

FOOTNOTES ON SWAMI VIVEKANANDA IN ANNISQUAM*

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Annisquam, a quiet seacoast village about forty miles north of Boston, is located within the larger area of Gloucester, Massachusetts. It is a residential community with well-kept older houses and some expensive new ones, narrow winding streets, and a speed limit of fifteen miles per hour.

There have been some changes since Swami Vivekananda visited there in 1893 and 1894. There is now a yacht club which it didn't have then. It still has no drug store, only one small general store selling some groceries and newspapers. The wooden hotels have gone with one exception. The Universalist Church, on a hill overlooking Lobster Cove, which was built in 1830, and where Swami Vivekananda spoke in 1893, remains the same.

A bit of Annisquam as it was in the early 1890's is described by Edmund Garrett, writing in *Romance and Reality of the Puritan Coast* :

A square old-fashioned house, with a central chimney, stands at the beginning of the winding country road to Annisquam. This is a quiet little haven, sheltered by granite hills that rise steeply between it and the sea, on one side, and boulder-strewn cape hills, on the other. No matter how

the wind may blow outside, the little cove is placid. The houses are mostly snug cottages, many of them very picturesque. Here and there is a mouldering boat by a decrepit wharf, or a dory drawn up on a float, or an old-fashioned well—in fact, the place abounds in artistic bits of foreground.¹

Such a setting attracted, of course, the artists, including Winslow Homer. They came with their camp stools and yellow umbrellas and used to dot the landscape. Near the lighthouse along the Atlantic shore could be found Rev. Shields and his family camping for the summer. This pasture land would soon be converted into substantial homes. Several small wooden hotels were built and by the time of Swami Vivekananda's visit, the villagers had turned their residences into boarding houses for the summer visitors.

They came from various parts of the East and as far as away as Chicago. So many came from Cambridge that the natives gave that name to one of its streets and one of its beaches. They were not only artists, but professors, clergymen, and writers, many with their families. And mothers with their daughters.

'It was a culturally sophisticated village,' says Paul Kenyon, former editor of the *Gloucester Daily Times* and historian for the Annisquam Village Church, 'and the boom was probably 1880s to early 1900s.'

Only in this country a short while and headed for the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, Swami Vivekananda's first visit to Annisquam in 1893 was to be a marked weekend in his life. Prof. John Henry Wright, whose guest he was to be, had

* Special appreciation and gratitude to Mr. Paul Kenyon, historian for the Annisquam Village Church, and Mr. Donald Usher, Curator of the Annisquam Historical Society, who have been kindness itself in giving of their assistance. Many thanks also to Mr. Russell Miller, University historian and archivist at Tufts University Library, and Mr. Alan Seaburg, archivist at the Andover-Newton Library at Harvard University, who were instrumental in supplying information on Rev. Penniman. Among the villagers at Annisquam, special thanks to Mrs. John Murray and Mrs. Alice Clark, who gave of their time most graciously.

Mr. Donald Usher supplied the photographs of old Annisquam.

¹ Edmund Garrett, *Romance and Reality of the Puritan Coast* (Little, Brown, 1897), pp. 214-15.

arrived with his family at Miss Lane's boarding house on June 17, 1893.² And there were to be other notables summering in Annisquam whom Vivekananda would be destined to meet.

How did Swami Vivekananda reach Annisquam? Probably by train from Boston. Or he could also have come by boat. It was a much used mode of transportation. The Boston and Gloucester Steamboat Co. left Boston twice a day, at 9.30 a.m. and 2 p.m. By whichever means, he left Gloucester Center by electric trolley car through a somewhat rural and informal countryside to Annisquam.

It was a chilly Friday. 'The wind has blown all day in strong sweeping gusts ... and the rain has dropped down by intervals. There isn't a hint of summer abroad ... we ought to be basking in August sunshine, instead of shivering in November weather.'³

Marie Louise Burke has written of this visit in her *New Discovery*, of how the boarders at Miss Lane's were all excited to see the Swami. Coming on such a blustery day, the hospitality of Charlotte Lane's must have been most welcome.

Charlotte Lane's boarding house was located at 8 Arlington Street. A spacious house with about ten rooms, its grounds ran down to Lobster Cove. She had no need to advertise her well-known private boarding house.⁴ Although Prof. Wright's family arrived there and presumably took their meals there, they lived in a small summer cottage adjacent to Miss Lane's called The Lodge.⁵ Charlotte Lane's place had no distinctive name of its own.

