



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY

We offer our grateful thanks for the invaluable patronage, co-operation and help given by the Ramakrishna Math, Howrah, Missions at Calcutta, New Delhi, Madras, Bhavaneshwar, Patna, Chandigarh, Ahmedabad and other towns in India and abroad viz New York, Switzerland etc. Specially to USIS New Delhi & Calcutta we are indebted much for the unique publicity material they provided us with and also to the West German, Belgian Embassies in India without whose co-operation such useful material could not have been possible to place before the readers. Our best regards go to Swami Sambuddhanandaji, General Secretary, Vivekananda Centenary Celebrations Committee (Central) and to Swami Swahananda, Secretary Vivekananda, Centenary Committee and Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi for the immense encouragement and guidance afforded in the production of this Souvenir and lastly but not the least our grateful thanks go to our notable and distinguished contributors & authors whose most interesting and informative material we have placed in this Volume and our thanks are also due to our advertisers and printers who have not shrunk behind in extending their helping hand in producing this humble Souvenir Publication in its dignified form. Nevertheless its frailties be excused.

VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY SOUVENIR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Swami Swahananda, Secy. Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi,
R. R. Mahindru, Chief Sub-Editor, Hindustan Times.
R. K. Jha, Rep. The Indian Nation.
S. L. Sharma, Editor-in-Charge.

*Edited by S. L. Sharma for Vivekananda Centenary Souvenir Advisory Committee,
The Foreign Window, C-40, South Extension-II, Ring Road, New Delhi-16*

Price Rs. 5 - Per Copy



	Pa
Foreword—by Swami Swahananda	...
Vivek Lila— Editor's Note	... 3
Hymn To Swami Vivekananda	... 3
V. Centenary Celebrations	... 3
Homage—Messages	... 43 to 5
Vision Of Ramakrishna	...
Ramakrishna Maths & Mission	...
Swami Vivekananda a Poem	...

CONTENTS

	Page
CELEBRATIONS	
Swami Vivekananda Centenary Celebrations, the world over	... 68-106
PERSONALITY	
The Making Of Vivekananda	... 107
Swami At Parliament Of Religion —By Swami Tejasananda	... 117
Vivekananda in Meditation —By Swami Swahananda	... 122
Swami Vivekananda —By Swami Vijnananda	... 127
MESSAGE	
Swami Vivekananda's Way of Life —By Acharya Vinoba Bhave	... 138
Swami Vivekananda Harbinger of New Era —By Swami Asangananda	... 141
Vivekanand Swami and his Divine Call —By Prarajika Muktiprana	...
The Celestial Bliss —By U. Thant	... 147
Gospel of Godly incence —By J. L. Nehru	... 151
Prabuddha Bharat—Swamiji's Reawakened India —By Kaka Kalelkar	... 154
Apostle of Renaissance —By K. M. Munshi	... 155
Swamiji—A Great Mission —By Pt. Sundar Lal	... 159
The Child of New Age that Dawned in India	... 161
My Tribute— —By Vaikunth Mehta	... 165
Return Of Vivekananda —By Swami Budhananda	... 166
Synthesis—Swami a symbol —By Swami Mukhyananda	... 168

ANECDOTES

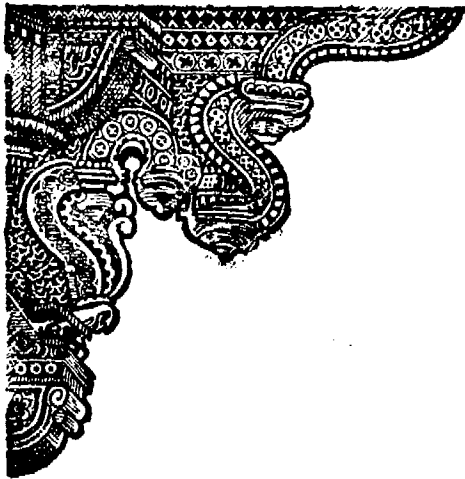
Transformation—Historic meeting—Immitation of Christ—A visit to Amarnath—Chilam Sharing—Hunger The Master—Adharma—Reverse Action—Rebuff—No Dry Monk—All Avtars—An Humble lion—The Belleache—In Service—Requisite qualifications—American Vivekananda—A Christ Amid—No egoim

... 171-176

SURVEY

Arise and Awake	—By Swami Lokeswaranda	...	179
One God, One World, One Man	—By Swami Punyananda	...	184
The Nation Builder—Patriot Saint of India	—By Swami Suddhasatwananda	...	187
Vivekananda A Humanist	—By Naryan Bose	...	199
Vivekananda A Socialist	—By A. K. Majumdar	...	203
Vivekananda Educationist	—By Swami Sambuddhananda	...	207
Vivekananda's Faith in Modern Youth of India	—By Swami Suparnanda	...	209
Vivekanandaism Revolves Round Sarvatma	—By Roma Chaudhari	...	211
Vivekananda on God	—By Smt. Anima Sen Gupta	...	229
Present from the Master and the Disciple	—By B. Malik	...	235
Manly monk and dynamic Sage	—By Sri A. C. Bannerjee	...	237
Implications of Swamiji's Gospel of man making	—By a Tapasyananda	...	239
Work work and keep thyself to the Right	—By Jaganath Kolay	...	241
Swami Vivekananda and America		...	245
Swamiji in Newyork	—By Miss Marie Burke	...	248
Vedanta in America		...	25
When Swami Vivekananda Visited Germany		...	261
Vivekananda on National Construction		...	265
Historic Address and others in U. S. A.		...	275

अम्बास्तोत्रम्		३
विवेकानन्द सन्देश आज.....	जवाहर लाल नेहरू	५
नव-भारत का उद्बोधक सन्यासी	काका कालेलकर	८
सन्यासिनी-आश्रम	काका कालेलकर	१२
पथ प्रदर्शक स्वामी विवेकानन्द	वीना शर्मा	१४
स्वामी विवेकानन्द तथा देश के प्रति हमारा कर्तव्य	कुमारी कोछर	१६
अमेरिका में एक स्वामी	_____	१७
स्वामी विवेकानन्द	_____	२०
स्वामी विवेकानन्द जर्मनी में	_____	२१
जगदम्बा का वरदान	_____	२३
स्वामी विवेकानन्द की गुरु भक्ति	_____	२५
विवेक सम्राट विवेकानन्द	दिलीप कुमार राय	२७
पथ प्रदर्शक स्वामी विवेकानन्द	_____	३१
माया और ब्रह्म का विवेक	स्वामी अनमोल प्रेमानन्द जी	३३
मृत्यु पर विजय	स्वामी सार शब्द आनन्द जी	३५



**Ramakrishna Mission,
New Delhi
3rd November, 1963**



FOREWORD

By

SWAMI SWAHANANDA

Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi.

THERE has been a cultural and religious upheaval in the later part of the nineteenth century in India. After the first war of Independence of 1857 an all round awakening was witnessed in the country. The British conquerors tightened their grip on the country and all this gave rise to offshooting of different kinds of socio-religious activities or movements beside underground political activities of the young people. Impact of Western civilization and economic advancement also had a telling effect on our educated community. One bad effect of it was that Indian began to suffer from inferiority complex about their religion, society, customs and culture which they had as a legacy down the centuries. But Shri Ramakrishna's impeccable, God-intoxicated life influenced thousands of people. His teachings based on impersonal principles yet not negating the traditional Hindu Sadhna and philosophy served as a beaconlight.

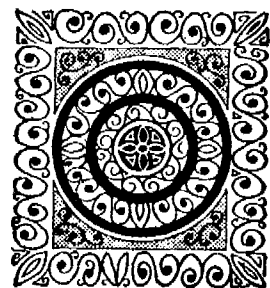
Swami Vivekananda broadcast the message of harmony of his Master to India and abroad. Swami Vivekananda was a unique combination of the character of a Hindu saint, the zeal of a social reformer and the struggle of a true patriot. He was not content merely with sermonizing or practising highest ideal of Hindu religion and philosophy but proclaimed a new God, and a new method of worship of serving the downtrodden and carried the significant term Dridra-narayana, God in the poor,

The Birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda is a national event. All patriotic Indian must be proud to participate in some function connected with this centenary celebrations which are held throughout the country. The country pays tribute to the memory of Swami Vivekananda and I hope that his birth centenary celebrations will keep alive that sacred memory of the great saint, patriot and philosopher. Familiarity with his life and teachings will help us to imbibe at least some of the great qualities of his head and heart, which made him a world figure at such an early age.

There have been many publications on the life and message of Vivekananda in English and the regional languages. The need of this present volume arose when the Centenary Celebrations started in the country, nay, the world over. In this Souvenir Volume such celebrations have been appropriately portrayed by the Editorial Board. Quite a number of informative useful illustrations are there for the reader. Swamiji's life and teaching's have been annalytically handled with profusion of illustrations, some of which are unique and give an idea of the special efforts made to collect the material as original as possible even from abroad. It seems a hard task to compress a huge material in an about four hundred pages but the patience and efforts of the people behind like Mr. S. L. Sharma and others are of course appreciable and the reader will find the Souvenir no doubt a useful and valuable present.

सत्यमेव जयते

Swami Swahananda





It is beauty seen, loved
and love that stands alone
It is song that lingers unsung
and knowledge here known.

It is death between two lives
and hell between two storms
the void whence rose creation
and that where it returns.

So if the tear-drop goes
to spread the smiling form
It is the goal of life
and peace, its only home.

Umasankar

RAILROAD STATION.
W. U. TELEGRAPH AND
NATIONAL EXPRESS OFFICES.
BINNEWATER, ULSTER CO., N. Y.

P. O. STONA RIDGE
ULSTER CO., N. Y.

Sept. 21 1899.

The handwriting of the Swami



EDITOR'S NOTE

VIVEK LILA

Perhaps never has the message of Swami Vivekananda, whose birth centenary the national celebrates been more appropriate than this time of national crises. His was the gospel of strength and service. Vivekananda was a worshipper of strength throughout his life. He believed in fearlessness. He wanted the youth of the country to be strong and virile. He once said "First of all our young men must be strong. Religion will come afterwards. You will be nearer Heaven through football than through a study of the Gita. You will understand the Gita better with your biceps than your muscles a little stronger." In this country we have tended to underestimate the value of ensuring that the youth of the nation is strong.

Vivekananda believed in "man-making" education whose aim it would be to turn out men with steel nerves and the same material as that of which the muscles inside which dwelt a "mind of thunderbolt is made." It was a doctrine of toughness both physically and mentally. His doctrine of strength also comprised character. He said, "Stand up be bold, be strong, Take the whole responsibility on your own shoulders and know that you are the creator of your destiny. All the strength and success you want is within yourselves. Therefore make your own future."

Here Vivekananda was true patriot, not in the conventional sense of the term (for he did not participate in national political activities), but in the wider, nobler sense of a nation-builder. To him Mother India was not a lifeless image but a living, smiling, beneficent goddess. From the snowy Himalayan peaks as his radiant eyes saw her weeping: the rolling waves of the Southern Sea as his radiant eyes saw her weeping: the weeping over the suffering and humiliation of her children, helpless victims of foreign rule and of their own superstitions. The regeneration of the people he considered to be the clue to political and socio-economic progress. A new nation of three hundred millions, he considered to be the clue to political and socio-economic progress. A new nation, would push itself to the front in the international society if it could imbibe the nourishing, sustaining ideas of the East and the West and reconcile them into a fresh ideal of manhood. That was the lesson he taught his contemporaries.

king" education whose aim it would be to turn out men with steel nerves and the same material as that of which the muscles inside which dwelt a "mind of thunderbolt is made." It was a doctrine of toughness both physically and mentally. His doctrine of strength also comprised character. He said, "Stand up be bold, be strong, Take the whole responsibility on your own shoulders and know that you are the creator of your destiny. All the strength and success you want is within yourselves. Therefore make your own future."

not, not in the conventional sense of the term (for he did not participate in national political activities), but in the wider, nobler sense of a nation-builder. To him Mother India was not a lifeless image but a living, smiling, beneficent goddess. From the snowy Himalayan peaks as his radiant eyes saw her weeping: the rolling waves of the Southern Sea as his radiant eyes saw her weeping: the weeping over the suffering and humiliation of her children, helpless victims of foreign rule and of their own superstitions. The regeneration of the people he considered to be the clue to political and socio-economic progress. A new nation, would push itself to the front in the international society if it could imbibe the nourishing, sustaining ideas of the East and the West and reconcile them into a fresh ideal of manhood. That was the lesson he taught his contemporaries.

Vivekananda was a believer in work and service. His approach to religion was practical. The Ramakrishna Mission which he founded has always kept before it the ideal of social and national service. Whenever disasters have taken place such as floods, fires, plagues or earth-quakes the members of the Mission have rushed timely aid. Their selfless spirit of sacrifice is known throughout India and abroad wherever the Mission has a centre. Vivekananda believed that true religion must do good to men and women. He said more than once that the best form of religion was to see Siva represented in living man and especially in the poor. It was for this reason that it was an insult to offer sermons instead of food to the starving man. His coined phrase, "**Daridra Narayana**" ("the Divine in the form of the poor"), became the symbol of active service to the poor.

India today must remember his immortal words that "the lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper are our flesh and blood." There is a tendency to forget the spirit of service for the poor from time to time. Vivekananda's message is as modern today as it was when he addressed the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893.

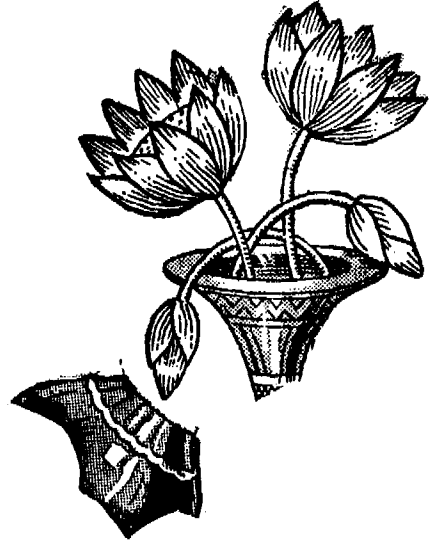
Birth centenary celebrations of Vivekananda is not the starting point of a new movement of revivalism; it is the beginning of the reinterpretation of the life and the message of this remarkable son of India, which actually will mean re-discovery of India or Swami's *Vivek Lila* which would therefore be acted and reacted time and again by our generations to come with pride and reverence.

The urge to give to the West what India could give took Swamiji to Chicago, where he laid the foundation of enduring Indo-American friendship and understanding. The urge to learn what India could teach brought Miss Margaret Noble to Calcutta and transformed her into Sister Nivedita. The Ramakrishna cult became a new link between the East and the West, deriving amazing vitality from the peaceful crusade against materialism inaugurated by Vivekananda and continued by generations of his followers.

Swami Vivekananda is the prophet of the modern age—an age which scorns passivity and believes in action. He was a seer, a sage—and is to be ranked with the greatest and the noblest the world has produced. The great sannyasi however did not make a negative approach to life and its problems. He equated humanity with divinity and worked for its salvation—not on the spiritual plane alone but also on the material. The militant monk wanted the common man to realize that he is heir to an uncommon heritage—he is the Son of the Immortal which makes him inferior to none. This is the spirit which all of us must cultivate if we are to fulfil our mission in life—whatever precise form may take. In paying our loving homage to his memory to-day we strengthen ourselves for the spiritual and national struggles which lie ahead.

Presentation of this Souvenir volume in commemoration of the Birth Centenary of Swamiji, is an humble service to him and the Mission which acknowledge and accept it with a smile. The Souvenir with all its frailties will still try to transmit Vivekananda's Message to the interested ear and heart far and near wherever this publication reaches. There are a number of other special publications in regional languages also which are being brought out by the Govt. of India, Mission Headquarters at Calcutta and other places but this prestige volume has its own charm, exclusive charm and multiplied charm for the newcomer, the raw seeker and the layman.

S. L. Sharma



A HYMN TO SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

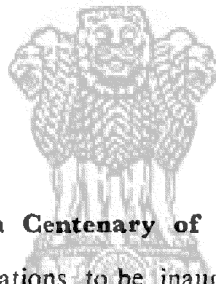
मूर्तमहेश्वरमुज्ज्वलभास्करमिष्टममरनखन्धम् ।
वन्दे वेदतनुमुज्ज्वलगतहितकाञ्चनकामिनीबन्धम् ॥
कोटिभानुकरदीप्तसिंहमहो कटितटकौपीनवन्तम् ।
अभीरभीहुंकारनादितदिङ् मुखप्रचण्डताण्डतनूत्यम् ॥
भुक्तिमुक्तिकृपाकटाक्षाप्रेक्षणमघदलविदलनदक्षम् ।
बालचन्द्रधरमिन्दुवन्द्यमिह नौमि गुरुविवेकानन्दम् ॥

I bow to Vivekananda, my spiritual guide, my object of worship, who is Lord Siva incarnate, resplendent like the bright sun, adored (alike) by men and gods, the embodiment of the Vedas, who has completely overcome the bondage of the much-ensured lust and gold, the lion (among men), brilliant with the rays of a million suns, who has nothing but the (*sannyasin's*) lion-cloth on, who is dancing the violent dance (of Siva), reverberating the quarters with the impassioned cry of 'fear not, fear not', a mere glance whose eyes is enough to impart both enjoyment and liberation, who tramples with ease the myriad hordes of vice, who is the veritable Siva with the crescent moon on the forehead, and who is worshipped by Indu.*

* A pseudonym assumed by the composer, Sri Sarat Chandra Chakravarti.

VIVEKANANDA

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS



In order to celebrate the **Birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda** the followig Scheme was drawn up :

TIME-- The Centenary Celebrations to be inaugurated at **Belur Math on Swamiji's birthday in January, 1963** and **extend over a period of one year ending January, 1964.**

PLACE—(i) During the year the Centenary to be celebrated in different Centres of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in India and abroad.

(ii) These Centres, with the help and collaboration of local bodies and individuals, to celebrate the Centenary in as many places as possible.

(iii) Similarly. Universities, Colleges, Schools, Public Libraries and other organisations and also members of the public be requeste to organised celebrations in a befitting manner in their respective places.

INAUGURATION—At the opening of the Centenary Celebrations on 17th Jan. '63, a **message of universal love and goodwill was issued by the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission.** It was published in different languages in newspapers and periodicals and in the form of leaflets in India and abroad. Arrangements were made to broadcast the same through the Radio in India and other countries.

PROPAGATION OF THE MESSAGE—with the help of the Universities and Societies, arrangements are being made for special lectures and meetings in India and abroad, to spread the teachings of Swami Vivekananda.

PUBLICATIONS—(i) To publish a **Memorial Volume** on Swami Vivekanada's contribution to world-thought with an introductory chapter on India's influence on the Thought and Culture of the world Through the Ages.

(ii) With the premission of the Ramakrishna Math, Belur, **the Complete Works of Swamiji** are being published through the different Centres of the Ramakrishna Math in **many Indian and foreign languages.**

(iii) (a) "Chhotader Vivekanand", Vivekananda for children in Bengali by Swami Niramayanand (price 50 nP.) has been published.

(b) A life of Swami Vivekananda in Bengali for schoolboys by Swami Vishwashryananda (Price Re.1/-) has also been published.

Both these books are translated into different Indian languages.

(iv) To have an **Album** published by Govt. of India.

(v) To request different Universities and Boards of Secondary Education and all other authorities for Primary & Social Education to include some of Swamiji's lectures and writings in the text book recommended by them with due permission from the Ramakrishna Math.

(vi) Graded literature on Swamiji's life and teachings suited to different educational levels of the reading public, special numbers of periodicals special publications like the Souvenir are being published.

PERMANENT MEMORIALS—(i) To devise necessary steps for the **preservation of the ancestral house and the birth place of Swamiji and the conversion of the same into a suitable memorial.**

(ii) To organise Foundations of Vivakananda Birth Centenary Lecturerships in Universities and other learned Societies, either.

(a) on Swami Vivekananda and his Message or

(b) on any other suitable cultural subject.

CONVENTIONS & CONFERENCES

To hold—

(i) A **Convention of the Sannyasins and Brahmacharins** of the Ramakrishna Order at Belur in December, 1963.

(ii) A Convention at Belur of the Sannyasins and Brahmacharins of the Ramakrishna Order, and lay members and associates of the Mission, to which admirers of Sri Ramakrishna and sympathisers of the Mission will also be invited, is expected to be held in the later half of December, 1963.

(iii) A Convention of **Sadhus** & Sannyasins of all sects at Varanasi with a view to establishing religious harmony and mutual goodwill is expected to be held in October, 1963.

(iv) A **Parliament of Religions** or, better, a Parliament of Man will be held in Calcutta from the 26th December 1963.

(v) A **Conference of woman** devotees and admirers will be held in Calcutta and a other places from the 8th December, 1963.

GENERAL COMMITTEE

Honorary Patrons

Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, President, India, New Delhi.

His Highness Maharaja of Varanasi, Varanasi.

Shree Yuvaraj Karan Singh, Srinagar, Kashmir.

Her Highness the Maharani of Gwalior, Gwalior, M. P.

His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore, Mysore.

His Highness the Maharaja Gaekwad of Baroda, Baroda.

Dr. Zakir Husain, Vice-President, India, New Delhi.

President

Srimat Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj, President, Sri Ramakrishna Math & Mission, Belur Math, Howrah.

Secretaries

—Swami Vireswarananda, Swami Sambuddhananda,

Asst. Secretaries—Swami Saswatananada, Shree K. P. Sen.

Treasurer

Shree B. K. Datta.

WORKING COMMITTEE

President

Shree P.C. Sen, Chief Minister, West Bengal,

Vice-President

Swami Yatiswarananda. ¶

Assistant Secretary

Shri K. P. Sen, I. A. S.

Members

Heads of Centres of Sri Ramakrishna Math and Mission.

Shree Anil Chandra Mitra, Bar-at-Law,

Shree Jagannath Kolay, Minister, W. B.

Shree Banamali Dass, Bar-at-Law.

Shree B. D. Agrawalla.

Shree Sontosh Kumar Basu, Ex-Mayor, Calcutta.

Shree J. N. Mookerjee

Dr. R. Ahmed, Minister, West Bengal.

Dr. H. L. Dey, Ex-Director, International

Monetary Fund, Washington, U. S. A.

Swami Ajneyananda.

Shree Sailendra Nath Pal.

With Powers to Co-opt.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President

Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. B. Mukharji.

Vic-Presidents

Dr. R. C. Majumdar, Ex-Vice-Chancellor, Dacca University.

Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Chairman, Legislative Council, West Bengal,

General Secretary

Swami Sambuddhananda.

Assistant Secretary

Shree M. M. Sur, M. P.

Treasurer

Shree B. K. Dutt, Mg. Director, United Bank of India Ltd.

Members

Shree Saila Kumar Mukherjee, Minister, West Bengal.

Swami Dayananda.

Dr. Kalidas Nag.

Swami Saswatananda.

Dr. Roma Chowdhury, Principal, Lady Brabourne College.

Shree K. P. Sen, I. A. S.

Swami Vimuktanda.

Shree G. Basu, M. L. C., J. P.

Shree Kanailal Ghosh.

Swami Santoshananda.

Sri Naresh Chandra Chakravarty.

Swami Tejasananda.

Shree J. C. De

With Powers to Co-opt.

FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Chairman

Shree G. Basu, M. L. C., J. P.

Vice-Chairman

Shree B. K. Dutt,

Secretary

Shree M. M. Sur

Asst. Secretary

Swami Ajneyananda.

Members

Swami Sambuddhananda.

Shree K. N. Mukherjee.

Shree M. G. Rungta.

Shree D. N. Bhattacharya.

Shree Hemanga Pada Barat.

Shree Ajit Kumar Dutta.

Shree S. P. Jain.

Mr. B. F. Goodchild.

Shree M. L. Shaw.

Shree B. P. Poddar.

Shree C. L. Bajoria.

Shree H. Sugla.

Shree N. L. Jalan.

Shree G. D. Jhawar.

EXHIBITION SUB-COMMITTEE

Secretary

Shree M. M. Sur.

Vice-Chairman

Dr. J. C. Mukherjee.

Jt. Secretary

Swami Santoshananda.

Swami Lokeshwarananda.

Shree Utpal Hom Ray.

Members

Swami Sambuddhananda.

Swami Vimuktananda.

Swami Punyananda.

Swami Gitananda.

Shree Sunilmoy Ghosh.

Shree M. M. Sur.

PUBLICATION SUB-COMMITTEE

President

Dr. R. C. Majumdar, M. A., Ph. D.

Vice-Presidents

Dr. Kalidas Nag, M. A., D. Litt.

Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, M.A., D.Litt.

Secretary

Prof. B. Bhattacharya, M. A.

Members

Swami Tejasananda.
Swami Gambhirananda.
Swami Niramayananda.
Swami Vimuktananda.
Swami Nityaswarupananda.
Swami Lokeswarananda.
Swami Advayananda.
Swami Sambuddhananda.
Shree M. M. Sur, M. P.

PUBLICITY SUB-COMMITTEE

Shree Ashoke Kumar Sarkar.

President

Shree Sookamal Ghosh.

Vice-Presidents

Member

Shree Vivekananda Mukherjee.
Shree Chapala Kanttacharya, M. P.
Swami Punvananda.
Shree Nikhil Ranjan
Shree Kedar Ghosh.
Shree Shibdas Bhatt
Shree Anil Bhattacharyya.
Swami Ajneyananda
Shree Basudev Banerjee.
Shree Shanti Mitra.
Shree Jatin Banerjee.
Swami Sambuddhananda.

Secretary

Shree Manindra Nath Bhattacharya.
Shree Pulin Dutta.
Shree Sudhir Chakraborty.

PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

Dr. Roma Chaudhury.
Swami Lokeswaragananda.
Swami Sambuddhananda.
Shree M. M. Sur, M. P.
Dr. Kalidas Nag.
Swami Ranganathananda.
Dr. R. C. Majumdar.
Swami Punyananda.
Shree Saila Kumar Mukherjee.
Shree K. P. Sen, I. A. S.
Swami Nityaswarupananda.

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Dr. Roma Chaudhury.

President

Srimati Subhadra Haksar.

Vice-President

Shrimati Santwana Das Gupta.
Srimati Saraswati Gaurisankar.

Asst. Secretaries

Members

Srimati Ila Pal Chaudhury.
Srimati Mira Dutta Gupta.
Srimati Bela Basu Roy Choudhury.
Srimati Ashoka Gupta.
Srimati Indira Sen.
Dr. Phulrenu Guha.
Srimati Panna Roy.
Srimati Savitri Ammal,
Srimati Shivani Chakravarty.
Srimati Mrinmoyee Roy.
Prabrajika Atmaprana.
Prabrajika Muktiprana.
Prabrajika Vedaprana.
Swami Sambuddhananda,

MUSIC CONFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Patron

Pandit Omkar Nath Thakur.

President

Sm. Purabi Mukherjee, Minister, West Bengal.

Vice-Presidents

Shri Manmatha Nath Ghosh.
Shri Asoke Kumar Sarkar.
Swami Punyananda.

Secretary

Swami Sambuddhananda.
Sm. Aparna Chakravarty.

Asst. Secretaries

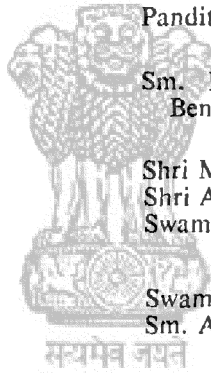
Swami Devananda.
Shri Siddheswar Mukherjee.
Sm. Kalpana De.

Members

Shri Sookamal Kanti Ghosh.
Shri Kedar Ghosh.
Shri Bankim Ghorai.
Sm. Bijan Ghosh Dastidar.
Shri Sankar Tagore.
Shri Kalidas Sanyal.
Swami Santinathananda.

Advisory Board

Shri Pankaj Mullick.
Shri Birendra Kishore Roy Chaudhury.
Shri Ramesh Chandra Banerjee.
Shri Hirendra Nath Ganguly.
Md. Dabir Khan & *Office Members* of the
Executive Committee.



**STUDENTS' CONFERENCE
SUB-COMMITTEE**

President

Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. B. Mukharji.

Secretaries

Swami Punyananda.

Swami Lokeshwarananda.

Members

Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee.

Swami Sumbuddhananda.

Swami Tejasananda.

With Powers to Co-opt.

**Swami Vivekanand Birth Centenary,
New Delhi**

Patrons-in-Chief

Dr. Zakir Hussain,

Sri Jawaharlal Nehru.

Patrons

Shhri Nur.Uddin Ahmed.

Shri C. Subramanian.

Shri B. Gopala Reddy.

Prof. Humayun Kabir.

Dr. K. L. Shrimali.

Shri K. C. Reddy.

Shri S. K. Dey.

Shri Mehr Chand Khanna.

Shri K. Gajraj Singh,

Mr. Justice. P. B. Gajendragadkar.

Shri D. Sanjivayya.

Shri Manubhai Shah.

Shri Y. N. Sukthankar.

Madame Aung San.

Shri C. D. Deshmukh.

Dr. D. S. Kothari.

Shri Bhagwan Sahay.

Srimati Aruna Asaf Ali.

Secretary

Swami Swahananda.

Asst. Secretaries

Swami Varesahananda.

Shri. S. M. Sen Gupta.

Treasurer

Shri. K. Dutt.

Members

99 prominent persons.

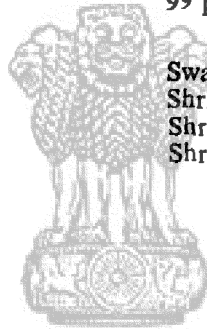
Souvenir Advisory Committee

Swami Swahananda.

Shri R. R. Mahindru, (Hindustan Times)

Shri R. K. Jha (Indian Nation)

Shri S. L. Sharma

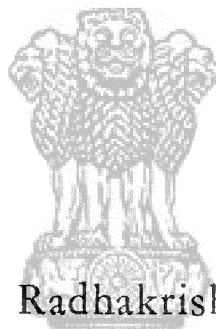


सत्यमेव जयते

HOLY CHICAGO

Swami Prabhavanda, present head of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, writes that, as Buddha preached his first sermon in Banaras, the seat of learning of his time, Vivekananda preached his first sermon in Chicago at the world's Parliament of Religions where the Western intellectuals of his day had congregated. There is another similarity between these two great teachers: Both Buddha and Vivekananda had a message for their own time as well as for all ages."

HOMAGE



Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

President of India

Inauguration by



This city of Calcutta has produced many men of genius in education, science, literature, and spiritual endeavour, and the greatest of them all is Swami Vivekananda. He embodied the spirit of this country. He was a symbol of her spiritual aspirations and fulfilment. It is that spirit which was expressed in the songs of our devotees, the philosophies of our seers, the prayers of our common people. He gave articulation and voice to that eternal spirit of India.

Many of us are content to look upon the greatness which he had achieved. But it is more interesting to know the way by which he attained that greatness, the hard difficulties which he had to encounter and surmount, the way in which he transmuted his intractable nature to the purpose of the Divine. That, also, has some interest to the pilgrims, to the stragglers, to workers who wish to attain some kind of lesson in spiritual life.

He was born here, educated in one of the institutions here, studied the works which were then popular in his time—of John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, David Hume, was disturbed in his mind, tried to discover the way to Truth, went hither & thither was tossed about till at last he met Sri Ramakrishna

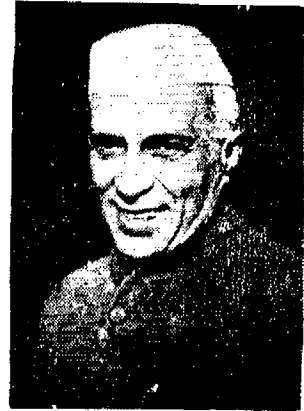
(Contd. to page 52)

MESSAGE

FROM

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA

On the occasion of the Centenary of Swami Vivekananda, I should like to pay my homage to this great son of India who was instrumental in putting a new life in our people. His writings are as fresh and as valuable today as when they were written. I am sure that they will continue to inspire not only the present, but coming generations.



MESSAGE

from

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

President Ramakrishna Math and Mission

Belur Math, Calcutta January 17, 1963



Sister and Brothers of the East and the West,

Please allow me to extend to you all my hearty greetings and good wishes on this historic occasion of the first birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda. His earthly career was a brief one, but it was packed with epoch-making spiritual realizations and their wide diffusion in the East and the West alike.

In his youth, sitting at Dakshineswar at the feet of his great Master, Sri Ramakrishna, who was the fulfilment of the aspirations of humanity of all ages and climes, he had imbibed the spirit of universality through the realization of the Divine in man. So, though he was born in India, he belonged to the whole world, and India had no exclusive claims on him. His mission in the East and the West was to rouse men and women to an awareness of their divine nature and the unity of man, which alone can bring peace to this world torn with hatred and strife. To quote his own words: 'Doubtless I do love India. But every day my sight grows clearer. What is India or England or America to us? We are the servants of that God who by the ignorant is called man.'

'There is but one basis of well-being, social, political or spiritual—to know that I and my brother are *one*. This is true for all countries and all people.' In his comprehensive message, science and religion, reason and faith, the secular and the sacred, the modern and the ancient, and the East and the West became unified, and he himself was the personification of that union. His life and message have given the necessary impetus for the ushering in of a new era in the history of the civilization of man.

To his countrymen he sounded the clarion call to be up and doing: 'Work, work, for the future of India depends on that.' He exhorted them to cast off all petty jealousies and to rally round the great ideal of 'unity in diversity', inherited by them from hoary antiquity. On this principle, he advised them to build up a great nation out of India's divergent races with divergent languages and customs, which, though a slow process, would yet give lasting results and to refrain from using force to attain quick and spectacular results, which would be short-lived. Weld the variety into a unity, he said, without destroying anything, for such destruction will make the nation so much the weaker and poorer. He asked his countrymen to look with pride on what the nation had attained in the past, and have faith in the future destiny of their motherland. 'I am one of the proudest men ever born,' he says, 'it is not for myself, but on account of my ancestry. It has given me strength.....raised me from the dust of the earth.....may you have the same pride.' Referring to the future of India, he said, 'There she is walking with her own majestic steps—my motherland—to fulfil her glorious destiny, which no power on earth can check'; 'Up, the long night is passing away, and the day is approaching; the wave has risen, nothing will be able to resist its tidal fury'; 'never is she going to sleep any more, no outward powers can hold her back any more, for the infinite gaint is rising to her feet.' He exhorted them to have faith in themselves, to give up lethargy and to work hard to build the future India. 'Have faith in yourself,' he said, 'otherwise there is no salvation; have faith and be strong, that is what we need'; '.....Call upon the sleeping soul and see how it awakes. Power will come, glory will come and everything that is excellent will come'; 'No great work can be done without sacrifice.....lay down your comforts, your name, fame or position, nay, even your lives'; '.....What our country wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which will accomplish their purpose in any form, even if it meant meeting death face to face'. '.....Thou brave one.....proudly proclaim, "I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother..... the soil of India is my highest heaven, the good of India is my good," and repeat and pray day and night, "O Thou Lord of Gauri, O Thou Mother of the Universe, vouchsafe manliness unto me,.....make me a MAN!"'

This message of strength, faith, energy and solidarity is specially needed today in our present crisis.

The Centenary year will witness the reverberation of his thoughts, which will be a perennial source of creative spiritual education for man, endowing him with a vision and the resolve to bring about unity, harmony and fellowship between man and man and nation and nation.

May the spirit of the great Swami, who awakened India and united the East and the West, inspire us all to live and work to this end in the light of the life-giving motto: '*Atmano mokshartham jagaddhitaya cha*—For one's own liberation and welfare of the world.'

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA
President, Ramakrishna Math & Mission

Swami Vivekananda Centenary

Head Office : Belur Math. Howrah)

City Office :

163, Lower Circular Road,
Calcutta-14. (India)

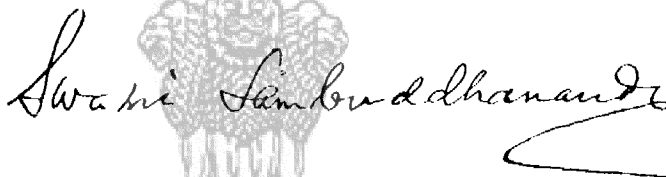


4th February, 1963

MESSAGE

One hundred year back Swami Vivekananda came to this world to teach mankind their higher and truer nature. At a time when men of different faiths were quarreling for the supremacy of their own religion over the other, his clarion call for 'tolerance and acceptance' ushered in a new era, a synthesis of faiths and—isms in the minds of the people. To the Indians, his message was a message of Courage and faith in oneself and love of one's own country,—India.

May the Birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda instil in us the noble ideals he preached for the amelioration of the world.



Swami Sambuddhananda

General Secretary

RAJ BHAVAN,
Bombay 35(BR).
4th May, 1963.

Swami Vivekananda gave new strength and new purpose to an old message, and in himself combined the highest qualities which any human being can hope to possess. He was a practical man and approached life in a practical fashion; but the deep spiritual content of his nature and his wide vision made it possible for him to give nourishment to the dying roots of India's religion and culture and reawaken thinking people to a sense of India's true Mission.

Swami Vivekananda was a Patriot. The political subjection of the country as well as the social degradation into which she had fallen were a challenge which he met with complete fearlessness. In his time—as again in our own—India stood at an important crossroad in her history. He warned then of the danger we faced by trying to seize the shadow and letting the substance go. Now, living in an age of speed and great scientific developments, we have opportunities greater than ever before to build society and the world, and Swamiji's message today is that man must begin with himself. The tremendous scientific and political power now in our hands must be allied to the strength of the Spirit if it is to give happiness to the individual and peace to the world. The best form of homage we can pay today is to dedicate ourselves to the values for which Swami Vivekananda stood and for which he worked.

VIJAYA LAKSHMI PANDIT
Governor of Maharashtra

MESSAGE

RAJ BHAVAN,
JAIPUR.

Dated May 9, 1963.

I am glad to know that the Sovenir Volume on Vivekanand Birth Centenary which we have all been expecting so eagerly will now soon be out. I do not know what messege to send on this occasion. Swamiji's life was in itself a living message not only for India but for the whole world. It is not yet outdate and never will be. The world needs and will always need that guidance in living Vedanta which Swamiji gave it so abundantly. Let me hope we shall all have the courage and the strength to follow in his footsteps.

SAMPURNANAND
Governor of Rajasthan



Governor of
Gujarat

MESSAGE



सत्यमेव जयते

Raj Bhavan,
AHMEDABAD.
Camp. Banjara Hill
Hyderabad.

29-5-1963

During the darkest hours of the Country's history, India invariably produced a great leader and teacher to guide and help the people to enlightenment. Swami Vivekananda was one such guide and reformer. However, he was unique in that his influence was confined not to this Country but to a large part of the rest of the World. His teachings and message are not for this Country or that, but for the world at large and for all times.

It is appropriate that the Vivekananda Centenary is being celebrated for, at this time of crisis and in the atomic age mankind has a greater need than ever of all for which Swami Vivekananda stood.

MEHDI NAWAZ JUNG

Raj Bhavan,
BHOPAL.
18th May, 1963.

MESSAGE

I am glad to learn that you propose to bring out a Souvenir to mark the centenary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Vivekananda was a Philosopher and Saint who, while preaching unity of all religions brought about the revival of our cultural heritage and the unity of our people. Let his life inspire us to do our duty in a dedicated manner.

H. V. PATASKAR,
Governor,
Madhya Pradesh.



NEW DELHI
18th May, 1963.

MESSAGE

Swami Vivekananda was not only one of our ablest exponents of Hindu philosophy but was one who did so much by precept and example to awaken Indians to the need for well coordinated attempt to rebuild the glory of India and her people, for he believed that India had a mission to fulfil and thus enable mankind to live in peace and happiness with the universe.

He was a great scholar indeed. His speeches on Hindu philosophy at the World's Parliament of Religions in America created a remarkable impression on the audience and stimulated in them a desire to study the Hindu philosophy.

He awakened us to the need for patriotic effort to rebuild our social order on the foundation of social justice and equality in order that India could be what her heritage and culture would entitle her to be.

I believe our young boys and girls would draw from his life the inspiration to dedicate their lives to the service of India.

MORARJI DESAI

Minister, Community Development,
Panchayati Raj & Cooperation
I N D I A
New Delhi, July 17, 1963.

MESSAGE

I have never had the opportunity of meeting Swami Vivekananda. But he has had a grip over me ever since I was ten. Try however hard I may, I cannot shake his image off even in my weakest moments.

A very brief biography of Swamiji came in my hand when I was ten and a student of class IV at Sylhet. I walked six miles back from the school to my home in the village crossing two flooded rivers enroute by ferry. I was oblivious of the world about me till I reached home at the end of the day and got down to the village pond to do the customary washing of feet. The book was still in my hand. I could not sit down to eat until I had come to the last page.

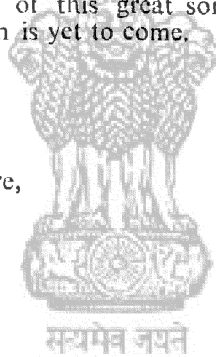
The young Swami radiated fire through his face. His words acted like shots of dynamite. These blasted me into pieces. The old personality died for even. The new one was to emerge. I have never ceased to be in quest ever since. It is Swami Vivekananda who taught "One should talk through deeds rather than words". It is Swamiji who commanded a foundry to be built to cast man.

Never, never has there been a purer, a more powerful personality, a living fire symbolising the passion and will of the people of India, a world citizen at the same time. The Centenary of this great son of India is but a reminder. The consummation of his dream is yet to come. It is in the process.

S. K. DEY

Minister for Food & Agriculture,
Government of India.

New Delhi, May 17, 1963.



The country is now celebrating the Birthday Centenary of a great son of India, Swami Vivekananda. The celebrations began in January 1963 and will continue till January 1964. An influential Committee has been arranging the celebrations throughout the country. Swami Vivekananda was one of the greatest leaders of India who through his preachings all over the world strived to recapture the glory of India. He was a very able exponent of Hindu philosophy and a very effective contribution to the cultural renaissance of the country. He worked hard to awaken the national conscience of his countrymen. His life will be an unfailing source of inspiration and a beacon light to millions of his countrymen. His message of truth and love is of great significance especially at the present juncture when we are passing through stress and strain. Let us work hard and try to follow the teachings of this great son of India. I am glad to know that Vivekananda Centenary Souvenir Advisory Committee is bringing out a special Souvenir to mark the celebrations. I wish the Souvenir every success.

S. K. Patil
S. K. PATIL

MESSAGE

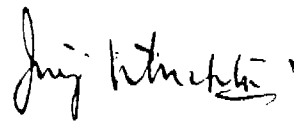
**Chief Minister,
Govt. of Gujarat**

*SACHIVALAYA,
Ahmedabad-15.
Dated 28-5-1963.*

I am glad to learn that the Vivekananda Centenary Souvenir Advisory Committee is publishing a Souvenir in reverential memory of India's one of the greatest contemporary savants and religious teachers, Swami Vivekananda.

The preachings and discourses and detached interpretations of the ancient scriptures by Swami Vivekananda are not only conducive to sustaining the religious and spiritual fervour in the masses but also essential for the upliftment of their moral and ethical conduct in their daily life. Swami Vivekananda had laid stress on purity of mind and strength of character which could help organise the integrated personalities of an individual as well as of a nation. It is by the development of such an organised and integrated personality of our citizens and our nation and the assimilation of such a synthetic impact in their daily life that the most worthy tribute could be paid to Swamiji on the sacred occasion of his Birth Centenary.

I wish the Souvenir all success.



JIVRAJ N. MEHTA



MESSAGE

It is a unique privilege for us to honour the sacred memory of Swami Vivekananda by observing his first birth centenary in a befitting manner. In paying our homage to him, we invoke in us the sterling qualities of his character, purity of spirit, fearlessness of mind, courage of conviction, belief in the glorious destiny of India, and above all, an abiding faith in God man. He raised social service to the supreme art of divine worship. It was Vivekananda who, for the first time, elevated the stature of India in the West by his vindication of the greatness of India's ancient culture. His dynamic teachings created a profound impact on the minds of his countrymen, specially youths who became fired with a new zeal and determination to remove the shackles imposed upon their dear motherland.

Vivekananda was initiated by his master, Shri Ramakrishna Paramhansa, into the realisation of the supreme glories of 'Atman'. Inequality, whether social, political, economic or religious, was, therefore, intolerable to him being a great obstacle to society's attainment of unity with the Divine. His insistence on the soul-force makes him a world-teacher as a class by himself. A prophet by his own right, Vivekananda's life, teachings and message have a influence on the present generation and will continue to inspire successive generations as well.

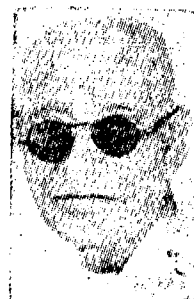
While wishing all success for the centenary celebration of Swami Vivekananda, let us be worthy of the rich heritage he has left for us.

**B. N. JHA
Chief Minister of Bihar.**

MESSAGE

It is fitting that the worthy President of India Dr. Radhakrishnan inaugurates the Centenary. Looking back into recent history one sees clearly how much we owe to Swami Vivekananda. He opened the eyes of India to her true greatness. He spiritualised politics. We were blind and he made us see. He is the father of Indian freedom, political, cultural and spiritual.

C. Rajagopalachari



Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities
40, Hamilton Road,
Allahabad.

Camp: 4-Sonehri Bagh Road,
New Delhi, May 29, 1963.

It is but appropriate that Vivekananda Centenary Souvenir Advisory Committee should bring out a well-edited Souvenir on the life and teaching of Swami Vivekananda. There could hardly be a time when we needed more of his words to inspire, enthuse and guide us than today.

ANIL K. CHANDA

West Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee

Congress Bhawan,
59-B, Chowringhee Road,
Calcutta-19.

I am glad to learn that a Souvenir Volume on Vivekananda Birth Centenary is being published. The life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda should be known more and more so that it can inspire men to stand boldly against injustice and pessimism.

I wish the Souvenir all success.

ATULYA GHOSH
President

(Contd. from page 43)

Paramahansa. The impact of his personality, the sincerity of his conviction, his passionate love of God made a remarkable change in the life and work of Swami Vivekananda. When he was disputing with philosophers and dialecticians, when he was attending many *samajas* which professed to declare Truth, he went to him and asked, 'Have you seen God?' And the answer came: 'Yes, I have seen Him even as I see you, only more clearly more intensely.' He was not arguing, he was not making guesses, he spoke from his personal experience and declared that he felt the reality of God in his own life, in the pulse of his being, and was face to face with Him almost all his life. That made a profound change in the life of Swami Vivekananda. It is the tradition of our country that religion does not consist in arguments and speculations. *Na medhaya na bahuna srutena*—not by brain power or study of many texts, but we have to see the Supreme face to face. The Rg-Veda tells us: '*Sada pasyanti surayah tad visnoh paramam padam*'. *Pasyanti*, they see constantly the highest dwelling place of the Divine. So says the Upanisad: '*Vedahametam purusam mahantam adityavarnam tav-asah parastat*.' Don't be deluded by the glamour of this world, by the darkness of this world beyond it is a deity. He is the Supreme. It is something which is to be felt, which is to be realized, which is to be experienced. That is the lesson of India. India never counted on dogmas, doctrines etc. They were instruments, they were means for the purpose of realizing the highest kind of truth. It is true that the Divine is in each of us, but the splendour is imprisoned. There are so many opaque things shutting it out from expression, from manifestation. It requires a good deal of spiritual meditation, austerity, if you wish to manifest the Divine which is in you.

When once we recognized that the Reality is something to be felt, something to be experienced, you do not attach so much importance to the way by which you attain it. They become subordinate. They become instrumental. And in that great utterance of his in September 1893 in the Chicago Parliament of Religions, what he said was there is a God above all gods, there is a religion above all religions, there is something which supersedes all our religiosities, all our pieties, rituals, dogmas, doctrines, etc., and that is the religion on the basis of which the whole world, East and West, could be united.

He quoted that famous verse of the *Bhagavad-Gita* in that audience: '*Ye yatha mam prapadyante tan tathaiva brajamyaham, Mama vartmanuvartante manush partha sarvasah*.' Even as men approach Me, so do I accept them. All men are trying to see Me, to find Me, and therefore, I don't make any differences between the path-ways and the addresses and the approaches adopted by them. I know their earnest endeavour, the way in which they are passing through turmoil to reach the Supreme. Therefore it matters little for me which way they attain Me. It is that which he said. He declared it in the Parliament of Religions, the voice of eternal India, the voice of universal religion, the voice which says there is one God above all gods. '*Devanam adideva ekah*', says the Rg-Veda. And the same scripture tells us that there are many ways in which that Reality is described by human beings. It is therefore essential for us to be understanding. At a time when our country was lost in dogmatic controversies, when religious people were fighting one with another, became dogmatic, became exclusive, he emphasized that you are all foods, you do not know what the ultimate Truth is. You must get rid of all these prejudices and

(Contd. to page 54)

Goodwishes from

Santinicketan May 23, 1963
Sj. Sudhi Ranjan Das, Vice Chancellor,
Visva-Bharati.

New Delhi, 17th May 1963
H. Wenmaekers, Councillor, AMBASSADE
DE BELGIUE

New Delhi, 15th May, 1963
C. C. Twelftree, Information Attachee
Australian High Commission

Roma, 13 Aug , 1963
Prof. Antonio Gargano, Institute
Italiano, per il,
MEDIO ED ESTREMO ORIENTE

Geneva. Le 17 Juin, 1963
Jean TREINA, LE COUSEILLER D' ETAT
Charge DU Department DE
La Prevoyance Sociale Et da
La Sante Publique

Berne, Le 21 Juin, 1963
V. Moine, Couseiller d' Etat

TRIBUTES

To Vivekananda

After Gone Through Swamijees' Works
The Love That I Had For My Country
Become Thousand Fold

I have come here (Belur Math) to pay my homage and respect to the revered memory of Swami Vivekananda, whose birthday is being celebrated today (1923). I have gone through his works very thoroughly, and after having gone through them, the love that I had for my country became a thousand-fold. I ask you, young men, not to go away empty-handed without imbibing something of the spirit of the place where Swami Vivekananda lived and died.

MAHATMA GANDHI

(Continued from page 52)

prepossessions and believe that the one universal God belongs to all religions, is found in all religions, and everyone is trying to seek the pathway to that eternal Supreme.

As in the life of the Buddha, there was in the life of Swami Vivekananda a moment when he thought that he should lose himself in the delights of inner life, in the delights of contemplation and not get back into the world. But Ramakrishna told him: 'Shame on you! Why are you trying so much to seek your own personal salvation?' '*Sivamatmani pasyanti*', the Supreme is in every human being. All these are to be regarded as embodiments of the Supreme. We should realize that the name given to him, Narendranath, was not a mere accident. He was the embodiment of *nara*, of the human beings. *Narayanam narasakham saranam prapadye.* *Narasakha* is Narayana. He felt the pangs of all human beings, and he wanted that every human being should live, should live a decent life. Most of us exist, but do not live. He wanted every one of us to acquire strength, beauty, power, dignity, and be a truly human being. We are not that. He looked at the misery of our country. He looked at the millions who died of poverty and hunger, and he said: I am the worshipper of Daridra Narayana, of the Narayana who is located in all the poor people of this world. So long as they are there, how can I content myself with my own salvation or with my own beatitude? It is my duty to look after them all. The best way to reach God is by the service of man.

He inculcated a **religion of patriotism**—not patriotism in the narrow sense of the world, patriotism as the religion of humanity. His was a religion which called upon us to look upon all human beings as kindred, as belonging to one family. That is the kind of religion which he taught us and which he adopted. He said '**it is a man-making religion**'. It is a humanistic religion. There is no divorce between contemplative life and social service. The two things are expressions of one and the same kind of phenomenon. If we have reached the Supreme and felt the reality of God in our own minds and thoughts, it would be our duty to come to the rescue of all people who are suffering in this world. A call to suffer was a thing which we should heed. Therefore he said: I suffer I suffer anguish when I look at the misery of my country, when I look at the poor millions dying like flies for lack of food, sustenance etc. Even Bhagvan takes pity: '*Bhagavan anukrasam vibhavati*'. He feels a kind of pity, a kind of compassion, when He sees how the people, in whom the divine spark is located, are not able to develop that spark and make it into a splendour, make it into a flame. That is why we are here. We are here for the purpose of fulfilling ourselves, and that kind of fulfilment does not consist merely in the accumulation of wealth, or name and fame, or possessions etc. It consists in completing yourself, in your making yourself a symbol or an image of the Divine which dwells in you. It is that kind of humanistic, man-making religion which gave us courage in the days when we were all young. As a student in one of the classes, in Matriculation or so, the letters of Sri Vivekananda used to be circulated in manuscript form among us all.

We are today at a critical period not merely in the history of our country but in the history of the world. There are many people who think we are on the edge of an abyss. There is distortion of values, there is lowering of

(Continued on page 56)

Swamijee Immortalised the fame & Prestige of Land

SADAKAT ASHRAM
PATNA

January 10, 1963.

Great souls have always been a source of inspiration to their fellow beings on this earth and Swami Vivekananda with his spiritual stature inspired people to aim at higher things of life. The ideal he stood for made universal brotherhood of man an understandable proposition to a world which was wedded to colour prejudice, having its root in the slavery of man. His spiritual approach roused the conscience of the thinking section of the human community all over the world and he succeeded in bringing home to the West the greatness of the ancient Vedic civilisation which he proved was out universal love of man for man and other beings. This great disciple of the great Master immortalised the fame and prestige of the land of his birth in a way which remains unrivalled even in the annals of Indian spiritualism in modern times. The sceptical youth with the interpid spirit rose to be the ablest and wisest heir to the legacy of spiritual wealth of the great enlightened one. The birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda reminds us of all that is good and great and I wish the celebrations of the centenary, all success.

RAJENDRA PRASAD

His Message a call of awakening to totality of Manhood

Vivekananda has said that there is the power of Brahman in every human being ; also that it is through the poor and the dispossessed that Narayana seeks and awaits our service. What a grand Message ! It lights up for man's consciousness the path to limitless liberation from the trammels and limitations of his self. This is not ethical injunction laying down any specific rule of conduct, no narrow commandment for the regulation of our behaviour. Opposition to untouchability is inherent in the Message—opposition not on any ground of political expediency, but because the Message is incompatible with insult to the humanity of Man, for untouchability is a self-inflicted insult to everyone of us.

And because the Message of Vivekanand is a call of awakening to the totality of our Manhood, that it has set so many of our youths on diverse paths to freedom through Work and through Renunciation and Sacrifice.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

A Lion Among Men

The going forth of Vivekananda marked out by the Master (meaning Sri Ramakrishna) as the heroic soul destined to take the world between his two hands and change it, was the first visible sign to the world that India was awake, not only to survive but to conquer.

Swami Vivekananda was a soul of puissance, if ever there was one, a very lion among men. We perceive his influence still working gigantically, we know not well how, we know not well where, in something that is not yet formed, something leonine, grand, intuitive, upheaving, that has entered the soul of India, and we say, Behold ! Vivekananda still lives in the soul of his Mother, and in the Soul of her children.

SHRI AUROBINDO



standards, there is wide-spread escapism, a good deal of mass hysteria, and people think of it and collapse in despair, frustration, hopelessness. These are the only things which are open to us. Such a kind of lack of faith in the spirit of man is a treason to the dignity of man, It is an insult to human nature. It is human nature that has brought about all the great changes that have taken place in this world. And if there is any call which Vivekananda made to us, it is to rely on our own spiritual resources. Say that man has inexhaustible spiritual resources. His spirit is supreme, man is unique. There is nothing inevitable in his world, and we can ward off the worst dangers and worst disabilities by which we are faced. Only we should not lose hope. He gave us fortitude in suffering, he gave us hope in distress, he gave us courage in despair. He told us : Don't be led away by the appearances. Deep down there is a providential will, there is a purpose in this universe. You must try to cooperate with that purpose and try to achieve it. Renunciation, courage, service, discipline—these are the mottoes which we can learn from his life. There was a time when Sri Ramakrishna marked him out for leadership. The last words which he uttered to any of his disciples were to Swami Vivekananda 'Take care of these boys'. Many were older than himself. But the advice was there—prophetic advice. He established the Ramakrishan Mission, which has centres in India and abroad.

It is essential, therefore, that we should remember what this great soul stood for, what he taught us. It is not merely a question of remembering it at a centenary celebration, but trying to understand what he wished us to do, assimilate it, incorporate it in our being, and make us worthy of the citizens of the country which produced Vivekananda.

A WARRIOR-MONK



A striking figure, clad in yellow and orange, shining like the sun of India in the midst of the heavy atmosphere of Chicago. a lion head, piercing eyes, mobile lips, movements swift and fast—such was my first impression of Swami Vivekananda, as I met him in one of the rooms set apart for the use of the delegates to the Parliament of Religions. Monk, they called him, not unwarrantably, but warrior-monk was he, and the first impression was of the warrior rather than of the monk, for he was off the platform, and his figure was intinct with pride of country, pride of race—the representative of the oldest of living religions, surrounded by various gazers of nearly the youngest, and by no means inclined to step, as though the hoary faith he embodied was in aught inferior to the noblest there. India was not to be shamed before the hurrying arrogant West by this her envoy and her son. He brought her message, he spoke in her name, and the herald remembered the dignity of the royal land whence he came. Purposeful, virile, strong, he stood out, a man among men, able to hold his own.

On the platform another side came out. The dignity and the inborn sense of worth and power still were there, but all was subdued to the exquisite beauty of the spiritual message which he had brought, to the sublimity of the matchless avangend of the East which is the heart, the life of India, the wondrous teaching of the Self. Enraptured, the huge multitude hung upon his words ; not a syllable must be lost, not a cadence missed ! 'That man a heathen !' said one, as he came out of the great hall, 'and we send missionaries to his people ! It would be more fitting that they should send missionaries to us.'

ANNIE BESANT

VIVEKANANDA— CREATOR OF MODERN INDIA

I cannot write about Vivekananda without going into raptures. Few, indeed, could comprehend or fathom him—even among those who had the privilege of becoming intimate with him. His personality was rich, profound, and complex, and it was this personality—as distinct from his teachings and writings—which account for the wonderful influence he has exerted on his countrymen. Swami Vivekananda, reckless in his sacrifice, unceasing in his activity, boundless in his love, profound and versatile in his wisdom, exuberant in his emotions, merciless in his attacks, but yet simple as a child—he was a rare personality in this world of ours.

Swamiji was a full-blooded masculine personality—and a fighter to the core of his being. He was consequently a worshipper of Sakti and gave a practical interpretation to the Vedanta for the uplift of his countrymen. ‘Strength, strength is what the Upanisads say’—that was a frequent cry of his. He laid the greatest stress on character-building.

I can go on for hours and yet fail to do the slightest justice to that great man. He was so great, so profound, so complex. A Yogi of the highest spiritual level in direct communion with the Truth, who had, for the time being, consecrated his whole life to the moral and spiritual uplift of his nation and of humanity, that is how I would describe him. If he had been alive, I would have been at his feet. Modern India is his creation—if I err not.

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE



A Saint of Dynamic & Fiery Energy with a Passion to Push India Forward

Rooted in the past and full of pride in India's heritage, Vivekananda was yet modern in his approach to life's problems and was a kind of bridge between the past of India and her present. ...He was fine figure of a man, imposing, full of poise and dignity, sure of himself and his mission, and at the same time, full of a dynamic and fiery energy and a passion to push India forward.

Vivekananda came as a tonic to the depressed and demoralized Hindu mind and gave it self-reliance and some roots in the past. He started new movements of thought.

He gave us something which brings us, if I may use the word, a certain pride in our inheritance. He did not spare us. He talked of our weaknesses and our failings, too. He did not wish to hide anything. Indeed, he should not. Because we have to correct those failings, he deals with those failings also. Sometimes he strikes hard at us, but sometimes points out the great things for which India stood and which, even in the days of India's downfall, made her, in some measure, continue to be great.

So what Swamiji has written and said is of interest and must interest us and is likely to influence us for a long time to come. He was no politician in the ordinary sense of the word and yet he was. I think, one of the great founders—if you like, you may use any other word the national modern movement of India, and a great number of people who took more or less an active part in that movement in a later date drew their inspiration from Swami Vivekananda. Directly or indirectly, he has powerfully influenced the India of today. And I think that our younger generation will take advantage of this fountain of wisdom, of spirit and fire, that flows through Swami Vivekananda.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Criminality is preferable to lethargy & indolence

Vivekananda not only made us conscious of our strength, he also pointed out our defects and drawbacks. ...India was then steeped in *tamas* (ignorance and unwisdom) and mistook weakness for non-attachment and peace. That is why Vivekananda went so far as to say that criminality was preferable to lethargy and indolence. He made people conscious of the *tamasika* state they were in, of the need to break out of it and stand erect so that they might realize in their own lives the power of the Vedanta. Speaking of those who enjoyed the luxury of studying philosophy and the scriptures in the smugness of their retired life, he said football-playing was better than that type of indulgence.

Swamiji made us see the truth that *tattva-jnana*, which had no place in our everyday relationship with our fellow beings, and in our activities was useless and inane. He, therefore, advised us to dedicate ourselves to the service of 'Daridranarayana' (God manifested in the hungry, destitute millions) to their upliftment and edification. The word 'Daridra-narayana' was coined by Vivekananda and popularized by Gandhiji.

ACHARYA VINOBA BHAVE

WITH VIVEKANANDA

Hinduism Arose From Grave As Jesus Did

Vivekananda saved Hinduism in India and that was why he was born in the nineteenth century and shaped by Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna. I was a law student living in Castle Kernan on the Madras Beach, when Swami Vivekananda strived back from Chicago in 1896, after becoming world-famous by then. He stayed for about a month in Castel Kernan then, and I look back to those days with pride and joy. *Prabuddha Bharat* was started then and Madras was thrilled by Swamiji's lectures. Hinduism arose from the grave as Jesus did.

C. RAJGOPALACHARI

A Personification of the Harmony of all Human Energy

In the two words, equilibrium and synthesis, Vivekananda's constructive genius may be summed up. He embraced all the paths of the spirit; the four Yogas in their entirety, renunciation and service, art and science, religion and action from the most spiritual to the most practical. Each of the ways that he taught had its own limits but he himself had been through them all and embraced them all. As in a quadriga, he held the reins of all four ways of truth, and he travelled toward. Unity along them all simultaneously. He was the personification of the harmony of all human Energy.

But the formula could not have been discovered by the brilliant intellect of the 'Discriminator', if his own eyes had not seen its realization in the harmonious personality of Ramakrishna. The angelic Master had instinctively resolved all the dissonances of life into a Mozartain harmony, as rich and sweet as the Music of the Spheres. And hence the work and the thought of the great disciple was all carried out under the sign of Ramakrishna.....

Vivekananda wished this harmony, that had come to fruition in one privileged being and had been enjoyed by a few select souls, to be extended to the whole of India and the world. Therein lies his courage and originality. He may not have produced one single fresh idea ; he was essentially the offspring of the womb of India, one of the many eggs laid by that indefatigable queen and throughout the course of ages. ... But all her different ants never combined into an ant-hill. Their separate thoughts seemed to be incompatible, until they appeared in Ramakrishna as a symphony. The secret of their divine order was thus revealed to Vivekananda, and he set out to build the City—*Civitas Dei*—the City of Mankind on the foundation of this golden concrete. But he had not only to build the city, but the souls of its inhabitants as well. ...

Sixteen years passed between Ramakrishna's death and that of his great disciple ... years of conflagration. ... He (Vivekananda) was less than forty years of age when the athlete lay stretched upon the pyre. But the flame of that pyre is still alight today. From his ashes, like those of the Phoenix of old, has sprung anew the conscience of India—the magic bird—faith in her unity and in the Great Message, brooded over from Vedic times by the dreaming spirit of his ancient race—the message for which it must render account to the rest of mankind.

ROMAIN ROLLAND

A Christ.....Who Shook The World of Thought on all its Higher Lines

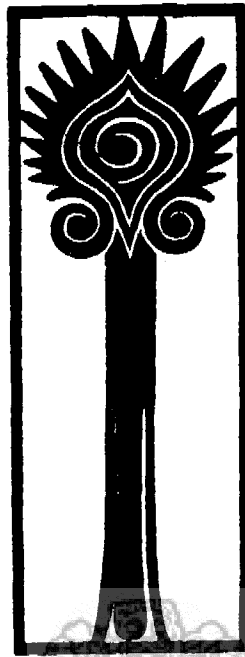
Many are the moments of sadness since the Swamijee has gone away. It seems that all the gods had left us, for his divine presence spread peace and tranquility wherever he went ; the tumult of uncertainly departed from my soul at the sound of his magic voice. His very form and every mood were those of tender compassion and sympathy. None knew him but to love him ; those of us who have had the royal good fortune to have met him in the flesh will some day realize that we have met the true incarnation of the divine One.

To me he is 'The Christ', than whom a greater one has never come , his great and liberal soul outshines as other things; his mighty spirit was as free and liberal as the great sun, or the air of heaven.

No being lived so mean or low be it a man or a beast, that he would not salute. His was not only an appeal to the poor and lowly but to kings and princes and mighty rulers of the earth, to grand masters of learning, of finances, of art, and of the sciences, to leaders of thought and of creeds, to might intellects, philosophers, and poets. Vivekananda shook the world of thought on all its higher lines. Great teachers bowed reverently at his feet, the humble followed reverently to kiss the hem of his garments ; *no other single human being was revered more during his life than was Vivekananda.*

In the few short weeks that I was with him, few could know him better than I. At first I attended him through a severe spell of sickness, then he sat with me partly through a paralytic stroke ; he would charm me to sleep and enchant me awake. So passed the sublimest part of my life, and now that sweet memory lingers and sustains me ever and always.

