

first realised. The route to the lecture hall had passed directly through an area where tear gas had just been used to disperse rioting students. When the Master related this incident to us upon his return to New York, we were shocked and horrified to hear that our beloved Guru had been subjected to such an experience. His own concern, however, was entirely for the unfortunate students of the university. When the car had at last reached the auditorium, they had found it flooded with water used to quench fires set by the rebellious faction of the student body and the talk could not, after all, be given. It is hoped that, at a future date, the students who, in the midst of this dark night of utter chaos and despair, had tried to reach the Master's Light will have their aspiration fulfilled.

The students at Indiana University in Indianapolis, where the Master was able to deliver his talk as scheduled, found it most inspiring. However, a problem similar to that encountered at Cornell presented itself. Rather than facing one arrogant young countryman who was determined to demonstrate what he felt to be his superior knowledge, the Guru found a group of several young Indians who completely and quite rudely monopolized the question period. "Vivekananda taught that purity was absolutely essential to the spiritual life. How then, can there be any point in bringing spiritual teachings to this country where all are given over completely to gross sensuality?" asked one of them.

The Guru responded to his ill-mannered countryman by initially reminding the questioner of how the remarkable "purity" of his fellow Indians was attested to by their present degradation in their vital life. If all were to wait, he continued, for absolute purity before entering the spiritual life, the day would never dawn when this qualification was achieved. The growth of aspiration does, indeed, require some initial purity; however, aspiration and purification must go together. One complements the other. Chastity and purity come only from inner aspiration.

On many occasions, the Master was able, despite the lack of sincerity of his questioners, to convey spiritual truth of enormous import. During the lectures that I was able to attend, I noticed that often, when the question was frivolous or actually sometimes hostile in intent, the Guru would use that opportunity to shed the fullest and most divine light on the subject, illumining all those present according to their receptivity and completely obliterating the negative force that had initiated the inquiry.

**At Indiana University though**, there were sincere seekers as well who were able to present their questions to Sri Chinmoy. A young man in the same audience was moved to ask the Master about his extremely poignant problem. His vision had been failing rapidly during recent years, and he had tried many remedies without success. Would prayer help to preserve his diminishing sight? Sri Chinmoy assured him that prayer would, indeed, be beneficial. God does listen. In fact, the Master said, “God has nothing to do but to listen to our prayers.” The young man then asked where he was to pray. “Where do you feel inspiration?” the Guru responded. “When I am walking along the street.” “Then there is where you should pray. One need not go to a special place in order to pray. Where you get inspiration, there you pray!”

As soon as the meeting was over, the priest who had arranged the talk, Father Lee Haggerty, came to the platform to tell Sri Chinmoy, “I am deeply honored that you have come to our place. You have offered me abundant Peace, Light, Bliss and Wisdom.” He went on to apologise for the misguided young Indians who had often in the past attacked him in a similar manner. It is hoped that the public rebuke administered by the Master has diminished their arrogance somewhat and perhaps they have given Father Haggerty less trouble since that day.