Charlotte Lane, who was called 'Aunt Tot' by the villagers, was not only a loving soul, but was much loved by all. Those who remembered her have characterized her as such. Her grandniece, Alice Moore, said she never married, her fiancé having died of tuberculosis. Another villager, Mrs. Alice Clark, very energetic and bright at ninety-five and not looking a day over seventy, said she got up at 4 a.m. and baked all the pies for her guests. 'She was a darling old lady, marvellous.' Charlotte Lane's dining room had two long tables, and according to Mrs. Clark, it was such fun to eat there. Charlotte Lane's sister, the grandmother of Alice Moore, might have heard the Swami speak at the church. Miss Moore remembers her mother saying that Swami had said that other religions should be respected.

Perhaps it was the evening of his arrival that, after dinner, they all repaired to the Lodge to hear Swami Vivekananda. This building, as well as Charlotte Lane's, still stands, and has a room and bathroom upstairs and a room downstairs which is partially divided by a staircase. It is unfinished on the inside. It can be said from all that is presently known that Swami Vivekananda slept at Miss Lane's.

Was this the weekend that he met at Annisquam Prof. Eugene Wambaugh of Harvard Law School? It appears to be so as the Wambaughs were staying only two houses from Charlotte Lane's. Prof. Wambaugh had a distinguished career in the law and was in his late thirties when he met the Swami. His son writes as follows :

In the summer of 1893 I became four. Faintly I remember seeing the Swami, but I recall clearly that his name came up often in family conversation both then and later. Especially in talk between my father and my sister Sarah who was then eleven and clearly much interested. She died in 1955. I do not recall anything that was said and neither left any papers that might help.

2. *Cape Ann Weekly Advertiser*, June 23, 1893, p. 4.

3. *Cape Ann Breeze*, Aug. 25, 1893, p. 4.

4. *Gloucester Daily Times*, July 10, 1893, p. 5.

5. Location of the Lodge and its use was given by the owner, Mrs. Alice Clark of Annisquam, Oct. 1978.

Sorry. And I apologize for the typing. I am certified as 'blind' and don't see very well.

Yours,
Miles Wambaugh⁶

The sister, Sarah, who talked with her father, later gained a world-wide reputation for her work in plebiscites.⁷

Friday, the day of the Swami's arrival, was blustery, but there is a saying about the weather in New England that if you don't like it, wait a minute. The moon was full on August 26,⁸ and it is just possible that on that evening, a Saturday night, Swami Vivekananda went on a picnic. Picnics were the 'in' thing in Victorian times.

This supposition is based on what follows. (At this point, it is necessary to go a little forward in time.) In researching Swami Vivekananda's second visit in 1894 when he was the guest of the Bagley's in the Hyatt house, a letter was sent to its present summer occupant, A. Hyatt Mayor, Emeritus Curator of Prints at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the grandson of Alpheus Hyatt, who owned the house in the 1890s. We received the following reply:

I remember my mother telling that Swami Vivekananda stayed at this house in the time of my grandfather, Alpheus Hyatt, who died in 1901. I do not know how long he stayed, nor exactly when, but the stay included a moonlight picnic, during which he unbent and became charmingly jolly, developing a new skill in skipping paper plates across the water. He ate the meat that was served at the picnic because he explained that he did not wish to be rude by flying against the customs of the heathen. I wish I knew more details but all I gathered was that he charmed everybody with his urbanity and his willingness to enter into the mood of the moment. It is a

⁶. A letter to the writer of this article, Oct. 1978.

⁷. *Dictionary of American Biography*, Supplement Five, 1951-1955 (Scribners, 1977), pp. 723-24.

⁸. *The American Ephemeris and Nautical Almanac for 1890* (Washington, D.C.: g.p.o., 1890), p. 139.

pity that no one passed on the wise things that he must have said.

Very sincerely,
A. Hyatt Mayor⁹

The fact of a moonlight picnic could perhaps pinpoint when the picnic occurred. In August 1894, the full moon was on the 16th,¹⁰ when it does not seem that Swami Vivekananda was there. This would bring the picnic into the 1893 picture.

Very likely the Swami met Alpheus Hyatt as well as his family. The two daughters, Harriett, then in her twenty-fifth year and the mother-to-be of A. Hyatt Mayor, and Anna, then seventeen, were later to become well known for their work in sculpture.