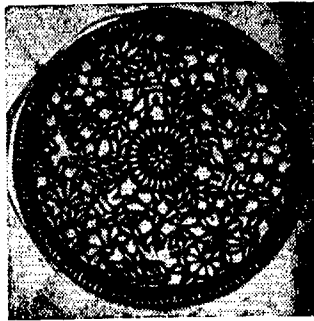
Dr. M. H. LOGAN



The Vision of Ramakrishna

'One day I saw that, through *samadhi*, my mind was soaring high by a luminous path. Going beyond the gross world studded with sun, moon, and stars, it entered into the subtle world of ideas. As it ascended higher and higher, I found on both sides of the way ideal forms of gods and goddesses. It came gradually to the last extremity of that region. There, a luminous barrier separated the sphere of relative existence from that of the Absolute. Leaping over that fence, the mind entered by degrees the realm of the Absolute. I saw that there was no person or thing having a form. As if afraid to enter there, even the gods and goddesses, possessing heavenly bodies, exercised their authority over realms far below. But the very next moment I saw seven wise *rsis* (sages), having bodies of divine light, seated there in *samadhi*. I felt that, in virtue and knowledge, love and renunciation, they had excelled even the gods and goddesses, what to speak of human beings. Lost in admiration, I was reflecting on their greatness, when I saw a portion of that undifferentiated luminous region condense into the form of a divine Child. Coming down to one of those *rsis* and throwing Its soft and delicate arms round his neck. It embraced him and, afterwards, calling him with Its ambrosial words, sweeter than the music of the *vina*, made great efforts to wake him up from *samadhi*. The *rsi* woke from *samadhi* at the delicate and loving touch and looked on at that wonderful Child with half-shut eyes, free from winking. Seeking his bright face, full of delight, I thought, that the Child was the treasure of his heart—their familiarity was of eternity. The extraordinary divine Child then expressed infinite joy and said to him: 'I am going; you, too, must come with me.' The *rsi* said nothing at that request, but his loving eyes expressed his hearty assent. Afterwards, looking on the Child with loving eyes for some time, he entered again into *samadhi*. Astonished, then, I saw a fragment of his body and mind come down to the earth along the reverse path. Hardly had I seen Narendra for the first time, when I knew that he was that *rsi*.

(Courtesy : Parbuddha Bharata)



The Ramakrishna Math And Mission

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE ACTIVITIES

By **Swami Vireswarananda**

(Swami Vireswaranandaji Maharaj is the General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. This article is a brief review of the activities of the Organization, the visible symbol of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda and the ideals they lived and worked for.)

The Ramakrishna Movement was initiated by the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna soon after his passing away in 1886. It was inspired by his life and teachings and worked out chiefly by his monastic disciples. Swami Vivekananda, however, gave to this movement a more practical shape in 1897, on his return from the West.

Sri Ramakrishna (1836-86) was born in a distant village of Bengal; and early in life, he became the priest of the Kali temple at Dakshineswar, a beautiful spot on the Ganga, some four miles north of Calcutta. He had great love for God from his very childhood; and this led him, now that he was placed in favourable environment, to make an intense search for Him. Through an intense longing to see God and dispassion for things material, he, as it were, 'laid siege to the citadel of God and took it by storm' and attained God-vision. His entire life afterwards was lived in the highest plane of spiritual consciousness.

Sri Ramakrishna had realized Truth not only through the disciplines prescribed by

Hinduism, but also through those prescribed by other religions, thereby proving by direct experience that all religions are true paths to God-realization. Such a bold assertion about the truths of all religious faiths was the greatest need of the age. It infused new life into religion, and what appeared to be mere superstition so long acquired its significance. Through his variegated spiritual experiences, he arrived at a synthetic harmony that reconciled all conflicting views of life and religion. To him, all beings were little bits of that infinite God-head; and his love, therefore, was all-inclusive, irrespective of class, creed, race, or nationality. Today, this great soul is worshipped in India and abroad as a spiritual luminary of the first magnitude like the great saviours of the past.

The Ramakrishna Order

During the last few years of Sri Ramakrishna's life, many sincere and yearning souls had come to him attracted by his spirituality. With great care and love, he trained these disciples, a good number of whom later em-

braced the monastic life, true to the spirit of renunciation he had infused in them. Foremost amongst them was Swami Vivekananda. After the passing away of the Master, the Swami travelled all over India, leading the life of an itinerant monk; and in his travels, he saw with his own eyes the miserable plight of his motherland steeped in squalor, poverty, and ignorance. He was filled with a fervour to uplift his motherland; and with this object in view, he crossed the seas and went to the United States of America. There he represented Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893. His interpretation of Hinduism impressed enlightened Americans of various walks of life, and all earnest seekers of various walks of life, and all earnest seekers of Truth were drawn to him. For four years, he preached the eternal truths of the Vedanta in U. S. A. and Europe, which the Westerns were sorely in need of. And these years of his life in the West gave him an opportunity to study the good and weak points in the Western nations; and by comparison and contrast with his own motherland, he realized the greatness of India in many fundamental things. But he had also realized that there was much superstition, poverty, and ignorance in this country.

The Ramakrishna Mission

On his return from the west, the Swami formulated for the monks of the Ramakrishna Order the true significance of the monk's life in one pithy sentence, 'For one's own liberation and for the good of the world'. He admonished them to give up the selfish idea of leading the life of a recluse and to dedicate themselves to the service of others, to see God in the sick, the poor, and the ignorant and render service, as worship, to this God in man. With this angle of vision, he asked them to distribute spiritual, intellectual, and material food, according to the needs of the sufferer. The stress was non God-realization. Such a *sadhana* or spiritual practice was presented as on a par with the traditional disciplines. Social service was, as it were, a by-product of this divine worship. The Swami's message, therefore, cannot be evaluated in terms of philanthropy or social service, for fundamentally it is a spiritual one. This service to man, seeing the God in him, is the Swami's greatest gift to the modern world of strife, competition, and war.

On May 1, 1897, Swami Vivekananda had established an association called the Ramakrishna Mission Association to unite the lay and monastic followers of the Master in a common organized effort for the service of humanity. After the starting of the Belur math in 1899, this association casted to function as an independent organization, and the Math itself carried on the preaching, educational, and philanthropic activities. With the extension of the activities, it was found necessary to have a separate organization for better facilities of work and more efficient management of the activities. It was also found necessary to give the organization a legal status. So, in 1909, a society under the name of the Ramakrishna Mission was registered under Act XXI of 1860. The management of the Mission is vested in a Governing Body consisting of the Trustees of the Belur monastery for the time being. This Governing Body is responsible to the Association, consisting of lay and monastic members. Everyone who has full sympathy for the objects of the Mission, and is prepared to accept all religions as paths to God and live in peace and fellowship with the followers of all religions, is eligible to become a member of the Mission. The Mission membership today includes men and women of various religious faiths and nationalities. The branch centres of the mission, spread all over India and abroad, are under the control of the Governing Body, though often placed under the management of local committees, most of whose members and office-bearers are public men of the place. The principal workers of the Mission, however, are the monastic members of the Ramakrishna Order. They are helped by local friends and admirers. The activities of the Mission, which entail enormous expenditure—in 1961-1962 it was about 1.5 crores for its permanent activities alone—are maintained by subscriptions and donations from the general public as well as grants from State and Central Governments and public bodies. Funds earmarked for any purpose are spent for that particular purpose; and funds of the branches are exclusively used for the welfare of the respective branch centres towards the promotion of their various activities. The branches and headquarters publish periodical—mostly annual—reports of their activities along with the accounts which are audited by certified auditors appointed by the Association in their General Meeting. The Mission renders service irrespective of caste, creed, colour, position, or nationality.

The Ramakrishna Maths

These are monasteries devoted to religious study, worship, meditation, and preaching. They, like the Mission centres, are scattered all over India and abroad. The monks of the Ramakrishna Order get their spiritual training in these monasteries. The Ramakrishna Maths affiliated to the Belur Math, started by Swami Vivekananda in 1899, are under the control of the board of Trustees of the Belur Math, with its headquarters at the latter place. All the Maths have temples or chapels, where the presiding deity is Sri Ramakrishna. These Maths are financed by friends and devotees. When the Math centres carry on activities of the kind under-taken by the Mission, they, too get help from the general public, and grants from the government and public bodies. The Math funds are also audited by certified auditors approved by the Trustees.

The above distinction between the Math and the Mission proper is only a technical one ; and the two sister institutions are by no means water-tight compartments, being placed as they are under the management of the same group of monks, the Trustees and Governing Body members, respectively, of the two institutions. There are, again, many centres which are combined Math and Mission centres, and again, there are purely Math centres carrying on activities undertaken by the Mission.

The activities of the Math and Mission in India can be broadly divided into three groups : (a) Spiritual and Cultural, (b) Educational, and (c) Philanthropic.

Spiritual And Cultural

The Math and Mission centres, specially the former, spread the spiritual teachings and cultural ideals as illustrated in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. This is done through public lectures and classes, birthday celebrations of the Master and other great incarnations and prophets, celebrations of Hindu festivities like the Durga Puja, etc., running of reading rooms and public libraries, and the publication of religious literature and magazines. Some of the centres have published a good amount of literature in various provincial languages, besides English, on the life and teachings of the Master and his disciples, as also translations of standard Sanskrit works on philosophy and religion. It is noteworthy that, during the birth centenary year of Swami Vivekananda, the *Complete Works* of the

Swami are being published in non Indian languages. Apart from several periodical magazines brought out by the different educational institutions, eleven regular magazines are conducted, five in English (one each from U. K. and U.S.A.), one in French from Gretch, and five in different Indian languages.

Educational Activities

Education is not to be merely informative, or practical and useful. The development of intellectual capacity alone will lead us nowhere. People who are all intellect, and nothing else, may not be quite welcome members of any society, for without a firm moral foundation, such an intellect may be a danger to society. Nor can mere breadwinning be the ultimate aim of education. Education, to be worth its name, must help one to build character and to be a good citizen doing one's duty by one's fellowmen. 'Education', as Swami Vivekananda put it, 'is the manifestation of the perfection already in man.' To attain this goal of education, living with the *guru* (teacher), as of old, is quite essential. So many of the Mission educational institutions are residential or partly so, and religious instruction forms an important feature in all of them. In addition to the college and school curricular, vocational training in various arts and crafts like cane-work, carpentry, weaving, leather-work, etc., is given to the students in most of these institutions, specially in the residential ones. Sports and physical training are encouraged. In short, an attempt is made to help the students manifest the perfection already in them by making the environments suitable for building a healthy body, a healthy intellect, and a healthy mind.

In the education of girls, which all these ideals are stressed, particular care is taken to see that they imbibe all that is best in the Indian womanhood of the past, as seen in characters like Sita, Savitri, Mira Bai, and others. Fine arts, domestic hygiene, cooking etc. form part of their education.

During the year 1961-1962, the Math and Mission ran, in all, three general colleges at Madras, Belur (Howrah), and Narendrapur (Calcutta)—the last two being residential with 1,815 students on their rolls ; three B. T. colleges, with 235 students ; two basic training schools at Perianaickenpalayam and Madras, with 73 boys and 179 girls respectively ; three a junior basic training colleges at Rahara,

Sargachi, and Sarisha, with 196 boys and 57 girls ; two colleges for physical education and rural higher education, and a school of agriculture, with 85,214 and 60 students respectively, at Perianaickenpalayaw ; two social education organizers' training centres there and at Belur, with 208 students ; four engineering schools at Belur, Belgharia, Madras, and Perianaickenpalayam, with 1,327 students ; eight junior technical or industrial schools, with 545 boys and 322 girls ; 86 students' homes or hostels, including some orphanages, with 7,026 boys and 528 girls ; three *causpathis*, with 57 students ; twelve multipurpose higher secondary schools, with 4,449 boys and 952 girls ; nine higher secondary schools with 2,925 boys and 2,246 girls ; seventeen high and secondary schools, with 7,273 boys and 3,620 girls ; twenty-four senior basic and M.E. schools, with 5,503 boys and 3,246 girls ; twenty-nine junior basic and elementary schools, with 4,092 boys and 2,360 girls ; sixty-five lower and other grades of schools, with 5,697 boys and 2,420 girls. The Sevapratishtan, Calcutta, and the Sevashrama, Rangoon, trained nurces, the number of trainees being 132. Thus, there were altogether 41,780 boys and 15,930 girls in the educational institutions run by the Math and Mission in India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Singapore, Fiji, and Mauritius.

During the birth centenary year of Swami Vivekananda, work is under way to start a university in the name of the Swamiji at Belur.

Philanthropic Activities

Activities in this line are either permanent ones, or of a temporary nature. Under the first category come the hospitals, the dispensaries, the invalid homes, etc. Under the second category come all temporary relief works which are launched now and then, whenever there are famines, floods, fires, earthquakes, or outbreak of epidemics like cholera, smallpox, plague, etc. On such occasions, every monk who can possibly be released from his ordinary duties is moved to the scene of the catastrophe for rendering service to suffering humanity. The hospitals and dispensaries are called 'Sevashramas' or 'Homes of Service'. A good number of them are located in places of pilgrimage like Varanasi, Vrindaban, Hardwar, etc. and in the interior of the Himalayas and in distant villages. In large towns, such dispensaries render service to the poorer section of the people.

During 1961-1962, there were eleven indoor hospitals with 979 beds, which accommodated 22,157 patients, and 66 outdoor dispensaries, which treated 30,47,519 cases, including old ones. In these dispensaries, homoeopathic, ayurvedic, and allopathic systems of treatment are adopted, according to the needs of the patients. The indoor hospitals include the T. B. Sanatorium at Ranchi and the outdoor dispensaries include the T. B. Clinic at Delhi. At the Rangoon hospital, there is special provision for the treatment of cancer with radium and deep X-ray.

Work for women : The Mission has ever been conscious of its duties to the women of India. Typical of the work done for them are the maternity section of the Seva Pratishthan the Domiciliary and Maternity Clinic at Jalpaiguri, the women's sections of the hospitals at Varnasi, Vrindaban, and Rangoon, the attached Invalid Women's Home at Varanasi, the Nivedita Girls' School at Calcutta, the Sarada Vidyalaya at Madras girls' high schools at Jamshedpur, the Sarada Mandir at Sarisha (24 Parganas) and so on. Besides, there are special arrangements for women in the other hospitals, dispensaries, and schools, and some institutions are conducted particularly for them.

Relief works : After the independence of the country in 1947, the Government takes the initiative in starting relief measures wherever any calamities, natural or otherwise, take place. Therefore, the Mission's relief activities have occupied a secondary place in its scheme of work since 1947. In spite of this fact, the large-scale relief operations carried out by the mission for the refugees from East and West Pakistan, following partition, need mention. During the year 1961-1962, the Math and Mission conducted flood relief in the Tanjore district of Madras, at Cranganore and Tripprayar in Kerala, and in Barhiya thana in Bihar at a total expenditure of Rs. 49,000.

Work Outside India

Besides the centres in the West, engaged in the propagation of Vedanta, there are eleven Math and Mission centers in East Pakistan, two in Burma, one each in Singapore, Fiji, Mauritius, and Ceylon (with branches in the various parts of Ceylon). The work done by these centres is on the same lines as those of the Indian centres.

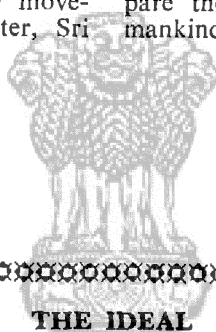
In other countries, there were fourteen centres in 1962—ten in U. S. A., one each in Argentina, England, France, Switzerland. These centres are under the spiritual leadership of the monks of the Ramakrishna Order. These monks are sent to foreign land at the invitation of the local students of Vedanta and devotees of Sri Ramakrishna. Through lectures, classes, and interviews, the Swamis preach the fundamentals of Vedanta and harmony of religions, as taught by Sri Ramakrishna. They lay stress on the universal teachings of the Vedanta—the divine nature of man and the oneness of the universe. They do not attempt at converting people to the Hindu faith.

Conclusion

In March 1962, there were 73 mission centres, 65 Math centres and 22 sub-centres, conducting permanent activities of various types. Thus it will be seen that the movement, inaugurated by the great Master, Sri

Ramakrishna, galvanized into an organization force by the illustrious leader, Swami Vivekananda, and strengthened and enlarged by his brother disciples, has crystalized today into a dynamic institution, seeking in its humble way to mould the social and spiritual aspirations of humanity at large according to the concept of universal religion, as preached and practised by these two prophets of modern age. Let us close this account with the words of Professor Floyd H. Ross of the University of California, U. S. A., who says : 'One of the most vital contemporary religious and educational movements in India today is the Ramakrishna Movement. Under the leadership of men trained in the spirit of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, the Ramakrishna centres are living examples of how the timeless truths of the past have value when they are continuously relived and reinterpreted in the present. The Ramakrishna centres...are playing their own part quietly in helping to prepare the way for the united pilgrimage of mankind towards self-understanding and peace.'

(Courtesy : Prabuddha Bharata)



THE IDEAL

My ideal, indeed, can be put into a few words and that is : to preach unto mankind their divinity, and how to make it manifest in every movement of life.

This world is in chains of superstition. I pity the oppressed, whether man or woman, and I pity more the oppressors,

Religions of the world have become lifeless mockeries. What the world wants is character. The world is in need of those whose life is one burning love, selfless. That love will make every word tell like thunderbolt.

Bold words and bolder deeds are what we want. Awake, awake, great ones. The world is burning with misery. Can you sleep ? Let us call and call till the sleeping gods awake, till the god within answers to the call. What more is in life ? What greater work ?

Swami Vivekananda



TO SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

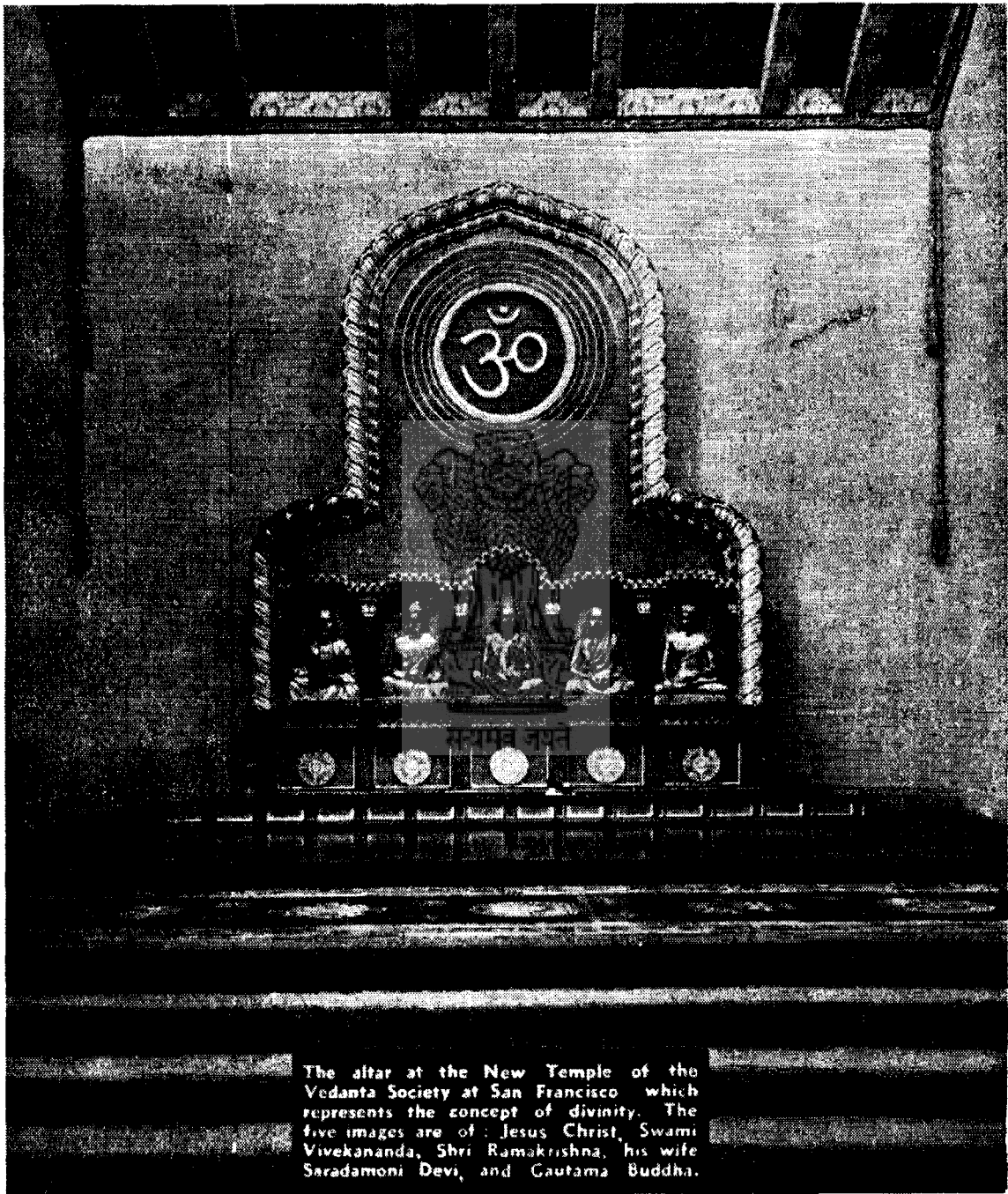
(On His Hundredth Birth Anniversary)

By An American Devotee

(An American Devotee is connected with the Vedanta Center of St. Louis, Missouri. U. S. A. Her poem is a tribute of her deep respect to Swami Vivekananda on his hundredth birth anniversary.)

Salutations to Thee,
O Knower of God, Messenger from God.
The rising sun heralded Thy birth,
In the holy land of India.
As the longest night was ending,
And the East awaited a new day.
Salutations to Thee,
O Being of Light.
Beyond the *gunas*, ever-perfect,
Ever-free.
We bow down to Thee in adoration,
And humbly lay our offering,
Of love and gratitude,
At thy blessed feet,
On this hundredth anniversary
Of Thy auspicious birth,
Ordained by our Lord and Master,
Sri Ramakrishna,
For the fulfilment
Of His spiritual mission,
To humanity.
Salutations to Thee,
O Radiant One.
The majesty and beauty,
Of Thy saintly presence,
And the charm and quality,
Of thy melodious voice,
Have defied description.
Though we no longer see Thee,
With mortal eye,
Yet, through Guru's grace,
We feel Thy blessings in our hearts,
And know Thou art still here
Though we no longer hear Thee
With mortal ear,
Chanting the Sanskrit *slokas*,

And affirming in song or sermon,
The Vedic verities,
That proclaim the divinity of man,
Yet, Thy universal message is not lost.
Great teachers following after Thee,
Have carried it to the farthestmost
Parts of our globe,
and Thy eloquent words,
Still have power.
Heard from pulpit,
Or leaping like tongues of flames,
From printed page,
They kindle anew the fire of devotion,
Within our hearts,
And burn away the dress of ignorance,
Within our minds.
O Thou, the bestower of Knowledge,
Born to remove the miseries of mankind,
Thy greatness and glory are beyond
Our ken.
No act of ours can add or detract,
No tribute of ours is worthy.
Rather, out of our great need.
We come humbly asking of Thee,
And seeking Thy grace,
In supplication and self-surrender.
Be merciful unto us, O Merciful One,
And grant us this boon : We pray,
That Thou wilt increase our strength,
And devotion ;
That Thou will shine the light
Of Thy knowledge within us ;
And draw us ever nearer to Him,
Who out of His infinite love for all,
Brought thee to earth,
On this blessed day.



The altar at the New Temple of the Vedanta Society at San Francisco which represents the concept of divinity. The five images are of : Jesus Christ, Swami Vivekananda, Shri Ramakrishna, his wife Saradhamoni Devi, and Gautama Buddha.



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

THE WORLD OVER

Calcutta—Vivekananda Centenary Celebration started at the Belur Math, the Headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission on Thursday, the 17th January, 1963. There was special worship in the temples and different parties gave devotional and musical performances in the math premises.

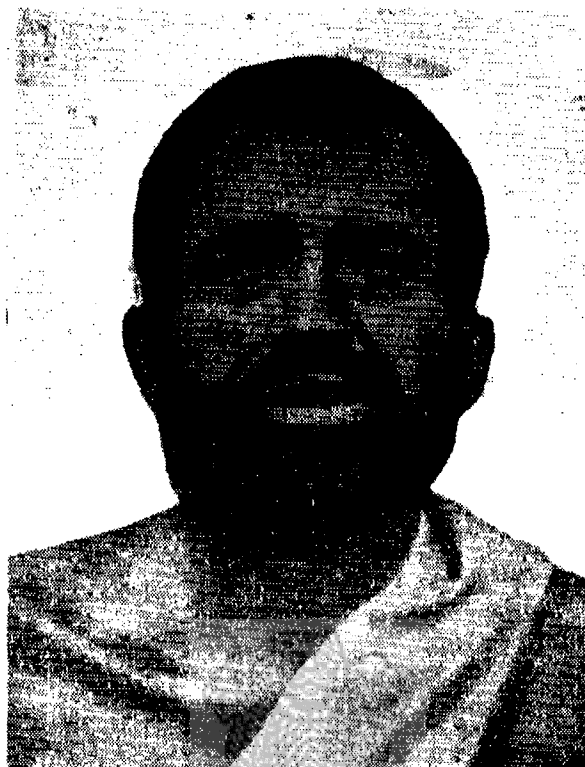
Due to the present critical position arising from the border disputes, *prasad* was distributed in earthen cups instead of feeding the devotees sitting. About 25 thousand people took *Prasad*.

From early morning people in thousands began pouring into the Belur Math to witness the inauguration of the Centenary. The Math compound was beautifully decorated with colourful gates and pandals.

At 3-30 p. m. there was a public meeting, where the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission read out his inaugural speech. Other eminent speakers also spoke on the occasion. There was an unprecedented crowd.

In the evening a special programme through the all India Radio was broadcast depicting the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda. The message of the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission given in the earlier chapter was also broadcast.

Under the auspices of the Swami Vivekananda Centenary Committee two public meetings were held at the Deshapriya Park on the 20th and the 21st January, 1963. *Sunday, the 20th January, 1963* : Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, President of India formally inaugurated the Centenary and delivered his highly inspiring inaugural address. The meeting commenced at 3-30 p. m. with Vedic Prayers. Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. B. Mukharjee, President of the Centenary Committee read out of the following *Welcome Address* :



*The
Master*

*Temple
Dakshineswar*



Mr. President, Ladies & Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Swami Vivekananda Centenary I extend to each and everyone of you a cordial welcome. The presence of such a distinguished gathering is a great blessing and a grace. It marks the momentous significance of this Centenary.

One hundred years have passed since the birth of Swami Vivekananda. He lived barely for forty years. Within that unbelievably short time he laid the foundation of an all-embracing and enduring transformation of India and of the world. He was the symbol of the eternally resurgent India, and the deathless spirit of man, the spirit that is never daunted, the spirit that conquers the phenomena of matter. A Buddha is born and for ages after we have Buddhist civilization. A Christ is born and for ages after we have a Christian civilization. A Caesar is born and for ages after we have a Roman civilization. A Vivekananda is born and for ages after and on this day we have the Vivekananda Age. The Vivekananda age is the modern age, on the anvil of which science and technology, trade and commerce shall forge a new civilization to be inspired by the spirit of man. It is the great age of synthesis. The present trials of synthesis. The present trials of antithesis are but the prelude to this great synthesis. Swami Vivekananda was such a synthesis. That synthesis is the only solution in this age. In assembling to pay homage to Swami Vivekananda on the occasion of his Centenary we are paying homage to him, his matchless service to India and to the world and we shall be paying homage to the spirit of man. When the Vedas raised the great interrogation, which God shall we worship, "KASMAI DEVAYA HABISHA BIDHEMA", they also replied, YO ATMADA, BALDA, YASMIN BISWA UPASATEY—"Him shall we worship, the Souls, the giver of strength, whom the whole universe acclaims". Vivekananda was this universal man for this cosmic age. It is his birth Centenary for which we are assembled here today.

This Centenary is being celebrated throughout the world and the States of the East and the West, of the North and the South are cooperating us. It is assisted by several Committees consisting of eminent men and women who are devising ways and means to help this world-wide Centenary movement. The Centenary has an all-embracing programme. It includes (a) the work of perpetuating the memory of Swami Vivekananda in his birth place by acquiring his residential house with the help of the State Government for establishing a Vivekananda Institute for Social Service, (b) publishing of a Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Volume, and (c) publication of the life of Swami Vivekananda in different forms, such as (i) Shishu Vivekananda, and Chhotader Vivekananda, (ii) Jugacharya Vivekananda, (iii) a Pictorial Album giving a full view of the life and activities of Swami Vivekananda, (iv) a documentary film on the life and work of Swami Vivekananda, (v) a general and authoritative life of Swami Vivekananda. Invaluable support and encouragement have been received from people all over the world including Europe, America (North & South), Africa (South & West), Asia and Australia.

The Centenary Committee offers its grateful thanks to (1) the Government of India for various kinds of help in the publication of the works of Swami Vivekananda in different languages of India and (2) the different State Governments in India which have ungrudgingly sent their help for the success of this Centenary. The Centenary Committee is particularly grateful to the Government of the State of West Bengal for the contribution of Rs. 2 lakhs in this financial year as part payment towards the sum of Rs. 11 lakhs which the Centenary Committee have asked for both the occasional and the permanent works this Centenary wishes to initiate. We are grateful also to the Corporation of Calcutta for having sanctioned Rs. 1 lakh instalments for the successful implementation of the Centenary programme.

I welcome with deep veneration, respect and love Dr. Sharvapalli Radhakrishna, the President of India who has come all the way from New Delhi to preside over this Centenary function. None could be more worthy to symbolise and articulate the spirit of this great historic occasion. You, Sir, are the representative man of the modern age. A great philosopher, a great statesman, you represent the eternal genius of India. In the tradition of the



great and incomparable Vasistha, you Sir, are our philosopher-statesman. We are grateful, Sir, that you are new in our midst to bless us and to bless this function with your words of wisdom which the Nation needs today at this hour of our great trial.

To each one of you, friends, who are present here I extend personally and individually my welcome. It is for you and us, for India and the world, that Swami Vivekananda, lived and died. May his spirit and ideal inspire us today to go forward to reach the highest goal of human destiny.

With these words, and on behalf of you all present here, and and on behalf of the Centenary Committee, I humbly request Dr. Radhakrishnan, the President of India, to inaugurate the Centenary of Swami Vivekananda.

P. B. Mukharjee—*President Centenary Committee*

After the Welcome Address, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan was garlanded and the Centenary messages received from the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and D. Rajagopalchari on the occasion, were read by the General Secretary of the Centenary Committee :

Message of the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission -

It gives me great joy to see that Swami Vivekananda's year-long Birth Centenary celebrations are being formally inaugurated in the city of his birth by the President of India himself. This is not only a happy augury but also an indication that Independent India is paying proper homage to the memory of the great Patriot Saint who marvellously roused the country to self-consciousness and won due recognition for her throughout the civilized world by his unique presentation of the Universal message of Vedanta. May his Birth Centenary year see rejuvenated India, strive heart and soul for at least partial fulfilment of the glorious destiny that Swamiji has prophesied for her, is my earnest, prayer at the feet of his divine Master, Sri Ramakrishna. I am very sorry I cannot attend this august meeting owing to indifferent health, but I shall be present here in spirit.

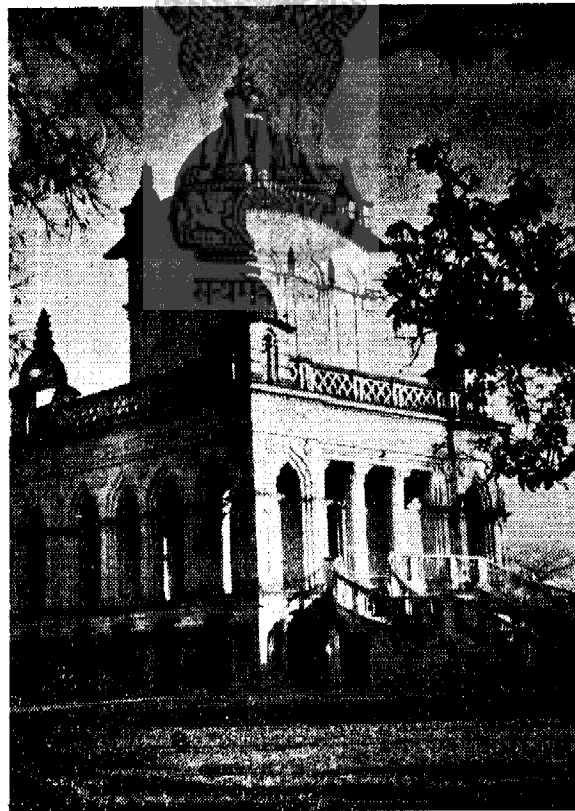
Message of late Dr. Rajendra Prasad :

Men who lead their fellow beings in any sphere of life are rare and those that lead the leaders, are rarer still. These super guides come not very often upon this earth to uplift the skinning section of humanity. Swami Vivekananda was one of these super souls. Well the land of Bharat feel ennobled by the memory of such a great one having sprung on its soil to serve humanity at large to be the spiritual path-finder of many a suffering soul and to shine in the spiritual firmament with the luster of the glory of Vedic civilization enlightening the world. It was he who could set the sceptic mind of the West at rest in the spiritual arena. Ambassadors of spiritual missions had risen before him in the East but none could speak to the West with the voice of conviction as his to keep audiences spell-bound and enthralled. The worthy disciple of the worthy Master rose to the pinnacle of spiritual eminence preaching the gospel of the innate oneness of man's racial entity and universal love and affinity of all human souls. Like the story of the seed and the tree each sustained the other's sublimity. The Centenary of this great scion of the spiritual world reminds us of the greatness of human soul and there could be no better interpreter of the heritage of the Vedic civilisation than he. Not only Indian but the Westerners too stand indebted to Swami Vivekananda for his bequest of *vivek* to posterity and I join the millions all over the world in wishing success to the celebrations in connection with his birth centenary everywhere. Messages from Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru and C. Rajagopalchari were read out. Dr. S. Radhakrishna President of India then made inaugural speech. The meeting was attended by nearly one lakh of people.

In the public meeting at the Deshapriya Park, most eminent speakers spoke on the life



Belur Math



Vivek Temple

and teachings of Swamiji and renowned singers entertained the gathering. Among the speakers names may be mentioned of Dr. R.C. Majumbar, Dr. Kalidas Nag, Swami Ranganathananda, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, Swami Gambhirananda, Principal Amiya Kumar Majumdar, and Swami Sambuddhananda. The meeting was presided over by Hon'ble Mr. Justice P.B. Mukharji. About 15 thousand people attended the function.

Besides the Centenary celebrations of the Belur Math and other Centres of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, celebrations were also held under the auspices of different organizations at many places in the city of Calcutta, its suburbs and outside. The prominent among them are : Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, Mahajati Sadan, South Calcutta District Congress Committee, Rani Jhansi Bahini, Vivekananda Society, Agragami Sanskriti Parisad, Jatiya Mahila Sanghati, Sindhi Rabindra Parisad, Sindhi Vaishnab Sammilani, Sri Ramakrishna Sarada Math, Bangiya Karmakar Mahasabha, Maulana Azad Social Welfare Mission (W. Bengal), Simla Seva Samity, Tarun Sangha Muralidhar Girl's College, Sahidnagar Swami Vivekananda Jayanti Sangha, Shri Guru Sanskriti Sangha, Central Calcutta United Swamiji Centenary Celebration Committee, Kidderpore Surabitan, Jorabagan Swami Vivekananda Centenary Committee, Sakti Sangha, Garia Vivek Bharati, Barisha Swami Vivekananda Committee, Bantra Ramakrishna Mandir, Homoeopathic College, Hindu Mission, Bengal Theosophical Society, Regional Director (Food) Employees Association, Belegata C.I.T. Buildings, Rishra and Serampore, Halisahar, Swami Vivekananda Centenary Committee, Krishnagore, Kalna, Dwarhatta (Hooghly), Gayeshpur (Nadia), Berhampore, Khagra (Murshidabad), Pritinagar (Nadia), Kamarhati, Hooghly, Gocharan (24-Parganas), Gobardanga, Sri Ramakrishna-Brahmananda Ashrama (Sikra Kulingram), Rajarhat Vishnupur, Ramakrishna-Shivananda Ashrama (Barasat), Raina, Ramakrishna Sadhanalaya (Makardah), Kolsur, Bagnan, Bhadreswar Thana Anchalic Swami Vivekananda Centenary Committee, Santara, Vrindaban, Commilla, Agartala, Nasik, Bombay, Dhum (E. Pakistan), Dibrugarh, Rajpur, Bhopal, Ahmedahad, Ajmer, Sholapur, Kashmir.

2. The undermentioned Centres of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission deserved the following schemes for the Centenary of the Swami Vivekananda :

Patna Blowing of conches, Bhajan and Arati with 101 lamps alight at the break of dawn on the 17th January, marked the beginning of the 3-day Centenary celebration at Patna.

A large meeting was held in the evening which was inaugurated by Shri B.P. Sinha, Chief Justice of India and Presided over by Pandit Harinath Mishra, Health Minister of Bihar. Many distinguished speakers paid their homage and spoke on the occasion.

Madras (1) Construction of the Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Building for a well-equipped Library and a Lecture Hall, (2) Publication of the Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda in Tamil & Telugu and a biography of Swamiji in Tamil, (3) Upgrading the present Sri Ramakrishna Math National Girls' Higher Elementary School, George Town, Madras, into a Girls' High School, (4) Installation of a bronze statue of Swamiji as a Wandering Monk on the Marina opposite the Ice House, (5) Exhibition, (6) To make an endowment to the University of Madras for arranging lectures by one of the most outstanding scholars on the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda, (7) Public Meetings, (8) Procession, (9) Pilgrimages, (10) Inter-Religious Conference, (11) Seminars, (12) Elocution & Essay Competitions, (13) Music Conference, (14) Physical feats, (15) Children's Rally, (16) Poor feeding & distribution of clothes.

The celebrations of the Swamiji Vivekananda Centenary were religiously inaugurated on Thursday, the 17th January, 1963. The function started with Magalarati. At 6-15 a.m. a huge procession carrying the gorgeously decorated life portrait of Swamiji with the blowing of the conches and several Bhajan Parties started from the Math and marched through the four main streets of Mylapore. In different parts of the city also more than forty processions by the local people and students heralded the Centenary.

After the procession, Swami Kailashananda, head of the local Math, lighted tastefully



Swami Swahandanda, Union Minister Humayun Kabir, Dr. W. Mathur



सत्यमेव जयते



Recitations

School Boy recites, Collegiates (behind) follow

decorated 101 ceremonial lamps to mark the inauguration and addressed the huge gathering on the significance of the occasion. The Chief Minister of Madras paid his homage to the illustrious Swami and praised the services of the Organization founded by him. About ten thousand devotees were given prasad in hand and more than 1,400 Daridra Narayanas were sumptuously fed.

The formal inauguration of the Swami Vivekananda Centenary was held at a mammoth public meeting. Hon'ble Shri Morarji Desai, the Union Finance Minister inaugurated the Centenary, Dr. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar presided and Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Hon'ble M. Bhaktavatsalam, Shri M.P. Sivagnana Gramani, Shri K. Balasubramania Aiyar, Shri M. Satyanarayana, and others spoke.

Inaugurating the celebrations, Shri Morarji Desai said, 'Swami Vivekananda's clarion call 'Arise, awake' should ring in the ears of the people especially now when the country was invaded by 'an unscrupulous neighbour in a deceitful manner'. He said, "Swami Vivekananda, who was no ordinary religious teacher, put India on the map of the world and showed to the nations of the world what vitality and strength the country possessed. Religion should occupy a central place in the thoughts and actions of the people as it alone enable man to know himself and deserve his life as a human being. Swamiji Vivekananda gave us patriotism when the world was unknown. He gave us self-respect and courage when they were lacking. He lifted us out of a sense of frustration and wrong fatalism born out of our mistakes. We lost our heritage on account of mistakes. He enabled us to get up again and strive to get back that heritage. The services of Swami Vivekananda will therefore be remembered as long as India retains her freedom and her heritage."

Shri Bhaktavatsalam, State Finance Minister announced that the Government had decided to rename the Ice House in Triplicane, where Swamiji stayed as "Vivekananda House". The Government had also agreed to the proposal of installing a statue of Swami Vivekananda in the compound of the House.

Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar in his presidential address said that Swami Vivekananda had in his life time, to pass through a great experience in order to shed all spiritual pride and spiritual exaltation. He preached the message of non distinction between one *jeeva* and another. The greatest message perhaps Swami Vivekananda conveyed to the Western as well as Eastern world was that the message of the spirit was live factor in all human affairs. Swami Vivekananda taught the people the necessity "To live our religion to practise and bring into practical administration, exhibition, and illustration, the truth of our religion." He said that the Ramakrishna Mission is effectively implementing this supreme message in its work.

Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Vice-Chancellor of Madras University, pleaded for establishment of more educational institutions under the Ramakrishna Mission to inculcate spiritual values in the students and teachings of the great saints.

Shri M.P. Sivagnana Gramani in his speech paid homage to Swami Vivekananda and his teachings. He said if Swami Vivekananda who was only a ray of that great and glorious Sun, Sri Kamakrishna, what to speak of that personality of the Master—He is beyond all human grasp ! He said,—“By honouring Swami Vivekananda, we honour only ourselves.”

Bombay : (1) Essay & Elocution Competitions for the students, (2) To present Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda in various languages to all the Colleges and important Libraries in the State of Maharashtra, (3) Public Meetings, (4) Musical Conference, (5) Mobile Exhibition.

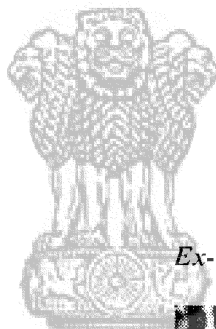
The 4-day celebrations were performed with due solemnity from the 17th January, when there were special Puja, Bhajan and distribution of Prasad.

On the 19th, the Governor of Maharashtra, Sm. Vijayalakshmi Pandit inaugurating the celebration said that Swami Vivekananda gave the Mantra of spiritual strength, truth and love. He gave new strength and new purpose to an old message. With the deep spiritual content of

**At
MADRAS**



Ex-Union Minister Murarjee-Swami Kailashananda & others



Ex-Chief Minister, Kamraj (facing) and others

Portland, OREGON—U. S. A.

Dr. William Graham of Church of Truth at Beaverton, Oregon speaks at the Symposium representing Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity.



his nature and his wide vision, he nourished the dying roots of India's religion and culture and reawakened thinking people to a sense of India's true mission. He made Hinduism and the soul of India understood in the West.

The Governor of Mysore, Jaya Chamaraja Wadiyar, who was the chief guest, said that Swami Vivekananda called on the people of India to uproot evil and re-establish righteousness. The Swami with his spiritual power charged the generations that came after him with a sense of morality and good life. He believed that Self could not be attained by a man without strength. It was he who thought that contemplation and action must be harmonised. India's soul was unconquerable because of the guidance of the master spirit such as Swami Vivekananda and other philosophers.

Mr. Shantilal Shah, Education Minister said that Swami Vivekananda had reactivated the Indian people at a time when they were feeling frustrated and despondent. He believed that real religion lay in the service of man, especially the poor and the down-trodden and it was for us to emulate his teachings.

On the 20th there were two public meetings—one at the Ashrama premises presided over by Shri K.M. Munshi and the other at Shivaji Park where Shri Golwalkar spoke eloquently before a large gathering of about one lakh of people.

New Delhi. (1) Production of the Life and Works of Swami Vivekananda in Punjabi & Urdu, (2) Construction of Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Children's Library (3) Purchasing modern equipment for the Ramakrishna Mission Free T.B. Clinic, (4) Public Meetings, (5) Recitation & Speech Competitions for the School and College students, (6) Devotional songs, (7) Poor feeding and distribution of clothes. (8) Cooperating in bringing out Vivekananda Centenary Souvenir.

There was a public meeting on the 17th January in the Ram Lila Grounds to pay homage to Swami Vivekananda. The speakers included the Prime Minister, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, The Mayor Shri Nur-Uddin Ahmed, the Right Rev. S.K. Mondol and Swami Swahananda.

Mr. Nehru in his speech said that great men like Swami Vivekananda had taught that one should tackle boldly whatever adverse circumstances faced one. All should try to imbibe something of the spiritual strength which sustained people like Swami Vivekananda in life. Swami Vivekananda was not only a spiritual leader but a great patriot who wished his country to live in honour and glory. There were very few people in history who could match Vivekananda's personality. He awakened the nation from slumber and gave expression to the nation's immortal aspirations.

The Prime Minister said that Swami Vivekananda was alive when he was a student in London. But he did not have an opportunity to meet him. "I however read his works. They have created a powerful impression on my mind." He further said that it would be good if the writings of Swami Vivekananda were read by students in schools,

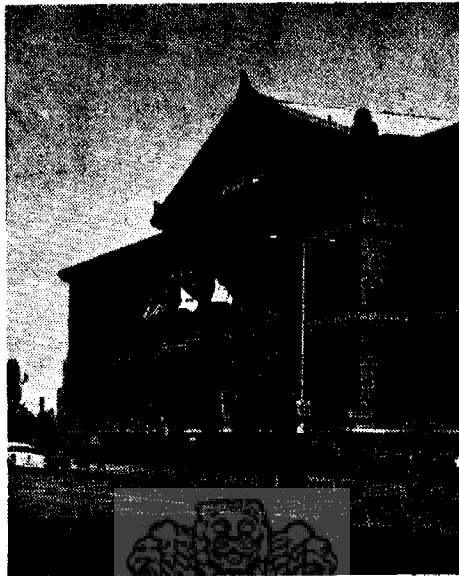
"As a great ambassador of India, Swami Vivekananda raised her status in the eyes of the world. But more important than that is the fact that he created a new hope in the minds of the people in his own country."

Speaking on the occasion, the Mayor of Delhi said that Swami Vivekananda strived not only for his own salvation but for the salvation of the entire nation.

Rt. Rev. S.K. Mondol, Bishop of Delhi stated that Swami Vivekananda had a global mind and his spiritual and intellectual powers were of a rare order.

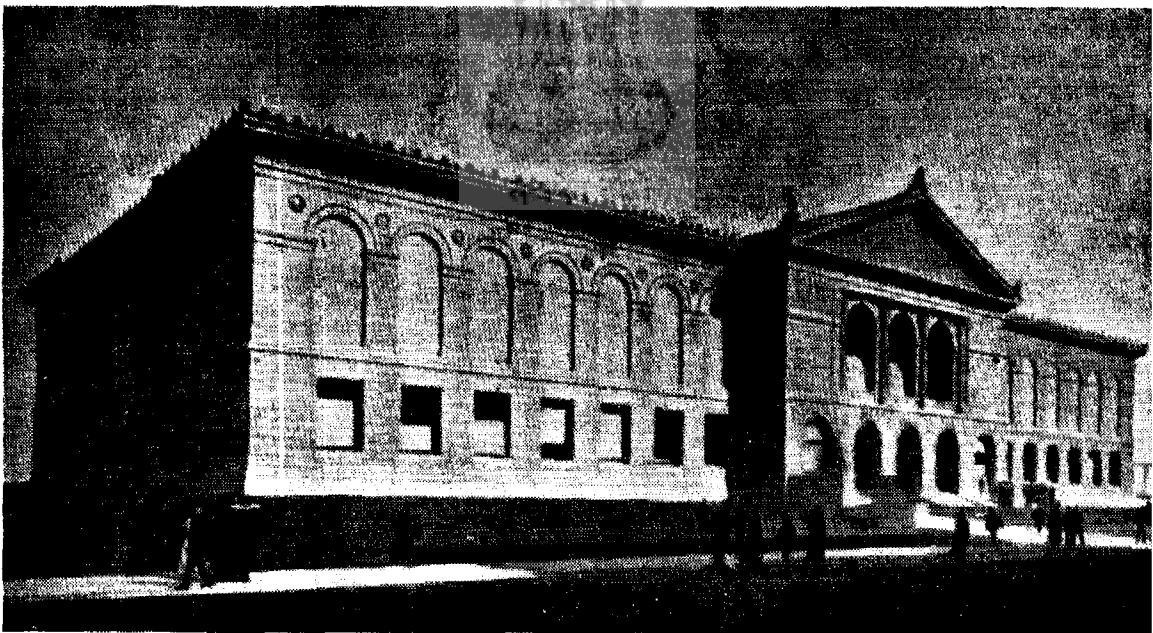
Where the Parliament of Religions Met

New View



Old View

ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO



Chandigarh : (1) Construction of the Centenary Memorial Buildings. (2) Publications of the Life and Teachings of Swami Vivekananda in Punjabi. (3) Public Meetings. (4) Essay, Recitation & Declamation Competitions for the students. (5) Poor feeding.

On the 26th January, 1963—the 11-days long Centenary Celebrations at the Ashrama were completed. On the Whole they have been very successful. New Shrine was dedicated on the 17th. A volume in Punjabi consisting of a short life, some lectures and teachings of Swamiji running to 224 pages (demp 1/8) was printed and a Bibliography of Ramakrishna Order Literature (Cyclostyled) was published. On the 20th the State Governor inaugurated the Public Celebrations and released the volumes. He also opened Ramakrishna Order Books Exhibition and unveiled a Statue of Swamiji. The Vice-Chancellor of the Punjab University, Chandigarh and Justice Dulat presided on 2 days. The Vice-Chancellor of the Panjabi University Patiala spoke at one of the meetings. Sweets were distributed in the labour colony and schools for working class children. A Sanskrit Kavya was specially composed by Pandit Shashidhar Sharma. A book Exhibition was also organised in the Panjab University

All the meetings went off very well. Most of the professors from the Panjab University and Principals of the Colleges took part in our important meetings. We had a meeting in the Panjab University also.

There have also been *Celebrations in different parts of Punjab*—Jullundur, Ferozepore, Pathankot, Ambala, Rohtak, Sangrur, Sind, Faridkot, Nilokheri, Kurukshetra (University), Palwal, Gurgaon, Dharamshala, Gurdaspur, Sonapat and in Simla. A provincial conference was held at Jullundur to organise the Celebrations in different districts. Mission also received invitations to speak at several places and it is hoped during the Centenary Year, the Celebrations will be held in most of the Schools and Colleges of Punjab.

Allahabad : (1) Religious Seminar, (2) Kirtan. (3) Public Meetings (4) Essay, Recitation, Debate and Music Competitions. (5) Physical feats & Sports. (6) Exhibition. (7) Procession. (8) Publications. (9) Poor feeding.

Bankura : (1) Construction of a Vivekananda Hall. (2) Essay Competition. (3) Social Service Training Centre. (4) Public Meetings. (5) Exhibition. (6) Music Conference. (7) Physical feats.

Ranchi : (1) Public Meetings. (2) Essay, Recitation and Elocution Competitions for students. (3) Distribution of Vivekananda literature in different languages. (4) Exhibition (5) Procession. (6) Sports and games Competition.

Asansol : (1) Public Meetings. (2) Poor feeding. (3) Procession. (4) Exhibition. (5) Essay & Elocution Competitions. (6) Dramatic Performances. (7) Physical feats.

Belgharia : (1) Publication of the Life and Teachings of Swami Vivekananda. (2) Distribution of Swamiji's Pictures to educational institutions. (3) Public Meetings. (4) Exhibition. (5) Physical feats. (6) Procession. (7) Poor feedings. (8) N.C.C. Demonstration and Route March.

Student Home function began in the morning of the 20th January, when a procession of the Students and staff of the Students' Home and of the Shilpapiitha joined at the Belur Math the big procession which starting from there came up to the Cossipore Udyanbati).

In the evening of 22nd at 4 p.m. a largely attended public meeting was held which was

At
CHANDIGARH (Pb.)



N. V. Gadgil Ex-Governor speaks



Portland, Oregon Symposium
(left to right at table) Swami
Aseshananda, Vedanta Society of
Portland. Rabbi Yonah Geller,
Congregation Shaarie Torah in
Portland; Dr. William Graham
of the Church of Truth, Beaverton,
Oregon; Father George Macris,
Greek Orthodox Church, Portland;
and Rev. William Cate of the
Greater Portland Council of
Churches.

presided over by His Holiness Srimat Swami Yatiswaranandji Maharaj, Vice-President, Ramakrishna Math & Mission. Swami Yatiswaranandaji formally opened the Centenary Exhibition which lasted for full one week up to 28th January.

On the 24th January a tricolour picture of Swamiji was distributed free among all categories of Schools of the district.

In the afternoon of 26th January there was a public meeting presided over by Srimat Swami Jnanatmanandaji, Manager, Udbodhan.

The general public of Kamarhati Municipal area also celebrated the first part of a year long programme in a befitting manner. They started the celebration on the 17th January, '63. A good number of processions were brought out from different schools, sections of which numbering about 2,000 or more converged on the ground of the Student's Home where a public meeting was held at 10-30 A.M. In the afternoon a very big meeting was held in the local Students' Welfare Association Ground. On the 20th January, 1963, processions of 2,000 boys and girls with bands joined at Dakhineswar Bridge the unique procession which started from Belur Math and proceeded to the Cossipore Udyanbati. In the afternoon of 3rd January, a largely attended public meeting was held in the spacious compound of Sagore Dutt H. School.

In connection with the Celebration, the Students' Home brought out five books—three in Bengali and two in Hindi.

During the celebration-week every evening lectures on the life and teachings of Swamiji were delivered in the Students' Home campus illustrated by magic lantern slides.

Rahara : (1) Inauguration of a three-Year Degree College, An Assembly Hall and a Hostel for the poor and orphan boys. (2) Publication of a booklet embodying the sayings of Swami Vivekananda. (3) Distribution of Swamiji's pictures to the educational institutions of West Bengal. (4) Essay Competition. (5) Public Meetings. (6) Exhibition. (7) Poor Feeding. (8) Sports, (9) Music Competition. (10) Procession.

Varanasi : The 7-day Centenary celebration programme started from the 17th morning with special Puja, Bhajana and distribution of Prasada. The discourses on the life and teachings of Swamiji, Bhagavatam, Mahabharata, Ramcharit Manas and Public meetings formed special features of the celebrations. Two days were devoted to Religious Conferences, where different religions of the world were represented. Unprecedented enthusiasm was witnessed amongst the local people to join the Centenary Celebrations of Swamiji.

Coimbatore : Arrangements were made to celebrate the Centenary of Swamiji with great devotion. 'Akhand Puja', continuous worship, Archana, Parayanas from the Vedas, Thevaran, Upanishads, etc. for 100 hours beginning at 6-49 a.m. on the 17th January. The Akhand Puja came to an end at 10-49 a.m. on the 21st.

The public celebrations were held on the 31st March, 1963 when Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, President of India delivered the Centenary address. On the same day he inaugurated a Seminar on Spiritual Values in Education.

Purulia : The celebration of the Birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated amidst great enthusiasm on the 17th. The inaugural programme included Prabhat Pheri, Puja, a big procession of students of different educational institutions with portraits of Swamiji, distribution of Prasad and a public meeting presided over by Swami Hiranmayananda.



KISHORE SAMITI

SAUGOR, M. P.

Kishore Samiti, Saugor in the M. P. is an active institution imparting physical and cultural training to young persons. They have their chief patron in a popular figure of the area Shri Manibhai Patel M. L. A. With keen interest celebrations of the Birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda were observed at the Samiti premises at Saugor and Shri Manibhai Patel presided on the occasions and made the following appeal, specially exhorted the younger members of the Samiti to rise to the occasion.

On this auspicious occasion of the Centenary celebrations of one of the most glorious sons that mother India has produced, I do sincerely thank you giving me this proud privilege to pay a tribute to the great Saint Swami Vivekananda. I feel that I am too small a person for this too big an assignment and it will be futile on my part to attempt speaking on various aspects of spiritual matters which Swami Vivekananda illuminated with his ocean of knowledge and I do admit frankly that I shall be a sad failure in such an attempt.....I would desire now to invite you and focus on only one aspect and that is 'character'—'formation of character' presented by the Godly man. India today, is in great need of men of character and we must, therefore, need from individual character, class character and national character and this formation require to work as the line shown by our great saints of which Swami Vivekananda is one and perhaps the foremost in the recent times. And for this purpose, to draw inspiration, I do beseech you to behold the portrait of Swami Vivekananda—the glorious symbol of great Indian character! And to get proper direction, I do entreat you to go through his immortal works. I agree that his works do not make either easy reading or attractive reading at the initial stage but that should not come in the way between yourselves and his teachings. You all know that the path to anything good or great is no easy. It is rather full of difficulties and I wish you to bear in mind the words of the great prophet himself—'No great task can be achieved by craftiness.'..... I will not be entirely wrong. If I say that it is rather impossible today excepting a few privileged ones to get enlightened in Vedant Philosophy by reading Vedanta itself. Then why should we deprive ourselves from the teachings of Vedants when it has been rendered in such lucid and understandable language and way by this great saint of India?.....Introspection, search of the inner-self and internal illumination with the aid of knowledge go to form the theme of Vedanta philosophy but unfortunately we are each day going away and further away from it and making ourselves more and more slaves of materialism by being influenced by the West and its way of life.....Yes, our misery is our own creation and I refuse to believe that there is any other way to be freed from it than by looking to our own things, accepting and adopting our own means and drinking in our own wells nay, rivers of knowledge.....If the souls of the people of Europe and America could be illuminated by the great words of the great saint, I do not see any reason why we, his countrymen, his devotees, his disciples should shun the light and grope in darkness. Let me call upon you all! Come one, come all! Let us sincerely follow his teachings for the betterment of ourselves and for this great ancient land!"

Manibhai J. Patel,
Chief Patron Kishore Samiti



RAHARA (24 Parganas) W. B.

Swami Punyananda, Secretary,

Ramakrishna Boys House, Rahara (24 Parganas)



Singing At Dawn

By Mrs. Padmalaya Das

Member of the P. E. N. All India Centre, Cuttack

The sky was flushed with the coming glory. Gold-red banners of wispy cloud proclaimed it. A flock of storks streaked past, fleeting white against a violet-tinted blue. The first breeze fluttered the lacy fronds of a roadside flame-of-the-forest. The stillness was exploded by conches and *hula-huli* * Began the singing :

Who are you who play
A new tune on India's heart-strings ?
By its sweet strains enthralled
As astonished world your praise sings.

Young and old took up the chorus to the rhythm of cymbals. The music swelled and floated away from the slow-moving truck. It was January 17, 1953. *(Continued to page 170)*

Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre London.

The formal inaugurating of the central celebrations was performed at a public meeting in the Caxton Hall, on 31 January, by Mr. M.C. Chagla the Indian High Commissioner. There were nearly 400 people, in spite of the snow-fall and the bad weather. Mr. Chagla said on the occasion that Swamiji was indeed a bridge between the East and the West. 'He was not only a great and illustrious son of India, but also known in the West as in his own country. He realized and preached day and night that the East could learn from the West and the West from the East. In his view, both parts of the world had much to contribute to each other for the benefit and emancipation of the human race. Swamiji's creed was that every individual had the divine spark in him. He also asserted that we could find God everywhere, in a Hindu temple, a Christian church, a Hebrew synagogue, or a Muslim mosque. God is omnipresent.

Swami Vivekananda's legacy is the Ramakrishna Mission, with its branches dotted all over the world. They exist to spread the gospel of Swamiji and bring succour to the needy. One of the important tenets of Swamiji's teaching is that the best form of worship is service of mankind. The best way to show your faith in God or to practise religion is to serve your fellow man. Therefore the Ramakrishna Mission all over the world is dedicated to humanitarian work.'

Rev. Sydney Spencer, former Principal of Manchester College, Oxford, said on the occasion that what appealed most to him about Swami Vivekananda was the work that is being done by the Ramakrishna Mission centres. They are all engaged in propagating religious unity, Rev. Spencer reminded the dedicated audience. The words of Swami Vivekananda, he said, were most prophetic. Swamiji said : 'Unity in variety is the plan of the universe', and he applied the truth in the sphere of religions. His approach was that of a mystic, like his Master Sri Ramakrishna's. He was truly a holy man, a *yogin*, an *akhanda brahmacharin*.

Celebration in Prague.

The Czechoslovak Peace Committee and other cultural and scientific institutions held an evening in honour of Swami Vivekananda at the Naprstek Ethnographical Museum in Prague. Mr. R. K. Jordar, the India Cultural Attache in Prague, spoke about the life and

work of Swami Vivekananda. Dr. Boris Merhaut of the Institute of Eastern Studies of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, spoke about Swami Vivekananda's importance for the development of independent India and his programme of national awakening. Among those present were : members of the Presidium



At
CUTTACK

Prabhat Pheri on 17-1-63



*Deputy Chief Minister Shri
Biren Mitra addressing at
Bhawneshwar Math.*

Malda : On the 17th January, the Centenary Utsav was declared open by blowing conch at 6-25 a.m. from almost every house in the town. At 8-30 a.m. a very big procession with beautifully decorated portraits of Swamiji went round the town. Fruits and flowers were distributed amongst the patients of the District and Police Hospitals and Daridra Narayanas were fed. There was a very well attended public meeting on the life and teachings of Swamiji. Arrangements were made for Magic Lantern lectures throughout the District on the 17th.

Khetri (Rajasthan) : Swami Vivekananda Centenary celebrations were observed with due solemnity from the 17th morning. 'Akhand Harikirtan' for 24 hours from the 17th morning, readings from the works of Swamiji, devotional music, public meeting and symposium on the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda formed the important features of the 4-day celebration at Khetri. All these functions were very largely attended.

Bikaner : The Centenary celebrations were inaugurated on the 17th at the Ashrama with Puja, Bhajan, talks on Swamiji's life and Daridra Narayan Seva. In the afternoon there was a big procession with a beautifully decorated portrait of Swamiji and painted placarde bearing some of his choicest sayings, and Bhajan Parties through the City.

Arrangements have been made (1) to bring out a Hindi biography of Swamiji, (2) to organise All Rajasthan Essay Competition on Higher Secondary and College levels, (3) to hold Art Competitions and recitations Competitions for local schools and colleges (4) and periodic public meetings.

Fiji : Under the auspices of the Ramakrishna Mission, Fiji, Centenary Celebrations were held in all the districts of the island. Besides the Conferences and Performances, such as, Parliament of Man, Women's Conference, Essay and Recitation Competitions, Procession, Music Conference, etc., there was publication of booklets in Fijian. As a permanent memorial, a "Swami Vivekananda Centenary Hall" will be erected and a Statue of Swamiji installed in it. They have also taken up the scheme of starting a Vivekananda University College to provide facilities for higher studies in Fiji and other educational institutions.

Rangoon Sevashrama : On the occasion of the Swami Vivekananda Centenary, the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama at Rangoon has decided to rebuild all war damaged wards of the Hospital on modern lines at an estimated cost of Kyat 9 lakhs.

Vedanta Society of St. Louis, U. S. A.

(i) On Thursday, January 17, a special worship with prayers, meditation and the chanting of Sanskrit hymns was conducted in the shrine of the Vedanta Society during the morning hours.

(ii) On Sunday, January 20, a public meeting was held in the chapel of the Society.

(iii) A notable feature of the celebration was the presentation of the book, "Vivekananda ; The Yogas and other Works" compiled with a biography by Swami Nikhilananda to universities, colleges, and public libraries in different parts of the United States.

(iv) The announcement of the award of one hundred dollars for the best essay on Swami Vivekananda written by a student of any accredited college in the United States.



PATNA

Shri H. N. Mishra, Health Minister, Swami Vitasakananda reading the President's Message



Session of Parliament of Religion, Chicago 1893. The fourth figure to the right of the president is Swami Vivekananda.

Moscow U. S. S. R.

Among the various functions held in honour of the Centenary, special mention must be made of an evening held in the House of friendship where Indian Ambassador, Mr. T.N. Kaul, was the guest of honour.

Under the joint auspices of the Institute of the Peoples of Asia, and the Institute of Philosophy, USSR, Academy of Sciences, a scientific session was held presided over by Academician, P.N. Fedosiev

"Vivekananda—Humanist and fighter for Social progress", "Philosophical Concepts of Vivekananda", Vivekananda and Indian Literature", "Enlightening ideas of Vivekananda" were a few of the papers read on the occasion.

Centenary Celebrations by the Government of West Bengal :—The Department of Community Development and Extension Service, Government of West Bengal, decided to participate in the country-wide celebrations of the Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary. The Celebrations, held at Block level and V.L.Ws. circle and villages commenced from the 17th January, 1963, and last for one year i.e. upto January, 1964.

The following suggestions were made by the Department of Community Development and Extension Service, Government of West Bengal to all the District Magistrates and Deputy Commissioners of the State.

- I. A short meeting on the 17th January, 1963 consisting.
 - (a) Garlanding a photograph of Swamiji.
 - (b) One or two suitable songs.
 - (c) A short speech explaining the significance of Swamiji's Teachings.
 - (d) Readings from Swamiji's message.
 - (e) Taking a pledge on the ideals of Swamiji's teachings.
 - (f) Participation in an activity to form a permanent memorial to the occasion such as (i) tree planting, (ii) construction of a 'Bedi', i.e. a raised platform around a tree for community gathering, (iii) opening of an educational institution, childrens' park etc., (iv) putting up playing apparatus in a children's park, (v) construction of a feeder road or a bridge etc. etc.

Swamiji's name to be associated with such undertakings.

II. There were follow up meetings during the whole year of 1963 in the districts as follows ;

February, March, 1963 : Malda, W. Dinajpur,
Darjeeling.

April, May, 1963 : Murshidabad, Nadia, Bankura.

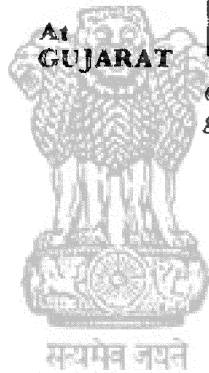
June, July, 1963 : 24-Parganas, Birbhum, Howrah.

August, September, 1963 ; Hooghly, Burdwan, Cooch
Behar.

Nov., December, 1963 : to be held at Purulia, Jalpaiguri, Midnapur.

This enable the celebration being held all over the celebration year. In these meetings, which were arranged at Block level, V.L.Ws. circle level and in villages, the life and teachings of Swamiji was reviewed in details. Every effort was made to fix up the dates in consultation with the local institutions under the Ramakrishna Mission and institutions devoted to ideals of Sri Ramakrishna Vivekananda so that their representatives such as monks may participate in those meetings as far as possible.

