communion with men in their hearts. All mankind shall then sit at the feet of Christ and other masters, and every Christian and every Hindu shall draw fresh inspiration from the Living God, and gather life and wisdom from the examples of those saints and martyrs, those Rishis and Yogis who were the glory of primitive Christian Europe and ancient India. Then shall there be a joyful and festive union of heaven and earth, and they shall talk with each other, and dance together before the throne of God Almighty. The Lord our God shall reconcile all our differences, and make this very earth of ours a heaven, a heaven indeed. The reign of the Supreme Mother shall be proclaimed and established throughout the world amid universal rejoicings, and many nations with myriad voices and diverse instruments shall sing that sweet name, Mother, which bringeth comfort to the sinner's heart and salvation to every trusting child. Let the trumpet proclaim the advent of the true God, at once the light and joy of the world, in whom both science and faith rejoice. And as His Holy Light dawns upon our beloved country, may millions in one united chorus sing His love! The Lord cometh. Therefore rejoice, O Zion!



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WE APOSTLES OF THE NEW DISPENSATION.

ONCE more has the orient sun roused and gladdened a slumbering world, and rolled away the thick folds of darkness in which it lay enveloped. Once more has the East spoken words of peace and hope to benighted nations. How dismal the night we have just passed! How bright the morning we now behold! Let us recall to mind the appalling spectacle we witnessed last night. Verily it was Ezekiel's vision over again. We stood in the midst of the Valley of Dry Bones. On all sides, as far as the eye could reach, there were scattered heaps of dry bones. And what were these? Exhausted systems of theology, lifeless dogmas denuded of flesh and blood, creeds and characters which had once lived and moved, but were now mere dry bones. Alas! how distressing the sight! It seemed to tell the sad tale of the havoc which sectarianism had perpetrated in the religious world, slaying truth and love, and filling the valley of the earth with dead and dry bones. And lo, they were very dry, and they said, "Our bones are dried and our

hope is lost." But no, their hope was not lost for ever. For the morning star soon heralded the dawn of day. And anon the great luminary shone forth, and its myriad rays scattered joy and light in all directions. The exhilarating morning breeze—the very breath of the Living God—entered into those bones; and “behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone, and they lived and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.” Scriptures and dispensations, prophets, saints and martyrs of all ages and climes stood revived, danced in joy, and blessed the light that had made them live again. And thus the valley of death was converted into a new world of life and light. Yes, we have seen the light of a New Dispensation. Asia, mother of many dispensations, has given birth to another child, and its birth-festival shall be celebrated amid great rejoicing. Sweet angel of the East! Heaven’s evangelist! sent from above with a new Gospel, thou hast come to us clad in the most gorgeous and shining raiment, and decked in the most magnificent jewellery, which the East alone can boast. Thou comest amid the ringing of bells and the sound of the conch-shell. Holy light! we hail thee, we kiss thee. Lord of the New Dispensation! I desire humbly to proclaim to-day among my assembled brethren the glad tidings which Thou hast sent to us from

heaven. Touch my lips with the live coal of inspiration, that I may boldly set forth the new light Thou hast revealed unto us. Glory, glory, glory be unto Thee, Great Spirit!

But why should I of all others be selected as the spokesman of the New Dispensation? Yet it is not I that speak, but we. Behind the visible "I" there is an invisible "We." It is my Church that speaks through me. There are others who are working with me in God's vineyard. Behind and around me are brother-apostles, who think and feel and live as I do, united with me in spirit, whose only vocation on earth is to preach the New Dispensation. Yes, there is a Church—a body whereof I am but a limb. Can I alone represent that Church? I am but a part of it. I can no more constitute the Church of God than can a single soldier compose an entire regiment. Accept me, then, as one among many. Do you see an individual before you? You are sadly mistaken. Behold a band of apostles entrusted with the New Dispensation. As I speak, their voices speak through me. For we are an undivided and organized Church. Here everything is in its proper place, and all the requisites of apostolical faith and fellowship are to be found here. Here you see God's special Providence working out the redemption of the land, through the instrumentality of a complete dispensation, with its

full complement of apostles, Scriptures, and inspiration. Rest assured, my friends, when we are dead and gone, all the events that are transpiring around us in these days shall be written and embodied in history, and shall be unto future generations a new Gospel of God's saving grace. The Lord is in our midst, not as a dead deity, but as the Living God of Providence. He has gathered around Him, not a handful of men, but a vast army of believing souls from every corner of India, from Sind and Burmah, from Lahore and Madras. And these are all marching under His guidance to the promised land. In the forefront are the ordained few, the delegates of Heaven, a complete band of apostles, with diverse gifts and talents suited to their respective vocation. Who feeds these men? The Lord. Who leads them? The Lord. Know ye not, brethren, that there are a number of souls in India who, under Divine command, have come out of the world, and whom the world disowns, who feed not upon earthly food, but upon the food supplied by Heaven? Look at these helpless souls with their families—men, women, and children, living from day to day upon mere alms and precarious contributions. They have no certain means of subsistence whereby to support themselves. They have taken the vow of poverty, which interdicts money-making and



self-support. They take no thought for the morrow, what they shall eat or what they shall put on. The Lord gives to each his daily bread. Each day bringeth the bare necessities of life. The morrow is entirely dark. Indeed, it is a mystery and a marvel how so many mouths are fed daily. And yet for fifteen years we have managed to go on, not stumbling, not starving. He who feedeth the sparrow gives unto this band of apostolic brothers their daily food and raiment. The spirit of Moses leads modern Israel through the wilderness of the world. And when they are hungry the Lord showers manna from above, and when they feel thirsty the barren rocks send forth gushing streams of water. Verily it is the living Jehovah who feeds us, His poor but trusting apostles, with the bread of life. He sustains the body; He inspires the soul. Our strength is He, the Lord, and our light, too. Neither wealth nor wisdom belongs to us, and in a humble and apostolical spirit we rely solely upon Providence.