Alpheus Hyatt, zoologist and paleontologist, established the first marine biological laboratory in the U.S., which is now located at Woods Hole in Hyannis, Mass. *The Dictionary of American Biography* characterizes him 'As a man Hyatt inspired the love and devotion of his students to a marked degree. . . . He was always approachable and kindly, unpretentious and open-minded.'¹¹

Since Annisquam was a small, closeknit village and all three professors, Hyatt, Wambaugh, and Wright lived in Cambridge, Mass., it is likely they all knew each other and that Prof. Wright would have introduced the Swami. Since the Hyatts had rented their house in 1894, they most probably would not have been in Annisquam at that time. So it would seem that it was in 1893 that they met Swami Vivekananda.

That the Swami 'unbent' suggests that he might have been on his guard as would

⁹. A letter to the writer of this article, dated 24 August 1978.

¹⁰. *The American Ephemeris and Nautical Almanac for 1891* (Washington, D.C.: g.p.o., 1891), p. 139.

¹¹. *Dictionary of American Biography* (Scribners, 1961), 5:447.

not be unlikely to someone new in the United States.

On Sunday evening Swami Vivekananda spoke at the Universalist Church. At one time 'the established church', it became in 1811 Universalist under the leadership of Father Leonard, 'Father' not only by denomination but by leadership. The theology of John Murray, who preached universal salvation, made a deep impression on Father Leonard. Finally in 1811 he announced his resignation from the Church stating that, on account of a decided change in his views, he had adopted the Universalist view of Theology. He wrote: 'And at present I am convinced by the Spirit of Truth which I find there, that Grace will reign as universally as sin has reigned.' He did not like the Calvinist doctrine of original sin and eternal punishment.¹²

There may be some confusion as to the denomination of the church from the announcement in the *Gloucester Daily Times*, August 26, 1893:

Annisquam Universalist Church, Rev. G. W. Penniman, Pastor. Rev. A. B. Shields of Rhode Island, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, will preach in the morning service at 10:30....

In *New Discoveries*, we find the announcement in a Salem newspaper, 'Swami (rev.) Viva Kananda preached in the Episcopal Church last Sunday evening, by invitation of the pastor and Professor Wright of Harvard....'

The announcement in the *Gloucester Daily Times* for August 28 ran as follows: 'Mr. Sivanei Yivcksnanda, a Hindoo monk, gave a fine lecture in the church last evening on the customs and life in India.' But the *Cape Ann Breeze* for August 29 wrote:

12. 'Historical and Biographical Account of Annisquam Village Church and Its Ministers dating back to 1728', comp. James H. Cunningham. Mimeographed and unpagged.

In the evening the church was open and a little of the Orient came to our doors in the person of a gentleman from Cathay, a Hindoo monk, the first one, I understand, who ever crossed the ocean to America. He is a guest of Professor Wright at Miss Lane's boarding house and has a musical Indian name, whose intricacies of speaking and pronunciation I have not yet mastered. He spoke in fairly good English, of the manners and customs in his far away land, and his dusky face, picturesque dress, distinctive phraseology, and pleasantly told story was a charming innovation in our matter-of-fact Western civilization.

This was, as he himself said, 'the first public discourse that he ever gave in English or in his native language'.¹³ It marked the beginning of his unprecedented work in the West. It was this quiet village, Annisquam, from where ships had sailed to China and India before Revolutionary times, that another revolution was so quietly begun.

In the early 1950s the parish at Annisquam voted to be interdenominational. Having broadened its views before Swami Vivekananda, it has broadened them since.

Even though from the published accounts there may have been some ambiguity as to the denomination of the Annisquam Village Church, and although Rev. Penniman was beginning his vacation, it seems just likely that this was when Swami Vivekananda met him. The *Cape Ann Weekly Advertiser* carries this announcement for October 6, 1893: 'Church services were resumed on Sunday morning after the vacation. Our pastor spoke on "The Parliament of Religions at the World's Fair".' So far, although we have been in contact with Rev. Penniman's daughter, and the archives at Tufts University and Harvard University have been searched, no trace of the sermon has come up. Mrs. Dorothy Penniman Hubbard has said that her father spoke of Vivekananda when she was a child. She was born in 1903. But, like Miles Wambaugh,

13. *Gloucester Daily Times*, Sept. 6, 1894, p. 4.

she doesn't remember specifics. How interesting that sermon might have been!