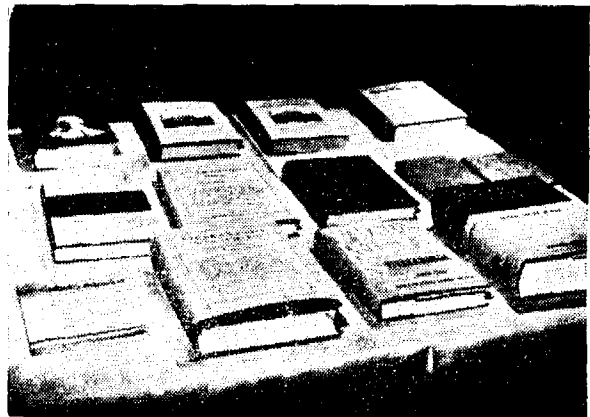
III. In each Block an action programme was taken up for a sustained intensive effort during the Centenary year on items such as, (a) literacy drive, (b) high attendance of children in Primary Scoools, (c) Kitchen gardens, (d) Farm foresting, (e) Planting and care of trees, (f) Cleaning of water areas and making compost with water weeds, (g) Establishment of gymnasiums. (h) Establishment and working of Mahila Samity.



*Governor Mehdi Nawaj Jung—
giving prize to children competitors*

**At
PATNA**

*Chief Justice of India Dr. B.P. Sinha
inaugurated the Session*



Books Display at Symposium—New York

This was best organised with active participation of local organisations such as youth clubs, Bratachari dal, Bharat Sevak Samaj, Mahila Samity, Bharat Krishak Samaj, Yuba Krishak Samaj, etc. etc,

This action programme was the best means of acknowledging gratitude to the Swamiji and acting upto his teachings. Hence greatest emphasis was laid on this.

IV. In the exhibition held at various sites in the Blocks during the celebration year there was a corner showing pictures of the Swamiji and posters with his messages. Local talents should be encouraged to display their work and suitable prizes awarded for the selected ones.

V. Local organisation of Yatra, Kabi, Kirtan, Katha Kata etc. was encouraged to prepare suitable works on some aspects of Swamiji's life and these may be produced during the year.

VI. Vivekananda Birth Centenary Celebration Day included in "Special Functions, such as Children's Day, Republic Day, etc." under the scheme "Exhibition, Prizes, Recreational activities etc." and the funds under them utilised for holding the meeting on the 17th January, 1963, and the subsequent follow-up meetings as stated in items (1) and (2) above.

VII. Libraries receiving financial help were encouraged to purchase works of Swamiji and works on Swamiji.

VIII. The scheme for "Exhibition prizes, recreational activities, etc." provided for expenditure on all the items enumerated in items (4) to (7) above. There was also provision for exhibition under the scheme for "Audio Visual Unit". The allotments under these two schemes was therefore suitably utilised to meet the above expenses in accordance with the prescribed scales.

Publications (a) The Memorial Volume of Swami Vivekananda (English) is in the Press, Life of Swami Vivekananda for students (Bengali), and Life of Swami Vivekananda for children (Bengali) have already been out.

(b) The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda are being translated in nine different languages of India, namely, Bengali, Canarese, Gujarati, Hindi, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Tamil and Telugu. All these are going to be published during the Centenary year by the different Centres of the Ramakrishna Math. A cheaper edition of the Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda in English will also be published by the Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta.

(c) Specially designed Memorial Medallions of Swami Vivekananda have already been prepared.

(d) The Ministry of Transport and Communication has brought out Postal Stamp with picture of Swami Vivekananda with his autograph.

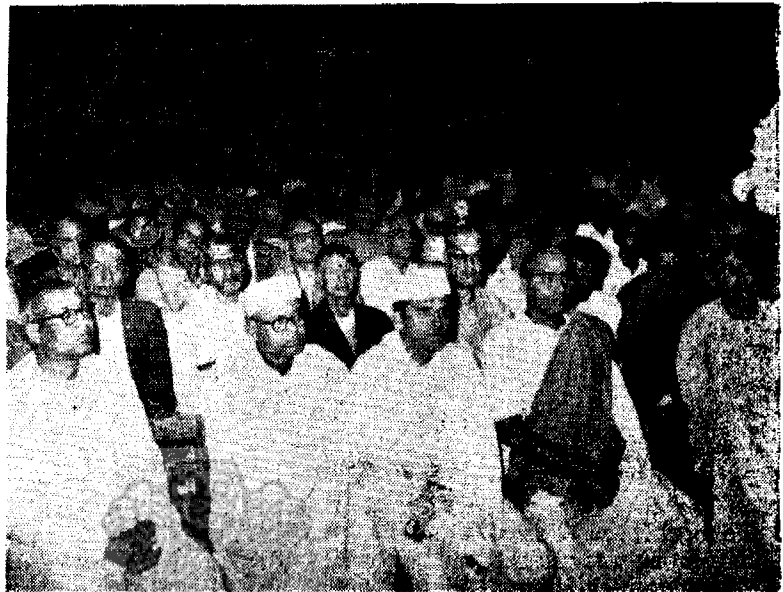
(e) The Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting have taken up the work of producing a Documentary Film on the Life of Swami Vivekananda. The Centenary Committee has supplied them synopsis.

(f) The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is publishing an Album of Swami Vivekananda.

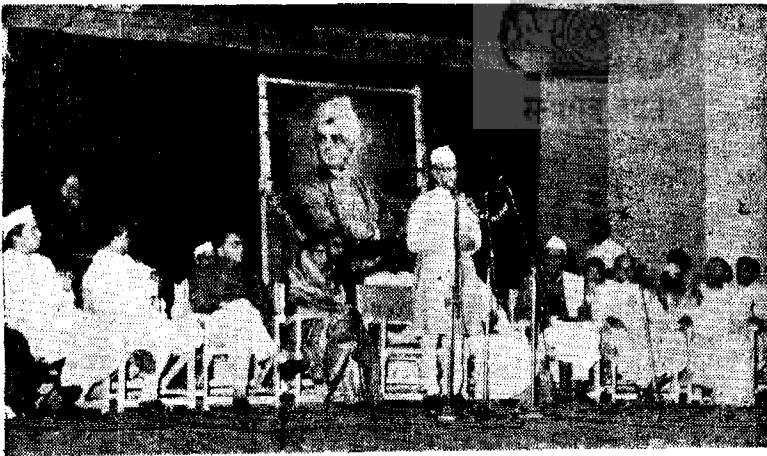
(g) The Ministry of Community Development and Co-Operation has published a booklet on Swamiji's ideas on national reconstruction.

(h) With the co-operation of Centenary Committee, New Delhi & Calcutta, Vivekananda Centenary Souvenir is brought out by the Foreign Window Publishing, New Delhi.

At
Belgharia, 24 Parganas



At
Ahmedabad



Governor Mehdi Nawaj Jung Addressing

5. *Lecture tour by Swami Sambuddhanandaji* : On invitation from the following places Swami Sambuddhananda, the General Secretary of the Centenary Committee, addressed public meetings, where local celebration Committees were organised with representatives from all sections of the people :

Madras, Chidambaram, Kumbakonam, Tanjore, Trichinopally, Rameswaram, Madura, Tinnavelley, Cape Comorin, Nagar Coil, Trivandrum, Coimbatore, Kaladi, Trichur, Salem, in South India. Ajmer, Beawar, Pushkar, Jaipur, Bikaner in Rajasthan and Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh ; and Bombay and Nasik in Maharashtra.

6. *All India Women's Conference* : The All India Women's Conference has been scheduled from the 18th December to the 21st December, 1963. The President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission will preside over the first session. Her Highness the Maharani Vijaya Raje Scindhia of Gwalior has kindly consented to perform the inauguration of the Conference. The following have been selected as local secretaries for the Women's Conference :

1. Smti. M.S. Mukherjee, Shillong
2. Dr. Miss Anima Sen Gupta, Patna
3. Prof. Mrs. Aditi De, Patna
4. Smti. C. Rama Bai, Mangalore
5. Smti. Bharati, Mangalore

Patna

The four-day celebrations commenced at the local Ramakrishna Ashram with a big public meeting was attended by thousands of men, women and children at Patna. Inaugurating the celebrations, Dr. B. P. Sinha, Chief Justice of India, said that the spiritual forces released through the preachings of Swami Vivekananda were tending to cement the entire humanity into a closer bonds of world community.

Dr. Sinha said that in the face of common danger the entire world community had begun to realise that the human race could survive not by national or international wars but by non-aggression against one another. The rule of "live and let live" was true not only of individuals but of nations also.

There were of course, Dr. Sinha said, temporary aberrations and disturbance of this universal force but that only illustrated that the animal in man had not yet been completely subdued. The recent happenings on India's northern borders were illustrations of such temporary aberrations. "They serve the very useful purpose of reminding us and the whole world that we have yet to be on the alert, and to realise that all is not well even with the civilised world", he said.

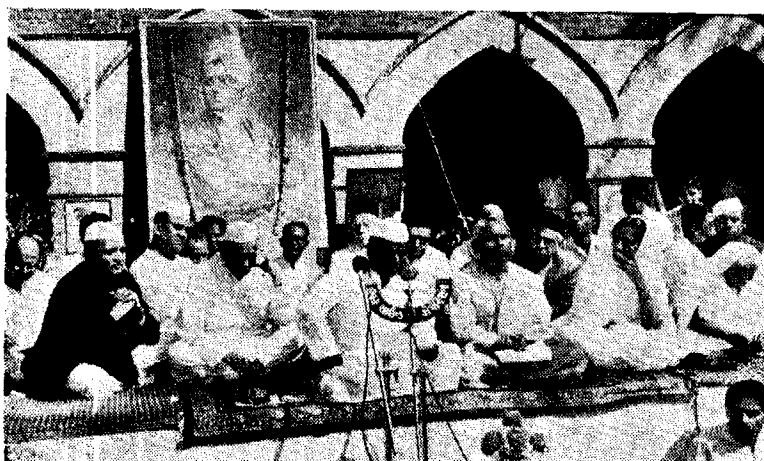
Dr. Sinha said that border events only showed that there were vicious and ignorant people who were selfish and unwise enough to commit aggression on others territory.

"At this critical juncture" he said, "we should remember Swami Vivekananda's teachings of universal brotherhood and the philosophy that we all belong to one great family of humanity."

The Chief Justice said : "Swami Vivekananda was not only the messenger of univesalism as mouthpiece of his great master (Swami Ramakrishna Paramhans) in moral and spiritual matters but also the prophet of Indian nationalism. The life of Swami Vivekananda has not only spiritual significance but also a great political significance which helped firmly to lay the foundations of independent India."

He said : "Swami Vivekanda told us that do-minations do not matter. What matters is that we should assiduously apply ourselves to the cultivation on mind, body and spirit so that an all round personality may be developed for the service of mankind".

At Ahmedabad (Gujarat)



*Indian
Congress
President
Shri
Sanjivaiyya
addressing*



*facing
Swami
Yatishwara-
nandaji
presiding*

At Belgharia, 24 Parganas

Mr. A. S. Ayyangar, Governor of Bihar, who was presiding over the closing function of the 4-day birth centenary celebration of the Swami Vivekananda at the local Remarkrishna Mision Ashrama said that he was responsible for putting India's culture and religion on the map of the world.

The Governor said that no useful purpose would be served by mere celebrating the birthday of India's great men. The people must follow their teachings and practice them in their individual life. Swami Vivekananda, the Governor said, saw God in man. He served man to serve God. The best form of worship to God was to serve the humanity.

Mr. Ayyangar said that at the conference of religions held at Chicago, Swami Vivekananda never attempted to establish the supremacy of one religion over the other. He explained the powerful tenets of Hindu religion based on all pervading philosophy. The Governor said that the great Swami preached the message of peace. But this message of peace was not of the weak but of the strong.

Gujarat

After Guru Maharaj Bhagavana Shri Ramkrishna Paramahansa Dev left the bodily, His Sanyasi disciples began touring India. Swami Vivekananda also took to the same kind of life and as a touring monk, he came over to Gujrat

and visited many of its cities and stayed pretty long in Porbandar, one of the towns of Kathiawar. When at Ahmedabad, he stayed at Lalshanker Mehta's Haveli in Amritlal's Pole, Khadia. After nine days' stay here, he visited Nadiad, Surat and some other towns. When at Junagadh he came in close touch with Shri Haridas Viharidas Desai, who was Diwan there and with Shri Harilal Chhaganlal Pandya, who was in charge of the Education Department of the Junagadh State. When at Jamnagar he saw our well known Ayyurved i.e. Physician Zandu Battji also. In Porbandar, where he passed about a year he came in touch with Shri. Shanker Pandurang Pandit who was well reputed as a Sanskrit scholar and was administrator of the State then.

When Swamiji was here in Gujarat and Kathiawar, three of his brother disciples also Swami Shri Shivan, Swami Shri Turiyanand and Akhanavadan happened to meet him somewhere here. After that in 1906, Swami Abhedanand and Shankaranand also visited Gujarat and stayed with Late Shri Bansilal Mehta, at Hajira's Pole. Thus, it can be seen that the connection of Gujarat and Saurashtra with the disciples of Shri Ramkrishna has been pretty long. This connection has been fruitful of many good results also.

Local Ramakrishna Seva Samiti has been in existence for nearly 40 years and it has taken up many social and religious activities in fitting with the activities of Shri Ramkrishna Mission.

Swami Vivekananda Centenary Dinner address of Swami Nikhlananda—

We have gathered here tonight to honour a remarkable saint born one hundred years ago. Like all great saints, Swami Vivekananda had direct experience of God. But unlike many of them, he did not want to enjoy that experience for himself in meditation and prayer or by giving only spiritual instruction to chosen followers. He awakened the spirituality of many earnest seekers in India and abroad, and at the same time dedicated his sole life to uplifting the material condition of the common man, especially of India. His mission was both national and international. That is why the centenary of his birth is being observed in Europe, America, Russia and the countries of the Far East, on a national scale in India..

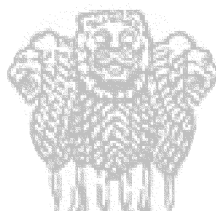
Swami Vivekananda was born in an aristocratic family of Calcutta and his character was moulded by both his rational rather and his God-fearing mother.

During his college days he was influenced by modern science and also by such Western philosophers as John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, and David Hume. He demanded rational proof and direct demonstration for all phenomena, spiritual or physical. But his inmost soul craved for communion with God through prayer and meditation. With a mind tossed by doubt he came to Sri Ramakrishna, whose God-intoxicated life was attracting many people from Calcutta. To his earnest question, "Sir, have you seen God?" Ramakrishna gave the forthright reply, "Yes, I have seen God. I have seen him more intimately than I see you." After much observation and many

At
Portland, Oregon—U.S.A.



*Facing
Swami
Aseshananad*



The Inaugural ceremony of the centenary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated at Shri Ramakrishna Math, Bhubaneswar, on January, 17th, 1963. A public meeting was held on the occasion. Mr. Sham Nath, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, who was the Chief Guest is seen here addressing the meeting. Mr. Biren Mitra, Deputy Chief Minister, Government of Orissa is seated on the right.

tests, Swami Vivekananda became Ramakrishna's disciple and attained inner certainty. He especially learnt from him that all religions ultimately lead sincere seekers to God, who is one without a second. On a certain occasion Vivekananda expressed the desire to remain absorbed in meditation on God and received his teacher's reprimand: What are you so anxious to see God with eyes closed? Can't you see Him with eyes open? God dwells in all human beings. Service to men is the highest worship of God." This piece of advice gave a new turn to Vivekananda's life.

After Ramakrishna's death Vivekananda renounced the world and travelled all over India as a religious medicant. He visited sacred places, and cultural monuments and mixed with people of all classes. Though he felt exalted at the past achievements of the nation, his heart was distressed at the sight of the physical suffering of India's masses. He resolved to find out means to improve their material condition. His insight told him that India needed the knowledge of science and technology developed in the modern West. He also strongly felt that he could share with Western people some of India's spiritual experience to help them out of a fast growing material outlook which bred fear and suspicion and deprived them of inner peace.

Guided by the finger of God, Swami Vivekananda, a young man of thirty, came to America to represent Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893. He was at once recognized as India's spiritual ambassador.

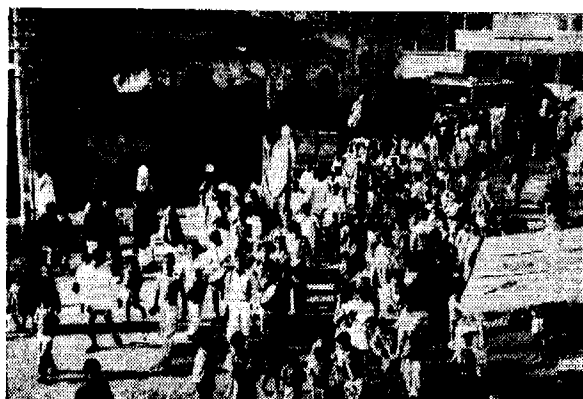
The eloquence, warm heart, and purity of this man of God attracted perceptive Americans. He spent four years travelling widely in the New World and preaching the time-honoured truths of Hinduism. He taught them the potential divinity of every soul, the fundamental solidarity of men, and the harmony of religions. He taught them about a God who is above all gods, a religion which rises above all our religiosities, and transcends all dogmism, rituals, and contrivances. The whole world, he pointed out, could be united on the basis of such a universal religion, which would recognize the divinity of prophets like Christ, Buddha

and Krishna, which would have no room for intolerance and persecution but unbounded respect for all faiths, and which would devote itself to bringing out the potential divine nature of every man and woman by allowing them to follow the laws of their own inner growth. True religion, Swami Vivekananda emphasized helps man to acquire strength, beauty, dignity, and a warm fellowship with others. To combat aggressive evil, the world indeed needs such a religion of aggressive goodness.

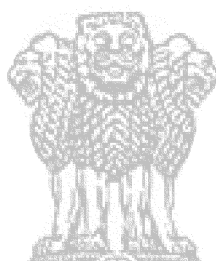
Armed with the recognition his spiritual power received in the West, Swami Vivekananda returned to India and plunged into activities for her national regeneration. Before his premature death at the age of thirty-nine, he organized the Ramakrishna Order, whose members take the vows of dedicating themselves to realization of God and service to humanity everywhere.

Swami Vivekananda realized the importance of both science and superscience, or religion, and showed the way for their synthesis. The intellect developed by science may, without vision, destroy. Reason without compassion can very well deluge the world with blood. Religion, too, without the practical mans provided by science, may remain mere empty ideals without touching the urgent physical needs of men. The Hindu scriptures say that by means of science man overcomes disease, poverty, ignorance, and by means of superscience he attains to immortality. Vivekananda visualized that through the cooperation of science and religion the world will come out of its present travail and deliver safely its unborn soul.

Swami Vivekananda was a great dreamer. Seven decade ago he gave his message to the world through the Parliament of Religions. Even then he dreamt of a Parliament of Man which would collate all the noble thoughts accumulated by humanity in the course of its evolution: the daring exhortations of prophets and seers, the startling achievements of modern scientists, the visions of artists and poets the rational speculations of philosophers, the uplifting activities of creative workers everywhere—all harnessed to the one end: peace on earth and goodwill among men.



*Procession
At Belgharia, 24 Parganas, W. B.*



On the occasion of the of the inaugural ceremony of the centenary of Swami Vivekananda held at Shri Ramakrishna Math, Bhubaneswar on 17-1-63, Mr. A. N. Khosla, Governor of Orissa, is seen here garlanding the life-size portrait of Swamiji.

Inauguration by His Excellency Shri B. K. Nehru, Ambassador of India at Vivekananda Centenary Dinner

Mr. President, Mr. Toastmaster, Swami Nikhilananda. Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a great honour to me to be asked to inaugurate the public celebration of the Centenary of Swami Vivekananda. This is the first function. I am told there are three more to follow which have been arranged, and I should like to announce them.

On April 18 there is a function at the Consul General in New York; on April 28 at the Community Church at 4-00 P.M., and on May 9 at the Asia Society at 8-30 P.M.

We have with us a distinguished list of speakers here tonight and the proceedings I understand have to close at 10 o'clock as the Secretary General has to leave at that hour. I shall not stand between you and the distinguished speakers who will talk about Swami Vivekananda.

I have been asked to inaugurate this meeting as official representative of the country where Swami Vivekananda was born. This need not have been so because Swami Vivekananda did not limit his teachings to any particular country. His teachings have value in all times in all countries. Nevertheless, the fact remains the effect of his teachings in India have been profound. The Indian renaissance which ultimately resulted in our gaining our freedom was in a very large measure due to the teachings of Swami Vivekananda and although this present generation perhaps does not remember the revolution in ideas which he created in India I do remember, in my younger days, the whole atmosphere was full of the teachings of this great man. To me, then and now, what appeals about him very greatly are two things: One is that to those of us reared in *bhakti* and whose only instrument of reaching Truth is the instrument of reason, even those who suffer from that limitation can follow Swami's path to the Truth. And secondly, that unlike many great men, salvation for him meant not a selfish searching for the salvation of his own particular soul but salvation for the whole humanity, not only India but all living beings. He did not retire to the Himalayas. He worked and taught us that our individual salvation lay in the salvation of humanity.....

The Vivekananda Centenary Dinner was held

by the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre of New York at the Warwick Hotel on March 28, 1963; with His Excellency U Thant, the Secretary General of the United Nations as the chief speaker of the evening. For the occasion a large gathering of representative Americans and Indians assembled to pay homage to Swami Vivekananda. Among those present were Swamis Pavitrananda, Nityaswarupananda and Sarvagatananda. The dinner started with the saying of grace by Swami Nikhilananda. As the dinner proceeded Swami Vivekananda memorial stamps issued by the Government of India were distributed.

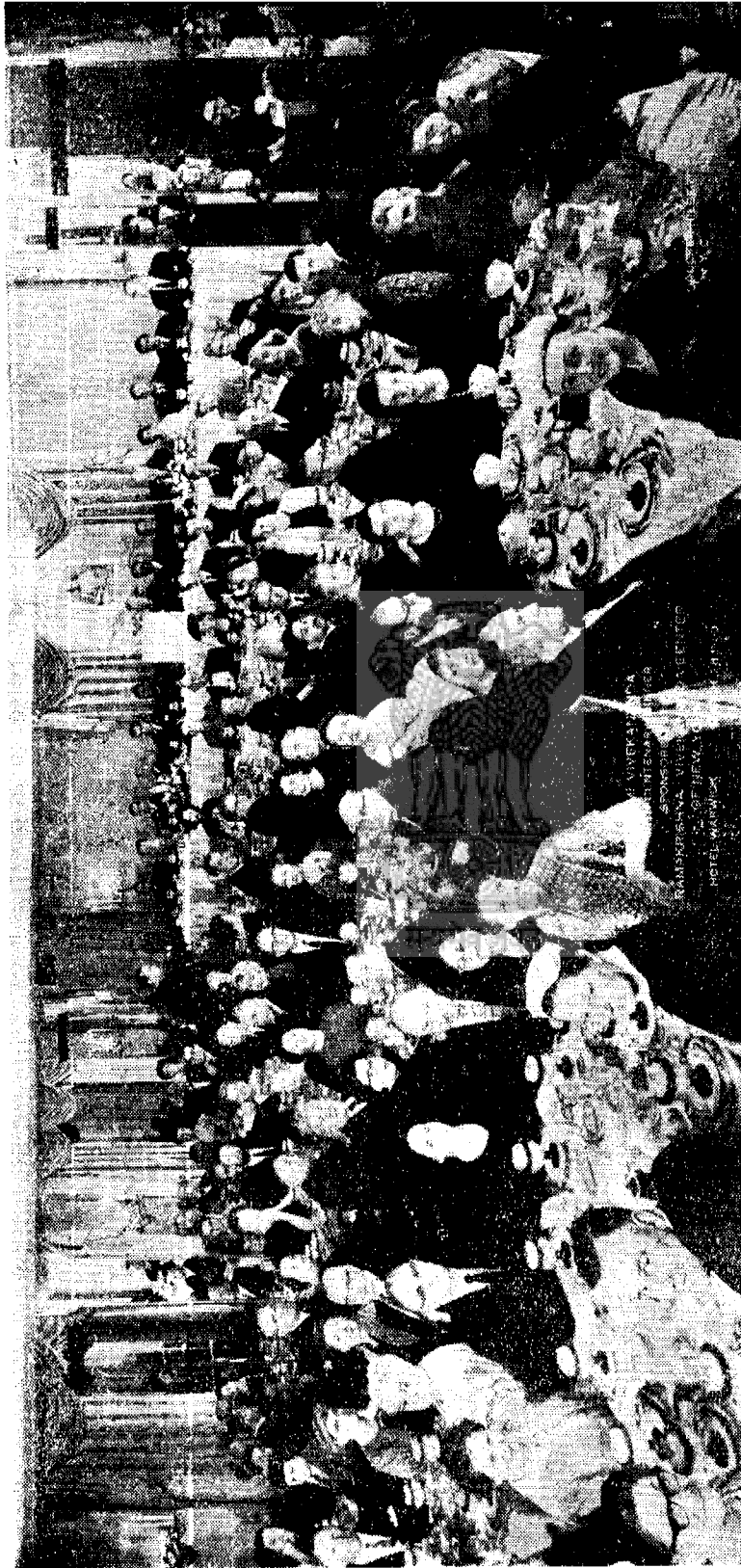
The after-dinner meeting started with a prayer by Swami Budhananda. Mr. John P. Rutherford, Vice-President of the Centre, who was the Toastmaster for the evening, read the message* from His Holiness Swami Madhavananda, President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission; Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, President of the Republic of India; and Prime Minister Pandit Nehru.

In his short introductory speech, Mr. Rutherford reminded the guests of the close tie that existed between each one assembled there and Swami Vivekananda, the channel through which the spiritual legacy of Sri Ramakrishna flowed to the Americans.

The Indian Ambassador, His Excellency B.K. Nehru in a brief speech mentioned the revolutionary impact of Swami Vivekananda's teachings, which were in a measure responsible for bringing about the freedom of India. And he emphasized that Swami Vivekananda's teachings have value in all times and in all countries. Mr. Nehru also mentioned for the information of the gathering that the Vivekananda Centenary will also be celebrated at the Consulate of India and the Community Church in New York in the month of April, and at Asia Society of New York in the month of April, and at Asia Society of New York in the month of May.

U Thant paid a moving tribute to Swami Vivekananda as 'one of the greatest men of all times' and 'the greatest spiritual ambassador of India in the history of India'. Discussing the great Swami's ministrations to the Western world, specially to America, U Thant said that Swami Vivekananda strove to bring about a synthesis of the knowledge of phenomena, in which the West excelled, and the knowledge of the Spirit, in which the East excelled. The

HOLY DINNER AT WARWICK HOTEL, NEW YORK



A Vivekananda Centenary dinner was held by the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York at the Warwick Hotel on March 28, 1963, with His Excellency U. Thant, the Secretary General of the United Nations as the chief speaker of the evening. For the occasion a large gathering of representative Americans and Indians assembled to pay homage to Swami Vivekananda. Among those present were Swamis Pavitrnananda, Nityaswarupananda and Sarvagatananda. The dinner started with the saying of grace by Swami Nikhilananda. As the dinner proceeded Swami Vivekananda memorial stamps issued by the Government of India were distributed.

Secretary General said that he strongly felt that if Swami Vivekananda's ideas in this regard were not worked out, exclusive intellectual development without corresponding moral and spiritual development was sure to lead us from one crisis to another. U Thant read out passages from Swami Vivekananda's message of tolerance in the affairs of the world for the good of mankind in the present and the future

Mr. Vincent Sheean, the noted author, traced the gradual process of Swami Vivekananda's transformation at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna, his work in America, and how he combined in his life and work, mystical experience and social consciousness.

Mr. S.K. Roy, the Consul General of India in New York dwelt upon Swami Vivekananda's impact on older generations and how similar ideas found wonderful expression in the lives of such great men as Tagore and Gandhiji.

In his concluding remarks Swami Nikhilananda mentioned Swami Vivekananda's vision of a Parliament of Man, which in a measure we find fulfilled today in the United Nations.

Proposing a Vote of Thanks Swami Nikhilananda said that U Thant's participation in the function had made manifest its true character, its universality.

Those who participated in the dinner expressed a feeling of exaltation after the function. A New York surgeon perhaps summed up the feeling of all when he said: "It was a rare blessing to be here this evening."

After the inaugural speech of Shri B. K. Nehru the following messages were read out:—

MESSAGE

I am glad to learn that the Centenary of Swami Vivekananda's birth will be observed in New York. To us in India it is of particular significance for his whole life and teaching inspired may generation and continue to inspire our people today. An ardent patriot, he brought his great spirituality to

bear upon his patriotism and thus his message was not confined to India only, but was for the whole world. I pay my homage to his memory.

(Signed) JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

MESSAGE

When India, under foreign domination, had lost faith in herself and in her spiritual heritage Swami Vivekananda carried the life-giving message of Vedanta, the message of peace, good will and the solidarity of man, based on his inherent divinity, to the Parliament of Religions, held at Chicago in 1893. The spirituality of the East and the dynamism of the West clashed, leading to the transformation of both and ushering in a new era of well-being in the history of human civilization. The great Swami's Birth Centenary year should be devoted to the spread of his message all over the world to achieve abiding peace and brotherhood amongst mankind.

I wish all success to your Centenary celebrations.

(Signed) SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

President:

Ramakrishna Math & Mission

RASHTRAPATHI BHAVAN

NEW DELHI 4

January 9, 1963

MESSAGE

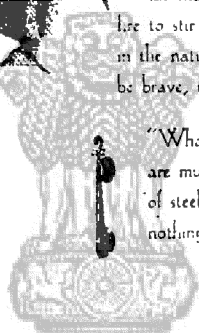
I am happy to know that the Centenary of Swami Vivekananda's birth is being celebrated in New York. A deeply religious man himself the Swami was not content with merely preaching and practising the highest ideals of Hindu religion and philosophy. He believed that true worship lies in the service of the poor and the lowly, and called upon his followers to a mission of service irrespective of casts, community and religion. By his catholicity of outlook and broad humanism, he succeeded in attracting to himself a large number of followers both from the East and the West, and it is fitting that the Centenary of his birth should be celebrated in New York which for some years was a centre of his activities.

(Signed) S. RADHAKRISHNAN



"Your country requires heroes,
be heroes. Stand firm like a
rock. Truth always triumphs
What India wants is a new electric
fire to stir up fresh vigour
in the national vein. Be brave,
be brave, man die but once "

"What our country now wants
are muscles of iron and nerves
of steel—gigantic wills which
nothing can resist —"



सत्यमेव जयते



At
MADRAS

Procession

**Address by Mr. John P. Rutherford
Vice President Ramakrishna Vivekananda
Centre, New York**

We are here tonight to honour the memory of this very great man. Narendra, later known to the world as Swami Vivekananda, was born in Calcutta in 1863. I think we are familiar with the story of his life but I wonder whether we have thought of the very close ties which bind each one of us to him.

In 1881 at the age of eighteen he came to Sri Ramakrishna. Few of us would be here tonight, if at one time we had not felt doubts similar to those which moved Narendra to question the traditional religious background in which he had been reared. He could not accept religion on mere faith, he wanted demonstration of God. Sri Ramakrishna, who had verified that the approach of the Christian, the way of the Mohamadan, the Yoga of the Hindu, all led to the one God, taught the young Narendra. This brought him to the experience which forever dispels doubt.

Community Church — More than 200 people gathered in the Community Church here Sunday afternoon for a meeting celebrating the 100th anniversary of the birth of a Hindu philosopher whose influence has spanned the continents.

Sponsors of the meeting were the Community Church and the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Centre of New York. They were honouring the birth of Swami Vivekananda, founder of the modern Hindu movement in the United States and disciple of the Hindu teacher, Sri Ramakrishna, who was the organizer of the Vedanta movement in India and who brought a new spirit of reformation into the Hindu religion.

The principal speaker was Dr. Houston Smith, head of the department of philosophy at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Other speakers were the Rev. Donald Harrington, minister of the Community Church, and Swami Nikhilananda, of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre in New York.

Dr. Smith characterized Swami Vivekananda as a man who was able to "rouse the slumber-

After Sri Ramakrishna's death in 1886 Narendra and 11 other disciples renounced the world and banded together in a monastic order. In 1893 he came to represent Hinduism at The Parliament of Religions in Chicago. The impact of this young monk on the 7,000 men and women gathered there was amazing. The only previous contact of consequence between the United States and the ideals of the Vedas had been the transcendentalist movement inspired by Emerson.

Swami Vivekananda stayed on in this country for 4 years; not as a missionary recruiting converts to a dogma, but as a loving guide to light the path of the soul's awakening. He was the channel through which flowed Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual legacy to us.

The identity of all true religions in their aspiration for God was Sri Ramakrishna's message to the world. Vivekananda brought this message of religious unity to America and it is most appropriate that this gathering be addressed by one dedicated to the unity of nations.

ing fires of religion in millions of hearts in the East and West before his death." The Swami was borne January 12, 1863 in Calcutta and before his death at 39 had achieved world-wide fame for his religious teachings and his efforts to raise the standard of living for the Indian masses.

"He was a man" said Dr. Smith, "who has fully geared in to the temporal as well as the spiritual existence of mankind."

"I think," Dr. Smith added, "that we recognize something of our own best selves in him."

Dr. Smith also reviewed the Swami's life and works and traced his influence in religious thought, particularly his speeches at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893. The Swami remained in the United States for three years, touring the country, talking to various groups, giving lectures, and conducting classes. In 1896 he founded the Vedanta Society of New York, which Dr. Smith said, "has done so much to enrich the cultural life of our land."

Rev. Harrington praised the Swami's vision of what he called "universal religion."

Detroit Tribune
February 19, 1894
Page 57

Vive Kananda,
Brahmin Monk of India.
In the costume of his Order.

At 8 o'clock P.M. on Tuesday evening
at Unitarian Church. Tickets 50c. Seated
for 10 o'clock. Program: 1. The tale of
Maharajah and Wajah & Hare
2. The story of the "Right" of
the "Prisoners" & "Masters of English"
3. Session of World's Parliament.

Detroit Tribune
Feb. 19, 1894

VIVE EXTRA LECTURE
UNITARIAN CHURCH.
KANANDA

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 21.
SUBJECT "LOVE." ADMISSION 50 CENTS.

The Detroit Journal, March 10, 1894

DETROIT OPERA HOUSE.
SUNDAY EVE., March 11.
KANANDA
"The Christian Monk of India."
ALL RESERVED SEATS IN GALLERY 25c.
Reserved Seats at Box Office.

The Detroit Tribune, March 10, 1894

DETROIT OPERA HOUSE
SUNDAY **KANANDA** SUBJECT:
"THE CHRISTIAN
MONK
OF INDIA."
MARCH 11.
Admission 50c with reserved seat—Gallery 25c. Reserved seats at Box Office

ADVERTISEMENTS THAT APPEARED IN U.S.A.

"He was a true prophet," the minister said, "speaking words that can unite, and the day will come when all men will recognize his truth. He had the great words our world needs today—harmony and peace, not dissention. That is why we still turn to him today 100 years after his birth."

Swami Nikhilananda pointed out that Swami Vivekananda, unlike many saints, was intensely interested in human problems.

"He felt sore at heart and terribly afflicted at the condition of the masses in India," the

Asia Society, New York—Three eloquent testimonials to the Indian religious teacher, Swami Vivekananda, were given here Thursday night before a hushed audience of Americans.

Convened to commemorate the birth centenary of the renowned leader were 250 residents of the New York metropolitan area. The event took place in New York's Asia House, a seven-story modern structure on Manhattan's East Side which houses a large Oriental Library and is host to speakers and programmes which further East-West understanding.

The meeting is one of a series being celebrated in New York and one of thousands taking place all over the world to honour the Swami. Speakers of the evening who paid tribute to his memory were Professor Amiya Chakravarty of Boston University's department of comparative oriental religions and literature; Swami Budhananda of the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Center, and Dr. Ainslee Embree of Columbia University's committee on oriental studies.

Prof. Chakravarty, who has been teaching in Boston for a number of years, commented on Swami Vivekananda's experience during his four years in the United States.

"Vivekananda was as much at home in the West as in the East," he said. "He found as much spirituality burning in the hearts of the people of America as in the hearts of his own people."

"Vivekananda repeatedly said, 'When I see an American woman working in her home, I understand the meaning of humanity—the sacrifice, energy, and intelligence with which

Swami said

"He awakened the spirit of consciousness of many men and women in America and the West. He wanted to introduce western science and technology into India to raise the condition of the masses."

He stressed the reality of God, the divinity of the soul, the harmony of religions—they are complimentary, not contradictory—and the unity of existence and solidarity in men."

the American home is run.'

"How could Vivekananda condemn the West, having in his spiritual household friends and followers from all over America?" asked Mr. Chakravarty.

The audience offered mute testimony to these observations. In its number were American members of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center including Swami Atmaghananda, one of the few Americans to be named Swami (in 1929).

Dr. Chakravarty expressed a "feeling of a great coming together of East and West."

"The United States is a land of many unities," he stated, referring to Vivekananda's belief in the harmony of religions, each according to its own country and needs.

"We Indians are now conscious of an image of your country revealed to us through the writings of two of your poets, Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson."

"Emerson read very widely from Indian literature and found the echo of his own thoughts in what he read there."

Swami Budhananda's talk centered on the life of Vivekananda and his religious teachings.

Dr. Ainslee recounted how 17th, 18th century Western writers all pictured India differently, and described how Vivekananda tried to reconcile conflicting impressions of the country.

"Vivekananda exalted India, uplifted India, in religious terms," Dr. Ainslee said. "He



The Master Disciple



had a deep and genuine concern for social and political India and accepted the challenge of a disunited India by reiterating the need for unity in religious and spiritual concepts."

"The best introduction to Vivekananda is not, however, to read about him but to read him," "The Swami's personality, with all its charm and face, its courageousness, its spiritual authority its fury and its fun, comes through to you very strongly in his writings and recorded words."

To coincide with the birth centenary of Vivekananda, a new compilation of his writings, *What Religion Is: In the Words of Swami Vivekananda*, was published last October by the Julian Press. It was edited by John Yale (Brahmachari Prema Chitanya) of the Vedanta

Society of Southern California and carries the above introduction by Christopher Isherwood.

The Vedanta Society of St. Louis, as part of its celebration of the Vivekananda Centenary, has presented copies of the book *Vivekananda: the Yogas and Other Works* compiled and biography by Swami Nikhilananda, to 117 universities and colleges, 66 public libraries, one high school and one ethical society, and plans a further distributions. The St. Louis society has also distributed a booklet compiled by its leader Swami Satprakashananda entitled *The Universal Message of Swami Vivekananda*.

In Portland, Oregon, the Vedanta Society has formed a centenary committee to collect funds to purchase books by Swami Vivekananda to be given as gifts to local public libraries.

Berlin

On the occasion of Swami Vivekananda's hundredth birth anniversary, a 'Swami Vivekananda Centenary Committee' was founded in the German Democratic Republic and a symposium was held in Berlin on January 14 and 15 this year.

The Symposium was organized jointly by the Institute of Indology of the Humboldt University and the South East Asia Society of the German Democratic Republic, with the Director of the Institute of Indology, Academician Prof. Dr. Walter Ruben presiding and Mrs. Hiltrud Ruestau, research fellow on modern Indian philosophy at the Institute of Indology, Berlin, acting as Secretary.

The Symposium was devoted to the discussion of the role of Swami Vivekananda within the perspective of the Indian freedom movement, and to problems of the historical, social, and literary development of Bengal in the 19th and 20th centuries. Among others the Symposium was attended by Professors, lecturers and students of the Humboldt University, research works of the Oriental Institute of the German Academy of Sciences, by Indians in Berlin, and representatives of the South East Asia Society of the GDR and the Ministries of External Affairs and Culture.

Inaugurating the Symposium Prof.

Dr. Ruben welcomed the guests on behalf of the Swami Vivekananda Centenary Committee of the German Democratic Republic and read out a message of greetings sent by the Chairman of the South East Asia Society of the GDR, Minister of Health Max Seifert. In his presidential address, Prof. Dr. Ruben traced back the roots of Swami Vivekananda's philosophy to classical Indian philosophy. He evaluated Vivekananda's philosophical thought within the perspective of Bengali and Indian society of the 19th century and he concluded his address by making an assessment of Swami Vivekananda's place in the world history of philosophy.

The main paper of the Symposium was read by Mrs. Hiltrud Ruestau, Secretary of the Swami Vivekananda Centenary Committee. Being an M.A. of Philosophy Mrs. Ruestau is doing research at present on modern Indian philosophy, with Swami Vivekananda attracting her main interest. She is preparing her Ph. D. thesis on the conception of Karma Yoga of Swami Vivekananda as compared to that of Tilak. In her paper Mrs. Ruestau gave an outline of Swami Vivekananda's life and thought. She stressed his ardent patriotism, his opposition to the colonial exploitation and spiritual degradation of his country by the foreign rulers, and his long for social justice and equality. By reviving the rich Indian

cultural heritage and defending the genuine spiritual values of Hinduism, Swami Vivekananda inspired a whole generation of Indians in their fight against colonial oppression, Mrs. Ruestau said.

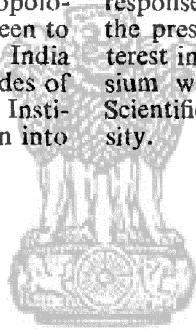
Dr. Ralf-Dietrich Jung, an exstudent of the well-known Calcutta statistician-and anthropologist Prof. Dr. Ramakrishna Mukherjee, discussed the changes that took place in Bengal from the time of Ram Mohan Roy to that of Swami Vivekananda and traced the reflections of the changes on the thinking of those two great champions of Indian patriotism. He also showed how both of them had drunk deeply from the wells of ancient Indian philosophy and mainly from the Upanishads.

Other papers dealt with the origin and role of the Bengali bhadraloks, the sociology of Swami Vivekananda, problems of Indian historiography, Bengali short stories, and contemporary Indian novels. The anthropologist Dr. Joachim Heidrich who had been to India recently on a Government of India scholarship, showed beautiful colour slides of Indian village life. Mr. Kyritz of the Institute of Phonetics gave an introduction into

classical Indian music, with the help of records and tape recordings, and Mrs. Doris Kahane spoke on the pictures she had painted during her stay in India in 1958-60. In the evening of January 15th, Satyajit Ray's documentary on Rabindranath Tagore was screened before a large enthusiastic audience, in the cinema hall of the University.

A lively discussion took place on almost all the papers read at the Symposium, among the participants being the Professor for Polish literature at the Humboldt University, Prof. Dr. Falkenhayn, Dr. Horst Krueger of the German Academy of Sciences and ex-Cultural Adviser to the Trade Representation of the G.D.R. in India, and the Indian research student Sunil Sengupta, an M.A. from Santiniketan University.

The Symposium got a very encouraging response from the University authorities, and the press and radio in Berlin took great interest in it. The proceedings of the Symposium was published shortly in full by the Scientific Journal of the Humboldt University.



(Vivekananda) shares the life of those about him, enters into their joys and sorrows, rejoices with them, mourns with them, but through it all, he never forgets who he is, whence he came, or what the purpose of his coming. He never forgets his divinity. He Remembers that he is the great, the glorious, the majestic Self. He knows that he came from that ineffable, supernal region which has no need of the sun or moon, for it is illumined by the Light of lights. He knows that he was, long before the time when 'all the sons of God sang together for joy'.

Sister Christine

**HAND OF
DESTINY**



THE MAKING OF

The light of the world dawned for the first time upon the future Swami Vivekananda on Monday, January 12, 1863. It was the holy hour of dawn just six minutes before the sunrise. It was the seventh day of the new moon in the month of Poush which is the ninth month of the Bengali year and as chance would have it, it was the day of Makara Sankranti, a great Hindu festival.

The infant grew and the time came when he had to be named. Some suggested that it should be Durga Das after the grandfather who had renounced the world. But the mother said, "Let it be Vireshwar," after the aspect of Shiva which she worshipped before the child's birth and Vireshwar it was. They called him *Bileh* for short. Later, Vireshwar became Narendra Nath.

Naughty and Restless Child

Narendra Nath was a naughty child, subject to fits of restlessness during which he was beyond control. At such time he would wear the family out. Bribes, threats—nothing was of any avail. Everything was tried, but in vain. Finally, Bhuvaneshwari (mother) found that if she poured cold water on the head of the screaming child, at the same time chanting the name of Shiva in his ear, or threatened

V
I
V
E
K
A
N
D
A

him with "Shiva will not let you come to *kailasa* if you do not behave," he would quiet down and become his eager, joyous self again. It was after such scenes that the mother used to say, "I prayed to Shiva for a son and He has sent me one of his demons." Aside from these outbursts he was a sunny-tempered, sweet, loving child, but of such an extraordinary restlessman that it took two nurses to take care of him.

The boy had a great fancy for wandering monks. Whenever a Sadhu came to the door, Naren was delighted. One day a monk came and asked for alms. All that the boy had was a piece of new cloth wrapped round his waist. Straightway he gave it to the Sadhu who placed it on his head and went away. When asked what had become of the cloth, the boy replied, "The monk begged me for alms and I gave it to him." Thereafter whenever a monk appeared boy was locked up. But that did not disconcert him; he would throw out of the window to the monk anything the room contained as an offering, and then enjoy the excitement. What a tease he was!

Young Naren played at meditation in those days. Though it was play, it awakened in him deep spiritual emotions. The boys of the neighbourhood sometimes joined him in this pastime.

Narendranath At School

At the age of six Naren went to the *Patha-shala*, the school where the boys are initiated into the three R's. But schools are strange places where one is apt to meet with strange comrades, and after a few days he had acquired a vocabulary which quite upset the family's sense of propriety. Never again, determined all the household, should he go to school. Instead, a private tutor was engaged, who conducted classes in the ancient worship-hall for Naren and some of the other boys of the neighbourhood.

At the age of seven he knew by heart almost the whole of *Mugdhabodha*, a Sanskrit grammar, as well as passages of great length from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*.

In 1871, when Naren was eight years old he entered the ninth class of Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar's Metropolitan Institution. His exceptional intelligence was at once

recognised by teachers and classmates. But he was so restless that they say of him that he never really sat down at his desk at all.

Soon after that he would have to study English. He was not willing to do so. It was a foreign language, he said, so why should he learn it? The teachers persisted and the boy went home crying to his parents, who agreed with the teachers. When he did commence to study English several months later, everyone was astonished at his enthusiasm and the ease with which he acquired it.

No Truck With Superstition

Even at this early age he evinced an impatience with superstition and fear, no matter how hallowed by tradition. The following incident is illustrative of this quality. He was in the habit of climbing a tree in the compound of one of his friends, not only to gather flowers, but to get rid of his superfluous energy by swinging to and fro, head downward, and then somersaulting to the ground. These antics annoyed the old, half-blind grandfather of the house, and he thought to stop them by telling Naren that the tree was haunted by a *Brahma-daitya*—the ghost of an uninitiated Brahmin—dressed in white, that broke the necks of those who climbed the tree. Naren listened politely; but when the old man was out of sight, he again began to climb the tree. His friend who had taken the words of the old man seriously remonstrated. But Naren laughed at his seriousness and said, "What an ass you are Why, my neck would have been off long before this if the old grandfather's ghost story were true!"

Deepening Spiritual Insight

In the year 1877, while Naren was a student of the third class, his father (Vishwanath Datta) went to Raipur in the Central Provinces. He arranged that his family should follow him later on under the charge of Naren. It was a long journey partly by bullock-cart via Allahabad and Jubbulpore through dense forests and over unfrequented roads, for the railways were in those days constructed only up to Nagpur. An incident happened on the way which shows that his spiritual insight was deepening. He had had vision and many moods of spiritual consciousness; this experience was induced by contemplating the beauties of nature

Passes Examination With Distinction

Vishwanath Datta returned to Calcutta with his family in 1879. There was some difficulty about getting Naren into school, for he had been absent for two years, but his teachers loved him and remembering his ability made an exception in his case. Then he gave himself up to study, mastering three years' lessons in one, and passed the Entrance Examination in the first division. He was the only student in the school to attain that distinction. His father gave him a watch as a reward.

When he had passed the Entrance Examination, Naren had made much advance in knowledge. While he was in the Entrance class he had mastered a great many standard works of the English and the Bengali literature and had read many books of history. He had specially studied standard works on Indian history by such authors as Marshman and Elphinstone. As he paid little attention to the text books, sometimes he used to work hard just on the eve of the examinations. Once he said, "Just two or three days before the Entrance Examination I found that I hardly knew anything of Geometry. Then I began to study the subject keeping awake for the whole night and in course of twenty-four hours I mastered the four books of Geometry."

Naren studied at the Presidency College for a year; but after that time he entered the General Assembly's Institution founded by the Scottish General Missionary Board. It is now known as the Scottish Church College.

Professor Mention Ramakrishna

It was while he was in the First Arts classes that he met for the first time in November, 1881, Shri Ramakrishna Paramhansa. It will be interesting to note here how he first came to hear of the great saint Professor William

Hastie, the great scholar, was at that time the Principal of the Institution. One day during the absence of the professor of English he took over the literature class. He was explaining Wordsworth's "Excursion," in which the poet refers to the state of trance of which the poet had had a glimpse while contemplating the beauties of nature. The students did not understand. The professor said, "Such an experience is the result of purity of mind and concentration on some particular object, and it is rare indeed, particularly in these days. I have seen only one person who has experienced that blessed states of mind, and he is Ramakrishna Paramhansa of Dakshineswar. You can understand if you go there and see for yourself." It was thus that Naren heard of his future Master, and not through the Brahmo Samaj of which he was a member.

Interest In Brahmo Samaj

It was at this period that he began to interest himself in the issues of the day, specially Brahmo Samaj. The healthy activities of the Brahmo Samaj were in sharp contrast to the moribund state of Hindu society; and its leader, Keshab Chandra Sen, the hero of a hundred platforms, was idol of young Bengal.

For a time the intellectual atmosphere of the Brahmo Samaj satisfied him; he felt uplifted during the prayers and devotional songs. But presently it began to drawn on him that, if God was to be realised, he was no nearer the goal than before he joined it. What were philosophies and Vedas, but attempts to describe the Indescribable? They were useless if they did not bring one to the feet of the Lord!

Frantic Search For Truth

In this longing to know the Truth he turned to Mahatshi Debendra Nath Tagore, who was regarded by many as one of the best of spiritual

Ye divinities on earth-sinners! It is a sin to call a man so; it is a standing libel on human nature. Come up, O lions, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep, you are souls immortal, spirits free, blest and eternal; ye are not matter, ye are not bodies; matter is your servant, not you the servant of matter.

If you have faith in the three hundred and thirty millions of your mythological gods, and in all the gods which foreigners have introduced into your midst, and still have no faith in yourselves, there is no salvation for you. Have faith in yourselves and stand up on that faith.

Vivekananda

teachers. Naren had been, in company with some friends, to see him once before, and he had advised them to practise meditation with great intensity. So to the Maharshi who lived in retirement in a boat on the Ganga, Naren, burning with the desire to know God, went a second time. The sudden appearance of Naren startled the venerable old man. Before he could say a word, Naren, tense with excitement, burst out the question : "Sir, have you seen God?" The Maharshi was unable to answer and contented himself with saying, "My boy, you have the Yogi's eyes." Naren came away disappointed. No, the Maharshi had not seen God. He went to the leaders of other religious sects, and not one of them could say that he had seen God. Where then should he go? Suddenly he remembered Shri Ramakrishna, whom he had met for the first time at the house of a devotee of his, named Surendra Nath Mitra in November, 1881, Whither Naren had gone to singing, had made inquiries about Naren and had even invited him to Dakshineswar. So Naren decided to go to Dakshineswar with Surendra Nath and put his question.

First Meeting With Paramhansa

At their meeting Shri Ramakrishna instantaneously recognised that Naren was the one who was to carry his message to the world. Narendra too was profoundly moved at his first visit to the Master. He told some of his friends of it later, though with some reserve :

"Well, I sang the song ; but shortly after, he suddenly rose and taking me by the hand led me to the northern verandah, shutting the door behind him. It was locked from the outside ; so we were alone. I thought that he would give me some private instructions. But to my utter surprise he began to shed profuse tears of joy as he held my hand, and addressing me most tenderly as one long familiar to him, said, 'Ah, you come so late.' How could you be so unkind as to keep me waiting so long! My ears are well-nigh burnt in listening to the profane talks of worldly people. Oh, how I yearn to unburden my mind to one who can appreciate my innermost experience ! Thus he went on amid sobs. The next moment he stood before me with folded hands and began to address me 'Lord, I know you are that ancient sage, Nara—the Incarnation of Narayana—born on earth to remove the miseries of mankind,' and so on !

The Saint's 'Strange' Conduct

"I was altogether taken aback by his conduct. 'Who is this man whom I have come to see,' I thought, 'he must be stark mad ! Why, I am but the son of Vishwanath Datta, and yet he dares to address me thus !' But I kept quiet allowing him to go on. Presently he went back to his room, and bringing some sweets, sugar candy, and butter, began to feed me with his own hands. In vain did I say again and again, 'Please give the sweets to me, I shall share them with my friends !' He simply said, 'They may have some afterwards,' and desisted only after I had eaten all. Then he seized me by the hand and said, 'Promise that you will come alone to me at an early date.' At his importunity I had to say 'yes' and returned with him to my friends.

"But I could not reconcile his words with his strange conduct with me. So I concluded that he must be a monomaniac. Yet I could not help acknowledging the magnitude of his renunciation. 'He may be a mad man,' I thought, 'but only the fortunate few can have such renunciation. Even if insane, this man is the holiest of the holy, a true saint, and for that alone he deserves the reverential homage of mankind !' With such conflicting thoughts I bowed before him and begged his leave to return to Calcutta."

Though Naren considered him to be a mad man, he was at a loss to account for the strange feeling of blessedness that came over him as he sat near the Master.

The following is the description of this momentous meeting given by Narendra to some of his brother-disciples :

'Novel Experience Within Me'

I did not realise then that the temple-garden of Dakshineswar was so far from Calcutta, as on the previous occasion I had gone there in a carriage. The road seemed to me so long as to be almost endless. However I reached the garden somehow and went straight Shri Ramakrishna's room. I found him sitting alone on the small bedstead. He was glad to see me and calling me affectionately to his side, made me sit beside him on his bed. But the next moment I found him overcome with a sort of emotion. Muttering something to himself, with his eyes fixed on me, he slowly drew near me. I thought he might do some-

thing queer as on the previous occasion. But in the twinkling of an eye he placed his right foot on my body. The touch at once gave rise to a novel experience within me. With my eyes open I saw that the walls, and everything in the room, whirled rapidly and vanished into naught, and the whole universe together with my individuality was about to merge in an all-encompassing mysterious void ! I was terribly frightened and thought that I was facing death, for the loss of individuality meant nothing short of that. Unable to control myself I cried out, what is it that you are doing to me ! I have my parents at home !” He laughed aloud at this and stroking my chest said, “All right, let it rest now. Everything will come in time !” The wonder of it was that no sooner had he said this than that strange experience of mine vanished. I was myself again and found everything without the room as it has been before.”

More Surprise In Store

A few days after the above experience, Narendra Nath paid his third visit to the Master at Dakshineswar, and though he was determined not to be influenced, yet he fared no better than the other times. Shri Ramakrishna took him that day to the adjacent garden of Jadunath Malik. After a stroll in the garden they sat down in the parlour. Soon Shri Ramakrishna fell into a trance and touched Narendra Nath. In spite of all his precautions Naren was totally overwhelmed and immediately lost all outward consciousness. When he came to himself after a while, he found the Master stroking his chest.

Naren had no idea of the happenings of period, but it was then the Master learned many strange things about him. Referring to this incident, he said later on “I put several questions to him while he was in that state. I asked him about his antecedents and where he lived, his mission in this world and the duration of his mortal life. He dived deep into

himself and gave fitting answers to my questions. They only confirmed what I had seen and inferred about him. Those things shall be a secret, but I came to know that he was a sage who had that the day he knew his real nature, he would give up the body, by an act of will, through Yoga.”

He devoted himself with his entire heart and soul to the task of realising God, willing accepting from Shri Ramakrishna the necessary advice and help which appealed to his reason, but only after a searching analysis of the Master's realisation and mode of life.

Naren's days now passed in study and meditation. Often he went to Dakshineswar. At his own home he lived in a room all to himself. Vishwanath Datta, whose ambition was to see Naren a great legal light, made him an assistant to Nimai Charan Bose, a well-known Attorney-at-law. Vishwanath was also desirous of seeing his son marry. On several occasions he had planned for Naren's marriage, but for some reason or other arrangements were always broken off.

Sudden Death Of Father

Naren sat for his B. A. Examination in 1884. Some days after the examination he suddenly came face to face with the grim reality of the world ; his light heartedness and boyishness of spirit received a rude shock. It was the early part of 1884. The examination result was not yet out. He had gone one evening about two miles from the city of Calcutta to visit a friend at Baranagore. It was night and there was much talk. Just as the merriment and song were at their height, a messenger came from Naren's home with the news that his father had died suddenly of heart disease. The news overwhelmed Naren. He hastened at once to Calcutta. The mother, the two sisters, and two younger brother of Naren waiting and weeping. Naren was dazed. He could neither weep nor speak. According

The history of the world, is the history of a few men who had faith in themselves. That faith calls out the Divinity within. You can do anything. You fail only when you do not strive sufficiently to manifest infinite power. As soon as a man or a nation loses faith in himself or itself, death comes. Believe first in yourself, and then in God.

He is an atheist who does not believe in himself. The old religions said that he was an atheist who did not believe in God. The new religion says that he is the atheist who does not believe in himself.

Vivekananda

to custom he performed the last rites for his father.

Vishwanath's sudden death placed the entire family in a desperate condition, for he was the only earning member and always spent more than he earned. The creditors knocked at the door. Relatives who had been indebted to his father in so many ways now turned into enemies. They even resolved to deprive the family of its living quarters. Though Narendra had no income he was compelled to maintain seven or eight persons. Came days of suffering. From comfort Naren was suddenly thrown into the direst poverty, facing at times even actual starvation. Later he made efforts to forget those terrible days, but in vain. So dark were they, so heavy the clouds of fate. Yet he is the real man who meets fate fearlessly and with power, the captain of his soul. This Naren did. He passed his B.A. Examination and was admitted to the Law class. In college he was the poorest of the poor. Even shoes became a luxury: his garments were of the coarsest cloth, and many times he went to his classes without food.

Darkest Period Of Life

The following is Naren's own description this darkest period of his life.

"Even before the period of mourning was over I had to knock about in search of a job. Starving and barefooted, I wandered from office to office under the scorching noon-day sun with an application in hand, one or two intimate friends who sympathised with me in my misfortunes accompanying me sometimes. This first contact with the reality of life convinced me that unselfish sympathy was a rarity in the world—there was no place in it for the weak, the poor and the destitute. I noticed that those who only a few days ago would have been proud to help me in any way, now turned their face against me, though they had enough and to spare. Seeing all this, the world sometimes seemed to me to be the handiwork of the devil.

"Sometimes when I found that there were not enough provisions for the family and my purse was empty, I would pretend to my mother that I had an invitation to dine out and remain practically without food. Out of self-respect I could not disclose the facts to others.

My rich friends sometimes requested me to come to their homes or gardens and sing. I had to comply when I could not avoid it. I did not feel inclined to express my woes before them nor did they try, themselves, to find out my difficulties. A few among them, sometimes, used to ask me. 'Why do you look so pale and weak to-day? Only one of them came to know about my poverty without my knowledge, and, now and then, sent anonymous help to my mother by which act of kindness he has put me under a deep debt of gratitude.

Temptations Come In Way

"Some of my old friend who earned their livelihood by unfair means, asked me to join them. A few among them who had been compelled to follow this dubious way of life by sudden turns of fortune, and in my case, really felt sympathy for me. There were other troubles also. Various temptations came in my way. A rich woman sent me an ugly proposal to end my days of penury which I sternly rejected with scorn. Another woman also made similar overtures to me. I said to her, 'you have wasted your life seeking the pleasures of the flesh. Your dark shadows of death are before you. Have done anything to face that? Give up all these filthy desires and remember God.'

"In spite of all these troubles, however, I never lost faith in the existence of God nor in His divine mercy. Every morning taking His name I got up and went out in search of a job. One day my mother overheard me and said bitterly, 'Hush, you fool, you have been crying yourself hoarse for God from your childhood, and what has He done for you?' I was stung to the quick. Doubt crossed my mind. 'Does God really exist,' I thought, 'and if so, does He really hear the fervent prayer of man? Then why is there on response to my passionate appeals? Why is there so much woe in His benign kingdom? Why does Satan rule in the realm of the Merciful God?' Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidya-sagar's words—'if God is good and gracious, why then do millions of people die for want of a morsels of food at times of famine?'—rang in my ears with bitter irony. I was exceedingly cross with God. It was also the most opportune moment for doubt to creep into my heart.

Calumny Hardens His Heart

"It was ever against my nature to do any-

thing secretly. On the contrary it was a habit with me from my boyhood not to hide even my thoughts from others through fear or anything else. So it was quite natural for me now to proceed to to prove before the world that even if He existed, to call upon Him was fruitless. Soon the report gained currency that I was an atheist and did not scruple to drink or even frequent houses of ill fame. This unmerited calumny hardened my heart still more. I openly declared that in this miserable world there was nothing reprehensible in a man who, seeking for a brief respite, would resort to anything. Not only that, but if I was once convinced of the efficacy of such a course. I would not, through fear of anybody, shrink from following it.

"A garbled report of the matter soon reached the ears of the Master and his devotees in Calcutta. And when one of his favourite disciples, Bhavanath, said to him with tears in his eyes, 'Sir, I could not even dream that Narendra could stoop so low,' he was furious and said, 'Hush, you fool! The Mother has told me that it can never be so. I shan't be able to look at you if you speak to me again like that.'

"But notwithstanding these forced atheistic views, the vivid memory of the divine visions I had experienced since my boyhood, and especially after my contact with Shri Ramakrishna, would lead me to think that God must exist and that there must be some way to realise Him. Otherwise life would be meaningless. In the midst of all troubles and tribulations I must find that way. Days passed and the mind continued to waver between doubt and certainty. My pecuniary wants also remained just the same.

Prayer to Divine Mother

"One day the idea struck me that God listened to Shri Ramakrishna's prayers; so

why should I not ask him to pray for me for the removal of my pecuniary wants—a favour the Master would never deny me? I hurried to Dakshinewar and insisted on his making the appeal on behalf of my starving family. He said, 'My boy, I can't make such demands. But why don't you go and ask the Mother yourself? All your sufferings are due to your sufferings are due to your disregard of Her.' I said, 'I do not know the Mother, you please speak to Her on my behalf. You must.' He replied tenderly, 'My dear boy, I have done so again and again. But you do not accept Her, so She does not grant my prayer. All right, it is Tuesday—go to the Kali temple tonight, prostrate yourself before the Mother and ask Her any boon you like. It shall be granted. She is Knowledge Absolute, the Inscrutable Power of Brahman, and He mere will has given birth to this world. Everything is in Her power to give.' I believed every word and eagerly waited for the night. About 9 o'clock the Master commanded me to go to the temple. As I went, I was filled with a divine intoxication. My feet were unsteady. My heart was leaping in anticipation of the joy of beholding the living Goddess and hearing Her words. I was full of the idea. Reaching the temple, as I cast my eyes upon the image, I actually found that the Divine Mother was living and conscious, the Perennial Fountain of Divine Love and Beauty. I was caught in a surging wave of devotion and love. In an ecstasy of joy I prostrated myself again and again before the Mother and prayed, 'Mother, give me discrimination! Give unto me knowledge and devotion! Grant that I may have an uninterrupted vision of Thee!' A serene peace reigned in my soul. The world was forgotten. Only the Divine Mother shone within my heart.

Thrice Fails in Object

"As soon as I returned, the Master asked

 * The Voice of Asia has been the voice of religion. The Voice of Europe *
 * is the Voice of politics. India is immortal, if she persists in her search for *
 * God. *
 * I do not mean to say that political or social improvements are not *
 * necessary, but what I mean is this, and I want you to bear it in mind, that they *
 * are secondary here, and that religion is primary. *
 * None can resist her (India) any more; never is she going to sleep any *
 * more; no outward powers can hold her back any more; for the infinite giant *
 * is rising to her feet. *
 * Vivekananda *

me if I had prayed to the Mother for the removal of my world wants. I was startled at this question and said 'No, sir, I forgot all about it. But is there any remedy now?' 'Go again,' said he, 'and tell Her about your wants.' I again set out for the temple, but at the sight of the Mother again forgot my mission, bowed to Her repeatedly and prayed only for love and devotion. The Master asked me if I had done it the second time. I told him what had happened. He said, 'How thoughtless! Couldn't you restrain yourself enough to say those few words? Well, try once more and make that prayer to Her. Quick!' I went for the third time, but on entering the temple a terrible shame overpowered me. I thought, 'What a trifle I have come to pray to the Mother about.' It is like asking a gracious king for a few vegetables! What a fool I am! In shame and remorse I bowed to Her respectfully and said, 'Mother, I want nothing but knowledge and devotion.' Coming out of the temple I understood that all this was due to the Master's will. Otherwise how could I fail in my object no less than thrice? I came to him and said, 'Sir, it is you who have cast a charm over my mind and made me forgetful. Now please grant me the boon that my people at home may no longer suffer the pinch of poverty.' He said, 'Such a prayer never comes from my lips. I asked you to pray for yourself. But you couldn't do it. It appears that you are not destined to enjoy worldly happiness. Well, I can't help it.' But I wouldn't let him go. I insisted on his granting that prayer. At last he said, 'All right, your people at home will never be in want of plain food and clothing'."

Five Years With Guru

To Shri Ramakrishna, Naren was indebted for his introduction to Hinduism. This understanding was a process. Naren came by it in watching his Master in religious worship, in religious teaching and in religious ecstasy. The spirit of this understanding was communicated to Naren in spite of himself. The Master injected his own consciousness, his own personal realisation of the Mother and of Hinduism in to the soul of Naren. How he did this is not fully known. The process was purely spiritual and too subtle to be explained. The doubting Naren was passing away; the devotional Naren, the spiritual Naren—Naren, the Hindu—was being born.

