

FREEDOM FROM IMPRESSIONS

MOORE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE LIBRARY



3 2042 00189542 8

MARY LAMOREAUX BURNELL

FREEDOM FROM IMPRESSIONS

By

MARY LAMOREAUX BURNELL

Lecture No. 133  
In the course  
NUDA VERITAS  
February 24, 1926

Published by  
Burnell Publishing Company  
320 Melrose Avenue  
Monrovia, California

MOORE COLLEGE  
LIBRARY

## FREEDOM FROM IMPRESSIONS

### PART I: Awareness

"Groping in the dark" is a sentence with which we are all familiar. We have learned to apply it to various endeavors that people make, to find out something more about their life and how to bring greater advantages to their experience.

All of the modern movements of thought that have taken different forms to interest the people, have given a sort of impetus to investigation that has not at all led the people out into the light, but has more or less emphasized the fact that the human race is groping in the dark. And even the sentences that they have been taught to pronounce so glibly, as though belonging to second nature, are sentences that do not lead

them out into the light, because they do not seem to move deeply enough in the consciousness; they seem only to ruffle the surface of the mind. They do not seem to go deep enough to draw forth some consciousness that might give an entirely different aspect to the world.

People are taught to say, There is no evil and there is no matter. They have adopted those words as a ritualism, and have felt that they have done their duty in pronouncing them; but they have not realized the significance of the words, nor really spoken them, unless there is some mind drawn forth within them, of a deeper nature than that which is capable of modifying by impressions and opinions and thoughts.

Many people believe that they receive a sort of culture or education by the several movements that are introduced upon the surface of their mind, by hearing new subjects, receiving new opinions; but the consciousness is not renewed by modification. A stagnant pool may be made to ripple by throwing pebbles into

it. That is not a sign that the pool has cleared itself. Clearing comes from the inflowing, vital mountain stream from the source of the pure waters. So we cannot accept the idea that we have advanced at all in consciousness by merely receiving the indentations upon the mind from some stone-throwers who hurl their opinions and convictions, and may be able to support their views by philosophical and historical thought.

There is only one way by which one may really experience a new world in which it would be true that there is no evil and no matter, and that is by a consciousness that is not surface, that is not the modification of thought, that is not a vibration of the internal instrument, but is like some deep, unsounded reality that impresses itself upon the person through his life rather than through his thought. And we do not mean by that that he is therefore led to lead a life; the expression "through the life" does not mean through living the life, but it means through the principle of life

itself, by which one contacts the eternal.

And that life is not stored in the mind as the place in which it is ticked off, as one would tick off an instrument to know data that might flow through. The mind does not necessarily figure in the great discovery, strange as that may seem. For human beings have learned to count upon their minds as the only means of broadening their life, of expanding their experience, their opportunities, of enlarging the area of living. But they are greatly mistaken who think that the mind is the place in which one experiences life. It is not any more necessary to life than the body. The physical body is just as important as the mind. But both are instruments, and are not necessary to the subject at hand.

It is well known by those who have made a study and who have spent their lives in teaching the doctrine, that when one attains to a certain perfection of mind, he has not attained that perfection by storing the mind

full of data about his universe, which he receives from observation of the external world; but by the ability to lay his mind aside, he discovers the great secret of life and contact with life and the revelation of life and the meeting with the true being of this universe. So that not by storing the mind full, but by reducing its vibrations, by minimizing its fragments, concealing its thinkings, its feelings, emotions.

In the Sanskrit language they used the word vasana very frequently, and it became so important to them that the translators have left the word untouched; they have not put it into the language; they let it stand as a word of significance. And around that word they arrange the science of escape.

The word vasana in the original means nearly like what our word "impressions" means; that which makes dents in the mind and marks upon it, and lays out grooves and ruts, things that stay in the mind through memory. They are called impres-

sions. They seem to stick close to one. After the object that caused the impression has passed into oblivion, or after the thought that made the impression has been forgotten, still there remains the impression.

And every one is so stored full of impressions, as though he had been shot with buckshot. So indented is he with the marks of the thoughts that have passed over him and left their impressions, that he cannot find himself ever clear minded enough to think a pure thought--pure thought in this sense, that one comes from an unbiased quarter, uncontaminated with flesh, with matter, or with mind, like a dew that might drop down from heaven. Some minds are capable of thinking thoughts that are as clear as crystalline dew, but they are minds that have been cleared of impressions.