Rev. George Penniman died in 1943. An appreciation has been written of him by Rev. Herbert Benton, who also may have met Swami Vivekananda, as his house was next to Charlotte Lane's and he was a friend of Penniman's since his high school days. He writes: 'Never have I known a man more genuine, more sincere, more devoted to the highest and best in life... Yet his scholarship and his transparent idealism made him no recluse. His was no cloistered existence. Dr. Scott calls him a "saint". But his was the human variety. He lived close to the great throbbing heart of the world. His sympathies were deep and broad, his thoughtful kindness inexhaustible.'¹⁴

Mr. Penniman's daughter feels that her father and Swami Vivekananda had many thoughts in common. She would hear the Swami's name mentioned off and on around the house when she was a child, but has no definite knowledge as to whether her father attended the Parliament of Religions.

On Monday, August 28, the Swami left Annisquam for Salem, Massachusetts, a train ride of about half an hour. From here he wrote to Prof. Wright, addressing him as 'Dear Adhyapakji', establishing with him a close, open, and loving relationship. Most grateful the Swami was.

His second visit to Annisquam was a year later in August. (See Marie Louise Burke's *New Discoveries*.) This time he came as a guest of Mrs. John Judson Bagley. An announcement in the *Cape Ann Weekly Advertiser* for June 15, 1894, states: 'The Hyatt house will be occupied this summer by Mrs. Francis Bagley¹⁵ of Boston.'

¹⁴. *Christian Leader*, Sept. 18, 1943.

¹⁵. The Detroit Public Library informs us that Mrs. John Bagley's given name was 'Frances E.' A typographical error could account for 'Mrs. Francis'. But why 'of Boston'?

Research has not been able to locate the address of this Mrs. Bagley, whether she lived in Boston proper or the environs or what her relationship was to Mrs. John Bagley.

The Hyatt house where the Swami stayed for perhaps three weeks is located in another section of Annisquam called Goose Cove. It is on the waterfront and rather secluded. A. Hyatt Mayor, the present owner, writes, 'There are half a dozen rooms where he might have slept, all considerably changed since then. The outside of the house has stayed much the same'.¹⁶ A porch was added to it some years later.

Prof. Wright and his family came early in June. The *Cape Ann Weekly Advertiser* for June 8, 1894, notes: 'Prof. Wright and family from Cambridge are here for the season. They occupy rooms at Mrs. Benton's and board at Miss Lane's.' Mrs. Benton's house was next to Charlotte Lane's on Arlington Street. She was a school teacher.

This would seem to be the season when Swami Vivekananda saw some of the lighter side of summer life at Annisquam. If the Swami arrived on August 17, the day was described like this in the *Cape Ann Breeze* for August 18: '... the day was improved to its utmost extent far into the evening. There were numerous riding parties, picnics, and sailing parties. The river was full of yachts, sail boats, and dories, and the streets were gay as carryalls, wagonettes, buggies, democrats,¹⁷ and vehicles of all sorts, filled with pleasant parties, rolled swiftly and smoothly along over the dustless roads...'

The centre of social life was Mechanics Hall. On August 21 an interesting musicale was given there, followed on the next even-

¹⁶. Letter to the writer, dated Aug. 29, 1978.

¹⁷. Democrats were a light farm-wagon with two or more seats drawn by two horses.

ing by entertainments furnished by blind musicians, while in the afternoon of the same day there was a sale whose proceeds were for the poor children of Boston.¹⁸ The *Gloucester Daily Times* for Saturday, August 25, announced: 'The steam yacht Senator is again visiting our harbour, and with its search-light and coloured electrics last evening illumined all its surroundings.'¹⁹

Whatever Swami Vivekananda may have taken in of all this, he did get time to write a few letters.

'Dear Sister,' he wrote to Isabelle McKindley on August 20, 'Your very kind letter duly reached me at Annisquam. I am with the Bagleys once more. They are kind as usual. Professor Wright was not here. But he came day before yesterday, and we have very nice time together. Mr. Bradley of Evanston, whom you have met at Evanston, was here. His sister-in-law had me sit for a picture several days and had painted me. I had some fine boating and one evening overturned the boat and had a good drenching—clothes and all...'²⁰

So we know the first few days were partially occupied with sitting for a portrait and visiting with his friends. Rev. George Penniman was not in Annisquam at that time and would not be preaching at the Universalist Church until September 2.²¹