For five years Naren had the company of his Guru. These years were a period of silent realisation, silent teaching and silent assimilation. Every time Naren visited Dakshineswar it was a strring event both to himself and the Master, marking the intensification of their relationship and the absorption of ideas and ideals on the part of the disciple. He was becoming saturated with spirituality. The Master gave him all that was to be given, all that he had. Shri Ramekrishna was like one who had struggled hard amidst insuperable difficulties to acquire a great treasure, and Naren was the son and heir who was to reap this treasure. Shri Ramakrishna had built up a great spiritual empire by conquering the dangerous invaders—lust and gold. Naren was to extend this empire over the earth. Shri Ramakrishna had dived deep down into the spiritual ocean. Naren was to show to the world the treasures which the Master had found therein. Shri Ramakrishna was the realisation and insight, and Naren was to become the utterance thereof.

It was in the middle of 1885 that Shri Ramakrishna showed the first symptom of a throat trouble which ultimately ended in the fatal cancer. He suffered so much from the intense heat of the summer that he began the use of ice. After a month or two he developed pain in his throat which was aggravated by talking and Samadhi. A physician was consulted who prescribed the necessary medicine and warned him against much talking, and at the same time cautioned the devotees against his going into Samadhi too often. But all attempts of the devotees to control the Master proved futile. At about that time Shri Ramakrishna attended a festival at Panihati, in the suburb of Calcutta, spending the whole day in singing and dancing and often going into Samadhi. The result was an aggravation of the diagnosed it as 'clergyman's sore throat.' The Master carried out the instructions of the physician in all things but in the two essentials. Whenever there was an occasion for deep spiritual converse, he would lose all body-consciousness and go into ecstasies, or when afflicted people came to him for solace he would talk, no matter what it cost him. At the same time his communion with God was intensified; he had no regular hours for food or drink; most of his time was spent in meditation and prayer, which with him meant Samadhi. This made the last year of his life a slow crucifixion.

Master's Approaching End

The Master, knowing that he was approaching the end of his mortal existence, was all the more eager to kindle in the heart of his chief disciples a burning desire for the realisation of God, which can only be attained by reducing to ashes all attachment to lust and gold. Therefore, his utterances are replete with a spirit of utter renunciation. Shri Ramakrishna not only imparted his spiritual teaching to his disciples, but he gave them likewise the stimulus and the strength to follow those teachings. His own life, the force of his utterances, the ease with which he slipped into the highest Samadhi and his communion with Divine Realities—all these were as a great Light by which they gained a glorious spiritual consciousness. Coming at a time when Naren was being buffeted on all sides, the Master's teaching sank deep into his heart to remain there for ever, a beacon light to show him the way through the wilderness of illusion.

While Naren was thus engaged in his own spiritual pursuits and in shaping the character of his young brother-disciples, the condition of the Master was going from bad to worse. Medicines proved of no avail, Dr. Mahendra Lal Sarkar thought that it might be due to the foul and congested air of Calcutta and advised removal to some garden-house in the suburbs. After a vigorous search the garden-house belonging to Gopal Chandra Ghosh at Cossipore was hired on rupees eighty a month. On the afternoon of 11th December, 1885, the master was removed to the new premises. He felt much refreshed at this new place on account of its beautiful scenery, free air and solitude.

As the end of the Master came nearer,

Narendra Nath's hankering after the realisation of God increased and intensified. His heart was like a seething cauldron. One night after deciding to go home for a day or two to settle some household affairs he went to bed but could not sleep. Calling Sharat, Junior Gopal and a few others to him he said, "Come, let us have a walk in the garden." As they walked about Naren said, "The Master's disease is most severe. May it not be that he intends to lay down his body! Strive your best for spiritual uplift through service unto him and prayer and meditation, while yet there is time. After his passing away, there will be no end to your repentance. We are wasting our time in the foolish thought that we shall pray to God after finishing this or that business at hand. That is only fastening more chains of desires on us, and desire means death. We must root that out at once."

In that cold starry night they felt a great urge to meditation. A stack of dry hay and twigs was lying near. Naren said, "Set fire to it. It is at this hour that the monk light their Dhuni fires. Let us do the same and burn our desires." The fire was lighted, and the boys sat around it, feeling that they were really making a bonfire of their desires and being actually purged of all impurities.

Shri Ramakrishna Initiates Naren

One day Shri Ramakrishna initiated Naren with the name of Rama, telling him that it was the Mantra which he had received from his own Guru. In consequence of this, Naren's emotions were stirred to tremendous heights. Towards the evening he began to encircle the house, repeating the name of the Lord "Rama ! Rama !" in a high and excited voice. All

If you seek your own salvation, you will go to hell. It is the salvation of others that you must seek and even if you have to go to hell in working for others, that is worth more than to gain heaven by seeking your own salvation. So long as the millions die in hunger and ignorance, I hold every man a traitor who, having been educated at their expense, pays not the least heed to them ! So long as even a single dog in my country is without food, my whole religion will be to feed it. Where should you go to seek for God ? Are not all the poor, the miserable, the weak, gods ? Why not worship them first ? Why gods ? Why not worship them first ? Why go to dig a well on the shores of the Ganges ? Let these people be your God—think of them, work for them, pay for them incessantly—the Lord will show you the way. —Vivekananda

outward consciousness had apparently gone, and he was full of ecstatic fire. When the Master was informed of this, he only said, "Let him be, he will come round in due course." The emotional storm subsided in a few hours, and Naren became his old self again.

The few days that were left to Shri Ramakrishna on this plane were memorable ones for the disciples. One day, Gopal Senior, one of the disciples, brought some Gerua clothes and Rudraksha beads to the Master for distribution among Sadhus. The Master said, "Here are boys full of renunciation. You won't be able to find better monks anywhere. Distribute the clothes and beads amongst them." One evening he called the boys, the future apostles of the Ramakrishna Order and put them through a certain ceremony. Thereafter they were permitted to take food from all irrespective of caste and creed. The Master himself initiated these boys as monks, fulfilling their heart's desire. Thus was sown the seed of the future Ramakrishna Order, which was to grow and develop into a mighty organisation.

Towards the close of the month of July the malady in the Master's throat had made such progress that he could speak only in a whisper, or else make his wishes known by signs. The disciples were grief-stricken that he, their father, their guide, he who loved them all as a mother loves her children, who had borne patiently with them, and had given up his own life for them, was sinking daily. Often, the Master would call the young disciples to his side, addressing them lovingly, speaking eloquently by means of signs of the love he bore them. His constant thought was, "What will become of them without me?" But there was Naren!

It so happened that Naren had been called to the side of the Master some days earlier, when he was suffering intensely and could scarcely speak. The Master wrote on a piece of paper, "Narendra will teach others." Naren hesitated and said, "I won't do that." But the Master replied, "You shall have to do it." Sometime before he had told Naren, "My

Sidhis (powers) will manifest through you in time," meaning thereby that Naren in later years, as a teacher, would in a miraculous way turn many of the most worldly-minded to the spiritual life.

"I Give You My All"

It was now only three or four days before the Master's Mahasamadhi. Shri Ramakrishna called Naren to him. Looking steadfastly at him he entered into deep meditation. Naren felt as if a subtle force, resembling an electric shock, were entering his body, and he lost all outer consciousness. When he came to, he found the Master weeping. Wondering, Naren asked Shri Ramakrishna why he wept, and was told, "Oh Naren, to-day I have given you my all and have become a Fakir, a penniless beggar. By the force of the power transmitted by me, great things will be done by you; only after that will you go to whence you came." Naren suddenly became the possessor of all the spiritual wealth of his Guru, acquired by years of super human effort and at the cost of terrible austerities. Shri Ramakrishna willingly deprived himself of his powers in order that Naren might be endowed with spiritual omnipotence. When that which was Ramakrishna had completed its task in its human Incarnation and manifestation, it gave itself wholly and entirely to Naren, as one gives a flower of bestows a gift, for the good of the world.

A couple of days before the final Mahasamadhi of the Master, as Naren was standing by his side, a curious thought flashed across his mind, "He has said many times that he is an Incarnation of God. If I can make him say now as he is in the throes of death, in the midst of human anguish and physical pain, 'I am God Incarnate,' then I will believe him!" The moment this thought came to him, the Master turned towards him and summoning all his energy said distinctly, "O my Naren, are you not yet convinced? He who was Rama and Krishna is now Ramakrishna in this body—but not from the standpoint of your Vedanta." Naren was stricken, with remorse and shame for having doubted, even for a moment, after so many revelations.

SWAMI AT PARLIAMENT OF RELIGION



Swami Tejasanda, Principal Ramakrishna Vidya Mandir Belur

Before starting for the West, Swamiji had the presentiment that it was his great Master Sri Ramakrishna who was preparing a stage at the heart of Western civilization to bring him before the world as an accredited exponent of Hindu thought and culture for the good of mankind. Feeling this instinctively in the core of his heart, the Swami once said to his brother-disciple Swami Turiyananda, "The Parliament is being organised for this (pointing to himself). My mind tells me so. You will see it verified at no distant date."

As a fulfilment of this prophetic utterance of the Swami, as it were, we witness in this cosmic drama of life a mysterious combination of circumstances which ultimately placed him in the forefront of a shining galaxy of illustrious representatives of the world's religions at Chicago as the first cultural ambassador of the East to the West. The dynamic spiritual message which Swami Vivekananda

proclaimed on that momentous occasion has rung down the corridor of time in superb eloquence during these years and is still gathering momentum from day to day to usher in a new order of human culture and civilization for the well-being of mankind.

Driven as it were, by destiny, Swami Vivekananda, the great apostle of peace, broke loose from the precincts of the monastery at Baranagore and wandered "free from plan, caste, home, constantly alone with God" from the foot of the snow-capped Himalayas to Cape Comorin and, at the end of this historic sojourn, took his seat on the last stone on India at Kanya-Kumari, where he plunged into deep meditation of the past, present and future of his motherland.

In the course of this reverie the picture of a new India loomed large before his mental horizon and he got up from his seat with a

grim resolve to go to the West to carry the message of the Master and to get back in exchange the material resources for feeding the hungry stomachs of his own moribund race so as to make them physically fit for the struggle of life.

As a matter of fact, this idea of going to the West flashed in his mind even when he was trekking through India. It was during this period of his itinerary that Swamiji heard somewhere between Junagad and Porbandar that a Parliament of Religions would be held at Chicago in America in 1893. While staying at Khandwa (in Central India) as a guest in the house of Shri Haridas Chatterjee, a distinguished pleader of the place, Swamiji's idea of attending the Parliament of Religions began to take shape and he said to him. "If some one can help me with the passage money, all will be well, and I shall go." Swamiji reiterated the very same idea at Bangalore towards the end of October 1892 in the presence of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore when he burst forth into an eloquent description of his mission. The proposal of the Swami was hailed with great enthusiasm by the Maharaja who promised the necessary financial help to cover all the expenses of the journey.

As already stated, this idea matured into a sacred resolve at Kanya Kumari from where he now wended his way to Madras. There he very soon attracted around him a brilliant galaxy of educated young men and made a public announcement of his intention to go to the West. In the heat of enthusiasm, his devotees and admirers immediately began to collect funds to make it possible for him to sail for the foreign land in pursuit of his noble mission. But the mind of Swamiji still rocked to and fro with a sense of uncertainty as to the success of the trip he was going to undertake. In such a perplexed state of mind Swamiji prayed to the Master and the Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi for light and guidance.

Several days later, he saw in a dream that Sri Ramakrishna was walking to the waters of the ocean, beckoning him to follow. The Swami was elated with joy to see this vision which unmistakably indicated the approval of the Master in this great undertaking. All doubts and misgivings were silenced and his mind got over the nervousness that temporarily took possession of him. But still he

would not be satisfied, unless he received the blessings of the Holy Mother for the fruition of his mission. He wrote a letter to the Mother with a brief account of his plan and purpose. The Holy Mother instinctively recognized it to be the will of the Master and conveyed her heart-felt blessings to his beloved Naren in a letter, full of overflowing love and affection. Thus fortified with the grace of the Holy Mother and the symbolic command of the Master in a dream to go to the West, Swamiji began to make hurried preparations for the great journey. At long last on the appointed day—the 31st May, 1893, the Swami after bidding farewell to all his intimate friends and admirers and his dear motherland embarked upon the ship and started on his memorable voyage from the old world to the new. This journey of Swami Vivekananda from the East to the West was a historic event of momentous significance in that it not only opened an avenue for the transmission of the most sublime cultural ideas and ideals of India into the wide field of Occidental thought, but also linked up the two hemispheres once for all with the golden tie of mutual love and respect for the evolution of a richer type of civilization for the benefit of humanity at large.

The ship carrying the great cultural messenger of the East, at last came to Vancouver in British Columbia, wherefrom he went by train through Canada to the city of Chicago where the World's Fair—the Universal Exposition, was being held at the time,

After reaching the destination he lodged himself in a hotel for the time being. On the following day when he went out to visit the Fair, he was struck dumb with wonder to see how all the latest scientific and artistic inventions of the entire world had been brought into a focus in that well-arranged and gorgeously decorated exhibition. A keen and shrewd observer, Swami Vivekananda, while marvelling at the tremendous energy displayed by this panorama of exhibits, was able at the same time to gather useful experience about the inventive genius of the people of the West. But all his exhilaration was chilled almost to the freezing point when he came to learn from the Information Bureau of the Exposition that the proposed Parliament of Religions would not be held until after the 1st week of September and that no one would be allowed to attend it as a delegate without official references and that time for the registration of



Swami Vivekananda

*I shall inspire men everywhere, until the world shall know
that it is one with God. Let there be but a dozen.*

delegates had already gone by. Nothing could be more stunning and disconcerting than this piece of unwelcome information which he had just received from the Bureau. His heart sank within him as he did not come there as a representative of a recognized organisation. It was then only the middle of July and he would have still to wait for about two months more, depending on his slender purse which was also being quickly exhausted.

But Swamiji was made of a different stuff. He was not the person to truckle to the adverse forces of life and to give up the noble mission to fulfil which he had come from afar to this distant land of America. Looking up to God as his sole guide, and believing in His infinite grace he girded up his loins and started for Boston (in Massachusetts) where living was less expensive than at Chicago. Mysterious are the ways of Providence. It was a sheer fluke that in the train bound for Boston his pre-possessing and handsome appearance and charming conversation soon attracted the attention of a rich lady who invited him to her farm called "Breezy Meadows" in Met-calf (in Massachusetts). Her name was Miss Kate Sanborn. During the period of his stay in the fashionable house of the obliging hostess, many distinguished persons called on the Swami and had interesting discussions with him on a variety of subjects.

At this time Mr. J. H. Wright, Professor of Greek at the Harvard University, was living at Annisquam (Mass.), a small village resort on the Atlantic sea-board. Coming to hear much about the Swami from the members of the family of Miss Sanborn, he invited him to spend the weekend at his place. Nothing but Providential dispensation could effect such a happy meeting between the two great geniuses of the East and the West. Swamiji promptly responded to this esteemed invitation from a reputed scholar. Prof. Wright was so deeply impressed by the profundity of scholarship and the versatility of genius of this Hindu monk that he himself insisted that he should represent Hinduism in the Parliament of Religions. Swamiji explained the peculiar difficulties that stood in his way in the fulfilment of this object, and said that he did not possess any credentials whereby to introduce himself to the organisers of the Parliament.

Prof. Wright who had already discovered the sparkling intelligence and the rare ability of the Swami, said. "To ask you, Swami, for

your credentials is like asking the Sun to state its right to shine"! Prof. Wright who was well known to the elite of the city of Chicago and also to many distinguished personages connected with the Parliament, wrote at once to his friend, the Chairman of the Committee on the selection of delegates, stating. "Here is a man who is more learned than all our learned professors put together". Moreover, he gave letters of introduction to the Committee which had the responsibility of providing accommodation for Oriental delegates. Knowing that the Swami was short of funds, he himself purchased a ticket for him to go to Chicago. The joy of the Swami knew no bounds to see this literal manifestation of the grace of the Master at this most dismal hour of his life.

Thus through the generous help of Prof. Wright, Swamiji came back to Chicago. But immediately after alighting from the train he discovered to his dismay that he had lost the address of the Committee. He was in great bewilderment as he could not ascertain what he should do under this most baffling situation. It was the chilly month of September and the night was fast approaching, and, to add to his misery, it was also snowing heavily. Besides, none did even deign to talk with a coloured man, far less answer his anxious queries about the whereabouts of a hotel. Extremely hungry and physically exhausted, the Swami who was to take the world by storm very soon in the Parliament of Religions, had no alternative but to take shelter for the night without food in a big empty packing box in the railroad freight-yard wherein he passed the night. When the day dawned, he got out of the sleeping box and, like a true Indian monk, he started begging for food from door to door to satisfy his hunger. But everywhere he was hooted and insulted and doors were slammed in his face in that land of plenty and profusion! Nothing depressed. Swamiji forged ahead, relying entirely on the will of God; for he fully believed that the Lord (his Master) must show him the light even in the midst of this deepening darkness.

Being unable to move any longer due to sheer physical exhaustion, the Swami sat down quietly on the roadside anxiously waiting for guidance from Above. All of a sudden one regal-looking lady stepped down from the magnificent residence standing opposite to where Swamiji was seated, and asked him ni a



*I have a message
to the West as*

**At
The Parliament**

*Buddha had a mes-
sage to the East.*



Last day September, 27, 1863 at Parliament of Religion—Swamiji seated on the right of President

most tender voice whether he was a delegate to the Parliament of Religions. Swamiji while answering in the affirmative, recounted his difficulties in the matter. She immediately took him to her house and entertained him with food and drink and assured him of all possible help to facilitate his participation in the Parliament. From that very moment his benign hostess Mrs. George W. Hale, her husband and their children became his most intimate friends. This unforeseen deliverance from this embarrassing and distressing predicament all the more strengthened his conviction that it was the Master who was testing his loyalty to him at every step and guiding him through thick and thin towards the glorious fruition of the sacred purpose for which he had journeyed to the alien land. Accompanied by Mr. Hale, the Swami went to the office of the Parliament and delivered his credentials. He was immediately accepted as a delegate and comfortably accommodated with the other Oriental delegates. Swamiji lost no time in picking up acquaintance with many distinguished personages who had come to attend the Parliament, and moved freely in the grand circle of ecclesiastics and other dignitaries who walked to and fro in the World Fair.

The Parliament of Religions opened on Monday, the 11th September, 1893, at 10 a. m. in the great Hall of Columbus at the Art Institute at Chicago simultaneously with the ten strokes of the New Library bell, each stroke indicating one of the ten chief religions of the world, represented there at the Parliament. It was indeed a unique phenomenon in the history of religions; for never before did the representatives of the world's religions gather together in one place.

In the centre sat Cardinal Gibbons, the highest prelate of the Roman Catholic Church on the Western continent. On the right and left of him were gathered the Oriental delegates—Pratap Chandra Majumdar of Bengal and Nagarkar of Bombay who were representatives of the Brahmo Samaj; Dharmapala who represented the Buddhists of Ceylon; Gandhi (a distant relative of Mahatma Gandhi) representing Jainism, and Mr. Chakravorty who represented Theosophy with Mrs. Annie Besant. Conspicuous among these Oriental delegates was Swami Vivekananda who with his noble bearing, bright countenance and gorgeous apparel and a large yellow

turban soon attracted the attention of the assembled thousands that congregated on that historic occasion. In the midst of this vast concourse of enlightened men and women, swami Vivekananda stood up with all the dignity, grace and charm of his spiritual personality, and, bowing down to Goddess Saraswati, surveyed in a sweep the whole assembly of the great hall and addressed the distinguished gathering as "Sisters and Brothers of America."

No sooner had these words been uttered, says Dr. Barrows, the Chairman of the Committee on the selection of delegates, than there arose a peal of applause that lasted for several minutes and the entire audience rose to their feet as a mark of appreciation of the great Swami who cast off all formalism of the Congress and spoke to the audience in the language of their heart. The bewildered Swami could hardly realize the reason for this spontaneous outburst of joy at these simple words!

When silence was restored, Swamiji at the very outset thanked the audience in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world, in the name of the mother of religions and also in the name of the millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects. He presented Hinduism and a religion which had taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance and quoted the two following illustrative passages from the scriptures: "As the different streams having their sources in different places, all mingle their water in the sea, so O Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee" (*Mahimna Stotra*, 7). "Whatsoever comes to Me, through whatsoever form, I reach him: all men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to me." (*Gita*, chap. IV, 11).

It was a very brief speech but its spirit of universality and broad-mindedness coupled with the depth of his spiritual conviction captured the imagination of the delegates and threw them into an ecstasy of unprecedented delight. No doubt Swami Vivekananda had occasions to give eleven lectures before some societies in the presence of some of the leading minds of America and to come in contact with a cross-section of American life before joining the Parliament, this was, in fact, Swamiji's maiden speech at a distinguished gathering of

Salutations To Swami Vivekananda

आनन्ददृश्येण विविच्य नित्यं तस्मिन् समाधत्त इह स्व लीलया :
विवेकंराग्य वशुद्धचित्तं योऽसौ विवेकी तमहं नमामि ॥ १ ॥

1. To him who, sifting out the Eternal from the transitory phenomena of this world, made it his sport to concentrate thereon his mind, purified by discrimination and renunciation—to that discriminating soul I salute.

विवेकानन्दनियग्नचित्तं विवेकानेकविनोदशीम् ।
विवेकभासा कमयीयकान्तिं विवेकिनं तं सततं नमामि ॥ २ ॥

2. To him whose mind was immersed in the bliss that comes of discrimination, whose nature delighted solely in kindling discrimination (in others), and whose beauty was made winsome by the glow of discrimination—to that discriminating soul my salutations ever go.

ऋतञ्ज विज्ञानमधिभ्रयत् यन् निरन्तरं चादिमध्वान्तहीनम् ।
सुखं सुखं प्रकरोति यस्य आनन्दमूर्तिं तमहं वमामि ॥ ३ ॥

3. Whose graceful form truth and knowledge have made their abode, and which imparts a joy incessant without beginning or end—to that embodiment of bliss I salute.

सूर्यो यथान्धं हि तमो निहन्ति विष्णुयथा दुष्टजनान् छिनत्ति ।
तथैव यस्याखिलनेत्रलोभं रूपं त्रितार्प विमुखाकरोति ॥ ४ ॥

4. Verily, as the sun dispels the intense darkness, as the Lord Visnu destroys the wicked ones, in exactly the same manner, whose handsome appearance, the cynosure of all eyes, drives away the threefold misery of life.

तं देशिकेन्द्रं परमं पवित्रं विश्वस्य पालं मधुरं यतीन्द्रम् ।
हिताय नृणां नर मूर्तिमन्तं विवेक-आनन्दं महं गमामि ॥ ५ ॥

5. To that teacher of teachers, supremely pure, the guardian of the world, the sweet one, the prince of *yogins*, who took up the human form for the good of mankind—to that Vivekananda I prostrate myself.

नमः श्रीयतिराजाय विवेकानन्दसूरये ।

सच्चिदानुखस्वरूपाय स्वामिने तापहारिणे ॥

Salutation to that king of renouncers and controllers of passions, the sage Vivekananda, who is Sat-Cit-Ananda (Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss Absolute) Itself, the spiritual preceptor, the remover of distress!

of the Czechoslovak Peace Committee, Patriarch of the Czechoslovak Church, Dr. Miroslav Novak, Chairman of the Prague Peace Committee, Dr. Jaromir Burak, and the Director of the Institute of Eastern Studies, Jaroslav Prusek.

Celebration In Moscow.

Under the joint auspices of the Institute of the Peoples of Asia and the Institute of Philoso-

phy, the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, a scientific session was held presided over by Academician. Mr. P.N. Fedosiev, as a part of the centenary celebration in Moscow. Vivekananda, Humanist and Fighter for Social Progress, 'Philosophical Concepts of Vivekananda' 'Vivekananda and Indian Literature', 'Enlightening Ideas of Vivekananda' were some of the papers read on the occasion.

VIVEKANANDA IN MEDITATION

By Swami Swahananda, Secy. Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi.

"The greatest help to spiritual life is meditation. In meditation we divest ourselves of all material conditions and feel our divine nature".

The picture of Swami Vivekananda in the meditative pose, as it is called, represents eternal India. Her message is twofold. By the activistic the sons of her soil traversed the old world with the message of goodwill and Godward view of life. Spiritual and cultural ideas were the motive force for these missionaries. But the meditative India was at the back of this activistic aspect. And this meditative aspect is represented by the conception of her ideals. Don't we see Siva always in the meditative posture? Is not Buddha too meditating perpetually? Don't we like to see Ramakrishna always merged in Samadhi?

Vivekananda immersed in contemplation is the ideal of sattva, of poise, calmness and reflection. Every action pre-supposes meditation. Every meditation is transformed into an action. Even a scientist meditates first, formulates a law and then experiments and if it is substantiated he accepts it as truth. Reflection again is the root of all creation. As the Upanishads say, the Great One reflected and the five basic constituents of the universe came into existence. Whatever flashed in that Cosmic Mind had its counterpart in the gross world. That is the process of creation, in all fields, in all climes. First idea, then representation: first feelings, then tears, poems, painting, sculpture and so on. Thought, contemplation, reflection, is at the root of all action. So the former must be kept at the back of all activity. It is not Krishna's message too? Does not Gita recommend 'intense activity amidst intense rest and amidst intense activity'? A portrait of meditation in your parlour will remind you that life is not all activity, movement, race; it is contemplation, poise, absorption too. If the controlling apparatus is not operative, life in the true sense will be lost like the misguided missile in the meshes of purposeless, meaningless activity. Many people nowadays like to live in excitements. They want to escape from their thoughts. They are anxious to drown their moorings in the busy programme of the day. Vivekananda in contemplation will save them from this unrest; only let them look at his picture now and then, reflect on his absorbed state and the mind will be at peace. What makes a man worried or restless? It is the immediate crisis? What was the problem before that, and still earlier? It is in the mind of man that the abode of peace must be established. Meditation, retiring to one's inner self at least for the time being is the solution. Vivekananda in meditation is the perfect ideal of that. Him we worship,

MAGNIFICENT JOG FALLS

At Jog the river Sharavathi hurls itself down a chasm of nearly 1,000 feet, splitting itself into four beautiful cascades known as the RAJA, the ROARER, the ROCKET and the RANI. The Jog Falls are the second Highest Water Falls in the world.

There are well-furnished bungalows with excellent cuisine at JOG

**ONCE A VISITOR
ALWAYS A VISITOR**

VISIT NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE)

The ideal Hill Resort for Rest Cure--

This Queen of Hill Stations with a bracing climate is nearly 5,000 feet high and commands a panoramic view of the surrounding terrain.

Once the Mountain stronghold of powerful Rulers, it has rich historical relics.

It was here that Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Patel stayed for recouping their health and Her Majesty the Queen of England and her husband halted recently for rest and relaxation.

Well-furnished Bungalows with excellent catering arrangements.



Meditation Pose (London 1896)
Narendra is a great soul perfect in meditation—Sri Ramakrishna

such magnitude and international importance. Miss Monroe, the then Editor of 'Poetry. A Magazine of Verse,' while recording her impressions of the Parliament of Religions and of Swamiji in her autobiography entitled, 'A Poet's Life,' had candidly stated. "The Congress of Religions was a triumph for all concerned, especially for its generalissimo the Reverend John H. Barrows of Chicago's First Presbyterian Church, who had been preparing fit for two years. When he brought down his gavel upon the world's first Parliament of Religions a wave of breathless silence swept over the audience—it seemed a great moment in human history prophetic of the promised new era of tolerance and peace. On the stage with him, at his eight, was a black-coated array of bishops and ministers, representing the various Protestant and Roman Catholic churches; at his right a brilliant group of strangely costumed dignitaries from afar and a monk of the orange robe from Bombay. It was the last of these, Swami Vivekananda, the magnificent, who stole the whole show and captured the town. Others of the foreign groups spoke well.....But the handsome monk in the orange robe gave us in perfect English a masterpiece. His personality, dominant, magnetic; his voice rich as a bronze bell; the controlled fervour of his feeling the beauty of his message to the Western world he was facing for the first time—these combined to give us a rare and perfect moment of supreme emotion. It was human eloquence at its highest pitch."

This resounding success of the Swami even at this opening session of the Parliament, made him one of the most popular figures in the whole assembly, and at the subsequent sessions. Writes the (*Northampton Daily Herald*) on April 11, 1894, "Vivekananda was not allowed to speak until the close of the programme, the purpose being to make people stay until the end of the session.....thousands would wait for hours to hear a fifteen minutes' talk from this remarkable man."

During the seventeen session of the Parliament, Swami Vivakananda, in the course of his illuminating addresses placed before the learned audience the cardinal truths of Hinduism. He said: "From the high spiritual fights of the Vedanta philosophy, of which the latest discoveries of Science seem like echoes, to the low ideas of idolatry with its multifarious mythology, the agnosticism of the Bud-

dhists and the atheism of the Jains, each and all have a place in the Hindu's religion..... Science is nothing but the finding of unity. As soon as science would reach perfect unity, it would stop from further progress, because it would reach the goal, and the science of religion becomes perfect when it would discover Him Who is the one life in a universe of death, Him Who is the constant basis of an ever-changing world. One Who is the only Soul of which all souls are but delusive manifestations. Thus is it, through multiplicity and quality, the ultimate unity is reached. Religion can go no further. This is the goal of all science... As we find that somehow or other, by the laws of our mental constitution, we have to associate our ideas of infinity with the image of the blue sky, or of the sea, so we naturally connect our idea of holiness with the image of a church, a mosque or a cross. The Hindus have associated the ideas of holiness, purity, truth, omnipresence and such other ideas with different images and forms.....If a man can realize his divine nature with the help of an image, would it be right to call that a sin? Or, even when he has passed that stage, should he call it an error. To the Hindu man is not travelling from error to the truth but from truth to truth, from lower truth to higher truth. To him all the religions, from the lowest fetishism to the highest absolutism, mean so many attempts of the human soul to grasp and realise the Infinite, each determined by the conditions of its birth and association, and each of these marks a stage of progress; and every soul is a young eagle soaring higher and higher, gathering more and more strength till it reaches the Glorious Sun.....To the Hindu, then the whole world of religions is only a travelling, a coming up, of different men and women, through various conditions and circumstances, to the same goal....If there is ever to be a universal religion, it must be on which will have no location in place or time; which will be infinite. like the God it will preach and whose sun will shine upon the followers of Krishna and of Christ, on saints all sinners alike: which will not be Brahminic or Buddhist, Christian or Mahomedan, but the sum total of all these and still have infinite space for development; which in its catholicity will embrace in its infinite arms, and find a place for every human being, from the lowest grovelling savage not far removed from the brute to the highest man towering by the virtues of his head and heart almost above humanity, making society stand in awe of him



California, 1900

He is power lay, perhaps, in the courage he gave others. He did not ever seems to be conscious of himself at all. It was the other man who interested him.

Miss Macleod

and doubt his human nature. It will be a religion which has no place for persecution or intolerance in its polity, which will recognise divinity in every man and woman, and whose whole scope, whose whole force, will be centred in aiding humanity to realize its own true, divine nature. Offer such a religion and all nations will follow you".

"The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth. If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of others. I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance: "Help and not Fight," "Assimilation and not Destruction", "Harmony and Peace and Dissension."

The mighty words which were addressed by the Swami to the entire humanity over the heads of the official representatives of the Parliament made a tremendous appeal to the conscience of the people at large. The obscure Hindu monk of India blossomed forth

into a world figure almost overnight and became the prophet of a new dispensation. Life-size picture of the Swami were hung up on the streets of Chicago. *The New York Herald*, one of the most popular and widely circulated newspapers, editorially remarked. "He is undoubtedly the greatest figure in the Parliament of Religions. After hearing him we feel how foolish it is to send missionaries to this learned nation." Though lauded up to the skies, from the platform and the press, the great Swami was not in the least puffed up with pride at this phenomenal success. For he was fully conscious that he was only an instrument in the hand of the Lord and his triumph was the triumph of Indian culture and the homage that the united nations paid to him on that memorable occasion was a spontaneous recognition of the greatness and universality of the Vedantic religion which he represented.

The news of his resounding triumph at the Parliament did not remain confined within the four walls of America but soon reached the shores of India and was flashed in the various Indian journals and magazines from one part of the country to the other. His brother monks at the Baranagore monastery were elated with unspeakable joy to hear of the phenomenal achievement of their beloved leader in that far distant land as a literal fulfilment of Shri Ramakrishna's prophecy. "Naren shall shake the world to its foundations."



by
Swami Vijnananda

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

A world embracing personality that Swami Vivekananda was, it is but natural that the whole world should rise as one man to render reverential homage to his hallowed memory. People all over the world are paying glowing tributes to the eminent Swami for his Himalayan attainments in the realm of spirituality, for his enlightening contributions of permanent value to philosophy, for his monumental success in upgrading and enriching the religious consciousness of the world and for his supreme achievement of founding a world-wide order of monks with 'liberation of self' as its intent and 'service of God in man' as its patent. While we are beholden to the magnanimous Swami for the religious fervour he has graciously instilled into us by his spiritual life and divine message, it is wellnigh impossible for even the most competent amongst us to render adequate tributes to him for, there is something transcendental and impersonal, something mystical and infinite

about him that always eludes our grasp. Nobody without a touch of the divine and an element of greatness in him can comprehend him. So, what best we can ail do is to recapitulate the several graces and blessings he has benignly bestowed on us by his exemplary life and invaluable message.

While his learned writings and fiery speeches reveal to us several glimpses of his dynamic personality, the soaring heights and the profound depths and dimensions of his spiritual being remain always an unrevealed mystery. A plunge into the inmost recesses of his per-



sonality is far beyond our reach. Only a second Vivekananda: as he himself once said, or a man of Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual stature and prophetic vision could probe into his soul and comprehend its potentialities and excellences. Whether it is an accident of nature or a blessing of destiny or a gracious act of Providence, the historical fact of Sri-Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda having been born in the same century with only a few years apart, their lives entwined together into a single mission, has a great spiritual significance to India and the world. The impact and the import of these two great personalities on, and to our nation have been to remind us of our sacred spiritual heritage and to focus our attention on our future divine destiny. It would be more correct to say that they were the two aspects of one personality than to say that they were two personalities. For, they were nearer to each other than two personalities could be. If one was the life of the other, the latter was the soul of the former. They were like the static and dynamic aspects of the one soul-force.

The Inevitable

If, as Romain Rolland says, Sri Ramakrishna was the consummation of three thousand years of spiritual life of three hundred million Hindus, Swami Vivekananda was the world-regenerating force released as a result of that consummation. Spiritual consummation is never divorced from world-regeneration. They are a single process. If the former initiates the latter, the latter presupposes the former. The two-fold process ends in the spiritual consummation of the world as a whole. Without Sri Ramakrishna, the spiritual potentialities of Naren would have been locked up forever and the world would not have seen the birth of the awakener of souls that Swami Vivekananda was; without Swami Vivekananda the world would not have been awakened to and imbibed the fountain of spirituality that Sri Ramakrishna was. Without either, their common divine mission would have remained unfulfilled and the world would have lost and nothing could have redeemed.

Life of Swami Vivekananda is distinguished by three progressive stages, one maturing into another, one fulfilling another. The first is the stage of a burning search for Truth. The second is the period of *sadhana* and personal realization of Truth. The last phase is of self-expression and self-dedication for world-regeneration. A predisposition biased in favour of

Truth, a rare gift of birth, and radiant purity permeating his thoughts, actions and emotions, a precious heritage from his devout mother, were the two predominant features of his youth. While purity protected him from all vulgar temptations and influences of dubious nature to which youth generally succumbs, his passion for Truth gave him the discrimination to sift Truth from untruth, the real from the unreal, the noble from the ignoble, the reverent from the irreverent and also the determination to pursue the True, the Real, the noble and the holy to their ultimate realization.

It is indeed these two, the pursuit of good and the pursuit of Truth that brought him to Sri Ramakrishna who prepared him for his future role of a world-awakener. It is true that he passed through a sceptical phase in his youth. But this scepticism of his was rather due to his dissatisfaction with the mere customary and conventional acceptance of the existence of God than due to any basic disbelief in God. His passion for Truth and Reality was of such intensity that only the highest standards of proof could satisfy it. Since nobody could provide him with such a proof, his passion for Truth took an appearance of scepticism. His scepticism was a measure of his hankering for Reality. It was a rebellion not against Truth but against blind belief in Truth. The proof that he wanted was nothing less and nothing other than actual preception of and participation in Truth. With him scepticism was only a passing mood. It did not satisfy his soul. Beneath the surface of his sceptic mind, there was an intense desire of God. To find a way to God if God existed was a compelling need with him. So he was in search of one who knew Truth from personal experience and not by mere faith. With all his scepticism he possessed that rare and wonderful spiritual quality for the attainment of religious consciousness—a positive enthusiasm for the good and the True. He had a natural dislike for material values though he had his doubts about spiritual realities. The monastic urge was instinctive with him. A meditative mind surcharged with an intuition for Truth was his prize possession. By a study of different systems of philosophy of the East and the West, he had found out that philosophy was, at best, only a way of speculation about Truth and not a path to discovery of Truth. Philosophy offers only mediate knowledge of Truth. But mediate knowledge for it does not remove ignorance. It is no better than mere belief. Philosophy like faith is no substitute for immediate knowledge



San Francisco, February, 1900)
One of them leaned forward and kissed the hem of the robe, murmuring brokenly in Spanish, 'Hombre de Dios Hombre de Dios ! (Man of God)
Madame E. Calve

of Truth. Neither faith nor philosophy could appease Naren's hunger for Truth.

In Sri Ramakrishna, he found not only a seer of God but God Himself. God had fully appropriated him to Himself. Sri Ramakrishna was a living proof of God. Swami Vivekananda was astounded by the authenticity of the proof of God that Sri Ramakrishna was and his critical apparatus gave way. He who anticipated disappointment found fulfilment. He who came to argue remained to adore. He who wanted God, got Him. His search for Truth came to an end. Sri Ramakrishna graced him with a vision of God. Swami Vivekananda could no more doubt the existence of God; he could no more resist God; nay, he could no more live without God. By the divine touch of Sri Ramakrishna, Naren the critic of God had turned into Naren the advocate of God. If Swami Vivekananda found fulfilment of his search for God in Sri Ramakrishna, the latter found the fulfilment of his divine mission in the former. It was a mutual participation and fulfilment. Sri Ramakrishna shared his God with Swami Vivekananda and the latter surrendered himself in the former's divine mission.

Vivekananda Was Crowned

Swami Vivekananda was now Sri Ramakrishna's anointed one. Sri Ramakrishna crowned him not only with God but also with his destiny. Swami Vivekananda wanted to immerse himself in God. But Sri Ramakrishna strongly reminded him of his mission on earth which was to awaken the world to the glory of God whom he had just discovered. Sri Ramakrishna invested him with the realization that the world is a manifestation of God and hence service rendered to mankind is worship offered to God. Sri Ramakrishna marked out his destiny. He was to be the leader of the band of monastic disciples devoted to realization of God and rejuvenation of mankind. In order to prepare him for this immense task, Sri Ramakrishna not only roused his manifold potentialities to dynamic expression but also transferred to him his own spiritual powers. With this the role of Sri Ramakrishna ended and the role of Swami Vivekananda began in their common mission of founding the kingdom of God on Earth.

After the passing away of the Master, the first thing that Swami Vivekananda did was to knit together into a strong spiritual brotherhood all the monastic disciples of Sri Rama-

krishna. This when done, he travelled all over India. He saw India in all its glory and in all its agony. He saw that the agony far out-weighted the glory. He gathered into his soul, as it were, all the agony of India. His soul was set ablaze by the sight of poverty and ignorance of the downtrodden people and his heart bled for them. The poignant realization that the destiny of India was tied up with his own, dawned upon him. He saw his own humiliation of the masses. He realized that he was to work out his own perfection through the material and spiritual uplift of India. He saw that the nation had lost its soul and individuality and was in a moribund condition. Religion had become static. It was evident more in its external forms than in its spirit. To give back to the nation its lost soul and individuality, to remove its poverty and ignorance, and, to make Hinduism more dynamic were the ideals he now set forth before himself.

The Parliament of Religions at Chicago offered him an opportunity to go to the prosperous West to preach the high *Vedantic* truths of divinity of the human soul, the harmony of religions and unity of existence, to the materialistic West. He wanted to confer upon the West the benefits of the Indian spiritual wisdom, and get in exchange for India the benefits of their material achievements. His triumphant success at the Parliament of Religions showed that the Americans were highly receptive and responsive to his message of *Vedanta*. His inspired speeches roused in their hearts tremendous interest in India and *Vedanta*. He harnessed their fervour to the two-fold work which he founded in America, the work of disseminating the truths of *Vedanta* and creating in the Americans an abiding interest to participate in the reconstruction of poor India. The work was partly a success. It led to the foundation of his work in India. The Ramakrishna Mission with its twin ideals of salvation and service was established. But the strenuous work that he did in America and India, his consuming passion with which he did his work had such a devastating effect on his health that he was taken away prematurely.

His Message

Now let us turn to his message. His messages has both national and international import. It is not only relevant and adequate to the present time but also significant for all time to come.

What is his message to Indians? 'Religion



(Madras February, 1897)

There are good souls, calm and magnanimous, who do good to others as does the spring, and who, having themselves crossed this dreadful ocean of birth and death, help others also to cross the same, without any motive whatsoever !

Sri Sankara

and religion alone is the life of India and when that goes India will die, inspite of politics inspite of social reforms, inspite of Kubera's wealth poured upon the head of every one of her children.' Religious instinct and spiritual impulse have been natural to India since ages. They have been the law of her being and her sustaining power from time immemorial. A gradual decline and the consequent poverty of these intrinsic impulses are, according to

Swami Vivekananda, largely responsible for the present degradation of India. The only way to regeneration is to strengthen the nation in her inborn impulses. A nation can blossom into her full stature through her native genius alone. If the Indian nation, after passing through several vicissitudes in the course of her history, still lives to-day, it is because we have not yet completely given up our God and religion. Indians must be re-educated into their divine status and on the foundation of spiritual heritage and divine destiny, the nation's future must be built. The re-awakening into divinity is the only pathway to salvation for India and for that matter for all mankind. During his sojourn through India as a wandering monk, Swami Vivekananda had discovered both the secret of India's past greatness and that of her future regeneration. Tuning the life to the high spiritual values was the secret of its great past and loyalty to these ideals is the key to her future awakening.

Perversion of Religion

Swami Vivekananda has strongly repudiated the foolish contention of some people that the degradation of India is solely due to her excessive spiritual preoccupation. According to him, it is the spiritual apathy and the consequent spiritual disintegration that has led to the present social and national degeneration. Religion is not to blame for the social and national evils. Evils exist not with religion but against religion. It is because people had lost the true spirit of religion and were too much involved in the external mechanical minutiae of religion that corruption had set in the social and notional life. Religion, both in its positive and negative aspects, had been misunderstood and misapplied to life. Religion had become a matter of a mere practice of rituals than practice of presence of God. Devotion to rituals had been substituted for devotion to God. Religion had been reduced to mere priestcraft and orthodoxy. Strict observance of the rigid rules of caste was considered

to be the substance of religion than a life devoted to spiritual ideals. Renunciation was looked upon as madness and sin. Religion was more professed than practised. It was professed for the sake of powers and privileges than practised for spiritual redemption. Priestcraft had become the bane of India. The higher castes were tyrannising the lower castes. The autocracy of priesthood and depositism of caste had created terrible demarcations within the social body making the majority of the followers of *Dharma* outcasts on earth. Religion had become more mechanical and less human. This state of affairs was nothing but a perversion of religion. Swami Vivekananda felt that the only hope was a re-statement of the culture of the *Rishis*.

Swami Vivekananda wanted an overall improvement in the material condition of India. He saw that religion was understood or rather misunderstood to be exclusive of material values. If India is poor and backward, it was partly because Indians had neglected material welfare. True religion is not against material values or such. It is against only an *attitude* of materialism which believes in the ultimacy of material values and makes material prosperity the *summum bonum* of life. Religion does not demand the neglect of material well-being. It only wants subordination of material values to spiritual ends. Material well being within limits is a necessity for the spiritual values to thrive. Swami Vivekananda used to say that religion which does not feed and clothe the poor is no religion at all. If material values divorced from spiritual aims cannot give happiness to man, spiritual propensities cannot thrive under material insolvency, by improving the material standards through the help of Western science. Eastern wisdom should be integrated with Western science. Wisdom without rejuvenation will not survive. On the other hand science without guidance from wisdom, becomes unethical and destroys itself. If neglect of material values has brought about backwardness of India, indifference to spiritual values is the cause of disintegration of the West. No culture, however high-souled it may be, will last long if it is without strength. Again no culture of enduring values can be built on purely materialistic foundations. Swami Vivekananda felt the separation of science and religion to be really tragic and wanted their integration for a wholesome development of India and the world. He was



of the opinion that the active elements of Western culture and spiritual elements of the culture of the East could be fused to form an ideal culture.

Swami Vivekananda's is a message of strength. For him, strength was synonymous with spirituality. He believed that without strength neither virtues could be cultivated nor spiritual values could be realized. Physical strength according to him, was the first condition of spiritual life. He himself was a virile figure full of vigour and strength. He wanted people to have muscles of iron and nerves of steel. A weak body, according to him, is a greater bondage to the soul than a strong body. There is hope, he used to say, for even a wicked man if he is strong in mind and body. His strength will perhaps, one day help him to get rid of his wickedness. But there is little hope for a weak man even if he is good. A strong and healthy body is a must and a minimum for the practice of religion. But a strong body alone will not suffice. A strong mind is a greater need. The capacity to distinguish good from bad, the real from the apparent, the permanent from the ephemeral and strong will-power to pursue the good alone, the real alone, the eternal alone, is an important aspect of strength conceived by Swami Vivekananda. He wanted people to have a mind made up of that same stuff which the thunderbolt is made of. Man, according to him, is a dynamo of infinite power. Through proper education this power can be released for constructive purposes. He wanted man-making, life-building, character-making education, an education that would liberate their inexhaustible potentialities, to be given to the youth of the country. Above all the emphasized soul-strength. Soul-strength is the real strength, he used to say. Soul is the repository of illimitable strength. This strength is lost to man through his Self-forgetfulness. Man must be made aware of this soul-strength through Self-knowledge. The Upanisads declare that he who knows the Self attains soul-strength. Soul-strength is the panacea for all evils of life.

Swami Vivekananda repeatedly declares that renunciation and service are the national ideals of India. 'If the national life could be intensified through these channels everything else would take care of itself.' Renunciation alone had always been the great dynamo of strength in India. Renunciation and service may well be called the warp and woof of the texture of

Indian culture. If renunciation points to the transcendental aim of our culture, service reflect its humanitarian outlook. Our culture is a culture of human values for spiritual ends. Neither the human values nor the spiritual aims can be ignored. Human values fulfil themselves only in spiritual destiny of man ; in themselves they are not self-sufficient. On the other hand, spiritual values can be realized only by transcending human values and not by ignoring them. So renunciation and service, contemplation and work, are integrated in our culture and religion. Without service, renunciation is only negative in value. acquires a positive value and a creative expression when it inspires selfless service of mankind. The discipline of renunciation for God fulfils itself in service of God. Service without an attitude of self-sacrifice is both a burden and a bondage ; but when inspired by love of God it brings about moral elevation and spiritual liberation.

Oneness of Religions

Our fall from the ideals of renunciation and service, is responsible to a great extent for our moral degeneration and spiritual apathy. Mere social service will not bring about social reform. Neither mere withdrawal from society procures salvation. When only social service becomes a mode of worship of God, when it is divested of all selfish motives, when a spirit of renunciation is assimilated to the work of social regeneration, material uplift and spiritual redemption of our country will take place. He was great teacher of the synthesis of all religions. Religion, he taught, is the means to attain God-consciousness. Each religion is an authentic path to reach God. Just as all rivers lead to the ocean, all religions lead to God, who is the one fact of all religions. Diverse religions are necessary to suit diverse tastes and temperaments. The world is spiritually one. The faith behind all modes of worship is the same. There is significance in all forms of worship, however crude and foolish they may seem to us. Swami Vivekananda says that man does not proceed from error to truth, but from lower truth to higher truth. Truth is not the monopoly of any religion. No religion is all-inclusive of Truth and no religion is all-exclusive of Truth. While no religion is absolute, every religion is true. Every religion is Truth-bearing. Every religion is a view of Reality, though all religions are not equally abounding in Reality. People quarrel about religion because they do not see the



underlying unity of all faiths. Instead of emphasizing God-consciousness which is the core of religion, people emphasize rituals, myths and other secondary details. For each man, whether he be a Hindu or a Muslim or a Christian, salvation lies in one-pointed devotion to his own faith. But this, Swami Vivekananda insisted, does not preclude the necessity of accepting and respecting other faiths as true. One has to expand and enrich one's religious consciousness by learning spiritual truths from other faiths. While one's own religion is quite adequate to give one an intuitive knowledge of

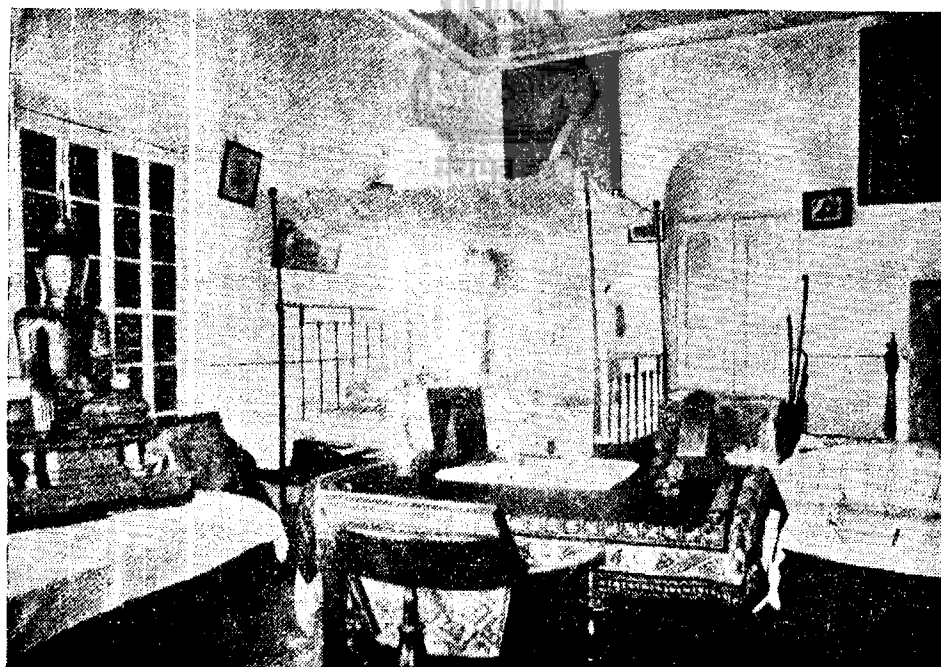
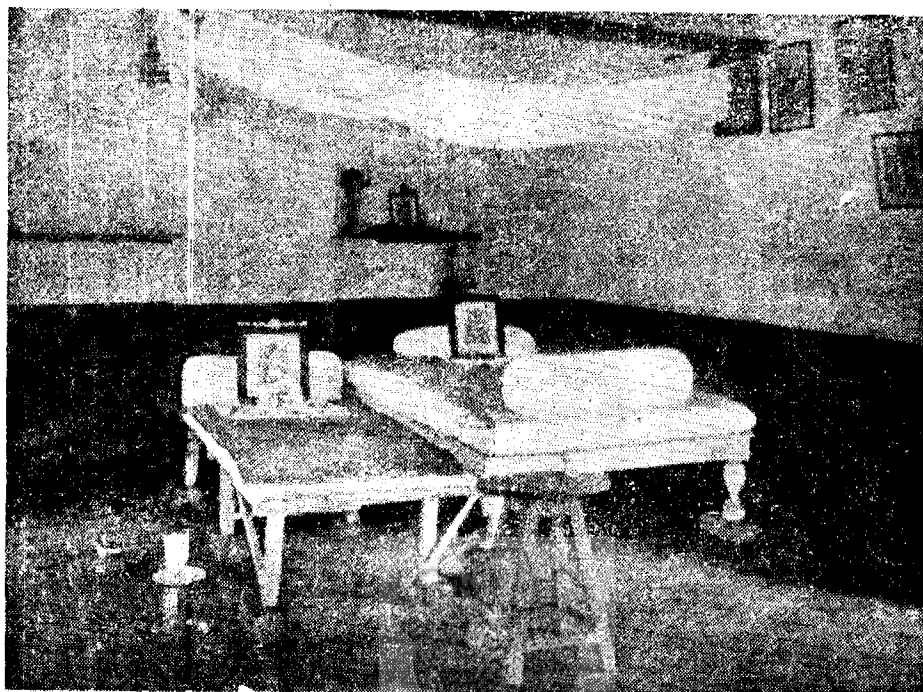
Reality practice of other faiths opens up new vistas in the panorama of Reality. Sri Ramakrishna, a modern Incarnation of God, who had the unique merit of having practised several faiths to their fruition, had Reality thrown open to him in its infinite abundance. He was thus the proof of oneness and uniqueness of all religions. Swami Vivekananda exhorted people to develop that catholicity of outlook which accepts all the religious systems of the world as true and assimilate the spiritual truths revealed in them.



O India ! Forget not that the ideal of thy woman-hood is Sita, Savitri, Damayanti ; forget not that the God thou worshipping is the great Ascetic of ascetics, the all-renouncing Shankara, the Lord of Uma ; forget not that thy marriage, thy wealth, thy life are not for self-pleasure—are not for thy individual personal happiness ; forget not that thou art born as a sacrifice to the Mother's altar ; forget not that thy social order is but the reflex of the Infinite Universal Motherhood ; forget not that the lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper, are thy flesh and blood, thy brothers. Thou brave one, be bold, take courage, be proud that thou art an Indian, and proudly proclaim—'I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother'. Say—'The ignorant Indian, the poor and destitute Indian, is my brother.' Thou, too, clad with but rag round thy loins proudly proclaim at the top of thy voice—"The Indian is my brother : the Indian is my life ; India's gods and goddesses are my God ; India's society is the cradle of my infancy, the pleasure-garden of my youth, the sacred heaven—the Varanasi (Banaras)—of my old age." Say brother —"The soul of India is my highest heaven, the good of India is my good", and repeat and pray day and night—"O Thou Lord of Gauri, O Thou Mother of the Universe, vouchsafe manliness unto me ! O Thou Mother of Strength, take away my weakness, take away my unmanliness, and Make me a Man !"

Vivekananda

Shri Ramakrishna's Room, Dakshineswar



Swami Vivekanand's Room, Belur Math

Swami Vivekananda passed away at an early age, even before he was 40. During this short span of life, he worked hard and strenuously. He lived on people's contributions. Dedicating everything to God, he lived a life of fearless activity. There is perhaps no greater authority on Shankar and Vedanta in this age than he. There are names like Jnanadeva of Maharashtra and Vidyaranya of Karnataka who had immense influence in their respective provinces in their times. So far as Jnanadeva is concerned, his influence has increased steadily. But all these authorities belong to the olden times. One cannot think of any other name than that of Swami Vivekananda in our own times who attracted so forcefully the attention of the whole world as a great teacher of Vedanta.

That worship and non-dualism (*advaita*) can go together, is accepted in the studies of Shankara. Shankara himself initiated community worship and brought about a synthesis in worship which fulfilled the need of the then society. In the modern age, however, it is not adequate. Realising this, Ramakrishna combined Islamic and Christian forms of worship also to the traditional form. Vivekananda was the noblest of his disciples. This synthesis of worship was imparted to Vivekananda by his *guru* (Master). From the Shankara point of view, there is nothing new in it, because it was initiated originally by Shankaracharya himself by combining *Bhakti* (devotion) with *Advaita* (non-dualism).

It is a different question that after Shan-



Swami Vivekananda's Way Of Life

By
Acharya Vinoba Bhave



kara many more teachers were born in India for which the place given to *Bhakti* by Shankara was not enough. They—like Vishnuswami Ramanuja, Nibark, Vallab, etc.—tried to give devotion a more intense form. One has to admit, however, that the synthesis of *Bhakti* with Vedanta is an old concept.

The special contribution of Vivekananda is the synthesis he achieved by uniting service to *Daridranarayana* (God) in the afflicted and the poor) with *Advaita*—which in its turn is a synthesis of different forms of worship. The word *Daridranarayana* was coined by Vivekananda. Like Lokamanya Tilak in Maharashtra, Vivekananda rendered great service to the people when the country was being ravaged by plague. It is a matter of joy to note that there was no difference in the essential spiritual make-up of Lokamanya and Vivekananda except that the former was a man of political activity—which

the latter, directly, was not.

As I have said, it was Swami Vivekananda who brought about a synthesis of *Advaita* and service to the *Daridranarayana*. The expression *Daridranarayana* which was dear to the Lokamanya, was popularised, after Vivekananda, by Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das, Mahatma Gandhi took it to each and every home in India and started some constructive work in pursuance of it. The genius of Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda was of the same nature. In the outward life, Mahatma Gandhi was more introspective than Lokamanya and thus came nearer to Vivekananda. Great men should not be subjected to comparison, it is neither desirable nor necessary. But all of them we have just mentioned were great men who did immense good to India.

Swami



Vivekananda's

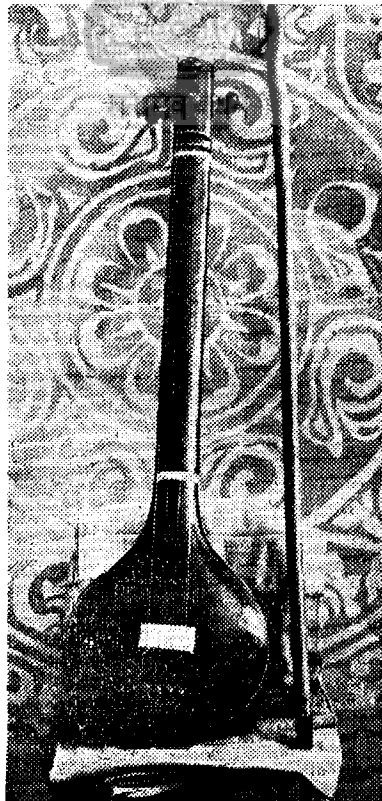
Mother

Ehuvesvari



Personal

Effects



Jesus Christ stands foremost in spreading by words and deed the message that service to the stricken is synonymous with the worship of God. Before him Gautama the Buddha gave this inspiration to India far more deeply. His was an all-embracing compassion which extended to all living beings. Undoubtedly that was a noble inspiration. But the concept what we now call direct service of man first appears in the teachings of Christ in a special and extensive form. As far as I have understood him, Christ was a non-dualist (*Advaitist*), even though not in the strict philosophical sense in which Shankara was. But the concept of *Amritasya Putrah*—children of Bliss, children of God, in which the Father and His children are conceived of as the one and the same was given by the Upanishad as well as by the Vedas. This concept found direct expression in Christ and the people of that age considered this concept of *Advaita* as a crime against God. That is why they were irate with Christ.

Jesus And Many Others Were Advaitists

As I have said, leaving aside the philosophical sense, the role of Christ, *per se*, becomes very nearly to *Advaitavedanta*. This becomes obvious in the Book of Paul. But so far as Indian Vedanta is concerned, we have to admit it was Vivekananda who achieved the unity of *Advaita*, and Vedanta. This is a great thing he has done as a result of which India has attained a synthetic way of life, harmoniously combining the knowledge of *Advaita* with different forms of worship, service to all living beings with service to man.

Mahatma Gandhi further developed the idea of service to man and emphasised the need of rendering productive body-labour with service. When I think of these things, I feel amazed. So many facts and aspects of critical observation have been discovered, all of which are found in the Gita. The genius, the knowledge, and the compassion that make a perfect and organic synthesis in the Gita, give it a unique place in the world literature.

Vivekananda was a great worshipper of the Gita. For the present I refrain from singing further the glory of Gita. I have been brought up on its milk, as it is my mind. I recall

Vivekananda's contributions on the occasion of his birth centenary. A young man of thirty or thirty-two, born in a subjugated India, masters a foreign tongue and delivers a discourse on Vedanta in the Parliament of World Religions at Chicago. No one who has seen the people of India, more dead than alive, under foreign yoke, can ever forget that memorable event which raised the prestige of India in the eyes of the world.

Vivekananda has also placed an ideal of *Guru-Seva* (service of the Master), which is not new to us. But for this age, when the attitude of fruitless controversy and idle disputation has become dominant, this was very necessary. Like Govinda Pujyapada and Shankaracharya, Nivrittinath and Jnanadeva or Shankardev and Madhavdev of Assam, Ramakrishna and Vivekananda were a modern pair. In the education that is given nowadays in the schools and colleges, there is no scope for relationship between the master and the disciple (*guru-shishya*), so to say. Today the teachers have come to take the place of books. Like books, they are "aids" or "helps" to study.

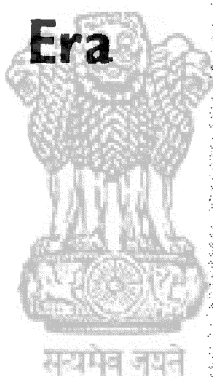
But a *guru* is something else. The ideal of master-and-disciple relationship existing in our ancient *gurukuls* is well worth recalling today. The highest form of that ideal is symbolised in the mutual relationship of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda,

Outwardly, Vivekananda was a preacher. Like St. Paul Vivekananda, too, had trances.

In spite of the trance, however, neither St. Paul nor Vivekananda, lost his inner equanimity and poise. For an *Advaitist* there is nothing to be surprised at, because he who loses his poise, also loses his *Advaita*. This was shown by St. Paul in the West and Shankaracharya in the East and by Vivekananda in our own times. This trance was no mere ecstasy of words or imaginations, but an ecstasy of God. In whomsoever the trance enters, his whole life becomes exalted by thoughts and he does not feel tired in spite of hard physical labour. By recalling the life of great men, we find a sacred joy. But I will keep it in my heart and won't dilate on it now,

[Translated from Hindi]

Swami Vivekananda Harbinger Of New Era



by Swami Asangananda, Belur Math

The life of a pioneer, who is destined to become a leader of mankind in the field of redemption from illusion and delusion, is not a bed of roses, but of thorns. It is but natural that Swami Vivekananda had to pass through painful trials and tribulations, and tremendous sufferings; but then these were not without any significance. As he was to take up the role of a teacher, he had to set an example to the people at large by shouldering all the limitations and weakness inherent in common human beings. Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Deva saw in his ecstatic mood the real nature of Swami Vivekananda. He saw him as one of the seven *rishis* (*saptarshis*) brought down to this world for the welfare of mankind. Swamiji was therefore bereft of all imperfections.



The call of the suffering humanity, nay, the wailing of the hungry, the downtrodden, the destitute, the homeless, was greater and more pressing than that of rendering service to the members of his family. Therefore it was that Swamiji was struggling hard to arrange for the bare maintenance of his mother and other members of the family, and when that had been done, he came away to the Baranagore Math. After organizing the Math on a sound basis with the assistance of his brother monks, Swamiji went to several places on pilgrimage and performed *tapas* spiritual practice, for a long time. He went round the country and came in close contact with the prevailing currents and cross-currents of thought and condi-

tions of the Indian people. Now he was found talking with, and residing in the palace of, a Maharaja, and next he was seen sitting in the cottage of a most indigent, miserable, and helpless person, discussing with him about his wale and woe. He saw terrible misery, poverty, illiteracy, everywhere. His heart melted. He had been thinking about the solution of these problems, but to no avail. At long last, he came to Cape Comrin (Kanya Kumari) and swami across the sea to the rock, now known as the 'Vivekananda Rock', and after deep meditation there, hit upon a plan for the amelioration of India and the Indian masses. Here at this sacred spot, he got, as it were, the key to the solution of all the problems that had been troubling him for the last few years. The plan was to go to the materially prosperous West, to America, where a Parliament of Religions was going to be held, and share with them the spiritual treasures of India, which they were badly in need of and bring back in exchange the necessary funds for improving the condition of the masses in India. Swamiji's visit to the United States of America, his famous address at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago in September 1893, his triumphal return to India after nearly four years of work in America, England, and the Continent, the right royal receptions from Colombo to Almora and his stirring addresses, detailing his scheme of work for the uplift of India and exhorting people everywhere to dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to it, are all well known to need repetition.

The remarkable expressions, of Swamiji in various fields of activities have attracted the attention of many a person in India and abroad. Some have seen him as a mighty orator, who electrified his audience with his thrilling and stirring addresses, while others have seen him as a great social worker, whose heart bled for the down-trodden, the miserable, the poor, and the destitute, while yet others have found him as an illustrious patriot to whom 'mother and motherland were more glorious than the Heaven—*janani janmabhumiśca svargadapi gariyasi*.'

But Swamiji was primarily a saint, a *rishi*, a seer. And it is his saint-hood from which had emanated his mighty and brilliant external expressions. He was a born *Yogi*. In his infancy he used to see a ball of light appearing every night before his going to sleep. One day his mother was terribly disturbed in not finding

him at home for a long time. She ultimately discovered him absorbed in deep meditation. Once, while travelling in a tram car, he was so absorbed in thoughts tantamount to meditation, that he forgot all about the destination and did not know that the car had already gone over that place a number of times till the conductor intimated him about it. While as a student he was going round many places, speaking with advanced religious persons and questioning them as to whether they had attained God-vision, he could not get any satisfactory reply till he came to Sri Ramakrishna, who was also similarly questioned, and who straightway said: 'Yes, I have seen Him as I see you, only in a more intense way; and I can show you also.' Before meeting Sri Ramakrishna, Swamiji had been to Sri Maharsi Devendra Nath Tagore, who was also likewise questioned by him regarding God-vision. Maharsi Tagore replied: 'You have the eyes of a *yogi*.'

Swami Vivekananda was a versatile genius. His active sympathy for the good and well-being of the common people, specially the poor, the diseased, the destitute, the illiterate, the lowly, and the down-trodden knows no bound. His coining of the word 'Daridranarayana', forges a new and unique idea and grand outlook in the domain of social service. There is no idea of mercy, neither exists the thought of 'superior' or 'inferior', nor any idea of a giver or a receiver, but instead reigns the divine idea of 'worship', the giver being the one who serves taking the role of a worshipper, worshipping the living God in the form of a receiver. In the field of hospitality, India has been recognized as the foremost nation in the world. Mahatma Gandhi had applied this newly coined word in his own life, and thus by his thought and deed brought a new consciousness even in the field of politics, and the result is so well known in the country today.