As one is able to clear his mind of impressions, he notices--and it is quite natural that he should do so--that other people's minds seem unnecessarily full of impressions, so unnecessarily

that it seems as if they carry a great burden. And they carry with them a great sensitiveness. You can scarcely move without arousing an impression which nearly always strikes upon some very live wire in their minds, to cause them pain, grief, to rouse a memory or a fear or a worry or antagonism or liking or partiality or disgruntlement.

How long is the list? Interminable the list of impressions that people have aroused continually, over the smallest things. So that one philosopher made this observation: that people who live in the world take the things of minor importance and make of them cosmic questions. It is the old saying 'mountains out of molehills'. So much may come to one of such great importance, out of a little word that may be spoken, some action performed by a neighbor, something written in the newspapers; or it may be the way the sun comes up in the morning, or the way the rain-drops fall. Things of minor importance overwhelm the mind because the impressions, there,

lie ready to fluctuate, to burst forth, and to stampede the world with their color.

The thinking minds today make this observation: that no one has any world that is not the measurement of his own awareness. We might therefore judge how little some are aware of the great life of the truth by the kind of worlds they carry with them. But that does not mean merely the sensitive world that one has, but the world that he calls his actual environment, which is measured to him in what he calls the terms of an exact science. And what a misappellation that is; for there is no exact science known in the world. And yet, it would seem that mathematics ought to be fundamental, that it should be relied upon, that it is basic. But the thinkers of today are very much questioning the mathematical propositions that have been made. And the non-Euclidean ideas are much more important than those Euclid put forth; and there are yet to come discardings of those now advanced theories.

But would one ever arrive, could one ever arrive at an exact science by observation of his world? And what is his world? It is his receptacle, his mental receptacle, his storehouse of impressions, what he sees, thinks, and feels. That is his world. Can he, by examining his degree of awareness, which is really his degree of limitation, can he know or ever come to know what is exactly, truly, absolutely so? Can he come to know a thing in itself by his manner of approach which is to observe with a sense of touch, with the eyes, with the ears, with what he calls his entire equipment of physical sensation and mental capability? Is he able to approach to the discovery of a thing in itself, what it actually is?

When the hypnotist takes his subject and says to him, There is a horse standing here, the subject sees the horse. He impresses the subject that he should know more about his creation than he does; he should be wiser; he should inform himself on the genus and the species of horse life; that he should study evolution; he should

even go into the science of geometry, and he should study anatomy and physiology; and there is no end to the sciences he should take up, all correlating, all fitting into the one subject in hand, the horse that stands here in the room.

So the man determines to make something of himself, to be wise, to attain knowledge which he feels is masterful and great. So he is possibly told that vivisection is a science that delivers great knowledge. He thinks therefore it should be practiced upon the horse. But whatever science he applies, whatever impression has been stored in his mind, or the mind of his fellow beings, that he applies to this horse, is useless and leads to nothing.

But it does lead to this, which may be something--and the learned men of today are saying that is the most important thing about the study of science--that the more they learn the more they are able to admit they do not know. That is a piece of wisdom in itself; to learn that there is much more that is not known than that which is known, is wisdom.

It seems as if it might be a barrier to wisdom, that it might be a chasm over which one cannot cross to wisdom. But quite the reverse; it is the beginning of knowledge to know that one does not know.

That is one of the observations so commonly made now, at this time of the world: that the people who think they know so much stand in their own light. We see it so much among the people who are in search of truth. They say, We have studied the truth so many years and we have read all that has been written. We have really stored our minds full of the philosophies and the religions of the world, we can recite them, we know them backwards and forwards. And when it comes to the modern form of thought, they say, We have been speaking the word, we have been studying, we have been meditating, we have posted ourselves. And we find that they are the people who stand in their own light, for they think they know.

Great indeed is the mind that can say, I do not know.

And toward what does it say, I do not know? Toward all this expression that is the output of a limited mind. He is wise indeed who, when he is asked "what is this?" can say that he does not know. For he is willing to admit that the means of approach to the knowledge of that book, or whatever object, is inadequate unless one have that approach which comes from within, which is not by the way of mathematics, is not by the way of sensation, is not by the way of impressions, but is by the way of life.