On the 31st of August, the Swami wrote to Alasinga, his great devotee in Madras: 'I just now saw an editorial on me about the circular from Madras in the *Boston Transcript*.'²² It had appeared on August

30. This was what Swami Vivekananda had been waiting for. It put the stamp of credibility on his being a genuine representative of Hinduism. That people like Prof. Wright might have thought him a fraud had concerned him. The editorial goes like this:

Swami Vivekananda came to the United States to convert the heathen of this country from the ruling faith in materiality to a lively conviction of spiritual things. The impression he made at the Parliament of Religions and his subsequent mission in various parts of the country are matters well known to all. Like our own missionaries to India, the gentleman who came as missionaries to us in America are not all of the same tenets and practices, and do not often know all about the good works of one another. But it is interesting to receive just at this moment, when the Hindoo monk has been speaking at Eliot and Plymouth, a circular of the proceedings of the public meeting at Madras, where leading Hindoos assembled together to make formal expression of their gratitude to him for his representing of Hindooism to the American public and at the Chicago Parliament of Religions. The chairman said: 'They were assembled to express their admiration and their thanks to the great American people for the very kindly and sympathetic reception which they have accorded to Paramahansa Swami Vivekananda, whom all here knew so well and revered so much. They had met also to convey to the Swami their high appreciation of the signal services which he had rendered in America in the Parliament of Religions and other places. There could be no doubt that his visit to the great Western country and his services there were of excellent augury...'

'Amid all the troubles and humiliations of our past history, in spite of our present fallen condition, we, Hindus, yet retain undiminished our faith in our ancient system of religion, of which the fundamental and central conceptions have been placed before you with such conspicuous power and success by our gifted representative. All of us who have the privilege of knowing personally Swami Vivekananda never felt for a moment's doubt that his mission to your great and free nation would prove an entire success and that his genius, enthusiasm, wisdom, and eloquence will bear fruit...'

This must have brought great joy and satisfaction to Swamiji. No doubt all who were interested in him at Annisquam got

18. *Gloucester Daily Times*, Aug. 18, 20, and 23, 1894.

19. *Gloucester Daily Times*, Aug. 25, 1894, p. 4.

20. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, 8 vols. (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama), 5(1973): 38-39. Hereafter cited as *Complete Works*.

21. *Gloucester Daily Times*, Aug. 20, 1894, p. 4; Aug. 25, 1894, p. 4; Aug. 29, 1894, p. 4.

22. *Complete Works*, 5:40.

the news. In this same letter to Alasinga, his thoughts are of the work to be organized in India and he imparts encouragement to his devotee : 'When you feel gloomy, think what has been done within the last year. . . . Are you sincere? unselfish even unto death? and loving? Then fear not, not even death. Onward, my lads ! The whole world requires Light. . . . Have faith that you are all, my brave lads, born to do great things ! Let not the barks of puppies frighten you—no, not even the thunderbolts of heaven—but stand up and work !'

Summer festivities looking ahead to the Labour Day weekend were going full tilt. The *Cape Ann Breeze* for August 27 stated : Last week was very gay for such a staid and conservative village. Every night brought some social event and this week promises to be like the last. There is, I hear, to be two parties this evening: a dance in the Hall, and another of Mrs. Hodgkin's pleasant receptions in the Mill. . . .

Hodgkin Mill was directly opposite from the Hyatt house on the other side of the inlet at Goose Cove. The Swami has written of the boating, dancing, and music which he heard during his stay.²³ It is no wonder, for the same newspaper reported on the following day :

Miss Belle Hodgkin, the well-known artist, held a very enjoyable dancing party at the old Hodgkin Mill, Annisquam, last evening which was attended by a great many artists who are summering at Annisquam. . . .²⁴

Nor was this all. On the previous saturday, a piazza concert was given at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. W.E. Dennis, by some yachtsmen from Boston, assisted by a few of our summer residents. Jolly songs and music on the banjo, guitar, mandolin, and harmonica made a pleasing diversion for the many friends and neighbours, who occupied comfortable chairs on the piazza. The many Chinese lanterns aloft also helped to enhance the beauty of the scene.²⁵

The festivities continued right through Labour Day. It was written up in the *Gloucester Daily Times* as follows :