Swamiji was a great believer in the doctrine of Mukti or Freedom, as voiced in the Vedas. Release from all fetters of bondage, illusion, and delusion, is the prerogative of human beings. '*Kalenatmani vindati*'—in the fullness of time every being realizes Brahma. Swamiji was a great spiritual personage, and had the supersensuous and superconscious vision of this Brahman. Just a few days on the eve of his *mahasamadhi*. Sri Ramakrishna, whom Narendra Nath (Swami Vivekananda) had been pressing to confer on him *nirvikalpa samadhi*, blessed him with the highest realization. Then

Sri Ramakrishna said: 'Now that you have tasted the bliss of the *nirvikalpa samadhi*, the door is locked, and the key is with me. Now, you will have to work, and when the work will be over, the door will be unlocked, and you will again enter into the domain of *nirvikalpa samadhi*.

Just two or three days before his passing away, Sri Ramakrishna asked Narendranath to sit near him, and then in an ecstatic mood, he transferred his spiritual wealth to the latter. And the former with his tearful eyes said to Narendranath: 'Now, I have become a fakir, and by the grace of the Divine Mother you will work wonders. Sri Ramakrishna's words proved true to the very letter.

Swamiji's religion was a man-making religion. After going through various kinds of spiritual disciplines and attaining success in all these, he did find out that God is not a mere colourless abstraction, but is one who can be

error to truth, but from lower truth to higher truth. Many-sided genius he was, and his method of helping every soul to attain God-vision and soul emancipation was to take him from where he stands and then to give him a lift by following the path of least resistance. As such, he introduced all the four Yogas—Jnana, Karma, Bhakti, and Raja Yogas—in the scheme of individual self-expression and attainment of perfection. Swamiji enunciates: 'Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divine within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy, by one or more or all of these and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are all but secondary details.'

His love for India is unspeakable. To him India was the epitome of spirituality, moral perfection, and love divine. Not only that, India to him was holy, the dust of India was

~~~~~  
 Once more He has come to help his children. Once more the opportunity is given to rise to fallen India. India can only rise by sitting at the feet of Shri Ramakrishna. His life and his teachings are to be spread far and wide, are to be made to penetrate every pore of Hindu society. Who will do it? Who are to take up the flag of Ramakrishna and march for the salvation of the world? Who are to stem the tide of degeneration at the sacrifice of name and fame, wealth and enjoyment—nay of every hope of this or other words? A few men have jumped into the breach, have sacrificed themselves. They are a few, we want a few thousands of such as they, and they will come.....Glory unto him on whom falls the Lord's choice.  
**Vivekananda**  
 ~~~~~

experienced and realized here and now, and that in man dwells the Divine, and that finally man becomes God. This, indeed, Swamiji declared, is the gist of all religion and spirituality. Swamiji was a *rishi*, seer of Truth. His service to humanity is extraordinary and remarkable, and this service is three-fold, viz service to the individual, service to the nation, and service to the entire mankind. Swamiji believed in the inherent goodness and perfection of every human being, and therefore individual persons were helped in the 'manifestation of Divinity already in man.' No doubt, many dark spots are observed in ones life, while living in the world. But he attains perfection in the fullness of time. Man has undoubtedly so many imperfections and limitations, and these are mere accidents on the way to the achievement of God-consciousness. Swamiji says that man does not travel from

holy. Just on the eve of his departure for India from England, an English lady asked him: 'Swami, how do you like now your motherland after four years' experience of the luxurious, glorious, powerful West?' 'India', Swamiji replied 'I loved before I came away. Now the very dust of India has become holy to me, the very air is now to me holy, it is now the holy land the place of pilgrimage—the *tirtha*.' Therefore we find that Swamiji gave a clarion call to his countrymen to serve, nay, worship her heart and soul, in order to bring infinite joy and blessedness to all the citizens of India. 'For the next fifty years,' the Swami said, 'this alone shall be our keynote—this, our great motherland, India. Let all other vain Gods disappear for that time from our minds. This is the only God that is awake, our own race, everywhere His hands, everywhere His feet, everywhere His ears, He

covers everything. All other Gods are sleeping. What vain gods shall we go after and yet cannot worship the God that we see all around us—the Virat? When we have worshipped this, we shall be able to worship all other gods. Before we crawl half a mile, we want to cross the ocean like Hanuman? Did not Swamiji visualize in 1897 that India would attain independence within the next fifty years through-out and attain independence within the next fifty years through unthought of means? Who could imagine that Mahatma Gandhi would invent a thoroughly new technique for attainment of freedom in which he did succeed? Within the last fifteen years India has made tremendous progress: still many more things are yet to be done. And therefore India expects all her citizens to be up and doing in their respective fields of activities, till our motherland turns out to be a paradise and becomes an ideal country to be copied and imitated by all the other nations of the world. Swamiji says: 'Therefore, whether you believe in spirituality or not, for the national life you have to get a hold on spirituality and key to it. Then stretch the other hand out and gain all you can from other races, but everything must be subordinated to that one ideal of life; and out of that a wonderful, glorious future India will come. I am sure it is coming—a greater India than ever was. Sages will spring up, greater than all the ancient sages, and your ancestors will not only be satisfied, but I am sure, they will be proud, from their positions in other worlds, to look down upon their descendants, so glorious, and so great.' Independence of India then was a desideratum, and ultimately as visualized by Swamiji it was attained in 1947. A country without national freedom has seldom any status, however cultured and civilized she may be and her voice is rarely heard anywhere. No doubt genius is honoured and respected everywhere.

Swamiji was a remarkable bridge-builder, connecting the East and West. He was born in India; the Indian people have naturally found in him one of the greatest patriots; he is known throughout India as the Patriot Saint of Modern India. Swamiji was unmistakably a patriot, but he loved all without any distinction of caste, creed, colour, or nationality, and worked for their well-being. He never condemned or cursed anybody. He encircled the

entire mankind through his unbounded love, immense sympathy, and service to all. He saw God in men. Therefore, his conception of service knows no frontier, social or national, geographical or sectional. His services were rendered where they were needed. Following in the footsteps of his illustrious Master, Sri Ramakrishna, the living embodiment of harmony and concord, Swamiji as a true disciple carried his Master's message throughout India and various parts of the globe. And the results of his multifarious activities are well known.

Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Deva performed various kinds of spiritual practices inculcated in several scriptures and had the intuitive vision of God, and thus reiterated the grand doctrine of unity and harmony discovered during the Rg-Vedic age: '*Ekam Sat vipra behudha vadanti*—Truth is one, sages call it variously.' When asked by one, 'What is the relation between God and man', Sri Ramakrishna replied: 'I see Him in all as all—men, women, and children are the veritable manifestations of God, only skin-bound.' Swamiji sat at the feet of his Divine Master and practised spiritual *sadhanas* resulting in the attainment of God-vision and soul-emancipation. Swamiji said later on: "All my spiritual experiences have led me to this conviction that God is man, or man is God." On the basic principle of Divinity of man depends today the solidarity of mankind, which, however, is being threatened by the onslaughts of modern materialistic ideologies. Science and technology have brought all the peoples of the entire universe together, and the ideas of time and distance have been engulfed. Therefore people have been compelled to live together in peace and harmony, or else to meet with terrible catastrophe. At this juncture, no nation can think of living the life of isolation, or of its own existence at the cost of others. As such it appears that the Swamiji's conception of 'One World' based on the doctrine of the divinity of man will disarm all the multifarious creeds, faiths, denominations, races, nations, and peoples of diverse ideologies of their hatred, bitterness, mutual suspicion, quarrel and bickerings, and will usher in a new type of mankind, endowed with love and joy, fellow-feeling and co-operation, spiritual of toleration and understanding. Swamiji said: 'I shall inspire men everywhere until the world shall know that it is one with God.'



VIVEKANANDA SWAMI AND HIS DIVINE CALL

By Prarajika Muktiprana

When Sister Nivedita, the illustrious disciple of Swami Vivekananda met him for the first time, she was on guard not to be influenced by the Hindu Yogi, as Swami Vivekananda was then known in England. So at the end of the visit she joined others and gave her verdict on the speaker that all he said had been said before and there was nothing new. However, it dawned on her slowly that she had never met a thinker like that Hindu Yogi who in one short hour had been able to express all that she had regarded as highest and best. She also realised that his call was sounded in the name of that which was strongest and finest, and was not in any way dependent on the meaner elements in man. And was she not waiting for this call? She knew that a call would come, it did, and she dedicated herself to the call.

This was how the people both in the East and the West coming in close contact with Swami Vivekananda always responded to his call. "Each Soul is potentially divine"—and Swami Vivekananda knew how to awaken that potential divinity within man, to bring out that which is strongest and finest in him.

As a matter of fact, there were hundreds

waiting for this call—men and women were athirst for this divine message. In England, Captain and Mrs. Sevier both were earnest students of religion seekers of the highest Truth. In vain they had been searching for it in various sects and creeds. One day with expectant hearts they came to attend the lecture of an Indian Yogi and intuitively felt this was the message they had been waiting for. "If this young man is what he seems, one must follow him and with him find God". Captain and Mrs. Sevier offered their services to Swami Vivekananda and followed him to India.

Earlier in India in 1883 at the railroad station of Hathras, Sarat Chandra Gupta, the young station master was fascinated at the very first sight of a young Sannyasin. He invited him to his quarters. Days were spent in constant spiritual conversations. One day the Sannyasin said he had a great mission to fulfil, but he was in despair at the smallness of his power. What is the mission? "India must become dynamic again and earn the respect of the world through her spiritual power". The divine call came. Sarat Gupta was touched. He offered himself to the great mission of the Sannyasin Sarat Gupta, the station master

became Swami Sadananda, the first Sannyasin disciple of Vivekananda.

When asked to explain his ideal Swami Vivekananda wrote, "My ideal indeed can be put into a few words and that is : to preach unto mankind their divinity, and how to make it manifest in every moment of life. Let us call and call till the sleeping gods awake, till the god within answers to the call."

Whether in the West, or in the East, this was Vivekananda's message—the message of divinity. Only he adopted his words to the needs of his audience. In the West he preached Vedant, the highest truth only, helping people to become conscious of their inner self. "Come up, O lions, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep; you are souls immortal, spirits free, blest and eternal." The sleeping gods did awake. Many got inspired to renounce the world and dedicate themselves to their master. There were some, who were deeply impressed and with changed attitude towards life and better understanding, came forward to offer their help and service to the great cause of their spiritual teacher. There were others also whose lives were completely changed and they devoted themselves silently to the pursuit of a higher life.

"He said something, the particular words of which I do not remember, but instantly to me that was truth. And I listened to him for seven years and whatever he uttered was to me truth," said Miss Macleod an American disciple who played a very significant role in the shaping of the Vivekananda Movement.

In India, to his own people, Vivekananda preached practical Vedanta, that is, how to apply Vedanta in every day life by worshipping Siva in the form of Jiva. The pioneers of India's regeneration must dedicate themselves to the service of the poor, the illiterate, the hungry and the sick. They must seek the manifestation of God in them. His clarion call stirred the soul of India to its depths and roused her from age-long slumber. His message electrified the the whole country. All classes of people from the highest rank of society to lowest responded to his call. Young and educated boys with burning enthusiasm and inspired with the ideal of renunciation and service came to dedicate their lives for their own liberation as well as for the good of the world. There were many who accepted him

as their leader—not as a political one but as a spiritual teacher—a prophet of the age under whose spiritual guidance they wanted to build up their character and offer their services to their Motherland. And yet there were others on whom his influence was deep enough to change the course of their lives which silently led them to the path realisation. "But to those who have had the privilege of knowing him intimately, he seems to be only comparable to those immortal spiritual personages who have shed an undying luster on this holy land."

Godly Scepter Works

Of course, it can never be claimed, that all of them who came in contact with him did great things. The achievements attained by Sister Nivedita with her genius and personality could not be expected of every one of his followers, but surely all of them wanted to express what was strongest and finest in them, to give their best and feel blessed.

Thus, he went on calling the sleeping gods within. He was determined to awaken the sleeping divinity. On the basis of the real nature of man, he united the West and the East. "We believe that every being is divine, is God. Every soul is a sun covered over with clouds of ignorance; the difference between soul and soul is due to the difference in density of these layers of clouds" To him this was the essence of all religions, the common ground where all religions meet.

Did he make any distinction between men and women? He wrote, "My whole ambition in life is to set in motion a machinery which will bring noble ideas to the door of everybody, and then let men and women settle their own fate."

For the regeneration of the world he proclaimed, "We want both men and women. There is no distinction of sex in the soul. We want thousands of men, and thousands of women, who will spread like wild fire from the North Pole to the South Pole—all over the world."

The message of universal religion that Swami Vivekananda carried to the western hemisphere was the message of Sri Ramakrishann. And did not Sri Ramakrishna come for the good of the whole world? His mission, like that of all other great founders of religions, was to deluge the earth with the pure and perennial waters of spiritual growth, to quench the fire of materialism burning the core of the

U. THANT
feels



THE CELESTIAL BLISS

*Speech by H. E., U. Thant, Secretary General of
United Nations delivered on 28-3-63 at
Vivekananda Centenary Dinner, New York.*

Mr. President, Swamiji, Ambassador Nehru, and friends. I certainly feel it a privilege to be asked to participate in this memorable function and to address this distinguished audience. And for this I am most grateful, particularly to Swamiji, for having made my participation possible. As a matter of fact, I was very closely connected with the work of the Ramakrishna Mission in Burma for many years before I left Rangoon to take up a new post in New York, about six years ago, but since

my arrival in this country, unfortunately, due to pressure of work, I have not been able to associate myself with the very noble functions performed by the Mission in this city.

We are celebrating here tonight Swami Vivekananda's Centenary and on this occasion, of course, it will be superfluous for me to recount many of his extraordinary activities, but in the brief space of time at my disposal I would like to touch on a few aspects of his missionary work, particularly in this country.

Swami Vivekananda, as most of you are aware, was the history of India. And for that matter, the history of Asia. The main purpose of his historic visit to the United States

the stars, while at the same time, the development of the moral and spiritual qualities of man is more or less ignored.

I feel rather strongly that the exclusive

Now in this life let us infinitely spread his lofty character, his sublime life, his infinite soul. This is the only work—there is nothing else to do. Wherever his name will reach, the barest worm will attain divinity, nay he is actually attaining it.....Whoever will be ready to serve him—no, not him but his children—the poor and the downtrodden, the sinful and the afflicted, down to the very worm—who will be ready to serve these, in them he will manifest himself. Through their tongue the Goddess of Learning. Herself will speak, and the Divine Mother—the Embodiment of all power—will enthrone Herself in their hearts.

—Vivekananda

of America. over, sixty years ago, was to find a synthesis, if I can interpret and assess his activities in this country. He was very keen to bring about this synthesis between India and the United States, and for that matter, between Asia and the West. To understand Swami Vivekananda it is very important to understand the cultural and spiritual background of India, the cultural and spiritual background of Asia.

In Asia, as most of you know, we attach more importance to the mind than to the body, and still much more importance to the spirit than to the mind. Traditionally, the aim of education in Asia has been to discover what is happening inside of us, to discover the truth inside of us, to learn to understand the extraordinary moral and spiritual qualities of man. In other words, the traditional aim of education and culture and civilization in Asia has been, throughout the centuries, the discovery of oneself, and to try to understand the spiritual qualities such as humility, reverence for old people, and so on.

Divergent Approach

In the West, the stress has been on the development of the intellect, if my interpretation of Western educational aims and ideals is correct. There is too much stress on the intellectual development of man. The aim of education in the West—when I say West, of course, it applies to the United States of America, Western Europe, and other countries of Europe too—the aim of education in the West has been, and still is, to create doctors, scientists, engineers, to discover outer space, to go to the moon and to Mars and

intellectual development without a corresponding moral and spiritual development is sure to lead us from one crisis to another. At the same time, in the middle of the twentieth century, in this space age, a purely moral and spiritual development unaccompanied by corresponding intellectual development is also an anachronism. So what is necessary in this second half of the twentieth century is a certain kind of synthesis, a certain kind of harmony, a certain harmonizing activity, by which man must be fully integrated. The development of man must be both intellectual, moral and spiritual. Only then man will be able to achieve the objectives set out in his own particular religion.

I think if we attempt to analyse the main purpose of Swami Vivekananda's mission to this country—my interpretation is he wanted to find a harmony, and of a synthesis between the Eastern concept of culture and civilization. It is very true of these times, much more than sixty years ago. What we need today is not to neglect or ignore the moral and spiritual qualities of mankind left by centuries of tradition and which is the key of all religion.

Another aspect of Swami Vivekananda's mission, to my knowledge, is the need of tolerance. Need of human relations. Not only religious tolerance but also tolerance in all spheres of activity. I think this message is also very necessary in these tense times; much more, if I may say so, much more than sixty years ago. If we recount a few phases of historical developments—let us say, for instance, a few centuries ago, there was no such thing as religious tolerance. Religious tolerance

was unthinkable. Let us take, for instance, the Crusades. During the time of the Crusades the Christians believed, and they believed very strongly, that all non-Christians were

point of view, has been what Swami Vivekananda strove to put across—particularly to the American people. I think it is a very great lesson to be learned from the teachings of

Be pure, staunch, and sincere to the backbone, and everything else will be all right if you have marked anything in the disciples of Shri Ramakrishna, it is this—they are sincere to the backbone. My task will be done and I shall be quite content to die, if I can bring up and launch one hundred such men all over India. He the Lord, knows best. The petty attempts of small men should be beneath our notice. Onward! Upon ages of struggle a character is built. One world of truth can never be lost: for ages it may be hidden under rubbish, but it will show itself sooner or later. Truth is indestructible. Purity is indestructible. Purity, patience, and perseverance are the three essentials to success, and above all love.

—Vivekananda

heretics. The same applied to Muslims; perhaps to Hindus, perhaps to Buddhists, perhaps to Jews, but according to European history during the time of the Crusades the Muslims also believed very strongly that Christians were heretics. So both the Christians and the Muslims (they were known as Saracens in those days) they decided to put the others to the sword. Various Crusades took place resulting in the death of tens of thousands of people, both Christians and Muslims, but when reason prevailed they realized—that both great religions could exist in amity, side by side without clashes, without hostilities, and without war. And since that time Christianity and Islam existed side by side in amity. Now in the twentieth century, of course, there is religious tolerance. Of course, there may be some exceptional cases in certain parts of the world, but generally speaking what humanity did not experience say, a hundred or two hundred years ago, is a reality now. Although there was no religious tolerance two or three generations ago, there is today religious tolerance.

With the same analogy, I may say, and I am sure you will agree with me, that in the second half of the twentieth century there is no political tolerance. We should not be surprised. Human nature is such that it likes to indulge in some passions like hatred and bitterness—sometimes even hysteria. But feeling is, although there is no political tolerance in these days, there will be political tolerance, perhaps in our generation and probably in the next one or two generations. This spirit of tolerance, this philosophy of live and let live, this concept of trying to understand the other's

Swami Vivekananda.

Synthesis Sublime

When we say that his main mission here was a search for a synthesis and an appeal for tolerance, we should also try to understand the concept of culture, of civilization. The concept of civilization, of course, is very difficult to define—there is a mistaken impression, assumption, if I may say so, regarding the concept of civilization. There seems to be a general feeling that there is a kind of civilization existing in the West and a different type of civilization connotes certain qualities of the heart. A civilized Indian, for instance, cannot be distinguished mentally and spiritually—morally and spiritually, from a civilized American. But a civilized Indian or a civilized American will find themselves very different from any of their compatriots in their own countries; so we cannot classify civilization in a particular region. It is primarily concerned with the qualities of the heart and the mind.

There is also another misconception, that wars and tensions were generated by conflicts of civilizations or conflicts of cultures. I think this is also a fallacy. If you read history you will find that England and France and, Germany, had wars for centuries, off and on, although they belonged to the same system of civilization and the same system of culture. The same can be said of many Asian countries which have been, throughout the centuries, at war with one another, although they belonged to the same culture and they subscribed to the same religious system. So tensions and

conflicts do not arise necessarily from the conflicts of culture, or the conflicts of civilizations. They rise primarily out of the evil in human beings, irrespective of geographical regions.

these waves, or thoughts, during meditation is evidence that your mind is tending towards concentration." To my knowledge this is the simplest receipt to practice this very noble and

This life is short, the vanities of the world are transient, but they alone live who live for others, the rest are more dead than alive.

These prophets were not unique; they were men as you or They were great Yogis. They had gained this superconsciousness, and you and I can get the same. The very fact that one man ever reached that state, proves that it is possible for every man to do so. Not only is it possible, but every man must, eventually, get to that state, and that is religion.

The only true duty is to be unattached and to work as free beings, to give up all work unto God. All duties are His.

No work is secular. All work is adoration and worship. —Vivekananda

I think this fact was also stressed by Swami Vivekananda in many of his speeches and statements.

He, of course attempted to teach many of his American friends the methods and procedures involved in mediation and contemplation which have been the traditional methods of finding our own selves. As I said earlier, the stress of education in Asia, and particularly in India, which is a very rich cultural country for thousands of years, has been to discover what is happening inside of us. I have said earlier that the stress of education in the West has been traditionally for the intellectual development of man. But in Asia, particularly in India, we try to discover what is happening inside of us by methods of contemplation and meditation, which, of course, is very difficult for the western audiences to understand. I think it may perhaps be appropriate for me to read one of his statements regarding this method of meditation and contemplation.

This is what Swamiji wrote on meditation: "You must keep the mind fixed on one object; meditation should be like an unbroken stream of oil. The ordinary man's mind is scattered on different objects, and at the time of meditation, too, the mind is at first apt to wander. Let any desire whatever arise in the mind; sit calmly and watch what sorts of ideas are coming. By continuing to watch in that way, the mind becomes calm and there are no thought-waves in it. These waves represent the thought activity of the mind. Those things that you have previously thought about too deeply have transformed themselves into a subconscious current, and therefore they come up in the mind in meditation. The rise of

very desirable art of meditation and contemplation which is still being practiced in many parts of Asia.

A man of God indeed

Than Swami Vivekananda, among many of his messages, had this very significant and very pertinent message for these tense times. He said, and I quote, "In this country I do not come to convert you to a new belief. I want you to keep your own belief. I want to make the Methodist a better Methodist, the Presbyterian a better Presbyterian, the Unitarian a better Unitarian". On this subject also I think it is worth quoting his attitude toward religious tolerance which, to me, is one of the wisest maxims which ever came into my experience. He said, "I accept all the religions that were in the past, and worship them all. I worship God with every one of them, in whatever form they worship Him, I shall go to the mosque of the Mohammedan; I shall enter the Christian church and kneel before the Crucifix; I shall enter the Buddhist temple, where I shall take refuge in Buddha and his Law. I shall go into the forest and sit down in meditation with the Hindu, who is trying to see the Light which enlightens the hearts of everyone. Not only shall I do these things, but I shall keep my heart open for all that may come in the future."

Those are very wise words and, friends, on this auspicious occasion when we are doing honour to one of the greatest men of all time, let us dedicate ourselves anew to this pledge: to make Christians better Christians, Hindus better Hindus, Muslims better Muslims, Buddhists better Buddhists, and Jews better Jews. Thank you very much.

J. L. NEHRU

Burns



GOSPEL OF GODLY INCENCE

Rooted in the past and full of pride in India's prestige, Swami Vivekananda was yet modern in his approach to life's problems and was a kind of bridge between the past of India and her present. He was a powerful orator in Bengali and English and a graceful writer of Bengali prose and poetry. He was a fine figure of a man, imposing, full of poise and dignity, sure of himself and his mission, and at the same time full of a dynamic and fiery energy and a passion to push India forward. He came as a tonic to the depressed and demoralized Hindu mind and gave it self-reliance and some roots in the past. He attended the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893, spent over a year in the U.S.A., travelled across Europe, going as far as Athens and Constantinople, and

visited Egypt, China and Japan. Wherever he went, he created a minor sensation not only by his presence but by what he said and how he said it. Having seen this Hindu sanyasin once it was difficult to forget him or his message. In America he was called the "cyclonic Hindu". He was himself greatly influenced by his travels in Western countries; he admired British perseverance and the vitality and spirit of equality of the American people. 'America is the best field in the world to carry on any idea', he wrote to a friend in India. But he was not impressed by the manifestations of religion in the West and his faith in the Indian philosophical and spiritual background became firmer. India, in spite of her degradation, still represented to him the light.

Thinking humanity

He preached the monism of the Advaita philosophy of the Vedanta and was convinced that only this could be the future religion of thinking humanity. For the Vedanta was not only spiritual but rational and in harmony with scientific investigations of external nature. 'This universe has not been created by any, extra-cosmic God, nor is it the work of any outside genius. It is self-creating, self-dissolving, self-manifesting, one infinite existence, The Brahman.' The Vedanta ideal was of the solidarity of man and his inborn divine nature; to see God in man is the real God-vision; man is the greatest of all beings. But 'the abstract Vedanta must become living—poetic—in everyday life; out of hopelessly intricate mythology must come concrete moral forms; and out of bewildering yogism must come the most scientific and practical psychology'. India had fallen because she had narrowed herself, gone into her shell and lost touch with other nations, and thus sunk into a state of "mummified" and 'crystallized' civilisation. Caste which was necessary and desirable in its early forms, and meant to develop individuality and freedom, had become a monstrous degradation, the opposite of what it was meant to be, and had crushed the masses. Caste was a form of social organisation which was and should be kept separate from religion. Social organisation

Hope Of India

He kept away from politics and disapproved of the politicians of his day. But again and again he laid stress on the necessity for liberty and equality and the raising of the masses. 'Liberty of thought and action is the only condition of life, of growth and well-being. Where it does not exist—the man, the race, the nation must go.' 'The only hope of India is from the masses. The upper classes are physically and morally dead.' He wanted to combine Western progress with India's spiritual background. 'Make a European society with India's religion. Become an occidental of occidentals in your spirit of equality, freedom, work and energy, and at the same time a Hindu to the very backbone in religious culture and instincts.' Progressively, Vivekananda grew more international in outlook: 'Even in politics and sociology problems that were only national twenty years ago can no longer be solved on national grounds only. They are assuming huge proportions, gigantic shapes. They can only be solved when looked at in the broader light of international grounds. International organisations, international combinations, international laws are the cry of the day. That shows solidarity. In science, every day they are coming to a similar broad view of matter. And again: 'There cannot be any progress without the whole world following in the wake, and it

Let there be but a dozen lion-souls in each country, lions who have broken their own bonds, who have touched the Infinite, whose whole soul is gone to Brahman, who care neither for health, nor power, nor fame and these will be enough to shake the world.

Those who give themselves up to the Lord do more for the world than all the so-called workers.

What we need today is to know that there is a God, and that we can see and feel Him here and now.

Not a drop will be in the ocean, not a twig in the deepest forest, not a crumb in the house of the god of wealth, if the Lord is not merciful. Streams will be in the desert and the beggar will have plenty if He wills it. He seeth the sparrow's fall. Are these but words or literal, actual life? **Vivekananda**

should change with the changing times. Passionately, Vivekananda condemned the meaningless metaphysical discussions and arguments about ceremonials and especially the touch-memotism of the upper castes. "Our religion is in the kitchen. Our God is the cooking-pot, and our religion is: don't touch me. I am holy".

is becoming every day clearer that the solution of any problem can never be attained on racial or national, or narrow grounds. Every idea has to become broad till it covers the whole of this world. Every aspiration must go on increasing till it has engulfed the whole of humanity, may the whole of life, within its scope."

All this fitted in with Vivekananda's view of the Vedanta philosophy and he preached this from end to end of India. 'I am thoroughly convinced that no individual or nation can live by holding itself apart from the community of others, and wherever such an attempt has been made under false ideas of greatness, policy or holiness--the result has always been disastrous to the secluding one.' 'The fact of our isolation from all the other nations of the

gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and the secrets of the universe, and will accomplish their purpose in any fashion, even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face.' He condemned 'occultism and mysticism. These creepy things : there may be great truths in them, but they have nearly destroyed us..And there is the test of truth. Anything that makes your weak physi-

We want everything but God, because our ordinary desires are fulfilled by the external world. So long as our needs are confined within the limits of the physical universe, we do not feel any need for God ; it is only when we have had hard blows in our lives and are disappointed with everything here that we feel the need for something higher : then we seek God.

Life is the unfoldment and development of a being under circumstances tending to press it down.

There must be no fear. No begging, but demanding--demanding the true devotees of the mother are as hard as adamant and as fearless as lions. They are not the least upset if the whole universe suddenly crumbles into dust at their feet ! Make Her listen to you. None of that cringing to mother ! Remember She is all-powerful. She can make heroes even of stones !

world is the cause of our degeneration and its only remedy is getting back into the current of the rest of the world.' Motion is the sign of life.'

He once wrote : 'I am a socialist not because I think it is a perfect system, but half a loaf is better than no bread. The other systems have been tried and found wanting. Let this one be tried--if for nothing else, for the novelty of the thing.'

One refrain

Vivekananda spoke of many things but the one constant refrain of his speech and writing was *abhay*--be fearless, be strong. For him man was no miserable sinner but a part of divinity ; why should we be afraid of anything ? 'If there is a sin in the world it is weakness ; avoid all weakness, weakness is sin, weakness is death.' That had been the great lesson of the Upanishads. Fear breeds evil and weeping and wailing. There had been enough of that, enough of softness. 'What our country now wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel,

cally, intellectually and spiritually, reject as poison, there is no life in it, it cannot be true. Truth is strengthening. Truth is purity, truth is all-knowledge...These mysticisms in spite of some grains of truth in them, are generally weakening...Go back to your Upanishads, the shining, the strengthening, the bright philosophy ; and part from all these mysterious things, all these weakening things. Take up this philosophy ; the greatest truths are the simplest things in the world, simple as your own existence.' And beware of superstition. 'I would rather see everyone of you rank atheists than superstitious fools, for the atheist is alive, and you can make something of him. But if superstition enters the brain is gone. the brain is softening, degradation has seized upon the life mystery-mongering and superstition are always signs of weakness.

So Vivekananda thundered from Cape Comorin on the Southern tip of India to the Himalayas, and he wore himself out in the process, dying in 1902 when he was thirty-nine years of age.

PRABUDDHA BHARAT— SWAMIJI'S REAWAKENED INDIA

By Kaka Kalelkar

Lokmanya Tilak referred to Swami Vivekananda as the patriotic Saint of India. Evidently he used the word patriotic not in the usual political sense but in a wide cultural Sociological sense. Swami Vivekananda, a thorough going Sanayasi, had renounced the world, but he had not renounced the cares of the world. Vedanta to him was the sovereign philosophy that could successfully tackle all the major problems of humanity. He was the first amongst modern Indian thinkers who worked for a living synthesis. In him we find reconciled all the various schools of metaphysics. Like Gaudpadacharya, he believed that from the higher pedestal of Advaita he could reconcile all the opposing schools of thought. Vivekananda's influence brought on end to the bitter acrimony between the reformers and the orthodox Sanatanis. He taught us to respect all religions. His social reforms did not confine themselves to the upper middle class. He thought more and more of the depressed classes the Daridranarayan (The Lord that loves to manifest himself in the form of the lowliest and the lost).

Very few people realized that Swami Vivekananda was the first amongst the moderns who roamed over the whole of Bharat, lived the life of the poor and identified himself with their careworn lives. Like all the other saints of India, he respected the poor and had great regard for the simple spirituality, manifested in their lives.

He discovered that the leaders of the nation had lost faith in themselves and their culture

and felt that confidence could be restored only by impressing the West with the grandeur of Hindu spiritual thought. He did succeed and brought with him from there a few devoted followers. The foremost among them being Sister Nivedita, whose penetrating, intellect made us realize the value of the cultural and sociological foundations of Indian life.

I have always held that Ramkrishna Paramhansa, Swami Vivekananda and Sister Nivedita are an indivisible trinity. They form the unified inspiration of Prabuddha Bharat—reawakened India.

The Vedanta of Indian philosophy evolved institutional Sannyas. This institution had a chequered career. Shuka, Yagnavalkya, Gautam Buddha, Shankaracharya and Swami Vivekananda seem to be the main guiding lights of this hoary institution. Each one of them gave a new turn to the ideal of Sannyas. And each represents in himself a large group of contemporary experimentors. A history of the lives and times of these five would reveal the evolution of the Indian ideal of renunciation and of its sociological influence.

It would be worth while comparing the Sannyas with the working of the Monastic order in Buddhism, Christianity and Islam.

The self-confidence generated by Swami Vivekananda greatly influenced leaders of thought of Modern India. He was thus one of the foremost builders of resurgent India.



APOSTLE OF RENAISSANCE

By
K. M. MUNSHI

Few can understand, unless they belong to my age group, the great influence which Swami Vivekananda had on us, in the first decade of the 20th century when we were at College. We were then subjected not only to political but also to cultural and religious humiliation. In those days small booklets, very cheap, were issued by missionaries in which our culture and religion were held up to ridicule, scorn and contempt.

There were books giving heavily biased summaries of Ramayana and Mahabharata, followed by criticisms trying to prove that we were barbarians, that our scriptures were immoral and our gods wicked. Then in these books followed a gushing description of the

Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost in which we were told how Christianity was faultless. We were then at an impressionable age and were not intelligent enough to find answer to the criticisms contained in these books. We felt humiliated.

India Awakened

At that time, Arya Samaj, founded by Swami Dayananda Saraswati, was the only movement which accepted the challenge of the missionary. But, it was only when we began to read the works of Swami Vivekananda that our eyes were opened. Reading these works, we derived considerable knowledge on Hindu Culture and Religion, from the modern point of view.

Swamiji gave us the message of New India; he gave us hope; he gave us pride in ourselves; we felt that we were not the uncivilized barbarians as the missionaries were trying to make us out, but a people with a great cultural heritage. This gave us back our self respect.

Indian Renaissance was not merely an artistic and literary movement like the European Renaissance. Nor was it only a religious movement. It was essentially cultural and spiritual. Though Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Dayananda Saraswati began the work, it was Swami Vivekananda who brought to us, the younger generations, the message of the Renaissance.

Renaissance

One of the essential features of the Renaissance was to bring the past in the vivid colours of the present. No nation can be great unless its present is founded in the past; nor can it be so, if it only lives in its past; and it can have no future, unless its present establishes a continuity with the past.

In one of the stirring passages, Swamiji said :

“You are bound by it (your religion), and if you give it up you are smashed to pieces. You have withstood the shocks of centuries simply because you took great care of it. You sacrificed everything else for it. Your forefathers underwent everything boldly, even death itself, but preserved their religion. Temple after temple was broken down by the foreign conqueror, but no sooner had the wave passed than the spire of the temple rose up again. Some of the old temples of Southern India, and those like Somanath of Gujarat, will teach volumes of wisdom, will give a keener interest into the history of the race, than any amount of books. Mark how these temples bear the marks of a hundred regenerations, continually destroyed and continually springing up out of the ruins, rejuvenated and strong as ever ! That is the national mind, that is the national life-current. Follow it and it leads to glory. Give it and you die.”

When we read Swamiji's works we realised that culture flows in a continuous stream. We cannot break it up by making artificial distinctions in time, into British Period, the

Moghul Period, the Freedom Period and so on. The life of a people is continuous. Spiritual heritage throws up creative activity which is one and indivisible. The collective mind of a people is basically the same, undergoing only minor changes from age to age.

We knew about Ramayana and Mahabharata but we found in them fresh inspiration only when we read Swamiji's summaries of his works. Yoga was a word of mystic implication, but it was only when we read his *Raja Yoga* and *Karma Yoga* that we realised what it was.

In one of his most beautiful speeches, Swamiji said :

“This is the ancient land where wisdom made its home before it went into any other country, the same India whose influx of spirituality is represented, as it were, on the material plane, by rolling rivers like oceans, where the eternal Himalayas, rising tier above tier with their snow caps, look, as it were, into the very mysteries of heaven. Here is the same India whose soil has been trodden by the feet of the great sages that ever lived. Here first sprang up inquiries into the nature of man, and into the internal world. Here first arose the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, the existence of a Supervising God, an immanent God in nature and man, and here the highest ideals of religion and philosophy have attained their culminating points. This is the land from whence, like tidal waves, spirituality and philosophy have again and again rushed out and deluged the world, and this is the land from whence once more such tides must proceed in order to bring life and vigour into the decaying races of mankind. It is the same India which has withstood the shocks of centuries, of hundreds of foreign invasions, of hundreds of upheavals of manners and customs. It is the same land which stands firmer than any rock in the world, with its undying vigour, indestructible life. Its life is of the nature of the soul, without beginning and without end, immortal; and we are the children of such a country.”

Nation and Culture

As one of the great architects of our Renaissance, Swami Vivekananda made us ‘India-conscious’. I will tell you of how I

became 'India-conscious. In some respects, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, Professor of English in the Baroda College in my time, reflected the cult of the Mother land, as taught by Vivekananda and envisaged by Bankim Chandra Chatterji before him.

In one of our visits to the Professor, I asked him, how we could serve the country. He took me to a map of India, and said: 'Look here, young man, if you want to serve India, meditate on her as the Mother, on her soil, her mountains and rivers as her physical body, on her people as so many living cells, on her culture which has come down through the ages as her soul. Then you would know how to serve the motherland.'

Some of us then thought—as some men in the present generation think—that India was a stretch of so many millions of miles or an undeveloped country with an explosive population. But we soon learnt that she was a Mother to be worked for and, if necessary, to die for.

Swami Vivekananda taught us to ignore the excrescences of our culture and to go back to the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita and the Yoga Sutras and to find in them the fundamental truth of our culture. Here again, when I asked Prof. Aurobindo Ghosh as to how to meditate on the 'Mother' he referred me to Yoga Sutra and the works of Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Vivekananda took us back to the fundamental values of our culture and brought God into our life. It is a strange way of putting it, for, we always thought of 'approaching Him', or 'Living in Him'. Swami Vivekananda gave us a new message—to bring God into our daily life.

The old religious teachers no doubt talked *paramartha*, but our religious attitude had been ego-centric for ages. If I prayed it was to go

to heaven; if I performed a ritual it was to secure favours in the next birth; if I made a donation it was to make a capital investment to be returned with compound interest in my next life.

It was Swami Vivekananda who changed this outlook. He taught us that religion must necessarily mean that God should come in our life by our living a dedicated life, that is by consecrating all our actions as an offering to God Himself.

Unless we begin to look upon the whole humanity as part of the God, we cannot expand our religious outlook. What is wanted is to live for others, to conquer egoism, to sink our *swartha* in *paramartha*. This can only come by broadening our outlook so as to include in our affection as many people as possible.

This way, Swami Vivekananda laid the foundation of our attitude that service was essential to spiritual life. We cannot lead a spiritual life unless we work for others in utter selflessness, in a spirit of devotion, with a sense of dedication that we are doing it for God's sake.

We are told that we are living in a dynamic age. Dynamism does not mean merely having gigantic dams or railways or atom bombs. This age can be dynamic, and not otherwise, only if we live for Truth, for Beauty and Love, for fulfilling our aspirations to rise above our sordid self.

We celebrate the centenary of Swami Vivekananda as he was a great apostle of our modern Renaissance. We offer him our tribute not merely for what he has done, but because it provides us with an opportunity to mobilise our own spiritual aspirations by dwelling on him, his works and his ideals. This way, we light our little lamp from the flaming torch that he was.

(Continued from page 146)

hearts of millions. His life was a wonderful synthesis of all religions because he practised all religious in his own life and realised that they are the different paths of reach the same truth. He preached the same eternal truth which was declared by the sages in ancient India. The Veda says, "Truth is one but sages call it by various names." Once more it was preached by Sri Ramakrishna, that all religions are true, that the divinity is inherent in man and he possesses the capacity for infinite evolution.

It was his intense yearning for god-realisation which brought Vivekananda to Dakshineswar at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna. The master recognised in him the future messenger of his mission who was to shake the world to its very foundation through the strength of his spiritual powers.

Vivekananda has been truly called a great patriot saint of India. Who knew better than him that political bondage was the root cause of all evils in India? Who realised better than him that under foreign rule there can be no physical, mental and spiritual growth? His great heart bled to see the deplorable condition of the millions in India. Again and again he appealed to his countrymen to rise from their age-long stupor to devote themselves heart and soul to the service of their motherland—to worship the great Motherland (India) alone for the next fifty years. But he never forgot to point out that that spirituality was the soul of India. "India will be raised-not with the power of flesh, but with the power of spirit, not with the power of destruction but with the flag of peace and love."

"Ye modern Hindus, de-hypnotise yourselves, teach everyone his real nature, call upon the sleeping soul and see how it awakes. Power will come, Glory will come, Goodness will come, and everything that is excellent will come, when this sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity."

A born lover of India as he was he never showed the least indifference to the spiritual hunger of the West. "Doubtless I do love India. But everyday my sight grows clearer. What is India or England or America to us? We are the servants of that god who by ignorant is called man."

It is but natural that since India has been released from the political bondage, she will desperately race after material progress but it will be suicidal if she thinks this to be her ultimate goal. The West has achieved material progress, and far more rapid progress is expected in the future. But with all the scientific inventions and achievements of the West, the possibility of world peace is daily fading away. The world has witnessed that exclusive development in the fields of science and technology without spiritual foundation is leading humanity to utter destruction. And this reminds us with a shock of the prophetic warning of Vivekananda that the whole of western civilisation will crumble to pieces if there is no spiritual foundation.

Vivekananda's mission was to conquer the whole world not with the sword but with spirituality. Unless science and technology are based upon and supported by spiritual idealism, there can be no civilisation which can bring peace to the world. India's real message to the world is the message of divinity which was preached by her great son Swami Vivekananda.

With the progress of science a broader and more generous conception of life is now before us. Modern science and technology have integrated the world on a physical plane. Different parts of the world have been linked up. So this is the time to flood the earth with the spiritual ideal of India. This alone can save India, can save humanity, from ultimate disaster. This is the mission of India. This also is her quota to give to the sum total of human progress. Our leaders should remember that all their efforts and enterprises to raise their country will fail if they overlook this ideal, this mission of India. Real civilisation will be built up only when science will be combined with spiritual idealism. The world is still waiting for that. Vivekananda said, "It is her (India's) mission to conserve, to preserve, to accumulate as it were, into a dynamo all the spiritual energy and that concentrated energy is to pour forth is deluge on the world, whenever circumstances are propitious." Swami Vivekananda was such a dynamo, through him spiritual energy has began to pour forth on the world. Circumstances cannot be more propitious than as they are now.



SWAMIJI—A GREAT MISSION

By :

PANDIT SUNDAR LAL

Chairman All India Peace Council

The period from the middle of the 19th to the middle of the 20th century may well be termed the period of Indian Renaissance. It was also a period of Rejuvenation and Reformation of India's multiform society. All through that period India was literally picking and choosing. We had to preserve all that was useful and beneficial in our past and to reject all that had become out-worn and even rotten through lapse of time. Similarly we had to adopt and make our own all that was right and useful in world currents with which we were then coming into contact and to avoid all that was wrong and harmful in them. As already said, we had to pick and choose which was by no means an easy task. Swami Vivekananda

was one of the foremost among those great sons of India who helped us and guided us in that difficult task.

Saturated with India's highest spiritual idealism, an adorning disciple of that ideal Indian saint-philosopher Bhagawan Ram Krishn Paramhans and an adept in Patanjali's Yoga Shastra, he was yet absolutely above all narrownesses, all superstitions, all unscientific dogmas and lifeless forms, ceremonies and rituals that had blocked the progress of Indian humanity. In a sense he was a bridge between the East and the West, between India's ancient philosophy and Western scientific thinking. In his own words he was an advocate and a living symbol of "Practical Vedanta"

Referring to the senseless way in which the Gita was then being honoured by a large number of Hindus, he did not hesitate to say—"Young men of India ! You will gain more by playing football than by reading the Gita". On another occasion, referring to the mechanical way in which many people performed their Pranayam, he said, "You have blown three times through your nose, do you think the Rishies will come flying down through the air?"

Swami Ram Tirth.

It reminds me of another eminent son of India, a contemporary of Swami Vivekananda and a kindred spirit, Swami Ram Tirth, who also gave to the world the same message of "Practical Vedanta." Swami Ram Tirth, just returned from Japan and America, was then living at Tehri in the Himalayas. Bubonic plague had about that very time broken out in Bombay. Some orthodox Hindu leaders, including Pandit Deen Dayal Sharma and the Maharajas of Darbhanga and Jaipur, decided to perform a great *havan* at Hardwar for avoiding the spread of plague in the country. Hundreds of maunds of ghee and other valuable material were to be thrown into the sacred fire. The organisers invited Swami Ram Tirth to come and preside over the function. Swami Ram Tirth's reply in English is published in his collection entitled—"In Woods of God Wilderness". He declined to accept the invitation and advised the organisers, instead of throwing so much valuable material into the fire, to buy eatables with that money and distribute the same among the poor and the hungry. He explained how the burning of all that material at Hardwar could in no way effect the spread of plague in the country. In reply to the argument that such a *havan* was enjoined by the *Shruti* and by the *Smriti*, Swami Ram Tirth boldly appealed to his inviters in the following words :—"For heaven's sake, give up sucking the dry bones of your *Smriti* and the dry bones of your *Shruti*."

Miracle of Hathyoga

I now come back to an incident in the life of Swami Vivekananda, a small incident and yet very meaning-full. After his return from America, Swami Vivekananda was once the guest of an elderly Bengali gentleman at Naniatal. The host was much senior to the guest in years. In the evening the host invited a few

friends to dine with the illustrious guest. But the host was addicted to drinking. So were some of those invited. Swami Vivekananda avoided liquor. Yet in spite of Swami Vivekananda's mild remonstrance, liquor was served on the table. At this the Swami challenged his host to 'drink him under the table', on condition that if the host was defeated he would give up drinking for the rest of his life. The old man confidently accepted the challenge. Bottles after bottles were brought on the table. At the end while Swami Vivekananda gulped down his throat several bottles one after the other, without in the least losing the clarity of his intellect or the control over his nerves, the old habitual lost both before completing one full bottle. Evidently Swami Vivekananda at the time made full use of his expert knowledge of *hathyog* practices. From that very day the host as well as all those present gave up drinking for the rest of their lives.

Swami Vivekananda's performance at the Chicago Conference of World Religions was a landmark in world history. It produced in the minds of the western people a unique reverence for India, her religion and her ancient civilisation. It sowed the seeds of a new spiritual life on the continent of America which are still germinating and bearing fruit. It was a laudable effort to construct a bridge between the East and the West. Swami Vivekananda was thus not only an eminent son of India, he was also one of the greatest benefactors of the world.

Swami Vivekananda, who embodied in himself all that was great and good in India's hoary past, at the same time fully appreciated all that was worth learning from other countries and other people. He was an enemy of all forms of exclusiveness like the present day caste system and various forms of untouchability.

Great Lesson for Youngmen indeed.

Swami Vivekananda's great mission has yet to be fulfilled. In a slightly different context, his mission was the same as the mission of Kabir, of Nanak, of Dadu, of Akbar, of Ram Mohanrai, of Ravindra Nath Tagore and of Mahatma Gandhi. Humanity has to develop unity in diversity and homogeneity in heterogeneity. We have to move towards a common Religion of Humanity and a common World Culture. I would urge all Indian youngmen carefully to study at least the collection of Swami Vivekananda's speeches entitled "From Colombo to Almora".

“AGGRESSIVE HINDUISM”. Here ‘aggressive’ only meant dynamic and active, not somnolent and passive. This movement needed new messiahs who could propagate the new gospel of Hinduism with vigour and foresight. Awakened India found a new voice in this Lion of Vedanta, Swami Vivekananda, who left a profound and deep impression on modern India and the West.

Swami Vivekananda was the child of the new age that had dawned in India. He had imbibed western learning which stimulated him to rethink about the concepts of his own culture. He hungered for knowledge which he devoured from wherever it came. He was athirst for knowing some of those things which his ancestors had pondered upon and made their own. The philosophies of the

THE CHILD OF NEW AGE That Dawned In India



सत्यमेव जयते



The century in which Swami Vivekananda was born in India was full of the ferment of a cultural renaissance which manifested itself in several religio-social movements like Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society and the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Movement. This was in a way the result of the vital contact between Indian and Western cultural values. The dreaming India awakened as it were to new possibilities of achievement by the dynamic West. Age-long Indian spirituality lay slumbering in a hoary tradition. Western ideas began to influence that thought of the land and there was even a deliberate onslaught on the traditional values of India. The culture of the West almost took an aggressive form and India had to take a similar attitude to meet the challenge—an attitude which was characterised by Sister Nivedita as

west, that of Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill and others gave him no abiding satisfaction. He found a serious lacuna in their thinking. It seemed to him that they merely touched the fringes of the problem. They left him disappointed and frustrated. They did not allay his deep thirst for a knowledge that liberates. His soul was in rebellion against conventions and customs of his own country which happened to conceal in a crust the real fertilizing stream that flowed beneath it. He was like a person who is described by the Upanisads as one who roamed about on the surface of the earth not knowing that a treasure lay hidden underneath his feet.

‘Tadyathapi hiranya nidhim nihitam aksetra-
trajna uparyupari sancaranto no vindeyuh’
—(Chandogya, VIII-3,2)

He began to hunt for this bidden treasure. He went to teachers, Professors and Pandits, seeking an answer to questions that surged in his breast. However, the door for which he found no key remained shut. Sad at heart, he brooded for days on end on the riddle of life, went through the dark night of the soul and was filled with darkness and despair. No ray of light penetrated the dense darkness that concealed the truth. We have known in history of great men and women passing through this anguish of the soul as a prelude to seeing the light. Gautama the buddha passed through this agony before illumination dawned on him. Jesus Christs saw the light after an 'encircling gloom'. Prophet Moha-med had the light of heaven bursting out on him before God Vouchsafed to him the revelation. Swami Vivekananda's own teacher Sri

was so careless of his personal appearance. But an unearthly light shone through his luminous eyes. He was extraordinarily tender and compassionate. Swami Vivekananda was strangely fascinated by this mad. He was the vision of Narayana in this Nara. The words that the master spoke strangely stirred him to his depths. He felt he was in the presence of one who had an aura around him of what Rudolf Otto describes as the 'numinous' which strikes one with a feeling of awe and reverence. Here was religion which was realization. Religion ceased here to be merely doctrine and dogma. It became realization or saksatkara, the only thing that is capable of giving life and reality to religion which would otherwise merely deteriorate into a soulless ritual and a sapless routine. Such a religion as this which was derived from one who himself was a realised

Do not blame any supernatural being, neither be hopeless and despondent, nor think we are in a place from which we can never escape unless someone comes and lends us helping hand. That cannot be, says the Vedanta ; we are like silkworms. We make the thread out of our own substance and spin the cocoon, and in course of time, are imprisoned inside. But this is not for eves. In that cocoon we shall develop spiritual realisation, and like the butterfly come out free.

The older I grow, the more everything seems to me to lie in manliness. This is my new Gospel. If you look, you will find that I have never quoted anything but the Upanishads. And of the Upanishads, it is only that one idea strength. The quintessence of the Veda and Vedanta and all lies in that one word.

It may be that I shall find it good to get outside of my body—to cast it off like a disused garment. But I shall not cease to work ! I shall inspire men everywhere, until the world shall know that it is one with God.

Ramakrishna Paramhansa had the vision of the deity only when he felt he could no longer continue to live without that redeeming vision. This is how the great teachers of mankind followed the gleam which led them onward in the precipitous path on which they chose to walk, a path which the Upanisad likens to a 'razor's edge'—ksuraya dhara misita duratyayn (Katha III-14).

In this precipitous search for the ultimate truth Swami Vivekananda, the disillusioned intellectual came up on an almost unlettered mystic, who had made his hymn on the fringes of Calcut'a, on the banks of the sacred river Ganga. This mystic was unostentatious in appearance and odd-looking. His hair was unkempt. He was unshaven. His body was half-covered by the fragment of a cloth. He

gave to Swami Vivekanandas' life a new tone and temper. He underwent a remarkable transformation within himself at the divine touch of this extraordinary man. All doubts that formerly corroded his soul came to be dissolved. All uncertainty ceased. His quest for certainty came near fulfilment. This event of great significance in the life of a foremost intellectual in the life of Swami Vivekananda as an individual but also came to be invested with an extraordinary significance for the whole of the Indian, people, nay for the whole world as later events proved.

Fired with his master's flame which he described with such vividness and zeal in his essay on 'My Master', this great disciple swept like a whirlwind over the whole sub-continent from Colombo to America, visiting the diffe-

rent parts of India, its great cities, its temples and places of learning. He was yet an obscure figure though here and there those who came into closer touch with him knew somewhat of the fire that was raging in him. He exhorted the people to shed their weakness, their superstitious, their faintheartedness, their inertia. 'Do not confuse your tamas with satva,' he roared. 'Arise awake, stop not till the goal is reached' was his continuous exhortation. Prince and peasant, pandit, and philosopher, the monks and the laity were all made astir when they heard this new voice which appeared like calling them on to a new life and a new era. He recalled to them the golden age of the dim past, the age of Vedas, the Upanads, the age of the Buddha and Mahavira, the age of Rama and Krishna. It looked as if he made the people realise the presence of a new Avatara in their midst in fulfilment of the prophecy of Srirama in the Gita.

'Yada yada hi dharma-ya,
glanirbaavati bhārata,
Abyutthanam adharma-ya tadatmanam
srjamyaham
Pstiytanaya sadhunam vinasaya ca duskrtam
Dharma samasthapanarthya sambhami
yuge yuge.'
(Bhagavadgita—IV-7,8)

To uproot evil and to re-establish righteousness was the supreme task to which he called all people in India, young and old, rich or poor scholar and peasant. The world is witness to the fact that in the wake of moral depressions, enthusiastic fervours have reawakened mankind periodically. This message reverberated in Swami Vivekananda's powerful voice with a new ring of truth. He called on all those who were in quest of religious life to abandon their self-righteousness and seclusion and plunge themselves into the world's work in order that they may redeem themselves. His slogan became 'atmano' moksaya jagaditaya ca'. One's own liberation is welded up with the redemption of the world.

During his peregrinations in India as a parivrajaka he happened to visit the State of Mysore over which reigned my noble ancestor, His Highness Sri Chamarajendra Wadiyar of revered memory. This was before he left India to go abroad. The Maharaja and the people of the Mysore State are ground of this fact that they have had in some measure the privilege of contributing their humble mite to

render it possible for Swami Vivekananda to go abroad carrying the lighted torch of his Master who represented in himself the entire gamut of India's spirituality. It is this message of vedanta as universal religion which broke all barriers that divided mankind that he carried beyond the shores of India and impressed the Western world with the truth of the spirituality of India. Till then it was practically a sealed book to people in America and England. To them, India represented a land of the heathen steeped in darkness and ignorance, to be mercifully made regenerate.

The West took it as their sacred duty to carry the teachings of the gospel of Christianity the like of which, they thought that we did not possess. At the Chicago Parliament of Religions Swami Vivekananda made his debut and electrified the whole atmosphere. Some journals gave it as their opinion as to how absurd it was to carry religion and spirituality to a land which produced a Swami Vivekananda and gave birth to philosophy and religion which his teachings brought to light. This 'ochre-robed' sanyasin spoke in ringing tones of the faith of his ancestors from the platform of the Parliament of Religions. He spoke to them of the glorious spiritual heritage of the people of India, a heritage from which the whole world may draw an inspiration for noble living. Swami Vivekananda made the reputation of India soar sky-high by his lofty utterances. He made numerous disciples who walked humbly in his footsteps. They were men and women of the West who took to the order of sanyasa and dedicated themselves to the service of India. Women like Sister Nivedita who wrote the excellent book 'The Master as I Saw Him' about Swami Vivekananda, threw herself heart and soul into the cause of the upliftment of Indian women and children. She wrote books like 'Web of Indian Life', 'Cradle Tales of Hinduism', 'Dharma and Religion' and others which helped the educated people of India to a reappraisal of their own civilisation and culture. They fostered a sense of self-respect and legitimate pride in their ancient heritage. Tasks of social reconstruction became as much a religious as a social duty. Mysticism and charity began to walk in unison. A new social conscience was awakened and with it a new era of social progress commenced. Swami Vivekananda desired that Indian society must adopt itself to changing conditions without surrendering its excellent roots in India's

Characteristic genius of the synthesis of cultures and spiritual regeneration of man. He created a new order of sanyasins who would be responsible for running educational institutions, hospitals and hostels, homes for them-entally afflicted. Asrams for those who longed for peace of mind and tranouillity of the soul without which mere worldly glory or prosperity would turn into ashes. In Swami Vivekananda we find the giant of India waking up. In him we find uncoiled the kundalim Sakti that lay coiled up in its slumbering depths. This was the renaissance of Sakti, a power which can conquer the world by its internal strength, a ekti to acquire which has been the goal of her national life. This Sakti was the object of worship of Sri Ramkrishna Paramahamsa and his great disciple Swami Vivekananda. The Swami with his Atma Sakti or spiritual power charged the generations that came after him, with a sense of morality and good life. Swami Vivekananda was impatient and intolerant of any. He was the adherent of the upanisadic saying 'nyamata bala kinena labhyah' (Mundaka, III 2. 4.) which means that 'that the self cannot be obtained by a man without strength. This strength is not that of arms and armaments; it is the spiritual strength of the Soul. Let us therefore invoke the spirit of Swami Vivekananda who reminded us of this great truth taught in our ancient Vecantic texts.

Swami Vivekananda's gospel of Neo-vedanta is new and yet old. Its foundations lie deeply imbedded in the sacred scriptures of India and its great masters of interpretation like Sankara. The vision of the unity of the universe which is no other than Brahma Darsana is the cere and quintessence of this Vedant. The light of this vision clears away all fissiparous tendencies, all division and strife and disintergration. The more we approximate to the truth of the unity of things, to the union of the individual and the universal of the Atman and the Brahman the more will we be reaching the fulfilment of human perfection. That 'the human soul is potentially divine' is the core of Swami Vivekananda's teaching. There is no gainsaying the fact that the results of this supreme vision as it implements itself in social action will make India really strong and free in the modern world.

The unison and action is the greatest factor of importance in the present context of the world. Aimless, hectic and hustling activity which lacks the steady light of meditation at its back will lead to barren results. Similarly, contemplation and meditation however valu-

able they may be for a fruitful life, remain truncated unless they are made to animate and inspire all outward activity. Contemplation and action must be harmonised. Without this harmony we are lost. This is the valuable teaching of Swami Vivekananda for the modern world.

The world is hungering for a philosophy of this kind. The progress of science and technology must proceed *pari passu* with a true religious. Science and spirituality must mingle. Science is blind without spirituality. Spirituality enables us to have a clear vision of the future and fills us with hope, courage and a spirit of adventure. In the perspective of modern thought we have in Swami Vivekananda the embodiment of a wisdom imparted by India's ancient sages and saints and an embodiment of a sanity of outlook and and wisdom of life without which man loses his hold over the supreme human valves. Swami Vivekananda may be looked upon as an immortal bridge-Amritasya setuh—between the West and the East, between the ancient and the modern, between the internal and the external, and between the good, the true and the beautiful. Furthermore, in Swami Vivekananda we find the corrective to the mere pragmatism and humanism of the west which would seem to wither away unless their roots strike deep into the spiritual life, of man, that is, unless they are rooted in the vivid realisation of an Ultimate Reality which India is fond of naming Brahman. A James and a Dewey, a Russell and a Whitehead, a Bradley and a Bergson find a supplementation here in the Neo-Vedanta of Swami Vivekananda which is imminently needed to round off the jagged edges of their philosophies.

These hundred years that have elapsed since the birth of Swami Vivekananda have been eventful years in the history of India and the rest of the world. India has become politically free but has yet to make great leeway in economic and social progress. She has to struggle on with internal disorder and external aggression the latter of which has unfortunately been thrust on her. But her soul is unconquerable and invincible due to the guidance of master spirits like Swami Vivekananda and other Philosophers. As was pointed out by one of the Swami's disciples: "Swami Vivekananda was an epitome of all that was great and good in the India of the past, and all that is also potentially great and good in her. With Sankara's intellect he combined Buddha's hear, Christ's renunciation, and the Prophet of Arabia's spirit of equality,

My Tribute

What a glorious life was crowded into the 39 years that Swami Vivekananda trode on this earth ! And what heights of spiritual greatness did he not reach in that all too brief sojourn here when he lived not as a recluse a way from the haunts of men but as a कर्मयोग or man of action, although ever a sanyasin preaching the complete non-attachment in the proper connotation of the term.

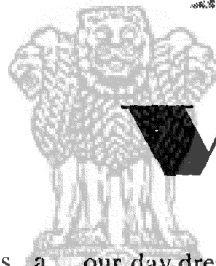
It is significant that to the Indian renaissance the part of the country which produced Swami Vivekananda namely Bengal and contributed more than any other part of India. In the field of social progress it was Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Keshab Chandra Sen, in art, literature and culture Rabindranath Tagore and in matters of the spirit Maharishi Ramakrishna Paramahansa the Master, his disciple Swami Vivekananda and following in their wake Arambindo the sage of Pondicherry. It is a new contribution to religious thought and practice that the last three made. Their religious thought had its roots in Hinduism, but each one of them sought the truths of all religions, found that these were essentially the same and therefore strove to propagate a universal religion based on the deepest spiritual values. In spreading the teaching of this religion all over the world the pioneer was Swami Vivekananda whose preaching of the new gospel first drew the attention of preceptors and philosophers to the pure beauty of Hinduism expounded by him.

The message had obviously as great a significance for us in India as in other parts of the world. For India, however, it was not merely in terms of a spiritual renaissance that Swami Vivekananda thought. His keen perception of the material aspects of the life of the people around him and his travels all over the country convinced him that before he brought food for the spirit it should be his endeavour to see that there should be nourishment and sustenance for the body primarily. Bodily hunger had to be satisfied before there could arise any thirst for spiritual advancement. Next he observed the damage to the social fabric and to individuals caused by conflicts to which difference of caste, creed, race inequalities gave rise.

Around the practice of Hinduism more over had grown up weeds in the shape of rituals, superstitions, customs which impeded not only the nations material and moral progress but the unfolding of the human personality itself. To instal Hinduism in its pristine purity it was essential, Swami Vivekananda taught to get rid of these encrustations which in the past had kept the nation divided and weak. The Ramakrishna Mission that he founded was intended primarily to serve the people through the Ashram established all over the country by inculcating the teachings of Hinduism in its purest form and in the most catholic spirit. At the same time the missionaries who were sent out were called upon to serve the people among whom they were posted in all walks of life. Particularly in times of distress and especially the lowliest of the low.

It is the gospel of service द्विद्वारायण that he preached and the humanitarianism he practised that distinguishes Swami Vivekananda to my mind from the religious teachers, the preceptors, the seers who with us in India for hundred of years have dedicated their lives to the satisfaction of the spiritual cravings of their followmen. His overflowing love for mankind, particularly the people of the country of his birth among whom his lot was cast enabled Swami Vivekananda to contribute to the relief of suffering and to the bringing of a ray of light in the lives of the fallen and the distressed. Full of love and tenderness though he was Swami Vivekananda was cast in a heroic mould. The country had a rich past, but it was destined, Swami Vivekananda believed in all earnestness to have a greater future. That glorious day would come when the nation know how to resist evil, to build up inner and outer strength and to stand united in the face of dangers and calamities. That clarion call was indeed needed in the days when the domination exercised by foreign rule was at its strongest. But to-day there are other forces which seeks to overwhelm us and there are evils that beset us as a nation. It is inspiring that on the historic occasion of the birth centenary of the greatest Indian of his time we remind ourselves of his message of enterpid courage and faith and hope boundless.

Vaikuñth Mehta A.I. Khadi Udyog Commission



Retu

VIVEKA

By SWAMI BUDE

Every wall, even if it be of granite, is a door, provided we have the will, strength and dexterity to break through it. Every crisis is a new opening to destiny. It was in the midst of one of our direst crisis that we received the message of the Gita which determined the very character of Indian civilization for millenniums. We therefore do not regret the blood we shed on the battlefield of Kurukshetra.

Blessing sometimes come in a seemingly un-blessed manner. If gold objected to be tested in fire, well, no one would know whether or not it was gold at all. Who would then care to give it any value? Therefore gold must be tested in fire.

Let India bless the day on which China gave her the blow. In future it will be recorded that China was really India's friend. She gave India the blow which was so badly needed for her awakening.

It has been authoritatively said that in the post-independence period India had been 'living in a dream-world'. Dreams serve no better purpose than to get broken, the earlier the better. What business had India to live in a dream-world at the scorching noon of history and human affairs? Those who have shattered

our day dreams by landing a punch on our nose have brought the much needed awakening as to the value of wakefulness. They have, by applying this brute force, brought to us an awareness that above all we needed strength. By their willfulness they have roused in India the will to stand by the banner and honour of the Country. By their concerted thrust they have made us united when we were always quarreling on so many issues. Above all, China has compelled us to shed our unclear thinking about many things in a world of brick, steel, wheel and truth. So many blessings had been hidden in the enemy's blow! Why should we be pessimistic then?

But the greatest blessing came to us from Providence. During the national crisis, in came the Vivekananda birth Centenary. Once India was languishing. Vivekananda awakened India's soul by his flaming words and oceanic love. Once India was fearful Vivekananda metamorphosed her by the Vedic mantra 'abhih'. And India became fearless. Once India was weak. Vivekananda dinned into her ears: 'strength, strength, strength', physical, mental and spiritual, always, everywhere, at all levels, in all possible and impossible ways. And



Of NANDAN

NDA, New York

India became strong in her own way.

Once India was forgetful of her ideals. Vivekananda sent forth his stentorian call :

"Oh India !

Forget not that ideal of thy womanhood is Sita, Savitri, Damayanti ;

Forget not that the God thou worshipping is the great Ascetic of ascetics, the all renouncing Shankara, the Lord of Uma ;

Forget not that thy marriage, thy wealth, thy life are not for sense-pleasures, are not for thy individual personal happiness ;

Forget not that thou art born as a sacrifice to the Mother's altar ;

Forget not that thy social order is but the reflex of the Infinite Universal Motherhood ;

Forget not that thy lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper are thy flesh and blood, thy brother :

Thou have one, be bold, take courage, be proud that thou art an Indian, and proudly proclaim : 'I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother.'