Is this new gospel a Dispensation, or is it simply a new system of religion, which human understanding has evolved? I say it stands upon the same level with the Jewish dispensation, the Christian dispensation, and the Vaishnava dispensation through Chaitanya. It is a divine Dispensation, fully entitled to a place among the various dispensations and



revelations of the world. But is it equally divine, equally authoritative? Christ's Dispensation is said to be divine. I say that this Dispensation is equally divine. Assuredly it is the Lord of Heaven who has sent this new Gospel unto the world. The same Living God who at sundry times and in diverse manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days vouchsafed unto us this new gospel. But does it not argue conceit and vain-gloriousness thus to extol the New Dispensation? Surely people would say that in including our new creed in the category of the world's dispensations we are trying to arrogate to ourselves honours which only Moses and Jesus can claim. Is it not the very height of presumption—they would say—that a number of striplings on the banks of the Ganges should venture to stand on the same level with Jesus, and rob him of his pre-eminence? What! are we to accept these men as Heaven-sent prophets? Shall we compare the short-lived glory which man gives to man to the eternal glory which the Lord gave to His beloved son Jesus? But who, I ask, covets prophetic honour and authority? They say I do. I say I do not. Again and again have I said I seek not the prophet's glory. I contend not for prophetic honours. Yet am I not ashamed of what I have said



regarding my exalted office as an apostle of the New Dispensation. In spite of reiterated remonstrances, it has been whispered already that we are trying, not to glorify the Dispensation, but to glorify ourselves. If Christ was the centre of his Dispensation, am I not the centre of this? Ungenerous and untruthful critics have insinuated that as Jesus claimed to be the King of the Jews, so am I ambitious of being honoured as the king of the Indians—of the Bengalis, at any rate. It is certainly not fair or kind of our critics to say so. Shall a sinner vie with Christ for honours? God forbid. Jesus was a born saint, and I a great sinner. Blessed Jesus! I am thine. I give myself, body and soul, to thee. If India will revile and persecute me, and take my life-blood out of me, drop by drop, still, Jesus, thou shalt continue to have my homage. I have taken the vow of loyalty before thee, and I will not swerve from it—God help me! These lips are thine for praise, and these hands are thine in service. Son of God, I love thee truly. And, though scorned and hated for thy sake, I will love thee always, and remain a humble servant at thy blessed feet. Yet, I must tell you, gentlemen, that I am connected with Jesus' Gospel, and occupy a prominent place in it. I am the prodigal son of whom Christ spoke, and I am trying to return to my Father in a penitent



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spirit. Nay, I will say more, for the satisfaction and edification of my opponents. I am not Jesus, but I am Judas—that vile man who betrayed Jesus into the hands of his infuriated persecutors. That man's spirit is in me. The veritable Judas, who sinned against truth and Jesus, lodges in my heart. If I honour Jesus, and claim a place among his disciples, is there not another side of my life which is carnal and worldly and sinful? I am Judas-like so far as I love sin. Then tell me not I am trying to exalt myself. No. A prophet's crown sits not on my head. My place is at Jesus' feet. Fear not then, my friends, that a man of conscious sin, one so vile in his own estimation, will covet high prophetic honours. I can assure you that I have done, and will do, all in my power to suppress this hideous lie which would rank me with Jesus and other prophets. If I really meant to be a prophet, I would try another Dispensation where I would find scope for my ambition, another Church where I could establish my mediatorial position and authority. Believe me, every inch of this man is real, tremendously real. If I wanted honour I would say so at once, without the least reservation. There is nothing so good as outspokenness and candour. Whatever my shortcomings might be, I have within me that fearless honesty which, regardless of opprobrium, would tell the public what I really



felt. Be assured, then, that my heart doth not delight in vain-gloriousness, but seeks the humble position of a servant at the feet of Jesus and other masters. I may be rhetorical, a little too metaphorical in what I say. You may accuse me of indulging freely in the poetry of religion. Perhaps it is the Asiatic's fault. The East is the land of poetry. Our literature is all imagery, our language allegory. Almost instinctively these oriental nations talk in parables. And did not Christ Jesus speak in parables? If I use metaphor, surely you have no right to construe it in its literal sense. You are bound to take my words in the exact sense in which I employ them. But the fact is otherwise. If I say, "I have seen God," you would rush to the inference that I saw a shining light in the heavens with my outward eyes, and you characterize my God-vision as mere imagination! And when I say "I sat with Moses and Jesus," behold, you run and proclaim unto the world I have seen two human figures, or rather their ghosts! You would misconstrue a plain piece of poetry, and then ridicule it as a fact of life. Ah! it is the Eastern passion for metaphor, the vein of poetry so characteristic of oriental nations, that has caused such misapprehension. Let not poetry mislead you. Ye unimaginative critics, do not confound the spirit with the letter. Show that you are



intelligent and honest enough to call a metaphor. Do not say I soar into the sky and work miracles in the spirit-world! I make no pretension to supernaturalism. Take me, gentlemen, at my worth. It would be a scandal and a lie to hold me up as the Prophet of the New Dispensation.

My individuality is lost in the community that forms my Church. This dispensation will not tolerate any form of egotism. It hides me in my brother-apostles. It conceals and absorbs the singular in the plural. We are lost in each other, and all distinctive personality is merged in the unity of the common Church. If I speak now, it must be in the name of my Church, the united fraternity of the Apostles of the new gospel. It will probably be said that each dispensation has a central personality, and that, therefore, willingly or unwillingly, I must permit myself to be treated as a Moses or a Chaitanya. Let me tell you that this seems impossible. For we represent a new dispensation. Its distinguishing feature is its immediacy, its denial of a mediator. While other dispensations have their special mediatorial agencies between God and a sinful world, here we have no such thing, no intercessor, no mediator. None of my fellow-believers takes God at second-hand, but would go direct to Him for light and salvation, thinking it wrong to rely



upon me or any one else for intercession. The humblest sinner bases his supplication for Divine mercy upon the merits of no saint or martyr, but upon the merits of the Lord alone. In the immediate presence of the Deity, the least among us daily seeks eternal life. Upon every Theist the new gospel imposes the inviolable vow of direct worship. This is the peculiarity of the present dispensation, and in this, more perhaps than in anything else, it differs from all other dispensations. There is indeed no place for a prophet-mediator in this dispensation. Why shall I then be accused of harbouring in my mind the mean ambition which the new dispensation so thoroughly interdicts? Then no more. Enough. We have had enough of this accusation and impeachment. My infatuated critics and cruel persecutors will, however, still perhaps go on, and would not stop. Already they have broken my bones and caused my heart to bleed, and often and often, at their hands, have I suffered deep and unutterable agony. For nearly a quarter of a century have I suffered persecution and calumny, and who can deny the shades in the picture of my life are awfully dark and very dismal? Quietly have I endured life's numerous trials, and, thank God, they have greatly contributed to my education and discipline. Do not tell me the honour which the world has given me has turned my head. If



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honour has turned my head one way, my sorrows and trials have turned it the other way; so that somehow Providence has managed to keep my head in equilibrium. I have shared honour and dishonour, popularity and unpopularity, exaltation and humiliation, and amid these ups and downs of life I am firm and steady in the safe-keeping of Providence. Be not afraid. God is with us. Some time ago, in Northern India, I was conversing with one of the most pious Christian officials in the land, now an ex-Lieutenant-Governor. In the course of the conversation he looked at me seriously and calmly for some moments, and said—What is it that makes you look so healthy and cheerful? Is it because you have a contented soul? The question took me by surprise, and somewhat confounded me, and I think I was not able to answer it quite satisfactorily. I have since thought over the incident, and the question has recurred to me again and again. There is evidently something in me which suggests this question, and I thank God for it. There is a native buoyancy in my soul which prevents its sinking in the sea of trial, and enables it, with God's grace, to rise triumphantly above the billows of danger and difficulty. Amid the dark clouds of trial and tribulation the soul's sunshine often cheers me. My daily prayer makes my life sweet amid the untold bitternesses which

beset me. In my faith I am truly happy. In communion is the secret of my joy. So sweet is my God that I cannot but feel very happy in Him. Though I cry, He is sure to make me smile. Yes, the world would make me a man of sorrow, but my beloved Father makes me unspeakably happy in the sweet faith He has vouchsafed unto me. Bless Him, then, O my soul, Who has made thee truly happy!