The day on Annisquam River was a regular 4th of July, at early morning the bunting was flung to the breeze from every flag-staff and the white winged yachts with their joyous occupants were flitting to and fro. . . . Dory and rowboat loads of picnickers made it lively with their songs along the banks of the river, the curling smoke told of clam bakes and boils, hot coffee and other good things served in true picnic style. . . . The cottagers kept open house and entertained their friends most loyally. . . . Huge bonfires lighted up the hills and shores, coloured lanterns from the cottages formed a splendid illumination. . . .²⁶

With New England having a drought in the summer of 1894 (the newspapers reported that smoke from forest-fires dimmed the light from the sun on the Sunday before Labour Day),²⁷ it was an ideal time for outdoor activities. At least Swamiji observed them even if he did not take part. Whether the Bagleys took him on excursions to other parts of Cape Ann is not known, but very likely. They would stay on until into October.²⁸

The day after Labour Day was the day the Swami was to speak at Mechanics Hall. Centrally located, it was the place in the village for almost all functions. The *Cape Ann Breeze* for September 4 gave this announcement :

An opportunity not lightly to be slighted, will be given us this evening to learn something of the conditions of Oriental life and religious observances by the lecture announced below.

Swami Vivekananda, the Hindoo monk, whose addresses at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago have attracted so much attention, is the guest of Mrs. Governor Bagley in the Hyatt House. In compliance with the urgent request of many persons in Annisquam, both citizens and

23. *Complete Works*, 6(1978):269.

24. *Cape Ann Breeze*, Aug. 28, 1894, p. 1.

25. *Gloucester Daily Times*, Aug. 29, 1894, p. 4.

26. *Gloucester Daily Times*, Sept. 4, 1894, p. 4.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Cape Ann Weekly Advertiser*, Oct. 12, 1894, p. 4.

summer visitors, he had consented to give a public address this evening at 8 o'clock in Mechanics Hall on 'Life and Religion in India'. His unusual eloquence and learning and his remarkable personal presence will make the occasion one not to be forgotten by all who may hear him.

There will be a small admission fee of 25 and 35 cts. charged. It is hoped that this stranger from a strange and far-off land will be greeted with a good audience on this his second appearance among us.

The same newspaper reported on September 6 :

A very fair audience assembled in the hall Tuesday to listen to the address of Swami Vivekananda, the Hindoo monk. He wore the distinctive dress of his rank, and was a picturesque figure in the flowing robes and loosely knotted sash, with his dusky, oriental-looking face and shapely head, surmounted by a dexterously twisted turban. His English is that of a cultured foreigner, who has been chiefly associated with refined and educated people. One has to follow him closely to always catch his meaning, however. The matter and manner of his lecture proved very interesting to his hearers, and they, so far as we have learned, congratulated themselves on the opportunity of hearing the distinguished stranger.

To complete the picture, the following was printed in the *Gloucester Daily Times* for September 6 :

Mechanic Hall was well filled on Tuesday evening to hear the lecture given by our visiting friend, the Hindoo monk. He was introduced to the audience by Prof. Wright, who also made some preliminary remarks befitting the occasion. The lecturer alluded to the visit he made to this village last year, and stated that the address he gave here at that time in the church was the first public discourse that he ever gave in English or in his native language; and kindly thanked the friends present who induced him to attempt the same. The religion of India was explained at some length by the speaker from a metaphysical standpoint, sharing the working of his mind and the thought following, yet his ideas were broad and liberal, when practically applied.

Many must have gathered after the meeting to thank and to congratulate him. Later in the week, he left Annisquam for Boston.

For a man of great austerity, great awareness, his sojourns in Annisquam, in addition to the friendships and admiration he found there, provided him with an elongated glimpse of summer festivity. He wrote Alasinga from Boston on September 29, 1894 :

The present Hindu society is organised only for spiritual men, and hopelessly crushes out everybody else. Why? Where shall they go who want to enjoy the world a little with its frivolities?²⁹

^{29.} *Complete Works*, 5:48.

SPACE-TIME—II

DR. SAMPOORAN SINGH

Manifestation of Space and Time

In the Rg-Veda, the oldest scripture of living world religions, there is a remarkable passage which describes the nature of Reality before the beginning of creation :

Existence was not then, nor non-existence,
The world was not, the sky beyond was neither.

What covered the mist? Of whom was that?
What was in the depths of darkness thick?
Death was not then, nor immortality,
The night was neither separate from day,
But motionless did *That* vibrate
Alone, with its own glory one—
Beyond that nothing did exist.
At first in darkness hidden darkness lay,
Undistinguished as one mass of water,
Then *That* which lay in void thus covered