Forgetful India appeared to regain remembrance, that remembrance regaining which Arjuna said to Sri Krishna in the Gita : "My

delusion is now gone and I have regained remembrance by your grace. I shall do what you ask me to do.

But then India's phenomenal memory showed signs of getting clouded again. Therefore Vivekananda has returned. Mind you, he has returned with all his power, humour and love. That great wanderer is everywhere on invisible feet in India again. This time he is entering every village and home, every head and heart. Those who want to serve India, save India, let them open themselves fully to the inspiration of Vivekananda. Let them see with Vivekananda's eyes, feel with his heart, and think with his brain. Let them get aflame with his fire. And there will be that light which will not know dimming for a very long time.

India's salvation is in understanding Vivekananda, loving him, and following him without reservation.

Let India stand as one man and assure returning Vivekananda : *nashto mohh smritir-lavdhva...Karishye vachanam dava* "My delusion is gone and I have regained remembrance. I shall do what you ask me to do."

SYNTHESIS — SWAMI A SYMBOL

by **Swami Mukhyananda**, *Secretary Ramakrishan Mission Ashram, Chandigarh*

The less you read the better. Read the Gita and other good works on the Vedanta. That is all you need. The present system of education is all wrong. The mind is crammed with facts before it knows how to think. Control of the mind should be taught first. If I had my education to get over again and had any voice in the matter, I would learn to master my mind first, and then gather facts if I wanted them. It takes people a long time to learn things because they can't concentrate their minds at will.

Indian genius has produced during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the modern period, as it did in earlier periods, a series of great personalities in different parts of the country who have been the embodiment of the spirit of India in its varied aspects, viz. Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Dayananda, Ramakrishna—Vivekananda, Narayana Guru, Gandhiji, Ramana Maharshi and Aurobindo. Swami Vivekananda has pointed out that “National union in India is the gathering of her scattered spiritual forces”. All these great personalities, and many other luminaries, have tried to accomplish this task and illumine the Indian horizon scattering the accumulated dark forces. It has been widely recognised that in the twin personalities of Ramakrishna—Vivekananda, Indian cultural ideals found their highest and

all round expression. They gathered all the past experience of the race, made them living and dynamic in the crucible of their own life, and shaped them a new to meet the needs of the modern age for the total benefit of humanity as a whole. In the words of Romain Rolland (1928), while Sri Ramakrishna, ‘the seraphic master’, “was the consummation of the 2000 years of spiritual life of 300 million people”, his great dynamic disciple Vivekananda’s ‘constructive genius’ could be summed up “in the two words *equilibrium* and *synthesis*... He embraced all the paths of the spirit: the four Yogas in their entirety, renunciation and service, art and science, religion and action, from the most spiritual to the most practical. Each of the ways that he taught had its own limits, but he himself had been through them

all, and embraced them all. As in a quadriga, he held the reins of all four ways of truth, and he travelled towards Unity along them all simultaneously. He was the personification of the harmony of all human Energy." Thus the spirit of the whole panorama of Indian cultural history from the hoary antiquity of the Vedic times down to modern times finds a synthetic embodiment in them giving a fresh impetus for the realization and unfoldment in future of heretofore undreamed of possibilities in the national and international fields.

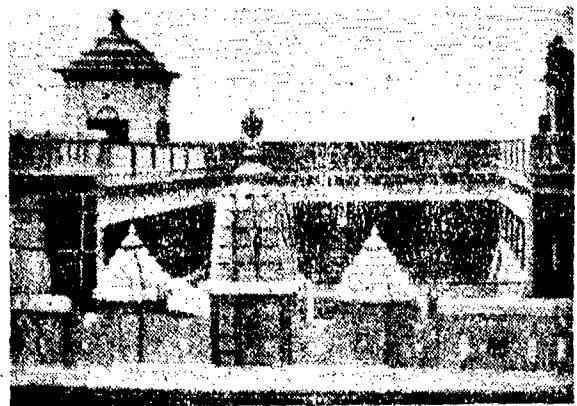
Narendra Nath Datta, who later became world-famous as Swami Vivekananda, was born in 1863 at Calcutta. Endowed with a brilliant intellect, he was highly rational in his approach to life's problems. He possessed a pure and fearless character and an intense urge to seek the Truth. During his college days he imbibed all that the West could teach—its science, philosophy and rational thought. But it did not slake his thirst for the ultimate Truth and he turned to all the eastern sages he met and put them the question straight: "Sir, have you seen God?" And the only one who answered him clearly in the affirmative, and undertook to show God to him as well, was the great prophet of religious harmony—Sri Ramakrishna, whom he accepted as his Guru. Narendra Nath imbibed all that the spiritual India could teach and soon soared to the empyrean heights of spiritual realization under the Master's guidance. The best tradition of the East and the West blended in his personality into a beautiful synthesis.

After the passing away of the Master in 1886, Swami Vivekananda traversed the length and breadth of the country as a wandering monk and felt great agony at the appalling condition of the country in striking contrast to her past spiritual glory and material prosperity. His heart was filled with great compassion for the burning misery of suffering humanity. He was seeking ways of raising the material condition of the Indian masses and elevating her women and rousing the country from her deep long sleep. He had realized that India was a land of religion and spirituality, and, in spite of her prevailing degenerate condition, she would again rise to heights surpassing all past glory and greatness if she gathered together her scattered spiritual forces, and once again launched forth on the path of her historic mission of the spiritualization of the human race. As he had felt the pulse of

India during his travels, he found after much reflection that he could achieve this better and quicker if he captured the strongholds of the West whose dazzling material civilization had cast a spell on India with India's spirituality. He also discovered that one of the most potent causes of India's degeneration was her withdrawal from communion with other nations, and until India got back into the current of life all around her she will remain in a stagnant mummified state. So his going forth to the West was symbolic of this new spirit of self-expansion.

Soon an opportunity presented itself in the shape of the Parliament of Religions at Chicago which was held in September 1893. Swamiji participated in it to represent India's religious traditions. The elite of the world were represented there and Swamiji won the day for the liberal, universal thought of India. His ideas were received with great admiration and respect all over the West and he was invited to address numerous crowded gatherings. He worked and widely preached in America and England (1893-97 and 1899-1901) and by his lucid presentation of the vast profound Indian thought and his own majestic and moving personality once again turned the eyes of the world on spiritual India. Vedanta Societies were established in the West and his western disciples, like the great Sister Nivedita, Sister Christine, Capt. and Mrs. Sevier, and Mr. Goodwin came to help in the task of India's regeneration.

When Swamiji returned to India in 1897, an unprecedented ovation was accorded to him by enthusiastic crowds from Colombo to Lahore and Swamiji delivered to, the people



Sister Nivedita Girls School, Calcutta

his message of hope of a great future India. In powerful and fiery language he placed before them his ideas and plans and exhorted them to work for the all-round national regeneration—spiritual, moral and material and the elevation of the masses and women. He urged the people to build up a society “deep as the ocean” in spiritual matters and “broad as the sky” on the social plane and help evolve a “Complete Civilization” on the basis of the mutual exchange and synthesis of all that is best in the East and the West. His was a message of strength, character, and manliness. The whole country was reinvigorated through his inspiring words and the great leaders of India drank deep from the life-giving waters of this immortal fountain.

To give permanence to this work of national regeneration and spiritual upliftment of humanity in term of universal, non-sectarian principles, he established the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. He devised a seal for it which is symbolic of the synthesis and harmony of Work, worship, knowledge and meditation dedicated to the Divine.

Swamiji passed away in 1902 before he was forty, leaving a rich heritage to mankind of new visions of attainment and fresh vistas of development and words of lasting value and supreme wisdom compiled in the eight volumes of his ‘Complete Works’ wherein he exhorts every man and woman to realize his or her inherent divinity and sends out the clarion call to ‘Arise, Awake. and stop not till the goal is reached.”

What is striking in Swami Vivekananda's character is his universality. In one of his letters (IV Edn., P. 169) he himself states, “Everything must be sacrificed, if necessary, to that one sentiment, *universality*.” His message and the scope of his work embraces the whole of humanity. “What is India or England or

America.” he declared, “we are the servants of that God whom the Ignorant call man.” ‘Man-making’ is my ideal he used to say.

And yet his was not an amorphous type of universality neglecting the obvious differences in temperament and equipment and varieties of cultural expressions in individuals as well as in communities and nations. He never wanted to smother these. As he points out in his lecture on ‘The Ideal of a Universal Religion’, his ideal was not a dead dull uniformity, but Unity in variety where every one of the cultures will grow according to their own genius and yet contribute to the general harmony. It is this synthesis of different view-points which he had achieved in his own person, which is imprinted in all that he has said and done. We find here an ideal approach in which man can fulfil himself at every level starting from the centre where one stands, serving his family, community, nation and religion, and moving in ever-widening circles to embrace the interests of the whole of humanity, nay the whole of Universe itself within the scope of his thoughts and activities. Thus it is that Swami Vivekananda was a champion of Hinduism, a great patriot, a philosopher, a saint and a lover of humanity etc. at one and the same time, without a jarring note, and worked for the emergence of a complete civilization in all its richness embracing the best ideals of the East and the West. It is to this aspect of Vivekananda's personality Pandit Nehru refers when he said:” Swami Vivekananda, though a great nationalist his was a kind of nationalism which automatically slipped into Indian nationalism, which was part of internationalism.”

Vivekananda has set the model and every-one of us should strive to realize this synthesis in our own character.

Let each one of us pray day and night for the downtrodden millions in India who are held fast by poverty, priestcraft, and tyranny—pray day and night for them, I care more to preach religion to them than to the high and the rich. I am no metaphysician, no philosopher, may no saint. But I am poor, I love the poor.

As grow older I find that I look more and more for greatness in little things. Anyone will be great in a great position. Even the coward will grow brave in the glare of the flood-lights. The world looks on! More and more the true greatness seems to me that of the worm doing its duty silently, steadily, from moment to moment and hour to hour.

ANECDOTES

The Transformation

I was preparing to renounce the world, as my grandfather had done. The day arrived on which I had decided to start life as a wandering monk—and then I heard that, on that very day, the Master was coming to the house of a devotee in Calcutta. I thought this was very fortunate : I should see my Guru before I left home forever. But, as soon as I met the Master, he told me imperiously : ‘You must come with me to Dakshineswar today.’ I offered various excuses, but he wouldn’t take No for an answer. I had to drive back with him. In the carriage, we didn’t speak much. When we got to Dakshineswar, I sat in his room for some time. Others were present. Then the Master went into a state of ecstasy. He came over to me suddenly, took my hand in his, and sang, with tears pouring down his face :

I am afraid to speak,
I am afraid not to speak,
For the fear rises in my mind
That I shall lose you—

All this time, I had fought back the strong emotion I was feeling ; now I couldn’t do so any longer, and my tears poured down like his. I felt sure that the Master knew all about my plans. The others were astonished to see us behave in this way. After the Master had returned to normal consciousness, one of them asked him what was the matter. He smiled and answered : “It’s just something between the two of us.” That night he sent the others away and called me to him and said : “I know you have come to the world to do Mother’s work; you can never lead a wordly life. But, for my sake, stay with your family as long as I’m alive.”

So Naren promised to do this. And now he set himself to find employment with renewed energy. He got a post in an attorney’s office. He translated some books. But these were temporary jobs ; they brought no real security to his mother and brothers. So now Naren decided to ask Ramakrishna to pray on his behalf that the family’s money-troubles might be overcome. Ramakrishna answered that it was for Naren himself to pray. He must forget his earlier scruples, accept the existence of the Divine Mother, and pray to her for help. Today is Tuesday, Ramakrishna added, ‘a day specially sacred to Mother. Go to the temple tonight and pray. Mother will grant you whatever you ask for. I promise you that.’

Naren was now almost free of the prejudices he had acquired from the Brahmo Samaj. Experience had taught him to have faith in Ramakrishna's words, and he was eager to do as he had been told. He waited impatiently for the night. At nine o'clock, Ramakrishna sent him to the temple. As Naren was on his way there, a kind of drunkenness possessed him; he was reeling. And when he entered the temple, he saw at once that the Divine Mother was actually alive. Naren was overwhelmed and prostrated himself again and again before her shrine, exclaiming, 'Mother—grant me discrimination, grant me detachment, grant me divine knowledge and devotion, grant me that I may see you without obstruction, always!' His heart was filled with peace. The universe completely disappeared from his consciousness and Mother alone remained.

When Naren came back from the temple, Ramakrishna asked him if he had prayed for the relief of his family's wants. Naren was taken aback; he had forgotten to do so. Ramakrishna told him to return quickly and make the prayer. Naren obeyed, but again he became drunk with bliss, forgot his intention, and prayed only for detachment, devotion, and knowledge as before. 'Silly boy!' said Ramakrishna, when he returned and confessed this, 'couldn't you control yourself a little, and remember that prayer? Go back again and tell Mother what you want—be quick!' This time, Naren's experience was different. He did not forget the prayer. But when he came for third time before the shrine, he felt a sense of deep shame; what he had been about to ask seemed miserably trivial and unworthy. 'It was', he said later, like being graciously received by a king and then asking him for gourds and pumpkins. So, once more, he asked only for detachment, devotion, and knowledge. However, as he came out of the temple, he felt suddenly convinced that all this was a trick Ramakrishna had played on him. 'It was certainly you,' he told Ramakrishna, 'who made me intoxicated. Now you must at least say a prayer for me that my mother and brothers will never lack food and clothing.' 'My child,' Ramakrishna told him affectionately, 'you know I could never offer a prayer like that for anyone; the words wouldn't come out of my mouth. I told you that you that you'd get whatever you asked Mother for; but you couldn't ask that, either. It is not in you to ask for worldly benefits. What am I to do about it?' But Naren answered firmly: 'You must say the prayer, for my sake. I'm certain they'll be freed from want if only you'll say they will.' At length, Ramakrishna yielded to Naren's urging and said: 'All right—they will never lack plain food and clothing.' And this statement was proved true.

Historic Meeting

It was the year 1881. A strange drama was being enacted on the bank of the Ganga at Dakshineswar, four miles north of Calcutta. The Ganga, after her winding journey through hills and dales, was nearing her destination—the sea; but this did not deter her from retracing her steps during high tide, as it were, in order to witness this strange drama. In the Kali temple of Dakshineswar, a middleaged man, frail but wiry in physique, with bloodshot eyes, calling often 'Mother, Mother', was the centre of attraction. He was eagerly awaiting the arrival of someone very dear very dear to him. At last, he arrived. And what joy! This dear one was a young man of 18, tall and handsome, and of an athletic build. The old man was mad in the remembrance of God and asserted that he saw Him face to face; the young man heard incredulously, then half believingly, and began to think that the former, though a lovable man, may be mad. Thus began the historic meeting between two prophets of modern India, who came to her rescue in the hour of her peril—the Master and the disciple—Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

Imitation of Christ

Swamiji in his parivrajak state visited Junagadh—a native state in Saurashtra where he was the guest of the Diwan of the state. In the evening all the officers of the State met and heard the Swamiji. The Director of Education—the late Chhaganlal Pandya, a great Sanskrit scholar and literary man was also one of them. He has written that in the beginning we took the Swamiji as one of the Christian Missionaries in the garb of a Hindu monk. Swamiji used to go out for walks in the evening. Mr. Pandya writes that we ransacked his books and found “Imitation of Christ” among the books. Our suspicion was confirmed. In the evening when we met one of us put the question “Swami, are you a christian missionary?” Swamiji replied, “What makes you think so?” “We replied that among Your books we found “Imitation of Christ”, Swamiji laughed and told us to open any page of the book and read. We opened the book and read one of the passages. Swamiji then gave us the parallel quotation from Bhagvat & Ummishads and said “All religions are alike, Mr. Pandya write that we understood from Swamiji what universal religion is. Mr. Pandey then translated “Imitation of Christ” in Gujarati placing in the foot notes parallel quotations from Hindu scriptures.

V. R. Thokore (Ahmadabad)

A Visit To Amarnath

Swamiji had a mystical experience at the cave of Amarnath which he visited on August 2, 1898, of which he seldom spoke. When earnestly solicited by a disciple, Swamiji related his Amarnath journey and experience as follows : ‘Since visiting Amarnath I feel as if Shiva is sitting on my head for twenty-four hours and would not come down. On the way to Amarnath, I made a very steep ascent on the mountain. Pilgrims do not generally travel by that path. But the determination came upon me that I must go by that path, and so I did. The labour of the strenuous ascent has told on my body. The cold there is so biting that you feel it like pin-pricks. I entered the cave with only my *kaupin* on and my body smeared with the holy ash ; I did not then feel any cold or heat. But when I came out of the temple. I was benumbed by the cold. I saw three or four white pigeons ; whether they live in the cave or the neighbouring hills I could not ascertain. I have heard that the sight of the pigeons brings to fruition whatever desires you may have.’

Beyond saying that Shiva Himself had appeared before him and that he had been granted the grace of Amarnath, the Lord of Immortality, not to die until he himself should choose to throw off his mortal bonds, Swamiji never spoke of this experience. Swamiji told one of his European disciples that the Image was the Lord Himself. It was all worship there. He had never seen anything so beautiful, sublime and so inspiring.

Though Swamiji was accompanied by Sister Nivedita, he went last inside the cave after bathing in the stream running in front of the cave, as it were with a purpose. He reached the cave, his whole body shaking with emotion. The cave itself was a large one and the Shiva (Linga) in a niche of deepest shadow, appeared to Swamiji that He was sitting on a throne Swamiji knelt before the Linga. He almost swooned with emotion. It was sure that he came face to face with Lord Mahadeva Himself in the cave. He was saturated with the presence of Lord Mahadeva. He could speak nothing except of Lord Shiva for some days after his return from the cave.

This was Swamiji’s experience at the cave of Amarnath.

N. K. Krishna Murty

CHILAM SHARING

After visiting the Taj, and other historical buildings at Agra, Swami Vivekananda set out for Vrindaban on foot. Hardly had he reached there when he came across a man who was smoking a 'chilam' in a relaxed mood. Tired of long journeys Vivekananda asked the man to let him have a puff.

The smoker was shocked at this unusual request from an ascetic and replied shyly : "Sir, I am a sweeper by caste."

Vivekananda was at first disappointed to learn that fact and moved on. But after a few steps, he stopped and thought "what a fool I am ? Having renounced wordly prohibitions and conventions, how can I keep of a man simply because he is a sweeper by caste ? Haven't I failed to rise above this level ?"

Then and there, he turned back, met the sweeper and shared the "chilam" with him. Never could he forget that incident.

* * *

HUNGER THE MASTER

Once, in Mayavati Ashrama, Swamiji's lunch was delayed a little. This pained him very much. He began to rebuke the hermits. But when he reached the kitchen to translate his mood into action he returned blankly because Virjanandji was himself facing trouble. The fuel was wet and the kitchen was full of suffocating smoke.

When, after a long time, food was brought to Swamiji, he asked one of the hermits childishly to take it back and refused to eat. The hermits stood dumb before him.

Ultimately Swami had to yield and he began to eat it piece by piece like an angry child. As soon as he tasted it, his face began to soften and shortly afterwards he asked joyfully. "Do you know why I was so angry ? Simply because I was very hungry."

* * *

ADHARMA

Once Pandit Ganesh Deoskas, editor of a Bengali journal "Hitawadi", came with a friend to see Swamiji. During the conversation. Swamiji, on coming to know that the visitor was originally a Punjabi, began to talk to him about Punjab. While discussing the economic, social and educational conditions of the State he laid emphasis on the efforts to improve the living conditions of the Indian masses in general. So keen was he on this point that he went on speaking on it for a long spell which ultimately led the Punjabi gentleman to believe that the whole time had been wasted.

When the gentleman voiced his feeling, Swamiji suddenly became grave and his face bore the marks of pity. Patiently, he said : Gentleman, until and unless all the living beings in my motherland are well fed, I will strive for it. It is my Dharma. Anything else is Adharma."

* * *

REVERSE ACTION

An article on "Swami Vivekananda in the American Heritage" appeared in the February issue of *Indian News*, a publication of the Indian Embassy in Washington which has an American circulation of over 15,000.

Written by Swami Budhananda, Assistant Minister of the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Center of New York, the article says "it is a fact of history that Vivekananda's message is.....a part of the national heritage of America. It was delivered in the English language. It was from America that his message travelled to India.



THE REBUFF

Swami Vivekananda held in contempt all the humiliating remarks of westerners on the unhappy masses of India and retaliated most violently. Once an English lady burst in to laughter on seeing an ugly Brahmin dressed fantastically. Naturally, Vivekananda was hurt, and spoke out; "Shut up. Have you ever done anything for them?"

* * *

NO DRY MONK

In 1889, Swami Vivekananda had to go to Banaras to look after his brother who was lying ill. One day, when he was standing in Pramanda Das Mitrav's garden, he received the tragic news of the sudden death of Balram Bose, the favourite disciple of Ram Krishna Paramhansa. He was shocked, for he himself liked Balram Bose very much. He, therefore, made up his mind to start off for the village of the deceased at once.

This led Pramanda Babu to comment; "How can a Vedantist like you be shocked to receive the news of death? After all, you 'are known to believe in the mortality of human life.'"

Vivekananda replied: "We are not dry monks. Do you think that because a man is a 'Sanyasi', he has no heart?"

Pramanda Babu was amazed at this new viewpoint, contrary to the conventional definition of ascetism.

* * *

ALL AVTARS

Swami Vivekananda had also a sense of humour. He never spared those who indulged in useless discussions. Once, while he was engrossed in a religious discussion, Pandit Surya Narain from Jaipur arrived there. During the discussion, he posed as a Vedantist and inter-venued to say, "I have no faith in the spiritual superiority of the so-called incarnations of God as well as mythological characters. All of us are Brahma, the *susme*. What difference is there between me and any so-called Avatari?"

Swamiji replied: "You are right, Sir. But Hindus have the tortoise, fish, boar, etc. too as their Avatars. What you are among them?"

This made the whole gathering laugh.

AN HUMBLE LION

A Western devotee writes: 'Swamiji was so simple in his behaviour, so like one of the crowd, that he did not impress me so much when I first saw him. There was nothing about his ways that would mark him as the lion of New York society as so often he had been. Simple in dress and behaviour, he was just like one of us. He did not put himself aside on a pedestal as is so often the case with lionized person-ages. He walked about the room, sat on the floor. Of course, I had noticed his magnificent, brilliant eyes, his beautiful features and majestic bearing, for these were parts of him for a few minutes,..... it flashed into my mind: "What a giant, what strength, what manliness; what a personality! Every one near him looks so insignificant compared with him."'

THE BELLVACHE

A long-drawn face is no sign of spiri-tuality. God is of the nature of bliss, and in religious life, which is communing with Him, there is no place for despon-dency and depression. That is why the Swami admonishes us: "If you have a clouded face, do not go out that day; shut yourself up in your room. What right have you to carry this disease out into the world?" When somebody asked him: "Swami, you are never serious?", he replied humorously: "Yes, when I have a belly-ache!"

IN SERVICE

.....If I can show the world one glimse of my Master, I shall not live in vain' Again, in a letter addressed to Swami Shivananda, his brother disciple, in 1884, he writes: "My supreme good fortune is that I am his servant through life after life. A single world of his is to me far weightier than the Vedas and the Vedanta. Oh! I am the servant of the servant of his servants."

REQUISITE QUALIFICATIONS

He was in need of one, a virile young man, with infinite capacity for activity; one who would have been educated in the modern way and would possess a sharp intellect and the ability to interpret the Master's message to the world in the light of modern science and rationalism and show that such a universal religion as preached by Sri Ramakrishna existed; over and above these, he was to be a person of the strongest moral calibre and capable of the highest spiritual realization.

Vivekananda "mixed with the American people in the manner of one raised on this soil. One does not know whether America ever had any greater friend than Vivekananda outside America." Vivekananda's impact on the United States began when he rose to address the 7,000 people in the Art Institute of Chicago at the Parliament of Religions and began with the words "Sister and brothers of America" "The entire audience rose to its feet," says Swami Budhananda, and there was a deafening applause of two minutes." "To America and her people, Vivekananda was "the conduit through which the most High was pouring His grace on America's humanity.

"What he gave to America truly belongs to America. It is genuinely a part of the American national heritage, and has been all the time slowly but surely leavening the spiritual culture of the nation....." **Swami Budhananda**

A CHRIST AMID

"During Swamiji's visit with the three Mead sisters of South California," writes Brahmacharini Usha, "the impact of his spiritual power was such that they felt, as one of them put it, as if Christ himself were in their midst.....he had the gift of expressing subtle spiritual ideas with the utmost simplicity....." "Those who have enjoyed daily association with a man of God cherish for the rest of their lives many apparently inconsequential details of daily living pertaining to him. These are precious to the devotees because by recalling them the holy man's personality and their relationship with him are re-created."

NO EGOISM

Swami Adbhutananda relates : "When Swamiji returned from the West, he had with him Captain Sevier, Mr. Goodwin, and others. I went to see him. but was hesitant to meet him, thinking that he must have been puffed up with pride, now that he had some Western disciples. Swamiji read my feelings, and holding me by the hand, said : "You are still that brother Latu to me, and I am your brother Loren !" Then only I realized that Swamiji had acquired the power of knowing people's minds, and had not the least trace of egoism."

Singing At Dawn

By (Mrs.) Padmalaya Das

Member of the P.E.N. All-India Centre

The sky was flushed with the coming glory. Gold-red banners of wispy cloud proclaimed it. A flock of storks streaked past, fleeing white against violet-tinted blue. The first breeze fluttered the lacy fronds of a roadside flame-of-the-forest. The stillness was exploded by conches and *hula-huli*. Began the singing ;

Who are you who play
A new tune on India's heart-strings ?
By its sweet strains enthralled
As astonished world your praise sings.

Young and old took up the chorus to the rhythm of cymbals. The music swelled and floated away from the slow-moving truck. It was January 17, 1963.

At one end of the open vehicle, on an improvised platform prettily decorated with the plentiful flowers of the season, were three portraits, Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Sarada Devi on either side of Swami Vivekananda. The proud stance, those compelling eyes that first saw the light of day a century ago, seemed vibrant with their eternal message :

"Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divine within, by controlling nature, external and internal."

"Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy, by one, or more, or all of these—and be free."

"This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or books, or temples, or forms, are but secondary details."

The singers comprised a group of about thirty ladies. Almost all were housewives and not all sang well. But there was much enthusiasm and devotion. One, a grandma in her fifties, who had long laid aside her *tanpura*, proved the most indefatigable of the lot, shaming younger ones by her example. There were six children too. They simply would not be

Vivekananda Likened to America's William James

Portland, Oregon, March 27—The unforgettable impression that Swami Vivekananda left on American during his lifetime was given a new interpretation at a recent meeting celebrating his birth centenary by an American scholar who found his philosophical approach similar to that of the American philosopher William James.

Describing Vivekananda as a "pragmatic transcendentalist," James Seling, of the faculty of Portland State College, told an audience at the Vedanta Society meeting here that the great Indian holy man appealed to the Westerner, particularly the American, because he expounded a philosophy already somewhat familiar to the American intellectual through the transcendental thought of essayist and poet Ralph Waldo Emerson, writer philosopher Henry David Thoreau and poet Walt Whitman. The method he advanced, Mr. Seling added, was remarkably similar to that of James.

Transcendentalism held that behind the phenomenon of appearance itself was reality and yet, paradoxically, within appearance itself was reality too, the American educator pointed out. The goal of life, then, according to Vivekananda, Mr. Seling continued, is to discover this reality. The method to that end in a practical one discards all that does not result in the realisation of truth and retains only those values that lead to that goal. Mr. Seling quoted William James who said, "Grant and idea or belief to be true, what concrete difference will its being true make in anyone's actual life?"

A philosophy without a living person to demonstrate it is worthless, Mr. Seling added, and Americans are inclined to judge what philosophy is worth in terms of concrete results.

In Swami Vivekananda, he said, Americans had, for perhaps the first time, the chance to see a man who was a walking saint, although not all could recognize him as such. He appealed to different people for different reasons, the American lecturer continued, as he described incidents in which the Swami could become a child when he was with children; was a master of brilliant repartee for the intellectual; was a magnificent Hindu who shocked men out of their complacency, for the orthodox Christian; and for those with spiritual insight, was an exemplar of great spiritual truths.

सत्यमेव जयते

On the twenty-ninth of January 1895, I went with my sister to 54 West 33rd Street, New York, and heard the Swami Vivekananda in his sitting room, where were assembled fifteen or twenty ladies and two or three gentlemen. The room was crowded. All the arm chairs were taken; so I sat on the floor in the corner. He said something, the particular words of which I do not remember, but instantly to me that was truth. And I listened to him for seven years and whatever he uttered was to me truth. From that moment life had a different import. It was as if he made you realise that you were in eternity. It never altered. It never grew. It was like the sun that you will never forget once you have seen.

His power lay, perhaps, in the courage he gave others. He did not ever seem to be conscious of himself at all. It was the other man who interested him. 'When the book of life begins to open, then the fun begins', he would say. He used to make us realize there was nothing secular in life; it was all holy. 'Always remember, you are incidentally an American, and a woman, but always a child of God. Tell yourself day and night who you are. Never forget it.' That is what he used to tell us. His presence, you see, was dynamic.

I feel that Swamiji is a Rock for us to stand upon. That was his function in my life, not worship, nor glory, but a steadiness under one's feet for experiments.

Josephine MacLeod

left behind and had hardly slept in excited anticipation ! (Not that some of the adults had not found sleep equally elusive !)

A shrunken moon looked old and disillusioned in the young light. A few stars glimmered. Today had not wholly forgotten yesterday. Last night's dreams still lingered behind shuttered windows.

We stopped to sing at the first cross-roads. Clouds of dust. A sweeper sweeping the streets halted his task and raised his head. Forget not that.... the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper, are thy flesh and blood, thy brothers", he had said.

Two little children dashed out of a side-streets for a glimpse. They gazed wondering, blinking still sleepy eyes.

Near the temple of Goddess Chandi. Shivering cycle-rickshaw drivers uncurled themselves from their vehicles narrow seats, their night's resting place. Some stood up and saluted the portraits. The reverence of the humble and poor of our country is touching in its simple faith. Poverty stricken, naive they may be, but in them lies the latent spirituality of our land—the spark of God that is in every human being. They had not heard of him, they had not read, but simply knew he must be someone truly great and humbly offered their homage.

The procession moved on. On the tiny cloth canopy above the pictures dahlias nodded in time to the jerking movement. Incense swirled out of two polished brass pots on the altar. Garlands of roses, red and pink, decorated the Mother and the Master, the source of the Swamiji's inspiration and power. Multi-hued flowers, including the common marigold, were knotted into the chain of fragrant beauty that adorned "The Hindoo Monk of India" (according to the legend on the print).

A serene smile hovered on the lips of Ramakrishna lost "in the limpid spaces of thought". But his greatest disciple, as Romain Rolland wrote, was "energy personified, and action was his message to men".

"Arise ! Awake !" The tongue of flame that seared the souls of men into wakefulness so many suns ago, has not lost an iota of its significance today. "Money does not pay, nor name ; fame does not pay, nor learning. It is love that pays ; it is character that cleaves its way through adamant walls of difficulties."

Every single leaf of a large peepul trembled ecstatically in the breeze as the six-wheeler gently rumbled down the city's main shopping centre. Under the tree an elderly stood beside a tea-vendor, staring in surprise, her steaming glass forgotten half-way to her lips. Apparently it seemed to her a unique sight, so many women singing in the open air that early in the morning ! Some cars followed behind forming part of the procession. Conches were blown at cross-roads and the songs in Sanskrit, Oriya and Bengali continued, concluding with a resounding "Swami Vivekananda Ki Jai" (the children joyously responding at the top of their voices) before proceeding to the next.

A bare-bodied man wearing only a waist cloth raced up on his bicycle, touched his forehead to the edge of the conveyance and left quietly.

And so through the streets of Cuttack spread the happy tidings of the birth one hundred years ago of that glorious apostle of New India.

A train whistled. It was past eight. A group of people stood by their luggage outside the station, obviously from the sister State of West Bengal. All of them raised their hands in unison as the truck trundled past.

Traffic was thickening. There were no longer tousled heads at hastily opened windows. The clamour and din of city life had started. Buses roared, cars whizzed. A man with a fish in his hand stopped haggling. People stood silently, waiting for public transport, office-workers, university students. A milkman cycled past, his cans clanking, his eyes on the procession. The policeman escorting us on a bike had begun to sweat at his job. It was time to return, it was nearly nine.

Overhead it was a clear sparkling blue, bright with the promise of a splendid cloudless day. I looked up once again at the great saint and savant who had arrived at a crucial time in our country's history to save an ancient notion, bringing hope and sustenance to mankind

The conches blew their loudest, as we turned in at the gate, the final notes of music faded away and the children joined in a last thunderous "Vivekananda Ki Jai",

A R I S E A N D A W A K E

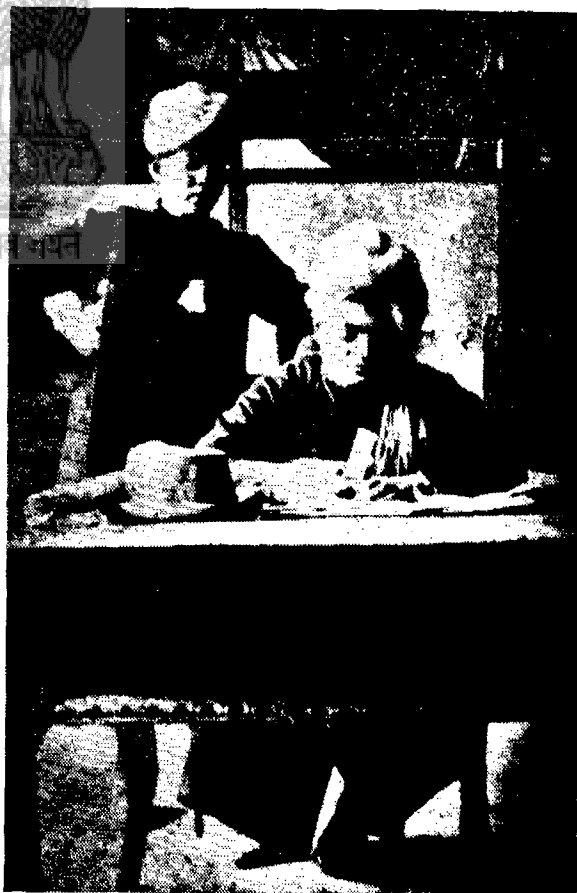
By
Swami Lokeswaranda

When asked why he went to the West, Swami Vivekananda replied he went because he felt that was the only way he could make his countrymen hear him. 'One knock from outside is equal to ten knocks from inside,' said he had gone round the country trying to draw the attention of the more fortunate sections of the Indian people to the wretched condition of the masses and getting them to organise some kind of activity to help improve their lot. No one had paid heed to him.

Swamiji at his desk

Why should they? He was a nondescript monk without any recognised or recognisable achievement of any kind to his credit yet; to the enlightened public opinion of the time, anything not tried and tested in the West was suspect; Swami Vivekananda was certainly interested with his command of English, but no one knew how he or his ideas would fare in the crucible of Western sophistication. At best he might be a remarkable man, but there was no question of accepting him as a leader.

So horrifying were the depths of the misery



of the people and so callous the attitude of the intelligentsia that Swami Vivekananda wept over his helplessness. Just then the call came that he should go and represent Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago. First the students of Madras put this idea across to him but he brushed it aside saying that he did not think that the role would quite suit him. Then more responsible people joined the students and began to press him to agree to go to Chicago. He was still in two minds, when it flashed to him that perhaps this was a good idea, perhaps this way he might be able to do some good to his country and also carry out the mission his master had entrusted to him. Just then he had some mystic experiences also which gave him the certitude that he needed that this journey was going to do some good to his people.

spoke as if India was a very backward country and they were ashamed that they came from that country; some of them even ran down Indian culture to show how modern, i. e., Western, they were. Swami Vivekananda was however, an exception. He declared that he saw nothing about which India need feel apologetic. She did have some problems but what country did not? And compared with what she has already achieved these problems were nothing. Military conquests might not be one of India's strong points but she had other things to boast of—her great pageantry of art and literature, religion and philosophy. For instance. She did not march her army into another country crushing it under the force of steel: instead, she sent ambassadors far and near preaching peace, friendship and amity. Was this cowardice? But she did this when

"Shall India die? Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct; all sweet-souled sympathy for religion will be extinct; all ideality will be extinct; and in its place will reign the duality of last day luxury as male and female deities, with money as its priest; fraud, force and competition its ceremonies; and the human soul its sacrifice. Such a thing can never be. The power of suffering is infinitely greater than the power of doing; the power of love is infinitely of greater potency than the power of hatred."

—Swami Vivekananda

It is wellknown that after an initial period of uncertainty Swami Vivekananda had a tremendous success with the American audiences. A few times he spoke on Hinduism but more often he spoke on India and her people. He tried to interpret India with all the grandeur of her culture and the magnificence of her spiritual achievements. So convincingly did he present the case of India that the press and the people of America began to feel that they had done much wrong to India by thinking that she was backward. They realized that through she did not possess political power and material prosperity, she had other treasures which made political power and material prosperity pale into insignificance.

The success of Swami Vivekananda was not the success of an individual but of a people—the Indian people. Beginning with Raja Rammohan Roy, many patriotic Indians had visited the West, but this was the first time when the Indian case had been put forward boldly, without any attempt to gloss and had won acclaim. When they spoke about India, some of them spoke with diffidence; they

she was at the height of her military power, when she could have run over any country she liked.

It is an amazing phenomenon whose significance is not often understood. In India the thing most aspired after is strength—moral strength. 'The greatest conqueror is he who conquers himself,' said Buddha. This may be wrong but this is what India has always preached and practised. For good or ill, it is this that has influenced her history through the centuries.

But is it wrong? Is it something of which India need be ashamed? Swami Vivekananda vehemently said 'No'. He said that it is something of which India has every reason to be proud that she never need her strength to hurt others. She had close contact with the countries of Asia and even outside, but her relations with them were on a footing of equality and friendship. She never tried to bully them and make them accept her way of life. There was a free exchange of ideas and there is evidence to prove that this went to enrich greatly

their life and culture, India perhaps had more to give than to take, but she never let others feel it,

Tolerance has been the key-note of India's attitude towards others. Within her own boundaries she has had a multiplicity of races, each distinct by itself with its language religion and culture. Yet they have lived together in uninterrupted peace. It is not they lived in isolation: they had much give and take between themselves till they evolved a common pattern of life into which everyone fitted without at the same time losing its distinct identity. She followed the principle of 'unity in diversity' with regard to her own diverse races and cultures and she followed the same principle in her dealings with other countries also. This principle is an off-shoot of that great principle of Vedanta according to which there is one common thread of unity running through all the pattern of being and becoming which we see around us. According to him the difference between good and evil is one of degree and not of kind. Nothing is absolutely good as nothing is absolutely bad. These terms are interchangeable depending upon the context in which we use them. We seem different but the difference is more seeming than real. Basically, we are all--one in divinity which is our true and ultimate nature. Nothing can wipe out our divinity, for this is the only reality, everything else being only a make-believe.

Swami Vivekananda claimed that by reason of her Vedanta India stands in a class by herself. So persuasively did he present her case before the West that large sections of enlightened opinion there began to veer round to his view. They began to appreciate the genius of India and recognize its uniqueness. Contempt gave place to admiration, distrust to acceptance. Previously they knew India as a bizarre country, with its rajah, yogis and cobras. They now recognized that she was great, great in all respects but more specially in religious thoughts and traditions. They also realized that there was much they could learn from India to their own advantage. Their old picture of India was completely shattered. India now emerged in their minds as a country that stood foremost from the point of view of religion and culture.

There is no denying the fact that this transformation took place mainly through the

efforts of Swami Vivekananda. He spoke incessantly at universities, churches, clubs and private parlours. Wherever he spoke the theme invariably was—India. Never before did one speak with such fervour such skill and such force of logic. India has never known a better advocate, before and after.

The success which Swami Vivekananda had in the West had great repercussions in India. Just as he had anticipated the people of India for the first time began to have some respect for themselves. Like people in the West they also used to think poorly about themselves—their culture, religion, art, etc. They now saw that there was great appreciation in the West of their achievements in these fields. This acted like a tonic on their morale. Their drooping spirits soared high and they began to feel



Home of Service Varanasi

proud of themselves and their past achievements. This was just what Swami Vivekananda had hoped for. He knew if he said something to his countrymen now they would listen to him with respect.

He had always felt that he had a message to give to the world, it was India's message. It was a message India has always sought to give to the world. In the past her representatives carried this message far and wide, and it was gladly and gratefully accepted wherever it was preached. Now few people knew about it or thought much about it. Even her own children were callous or contemptuous about it. This grieved Swami Vivekananda most. But when, thanks to his efforts, the West began to appreciate it, a change came in the attitude

of the people of India. They, too, saw much merit in it. They were grateful to Swami Vivekananda because he had raised India's status in the eye of the world. They acknowledged him as a leader and a patriot. They were eager to hear him and do whatever he wanted them to do.

Curiously enough, when he came back to India, he spoke more about India's present needs than about her past achievements. He spoke about the urgent need to combat poverty disease and ignorance. He had no patience with people who pretending to be religious took a lofty attitude of indifference towards these problems. He said there could be no religion so long as these problems remained unsolved. He ridiculed the idea of anybody calling himself religious while men and women were starving or were groaning under the burden of social disabilities. Through centuries of neglect masses in India had been reduced to the status of 'next-door-to-brutes.' He said the only religion he believed in was serving them and helping them to get on their feet and making them 'men' again. All men are divine, even the worst among them. 'God the poor,' 'God the wicked' 'God the sinner'—these were his usual phrases, 'Be and make.' be God and help others also be God—this was his call.

He was a great believer in education, of course, true education. 'Education is the panacea of all evils' he used to say. By education he meant 'character-building' and 'man-making' education. a nervous association of noble ideas and thoughts. He decried the present tendency to stuff the mind with mere 'information'. He wanted, instead, 'assimilation.' If information was education, then a library was certainly a great scholar, he would say! He was anxious that the study of science should be encouraged in the country. He knew that the key to progress in the country lay in the study of science and technology.

He dealt the hardest blow to caste. India's

Today, when many decades have rolled by since their exit from the arena of this world, we cannot hear the name of the one without remembering the other. Yet, at the time of their first meeting, what a contrast did they present! Whoever could have thought! that Narendra, the brilliant graduate of Calcutta University and a man of penetrating intellect, was to be the chief disciple of the 'mad' Paramahansa—unlettered and merged in the thought of God? But that was to be.

downfall began the day she coined the word 'untouchable,'—he used to say. He believed in Braluminism, but this according to him did not mean creation of a privileged class. He wanted that the social environment should be such that everyone would have the opportunity to rise to the highest which is Brahminism. Going up, 'levelling up'—this is what he aimed at; he wanted a 'sudra' should be a 'Brahmin' but never a 'Brahmin' a 'sudra'; he was never for bringing the level down.

The said spectacle of women suffering from social disabilities distressed him. He wanted that they should be given education and then allowed to play their appointed role to help advance the national cause. No country can thrive which neglects its women. 'A' bird cannot fly with one of its wings cut off,' he used to say.

Ever since Swami Vivekananda returned to India in 1897, a great change came over the country. He travelled ceaselessly for the few years that were spared to him since then. Wherever he went he was given a tumultuous reception. Thousands came to hear him when he spoke. They wept, laughed and cursed with him. He, however, never used a soft word to them. He scolded them in the harshest possible language. He scolded them for their sloth, for their readiness to accept defeat, their lack of courage and will. They loved him all the more for this, for they knew he was speaking the truth. They swore to follow him to death, for they knew he was their trust friend.

Here was true awakening, true renaissance. The national conscience had been roused and India was again stirring to life. Proud of her heritage she resolved to build up a bright future. She wanted to be herself again and not a mere copy of the West, Swami Vivekananda had called out. 'Arise. Awake' India gave a magnificent response to this call.



*Swamiiji with some of his Gurubhais and disciples at Madras
after his return from the West (1897)*

सत्यमेव जयते



ONE GOD ONE WORLD ONE MAN

By **Swami Punyananda**

Secretary Ramakrishna Mission Boys' Home Rahara (24 Parganas)

Swami Vivekananda's contributions towards the regeneration of India is a matter of history to-day. His message of patriotism, utterances of love and unity were indeed the detonating sparks that aroused the "sleeping leviathan" and pushed it on to a dynamic and realistic march. This happened towards the close of the last and the early part of the present century and it is admitted on all hands to-day that his life was a source of inspiration to millions of men and women and his ideas and teachings entered, knowingly or unknowingly, into the very vitals of the race, stirring it up to the utmost sacrifice for the salvation of the motherland. His constructive and practical approaches to complicated national and social problems, again, have, to a considerable extent, been accepted as the *modus operandi* in many important development projects, designed to have a healthy India, rejuvenated in education, culture and religion.

Two under-currents of thought seem to have flowed uninterruptedly during Swamiji's life of tremendous activities, both in the West and in the East. They were, in short, the currents that carried the immortal message of the soul and the sublime symphony of human brotherhood. There was absolutely no crossing in those currents. They merged in a single flow. Yet, when Swamiji stood for the first he was a prophet of the bygone days, firmly rooted in the realisation of unfathomed eternal truth and Brahman,—a Yogi, indeed, awake only to transcendental thoughts. But when he stood for the second, which was only a natural corollary of the first, he used to speak like one from whose vision the seeming differences of countries, nations, religions etc. had receded; from whose thoughts the struggle between people and people, nation and nation

had completely died down. Often enough, in the flow of those thought-currents, he completely forgot the mundane relations and reached a cosmic sphere wherefrom he visualised a common brotherhood and a happy 'One World'. In that ecstatic mood his feelings melted into love, knowledge merged with power, and words, if issued at all, issued forth as prophetic utterances.

Time has receded and years have gone by since Swamiji gave up his human form. Nevertheless, we can listen, if we do care to listen with an undivided attention, how he said—"Doubtless I do love India. But every day my sight grows clear. What is India or England or America to us? We are the servants of that God, who by the ignorant is called MAN"....."I belong as much to India sata the World—no humbug about that".

There was yet another aspect of Swami Vivekananda—the aspect of a sannyasin in other cloth, which revealed his true inner self. Let us recall a few of his memorable lines which he uttered Symbolising the spirit of an uncompromising sannyasin, true to the service of God alone.

"You do not know the sannyasin. 'He stands on the heads of the Vedas', because he is free from churches and sects and religions and prophets and books....."I hate this world, this dream, this horrible nightmare with its churches and chicaneries, its books and black guardisms....." "Be still my soul! Be alone! and the Lord is with you. Life is nothing! Death is a delusion. All this is not. God alone is".

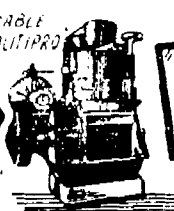
WHEN
MASTER
LEFT



THEM
MOURNING

(with a group of devotees at Cossipore Garden House, 16 August 1886)

1. Mahendranath Gupta (M) 3. Kali (Swami Abhedananda) 5. Sharat (Swami Saradananda) 6. Mani Mullick 7. Gangadhar (Swami Akhandananda) 8. Navagopal 9. Surendra 11. Tarak (Swami Shivananda) 13. Senior Gopal (Swami Advaitananda) 15. Vaikuntha 17. Manomohan 18. Harish 19. Narayan 21. Shashi (Swami Ramakrishnanda) 22. Latu (Swami Adbhutananda) 23. Bhavanath 23. Bhavanath 24. Baburam (Swami Premanda) 25. Nirajan (Swami Niranjananda) 26. Narendra (Swami Vivekananda) 27. Ramachandra Dutta 28. Balaram Bose 29. Rakhal (Swami Brahmananda) 30. Nityagopal 31. Yogindra (Swami Yogananda) 32. Devendra.

United EXPORT WORKS :- 10 CONVENT RD CALCUTTA. 14		EXCEILTM AUTOMATIC OIL EXPELLER	OIL EXPELLERS FILTER PRESSES DISINTEGRATORS & SPARE PARTS OF ALL TYPES OF OIL EXPELLERS & FILTER PRESS CLOTH.	PHONES OFFICE: 22 2426 WORKS: 24 3752 22, CANNING STREET CALCUTTA-1
UNITED ENGINEERING (EASTERN) CORP.				

DEATHLESS IT STANDS

India, this Motherland of ours',.....a voice gentle, firm, and unmistakable in its utterance is coming unto us and is gaining volume.

Like a breeze from Himalayas it is bringing life into even dead-bones and muscles.

The lethargy is passing away and only the blind cannot see, or the perverted will not see that she is awakening, this Motherland of ours from her deep, long sleep.

None can resist her anymore : never is she going to sleep any more ; no outward powers can hold her back any more ; for the infinite gaint is rising to her feet.

Up, up, the long night is passing. The day is approaching. The wave has risen, nothing will be able to resist its tidal fury.

Believe, believe, the decree has gone forth, the fiat of the Lord has gone forth—India must rise, the masses and the poor are to be made happy.

Every man to the force, every good will be added to its forces, every hand will smooth its way, and glory be unto the Lord !

They talk a great deal of the new theories about the survival of the fittest, they think that it is the strength of the muscles which is the fittest to survive.

If that were true any one of the aggressively known old world nations would have lived in glory to-day, and we, the weak Hindus who never conquered even one other race or nation ought to have died out, yet we live here (450) millions strong !

We, of all nations of the world, have never been a conquering race, and that blessing is on our head and therefore we live.

Study the history of the whole world, and you will see that every high ideal you meet with anywhere had its origin in India.

From time immemorial India has been the mine of precious ideals to human society ; giving birth to high ideas herself, she has freely distributed them broadcast over the whole world.

This is the land from where, like the tidal waves, spirituality and philosophy have again and again rushed out and deluged the world, and this is the land from whence once more such tides must proceed in order to bring life and vigour into the decaying races of mankind.

Sceptres have been broken and thrown away, the ball of power has passed from hand to hand ; but in India, courts and kings always touch only a few : the vast mass of the people, from the highest to lowest, has been left to pursue its own course, the current of national life flowing at times slow and half-conscious, at others, strong and awakened.

I stand in awe before the unbroken procession af scores of shining centuries, with here and there a dim link in the chain, only to flare up with added brilliance in the next, and there she is walking with her own majestic steps,—my Motherland,—to fulfil her glorious destiny, which no power on earth or in heaven can check—the regeneration of man the brute unto man the God.

The Indian nation cannot be killed. Deathless it stands, and it will stand so long as that spirit shall remain.

Swami Vivekananda

THE NATION BUILDER



PATRIOT SAINT OF INDIA

A galaxy of incarnations, saints and sages sanctified the soil of India, this motherland of ours. In fact, no other country in the world can pride herself of producing so many spiritual leaders of humanity.

Here in India, was born Lord Buddha who was an incarnation of renunciation and compassion. India also gave birth to Sri Sankara the torch of whose unlimited knowledge illumined the whole horizon of the globe and here too came Sri Chaitanya, the milk of whose heart flowed spontaneously for one and all, even for the most abject sinner.

Again we find in this country, the advent of one in whom the world has recently witnessed a harmonious blending of the vast expansive heart of Buddha, wonderful intellect of Sankara and all-embracing love of Chaitanya, Swami Vivekananda.

When God incarnates as an Avatara, he brings with Him a number of god-men who

By : Swami Suddhasatwananda, Madras

are called apostles. They first live the most ideal life of renunciation and spirituality and carry the message of the Incarnation to every home. So, when God incarnated as Sri Ramkrishna Paramahansa, he brought with him Swami Vivekananda, Swami Brahmananda and others, to propagate his message of peace, message of love and message of harmony among the masses. Swami Vivekananda was the chief disciple and rarest and highest specimen of human being that we can conceive of. He, in the words of Sri Ramkrishna, was Narayana in the form of a Nara (man) and was one of the great Saptarshis. Swami Vivekananda was the greatest gift of Sri Ramkrishna to mankind for which the whole human race will ever remain grateful to Him.

What made Vivekananda so great and so memorable? Is it because he was a monk? No, thousands and thousands of monks have been born throughout the world and yet how few of them are known and remembered; or is it because that he was a great Jnani or an

orator, or he crossed the Atlantic? No, there were many a jnani and orator and many had gone to foreign countries yet, few are known. Swami Vivekananda is great for his unique patriotism, for his burning love towards his countrymen and for the great sacrifice he had made for them. Wherefrom did he get his true patriotism and this unbounded love for human beings? He got it from his Guru Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna would not talk much, but the brief indication that he gave, was enough for an exceptionally intelligent person like Swami Vivekananda to catch its true significance, and deeply devoted to his Guru as he was, he took it as gospel truth and lived the rest of his life to translate it into action.

Living for others

Once Sri Ramakrishna asked Swami Vivekananda, who was then young Narendranath Datta, about the aim of his life, to which he replied, "I shall like to remain always immersed in Nirvikalpa Samadhi and enjoy the divine bliss." At once came the mild retort from Sri Ramakrishna who said, "I can never imagine that you will be so small and selfish only to enjoy yourself. You should, on the other hand, be like a big banyan tree, under whose cooling shade thousands of weary souls will take shelter and be cooled and consoled." The tree always stands the scorching heat or biting cold or heavy rain and violent storm, but it always welcomes others irrespective of any distinction and offers them its soothing shade.

On another occasion Sri Ramakrishna was sitting on his cot in his room at Dakshinewar in a half-ecstatic mood surrounded by Narendranath and other when all of a sudden he said, "It is not merely Compassion but service, it is to serve jiva (being) as the veritable manifestation of Lord Siva." Narendranath came out of the room and told other, "I have heard something new today and if I am alive I shall try to give shape to what I have heard." Intelligent Narendranath got sufficient clue from the above two incidents and determined to mould his life accordingly and when we read his life we find how he had translated into action the teachings of his great master. Indeed his whole life was a great dedication for the fulfilment of his master's wishes.

After the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna,

Swami Vivekananda travelled as a wandering monk mostly on foot from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and came in close touch with the masses of India. He moved with them freely, mixed with them intimately, and conversed with them friendly forgetting absolutely his aristocratic birth, his learning and all superiority complexes.

The abject poverty, steep ignorance and utter helplessness of the people, deeply moved the motherly soft heart of the great Swami. This made him restless, robbed him of his sleep and made him plunge into deep thought of how to improve their condition.

He approached some rich people of the country, but utterly selfish as they were, they turned a deaf ear to his request. So Swamiji went to America. Though outwardly he went to represent Hinduism at the great Parliament of Religions at Chicago, his main object was to get some money by which he could do some permanent service to his beloved countrymen.

When Swami Vivekananda carried the day even on the first sitting of the Parliament and when afterwards he was at the highest pinnacle of glory and fame in America, the thought of his poor ignorant and suffering sisters and brothers of India, was always uppermost in his mind. He never for a moment, forgot the miserable condition of his countrymen.

Once, he was the guest of a rich lady there who arranged a very soft bed on a costly spring cot. At the dead of night, the lady heard some sound of sobbing from Swamiji's room. She came running to see to her great sorrow and bewilderment that Swamiji was rolling on the door-mat and weeping like a child. On being asked the reason, Swamiji said, "As soon as I lay down on the soft bed so kindly provided by you, at once the thought of my poor countrymen flashed before my eyes. They don't even get a mat for their bed or even a brick for their pillow. They are my flesh and blood and when they suffer like this, how could I sleep on a comfortable bed? Their pitiable plight troubled my mind so much.!"

After the most successful and triumphant tour in the West where Swamiji was showered with all love and reverence and where the most aristocratic society deemed it a great

honour to receive Swami Vivekananda, he on the eve of his departure for India, was asked by one of his devoted disciples, "Swamiji, after passing these four years in the company of the cream of society of this country and receiving so much of love and affection and seeing for yourself the tip-top and advanced condition of this country, how will you like India which is steeped in deep ignorance and which is full of abominable customs and manners?" At once came the bold reply from the great Swamiji, "India I loved before I came away, now the very dust of India has become holy to me, the very air is now to me holy, it is now the holy land, the place of pilgrimage the Tirtha and Tirtha and I am eagerly waiting for the blessed day when I shall be able to roll myself on the sacred dust of India."

of his love for India and her people. He said, "For the next fifty years this alone shall be our keynote—this, our great Mother India. Let all other vain gods disappear for that time from our minds. This is the only God that is awake, our own race; everywhere His hands, everywhere His feet, everywhere His ears. He covers every thing,"

In spite of all weaknesses, drawbacks, ignorance and other faults, which naturally pained Swamiji so much, he never lost hope neither did decrease his love and adoration. He said, "In this land, are still religion and spirituality, the fountains which will have to overflow and flood the world, to bring in new life and new vitality to the Western and other nations." Swamiji exhorts each one of us to feel proud that we are born in this land and

 ✱ The one vital duty incumbent on you if you really love your religion, if ✱
 ✱ you really love your country, is that you must struggle hard to be up and doing, ✱
 ✱ with this one great idea of bringing out the treasures from your closed books, ✱
 ✱ and delivering them over to their rightful heirs. And above all, one thing is ✱
 ✱ necessary, Aye, for ages we have been saturated with awful jealousy; we are ✱
 ✱ always getting jealous of each other. Why has this man a little precedence, ✱
 ✱ and not I? Even in the worship of God we want precedence, to such a state ✱
 ✱ of slavery have we come. This is to be avoided. If there is any crying sin in ✱
 ✱ India at this time it is this slavery. Every one wants to command and no one ✱
 ✱ wants to obey; and this is owing to the absence of that wonderful Brahma- ✱
 ✱ charya system of yore. First, learn to obey. The command will come by ✱
 ✱ itself. Always first learn to be a servant, and then you will be fit to be a ✱
 ✱ master.....Our ancestors did most wonderful works, and we look back upon ✱
 ✱ their work with veneration and pride. But we also are going to do great deeds, ✱
 ✱ and let others look back with blessings and pride upon us, as their ancestors. ✱
 ✱ With the blessing of the Lord every one here will yet do such deeds that will ✱
 ✱ eclipse those of our ancestors, great and glorious as they may have been. ✱
 ✱ **Vivekananda** ✱
 ✱ ***** ✱

That was Swami Vivekananda. This feeling of oneness and sincere love and affection for India and her people made Vivekananda so great.

He came back to India and established the Ramakrishna Math at Belur with the money that he brought from the West, to serve humanity and thereby attain the highest goal of life. Naturally, Belur Math was dearer to him even than his life but the love for his countrymen was so intense and deep that he once proposed to sell the Math and serve the affected people when there was an epidemic of plague at Calcutta.

It is impossible for us to fathom the depth

never to feel any inferiority complex. In a clarion call he asks us, "Thou brave one, be bold, take courage, feel proud that thou art an Indian and proudly proclaim,—'I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother. The Indian is my life, India's gods and goddesses are my God, India's society is the cradle of my infancy, the pleasure-garden of my youth, the sacred heaven, the Varanasi of my old age.' Say, brother,—'The soil of India is my highest heaven, the good of India is my good.'"

Ah! If we could possess an iota of this love for our Motherland and for our brothers, the condition of India would have been otherwise. India would then become a veritable heaven

In the words of Sister Nivedita, "Swamiji was a true lover, but the queen of his love was India, he completely identified himself with the cause of India and at every breath he would think of the welfare of India."

Our patriots should try their best to imbibe at least a fraction of this burning love for the country. It is not so easy to become a true patriot though many of us profess to be so. Let us hear how Swamiji defines true patriotism. He says, "Do you feel that millions and millions of the descendants of gods and sages have become next door neighbour to brutes? Do you feel that millions are starving for ages? Do you feel that ignorance has covered the land as a dark cloud? Does it make you restless? Does it make you sleepless? Has it gone into your blood, coursing through your veins, becoming consonant with your heartbeats? Has it made you almost mad? Are you seized with that one idea of the misery of ruin, and have you forgotten all about your fame, your wives, your children, your property, even your own bodies? Have you done that? That is the first step to become a true patriot, the very first step."

Swami Vivekananda was a patriot of that type. Once he said, "I don't like to go to heaven, so long a dog in my country remains hungry." Swamiji said, "I consider that the great nationalisin is the neglect of the masses, and that is one of the causes of our downfall. No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses of India are once more well educated, well fed and well cared for. So, keep the motto always before you, "elevation

of the masses without injuring their religion."

Swamiji asked us to cultivate love for our people and for our country. He said, "It is love and love alone that I preach. Love never fails, my son, today or tomorrow or ages after, truth will conquer, love shall win the victory. Love your fellowmen." He exhorted us to look upon the unfortunate sisters and brothers as veritable manifestations of the Divinity. He said, "Where would you go to seek for God? Are not all the poor, the miserable, the weak Gods? Why not worship these living gods first?" Swamiji wanted especially young men to come forward and take up this ideal. He had great hope and faith in your people. He wanted them to besome ideal specimens of men first and then serve others. He said, "I want fiery young men of spotless character, with muscles of iron and nerves of steel and with a still stronger determination, a thousand such and the whole country would be revolutionised."

If we boast ourselves to be the children of India, to be the decendants of saints and sages, to be the heirs of the great heritage, we must come forward and respond to the clarion call of this greatest patriot-saint of India.

The Nation Builder

Swami Vivekananda has been described as the patriot-saint of India, an Indian nation builder or the father of Indian nationalism. The phrases are aptly applied so far as this side of his life and message are concerned, and so far as we can separate this from the other sides of his varied life, with which we do not proposes to deal in this article. So far

I am firmly convinced that no good comes out of the man who day and night thinks he is nobody.

If a man, day and night, thinks he is miserable, low and nothing, nothing he becomes. If you say yea, yea, I am, I am,' so shall you be; and if you say 'I am not,' think that you are not, and day and night meditate upon the fact that you are nothing, aye, nothing shall you be. That is the great fact which you ought to remember.

We are the children of the Almighty, we are sparks of the infinite, divine fire. How can we be nothings? We are everything, ready to do everything. we can do everything, and man must do everything.

This faith in themselves was in the hearts of our ancestors, this faith in themselves was the motive power that pushad them forward and forward in the march of civilization, and if there has been degeneration, if there has been defeat, mark my words, you will find that degradation to have started on the day our people lost this faith in themselves.

Swami Vivekananda

as the impact of his personality on the political life of the country is concerned, Principal Kamakhya Mitra was absolutely correct when he wrote in 1930 : 'I do not know a single self-sacrificing Indian worker of the present century who has not been influenced more or less by his thoughts, words, and example' (*Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda*, p. 349). And this has been confirmed by such eminent leaders of thought and action as Jawaharlal Nehru, Rabindranath Tagore, Subhas Chandra Bose, and Sri Aurobindo.

A strict directive

Though we are not dealing with the other aspects of the Swami here, in all justice to him we must warn the readers that he resented being called a politician or a mere Indian patriot. 'Those who ... want to prove that I am a political preacher, to them I say, "Save me from my friends"', he wrote in 1894 from America ; and he added, 'I am no politician or political agitator. I care only for the Spirit' (*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. V. Seventh Edn., p. 46). In 1896, he wrote : 'You must not forget that my interests are international and not Indian alone' (*ibid.*, p. 124). All the same, his love for his country was intense and unparalleled : 'My life's allegiance is to this my motherland' (*ibid.*, Vol. IV. Seventh Edn., p. 312). How this patriotism and universalism could be reconciled on the basis of

spirituality is another question and quite beyond the scope of the present article. With these reservations, let us study how Swami Vivekananda roused the nation, and what programme he chalked out for future generations in this country.

One fact that all students of the Swami's life have noted is that his appearance at the Parliament of Religions and his glorious achievement there constituted in themselves a unique event of national importance. And as he spoke at the Parliament, writes Sister Nivedita, 'a nation, sleeping in the shadows of the darkened half of earth, on the far side of the Pacific, waited in spirit for the words that would be borne on the dawn that was travelling towards them, to reveal to them the secret of their own greatness and strength' (*ibid.*, Vol. I. Ninth Edn., Introduction, p. xii). The Indians had been oppressed and disparaged till they had come to think that they really lacked the strength of body, mind, and spirit that makes a nation great. Here was one of their very own men who could not only hold his position against the elite of other nations, but could improve upon their philosophy of life. Yes, India had something to contribute to the progress of the world ; she, too, had a mission to fulfil ; and she could be self-confident about her role and feel proud of that.

No inferiority complex for Hinduism

In Swami Vivekananda, Hinduism found a

Indians All

I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother...The ignorant Indian, the poor and destitute Indian, the Brahmin Indian, the Pariah Indian is my brother...The Indian is my brother, the Indian is my life. India's society is the cradle of my infancy, the pleasure garden of my old age...The soil of India is my highest heaven, the good of India is my good.

Swami Vivekananda

.....Autonomy does not and should not mean disruption or that hereafter provinces could go the way they chose, independent of one another and of the Centre. If each province began to look upon itself as a separate, sovereign unit, India's independence would vanish the freedom of the various units as well.....It would be fatal if it led to narrow provincialism, mutual bickerings and rivalries—between Tamil and Andhra for instance, Bombay and Karnatak and so on.....The world outside does not know them as Gujaratis, Maharashtrians, Tamilians, etc., but only as Indians. We must, therefore, resolutely discourage all fissiparous tendencies and feel and behave as Indians.

Mahatma Gandhi

champion who spoke uncompromisingly as a Hindu, without cringing apologies, or fear of foreign criticism, or eagerness for the approbation of Western dignitaries. Sister Nivedita writes : 'What Hinduism had needed was the organizing and consolidating of its own idea' (*ibid.*, p. ix) ; 'For India herself, the short address (at Chicago) forms, as has been said, a brief Charter of 'Enfranchisement' (*ibid.*, p. xiii). The Swami spoke of Hinduism as a whole, and he showed how its apparently contradictory ideas could be reconciled by assigning to them their due places of honour. A whole nation heard him, and each individual felt a more intense love for his brother in faith. The Hindus became conscious of their invaluable possession and felt no need any more for standing before others with begging bowl in hand.