A word of praise I must also offer unto the blessed Son of God, for he, too, has made me what I am. His sacrificial blood, freely given unto a wicked world, has gone into my life-blood. While I was in the mother's womb I drank that precious blood, and grew in stature and strength. Let me remark, by the way, I speak metaphorically. That is to say, I was born to learn and practise forbearance, of which Jesus furnished so eminent an example. Forbear and forgive—that was the watchword of Christ's life, and those who have drunk his spirit cannot but enjoy the sweetness of forgiving love. If numberless enemies surround you in the battlefield of life, the best way of vanquishing them is to do what Jesus did—pray for them, for they know not what they do. Surely you can afford to smile at those puny hands which are trying to take the citadel of truth by storm. The soldiers of God must not joke. You must not indulge in the pastime of "destroying



mosquitoes with heavy artillery." We have more serious things to attend to in life. We have to deal with eternal verities. Let us think of him who delighted not in resenting enmity, but who, though cruelly reviled, persecuted, and crucified, poured out the blessed blood of forgiveness and love over his foes. And it was by forgiveness that he conquered the wicked world. Let us prove worthy disciples of the Lord Jesus. As he stood unmoved, the very perfection of serenity and peace, amid the rage and fury of implacable enemies, and the troubles and agonies of bitter persecution, so let us bear the burdens of life with cheerful hearts, forgive our foes with brotherly love, and convince an antagonistic world of the truth of our cause by our joyful faith and sweet trust in God's Providence. The new gospel is a gospel of joy, and blessed are they who rejoice in it!

Besides immediacy there is another characteristic of the present dispensation which distinguishes it from all other religions. It is inclusive, while they are more or less exclusive. They exclude each other. But this includes all religions. If it does not include all it is fatal to itself. This dispensation shuns altogether the old-path exclusivism, and establishes for itself the new character of an all-embracing and all-absorbing eclecticism. No one can be true to the New Dispensation who indulges in sectarian



hatred and bigotry, and lives in a strait church which excludes the rest of the world. All the old churches hated and excluded and denied each other, each claiming a monopoly of truth and salvation. But here, in the New Temple, is a catholicity which embraces all space and all time. Let me explain this more fully and philosophically. I shall touch upon two important points only, which, if rightly comprehended, will give you an idea of the pre-eminently new and catholic character of the New Dispensation.

The new faith is absolutely synthetical. Its life is in unity. It loves unity above everything else. It values synthesis above analysis, one above many. Synthesis and analysis are logical terms, and may fairly be left to Mill and Whately to be dealt with as they might wish. Why import them into theology?—some might ask. They have their uses in the domain of theology. Verily the philosophy of synthesis is of the highest importance to religion, and perilous has every effort been to work out human redemption without it. Many an exalted system of faith went adrift in the absence of the rudder of unity, and was shipwrecked upon the treacherous shoals of sectarianism. Gentlemen, trifle not with unity. In the logic of synthesis is the world's salvation. In unity is science. And in unity, too, is salvation. What are the men of

science doing in these days? They are only evolving the unity of law and principle out of multiplicity of phenomena. From a vast induction of varied phenomena, a huge mass of facts and figures, they evolve, by processes of generalization and classification, the unity of force and cause. To resolve multiplicity into unity, many into one, is science.

Why is it that the world honours Christ and the other prophets? Because they loved synthesis above analysis; because they were unitists, if I may use the expression. God is the grandest and sublimest synthesis, the harmony of all truth and the unity of all goodness. He is One Person, around Whom gather various attributes. Thirty-three millions of divinities, the endless permutations and combinations of these varied attributes, are the multiplicity of theology, to which the unscientific polytheist pays homage. But the scientific monotheist worships the Supreme One amid His many attributes and manifestations. Monotheism represents the science of religion, the philosophy of God-consciousness, the logic of synthesis. Polytheism is anarchy and chaos in religion; it is the death of science, of logic and philosophy. If you stop at analysis, and deal only with broken fragments of Divine attributes, you are as disloyal to science as you are to theology. Carry back these fragments into the indivisible unity of the Divine Person,



and you have vindicated both science and religion. Surely multiplicity is death, but unity is life. In the sea of analysis you are lost amid divisions, quarrels, perplexity, and confusion. You find peace as soon as you enter the tranquil haven of synthesis. Come, then, to the synthetic unity of the New Dispensation. You will see how all other dispensations are harmonized and unified in this, a whole host of churches resolved into a scientific unity. In the midst of the multiplicity of dispensations in the world there is a concealed unity, and it is of the highest importance to us all that we should discover it with the light of logic and science. For science and salvation are one thing, and the highest Unity and Deity are identical. Who can count the many churches in the world, with their endless divisions and subdivisions? Tangled in the folds of perplexing polemics, the world sees no way of escape, and in plaintive strain cries—Who will come to my rescue? Only science can deliver the world, and bring light and order out of the chaos and darkness of multiplied churches. If there is science in all things, is there no science in the dispensations of God? Do these alone, in God's creation, stand beyond the reign of law and order? Are they the arbitrary and erratic movements of chance? Are they the madness and delirium of nature? Are they the mere fortuitous combination of circumstances,

accidents without method or reason? Sure I am that amid their apparent anomalies and contradictions there is a logical unity of idea and method, and an unbroken continuity of sequence. All these dispensations are connected with each other in the economy of Providence. They are linked together in one continuous chain, which may be traced to the earliest age. They are a concatenated series of ideas, which show a systematic evolution of thought and development of religious life. Popular opinion, however, on this subject has always run in a contrary direction. Men have not seen, and, therefore, they are ready to ignore and deny, the connecting link between the several dispensations. The New Dispensation has discovered the missing link. It has found the secret thread which connects these dispensations and keeps them together. Where others see only confusion and anomaly, it sees order and continuity. Joyfully it exclaims—"I have found the science of dispensations at last: unity in multiplicity. Here is Hinduism, there is Buddhism. To me they appear linked together. Here is Judaism, and there is Christianity. I see unity in this duality." Unscientific men may dissociate the two, true science connects Moses with Jesus in logical sequence. O Moses, thou venerable prophet, leader of the Jews! thou camest into the world fifteen centuries before Christ. Thou hadst therefore no

conception of Jesus. And yet thy life and career prophesied Jesus. Thou didst begin Israel's march to the promised land. But another far greater was to complete thy work. Didst thou know this, Jehovah's servant? Was it thy conviction that Judaism was the final dispensation, and that no progress was possible beyond that? Or camest thou to prepare the world for thy master, Jesus Christ? Say, Moses, was not thy gospel only a typical prelude to that which was to follow? In Jesus we see the logical consequence of Moses.