\*

## PART II: The Hidden Side of Life

\*"Though acting after every feeling, such as love, hate, fear, and the like, he who stands unaffected within, like the (ether), is said to be the (one who is really liberated)."

Though such acts may come about in moments of break, on account of previous habit,...

(such as feeling hate or fear or love or any emotion; because of former habits they recur),

...he remains unaffected within, being free from all affection in consequence of the mind being entirely at rest. He is as unaffected as the (ether) which continues naturally pure though filled with smoke, dust, clouds, and the like.

\*The Jivanmukti-Viveka, p 22,23

Yet the ether is never touched by particles of dust or smoke. So he who finds himself, who discovers life--not the impressions of mind, but life--is not affected by the impressions that flow through his mind. He may stand in the midst of them like one unmoved; and though he personally have the recurrence of impressions, it is as though they had not touched upon him. The modifications of his mind do not jar him.

There was a great teacher one time, of whom it was said that while he was learning the Vedas, which he committed to memory, he had many, many moments of stumbling, many moments of forgetfulness; but after he had learned the Vedas, after he had mastered their meaning, after they had saturated him until he was the truth which they taught, it was said that not anything could ever change his poise. Nothing after that could ever modify him, nothing could divert him, nothing could turn him aside, nothing could make him utter a word that was not absolutely true. The magnetisms of the people about him and suggestions which came from

their minds never influenced him to digress in any way from the absolute standard of his message. And the account of him is this, that one time while teaching, he had been so long carrying on his discussion--the people flocked about him, they would not go home for their dinners, nor even to sleep at night, for he kept giving forth the doctrine, always absolutely true--and while he talked he fell asleep, and in taking his nap he continued to teach, the words pouring out of his mouth--sound, true, living doctrine. So they said of him afterwards that there was not anything that could ever pass over his mind, even in sleep, that could cause him to digress from the absolute truth.

Why does it seem necessary ever to turn from the absolute truth? Does it not seem sometimes that the people are calling for less? Does it not seem they want their minds fed with food to which they are accustomed? But the great teacher never digresses from the message of truth. It is not more difficult, the meat of the word is not more

difficult than the milk, to assimilate. And the milk and the meat are both sound doctrine; they are not different. The milk of the word is merely the judgment in juxtaposition with truth--sequence and preliminary, of the same substance, of the same material. But the supposition that the people require milk sometimes, is misleading in making one think that the people should have something less than truth, that they should have something more entertaining, something more flamboyant or pyrotechnic, something that opens the heavens for them that they may observe the fiery rain from the sky. Some say, My people want phenomena, they want to see the shower of roses from the sky; for they have read in books that such things occur at times. How, then, can we teach the people so that they may feel they are receiving a message that entertains a soul that has been poisoned on food that is not for the illumined, but is for those who seek to enter into the finer forms of matter, and experiment with over-the-threshold experiences that lead to nothing except more worlds, more worlds to conquer.

\*The knowledge of ignorance is, then, the first lesson in walking according to the Word.

The knowledge of ignorance--that surely should be simple.

An ignorant man has sought, and having sought, he finds the teacher; and finding has believed, and believing has hoped; and henceforward having loved, is assimilated to what was loved--endeavouring to be what he first loved. Such is the method Socrates shows Alcibiades, who thus questions: "Do you not think that I shall know about what is right otherwise?" "Yes (said Socrates), if you have found out." "But you don't think I have found out?" "Certainly, if you have sought." "Then you don't think that I have sought?" "Yes, if you think you do not know."

\*Ante-Nicene Christian Library,  
Clement of Alexandria

That, according to the great minds, is the measure of how much one knows. That is the measure of whether one has found out or not, if he does not think he knows. He is willing to be a babe, an infant; for of such is the kingdom of heaven. They do not put forth their minds filled, charged with impressions, rounded out, corpulent with impressions. There is no youthfulness about that; there is no baby-likeness about that. There is a rotundity of an accumulation of mentality. It is not at all characteristic of a spiritual mind.

They said of the ancient sages: They are as though they know nothing; they go about as though they have no knowledge; they do not answer promptly, as though they wished to be interpreted as knowing about the subject, but they are quite willing to appear as though they had never heard of the subject. For their minds are upon things more important than the discussions between opinions that come to conflict and then fly away again as though they had met with

antagonistic forces. They enter no conflicts, they enter no argumentations.