In 1897, he received a hero's welcome on his return to India, and a greater hero he proved to be by his dynamic oratory ; his transparent love for his country and countrymen : his message of hope, strength, goodwill, and self-confidence ; his exhortation for re-ordering our national life, and for absolute selflessness in personal life, his vigorous call for renunciation and service ; and his practical programmes for the educational and social betterment of our women and the masses. Swami Vivekananda knew that his work in America had a tremendous effect in India. It generated faith and self-confidence in the masses, and this paved the way for his Indian work. When he returned with this prestige, he used it all for the uplift of the country and not for any personal gain. He mentioned three tests for a real national worker—true and abiding love for those whom one would serve, absolute selflessness, and a practical plan of work. Examined from all these three points of view, the Swami proved that his heart, intelligence, and action were in full accord and wholly dedicated to the cause he stood for. His life is a standing witness to all this ; his message is a source of inspiration to generations yet to come ; and the path he chalked out is the surest way to success, as recent Indian history has been proving almost every day.

II

Lest somebody should suspect us of platitudes, let us study Swami Vivekananda's message in some greater detail. As we do so, we are struck with wonder at the way he

penetrated into the innermost core of the problems and the far-reaching solutions he suggested regarding them.

It is a matter of history now that the Indian national movement, in its earlier days, believed only in holding meetings and passing resolutions, sometimes couched in strong words, but oftener in a mild tone that would not offend the rulers too much. Apart from this, the national leaders could not hit upon any practical and effective programme. Things were much the same when Swami Vivekananda worked in India from 1897 to the middle of 1902. But, far from being influenced by the prevailing atmosphere, he showed his originality in more than one way, and subsequent history proved that he was absolutely right in his diagnosis of the disease in the Indian national life, as also in his prescription of the necessary remedy.

Religion the premier

One point he emphasized in almost all his lectures and conversations in India was the primacy of religion in all the modes of expression of our national life. 'Religion and religion alone is the life of India ; and when that goes, India will die, in spite of politics, in spite of social reforms, in spite of Kubera's wealth poured upon the head of every one of her children' (*ibid.*, Vol. III. Eighth Edn., p. 146). 'The secret of a true Hindu's character lies in the subordination of his knowledge of European sciences and learning, of his wealth, position, and name, to that one principal theme which is inborn in every Hindu child—the spirituality and purity of the race' (*ibid.*, p. 152). The Swami noted that the Indian people responded with alacrity when called in the name of religion, though they might be ignorant about politics and economic theories that sway the Western masses. As a necessary corollary of this, it followed that, if the Indian people were to be raised, their hearts had to be reached through religion. 'So, every improvement in India requires first of all an upheaval in religion. Before flooding India with socialistic or political ideas, first deluge the land with spiritual ideas' (*ibid.*, p. 221). 'Each nation has its own peculiar method of work. Some work through politics, some through social reforms, some through other lines. With us, religion is the only ground along which we can move' (*ibid.*, p. 314).

The Swami was not scared by the bogey of religious fights ; for, according to him, it is politics that is really responsible for such orgies. True religion unites, irreligion divides. 'What then invited people to do these things ? Politics, but never religion ; and if such politics takes the name of religion, whose fault is that ?' (*ibid.*, Vol. IV. p. 125). Again, India had specifically chosen for herself the task of harmonizing all her religions

tribution to the sum total of human welfare. India had chosen spirituality as the field of her action. The choice had not been a bad one. But, even if it had been unwise, we cannot suddenly change the current of our national life overnight. Prudence also requires that one should follow the path of least resistance. The Swami had therefore no soft words for those who would decry India's religion and run after the West for bringing

HOLD ON YET A WHILE, BRAVE HEART

If the sun by the cloud is hidden a bit,
If the welkin shows but gloom,
Still hold on yet a while, brave heart,
The victory is sure to come.
No winter was but summer came behind,
Each hollow crests the wave,
They push each other in light and shade ;
Be steady then and brave.
The duties of life are sore indeed,
And its pleasures fleeting, vain,
The goal so shadowy seems and dim ;
Yet plod on through the dark, brave heart,
With all thy might and main.
Not a work will be lost, no struggle vain,
Though hopes be blighted, powers gone,
Of thy loins shall come the heirs to all,
Then hold on yet a while, brave soul,
No good is e'er undone.
Though the good and the wise in life are few,
Yet theirs are the reins to lead ;
The masses know but late the worth,
Heed none and gently guide.
With thee are those who see afar,
With thee is the Lord of might,
All blessings pour on thee, great soul,
To these may all come right.

—The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda,

Vol. IV (7th impression), Pp. 389-90.

in accordance with her national theme, as enunciated in the *Rg-Veda* : 'Ekam sat, viprah bahudha vadanti'—That which exists is one : sages call it by various names. Unity in variety is the ideal inspiring the whole of Indian life. Future progress lies along that line alone.

Unifying Power of Religion

Each nation had to make its special con-

about a better order of things. Religion had been sustaining the nation for centuries, despite waves of oppression and foreign depredation. And it is religion, again, that holds the different regions together, varied though they are linguistically, socially, and in many other ways. "This nation still lives ; the *raison d'être* is it still holds to God' (*ibid.*, Vol. III. p. 148). 'The one common ground that we have is our sacred tradition, our religion. That is the only



common ground, and upon that we shall have to build' (*ibid.*, p. 286). 'We see how in Asia, and especially India, race difficulties, linguistic difficulties, social difficulties, national difficulties, all melt away before this unifying power of religion' (*ibid.*, p. 287). 'National union in India must be a gathering up of its scattered spiritual forces. A nation in India must be a union of those whose hearts beat to the same spiritual tune' (*ibid.*, p. 371). 'There has been enough of criticism; ... the time has come for the rebuilding, the reconstructing; the time has come for us to gather all our scattered forces, and through that to leap the nation on its onward march' (*ibid.*, p. 367).

The preservation and advancement of spirituality must be our national policy, for in it lies India's real greatness, and also because the world is athirst for this spirituality, and looks to India to show the way. The only means of a vigorous national life, in the Swami's conception, was to conquer the world with Indian spirituality. 'They are waiting for it, they are eager for it' (*ibid.*, p. 277). By this spirituality, he did not mean the changing manners and customs, but the eternal principles underlying true spirituality. He enumerated them as, 'the idea of oneness of all, the Infinite, the idea of the impersonal, the wonderful idea of the eternal soul of man, of the unbroken continuity in the march of beings, and the infinity of the universe' (*ibid.*, p. 110). To emphasize the primacy of spirituality in any truly progressive movement, he asked: 'Does man make laws, or do laws make man? Does man make money or does money make man?' (*ibid.*, Vol. V. p. 462). His own answer was: 'No nation is great or good, because Parliament enacts this or that, but because its men are great and good' (*ibid.*, p. 192). His first duty in India, accordingly, was to make the nation more spiritual, and more united through an understanding of Hindu culture, history, and tradition. That would restore confidence, and that would arrest the tempo of denationalization which was in evidence everywhere.

III

Indian themselves to save India

A spiritual giant of the Swami's stature could not speak or write otherwise than as a man of religion. That was the Swami's only aim—to raise India and the world spiritually,

to make the whole of the varied human life a constant struggle for spiritual unfoldment. To make this a reality, he contacted men in all fields of activity, social, religious, scientific, economic and others. In the Indian national life, he left his own unique contributions. One of these was: 'India is to be saved by the Indians themselves' (*ibid.*, Vol. IV. p. 659). He repeated this idea before several audiences and expatiated on it whenever an opportunity arose. The dictum voiced by him more than sixty years ago has not lost its significance even in the present context; for, even today, many people cherish a vague hope that other nations will somehow make India strong and prosperous. And one has to remind such people of the old adage: 'God helps those who help themselves.' Hence, how strange and unpractical this must have sounded in those days in the ears of the nationalists who saw no way of escape from foreign domination! Yet, the greatness of a leader lies in seeing beyond the immediate difficulties and rousing the drooping spirits of others by pointing forcefully to the essential principles of human life. So the Swami went on telling his compatriots: 'Every nation, every man, and every woman must work out their own salvation' (*ibid.*, p. S62). 'Every nation must save itself; we must not depend upon funds from America for the revival of Hinduism, for that is a delusion' (*ibid.*, Vol. V. p. 61). 'You must not depend on any foreign help. Nations, like individuals, must help themselves. This is real patriotism. If a nation cannot do that, its time has not yet come. It must wait' (*ibid.*, p. 108). It must have required a prophet's vision and a lion's courage to realize such a truth and give expression to it in the closing years of the last country.

And, yet, Swami Vivekananda was not an isolationist. Often enough did he remind his countrymen that India's fate was sealed the very day she coined the term '*mleccha*' and ceased to have free communication with the world outside. In fact, his words sound just like those of a modern internationalist though they were uttered during the darkest days of Indian political life. 'The fact of our isolation from all the other nations of the world is the cause of our degeneration, and its only remedy is getting back into the current of the rest of the world' (*ibid.*, Vol. VIII. Second Edn. p. 325) 'Even in politics and sociology, problems that were national

twenty years ago can no more be solved on national grounds only... They can only be solved when looked at on the broader light of international grounds' (*ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 241).

His conciliation of nationalism and internationalism in the Indian arena was equally charming. India had to learn many things from others, and she had to reconstruct her social, political, and economic life with the help of the light she got from outside. 'But it must always be we who build up a new India as an effect and continuation of her past, assimilating helpful foreign ideas wherever they may be found. Never can it be they; growth must proceed from within'

West her arts and her sciences. From the West, we have to learn the sciences of physical nature, while, on the other hand, the West has to come to us to learn and assimilate religion and spiritual knowledge' (*ibid.*, p. 443). Elsewhere, he says that we can learn with profit from the West its method of organized activity. And he speaks of India's stable society which has withstood the shock of ages, and which can serve as a model to others. We have to exchange these if we want to thrive. 'Each nation must give in order to live' *ibid.*, p. 273).

The next point he emphasized was *the uplift of women and the masses*. India's salvation, according to him, was inextricably bound

Oh India! Forget not—that the ideal of thy womanhood is Sita, Savitri, Damayanti; forget not—that the God thou worshipping is the great ascetic of ascetics, the all renouncing Sankara, the Lord of Uma; forget not—that thy marriage, thy wealth, thy life are not sense-pleasure,—are not for thy individual personal happiness; forget not—thou art a sacrifice to the mother's altar; forget not—that thy social order is but the reflex of the infinite Universal Motherhood; forget not—that the lower classes, the ignorant, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper, are thy flesh and blood, thy brothers. Thou brave one, be bold, take courage be proud that thou art an Indian—and proudly proclaim,—'I am Indian—every Indian is my brother.' Say,—'The ignorant Indian, the poor and destitute Indian, the Brahman Indian, the Pariah Indian, is my brother.' Thou too clad with but a rag round thy loins proudly proclaim at the top of thy voice,—'The Indian is my brother,—the Indian is my life, India's Gods and Goddesses are my God, India's society is the cradle of my infancy, the pleasure-garden of my youth, the sacred heaven, the *Varanasi* of my old age.' Say, brother,—'The soil of India is my highest heaven, the good of India is my good,' and repeat and pray day and night: 'O thou Mother of the Universe vouchsafe manliness unto me! O thou Mother of Strength, take away my weakness take away my unmanliness, and—MAKE ME A MAN!'

Swami Vivekananda

(*ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 198) 'Learn from every nation, take what is of use to you. But remember that, as Hindus, everything else must be subordinated to our own national ideals' (*ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 152).

Exchange of East's & West's presents

National dignity and the welfare of the world as a whole require that each nation should maintain and fulfil its mission in the comity of nations. Indian's mission is spirituality. So she must give as freely of this as she receives everything good from outside with open arms. 'We should learn from the

up with this. His emphatic declaration was: 'The uplift of the women, the awakening of the masses, must come first, and then only can any real good come about for the country, for India' *ibid.*, Vol. VI, Sixth Edn., p. 490). 'The whole defect is here: The real nation who live in the cottages have forgotten their manhood their individuality. ... They are to be given back their lost individuality. They are to be educated' (*ibid.*, Vol. VIII, p. 307). Education of the proper type, based on national ideals and conducted by true nationalists who must needs be spiritual, can retrieve the situation. But one did not, in those days, find any real endeavour to spread this kind of education. Besides, the national

Voice Of God

Each soul is a star, and all stars are set in that infinite azure, that eternal sky, the Lord. There is the root, the reality, the real individuality of each and all. Religion began with the search after some of these stars that had passed beyond our horizon, and ended in finding them all in God, and ourselves in the same place.

My ideal indeed can be put into a few words and that is: to preach unto mankind their divinity, and how to make it manifest in every movement of life.



This world is in chains of superstition. I pity the oppressed, whether man or woman, and I pity more the oppressors.

One idea that I see clear as day-light is that misery is caused by ignorance and nothing else. Who will give the world light? Sacrifice in the past has been the Law, it will be, alas, for ages to come. The earth's bravest and best will have to sacrifice themselves for the good of many, for the welfare of all. Buddhas by the hundred are necessary with eternal love and pity.



Religions of the world have become lifeless mockeries. What the world wants is character. The world is in need for those whose life is one burning love selfless that love will make every word tell like thunderbolt.



Bold words and bolder deeds are what we want. Awake, Awake, great ones! The world is burning with misery. Can you sleep? Let us call and call till the sleeping gods awake, till the god within answers to the call. What greater work? The details come to me as I go. I never make plans. Plans grow and work themselves. I only say, awake, awake,



I have lost all wish for my salvation. I never wanted earthly enjoyments. I must see my machine in strong working order, and then knowing sure that I have put in a lever for the good of humanity, in India at least, which no power can drive back, I will sleep, without caring what will be next, and may I be born again and again, and suffer thousands of miseries so that I may worship the only God I believe in, the sumtotal of all souls—and above all my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races, of all species, is the special object of my worship.



The only God to worship is the human soul in the human body. Of course all animals are temples too, but man is the highest, the Taj Mahal of temples. If I cannot worship in that, no other temple will be of any advantage.



All truth is eternal. Truth is nobody's property; no individual can lay any exclusive claim to it. Truth is the nature of all souls. Who can lay any special claim to it? But it has to be made simple (for the highest truths are always simple), so that it may penetrate every pore of human society, and become the property of the highest intellects and the commonest minds, of the man, woman, and child at the same time. All these ratiocinations of logic, all these bundles of metaphysics, all these theologies and ceremonies may have been good in their own time, but let us try to make things simpler and bring about the golden days when every man will be a worshipper, and the Reality in every man will be the object of worship.

leaders made no attempt to win the hearts of the masses by serving them during natural calamities, like flood, famine, and pestilence ; this was very much felt by the Swami, who initiated on his own account the service of the 'Dāridra-Narāyaṇas'—God in the poor— which phrase was first coined by him.

No religion with empty stomach

We cannot live on ideas and talk by shutting our eyes to the problem of hunger. 'Did not our *gurudeva* use to say, "An empty stomach is no good for religion"? (*ibid.*, Vol. VI. p. 254). 'No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses in India are once more well educated, well fed, and well cared for' (*ibid.*, Vol. V. p. 222); 'First of all, you must remove this evil of hunger and starvation, this constant anxiety for bare existence' (*ibid.*, p. 380). The remedy lay in opening out new avenues of national income. Industry had to be developed, commerce better organized, and agriculture improved and intensified.

In this context, we cannot resist the temptation of referring to his estimation of the work that was being done by the Indian National Congress of those days. He said during a private conversation at Belur Math in 1898 : 'Sit at their (i.e. of the English) feet and learn from them the arts, industries, and the practicality necessary for the struggle for existence. You will be esteemed once more when you will become fit. ... Without the necessary preparation, what will mere shouting in the Congress avail?' (*ibid.*, Vol. II. Fifth Edn., p. 147) This was only one side of his estimation, which was concerned with the lack of constructive work in those early days and the want of realization that one must earn the esteem of others if one were to have one's due share of other people's help in international dealings. All the same, Swami Vivekananda knew that the Congress formed the vanguard on the political front for the betterment of the nation. When an interviewer asked him, 'Have you given any attention to the Indian National Congress movement?' he replied, 'I cannot claim to have given much ; my work is in another part of the field. But I regard the movement as significant, and heartily wish it success, A nation is being made out of India's different races ... It will certainly end in the working out of India's homogeneity, in her acquir-

ing what we may call democratic ideas' (*ibid.*, Vol. V. p. 199).

IV

Swami Vivekananda certainly felt the need of economic and political advancement and freedom : but he preferred working in other fields. We have already mentioned religion, education, and philanthropy. The need of social reform, too, was admitted by him, and he had no kind words for such diabolical practices as untouchability, child-marriage, oppression of the masses by the higher castes, and so on. Though he did not lead any reform movement, the reforming spirit of the nation got a real impetus from his denunciation and forceful utterances. All this yielded a rich harvest in the years that followed.

Not content with this alone, Swami Vivekananda aimed at changing the very outlook of the nation. We have already referred to the galvanizing effect that his success in the West had on the Indian people as a whole. He took advantage of this success to make his message clearer and his effect more effective.

For eliminating communal rancour and for establishing brotherly feeling in all the spheres of human association, he urged all to imbibe the spirit of harmony illustrated by the life of Sri Ramakrishna. He also thought that a more dynamic, progressive, and balanced national life could be ensured through a better understanding of the fundamental principles of religion and a more practical application of these in life, without distinction of caste, creed, or colour. The Indians had enough of philosophy, but they lacked practicality. Our scriptures, for instance, say that all souls are same, but in practice we look down upon others and consider ourselves a little higher in stature. This brings about national weakness and disruption. In the modern world, no section of a nation can progress without pulling up the others also along with itself.

Then, again, indolence masquerades here as the highest spiritual equipoise. That is a sign of death. If the nation is to be resuscitated, it requires to be strengthened mentally and physically. Under the prevailing conditions, the Swami did not even hesitate to utter such an apparently sacrilegious

maximum as, 'You will be nearer to heaven through football than through the study of the *Gita*. These are bold words : but I have to say them, for I love you. You will understand the *Gita* better with your biceps, your muscles, a little stronger' (*ibid.*, Vol. III. p. 242). Swami Vivekananda has often been described as a prophet of strength ; to some extent, it is true. His theory was that, to rise to spiritual equipoise, one has to pass through activity ; otherwise, one will lapse into laziness. That was the ailment from which India suffered. He therefore pleaded for strength, so that there might be more activity all around. The Hindus must become more dynamic, more confident in their approach to life's problems; for expansion is life, while contraction is death. Against such a background, one can understand why he decried too much of emasculating emotionalism in the religious expressions of contemporary society. 'What we now want in our country, however, is not so much of weeping, but a little strength' (*ibid.*, p. 130); 'The only religion that ought to be taught is the religion of fearlessness' (*ibid.*, p. 160).

The Swami insisted on faith—faith in oneself and in one's own tradition. A denationalizing education had hammered it into our brains that we were nobodies, that our national culture belonged to a bygone age which the Westerners had transcended long ago, and that what good things it contained were borrowed from Greece and Rome. To lose faith in oneself and in one's nation, and then to run after others like beggars, not only hurts national dignity, but it also spells death. Time and again, therefore, the Swami dinned it into the ears of his countrymen that they were all potentially divine, and actually they were superior to others in many respects. Besides, their history was quite a glorious one. India in the past not only stood on her own legs, but actually taught others to do so. And in front of the Indians lay a brighter future, before which every other period would pale into insignificance, and every nation would stand in awe and admiration. 'So long as they forgot the past, the Hindu nation remained in a state of stupor ; and as soon as they have begun

to look into the past, there is one every side a fresh manifestation of life' (*ibid.*, Vol. IV. p. 324). As he visualized the bright future, he exclaimed: 'Up, up, the long night is passing; the day is approaching; the wave has risen ; nothing will be able to resist its tidal fury...Believe, believe, the decree has gone forth; the fiat of the Lord has gone forth—India must rise, the masses and the poor are to be made happy' (*ibid.*, Vol. V. p. 35).

It was not without reason that India fell in recent past. She had lost the vigour of the spirit: she neglected her women and the masses: she had no programme of national education; she failed to apply her vast wisdom in a practical way : she withdrew into a shell eschewing international co-operation, she magnified the emotional side of religion; she mistook weakness for strength; she lost faith in herself and her past; and she failed to achieve communal harmony. As a result of all these, as well as many other drawbacks, she became enslaved. From that resulted a series of vices that slave nations are prone to. Laziness, lack of initiative, selfishness, jealousy, want of co-operation, absence of business integrity, and such other vices followed in the wake of centuries of foreign rule. The situation needed physical as well as psychological treatment. Swami Vivekananda, accordingly, pointed out the defects, like a loving father, and advised their removal, like a bold surgeon. At the same time, he infused faith in the nation with inspiring words and promise of a glorious future, like some prophet of old.

He summed up his method of nation building in three short formulae: 'Three things are necessary to make every nation great ; (1) conviction of the powers of goodness, (2) absence of jealousy and suspicion, (3) helping all who are trying to be and do good' (*ibid.*, Vol. VIII. p. 299).

A lesser ideal would not satisfy a Swami Vivekananda. A national leader of such light and leading of such love, vigour, and inspiration, is rare indeed.



V I V E K A N A N D A H U M A N I S T

By :

Narayan

Bose



Humanist thought gave rise to love of classics, critical spirit and intelligence in Europe in the 18th Century. Although it was a European movement having the imprint of the greek culture, its germinations were evident throughout the world, It was witnessed in different parts of the world such as Italy, Germany, France and England which had their individual form but a common ground of interest. That absorbing interest was man himself as an individual.

This through current of the West was fast infiltrating into the socio-economic complex of Indian with the advent of the British. This culture contact of the East and the West stirred a new searching and seeking of India's ancient civilization, on the other hand an era of English learning slowly stepped in. While a rich literature along with its pageantry attracted the attention of young Bengal in those days, another school of thought grew which proclaimed the superiority of Indian culture and civilization above everything else.

But the majority of the leaders who glorified man during this period derived their inspiration from comingling of the thoughts between the East and the West. So we find a distinct note leading to three directions such as :

- (a) Profound faith in man.
- (b) a spirit of enquiry.
- (c) liberty.

Our leaders were not of the type of the reformers of the European renaissance. No doubt there was spirit of revivalism in them they were more modern than ancient in outlook. They wanted to mould life in accordance with the modern demands. In Bengal the leadership of this period was amply manifest in the persons of Raja Ram Mohan Roy Bankim Chandra Chattopodhya, Vidya Sagar and Swami Vivekananda. All of them were conscious of the strivings of the new age. But they at the same time did not forget to highlight the massage of ancient Indian thought. Their mission was sigularly man-centered.

Swami Vivekananda was undoubtedly a product of these commulative forces unleashed by his predecessors and in the field of new valuation of man. He was therefore, a critical analysit of the old and interpreter of the new. Out of this old and the new meeting point the built up his world view of man.

To him man is born divine spirituality which is the key note of Vivekananda's philosophy is nothing but an awareness of "Manliness". He constructed the unique concept of man as divine individual and said the modelling of character of that man is the goal. Thus the realisation came to him that unless and until man possess character he cannot be of any service to the cause of the country.

In this context he placed before the country the social content of the Vedanta as the moving force and a practical apparatus of his theory. His travels throughout the country made him thoroughly acquainted with the inner story of people's sufferings, poverty and disease and the solution that he discovered was arousing of man's spirit of confidence in his potentialities. The condition of the people was so much telling upon him that it was as if the daily air he used to breathe. But he was not sitting idle in the web of the dreams and plans. He made a clarion call to the nation for dedicated service and the pointer that he made for such achievement of his purpose is constructive work in diverse fields of our national development. work as he conceived is that which should transcend ecclesiastical organisations and doctrinal sophistries to remake society. Thus Vivekanandaism has emerged as an activistic dynamism of a spirit in man and the means it suggests is the constructive work—work for the country. The call of Vivekananda was so sensitive that it touched the leaders of the country having different shades of view. Leaders in politics, religion, and education imbibed equally the amount of inspiration from the perennial fountain of his writings.

His message was meant for all. He said "We reject none, neither theist nor pantheist, monist, polytheist, agnostic and a theist",

Jiva according to Vivekananda is the Brahman in essence. He was influenced by the *samklya* to some extent. The belief in the multiplicity of Jivas, he interests from *samklya* but like the true *advaitist* he believes in their ulti-

mate identity with Brahman. He was an eloquent advocate of the purity and invite goodness of the human soul. Swami Vivekananda was greatly shocked at the christian conception of soul as the sinner. Man is the architect of his own fortune and hence constant efforts at the control of internal and external nature would lead to the divinisation of man. He regarded man as the highest being in creation because he alone attains to freedom.

Swami Vivekananda's humanist philosophy may be examined in the perspective of M. N. Roy. Roy in his early life derived inspiration for his social service from Swami Vivekananda but in later years through the fire of revolutions he came to work upon an apparently divergent thought but fundamentally having the same core. Speaking of Man's freedom Swami Vivekananda wanted man to be free and develop self-will in line with the vedantic ideal. Roy also fundamentally said the same thing. He says Freedom is the factors physical, social, psychological which obstruct the unfolding of man's rational, moral, creative potentialities. The function of social relationships should be to secure for individuals as individuals the maximum measure of freedom. Therefore it is obvious that Roy wanted individuals in the society who would be spiritually emancipated to unfold their potentialities. In order to arrive at such a course Roy holds out education as a precondition of such a reorganisation of society as will be conducive to common progress and prosperity without encroaching upon the freedom of the individual. Here we find both Swami Vivekananda and Roy meeting on the same ground. The common ground of interest is the freedom of the individual and the recognition of education as the potent liberating force.

Critics may say that while Swami Vivekananda looked at man as a divine being Roy considered man as a biological entity. But a close analysis suggested that when Roy accepts individual as the sacred trust, he does not rule out the sacred character building activities have

Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy--by one or more or all of these—and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines or dogmas or rituals or books or temples or forms are but secondary details.

Vivekananda

received recognition in the country which also points out to the goal indicated by him. So he expressed in these vigorous words the future lot of the common man,

“Let her arise out of the peasants cottage, grasping the plough. Out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler and the sweeper. Let her spring from grocer’s shop, from bedside even of the fitter seller. Let her emanate from marts and markets. Let her emerge from the grove and forests from hills and mountains”,

Having thus visualised the future of common man in India he made-out his policy domestic as well as foreign. In the field of his domestic policy he asked country men to con-

centrate on the principles of service of man for his uplift. Where as his international policy was directed to arousing fast spirituality in the materialist West. But every where he tried to pierce through the human problems and touched a world wide campaign of bringing man on the platform of common understanding. The Neo-vedanta that he interpreted is the gospel of hope for man and the nature of humanist movement, he ushered in is the unique movement of unity and welfare. Therefore to all intents and purposes he was humanist of the purset water. Said Swami Vivekananda. “He who is once the high and the low, the sinner and the saint, both God and worm, him worship visible, knowledge real omnipresent, break all other idols.



I may make bold to say that the only religion which agrees with, and even goes a little further than modern researches, both on physical and moral lines in the Advaita. ... When atheists and agnostics had destroyed the nation, it was found out that Advaita was the only way to save India from materialism, Materialism prevails in Europe today. The salvation of Europe depends on a rationalistic religion, and Advaita is the only religion that can hold on any intellectual people.

Swami Vivekananda

Voice Of God

Do not be in a hurry, do not go out to imitate anybody else.

This in another great lesson we have to remember ; imitation is not civilization. I may deck myself out in a Raja ? An ass in a lion's skin never makes a lion.

Imitation, cowardly imitation, never makes for progress. It is verily the sign of awful degradation in a man.

Aye, when a man has begun to hate himself then the last blow has come. When a man has begun to be ashamed of his ancestors, the end has come.

Here am I, one of the least of the Hindu race, yet proud of my race, proud of my nation, proud of my ancestors. I am proud that I am a countryman of yours, you the descendants of the sages, you the descendants of the most glorious Rishis the world ever saw. Therefore have faith in yourselves, be proud of your ancestors, instead of being ashamed of them.

And do not imitate ; do not imitate !

Whenever you are under the thumb of others, you lose your own independence. If you are working, even in spiritual things, at the dictation of others, slowly you lose all faculty even of thought.

Bring out through your own exertions what you have, but do not imitate, yet take what is good from others. We have to learn from others.

You put the seed in the ground, and give it plenty of earth, and air, and water to feed upon ; when the seed grows into a plant, and then into a gigantic tree, does it become the earth, does it become the air, does it become the water ? It becomes the mighty plant, the mighty tree, after its own nature, having absorbed everything that was given to it. Let that be your position.

We have indeed many things to learn from others ; yea, that man who refuses to learn is already dead.

Swami Vivekananda

BE AND MAKE

Shall India die ? Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct ; all moral perfection will be extinct ; all sweet-souled sympathy for religion will be extinct ; all ideality will be extinct ; and in its place will reign the duality of lust and luxury as the male and female deities, with money as its priest : fraud, force, and competition its ceremonies ; and the human soul its sacrifice. Such a thing can never be.

India will be raised—not with the power of flesh, but with the power of the spirit ; not with the flag of destruction, but with the flag of peace and love, the garb of the Sannyasin ; not by the power of wealth, but by the power of the begging-bowl. Say not that you are weak. The spirit is omnipotent.

Young men ! your country requires it. The world requires it. Call up the divinity within you, which will enable you to bear hunger and thirst, heat and cold. Sitting in luxurious homes, surrounded with all the comforts of life, and doing out a little amateur religion may be good for other lands but India has a truer instinct. Its intuitively detects the mask. You must give up. Be great. No great work can be done without sacrifice. The Purusha himself sacrificed himself to create this world. Lay down your lives, and make a bridge of human chains over which millions will cross this ocean of life.

First let us be Gods and then help others to be Gods. Be and make. Let this be our motto.

Swami Vivekananda

V I V E K A N A N D A S O C I A L I S T

In a letter to his brother-disciple Swami Vivekananda wrote in 1897 :

“Curtail the expenses on worship to a rupee or two per mensem. The children of the Lord are dying of starvation. Worship with water and Tulsi leaves alone, and let the allowance for His Bhoga (Food offerings) be sent in offering food to the living God who dwells in the persons of the poor—then will his grace descend on everything”. (*Vol. VI/405*)

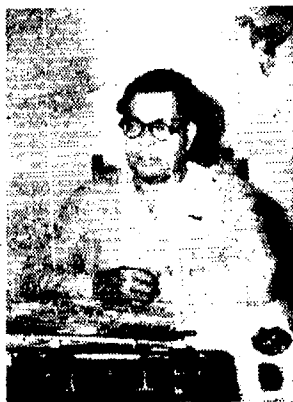
The extract quoted above helps us understand the way the Swami's mind was moving when he resolved to raise the message of India. The Swami was no politician, in fact, he hated mixing with politicians for they place self-interest above service. The only politics Swami Vivekananda was interested in was service of devotion to God coupled with Truth. Nevertheless, the careful reader does not fail to notice that throughout the whole of the Swami's writings there is an undercurrent of love for humanity as a whole, an ardent desire to do away with all kinds of exploitation and determination to raise the masses of India by giving them true education. With this end in view of the Swami expounded his practical philosophy which is called socialism in the absence of a better expression. Said the Swami. “I am a socialist not because I think it is a perfect system but half a loaf is better than no bread. The other systems have been tried and found wanting. Let this one be tried—if for nothing else, for the novelty of the thing. A re-distribution of pain and pleasure is better than always the same persons having pains and pleasures. The sum total of good and evil in the world remains ever the same. The yoke will be lifted from shoulder to shoulder by new systems, that is all” *Vol VI PP 342-44*).

Mass poverty casts him a socialist

It is seen from the extract quoted that socialism was not the only philosophy of life for Swami Vivekananda. At a time when the Indian masses were steeped in ignorance and poverty the most immediate necessity was to raise them, to restore their lost individuality. And with this end in view the Swami preached socialism.

The orthodox Marxian Socialists complain that the socialism of Vivekananda was not

By :
**A. K.
Majumdar**
Principal
Krishnanagar
College,
Krishnanagar
(Nadia)



revolutionary in character, it was rather reformative and didactic. Before reaching a hasty conclusion like this we will do well to ascertain the chief and basic characteristics of the socialistic thought throughout the ages. These are first exposing the fallacies of the existing social and political order. Second a conviction that the unethical character of the existing system has its roots in corrupt institutions rather than in the unchanging nature of man, third a belief in the moral value of the new order and that the ideal is realizable through effort and initiative ; fourth a programme of action which inevitably leads to the goal by changing the heart of human beings or changing the structure of existing institutions or both. Sixth a missionary zeal or revolutionary will to carry out this programme.

Socialism De Plato, De Marx

A casual reading of History shows that the character of socialism changes from one age to another. For instance the socialism of Plato is not the same as that of Marx. In Europe the socialism of the nineteenth century was certainly more scientific than the previous socialism :—emphasis was laid on economic problems rather than law of nature and law of reason. It differed in several respects from Marxian socialism. In the first place, desire for sympathy and better understanding between the classes was its keynote. Emphasis was laid on mutual co-operation rather than class struggle. Secondly, it was closely related to the traditional moral and spiritual values. It is in this context that Vivekananda's socialistic views are to be assessed. Vivekananda's goal was to achieve an ideal social order in which there would be no exploitation of the so called lower class by the higher. This he wanted to achieve by remoulding human nature and changing the existing social institutions. As for the latter, he zealously took up the cause of female education and freedom of women, that of removal of untouchability and introducing a synthesis of technological and religious education western science and Vedantism. Man is not, according to Vivekananda, a mere social-economic apparatus, man is potentially divine. The spiritual, essence of man was, for the time being, forgotten on account of the impact of Western education. Vivekananda called pointed attention to man's spiritual heritage. Said the Swami before the Parliament of Religious in Chicago in the year 1893 :

“Ye are the children of God, the shares of immortal bliss, holy and perfect beings. Ye divinities on earth—sinners ; It is a sin to call a man so, it is a standing libel on human nature. Come up, O lions, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep you are souls immortal, spirits free, blest and eternal, we are not matter, ye are not bodies, matter is your servant, not you the servant of matter...Hindus believe that he (Man) is a spirit. Him the sword cannot pierce—him the fire cannot burn him the water cannot wet. Him the air cannot dry. The Hindu believes that every soul is a circle whose circumference is nowhere, but whose centre is located in the body and that death means the change of this centre from body to body.

The socialism of Swami Vivekananda is based upon the basic identity between man and man. This is not a doctrine based upon ratiocination and intellectual understanding but upon intuitive experience (anubhava). Every human soul is identical with the Universal soul, the Absolute or Brahman. The best proof that the Hindus give about soul and the Absolute is direct experience. The ancient sages proclaimed. I have seen God. Swami Vivekananda followed the same line of approach to soul and God.

Socialism of Swamiji

Communitistic socialism does indeed work forward to the ideal of absolute equality, it appears in practically all periods when masses are found in object poverty and wretchedness, surrounded by affluence. Its ideal has been expressed in the maxim : “From each according to his capacity to each according to his need”. Swami Vivekananda pointed out in unequivocal terms that absolute equality among men can be achieved, not on the economic or social plane, but on the spiritual, it is only when we look upon all human beings as manifestations of the same Universal Spirit that equality can be ensured. It may sound highly metaphysical, nevertheless it is true as this is a conviction based on the unerring insight of seers.

At a time when the Indian National Congress was sinking into insignificance and was almost dying of consumption, Vivekananda roused the nation from its age-long slumber by urging upon each and every Indian to realize God in the nation, in his fellow countrymen

and demanded of his countrymen indomitable courage, unstinted devotion to truth and endless sacrifice to achieve the goal. The Neo-Vedantism of Vivekananda was not divorced from life but rather it was all pervading in character. Said the Swami.

A true prophesy

“For the next fifty years this alone shall be our keynote—this our Great Mother India. Let all other vain Gods disappear for that time from our minds. This is the only God that is awake, Our own race, everywhere his hands, everywhere His feet, everywhere His ears, he covers everything’.

The Swami urged his countrymen to be strong enough so that they could invigorate the whole world. “The soul is not for the weak” says the Mundaka Upanishad. An aspirant can reach the goal which is nothing short of realization of the identity of man and God. And this can be achieved by controlling both inner and outer nature. Mastery of matter. Mastery of life and mastery of mind are the successive stages through which the aspirant has to travel before the goal can be reached.

What precisely is the ideal social order that Swami Vivekananda had in view? In his own words, ‘if it is possible to form a State in which the knowledge of the priest period, the culture

of the military, the distributive spirit of the commercial and the ideal of equality of the last (Sudra period) Compl Works Vol VI P. 343 can all be kept intact, minus their evils, it will be an ideal State”.

In order to achieve the ideal State what is of paramount importance is the spread of education in all stages of life and to all classes of people. Education would awaken the potential divinity of man and make him strong and fearless so that he can withstand the onslaughts of life and make life worth living. As the Swami put it: “go from village to village, from one portion of the country to another, and preach this message of fearlessness to all, from the Brahman to the Chandala. Tell each and all that infinite power resides within them, that they are sharers of immortal bliss. Thus rouse up the rajas within them—make them fit for the struggle for existence, and then speak to them about salvation. First make the people of the country stand on their own legs by rousing their inner power, first let them learn to have good food and clothes and plenty of enjoyment—then tell them how to be free from this bondage of enjoyment”.

Education the level

The Swami’s exhortation to the youth of India goes unheeded. Our educational system today does not provide adequate room for reli-

No. country has ever produced such a many-sided character harmoniously combined in one form as we have seen in the late Swami Vivekananda. ... Poverty, self-abnegation, self-renunciation, and disinterested love for humanity were the ornaments of this exemplary character. ... I had the honour of living with this great Swami in India, in India, in England and in this country (U.S.A.) I lived and travelled with this great spiritual brother of mine, saw him day after day and night after night and watched his character for nearly twenty years, and I stand here to assure you that I have not found another like him in these three continents, and that none can take the place of this wonderful personage. As a man, his character was pure and spotless; as a philosopher, he was the greatest of all Eastern and Western philosophers. In him I found the ideal of *karm-yoga*, *bhakti-yoga*, *raja-yoga* and *jnana-yoga*; he was like the living example of Vedanta in all its different branches. ...

Many have asked me why so great and good a man must die. I have said: Why should he not die? His task was finished. One ordinary human body was not enough, nor twenty, nor a hundred for such tremendous energy. Such an intense intellect and spirituality would soon dissolve the granite foundation stones.

Vivekananda is not dead, he is with us now and for ever. He is my comfort and solace. He is the Senior Brother to the whole world.

Swami Abhedananda

gious education which alone fosters fearlessness. The diploma—centred education has been eating into the vitals of our society and producing truncated human beings. Education, therefore, did not mean for the Swami acquisition of information contained in books. Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man and religion is the core of education. Education should not be the monopoly of the intelligentia, it should be imparted to the masses without any exception.

Poverty, priestcraft and social tyranny are responsible for the downfall of India as a nation. The Swami, therefore, endeavoured to raise the masses of India, to restore their lost individuality without destroying their religion. And this ideal can be best achieved through education. Said the Swami "Education, education alone ! Travelling through many cities of Europe and observing in them the comforts and education of even the poor people, there was brought to my mind the state of our own poor people and I used to shed tears. what made the difference ? Education was the answer I got. Through education, faith in one's own self, and through faith in one's self the interest Brahman is waking up in them while the Brahman in use is gradually becoming dormant".

Exploitation by the Upper

The international trade between India and the outside world flourished on account of the labour of millions of silent toilers who come from the so called low caste. It is a pity that those who are contributing to the wealth of India have been left uncared for by those who have exploited their labour and are becoming richer day by day at their cost. The Swami was fully sensible of the tragic effects of exploi-

tation and he put removal of exploitation in the fore front of his practical programme of action. "I do not believe in a God who cannot give me bread here, giving me eternal bliss in heaven". Said the Swami.

The vision of resurgent India was described in the following words by the Swami.

"You (the upper class) merge your selves in the void and disappear, and let New India arise in your place. Let her arise out of the peasants, cottage, grasping the plough. Out of the huts of the fishermen, the cobbler and the sweeper. Let her spring from the grocers shop, from beside the oven of the fritter-seller. Let her emanate from the factory, from marts and from markets. Let her emerge from the groves and forests, from hills and mountains—these common people have suffered appression for thousands of years—suffered it without murmur and as a result have got wonderful fortitude".

Let us not think for a moment that the kind of socialism the Swami had in view would be imposed by what is called 'dictatorship' of the proletariat for, the Swami was against regimented society. "Liberty to the first condition of growth", said the Swami. He also reminded the social reformers that "without mutual co-operation we can never make ourselves strong" Again, "all that we want is no privilege for any one but equal chances for all". The ideal that the Swami envisaged was a synthesis of individualism and socialism unity and variety, freedom and organisation. Material prosperity and spiritual enlightenment. He certainly wanted a classless society to evolve but the end was to be achieved through love, sympathy mutual aid and proper education and never through hatred between one class and another nor through armed revolution.

As for Swamiji, he is our crest-jewel. We do not care a fig even to lay down our lives for his sake. We shall feel thankful if we can you ever understand what Swamiji is ? ... Swamiji was a seer with a distant vision. He knew what would happen in the future, and therefore formulated these rules for the guidance of the Order, The more we discuss his words and try to practise them in life, the better for us.

Swami Shivananda

V I V E K A N A N D A E D U C A T I O N I S T

The consensus of opinion of all the savants of the West and the sages of the East holds that Swami Vivekananda is the most wonderful phenomenon in the history of the human race. He was undoubtedly a man of multiple personality. In his make-up one could see the traces of the brain of Shankara, the heart of Buddha, the love of Sree Chaitanya, the spiritual fire of Guru Nanak, the mildness of Christ and the apostolic eloquence of St. Paul,—all harmoniously combined.

With all the multifarious aspects of his life Swami Vivekananda appears to one and all as a great scholar, vastly learned in the lore of the East and the West, a great philosopher and eloquent orator. Above all, he was an educationist of the top-most rank. His ideas of education are appreciated and admired by all the educationists of this world not only of his age but also of today.

What was education to him

Education, with Swami Vivekananda, is not an amount of information that is thrust into the brains of the boys and girls, but education, with him, means, "the manifestation of perfection already in man". He believed in the amazing utterances of the Vedas where they announce at the top of their voice the eternal verity of the soul. They declare that the soul is potentially divine and perfect. Perfection and divinity are the birthright of every soul. Education, therefore, according to the great Swami, is the means or the ways of attainment of the apex of perfection,

While commenting on the existing education of his days he remarks that the first thing which a boy, or a girl, learns after going to school is that his father is a fool ; the second thing that he learns is that his grandfather is a lunatic ; and the third thing that a young learner gathers from the school is that his teacher is a hypocrite ; and the fourth thing that he learns is that his religion is nothing. Within sixteen years, therefore, every boy or girl becomes a mass of negation. "A negative education or any training that is based on negation is worse than death". An education is not an education at all if it does not contribute to the making up of a true man—the building up of his character. Real education shapes the angularities of the learned and embellishes his inner and outer character. True education removes

By :
**Swami
Sambuddha
Vivekananda**
Genl. Secy.
Vivekananda
Centenary
Celebration
Committee
Calcutta.



all the flaws and defects of one's nature and makes him a good citizen of the world. It broadens the outlook of a man, widens his heart and helps him to outgrow all the sectional limits. To him all distinctions and differences disappear and he prepares himself to face all the problems of human life by his inner strength from a higher stand point.

The plastic period of human life is boyhood. It is in this period that the mind of a boy remains receptive. All that he happens to come across leaves an indelible impression upon his mind and it helps him in making up the inner man. It is education that teaches one to harmonise the inner man with the outer one. Where there is a harmony between the two a wonderful development takes place.

Sound mind must with sound body

Swami Vivekananda was a worshipper of strength all through his life. He wanted the boys of his country to be strong in every way. He believed in all-round development. A boy, according to him, should not only be physically strong, intellectually keen and morally great, but also spiritually invincible. He was thoroughly disappointed in the type of modern boys and would often deplore saying 'what would these namby-pamby boys, with no strength in the body, no intellect in the brain and no courage in the heart, do'. He wanted young men with muscles of iron, nerves of steel and above all, with a will that makes one determined to meet death face to face going down, if necessary, to the deepest depth of the Pacific. He wanted boys of the type of Nachiketa, the hero of Kathopanishad, who, according to Vivekananda, was really a boy of ideal education. Nachiketa was a boy full of fire, courage and spirit which remained ever undaunted and unruffled even when he met the King of Death face to face in his own palace. He was a boy of burning sacrifice, to whom nothing appeared to be of any value and nothing is too great to be sacrificed for the attainment of the highest end of human life. "Self sacrifice and not self-assertion is the highest law of this universe", says Vivekananda.

Gifts of food and clothes to the needy people are of little value as they do not last long and the benefit the people reap out of them is only temporary. But the great Swami maintains that the gift of education is far superior to material gifts. For, if one happens to be really educated, he enjoys the benefit of education all through his life.

Man making & bread winning education

There are two kinds of education. The education that one receives at schools and colleges of the modern age,—in arts, in science or in philosophy—is more or less a bread-winning education. So far as the making of a man is concerned, school and college education of the modern age is of little value. Man-making education is absolutely different from bread-winning education. Of course, in these days of economic atrophy none can deny the demand of such education as is available in schools and colleges of the modern age. It is really a necessity for keeping the body and the soul together. But one has to save the body to develop the soul. Bread-winning education hardly helps a man in self-analysis and far less in self-fulfilment. Without self-development, self-fulfilment,—the be all and end all of human life,—is a chimera. To be a literate is one thing, but to be an ideal citizen of the world is quite another

Character building education

Man-making education, therefore, has very little concern with literacy. Even the most illiterate man, the history of the human race tells us, can be the greatest man that humanity can claim to have ever produced. Swami Vivekananda therefore maintains that we need today man-making and character-building education. The education that teaches a man to analyse his own self through and through, to get rid of all evils of inner life, shape all the angularities to build himself up a new man, a man of all-round development that leads one to self-realisation or self-fulfilment—the summum bonum of human life, is the education that we need today. It is self-analysis that alone can contribute to self-development and self-development which, when expanded consummates in self-fulfilment.

Realising the real weight and importance of man-making education, the great Swami did not hesitate to make a passionate appeal to the youths of India to come forward with their quota of contribution to the service and upliftment of the illiterate masses of India and give them a lift from where they had been living. Elevation of the illiterate masses and the down-trodden by man-making and character-building education was the motto of Swami Vivekananda's life. "No amount of politics," he says, "would be of any avail until the masses in India are once more well educated, well fed and well cared for". "Through education faith in one's self and through faith in one's own self—the inherent Brahman wakes up in them".



Ramakrishna Math, Bhuvneshwar

Vivekananda's Faith In Modern Youth Of India

A modern youth, the glammers of scientific achievements and advance technology put before his eyes, may naturally ask what Swami Vivekananda, a monk that he was did for the betterment of our country. A young mind is bewildered to conceive of the pursuits of this space age and atomic age and thus comes to the conclusion that material prosperity is the be all and end all of life, neglecting altogether the spiritual values on which the traditional culture of our motherland is based.

Material prosperity is no doubt mostly needed in all countries under the sun but if we forget the true culture that keeps the morale of the people high, we will surely move adrift from the moorings of our ancient ideas and ideals which are the hed-rocks of Indian civilisation. Mathew Arnold's oft-quoted poem may be cited where he says—

“The East bowed low before the blast
In patient, deep disdain ;
She let the legions thunder past
And plunged in thought again.”

By Swami Suparananda

Ramakrishna Math Bhuvneshwar (Orissa)

meaning India, which is a part of the East found solace and comfort in the thought of something higher or spiritual which she adored and never gave honour or superiority to men of power and possessors of wealth in her days of degradation. When there was depression of spirit, the man of realisation would proclaim to the top of his voice—

“Vedhahametat Purusham Mahantam
Adityabarnam Tamasaha Parastat.”

“I have known this great Purusha who is effulgent as the Sun and who is beyond darkness.” The man of power or a possessor of wealth, however, take these people as impractical in consideration of worldly matters, but if we think deep we will find that they are intensely practical in solving the problems of our lives which are more important and which need immediate solution to conduct day-to-day affairs in every walk of

life. A man hankers after name, fame, wealth etc., but like a vanishing panorama everything passes away with the march of time. The only eternal Being is the Purusha or Atman or Brahman who is Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute.

Swami Vivekananda as an itinerant monk for long five years travelled throughout the length and breadth of India and found in his own eyes the appalling ignorance, dire poverty and lack of faith in their own religion and customs among the masses. The weak and the miserable are living under the heels of the privileged or so-called educated people and thus have forgotten that they are "Men". Being a true disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, the saint of Dakshineswar, near Calcutta, who was the living embodiment of Vedanta and who saw the manifestation of the Divine in every living Being, nay in every blade of grass, how can Swamiji keep quiet? Had not Sri Ramakrishna, the Great, said "Verily all this is Brahman!" To rouse up that spirit and consciousness, he remarked "Before flooding India with socialistic or political ideas, first deluge the land with spiritual ideas." The future of mother India flashed before his inward eyes and he said "Up, up, the long night is passing, the day is approaching the wave have risen, nothing will be able to resist its tidal fury. Believe, believe, the decree has gone forth, the Lord has gone forth—India must rise, the masses and the poor are to be made happy. Rejoice! The flood of spirituality has risen. I see it is rolling over the land resistless, boundless, all-absorbing."

His Faith in Youngmen

He had great faith on our youngsters who are the builders of a glorious India in all its aspects and so he specially laid stress in the making of a "Man" which he thought to be more valuable than all other things in the earth. He wanted that our youngmen should have muscles of iron and nerves of steel wherein shall reside an indomitable heart that knows no submission to weakness and lethargy. He also wanted that our youngmen should

develop chastity and 'Shraddha' which are the prime factors for attaining perfection in life and thus he advocated such education as would give life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas. He said "If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library." The ass carrying its load of sandal would know only the weight and not the value of sandal wood." If education is identical with information, the libraries are the greatest sages in the world, and encyclopaedias are the Rishis." He emphasized that western science coupled with Vedanta, Brahmacharya being the guiding motto and also "Shraddha" and faith in one's self will surely enrich the qualities of the youngsters of our motherland with regard to the build-up of their physical, moral and ethical needs.

Unity in Diversity

After coming back from the West Swamiji translated into action what he preached and taught and thus founded the well-known Ramakrishna Math and Mission with the twin ideal. 'Atmano Mokshartham Jagadhitaya cha' i. e., for one's own liberation and welfare of the world. His idea behind social work was not so as is generally understood by the term but something different from ordinary stand point. His motto was 'Work is Worship'. When the work is done in a spirit of worship of the Lord, the out-look is changed completely and service instead of help takes the form. The work so done becomes selfless and it gradually purifies the mind which is the sine qua non of attaining perfection in life. In line with the ancient Rishis of India he realised that oneness or unity in the diversities of the world and so he gave a clarion call to the people particularly to the younger generation to round the banner of that ideal of work.

During this centenary year which heralds the birth of Swamiji, the great patriot, saint and seer, let our young friends recall to their minds his life-giving and soul-stirring messages which were not for the past but are also for the present as well as for ages to come.

As well known, it was first at the celebrated Parliament of Religion, held in Chicago in 1893 that Swami Vivekananda voiced in the West the eternal enchanting, enlivening message of India's—a message at once of good cheer and sound hope, a message at once ever old and ever new, a message at once sweet and sublime—a message, in short, of spiritualism, of the divinity of the soul, of its consequent infinite might and majesty, inconceivable glory and grandeur, immeasurable purity and perfection incomparable beauty and love and dedicated service, loving, revering and serving all as God Himself.

Now, very briefly, what is the quintessence of Swamiji's message for the world? What comes out of his voluminous works? Only one fact—once eternal, central, incontrovertible fact, viz, that Truth is not the monopoly of any one country, any one nation, any one church in the world. On the contrary, all the so-called different systems of Religion of the world are really at bottom one. How? Only because they all unanimously teach and preach a central doctrine, viz. that of spiritualism. What is spiritualism? It is, in the most liberal sense, a doctrine of the spirit, of the soul, of the self, or the Atman. What is the spirit, the Soul, the Self, or the 'Atman'? of course, there are different theories. But the Central Concept is that the spirit, the Soul, the Self, or, the 'Atman' is associated with a material body, seemingly affected by a material world. Yet is itself not material, but something, else, something more, something over and above, something beyond.

Soul is Divine

That is, the Soul is divine in nature, divine in attributes, divine in powers, divine in activities, divine in aims, divine in strivings, divine in destiny. Who does not admit this? The monists, the monotheists, the agnostics, the atheists—all, all without distinction. For, even to an agnostic or an atheist, the Soul is something peculiar, something unique, something wonderful, something unparalleled. And that is nothing but its divinity.

Here, Divinity, does not necessarily mean the nature and essence of a Divine Being, like God. It simply means the eternity, purity, non-materiality of the Soul. And, according to all systems of Religion, the Soul is so. What a superb conception from the theoretical standpoint.

VIVEKANANDAISM

revolves round

**Sarvatma-vada
Sarva-seva-vada**

By :

Dr. Roma Chaudhuri, M.A., Ph.D.

Principal

**West Bengal Govt. Lady Brabourne
College, Calcutta**

Service is God

Similarly, from the practical standpoint, the fundamental concepts of "Priti and Seva". Love and service find a central place in all systems of Religion, worth the name. Do you believe in God? Then, love, rever, serve and worship Man as God Himself. Do you not? then, too love, rever, serve and worship Man as Man, as a real Man, as pure and perfect, as immortal and non-material, as blissful and beautiful, as the repository of all qualities, all powers, all goodness, without fail.

Truth is one

Names indeed, are many many more than our quarrels. But how very unnecessary, how very foolish, how very wrong. For Truth is always one. It may be reflected in different ways in different minds, it may be positively distorted through malice, it may be negatively distorted through malice, it may be negatively mis-interpreted through ignorance. But Truth is one, and unchange-able. Our selfish distortions, or follish mis-interpretation cannot make it other-wise. This is the one conviction that grows in us all from our studies of comparative Religion. And, let this conviction grow, let this conviction spread ;

Otherwise, what hope is there for a dying world? It may sound strange to call this modern progressive proud world of ours, 'dying'. But is it not dying in its own blindness, in its own narrowness, in its own selfishness? And, will it not be soon dead to make good the prophecy of Swamiji—

"The whole European Civilisation will crumble to pieces, in the next fifty years, if there is no spiritual foundation...Europe, the centre of the manifestation of material energy, will crumble into dust within fifty years if she is not mindful to change her position., to shift her ground and make spirituality the basis of her life". (III. 59).

But let us not be pessimistic. Let us place Truth in own heads, Love in our hearts, Virtue in our hands, Courage in our feet, and know all to be the same, Love all as our nearest and dearest ones, serve all virtuously, and proceed towards the goal couragously. in firm. unfaltering steps, what more is needed?

"If the Parliament of Religion has shown

anything to the world, it is this : It has proved to the world that holiness, purity, charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has men and woman of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own Religion and the destruction of all others, I pity him from the bottom of my any heart and point out to him that upon the banner of every Religion will so be written, in spite of their resistance. Help and not fight Assimilation and not Destruction, Peace and Harmony and not Dissension". (Final address at the Parliament of Religion Chicago, September, 27, 1893).

What an absolutely inspiring message ;

The two doctrines combined

Thus, theoretically, Swamiji's message is one of '*Sarvatma-Vada*', practically, it is one of the '*Sarva-Seva-Vada*'. That is, theoretically, it means the superb doctrine that everything is the '*Atman*' Brahman or the Supreme Being. If that be so then every man, every person, everybeing. If that, be so, then every man, every person, is Brahman, and has to be practically loved and served as such.

The practical side necessarily and naturally follows from the theroretical one. But Advaita or Monistic Vedantist, though Vehemently supporting the first, do not pay any heed to the second. So, it was left to the later Vaisnava philosophers, who were by no means, monists, to develop, cultivate and puralise the same fully. It was Swamiji, who for the first time, combined gloriously this Advaita doctrine of Oneness the soul of Brahman, with the Vaisnava doctrine of service of all. Herein lies Swamiji's uniqueness. and herein his exhilarating message of Spiritualistic Humanism, echoed thunderingly all throughout his fiery speeches and writings :—

"Where should you go to seek for God? Are not all the poor, the miserable, the weak Gods? Why not worship them first? Why go to dig a well on the shores of the ganges?" (V.39)

"Look upon everyman, Women, and every-one as God. You cannot help any one, you can only serve.....Do it only as a worship". (III.246)

"The poor, the down-trodden, the ignorant let these be your God". (VI.287).

Swami Vivekananda was an advocate of *advaita-Vedanta* ; he was also a devoted disciple of Shri Ramakrishna who was a worshipper of Mother Kali. Although the philosophy of Vivekananda is essentially non-dualistic he has pleaded for devotion and divine worship by describing the Impersonal Supreme reality as God. The series of lectures on *Bhakti*, which Swamiji has delivered from time to time shows that he never thought ill of any cult based on the fundamental duality between God and the individual soul. Like Shankara he, too, was of the opinion that all forms of divine worship could be harmonised with *advaita-vedanta* without doing any harm to its non-dualistic spirit.

Love Is God



In all his lectures, Vivekananda has described God as "love" and also as the Great attractive power that lies at the very root of this universe. Love, again, has been described by

Anima Sen Gupta, M.A., Ph.D.

Reader in Philosophy, Patna University.

him as *Sadhana* (Krishna is God and Radha is mad with love for Him). That is to say that in his opinion, God is Love and can be realised through Love. Ordinarily, these statements of Swamiji raise certain questions in our critical minds. Is Love one with the great attractive force which is governing this world of ours ? or is it the nectar that is constantly flowing down currents from the bosom of that Great power ? Who is the Great one that possesses this power ? How can love be both the end and the means for gaining the end ? One may ask : are not these statements of Swamiji regarding the nature of God confusing and contradictory ?

Now, if we go deep into the spirit of his theistic comments, we find that these contradictions are only apparent and not real. All these statements can be knitted together in a

"None can resist her (India) any more, never is she going to sleep any more, no outward powers can hold her back any more; for the infinite giant is rising to her feet.

—Swami Vivekananda

logical manner to build up the theistic philosophy of Swami Vivekananda. Swamiji realised the necessity of harmonising the warm yearnings of the human heart with the cold criticisms of Reason. So, he has not only advocated the existence of *saccidananda* as the ultimate category, but has also described the Supreme being as Love. It is only when God is regarded as Love that man can find full satisfaction of his emotional nature by seeking shelter in Him. Love is what a human heart always craves for. If love does not find any place in a religious system, then that system ceases to be religious in the true sense of the term. In the Gita, Lord Krishna says that he is the knowledge of the knowers. *Jnanam jnanavata maham*) Swamiji says that God is the very love of the lovers. Love is the noblest and finest flowering of the emotional life of a person and as such it is to be regarded as the manifestation of the immortal juice in the very being of a finite personality. Just as God is both knowledge and attainable through knowledge, in the same manner He is both Love and attainable through Love.

Love As Means

It is because God is Love and is present in all beings and things of the world as their essence and excellence that love also serves as the principal means for attaining communion with God. Love in the form of Divinity constitutes the innermost core of an individual soul. In the words of Katha Upanisad, it is "*Gudam anupravistam*". Though it is present in the soul, yet due to ignorance and impurities of this worldly-life, this divinity remains concealed and unrealised. The form in which Love ordinarily finds expression in worldly-life is tainted and made narrow by the soiling touch of egoism and selfish individuality. The result is that we cannot love anybody disinterestedly (i.e. for love's sake only). Hence, love in worldly life appears in the forms of selfishness, lust, greed etc and prevents us from attaining the highest ideal of life. (Even this selfishness is but a manifestation of the same love). If Love is to

be purified, then constant practice of virtues in the forms of charity with sympathy, compassion, forgiveness, humility, love etc becomes absolutely necessary for a devoted soul. All these virtues are nothing but expressions of Love in different forms. Hence, to practise these virtues in all types of social relation is equivalent to adopting love as a means to God-realisation purity and nobleness of heart are to be valued by man because these are the guiding stars to lead him to his final goal : such purity cannot be attained unless the heart of man is flooded with Love by constant culture of it in a disinterested manner in all walks of his worldly life. The conception of God as Love can remain fixed in the mind of the devotee only through its ceaseless display in all worldly affairs. The whole of the world constitutes a single family of which God is the Father. So, all members should be connected together by the ties of friendship and love. It is only by loving the finite in a disinterested manner (considering it as a manifestation of God) that the *mumukshu* can become mad with love and longing for God. It would, therefore appear that there is no contradiction if one says that God is Love and is also attainable through love. It is the nature of love to change a man into that which he loves. If a man loves the Great Love, he himself changes into that form and becomes one with the Life Divine. In fact, the love that we display in our day-to-day dealings is nothing but an expression of that Great Love which remains covered by the dust of impurities issuing forth from various *antahkaranika vrttis*.

God is Both Love and the Great Attractive Power of the Universe

There is also no inconsistency in describing God both as Love and as the great attractive power of the Universe. If God as Love is the cause of the whole universe, then it is only logical that He should also be regarded as the great attractive power of the world. That which is Love, naturally draws everything towards it. Moreover, *jagatkaranata* itself is power or *sakti* and hence

~~~~~  
 Losing faith in one's self means losing faith in God. Do you believe in that Infinite, good Providence working in, and through you ?  
 If you believe that this Omnipresent One, the Antaryamam, is present in every atom, is through Ota-Protas, as the Sanskrit word goes, penetrating your body, mind and soul, how can you lose heart ? — Swami Vivekananda  
 ~~~~~


God as Love and as the root cause of the universe is bound to be an attractive power behind and beyond this world of created existence. He is the force which regulates the courses of the sun and the moon. He is the reality that constitutes the very being of all created things of the universe and it is He who is expressing Himself in the world in the forms of various natural laws. "Unattached yet shining in everything is love, the motive power of the universe without which the universe would fall to pieces in a moment, and this love is God." The Highest Being is described in the Brhad Upanisad as fearless (*abhaya* *va* *janaka praptosi*). It is only Love that is fearless and anybody who tastes love becomes fearless. The mother does not hesitate to stand face to face with death when she realises that by doing so she can save the life of her dear son. A devoted wife is not afraid of risking her own precious life for the sake of her beloved husband. The Ultimate Reality as described in the Upanisada is *abhih* and Love too is *abhih*. We find that Swamiji has not said anything against Vedanta teachings by describing the Highest Being as Love. Since this Great Love is the source of everything it is also the source of all forms of finite love which we enjoy in and through our worldly relations. Infinite love produces finite love just as Infinite knowledge produces finite phenomenal knowledge. Hence, God is both Love and a fountain of Love from which streams of sympathy, affection, compassion etc are flowing downwards to feed the hearts of human beings. There is no vagueness in describing God both as Love and as the possessor of Love as the *advaita-vedanta* recognises *tadatmya* and not *bheda* between power and the possessor of power.

Considering from all points of view, we can say that the statements of Vivekananda regarding the nature of God signify only the truth that God is Love.

In *Pancadasi*, God has been described as *anandamaya* love and it has been stated that being bliss, God is also the subject of love (Yah paramanandarupo na bhavati sa niratisaya premavisaya nabhavati). In fact the two statements: "God is bliss" and "God is Love" convey the same truth. Although, ordinarily we think that love issues forth from *Ananda* as an effect, still from the philosophical point of view, these two terms can be used to signify the same

truth. It is *Ananda* that finds expression in and through love. Bliss, indeed, is the inner aspect and Love is the outer expression of the Supreme being. God dwells in the heart of man as bliss and when this bliss is expressed in the external world, it assumes the form of love and devotion. Hence, there is no cause-effect relationship between bliss and love.

God as love and practical advaita

This conception of God as Love is the key note of Swami Vivekananda's practical *advaita*. Although Swamiji is a staunch follower of *advaita-vedanta*, still the view of the *advaitins* that knowledge and action cannot meet together has not found favour with him. On the otherhand, Swamiji has taught us that action understood in its proper spirit can be synthesised effectively with knowledge. The secret of *karmayoga* is nothing but spiritualisation of service by cultivating the attitude of selfless love and devotion to Life Divine. The pursuit of *karmayoga* lies in making actions free of all selfish interests and also in shifting the motive from narrow egoism to the finite love and bliss that supports the whole world. The Great Love is manifesting itself in and through this colourful multiplicity which we call "world". It is, therefore, the duty of a devotee to love and adore this finitized expression of the Infinite and also to serve God by serving His innumerable children. He should see God in every creature and all his activities should take the form of an offering of Pure Love to God without selfish motive. He loves God because he cannot help loving God who Himself is Love: he serves God by serving the whole of His creation in a disinterested manner because his love must an outlet in service. In the sphere of religion *upasaya* and *upasaka* are mutually drawn to each other by intrinsic excellences and not by desire to secure any selfish end. Giving up of the sense of egohood (which constitutes the real bondage of the soul) is easily achieved only in the sphere of Pure Love. Mother can easily forget all personal comforts and gains for the sake of her children. It is also easy for man to love that being who himself is a fountain of love. True service is possible only through love and true service also constitutes the test of pure love. When action is performed in the attitude of devotion and selfless love for the whole universe, it assumes the form of spiritual *Sadhana* which is wholly beneficial to the highest goal of human life. It is

only through selfless love that one can feel his ideatity with the whole of creation and can easily engage himself in such philanthropic works which are sure to bring good to mankind. Swamiji has said that selfish man is the most miserable creature in this world, One who is selfless is happy. He feels his identity with the whole universe and God dwells in the heart of such a true lover. A man is always eager to give up everything for a person whom he loves and he and his loved one are not two but one. The narrow individuality which divides man from man is not his real being. The true being of man is the divinity that resides in him as his permansnt support. This divinity is expressing itself through all sights and sounds of the universe. Hence, nobody is a stranger : all are members of One Divine Family. Swamiji has said. "The perfect man, sees nothing but God". "He expands into one mass of universal love, infinite love—the love that is God".

him, ascription of personality to One Impersonal Reality and devotion to such a personal God takes place in the lowest stage of spiritual sadhana when God, Nature and Soul are regarded as essentially distinct and different.

"We have seen that there is the eternal God and there is eternal Nature and there is also an infinite number of eternal souls. This is the first stage in religion, it is called dualism..... when man looks at Nature, he is the subject and Nature is the object...When he looks at God, he sees God as the subject and himself as the object."