The New Testament is the necessary logical sequence of the Old Testament. The two are parts of the same dispensation. Or why do you, Christian brethren, bind together in one volume those apparently contradictory books, the Old and the New Testament? Is there not a wide gulf between Moses and Jesus? Did not the Jews crucify Christ? Are not the Jews even to the present day sworn enemies of the Prophet of Nazareth? Why does not the Christian dispensation then say to the Old Testament—"Vile and hateful foe, avaunt! Go with thy Moses and Israel, thy law of blood for blood, thy narrow hard Judaism! Thy people have killed my Lord Jesus. Away!" Killed Jesus! Can it be so? Let us hear what Christ himself said. He said he had come to fulfil, not to destroy, the Old Testament. He did not annihilate, he completed



and perfected the church of Moses. Logic looks upon Christ as the inevitable logical sequence of Moses. Faith sees Christ in Moses. The Jew of the New Testament is the Jew of the Old Testament developed and matured. Moses is the prefiguration of Jesus. Jesus is Moses perfected. Know ye not that coming events cast their shadows before? Moses taught stern justice, and inaugurated the reign of law. Jesus taught love, and established the kingdom of grace. Fear is the beginning of wisdom; love is its perfection. The theology of love is the logical complement of the theology of fear. The dispensation of grace is the necessary logical result of the dispensation of justice. Love is the fulfilment of the law. The two thus form one integral gospel, and are indissolubly connected. Can you separate Jesus from Moses? You cannot. Come, then, Moses and Christ, hand in hand! Hail Moses-Christ, unity in duality! In blessed union for ever knit together, who can disunite you? And if these spirits come together, will not Paul follow? You know ratiocination. It is nothing but the evolution of what is called the conclusion from two given premises. The major and the minor premises *involve* and necessitate the conclusion. To *evolve* it is logic. Given Moses and Christ, Paul is a logical and a theological necessity. Having produced those two great characters, the world was bound to produce a

third. St. Paul was, indeed, a necessity. There was an urgent need of Paul, of one who would say—"For me to live is Christ." How noble, how beautiful the soul of St. Paul! Can we do without him? Christianity minus St. Paul!—just conceive that. What if soon after the Gospel scenes were enacted, the curtain fell over the history of the Church? What if the thread of the narrative terminated suddenly and abruptly at the point where the Evangelists left it? Imagination recoils from the unfinished drama. Logic disapprovingly turns away from the sad inconsequence, from the incomplete syllogism. Christ necessitated Paul. Without the latter the logic of the Church was incomplete. Paul lived in Jesus, and was evolved as soon as national exigencies called him forth. The Apostle of the Gentiles was a logical sequence of the life and character of his master Jesus. So loyal and faithful an apostle was, indeed, a component part of Christ's dispensation. Paul in Christ and Christ in Paul, the two are inseparably connected. And yet Paul never saw his master except in spirit. A glorious man he was, a worthy servant of a worthy master. Not having seen he yet believed, and he so thoroughly believed that he lived in Jesus. When Christ said, Blessed are they who have not seen and yet believed, was not the future Paul before his mind's eye? We see the tenderer side of Christ's life reflected

WE APOSTLES OF THE NEW DISPENSATION.

in the soft, imaginative, and susceptible heart of St. John. He is the heart of Christ, which we miss in the synoptical gospels, otherwise so faithful in their portraiture of character and events. The sweet love of Christ fills the small cup of St. John's heart, and overflows the pages of his Gospel. Such touching expressions as "I in them and thou in me," "I am the vine, ye are the branches," abound in the last gospel. In language at once sweet and rich in oriental imagery, John expounds the unity of the disciple and the master, and shows how they were spiritually connected and identified. If John was attached sentimentally to Christ, Paul was connected doctrinally. He was the theological interpreter of his master's mind. The theology of Christ was incarnated in Paul. There would have been no Christianity without Paul. He showed how one who had never seen his chief could yet "put him on" so completely as to show an indivisible unity of thought.

Admit, then, that Paul was a necessary logical adjunct and consequent of Christ, as Moses was, indeed, his antecedent. Does the continuity stop here? No. If the New Testament follows the Old in the line of logical sequence, the New Dispensation follows as necessarily all the Old Dispensations which have gone before it. If you cannot separate Paul from Christ, surely you cannot separate us from Paul. Are we not ser-

vants of Paul and apostles of Jesus? Yes. You cannot regard us otherwise. When I say the New Dispensation is a sequence of the Christian dispensation you will no doubt admit a chronological succession. You will perhaps go further, and trace a theological connection. But you have yet to discover a logical succession. Students of logic will yet recognize in the present movement a deduction and a sequence resulting from the Christian dispensation. You cannot deny us. We are the fulfilment of Moses. He was simply the incarnation of Divine conscience. But there was no science in his teachings, that science which in modern times is so greatly honoured. Let Moses grow into modern science, and you have the New Dispensation, which may be characterized as the union of conscience and science. As for Christ, we are surely among his honoured ambassadors. We are a deduction and corollary from his teachings. The New Dispensation is Christ's prophecy fulfilled. Did not Jesus predict and foreshadow a fuller dispensation of light and grace? Did he not say the Comforter would come after him, and guide the world "into all truth"? Do you not remember those prophetic words?—"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." And touching the subject of synthetic unity, one can

hardly conceive a clearer foreboding than is to be found in those words of Paul—"That in the dispensation of the fulness of time he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth, even in him." Inasmuch as the present dispensation sums up all things in a divine synthesis unifying all in God, and seeks new light in the direct inspiration of the Comforter or Holy Spirit, one cannot fail to recognize in it the fulfilment of an ancient prophecy, the realization of Christian and Pauline anticipations. What do we see before us in India to-day but the fruit of that tree, whose seed Jesus planted, and Paul watered, centuries ago? The unbeliever may hold that Christ wholly denies us, and is far away from us. But faith points to his spirit in us, and maintains an unbroken continuity of dispensation. Wherever a dozen disciples are gathered in his name, he is there. We in India are imbued with his spirit. If it be true that the faith of our ancient Aryan ancestors has permeated us, it is equally true that Christ has leavened us and Christianized us. The Acts of his Hindu Apostles will form a fresh chapter in his universal gospel. Can he deny us, his logical succession? Surely he cannot. And so Paul too. Wilt thou reject us, Saint Paul? Revered Brother, wilt thou cast us away as thine enemies? Is not thy spirit in us? Let our lives testify. Gentlemen, what was Paul's great mis-

sion? To obliterate the distinction between Jew and Gentile. "I speak to you Gentiles," said he; "inasmuch as I am the apostle of Gentiles, I magnify mine office." "There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him." Again, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles." Paul was raised by God to break caste, and level the distinctions of race and nationality; and nobly did he fulfil his mission. The Jew and the Gentile he made into one body. The modern Pauls of the New Dispensation are carrying on a similar crusade against caste in India. The obnoxious distinctions between Brahmin and Sudra, between Hindu and Yavana, between Asiatic and European, the new gospel of love thoroughly proscribes.

