

My dear Friends:

I have just been reading a most beautiful book by our Brother Sri Ram, the best yet, I feel. There are two chapters especially wonderful in it, the IVth, "The Reality in Ourselves," and the last, "The Path to Spiritual Reality." I feel I would like to use our next two Letters in the consideration of these two priceless chapters. Of course you must all get the book: "An Approach to Reality."

I have felt for a long time that the greatest need in our work is for our members to approach Reality, if they can, in proportion to their ability. Only in that way can our Society become imbued with a lasting and powerful inspiration. We can provide little channels for that power, but it is the Great Life which truly does the great work. In proportion as we recognize that Life, and make ourselves ready to be Its messengers, so do we truly work. Only in that way can we become fountains of inspiration to our fellow-men. Only in that way can we radiate a power which in this sad and troubled world can truly "make all things new."

Spiritual, not necessarily psychic, consciousness, is what is needed. And no one in the world can teach us about that better than he whom I call our Theosophical Saint. Let us discuss that splendid fourth chapter, "The Reality in Ourselves."

He begins with saying that spiritual consciousness cannot be explained. It is quite impossible to express it in physical plane words. It is impossible because all the words which we use are words which identify the past experiences of ourselves and others like us. This is an experience which comes to the very few and is as yet not common to the race. Says the Sage Lao-Tse:

"The one who knows the Secret does not speak:

The one who speaks does not know the Secret."

Reality has been called the Unknown, and it is true that the Spiritual Consciousness has depths which are endless. As Light on the Path puts it: "You will enter the Light, but you will never touch the Flame." Reality is synonymous with Truth and Beauty. "When I say 'Beauty' we must remember that beauty is not necessarily what people regard as beauty. When something gives us a certain gratification, we often say how lovely it is. The gratification may be there, but there may not be beauty in the gratification. Beauty is Truth, and Truth is Beauty, if the beauty is divine, and of course the Logos is all Truth. Truth is the life, and Beauty the form."

But although Reality is so endless, it is also very near. "Closer is He than breathing, nearer than hands or feet." The ignorant mind, says Sri Ram, does not believe that there can be a reality which it does not share, and asks for proof. To ask for proof of a realization that has not yet come to the interrogator is to ask for something which can never be given. As far as we can glimpse it, he discusses the nature of the spiritual consciousness. "Even if the goal is far off, we can see the goal as through a telescope. The goal being not away from us, but within ourselves, what we do then is to sense in ourselves the direction of Truth, that truth of which even a faint perception acts like a magnet or a scent, enabling us to follow an unseen trail out of the mazes of our experience."

Again Light on the Path tells us the same thing. It calls spiritual consciousness the "dim star of our being." "Steadily as you watch and worship, its light will grow stronger. Then you will know that you have found the beginning of the way. And when you have found the end its light will suddenly become the infinite Light." That Light may come in a flash, and only last a second, probably when



we least expect it. "The Kingdom of Heaven cometh not with observation." It comes like light breaking through the clouds. But then the clouds close up again. For it to stay always one must put an end to all the causes which cloud it. And this is not the work of a moment.

"The process of self-purification," wrote the Master K. H., "is not the work of a moment, nor of a few months but of years--nay, extending over a series of lives." Says Sri Ram: "The petals have to grow silently among the enclosing sepals even if the blossoming is the phenomenon of one beautiful moment." Says Light on the Path: "Look for the flower to bloom in the silence that follows the storm; not till then."

We must burst the shell of the enclosing consciousness of our own past creation. Kama-Manas must become Buddhi-Manas. Buddhi is the Divine Intuition which needs no teachers from without. It is not conjecture, hunch or wishful thinking. All falsehood has been eliminated from the nature of the man who is able to exercise it all the time. The spiritual man has cut through completely all illusion and pretence. He is the man who has unified dreaming and waking. That is to say, he has gone beyond the waking state to a state which is dreaming in the most wonderful sense...not the dreamings of the 'unconscious' but dreams that are dreams at one end and creations at the other. "We are on the borderline between the land of shadows and the land of light. That is why we pray: 'From the unreal lead us to the Real.' It is not possible to gain any spiritual knowledge or wisdom, except by preparing ourselves to receive it. There has to be the virgin soil in which the divine seed can strike its roots and grow...That is why all occultists, all spiritual teachers, speak of the life of the seeker as most important. In order to gain true knowledge, there must be the faculty to acquire it. To develop this faculty, which is innate in each man, the barriers to its sprouting and growth have to be removed." And the barriers are our ways of life, thought, emotion and action. We must come out of our world into Theirs. We must be prepared to think and act alone, loyal to the truth as we perceive it for ourselves in every matter, and not accepting it second-hand.

"Such a withdrawal of the heart from the world and its ways will lead in reality to a closer unity with it in spirit--a unity which does not exist at present, for its service and redemption. The less we use the world for our own purposes, and depend upon it as a parasite, the more we shall be able to love those who are in it and sympathize with them in their struggles...The unreality lies in the traffic for profit and pleasure, the reality is individual realization."

I have quoted largely from Sri Ram's book, often without quotation marks. For his words are better than any of mine could be. Get the book, my friends, for a great and truly spiritual genius has arisen amongst us. Let us all with unflagging determination try, each according to his power, to approach that Light without which the world's ways are all in darkness. "Draw nigh unto God," said St. James, "and He will draw nigh unto you." That Light is awaiting us since the creation of the world.

Your affectionate friend,

Clara Codd