But their very breath is doctrine, and their soul is doctrine, and their atmosphere is doctrine, and they are healing in their words, which are often words hidden from the ears and hidden from the mind. Great indeed is that presentation of doctrine that escapes the capturing energies of mind and slips into the very soul and into the body, without being snagged in mentality.

One who practices healing knows very well that he tries to subdue his mind and the mind of the patient, that there may be an action of that which is not mental nor physical.

And the purpose of this is that there may be presented before him the perfect physical and the perfect mental, so that we find people who have received the treatments are corrected physically and they are corrected mentally. So it seems that they really pass through

a conversion, actually a change of mind, of habit, of thought, of will, of character, of disposition, and of all that seemed to be the amalgamated whole which they called themselves--passes through a repolarization and internal change that sets itself up as though it belonged to another world.

And it does belong to another world. For when one is polarized to that true consciousness, he lives in a new world; and that is all there is to entering the kingdom of heaven. It is at hand. The kingdom of heaven, with all its excellences, its powers, its glory, its freedom, is at hand. One enters it by repolarization, which means that he is able to drop this garment called mind, that he may be seen in his true glory which is the glory of the Self.

Happy is he who possesses the wealth of the Divine Mind. There is no wealth like it. Riches, rubies, diamonds, gold, silver--there is nothing to be compared with the wealth which one has by the possession of the Divine Mind. And the Divine

Mind is the consciousness which is no longer limited, no longer bounded mathematically or dimensionally, or with its own restraint of its own mental nature. But it is a mind that has lost itself, like a veil that has dropped away that the true may be.

And while one talks about the true, he forgets that he is in the presence of the true. While he talks about the hidden meaning of life and the hidden presence of the kingdom of heaven, he forgets that there is more actual to him than the world of things. He forgets that he is breathing the breath of the perfect world. For while he talks of the hidden life, he still sees his world full of people and objects. But is it not stated in the classics that while one is still overwhelmed with impressions, while he still feels hatred or love or fear, there may come to him that stability which goes with the inner life and the discovery of the true Self, by which he is able to stand like one untouched in the midst of the changes of thinking? In the midst of impressions, he is always the same.

The medicinal quality of that understanding is beyond any reckoning. No one can tell what it means until he has for himself entered into that Holy of Holies within his own consciousness, the place where he is able to say, Whether I know or do not know, the truth is. And when he enters into that which does not consult with his own mind, does not ask the opinion of his mind, does not question it, but he enters into that hidden place within himself, he there then may experience that wonderful romance of life which seems to be the dissolving of all external forms and the melting of worlds.

How many times has it been brought to the notice of this Instruction that people melt down before the indomitable word, the word that stands unmoved in the midst of thoughts, in the midst of objects. Before that word we see the gross material melt and flow away, and in the place of it there shines forth the glory of a new countenance, the beauty of a new heart, the soundness of a new flesh, the radiance of a divine mind that is quite capable of thinking no thought, but stand-

ing transfixed in the ecstasy  
and the being of eternal life.

And now over the people the Spirit has its action. Now the presence of the eternal Truth moves without motion, still in the heart, without confusion, asserts itself without aggression, makes itself known without outward speech. But knocking within, it announces its reality. And it overrides the attempt which men put forth with their minds to know, and crushes all their assumed knowledge into ignorance, and baptizes them with the waters of that ignorance, that the Spirit of Truth may have its action without impediment, without objection, without resistance, without contradiction.

The movement of the true life is upon the people. Few are chosen, but those few have felt the life which needs no expression in thought or word, which does not depend upon expression, but is in itself all sufficient. And within the heart it is the warmth of life, and it is the assurance of eternity, and the acknowledgment of the unchangeable, the immutable. And it is the radiance

and the glory of healing. It is protection, it is immunity, it is goodness, it is sweetness.

So that it was said, as a second step of four degrees that are imposed upon those who undertake the discovery of the true life, it was called the sweetness of nothingness. And that was the sweetness described in the ancient books as honey sweetness because of the nature of honey to be as sweet in the tiniest drop as in the whole honeycomb. So the sweetness of the perception of nothingness is in every point the entire sweetness of renunciation of all things that are false. And in that sweetness there beams forth-- as though it were a way made for the advent of true light-- the true Self.

So under that now we are, as under the action of the Spirit. And if all words missed us and if all words went by us, the truth would be the same.

\* \* \* \* \*