In the kingdom of God there is no invidious distinction, and therefore this dispensation gathers all men and nations, all races and tribes, the high and the low, and seeks to establish one vast brotherhood among the children of the great God, who hath made of one blood all nations of men. Let them that have eyes see that in the midst of the great spiritual revolution and revival going on in this land, Moses and Christ and Paul are gathering through us the many tribes of Israel, and uniting all in the name of the king-



dom of heaven. In this anti-caste movement, which daily brings Jew and Gentile, Hindu and Christian, nearer and nearer in spiritual fellowship, the chief workers are verily spiritual descendants of Moses, Jesus, and Paul. From these mighty prophets have sprung up, at different times, minor prophets, holy fathers and saints, martyrs of the Reformation, ministers and missionaries, who have all contributed to develop and extend their work till it has gone to the uttermost parts of the earth. In this long line of succession, last and least are these humble apostles of the New Dispensation. But why do I carry the chain of logical sequence down to these days and this hour? Shall I not also carry it up to the days of Greek philosophy and Hindu devotion, yea to the earliest childhood of the world, when Adam in sweet innocence adored the Supreme God? I trace the second Adam to the first. The first Adam, I say, made the second Adam a logical necessity. Who was Adam? Whoever he was, whatever he was, before his fall he was surely Christ, the impersonation of uncontaminated and obedient humanity. The innocent child of God had not yet been defiled by the world. He had not yet tasted the forbidden fruit. His heart was obedient unto the Lord, and his only creed was "Thy will be done." Verily the pure Adam was Christ Jesus. The two were united and identified. But when Adam fell,



Christ went out of him, and was estranged from humanity. Could Christ remain long as an exile from a sinful and sorrowing world? His recall was a necessity. The son had disobeyed the Father. A reconciliation was necessary. The will in man had gone astray from the Divine will. Its return was needful. "Paradise lost" made "Paradise regained" a necessity. An example of obedient sonship was really the logical sequence of Adam's transgressions in the economy of Divine Providence. In the plan of redeeming mercy, the tragedy of man's disobedience and expulsion from heaven necessitated and predestined his final reconciliation with God in Christ. So Christ was a necessity. But the world needed something more than innocence. It needed tried purity. Mere childlike innocence could not stand in the hour of trial. Adam was unable to withstand the wily machinations of the tempter. But when the son of God was tempted, he said, "Get thee behind me, Satan." It was such an example of tried and triumphant righteousness that the world needed, and in Jesus it was found. Humanity was lost in Adam, but was recovered in Christ. The human will broke with the Divine in Adam; it was reconciled and attuned to it in the Prophet of Nazareth. The first Adam broke the harmony of heaven and earth; the second Adam restored it. The unity of Divinity and humanity in man was destroyed

by Adam, and God and man became a conflicting duality. In Christ's atonement the two were again united, and the blessed son was at one with the Father. Behold the beauty of this chain of logical sequence from Adam to Christ and from Christ down to modern times ! How all prophets and reformers, all scriptures and dispensations, are linked together in the unity of a vast synthesis, each growing out of national exigencies in the fulness of time, and all following in the regular order of sequence according to recognised laws of thought ! How many dispensations has the Lord of nations vouchsafed ! How many are yet to come ! Yet in their multiplicity is a wonderful unity. Analysis shows they are many. But synthesis proves they are one, the gradual unfolding of one identical purpose in the saving economy of Providence, even the redemption of nations. Bring into a focus these scattered dispensations, and you will at once find their harmony in science, their unity in truth and God.

I shall now proceed to explain the other distinguishing characteristics of the New Dispensation. It is subjective. It aims at synthesis, and it aims at subjectivity. It endeavours to convert outward facts and characters into facts of consciousness. It believes that God is an objective reality, an Infinite Person, the Supreme Father. In the same manner it believes in the objectivity of all

prophets and departed spirits, each a person, a child of God. But the recognition of the objective side of truth is not the whole of philosophy or theology. There is a subjective side as well. We have done a great deal for the former. The latter demands an equally faithful recognition; nay, it ought to excite much warmer interest. For subjectivity is of the first importance to the wants of the soul. For who among us does not believe in the outward and objective God? And yet how few among professing Theists realize Divinity in their own hearts! God is not only a Person, but also a character. As a Person we worship him; His Divine character we must assimilate to our own character. True worship is not completed till the worshipper's nature is converted so as to partake of the nature of Divinity. Worship is fruitless if it does not make us heavenly and divine. The transfer of the outward Deity to subjective consciousness is the maturity of faith, the last fact of salvation. "I believe Thou art" is the earliest utterance of faith; "Thou art in me, life and light" is the consummation of faith. It will not do to say, "Lord, Lord." You must put God into your inmost souls. In regard to the spirits of departed saints the same argument holds good. If you simply admit their entity, of what avail is it to you? You have no doubt heard of such a thing as the communion of saints. What is it? Is it



the superficial doctrine of objective recognition, or is it the deeper philosophy of subjective fellowship? You must guard yourselves, my friends, against the evils arising from the mere objective recognition of the world's prophets and saints. Nothing is so easy as to say, O Jesus! O Moses! This apprehension of the external reality of great spirits is not communion. There is Christ, here are we; and between us there is a great gulf. There is no attempt to bridge the gulf, and bring about closer relations. Hence it is that Jesus, though good and true, affects not our lives till we realize him within. The Christ of older theologies is the barren outward fact, the dead Christ of history and dogma. But the Christ of the New Dispensation is an indwelling power, a living spirit, a fact of consciousness. It is this philosophy of subjectivity which underlies the Pilgrimages to Saints, as they are called. We have been asked to explain what we mean by these pilgrimages. They are simply practical applications of this principle of subjectivity. As pilgrims we approach the great saints, and commune with them in spirit, killing the distance of time and space. We enter into them, and they enter into us. In our souls we cherish them, and we imbibe their character and principles. We are above the popular error which materializes the spirits of departed saints, and clothes them again with the flesh and bones which they have

for ever cast away. Nor do we hold these human spirits to be omnipresent. We do not say of them that they fill all space, and are here, there, and everywhere. We believe they still exist, but where they are we cannot tell. Wherever they may be, it is possible for us earthly pilgrims, if we are only men of faith and prayer, to realize them in consciousness. If they are not personally present with us, they may be spiritually drawn into our life and character. They may be made to live and grow in us.

This is not pantheism. As far from pantheism is this communion of saints as the north is from the south pole. Detestable pantheism! Thou hast done incalculable mischief in India. This land has seen thy horrors as no other country has. Therefore thou shalt not be permitted to re-enact those horrors. We have had enough of this cursed pantheism. No more. We shall not, gentlemen, ignore personality, as the pantheists do, but we shall recognize the objective personality of each individual saint, while ingrafting the spirit of his character in our lives, by means of deep and profound communion. This is a normal psychological process, to which neither science nor theology can take exception. Here is the subject mind, there is the object—a prophet or a saint. The subject, by a mysterious though natural process, absorbs the object. Your philosophers have, perhaps, told you what the soul is,



and what its various attributes and faculties are. But I fear they have not yet told you one thing, which is too important to be missed. I mean the absorbent character of the human soul. Marvelous is its power of receptivity. It is, indeed, a wonderfully impressionable substance. Place an ascetic before the soul, and you will see how it takes in all the salient features in his character. His poverty and resignation, his self-control and simplicity, are gradually sucked in almost unconsciously, till they enter into your very blood and being. I may be a misanthrope; I may hate man with intense hatred. Yet a few hours' association with warm-hearted philanthropists may so completely change my ideas and influence my feelings as to make me a converted man. An hour in the company of saints is enough. The whole heart is revolutionized. Contact with exalted minds has often been found to have the miraculous power of sanctifying even the most confirmed sinner. All scriptures bear testimony to its blessed influence. The human soul, if it has not lost its susceptibility, inevitably imbibes and draws in the goodness of saints. It naturally and unconsciously absorbs all that is good and true in them.

Among the many theories of morals which the science of ethics deals with there is, as you are doubtless aware, one known as the Theory of Sympathy. Whatever its errors may be, and



these are palpable, it has a substratum of truth. Those who are conversant with even the rudiments of moral science must hesitate to accept sympathy as the sole standard of rectitude, and surely we can never persuade ourselves to believe that there is no conscience in us, and that it is only the sentiment popularly called fellow-feeling which helps us to determine what is right. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that sympathy plays a most important part in the moral economy of the world. It is this noble sentiment which makes us go out of ourselves, and enter into the feelings and wants, into the difficulties and sufferings of others, with a view to afford the needed relief. Our selfishness keeps us in chains within ourselves. Sympathy breaks these iron chains, and drags us into the bosom of the sorrowing brother, so as to make us feel as he feels. We all know what this is. Whenever we see an object of pity, a man dying of starvation, a bleeding soldier, a poor disconsolate orphan, or a bed-ridden patient smarting under painful maladies, we unconsciously transfer ourselves in imagination to his position, and so closely identify ourselves with him as to feel at the time the very agony which he is suffering from. If it is a limb burning in fire that we see, we feel as if the same limb in us has caught fire. Do we see a neighbour benumbed with cold? We immediately feel the numbness in ourselves. Is he suffering from



penury and want of food? Though rich ourselves, we are sure to feel in his presence the pangs of poverty and care. Call it sympathy, or charity, or love, there is assuredly something in our nature which, though we ourselves may be happy and healthy, makes us feel and realize the wretchedness and disease and sorrow of our neighbours. It makes us one with others. It imperceptibly steals self out of its own tenement, and gives it a temporary lodgment in the neighbour's breast that it may suffer and serve there.

How beautiful, how real is this picture of one man living in others, of the loving soul identified in love with suffering humanity! How all mankind with its sorrow and suffering passes into our consciousness, and is absorbed in the susceptible heart! Of Jesus it has been truly said that he took upon himself the sins and sufferings of the world. Well may the doubter ask—Why should his innocent and happy soul suffer for the world? Why should the pure-minded Jesus undergo the misery and wretchedness of this wicked world? Shall the saint suffer for the sinner? These questionings of the doubter the philosopher can readily silence by an appeal to the wondrous mystery of the law of sympathy. Jesus saw the miserable condition of the world; he saw how men and women were groaning under the weight of accumulated sin

and sorrow. And as he saw their dark and dejected faces and the depth of their degradation, the lamb in him was moved. As he went about mixing with the unclean and the fallen, and seeking the lost and the spoilt, he saw the height and depth of evil in the world, and as he saw he wept. The world in agony cried, and the entire load of its agony pressed upon Jesus' bosom, and he too cried in bitterness. It was the bitterness of transferred sorrow. It was the agony of the world in him. He was not unhappy. The joy of heaven was in him. But the world grieved his spirit. Amid scenes of heartrending sin and sorrow the very impersonation of Divine charity could not stand unmoved. He so loved the world that he made its sorrows his own; and though he himself was happy in conscious purity, he suffered for the sorrows of others. How? By a mysterious transposition they were in him and he was in them. By sympathy he made himself all mankind, and took into his own consciousness all their sorrows. Had Jesus been a man devoted to his little self alone, he would have lived and died for himself. But he was *man*, he was humanity. He lived and suffered and died for others. His heart was the sum total of all hearts. The heart that throbbed in him was not his, but the world's. The world's joy gladdened him; its sorrow mortified him. Its prosperity was his prosperity.

Its tears were his tears. So completely was my Jesus identified with the world in divine love and sympathy that the world lived always in his capacious bosom. The objective world he absorbed in his subjective consciousness. And are you not doing the same thing in a small measure, ye ambassadors of Christ in India? What is it that has brought you to this distant and foreign country? Is it duty, or is it love, the same love that your Lord Jesus felt for the whole world? India's pitiable condition has excited in your hearts the deepest sympathy, and you have felt drawn towards us as only the true philanthropist can feel drawn. The more you have thought of the evils in the land, its ignorance and superstition, its moral and spiritual destitution, the tyranny of caste, the reign of grim idolatry—the more you have reflected on these and other evils, the more you have felt sympathy and compassion for the miseries of our people, and the more devoutly you have implored Divine blessing for the redemption of the country. India's sorrows you have made your own sorrows. By placing yourselves in our position you have realized in your own minds our wants and sufferings; and with the whole weight of our national sufferings pressing upon your hearts, you have approached God, and said—"Lord of the weak and helpless, send unto this land copious showers of Thy grace, that



its teeming millions may have eternal life." You would never have left your homes to do your master's work in foreign fields had you not made India's heart yours. We have gone unto you, and you have identified yourselves with us in spirit. This is what I mean by the philosophy of subjectivity. It underlies that blessed institution in the Christian Church known as the Sacrament. The idea of the Lord's Supper many are apt to ridicule. Is it really ridiculous? Is it not rather an eminently philosophical idea? The difference between objectivity and subjectivity in religion, and the superior importance of the latter, none comprehended so thoroughly as Jesus. Or he would not have instituted the sacramental rite. The disciples and apostles believed in him as their Lord and Master, and they had assured him of their loyalty and devotion. Why, then, did he demand of them further allegiance? Why did he impose upon them the obligation of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, saying—"This do in remembrance of me"? Why was this ceremony at all necessary? Because the prophet saw, with the eye of a prophet, that his people would continue to hold him up as an objective impersonation of truth and purity, and he wished to prevent it. Despite the unbounded reverence and love which they tendered to him, he felt he was only an outward object of devoted loyalty.



His burning words, "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father," are a standing rebuke to those who thus render him only objective homage. He preferred subjective allegiance, the loyalty which, while it intellectually accepted him, absorbed him spiritually in the inner consciousness. Nothing short of internal assimilation and absorption could satisfy Jesus. And this beautiful idea he embodied symbolically in the eucharist. He asked his disciples to eat his flesh and drink his blood. In other words, he wished to be accepted by the world subjectively, and not objectively. Let us be satisfied that every bit of flesh and every drop of blood in you and me is Christ before we proclaim ourselves his followers.

Christianity refuses to be tested by outward criteria. Faith in Christ means life in Christ. If you simply profess Christianity, what reward have ye? Not belief, but conversion, is what Christ requires of you. Show that your flesh is Christ's flesh, and your blood is his blood. Show that your life is his life and your character his character. Otherwise you are not a Christian according to Christ. If I have eaten and assimilated him, then this hand you see is no longer my flesh, earthly and carnal, but Christ's flesh, effulgent and spiritual; and if I kiss it, I am sure I kiss Christ Jesus, and not my hand. This



assimilation must be real, and not imaginary or sentimental. For verily we have to deal with the Christ of history, and not a mythical character whose interest is purely romantic, and whose beauty is all but poetical. The Christ of history is a real, stern fact, a stately figure towering above all. With your eye upon that majestic person, rigidly scrutinize your character, and say, have you so absorbed his spirit as to be able to declare that you are one with him in forgiveness, lamb-like meekness, and self-sacrifice? If upon severe self-examination you find that you are not like Jesus in these things, then confess you are not a Christian, whatever your dogmas and doctrines may be. Is Christ a problem of mathematics which you must solve intellectually? Is he a logical proposition, which you can only believe with the understanding? Far from it. He is a person, a character that hates lip-loyalty and dogmatic assent, and demands absorption in your flesh and my flesh. He wishes to live in you perpetually, incarnate in your being, embodied in your character, flesh of your flesh, blood of your blood, and breath of your breath. Will you not allow him thus to abide in you? Apply the same argument, my friends, to all the other prophets and saints, ancient and modern, Eastern and Western. You may talk of your devotion to these masters, but if you have not assimilated their character your devotion cannot



be real. If your lives belie them, you must be classed among Pharisees and hypocrites. Let your flesh and blood bear living testimony to your fidelity to Christ and Paul, Moses and Isaiah, and all the saints of modern and ancient times. And in this assimilation of many characters behold a wonderful harmony and unity. The plurality of objects is lost and absorbed in the unity of the subject. You take in the divinity that dwelleth in each, and make it your own. In God are the sons of God united. If you take the different phases of truth and character in different individuals, you are lost in vision and schism. But accept them in their divine source, and you have unity.

The New Dispensation never preaches goodness; it preaches godliness. Goodness is human; godliness is divine. Christ rejected the former and put on the latter. His will was the Divine will. His word was God's. His work was the Father's. It was not he that spoke, but the Lord spoke through him. In the depths of his consciousness he felt so thoroughly identified with the spirit and nature of God that he boldly and frankly said, "I and my Father are one." The son did not proclaim himself the Father, but he claimed to be one with Him. What Christ claimed and revealed in his own character was only subjective divinity, not objective Deity. He was God-consciousness, not God. He was a



partaker of the Divine nature. And what are we? Partakers of Christ and of God in Christ. Paul, who had really put on Christ, and than whom perhaps none in ancient or modern times hath proved a truer disciple, often used this significant expression in his epistles. Nothing could be clearer or more appropriate than this expression. It indicates the deep spirituality and subjectivity of the relation in which Paul stood to his master. In fact, this idea of spiritual assimilation is altogether a Christian idea. Christ's teachings and Paul's epistles are full of it. The New Testament abounds with such passages as—"Abide in me and I in you"; "Put ye on the Lord Jesus"; "I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me"; "To be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man." The world may not comprehend the height and depth of this great doctrine. But if you deny this doctrine, you deny philosophy, and you deny Christ. The foolish Jews may wonder, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" yet the voice of Christ shall go forth rolling through centuries and ages, "He that eateth me even he shall live by me": "He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever." Though ridiculed and laughed at, this eminently philosophical and Christian principle of mutual absorption challenges universal assent. You may wonder, you may smile; the fact, how-

ever, is indisputable that in all ages devout and godly men have eaten the flesh of saints and been in turn eaten by others. Divinity went into the flesh of Christ. Then Christ was eaten by Paul and Peter. They were eaten by the fathers and the martyrs and all the saints in Christendom, and all these have we of modern times eaten, assimilated, and absorbed, making their ideas and character our own. Thus one nation may swallow another, and be identified with it. Thus one generation may draw into itself the character and faith of another generation. And we too may enter into each other and dwell in each other. We Hindus are specially endowed with, and distinguished for, the yoga faculty, which is nothing but this power of spiritual communion and absorption. This faculty, which we have inherited from our forefathers, enables us to annihilate space and time, and bring home to our minds an external Deity and an external humanity. Waving the magic wand of yoga, we say to the Ural mountains and the river Ural, Vanish, and lo! they disappear. And we command Europe to enter into the heart of Asia, and Asia to enter into the mind of Europe, and they obey us, and we instantly realize within ourselves an European Asia and an Asiatic Europe, a comingling of oriental and occidental ideas and principles. We say to the Pacific, Pour thy waters into the Atlantic; and we say to the



West, Roll back to the East. We summon ancient India to come into modern India with all her rishis and saints, her asceticism and communion and simplicity of character, and behold a transfiguration! The educated modern Hindu cast in Vedic mould! How by yoga one nation becomes another! How Asia eats the flesh and drinks the blood of Europe! How the Hindu absorbs the Christian; how the Christian assimilates the Hindu! Cultivate this communion, my brethren, and continually absorb all that is good and noble in each other. Do not hate, do not exclude others, as the sectarians do, but include and absorb all humanity and all truth. Let there be no antagonism, no exclusion. Let the embankment which each sect, each nation, has raised, be swept away by the flood of cosmopolitan truth, and let all the barriers and partitions which separate man from man be pulled down, so that truth and love and purity may flow freely through millions of hearts and through hundreds of successive generations, from country to country, from age to age. Thus shall the deficiencies of individual and national character be complemented, and humanity shall attain a fuller and more perfect standard of religious and moral life.

There is no reason, my European friends, why you should move eternally in your narrow groove, rejecting every thing which is Eastern



and Asiatic. Why should you not add to your national virtues those of the East? Why should you not add to your philosophy and science and civilization the transcendental faith and poetry of Asia? The grammar of modern theology must be condemned by every scientific man as bad grammar. It makes no mention of the copulative conjunction. The disjunctive *Or* reigns supreme; the copulative *And* finds no place. The European seems to argue that he is justified in accepting one or other of the many possible phases of goodness and truth as represented by different nations, and that he is, therefore, right in choosing only the Western type of character and excluding the Eastern. He treats the various ideas and principles of religion as optional subjects of study and culture, and he prefers those only which suit his convenience and chime in with his tastes and traditions. He will insist upon disjoining, and protest against conjoining, the different elements of character. The problem of salvation which he thinks he has to deal with is—Shall I have knowledge *or* faith, science *or* yoga, dogmatism *or* devotion, prudence *or* ascetism, philosophy *or* poetry—the one *or* the other? Say rather we shall have both the one *and* the other. You have in you what is good and great in European character. Now must ye superadd the excellencies of oriental nations. In your hearts Asia's deep spiritual life has yet to



be subjectified. To you, my Hindu countrymen, allow me to administer the same warning and the same counsel. Will you rest content with your nationality and your Hinduism, repudiating Christianity as yavana, and European civilization as a mass of lies and impurity? Will you remain shut up in your small homes, and say that the sun of truth shines not on the outside world? Is godliness the Hindu's monopoly? Will you have only the small and mutilated and one-sided creed of your country, and refuse to enter into fellowship with the great nations of the West? Shun jealousy and narrow-minded bigotry, and so enlarge and distend your hearts that not only Asia, but all Europe and America, may find place therein. India! absorb England. Asia! assimilate Christian Europe. A vast world of objective truth yet lies before you, brethren, and the Lord God summons you to convert it into your flesh and blood, into your life and character. When all nations and countries will thus eat and absorb each other's goodness and purity, then shall the inward kingdom of heaven be realized on earth, which ancient prophets sang and predicted. All truth shall then be harmonized and reduced to a beautiful subjective synthesis in the life of humanity. No longer do you see jealousies and enmities dividing the world. The battle-cry is hushed, and the sword of sectarian hate has found rest in the sheath. No longer do we see scrip-

tures arrayed against scriptures, churches against churches, sects against sects—endless groups of fighting zealots. It is one undivided spirit-world, in which there is neither caste nor sect nor nationality. Leaving the earth and all that is earthy below, we soar on the pinions of oriental transcendentalism into the purer atmosphere of yoga, and from there we see a vast sea of spirituality rolling below, in which Europe and Asia, the Atlantic and the Pacific are all swallowed and lost, and the whole world of sectarianism is drowned in the illimitable ocean of eternal truth. How grand, yet how real is this subjective heaven! This is heaven indeed. Do not identify yourselves with any small sect, but embrace all humanity.

Honour Christ, but never be “Christian” in the popular acceptation of the term. Christ is not Christianity. In accepting the former take care you do not accept the latter. Let it be your ambition to outgrow the popular types of narrow Christian faith, and merge in the vastness of Christ. Neither should you become “Christian,” nor should you simply aspire to be “Christlike,” for then you would represent the lower strata of spiritual life. Advance to a higher ideal, my friends. Be Christ. Do not rest satisfied with anything short of this. I say again, be Christ. Incorporate him into your being; import him bodily into your own consciousness. Make him

your flesh and blood. Let us all be so many Christs, each a small Christ in his own humble way. We shall have no outward Christ, however pure. For what is Christ? Not a doctrine, but the eternal and universal spirit of sonship. He is the light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world. As such, he lived long before he was born, and he still lives, though dead. As such, he shines in the Christian as well as in the non-Christian world, and he excludes no saint, no scripture, no light vouchsafed by God before or after him. The "light" that is in every man cannot be exclusive. I cannot imagine a fictitious Christ. The Christ of the Gospel, the son of God, who embodies in himself the Father's will, and who by obedience has recovered the divinity in man lost by Adam, that is to me—and may he be unto you!—the true Jesus. I have no other Christ. I will accept no other Christ. It is in him and through him that we are reconciled to God and to all truth, and therefore to all dispensations and prophets. If Christ means, as every true Christian alleges, the reconciliation of human with Divine will, then let there be no war or discord in his name, but "peace on earth and goodwill among men." If you have the true Christ in you, all truth, whether Jew or Gentile, Hindu or Christian, will pour into you through him, and you will be able to assimilate the wisdom and righteousness of



each sect and denomination. Accept the prince of prophets, and you will find in him and with him all prophets, Eastern and Western. If you are Christians, you will quarrel and fight; but if you are so many little Christs the harmony of heaven will reign among you, and there shall be no sectarian division. Fling away the sectarian's small Christ, and let us be one in the large Christ of all ages and creeds.

Such is the New Dispensation. It is the harmony of all scriptures and prophets and dispensations. It is not an isolated creed, but the science which binds and explains and harmonizes all religions. It gives to history a meaning, to the action of Providence a consistency, to quarrelling churches a common bond, and to successive dispensations a continuity. It shows by marvellous synthesis how the different rainbow colours are one in the light of heaven. The New Dispensation is the sweet music of diverse instruments. It is the precious necklace in which are strung together the rubies and pearls of all ages and climes. It is the celestial court where around enthroned Divinity shine the lights of all heavenly saints and prophets. It is the wonderful solvent, which fuses all dispensations into a new chemical compound. It is the mighty absorbent, which absorbs all that is true and good and beautiful in the objective world. Before the flag of the New Dispensation bow ye nations, and



proclaim the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man. In blessed eucharist let us eat and assimilate all the saints and prophets of the world. Thus shall we put on the new man, and each of us will say, The Lord Jesus is my will, Socrates my head, Chaitanya my heart, the Hindu Rishi my soul, and the philanthropic Howard my right hand. And thus transformed we shall bear witness unto the New Gospel. Let many-sided truth, incarnate in saints and prophets, come down from heaven and dwell in you, that you may have that blessed harmony of character in which is eternal life and salvation.

Brother Apostles, before I conclude I must say a word to you. I charge you to stand forward boldly with the flag of the New Dispensation. March under the Divine Captain's command, and let victory and glory be yours. Let your faith and character so shine before men that you may be reckoned worthy of the flag you bear. Heed not the voice of evil counsellors, but seek wisdom in inspiration. Let Heaven's light be your guide. Realize the tremendous responsibilities which stand upon your shoulders, as the chosen apostles of the present dispensation, and in the discharge of your sacred duties turn neither to the right nor to the left. In these days of scepticism a whole army of infidels will attack you and persecute you. The light which the Lord has



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vouchsafed unto you is darkness unto all those who have no faith, and they shall laugh at you. Stand firm. Small is our number now, but many will come and swell your ranks in the fulness of time. With the living blood of all the saints and all the prophets in you, ye shall know no discomfiture, but shall fill the land with light and love and life. Shrink not from trial, but let all who choose come and test your doctrines. Let the impostor tremble, for he deals in lies and unrealities. But, my beloved brother-apostles, ours is real truth, and by the grace of our blessed Lord we will prove it. Gentlemen, whether you give us honour or not, give us your prayers, and we shall go on conquering and rejoicing, and glorifying the Lord of the New Dispensation.

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