Next stage, according to Swamiji, is the stage of *visistadvaita* when man feels that he is a spark of that Great fire and that the whole universe is a manifestation of God Himself. "We are little particles floating in one mass and that mass is God. We are individuals but one in God. We are all in him. We are all parts of him and therefore we are one. And

Keeping aloof from the community of nations is the only cause for the downfall of India. Since the English came, they have been forcing you back into communion with other nations, and you are visibly rising again. Everyone that comes out of the country confers a benefit on the whole nation ; for it is by doing that alone that your horizon will expand. And as women cannot avail themselves of this advantage, they have made almost no progress in India. There is no station of rest; either you progress upwards or you go back and die out. The only sign of life is going outward and forward and expansion. Contraction is death. Why should you do good to others? Because that is the only condition of life ; thereby you expand beyond your little self ; you live and grow. All narrowness, all contraction, all selfishness is simply slow suicide, and when a nation commits the fatal mistake of contracting itself and of thus cutting off all expansion and life, it must die. Women similarly must go forward or become idiots and soulless tools in the hands of their tyrannical lords. The children are the result of the combination of the tyrant and the idiot, and they are *slaves*. And this is the whole history of modern India. Oh, who would break this horrible crystallization of death ? Lord help us !

Swami Vivekananda

Summing up

Truly speaking, God of Vivekananda's philosophy is no other than the Impersonal Brahman that has been described as *saccidananda* in the philosophy of the advaita school. Swamiji has said, "One infinite soul is manifesting itself in multiple forms through multiple mirrors. This infinite soul constituting the background of the universe is no other than God." Like Samkara, Vivekananda, too, has not accepted devotion to *Saguna Brahman* as a direct means to liberation. According to

yet between man and man, man and God, there is a strict individuality, separate and yet not separate."

The Highest stage is the *advaita* stage when one realises that the Infinite eternal reality cannot really be made finite. It is always infinite and the finite forms are nothing but the different reflections of that One Impersonal Being in different fictitious *buddhis*. This being may be called God even in the impersonal form simply because of the fact that it constitutes foundational principle of the universe. This

Infinite is, however, not God in the sense of a personal being that remains essentially distinct and different from the individual soul.

The salient feature of Swamiji's theistic teaching is that he has lucidly shown how a man can worship God even in the *Advaita* stage—a point that has not been dealt with clearly and consistently in the philosophy of Samkara. According to Swamiji, worship of God in the *advaita* stage means simply devotion to and love for *Saccidananda* Brahman that constitutes one's own real self. Even though there is *Upasya* is no other than his own self. To worship one's own self is very natural to human beings. Even in the stage of bondage, an individual thinks only of the good of his own self and performs various actions only with a view to satisfying his own self. In other words, a man, engrossed in worldly enjoyments, worships nothing but his own self. According to Swamiji, in the highest stage of realisation also, man worships

scope for *premalaksana bhakti* which has become a discouraging aspect of *advaita-vedanta* according to some critics. Swamiji has solved this difficulty by describing *saccidananda* as love—a conception which is very dear to the loving heart of a devotee. Man is essentially a unity of intellect, emotion and conation and it is only through the satisfaction of these three aspects of his nature that he can be fully satisfied. Intellect awakens in him an intense desire for the knowledge of the ultimate uniting principle, whereas emotion inspires him to cling to some such being from whom he will be able to receive love. Conation again seeks its different forms of enterprise. By defining the highest being as impersonal absolute and also as love and by synthesising *advaita* knowledge with *niskama karma*, Swamiji has brought about a happy reconciliation between knowledge, action and devotion. Of course, *Pancadasi* has given a high place to love by describing Brahman as the object of love. (*Pritivisayatvat anandasvar-*

The history of the world is our witness. Nation has arisen and based its greatness upon materialism, declaring man was all matter. Aye, in Western language, a man gives up the ghost, but in our language a man gives up his body. The western man is a body first, and then he has a soul; with us a man is a soul and spirit, and he has body. Therein lies a world of difference.

All such civilizations, therefore, as have been based upon such sound foundations as material comfort and all that, have disappeared one after the other, after short lives from the face of the world; but the civilization of India and the other nations that have stood at India's feet to listen and learn, namely, Japan and China, live even to the present day, and there are signs even.

Their lives are like that of the Phoenix, a thousand times destroyed, but ready to spring up again more glorious.

But a materialistic civilization once dashed down, never can come up again; that building once thrown down is broken into pieces once for all. Therefore having patience and wait, the future is in store for us.

Swami Vivekananda

nothing but his own self: but the concept of self is different in these two stages. In worldly stage, the self that is worshipped is narrow, impure and false. whereas in the stage of liberation, one worships one's own true self which is both *Bhuma* and *ananda*. Swamiji thus has given reply to the age-old criticism against *advaita-vedanta* that by falsifying God, *advaita* has done away with the necessity of worship in the stage of *tattva-jnana*. Moreover, the *vaisnava* religion describes *Bhakti* as a form of love for God who himself is a fountain of love, whereas *advaita* does not provide any such

upata). Even then *Pancadasi* has not described *saccidananda* as Love. If we follow the teachings of *Pancadasi* closely and carefully, we find that according to this *advaita* text, love refers to that *vr̥tti* only which has bliss for its object. So, here love is only a means to the realisation of bliss but it is not bliss itself. If love is only a *vr̥tti* having *ananda* as its object, then in the highest stage of liberation, it will naturally find no place due to the destruction of all *vr̥ttis*. Such a state, too, is not wholly pleasing to God-intoxicated soul who seeks nothing but divine love.

The writings of Swami Vivekananda reveal that he has not accepted love simply as a *vr̥tti* having its object in the form of bliss on the otherhand, it is the *vr̥ttavacchinna caitanya* that has actually been admitted as Love by him. In fact, it is consciousness that is primary: whereas *vr̥tti* is only secondary. If this consciousness and not the *vr̥tti* is regarded as love, then this love can exist even in the highest stage as *saccidananda Brahman* and so Brahman itself can be legitimately described as Love.

The greatness of Vivekananda lies in the fact that he has interpreted the ascetic *advaita vada* of Samkara in such a charming manner that it has become saturated through with love. It has thus become a source of inspiration for those who wish to take shelter in Love and Love only.

(Specially written for publication in the *Vivekananda Centenary Souvenir*, New Delhi.)



For I must tell you frankly that the very foundations of Western civilization have been shaken to their base.

The mightiest buildings, if built upon the loose sand foundations of materialism, must come to grief one day, must totter to their destruction, some day.

The Present From The 'Master' And The 'Disciple'

By : B. Malik, Vice Chancellor, Calcutta University



We have been celebrating the last few years one birth centenary after another of Indians who have left an indelible mark on the present day life and culture and have earned for themselves a permanent place in our history.

One would wonder how it happened that at a time when we were under foreign domination, when our religion, culture, mode of life were all derided and looked down upon by western critics, giants appeared almost in every walk of life. Religion, arts, science, music, poetry etc. and other phases of human activity to which importance could be attached were all revived and there was tremendous awakening all round.

The conclusion is inevitable that it was the violent impact of the West on our more or less somnolent life that produced the reaction. In Bengal where the impact was probably most violent, the reaction was also equally powerful.

It is well known and it is supported by Lord Krishna's sayings in the Gita that when-

ever need arises saviours are born to guide humanity and show the right path. It may be that a time had come when it was necessary to have a personage of the stature of Ram Krishna Paramhansa Deb to re-establish the preachings of the ancient Hindu Scriptures.

It is remarkable and may be that it was deliberately so planned that a man who was practically illiterate should have attained such spiritual heights that some of the most westernised and sophisticated, some of the most learned men in the Scriptures, ancient and modern, when they came in contact with him recognised him as a man of God, recognised his superiority and bowed down to him.

His catholicity, his spirituality, his knowledge, his experiences, his teachings were such that round him gathered the intelligentsia of the then Bengal, who had been groping for light and guidance.

One of the most remarkable young men who came into touch with him at this time was a University student modern in his outlook, brought up under the shadow of Brahmo

culture, which though it claimed to rely on monotheism of the highest order based on Hindu philosophy, had more or less patterned itself and copied the western mode of life and culture.

From the very beginning the Master recognised his chief disciple and the intimate relationship that grew up between them helped to change a young student of about 20 or 21 within a few years time known as Vivekananda.

It appears to me as if Swamiji's advent at this time of India's existence was most needed and he imbibed into the hearts of his countrymen pride in their ancient culture, faith in their religion and at the same time taught them that the West also had a lot to contribute and it is the culture and synthesis of the West and the East that would produce the best result and save India from all its misery, poverty and human suffering.

The effect of Swamiji's life and preachings is even to day after more than half a century continuing to influence the human mind in an ever increasing degree and would probably continue to do so, so long as we have not another Vivekananda to replace him.

To all those who were young when Swamiji strode like a Colossus on their mental horizon, the fact that impressed them most was that howsoever much the Christian missionaries might deride Hinduism, they need not hang their heads in shame. That Hindu Philosophy had been developed through ages by Hindu sages whose minds have soared to heights which had rarely if ever been reached. It drew their attention back to respect for Hinduism and inspired many of them to the belief that it was worth their while to study it and ponder over its teachings.

Except a few sanskrit savants of the West, mostly Germans, an average Westerner was satisfied by labelling Hinduism as merely idolatry. After Swami Vivekananda burst on their mental horizon at the Parliament of all Religions at Chicago in 1893 and later as a result of his tours in U.S.A. and England thoughtful people in the West came to realise that there was more in Hindu Philosophy and Religion than they had dreamt of. That process is still continuing and every day ardent students of religion and philosophy are devoting more and more time to the study of Hindu philosophy.

Apart from making the West aware of the

ancient contribution made by the East, Swamiji helped in making the East aware of the West. He was very much impressed by the industrial progress of the West, its prosperity, its orderly and clean living and was anxious that he might be able to help India to overcome its poverty. Indians might again regain physical, mental and moral health, strength and vigour.

While he made Indians feel that they could walk with their heads erect, he was keen that we should know our shortcomings and not live in snug self-satisfaction, with a false sense of superiority. He wanted material and moral progress to go hand in hand together. He preached that every faith in this world should have an understanding of the others and with the understanding there should develop mutual respect.

He was painfully aware of the fact that more harm had been done and more cruelty perpetrated in the name of Religion by men and women who thought that theirs was the only true religion and they had the right to destroy the others. It was, therefore, that he said that on the banner of every Religion the motto should be "Help and not Fight", "Assimilate and not Destroy", "Live in Harmony and Peace and not Dissension."

He preached that man was made not only in the image of God but was a part of the Divinity itself and service of Humanity was the greatest service of God.

His greatest contribution has been the founding of the Ramakrishna Mission to perpetuate the memory and the teachings of his Ramakrishna Paramhansa Deb. The Mission has always had in its membership learned men, devout and self-sacrificing, who have accepted as their mission the service of humanity.

Up to recently they used to look after the aged, the infirm and the sick. They have now started a still more important chapter of activity—education of the young.

If India is to progress, it is very necessary that we should always have available men and women of character, imagination and sympathy, imbued in our traditions and culture. I had the privilege to see some of the educational institutions they have started and it has given me confidence that our future will be brought if we can produce young men and women trained and brought up by the selfless and cultured Swamis of the Ramakrishna Mission.

Vivekananda was the great messenger of the East to the West who believed that unceasing activity pervaded the whole world and whole humanity was vibrating with pulsation. To him *Man* was not a crawling earth worm nor was he a mere worldly being controlled by the laws of demand and supply. On the

MANLY MONK AND DYNAMIC SAGE

By

PROF. A. C. BANNERJI

Ex-Vice Chancellor Allahabad University जयन्ते



other hand *Man* is a part of Universal Spirit complete in himself. However debased a man may be he is never deprived of the innate divine spark in him. There is nothing higher than *Man*. He is the soul or "the Purush" personified. The manly Monk proclaimed that "the Purusha" is the unit where different per-

ceptions converge and become unified.

Vivekananda was every inch a masculine personality. He could never brook weakness. He preached "strength is what we need, strength is what is required", "salvation is never achieved by the weak". He dedicated his whole life to bring about moral, material and spiritual uplift of his country men and of the world. He urged his country men to action with the following soul-stirring words "Let us proclaim to every Soul:—rise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached, Arise, awake, from this hypnotism of weakness. None is really weak, the Soul is infinite, omnipotent, and omiscient. Stand up, assert yourself and proclaim that God is within you, do not deny Him. It is a man-making religion that we want." He realised that on the strength of the individuals lay the strength of the nation. The weak and the coward cannot achieve salvation.

Name and fame in India and abroad could not divert his mind from the path of his duties towards his country and its down-trodden masses. He was a great patriot. Smitten by acute mental anguish he often cried out and prayed fervently "Oh! Mother, show me the way how I can help the masses". In agony of his heart the patriot saint exclaimed "Religion is not the crying need of India. The urgent need is service to the poor—the worship of **"Daridra Narayana"**.

The great Swami refused to believe that man is a sinner. He exhorted the audience in the Parliament of religious at Chicago in 1893 in the following words "It is a sin to call a man a sinner; it is a standing libel on human nature. Come up, lions, and shake off the delusion that your souls are immortal spirits free, and eternal".

The manly Swami had an athletic build possessing square shoulders, broad chest and muscular arms. He said that he wanted iron-wills and hearts that did not know how to quake. Vivekananda had a masculine personality in every sense of the term. He repeatedly said "Be strong. Be manly". He had respect even for one who was wicked provided the vicious person was manly and strong as the Swami firmly believed.

Vivekananda preached with all the spiritual force at his command that self-help was the best help. He realised that everyone must

help himself and never look to others for help.

He was a wandering monk who had a dynamic personality. It was against his nature to remain confined in a monastery. He felt the inner urge to break away from it and wader from place to place so that he might gain experience and cultivate self-reliance. In his wanderings he met all types of people from street beggars and common labourers to business magnates and Maharajas; and he learnt lessons of the highest wisdom. His magnetic personality and his remarkable physical build vibrated with life and pulsation. It is no wonder that he electrified the whole audience of the Parliament of Religious by his wonderful oration. He had a restless spirit. No static phase could ever come him and subdue his energy. He stood as a symbol for progress and evolution.

Swami Vivekananda had proper foresight. After attending the Parliament of religious at Chicago in 1893, he stayed for about four years in America and Europe before returning to India. He thus got the opportunity of studying the proper method of organisation and starting numerous centres in America, Europe and later on in India. This accounts for the tremendous success of Rama Krishna Mission in India and abroad. Vivekananda sowed a little sapling which has now blossomed forth into a mighty tree. There were representatives of other religions of the East attending the Parliament of religious but almost all of them left America soon after the close of the Parliament's Session.

Vivekananda was undoubtedly the most fascinating, the most dominant and the most popular personality amongst the delegates to the world's Parliament of religious at Chicago. When Swami Vivekananda told Prof. Wright of the Harvard University that he had no credentials which would enable him to become a delegate and attend the Parliament, Prof. Wright replied, "To ask you, Swamiji, for your credentials is like asking the Sun to state its right to shine".

The conquering hero received tremendous ovation on his return to India in the beginning of 1897. He visited the West for the second time in 1899 and 1900. The great soul passed away at the young age of 39 in 1902. It is our duty to remember his message and take the vow "We shall rouse India and the whole world."

Implications Of Swamiji's Gospel of Manmaking

By

Swami Swami Tapasyananda, President Ramakrishna Mission Ashram; Trivandrum

It is an oft-repeated statement of Swami Vivekananda that his mission in life was 'Man-making'. He compressed a lot of meaning into this small and striking expression which he coined in order to convey his message to his countrymen in a word. According to the Swami every nation has a national character based upon the general sense of achievement and consciousness of a living tradition shared by the people comprising that nation. The integration of the national will and the efflorescence of a high cultural life among a people depend upon the nature of this sense of achievement and tradition as also on the intensity and whole-heartedness of the peoples' participation in it. The difference between a primitive society and a powerful nation is primarily based on this psychic factor, rather than on any purely physical qualities. The civilised man has a great tradition of achievements, ideals, skills and patterns of behaviour, and a sense of self-estimation arising from it. The primitive man, on the other hand, has not much of it, and whatever he has, is out of touch with reality and lacking in the vitality needed to integrate the collective will. The difference between a vigorous, cultured society and a weak, primitive society consists in the difference in the quality,

intensity and wealth of this sense of self-esteem and the general participation of the individuals of the group in this sense.

India, at the height of her cultural greatness did possess a high sense of self-estimation of this type, and the courage and enterprise resulting from it. As a consequence India was the greatest cultural force in the world till the 10th century. But the national life became gradually decadent with repeated invasions, and finally the utter military defeat and political downfall that took place towards the 19th century made the succeeding generation of the Indian intelligentsia suspicious of the cultural values of their land. National pride and self-confidence was displaced by an admiration for, and imitation of, Western idea and ways of life; for it was argued that, if the latter were not sound and far superior to their Indian counterparts, how could you account for the downfall of India and the triumph of the West. A wave of uncritical admiration for Western culture spread through the country, accompanied by a defeatist mentality which expressed itself in a spirit of imitation, cowardice, and upstartism.

We see this devitalisation in the reactions of

Indian youngmen when they contact Western culture. Having no platform of their own to stand upon, they are easily carried off their mornings, and their rush headlong on the path of imitation and uncritical acceptance of thoughts and life of the West. Unfortunately such imitation can only breed upstarts and weeklings, and very often what is imitated is not the great character traits of the people they admire, but their vices and superficialities under the mistaken notion that these are the hallmarks of the fashionable and up-to-date gentlemen. The development of such character traits are quite characteristic of primitive people and tribes when they come into contact with powerful civilisations. That India with its milleniums of cultural evolutions and brilliant traditions almost reached this degraded condition was one of the greatest tragedies of history.

It was Swami Vivekananda's view that so long as this defeatist mentality with its accompanying sense of self-condemnation and disrespect for the national part persisted, Indians would continue to languish as a people. Self-confidence is the basis of all character, and when the nation as a whole has lost its self-confidence, the individuals constituting it are bound to be infected with this basic weakness.

Lack of initiative, absence of originality and paucity of leadership are characteristics of a people in this situation. Public life in India has for quite a long time been characterised by these negative qualities. The Indian mind, one of the most brilliant in all the world, has contributed but little to the characteristic development of modern times, namely, science. So also in regard to political and social ideas, India has been only a camp-follower of the West and not a creator of new patterns and systems. In the field of leadership we have, no doubt, put forth some great men, but have also resigned ourselves to the lazy luxury of hero worship. In a virile society people create leaders of the type they want for a time and situation, and not make one man into a God, believe him to be a leader for all times, and be puzzled with the question "what after him?" Besides, leadership is a quality wanted in every field of life—men with initiative, courage, sense of responsibility and capacity to win the allegiance of their followers. It is only when we can produce an abundance of such men in stations high and low—as such in the farms, factories, offices and business houses as in the army, navy, the houses of Parliament and all

other diverse fields characteristic of a complex-society—that the country can rise to heights of glory and achievement.

The root of this deficiency, of this paucity of leaders, lies in the absence of a national character arising from a positive sense of achievement and the self-confidence resulting from it. Swami Vivekananda held that India had a unique record of achievement and an unparalleled capacity in the spiritual field. India was the centre from which all the great spiritual ideas travelled to the other parts of the world in the past, and it continues to be so even to this day. Her contribution to science and art too was also conspicuous. But the actualisation of spiritual consciousness in this earthly life is the special national ideal for which India had lived in the past, and in this field the achievements and aptitude of the Indians are unmatched by any people even to this day. The national consciousness of India must be enlivened by this awareness and then only Indians as a people will in their contact with vigorous cultures from outside, display that attitude of composure, dignity and courage born out of a sense of possessing a firm and unassailable position of their own. It is for want of such a vantage point that, while contacting vigorous culture, primitive people and decadent races show an imitative tendency in place of absorbing the new cultural values. Out of strength only absorption comes; out of weakness, only imitation can result. It was Swami Vivekananda's idea that the imitative tendencies, as contrasted with capacity for absorption, which Indians have been showing, is due to this lack of consciousness of their own splendid achievements and possibilities in the spiritual field.

Man-making according to the Swami consists in the first place in this achievement of the Indian consciousness with an awareness of our achievements and potentialities. But it does not end with that. For Swami Vivekananda never meant that we should remain satisfied gloating on past achievements as a compensation for our present downfall and degradation. Thinking on the past is beneficial only as a spring-board for the future, never as an opiate for deadening higher aspirations and efforts. He recognised that man in the West has effected a revolution in life through the discoveries of science and its application to human well-being. In the attainment of power, in the

Continued on page 242

By Shri Jaganath Kolay
Minister for Home
(Publicity) West Bengal



WORK WORK AND KEEP THYSELF TO THE RIGHT

Of reformers, the world has a stately catalogue. Vivekananda as one in the galaxy priced on his mission by boldly proclaiming to the world that while other Reformers wanted to reform by bits, he wanted root and branch reform. He was one of those Savants who believed in innate divinity of man and simply complained of the apathy and acrimony of the rulers and the leaders of a race in the matter of proper education of their fellowmen. He did not complain of the lack of their proper talents but of the want of sincere desire for the uplift of their fellow citizens. It is not the head that counts but it is the heart that does. Of the prodigies of talents, the world cannot boast of more than five or six men in an age. It is really doubtful how far such giants of talents have achieved towards amelioration of the lot of the masses. Those who have knocked at the doors of the poor and humdrum, the maimed and the infirm, the neglected and downtrodden are those who have flung their talents to the winds and extended their arms to the weak and to the distressed out of their sheer sense of fellow feeling—a unique sense of sympathy and love of being. If Vivekananda is ever remembered in the world it is for the largeness of his heart rather than for his super-ordinary talents. Perhaps of the Reformers he stands single in combining in himself extraordinary gifts of the head with extraordinary gifts of the heart.

The world stands in an acute need of such iron sinews—such boldness of purpose—such nobility of achievements—such absolute disinterestedness. The world is now torn to pieces by avarice, Parochial tenets, vanity, pride and spirit of domination of the stronger over the weaker and so it now needs exactly such a leader. Plato said that for peace and security of the world, kings ought to be philosophers and philosophers should be kings.

Carlyle lamented that mis-selection of national leadership was responsible for all the woes of the world. We never know how to choose our hero. Unless a right type of hero is at the top of the Government we can never dream of the Millennium that Christ pointed out to.

Proper education, real mould of man making.

What we essentially lack among masses is the proper kind of education. Vivekananda defined education as the unfoldment of the divinity in man. We cannot learn to love each other unless we come to realise what we ourselves are. We cannot hope to eliminate dissensions, discord, hatred, jealousy and the host of other vices which beset our daily course of life unless we know and realise that such vices

Continued on page 243

Continued from page 240

creation of wealth and in the amelioration of sufferings, the contributions of modern science have to be reckoned as unparalleled. It is also science and its application to production and communication that have made the modern industrial civilisation possible, giving a chance to the common man to assert his manhood and be something more than a hewer of wood and dryer of water. These achievements of the

only make him into an exalted animal with unlimited powers of destruction. It is only in the encounter with God that the noblest part in him is enkindled. Swami Vivekananda was convinced that the ancient heritage of India could alone supplement the scientific and technological civilisation of the modern world with what it is lacking in the spiritual field.

Thus when Swami Vivekananda, in his

As says our great philosopher Kapila, if purity has not been the nature of the soul, it can never attain purity afterwards for anything that was not perfect by nature, even if it attained to perfection would go away again.

If impurity is the nature of man, then man will have to remain impure, even though he may be pure for five minutes.

The time will come when this purity will wash out, pass away, and the old natural impurity will have its sway once more.

Therefore, say all our philosophers, good is our nature, perfection is our nature, not imperfection, not impurity,—and we should remember that.

Remember the beautiful example of the great sage who, when he was dying, asked his mind to remember all his mighty deeds and all his mighty thoughts.

There you do not find that he was teaching his mind to remember all his weaknesses and all his follies!

Follies there are, weaknesses there must be, but remember your real nature always,—that is the only way to cure the weakness, that is the only way to cure the follies."

Let me tell you as one who has been working—at least trying to work—all his life, that there is no regeneration for India until you be spiritual.

Not only so, but upon it depends the welfare of the whole world.

Swami Vivekananda

modern spirit were given full recognition by Swami Vivekananda and he wanted India of his times, just emerging from pre-scientific and medieval conditions of life to participate fully in the achievements and aspiration of new age.

But he knew also the limitations of science that it only puts power into the hands of man and not wisdom, that it imparts knowledge of nature but not love of one's fellow beings, that it enlightens us on the mechanism of nature but does not give insight into its mystery. He felt that spiritual insight alone could ennoble and expand the heart of man. Without the consciousness of the Divine spark in him the power which science has armed man with, can

scheme of making 'Man' of his countrymen, exhorted them to be conscious of their past, he was really asking them to look ahead into the future and prepare themselves to be the citizens of the world, combining in themselves the best of the East and the West, the spirituality of India and the scientific outlook of the West. When Indians as a people are seized with a sense of the vital role they have to play in the salvaging of human life and culture, and make a tremendous educational and organisational effort to make themselves fit for it, then alone India will have a national character, and then alone will come real creativeness and leadership in this country. This is the implication of Swami Vivekananda's gospel of 'Man-Making'.

(Continued from page 241)

as those are simply inconsistent with our real divine nature. We have to realise by proper kind of education that hatred and jealousy, non-cooperation and selfishness are only foreign to our real nature. They are there so long as we partake of our animal nature. Vivekananda, therefore, rightly stressed on re-orientation of the programme of education. We are taught from the beginning to earn, to be rich, to enjoy life and to purchase for us a

leader—one who was dead to the work-a-day life of the common man—soaring high—far above the world of dust and heat. He was intensely practical and was never a dreamer and idealist. He would have the best of the West as he would have the best of the East—the best of the past as the best of the present—the best of the white as the best of the black—the best of the man irrespective of the caste, cline or colour. He was no advocate for the life of a recluse—he was intolerant of laziness

I may be a little bubble of water, and you may be a mountain-high wave. Never mind ! The infinite ocean is the background of me as well as of you. Mine is also that infinite ocean of life, of powers of spirituality, as well as yours. I am already joined—from my very birth, from the very fact of my life—I am in Yoga, with that infinite life, and infinite goodness, and infinite power, as you are, mountain-high though you may be. Therefore, teach this life-saving, great, ennobling grand doctrine to your children, even from their very birth !

You need not teach them Advaitism ; teach them Dvaitism, or any 'ism' you please, but we have seen that this is the common 'ism' all through India ; this marvellous doctrine of the soul, commonly believed in by all sects.

Swami Vivekananda

name, that at the cost of the dearest of our virtues. We are never taught that the whole and only purpose of education is discovery of Self. "Give me", Vivekananda said, "hundred Brahmacharis prepared to sacrifice their life for the suffering humanity and I will revolutionise the world". The kind of education he wanted was to consist of such a course of training as would make the learners acquire nerves of steel and muscles of iron, to acquire complete freedom from the trammels of fear and at the same time to acquire the very essence of the culture of the past. He used always to emphasise on the Custodian of a nation's education that they had a holy task for them to do—that everything depended on them so far as the making of a nation was concerned. We have so far laid too much stress on the intellectual side of the man—we have so long neglected the education of the heart. The result of such education is, as we see, strife in and strife out—one war is hardly over while another is threatened. What India needs most is a new system of education based exactly on the line suggested by the sad great Saint.

We would do Vivekananda the greatest wrong if we only take him to be a religious

sloth and procrastination. His behest to man was never to stand still but to move on—may be on a wrong track so as to dash against a wall so that one might be wiser by experience, turn again and take to the right track. Stagnation was alien to his nature. Of the hundreds of commentators on Karma-Yoga of the Gita, he stands supreme as an exponent of that Yoga. He really appreciated the zest and earnestness of the West but simply mourned for the Westerners that they directed their energy rather in the wrong track. He wanted his countrymen to emulate the spirit of work of the West but warned them of the dangers of a frenzy for work, work for the sake of work alone. Work was only a means to an end which is liberation from bondage.

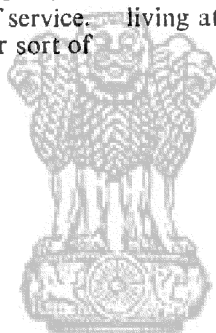
Neither Seek Nor Avoid

We ought never to be cowards, never to fly from the dangers and difficulty of the keen competitive life of the world but our whole mission of the work should be not to bring about physical comforts nor again to cultivate a stoic habit of rejecting the pleasures of life. The correct path lay in between the two and that directed to the progress, peace and regeneration of human brotherhood. The secret of work, he detected, has seldom been ex-

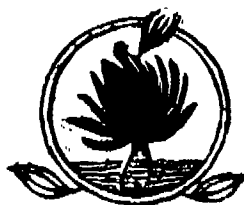
plored by any other teacher than Lord Shri Krishna. He sums up the philosophy by saying —‘neither seek-nor avoid’. A true worker would not betray any anxiety for earning a name by hazarding himself in dangerous achievements neither would he seek to elude the call of a duty however much he may personally suffer in execution of such duty. “Self”, he said, “was simply responsible for the nine-tenths of mischief of individual, racial and national life ” We have been taught to applaud charity but have seldom been given to learn the viciousness of the habit of receiving.

“The only measure of man”, he pronounced, “lay in gauzing him by how much he gives and how little he receives”. He once burst out in ecstasy as his Master Shri Ramakrishna chastised him and his brother Shanyasis for being charitable to the poor in a spirit of pity. His Master warned that the correct attitude to bear to a fellow being howsoever poor he or she be was not one of pity but one of service. We seldom bear in mind that the poorer sort of

humanity offer us the opportunity of being great by the exercise of our sense of self-sacrifice. The depth of feeling that he had for his fellow beings is never to be met in any other world leaders. He declared that he would hundred times prefer a hell and never hanker for the heaven till the last of men on the earth could be emancipated from the bondage of poverty, disease and ignorance. He never aspired for a heaven for himself. Once he was found out in the Belur Math pacing on the corridor facing the Ganges and drenching his cheeks with tears and being accosted by Rakhhal Maharaj he replied explaining his reasons for tears saying that none actually thought for the sick and poor in this world—that none actually has a heart in the world—that all our sympathies are only lip-deed and all our programme of charity, and humanity is but hypocrisy. India to-day needs him most and we are tempted to cry even as the great English poet did for Milton—“Vivekananda, thou shouldst be living at this hour ; India hath need of thee”.



सत्यमेव जयते



Thousand Islands Park

island on St. Lawrence River was Swamiji's centre of activity from June 12 to August 6, 1895. Here every morning the students sat at the feet of their great Guru and took lessons in Vedanta. Above is a picture of the house where Swamiji lived. The upper open window in the left hand wing belonged to his room. On the upper veranda Swamiji used to give his evening talks,



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND AMERICA

Before the turn of the last century, a young well-built, saffron clad yogi set up a Vedantic centre in new York to preach Hindu religion, philosophy and culture to the newly-affluent American people.

This was a bold move at a time when the United States was being dubbed by the less fortunate countries as a materialistic wasteland, where people were busy piling up personal fortunes in the wake of an industrial explosion, completely oblivious of their spiritual aspirations and duties.

But this delusive, though common, image of 19th century America failed to deter the yogi who had unbounded faith in man, his basic goodness; his abiding spirituality.

That Yogi was Vivekananda, the founder of the world-wide Ramakrishna movement, the first Indian ambassador to the West with a spiritual message, the message of peace, love and universal brotherhood of man.

Swami Vivekananda had gone to the U. S. to attend the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893. He was a tremendous success at that congregation of learned philosophers from all parts of the world. Americans waited for hours to hear him. They cheered wildly

when he pleaded for co-existence of different religions on the same soil, saying :

"But if any one here hopes that this unity will come by the triumph of any one of the religions and the destruction of the others, to him I say : 'Brother, yours is an impossible hope.' Do I wish that the Christian would become Hindu ? God forbid. Do I wish that the Hindu or the Buddhist would become Christian ? God forbid.....The Christian is not to become a Hindu or the Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth."

After the Parliament of Religions, he spent two years in the U. S., travelling, lecturing, stirring his audiences with his profound presentation of a religious way of life that transcended sectarian differences and dogmatism.

In his speeches, besides presenting the Vedantic philosophy, Vivekananda invariably referred to India's extreme poverty and pleaded for help to raise the living standards of her masses. Wherever he went, Vivekananda aroused the people with his powerful personality, his sublime eloquence and the eclecticism and universality of his message. He stimulated both enthusiasm and antagonism.

Commenting on the wide acclaim won by Vivekananda during his U.S. visit, Dr. Thomas W. Simons, a former U.S. Consul General of Madras, recently described the saint as a "truly great man" and said :

All classes and types of men come under the magic of his presence and words, and felt they had brushed their sleeves against greatness."

Joseph Campbell, Professor of English at Sarah Lawrence College, writing in the NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE a few years ago, called Vivekananda a "prelude to the modern moment", and said :

"Vivekananda's vivid appearance at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, September 11, 1893, marked an epoch in the opening of the modern mind to humanity as a unique species with a single destiny. For this brilliant young yogi, of heroic stature, had come not only to teach but to learn.

"The end of all religions, 'he taught, 'is the realizing of God in the soul.' What he learned and saw in America filled his heart with a great will to rescue the starving masses of India through practical action. He returned to teach service to the poor as a form of worship—and this teaching became within 30 years, the inspiration of Gandhi."

Vivekananda paid three visits to the U.S. His first visit was a veritable saga, at once touching and dramatic. Romain Rolland called it "an astonishing adventure". The saint left India with borrowed money, ran out of his meagre funds immediately on arrival in the

U.S., spent a night in an empty box at a railway station, begged for food from door to door and was eventually rescued by a gracious lady, Mrs. G. W. Hale, all the members of whose family later became his disciples.

What was the reason for Vivekananda's amazing success in the U.S., a country largely ignorant of his philosophy and occasionally hostile to his unfamiliar and unorthodox views? His personality? Yes. But an equally important factor was the American people's traditional respect for freedom of worship and their basic interest in matters of the spirit. Their material prosperity, as was erroneously believed, was not at war with their spiritual aspirations.

Under the skin-deep crust of American materialism, there was a strong spiritual and intellectual ferment. Various forces were at work : An idealistic revulsion against the evil effects of industrialism, and a continuation of America's perennial search for spiritual values.

Americans were taking increasing interest in comparative religions and there was a steady growth in scholarly activity in Sanskrit and related subjects.

Thus, when Vivekananda arrived in the U.S., there was at least an elite public with some knowledge of India and her religions. His visit gave a fillip to that knowledge, and evoked widespread interest in the spirit and problems of India. Their considerable interest in Vivekananda and his Vedantic movement is not surprising since it was the U.S. which offered the first world platform for the Swami's gospel of universal love and service to mankind. His name still evokes great reverence among his followers all over the U.S. A bronze statue showing Vivekananda in deep meditation adorns the Vedantic Centre's headquarters in Hollywood.

The Vedantic movement in the U. S. has been growing stronger ever since the establishment of the first Vedantic Centre in New York in 1894. Presently, there are nearly a dozen such centres in different parts of the U.S. Among the more active and influential is the Hollywood Centre which is known as the Vedantic Society of Southern California.

Harvard University

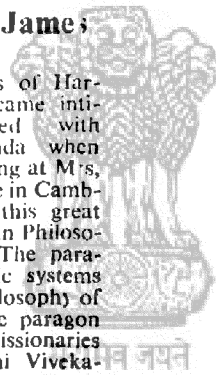
March 25, 1896. Swamiji delivered a lecture on Vedanta Philosophy before the Graduate Philosophical Society of Harvard University. It was a great intellectual triumph for Swamiji, for after the lecture he was offered the chair of Eastern Philosophy, which he did not accept.



Dr. William James



Dr. William James of Harvard University became intimately acquainted with Swami Vivekananda when the latter was staying at Mrs. Ole Bull's residence in Cambridge in 1894. Of this great Indian the American Philosopher later said : "The paragon of all monistic systems is the Vedanta Philosophy of Hindustan, and the paragon of Vedantic Missionaries was the late Swami Vivekananda who visited our land some years ago."



Unitarian Church Detroit

Swamiji stayed in Detroit from February 12 to 23 and March 9 to 30, 1894. In this city, he gave a total of public lectures. These lectures aroused scathing criticism against him from reactionary forces of Christianity, while the liberal section defended him as warmly as he was attacked. Here is a photograph of the Detroit Unitarian Church, one of the venues Swamiji's lecture,



The activities at these centres consist of Sunday lectures and at least one evening class for the public, and a special weekly class for the members. The lectures, usually on Indian scriptures and culture, have helped in correcting many distorted views about Indian religion and philosophy.

These centres have different ideals before them than those of their Indian counterparts which are generally engaged in social service.

In the U.S., Vedanta comes with a timely message, not seeking converts but working for a deeper re-assessment of the divine-human equation.

Presently, all the Vedantic centres of the U.S. are busy in a year-long series of observances commemorating the 100th birth anniversary celebrations of their illustrious founder. The programme includes devotional services, lectures, discussions and banquets.

Swamiji Abroad
II

SWAMIJI IN NEW YORK

A Story Retold

(December 6 to December 24, 1895)

By Mrs. Marie Louise Burke

On Wednesday, November 27, 1895, Swami Vivekananda sailed from Liverpool on the SS. *Britannic*, a passenger ship of the White Star Line. The *Britannic*, of 5,000 tons, was by no means the most modern 'luxury liner' afloat. Built over twenty years before, it had long since been outmoded in design, power, and speed by steamers three times its tonnage, and its comforts were nothing compared to theirs. But the voyage started well. On the second day out, the ship, as was customary, anchored for a few hours off Queenstown, Ireland, to pick up the mails, and it was very likely from there that Swamiji wrote to Mr. Edward T. Sturdy, who had been his host in London: 'So far the journey has been very beautiful.' He had been given a cabin to himself by a friendly purser ('Every Hindu is a Raja, they think, and are very polite', he wrote in connection with this good fortune to Alberta Sturgis, Mrs. Leggett's daughter by her first marriage); he had been promised that the fare, which, as he wrote, had been 'meat, meat, meat', would be varied by the vegetables he preferred; and he found that the weather, though so foggy that the ship was delayed, was calm and cheerful. But after leaving Queenstown, the *Britannic* set forth onto the open seas and headed straightway into rough and stormy waters. From the on the voyage was, as Swamiji put it, the most 'disastrous' he had ever had. The little ship, endlessly tossing and pitching, made slow, laborious headway through the turbulent At-

lantic; and for the first time in his life, Swamiji was, as he wrote 'very badly seasick'—and this for days on end. It was an experience he was long to remember. Several years later, Sister Nivedita, referring to his temporary reluctance to make a second voyage to the West, wrote from India to Miss Josephine MacLeod: 'He dreaded being ill at sea so much.'

On Friday, December 6, at 4.24 a.m., the *Britannic*, at last, crossed the bar of the harbour of New York. The temperature was 6 below freezing and a wind was blowing, but the sky was clear and was growing light when, after the usual long stop at the quarantine station at Ellis Island, the ship was piloted toward the docks of Manhattan. Although the skyline that greeted Swamiji had little resemblance to the skyline of today, its massive buildings, some of which towered to twenty stories, and its great Brooklyn Bridge, the marvel of the age, that stretched hugely across the East River, were nonetheless impressive.

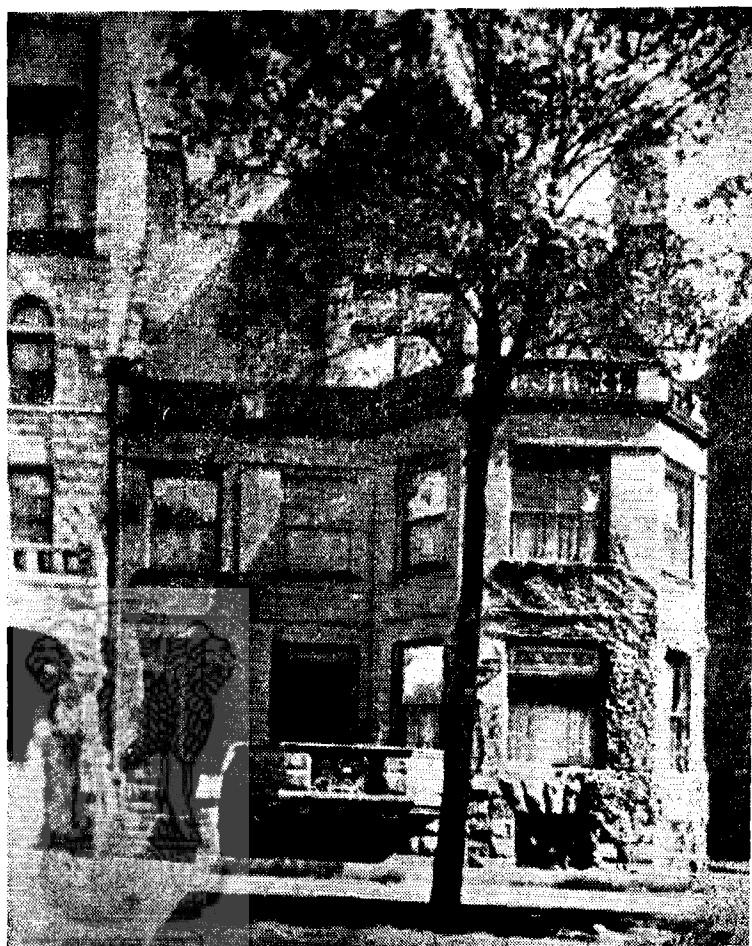
There is no record of who met Swamiji at that cold and early hour, but most probably his disciple, Swami Kripananda,¹ was waiting at the North River dock to greet him, to look after his luggage and to escort him to the lodging house at 228 West 39th Street, where a few days earlier, two large parlour rooms had been rented for his and Kirpananda's use. 'My

Hale House

Swamiji was a guest of the Hale family at their Chicago residence from time to time. He also made the Chicago home of this aristocratic family his headquarters during almost the whole of 1894. Of the Hale family, Swamiji wrote: "He (Mr. George W. Hale) and his wife are an old couple, having two daughters, two nieces and a son. The son lives away from home and earns a living. The daughters live at home.....All the four are young and not yet married... They will probably live unmarried; besides, they are now full of renunciation through contact with me and are busy with thoughts of Brahman,

The Four Cousins

Left) Harriet MacKindley, Mary Hale, Isabelle MacKindley, Harriet Hale. These four girls in the Hale household was loved by Swamiji and he held a very high opinion of them. He had deep and abiding affection for the two "Mettlesome Arabs," Mary Hale and Isabelle MacKindley. Even after his return to India, Swamiji was in regular correspondence with Isabelle MacKindley. The Hale sisters were daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Hale while the MacKindleys were their nieces,



feuds had already engaged some rooms..... where I am living now', Swamiji was to write to Mr. Sturdy two days later. We do not know whether these thoughtful friends were officers of the Vedanta Society or others interested in Swamiji's work ; but in any case, the lodging house was one in which Kripananda had lived in a smaller room—from April 19 to July 10 of this same year and to which he had returned in October. In November he had held classes there—again, in a room smaller than the parlours—under the auspices of the Vedanta Society, and thus the house, familiar now to Swamiji's friends, had no doubt seemed to them the logical place for him to make his headquarters.

The neighbourhood, though dreary, was respectable and better by six blocks than that in which he had lived the previous season, it being six blocks farther north. Yet one cannot agree that the house was, as Kripananda wrote in a letter of December 7 to the Brahmapadin, 'in the best part of the city'. Though farther north, it was also farther west ; and west in New York, particularly around 39th Street, could scarcely be called 'best'. According to Sister Devamata, whose memories of this period were first published in *Prabuddha Bharata* of 1932, the house was 'one in a long monotonous row of dingy boarding houses'—a row, no doubt, of those narrow, high-stooped, brown-stone fronts, each identical with the one jammed next to it, which had sprung up everywhere in New York during the latter half of the nineteenth century, and of which many, in their old or middle age, had been converted into uninspired lodging houses. Two redeeming features of this house—were the low rent of its rooms and the handy fact that it could be reached, as Kripananda correctly pointed out, by horsecar and trolley, and also by elevated railway, from all parts of the city. The house, which stood in the middle of the block between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, was not far from the Broadway cable cars, nor, for that matter, from the Sixth Avenue Elevated, whose wooden coaches, drawn by steam locomotive, rumbled into a station at 42nd Street ; and on 42nd Street itself ran jangling and clanking a cross-town streetcar.

The two parlour rooms that Swamiji's friends had engaged were on the first floor, running front to back and opening onto one another, as parlours in those days were wont to do. The front windows, no doubt, tall and

narrow, faced north onto the street, and it was they, presumably, that provided most of the light, for the back parlour could have had, at best, only a side window, looking out onto an air well. There was, of course, neither private bath nor kitchen connected with the rooms ; they were simply rooms. The lodging house kitchen, shared in common by the roomers, was, as we learn from Sister Devamata's memoirs, on the floor below (the basement or ground floor), and, to judge from the usual arrangement of houses such as this, the bathroom, also shared, was on the floor above, at the far end of the hall. It was to this undistinguished lodging house that Swamiji came on the morning of December 6.

The Yogi, with his peculiar notions of dress and worship, arrived Friday on the *Britannic*. He went to No. 228 West Thirty-ninth street. While in New York, he will lecture upon metaphysics and psychology, and will also disseminate in a general way his ideas on the universal religion which asks no man to take another by the throat, because his creed happens to be different. 'Let me help my fellowman ; that is all I seek', he says.

'There are four general types of men', he says, 'the rational, the emotional, the mystical, and the worker.' For them we must have their proper worship. There comes the rational man, who says, "I care not for this form of worship. Give me the philosophical, the rational—that I can appreciate." So, for the rational man is the rational, philosophic worship.

'There comes the worker. He says : "I care not for the worship of the philosopher. Give me work to do for my fellow-men." So, for him is made a worship, as for the mystical and the emotional. In the religion for all these men are the elements of their faith.'

'No', said the Swami, very softly, in answer to a question, 'I do not believe in the occult. If a thing be unreal it is not. What is unreal does not exist. Strange things are natural phenomena. I know them to be matters of science. Then they are not occult to me. I do not believe in occult societies. They do no good, and can never do good.'

In fact the Swami belongs to no society, cult, or creed. His is a religion which compasses all worship, all beliefs.

Swami, who is a very dark-featured and

A saint is more holy, more pure, more single-minded than ordinary men. But with Swami Vivekananda, there could be no comparison. He was in a class by himself. He belonged to another order. He was not this world. He was a radiant being who had descended from another, a higher sphere for a definite purpose. One might have known that he would not stay long.

Is to be wondered at that nature itself rejoices in such a birth, that the heavens open and angels sing it praise ?

Sister Christine

good-looking young fellow, explained his creed yesterday in remarkably pure English. One forgot when he spoke that an orthodox choker peered over the Bombay robe which in turn, scantily concealed the American trousers. One saw instead a winning smile and a pair of deep, lustrous black eyes.

Swami believes in reincarnation. He believes that with the purification of the body the soul rises to a higher condition, and as the purification through matter continues, the spirit rises, until released from further migration and is joined with the universal spirit.

Before starting his work, Swamiji had the week end to recover from his days of illness at sea and to find his land legs once again. We do not know in any detail how he spent Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, but we do know that, aside from being interviewed by the writer of the above article, one of the first things he did upon his arrival in New York, which he found 'very dirty and miserable' after 'the clean and beautiful cities of Europe', was to visit several of his friends. He called on the recently married Mr. and Mrs. Francis Leggett, delivering to these 'birds of paradise' as he called them, packages that Josephine MacLeod, Mrs. Leggett's sister, had sent in his care from Europe. 'They are as usual very kind', he wrote to Miss MacLeod on Sunday, December 8, and in this same letter, he mentioned others on whom he had paid calls. 'Saw Mrs. and Mr. Salomon and other friends', he wrote. 'By chance met Mrs. Peak (Peake) at Mrs. Guernsey's, but yet have no news of Mrs. Rothinburger (Roethlisberger).'

From the day of his arrival in New York until a few days after his classes had begun, Swamiji and his disciple, Kripananda, lived in

Blessed is the country in which he was born, blessed are they who lived on this earth at the same time, and blessed, thrice blessed are the few who sat at his feet.

Sister Christine



*Sister Christine,
The Thrice Blessed*

the two parlour rooms much as they had in the early part of the year when they had shared rooms in a lodging house on West 33rd Street. On December 10, Kripananda wrote to Mrs. Bull ; 'Since the Swami arrived, we had common householding, and I gave my share to defraying the expenses of the victuals.' These victuals were cooked, no doubt, in the community kitchen on the floor below, and it is not unlikely that Swamiji, at least once, did the cooking himself, preparing the spicy and complicated Indian dishes that he liked so well, with Kripananda later washing the many pots and pans that this had involved.

But, shortly, the situation changed. At the preliminary meeting, it had become apparent that both parlour rooms would be needed for the morning and evening classes, and that Kripananda would require a room of his own. Thus, within a few days, he moved to a small room on the top floor of the house, for which he paid two dollars a week. Coincident with Kripananda's move, the task of cooking fell upon Miss Sarah Ellen Waldo, an ardent disciple of Swamiji, who had attended his earlier New York classes and had been with him at at Thousand Island Park in the summer of this same year.

It is from Sister Devamata's *Memories of India and Indians*, published in Prabuddha Bharata of 1932, that we learn something of the part Miss Waldo played in the daily life at 39th Street. (During this period, Sister Devamata, then Miss Laura Glenn, attended all of Swamiji's classes, but did not become his disciple nor drew close to him. A few years later, however, she took an active part in the work he had left behind in America and became a close friend of Miss Waldo, who told her of the more intimate side of life at 39th Street. Later still, she became a follower of Swami Paramananda and went by the name of Devamata.) As she tells the story, the lodging house kitchen and its utensils were evidently none too clean, and it was, she writes, the day following Swamiji's arrival in New York (actually, it was probably not until after the classes had started) that he said to Miss Waldo ; 'The food here seems so unclean : would it be possible for you to cook for me ?' Miss Waldo was, of course, delighted. 'She went at once to the land-lady', Sister Devamata continues, 'and obtained permission to use the kitchen. Then, from her own store, she gathered cooking utensils and groceries. These she carried

with her on the following morning. She lived at the far end of Brooklyn. The only means of transportation was a jogging horse-car, and it required two hours to reach the Swami's lodging at 38th (39th) Street in New York. Undaunted, every morning found her on her way at eight o'clock or earlier ; and at nine or ten at night, she was on her way home again.'

Miss Waldo, a tall, portly woman, then in her fifty-first year, evidently did things with a vigour that swept all before it, and the name 'Haridas' (Servant of the Lord), which Swamiji had given her, seems to have become her well. '(She) moved about doing everything', Sister Devamata writes. 'Her service was continuous and untiring. She cooked, edited, cleaned, and took dictation, taught and managed, read proof and saw visitors.'

It was because of Miss Waldo's ability to grasp Swamiji's thought so well that he was to entrust her with the final editing of his lectures and class talks. It was she also whom he felt free to scold. 'One morning the Swami found Miss Waldo in tears', Sister Devamata relates. 'What is the matter, Ellen ?' he asked anxiously. 'Has anything happened ?' 'I seem unable to please you', she replied. 'Even when others annoy you, you scold me for it.' The Swami said quickly ; 'I do not know those people well enough to scold them. I cannot rebuke them, so I come to you. Whom can I scold if I cannot scold my own?' Needless to say, Miss Waldo thenceforth no longer felt Swamiji's scoldings to be a cause of sorrow they were, on the contrary, 'a proof of nearness'.

With the start of the classes, with Kripananda's move to the top floor, and Miss Waldo's daily advent on the first floor and in the kitchen, the householding at 39th Street settled down, so to speak, for the winter. Swamiji, of course, continued to live in one of the parlour rooms—the back one ; and in this room he also, no doubt, gave private interviews, studied, wrote letters and articles, edited his class talks, and from time to time throughout the day and night, entered into the fathomless depths of meditation that were his natural habitat.

Contrary to the belief generally held by Swamiji's biographers—a belief traceable to a

fairly exaggerated report given by Kirpananda in his news-letter of December 7 to the *Brahmavadin*, the work of spreading Vedanta had not been particularly successful or widespread during Swamiji's absence in England. Nor had Swamiji expected that it would flourish. 'Do not for a moment think the "Yankees" are practical in religion', he had written to his Mad'asi disciple, Alai ga Perumal, in March of 1891. 'In that the Hindu alone is practical, the Yankee in money-making, so that as soon as I depart, the whole thing will disappear. Therefore, I want to have a solid ground under my feet before I depart.' He was well aware that a second season in New York was absolutely essential in order to put his American work on a firm foundation. 'This winter's work in New York was splendid,' he had written on June 26, 1895, to Mary Hale, 'and it may die if I suddenly go over to India, so I am not sure about going to India soon.' By August, he was no longer in any doubt, but certain that he would have to return to America. 'It requires a few months more of work in New York to carry it (the work) to some visible shape', he had written to Mr. Sturdy in that month's 'as such I will have to return to New York early this winter.' But although Swamiji's work had not grown in his absence, it had by no means died out. 'I have planted a seed in this country', he had written in July of 1895 to the Maharaja of Khetri. 'It is already a plant, and I expect it to be a tree very soon.' The plant was very much alive, waiting only for his return to continue its growth into a sturdy, unshakeable tree.

The Vedanta Society, which he had founded in November of 1894, was still intact, and those who had drawn close to him were still eager to serve him. Aside from the two *sannyasins*, Swami Kripananda and Swami Abhay-ananda, to whom he had given monastic initiation at thousand Island Park, there were Miss Ellen Waldo, Miss Marry Phillips, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Goodyear, Mr. and Mrs. Francis Leggett, Miss Josephine MacLeod (who, though at the time in Europe, was ready to give all the support she could), Miss Emma Thursby, and in Cambridge, Mrs. Ole Bull. This is to say nothing of the many people who had attended Swamiji's classes and lectures in

the spring of 1895 and who had been waiting for his return. Then, too, he had many close friends and supporters in New York who belonged in a category somewhere between those



*Most Devoted
Sister Nivedita*

who worked directly for the Vedanta movement and those who simply attended his classes and lectures. We can be sure that a good majority of all these people flocked to Swamiji's New York classes as soon as he reopened them in December of 1895.

Mrs. John J. Bagley

of Detroit's most influential ladies was Swamiji's hostess in Detroit. She first met Swamiji in Chicago at the Parliament of Religions. On the arrival of Swamiji in Detroit Mrs. Bagley arranged for a grand reception in his honour and the whole town was invited. There the elite of the town paid homage to the great Indian. The Detroit Free Press called the reception "One of the most important Social Functions that has taken place in Detroit this season". And described Swamiji as "The Social Lion of the Day."



Mrs. Ole Bull

provided Vivekananda with a place "Where I can sit down & write down my thoughts". Swami was her guest at her Cambridge residence twice during October and December of 1894. Swamiji's relationship with her was very close and he addressed Mrs. Bull as "Mother". On the other hand Mrs. Bull too played a very important part in his life. At the invitation of Swamiji she came to India in 1898, and accompanied him on his Himalayan tour. She became famous as "Dhirmata".

Her generous contribution helped Swamiji built Belur Math on the Ganges and provided the organization with a permanent fund.

John D. Rockefeller

Swamiji's host in Chicago was a business associate of John D. Rockefeller. But John D. resisted from seeing the Hindu monk till one day on an impulse, he went to his friend's house and met Swamiji. Swamiji made him understand that God has given all his wealth thereby providing him an opportunity to help and do good to people. Rockefeller was a hard man to advise. He was apparently irritated. But within a few days he donated an enormous amount towards the financing of a public institution his last donation



Swami Kripananda

Leon Landsberg, popularly known as Swami Kripananda was "an American by citizenship and a Russian jew by birth." After he met Swamiji, Landsberg, then a journalist in New York gave up all other activities and took over the burden of the practical details of Swamiji's worth. At Thousand Islands Park Swamiji initiated him to monastic life and gave him his monastic name, Swami Kripananda. When Swamiji left for Detroit, Kripananda took over charge of his New York mission.

Swami abroad IV

Miss Katherine Abbot Sanborn

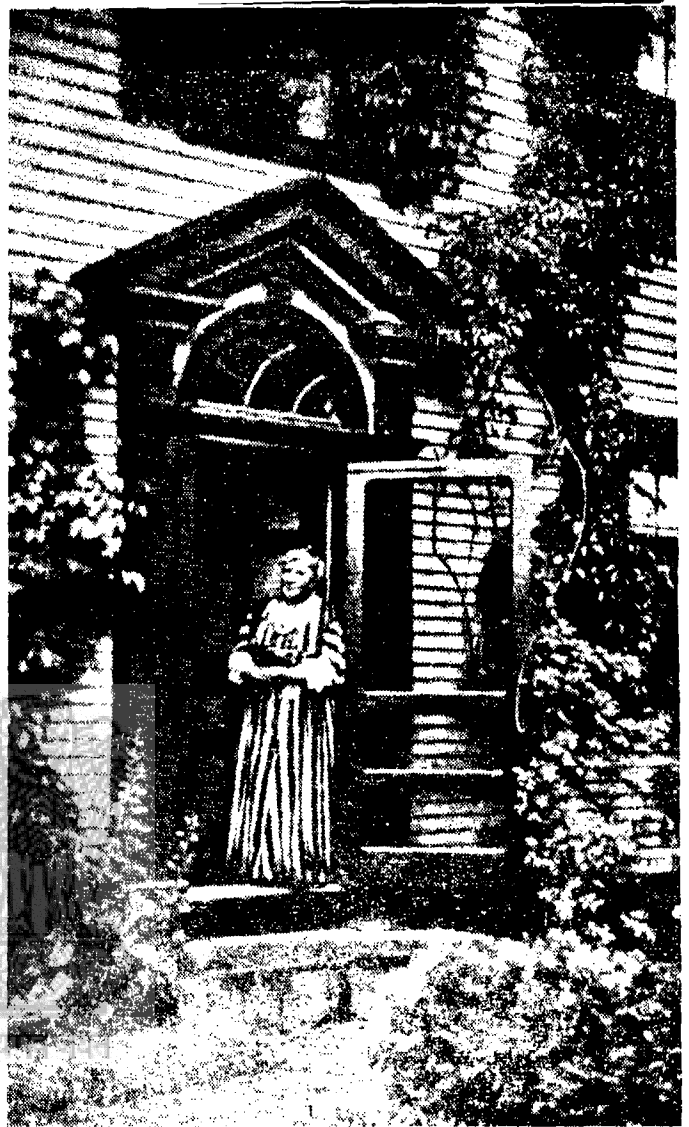
lecturer and author, was an energetic and enthusiastic hostess of Swami Vivekananda at "Breezy Meadows," Massachusetts, near Boston. Miss Sanborn met Swamiji while he was on his way to Boston before the Parliament of Religions. There, through the enthusiasm of his hostess, Vivekananda received much local publicity and met prominent people like Professor John H. Wright of Harvard University, who eventually were instrumental in securing him admission to the Parliament of Religions as a delegate.

Although the United States is primarily a Christian nation, followers of other religions are found throughout the nation among them, those who have chosen the Hindu Vedanta philosophy. While the Hindu Vedanta following is not large, ten centers—a monastery and a convent have been established with a membership of about fifteen hundred.

The centers are under the direction of Swamis, or holy men, of the Ramakrishna Order—the only ordained monks of a genuine Hindu order in the United States. They are guest teachers, not missionaries, who have come to the United States at the invitation of Americans wishing to establish centres where they may be instructed in the Hindu philosophy.

Respect for other faiths is basic in the Hindu religion, and has been an important feature of the Swamis' teachings. Sri Ramakrishna Deva, after whom the Order is named, is known as the 'Prophet of the harmony of all religions.'

The monastic Ramakrishna Order was founded at Baranagore, near Calcutta, shortly after Sri Ramakrishna's death in 1886, by his Sannyasi disciples headed by Vivekananda.



VEDANTA IN AMERICA

In 1893 Swami Vivekananda came to the United States as the representative of the Hindu faith, to the Parliament of Religions held at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. He spent three years in the United States lecturing and writing. Just before his return to India, in 1886 he founded the first American Vedanta Society, in New York City.

The second Vedanta Society in the United States was also established by Swami Vivekananda in San Francisco in 1900. Others

followed until today. There are ten centuries—four on the East coast, in Boston, Providence, two in New York City, two in the middle-west, in Chicago and St. Louis and four on the West coast, in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, and Seattle. There is also a monastery at Trabuco Canyon in California, and a convent at Santa Barbara.

Many of the Societies also have retreats. The Shanti Ashrama in the San Antonio Valley, given to Swami Vivekananda in 1900, is the oldest. The California Societies also have two others—the Olema Retreat in Marin Country and a retreat on Lake Tahoe. Oregon's (Portland) Ramakrishna Ashrama is a 120-acre tract with several buildings, and a temple, overlooking the Columbia River Valley. The Sarada Ashrama at Marshfield, on the Atlantic Ocean, serves both the Boston and Providence centers; the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Center in New York maintains the Vivekananda Cottage at Thousand Island Park in New York State.

Origin

The Ramakrishna Order's activity abroad began shortly after Swami Vivekananda's return to India when he founded the Ramakrishna Mission Association. Shortly thereafter the Math, or monastery, was transferred from Baranagore to Belur, and at the same time, the Mission Association taken over by the Math. Math activities were then extended in India and abroad.

The Vedanta philosophy, or religion, is the most highly intellectualized form of Hinduism, and as such, its appeal outside of India has been primarily to the intellectual. It is through the intellectuals that the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and the Ramakrishna Order have been publicized.

Gerald Heard, the British novelist-philosopher, became a convert of Vedanta and was instrumental in establishing the monastery at Trabuco Canyon. Through Heard, Christopher Isherwood, Aldous Huxley, and John Van Druten became interested, and stayed at the Vedanta Society of Southern California's Hollywood centre as initiates. W. B. Yeats, Tennessee Williams, Tom Sugrue, are among other writers and playwrights whose interest was aroused, as well as Somerset Maugham whose *Razor's Edge* dealt with Indian religion.

Isherswood, who lived at the Hollywood centre two and one-half years, assisted its Head, Swami Prabhavananda, in translations of the *Yoga Sutras Of Patanjali*, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, *The Song of God*, and other books on Vedanta. Auxley, Heard, Isherwood, Van Druten, and others also contributed articles to the magazine, "Vedanta and the West".

Vedanta

Clergymen of all faiths have been attracted by the pantheistic philosophy of Vedanta which recognizes the same divine inspiration in all religions. Bishop Frederick B. Fisher, a Methodist Bishop in India for many years, sent a Hindu temple from Benaras for the Garden of Meditation at the Florida Southern College, a Methodist College at Lakeland, Florida.

Vedanta also numbers among its followers, college and university professors. Dr. Percy H. Houston of Occidental College, Los Angeles, was the first President of the Vedanta Society of Southern California.

Other lay members are in business and the professions. Still other adherents are women of means and leisure who have found fulfillment in the Vedanta philosophy.

The Centures are supported entirely through voluntary offerings of members and gifts of friends. The late Mary Morton, daughter of Levi P. Morton, Vice-President of the United States under President Benjamin Harrison, presented the 34, West 71st Street residence to the Vedanta Society of New York. The Sri Sarada Math at Santa Barbara was given to the Vedanta Society of Southern California by the late Spencer Kellogg, retired businessman. Mrs. C. M. Wyckoff of Hollywood gave her home and a modest annuity to founding the Vedanta Society of Southern California. A further ten thousand dollar insurance policy donated by Mrs. Wyckoff was largely responsible for completion in 1938 of the Vedanta Temple in Hollywood. An Italian nobleman, becoming interested in Vedanta while in Hollywood, donated the income from an orange grove to the Southern California Society. Gerald Head gave the Society the Ramakrishna Monastery at Trabuco Canyon.

Swamis

The Swamis heading the centres are active in the religious educational and cultural affairs of the United States. Swami Nihkhananda of the New York centre has served as a member of the Seminar on Inter-Religious Relations at Columbia University. He has also conducted a course on Hindu philosophy at Douglas College, New Brunswick, N. J. He has lectured and conducted chapel services at other universities.

Swami Akhitananda of the Providence, Rhode Island, Vedanta Society is a member of the Universal Club for Ministers, the Rhode Island Ministers' Union, the World Affairs Council, and the Rhode Island Philosophical Society. He has addressed these groups and other organizations throughout the country, and also served on the Board of Governors in the Massachusetts Institute of Pastoral Counselling, with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) officials in programming religious study for the students, and in conducting services and giving instruction to MIT students.

The Head of the Portland, Oregon, Vedanta Society, Swami Aseshananda, has lectured at Oregon colleges—Willamette University, Portland State College, Reed College, and others. Swami Vividishananda of the Seattle (Washington) Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre spent four weeks in Hawaii in 1958, holding classes, lecturing and giving instruction.

Almost all of the centres maintain libraries or reading rooms for their members, which are open to the public, generally before services.

Some of the centres also carry on a publishing programme. Among the publications of the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Centre in New York City are *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, and *Bhagavad-Gita Self-Knowledge And the Upanishads*, translated into English and annotated by Swami Nihkhananda.

The Vedanta Press of the Vedanta Society of southern California issues translations and new titles. It has published *Vedanta And the West*, a bi-monthly periodical since 1938, and and stocks Indian books for distribution to American booksellers.

Prominent at all centres is the seal of the Ramakrishna Order of India, designed by the late Swami Vivekananda, founder of the Order

Mr. Thomas W. Palmer

During his second visit to Detroit, Swamiji was the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas W. Palmer. A successful Businessman of Detroit, Mr. Palmer held various local offices, was elected to the U.S. Senate and was appointed U.S. Minister to Spain. Shortly after he relinquished this position he was selected president of Chicago World's Columbian exposition and came to know of Swamiji at the Parliament of Religions. (See below)

A serpent outlines the round seal representing Yoga or concentration; a swan resting on stormy waters in the center of the seal represents the self of man, or work; a lotus in the foreground signifies love, and the sun's bright rays on the horizon, knowledge. The seal bears the motto in Sanskrit, "May the Swan lead us to Him."

California

The two largest and most active of the Ramakrishna Order's centres in the United States are those of California.

Swami Vivekananda, who founded the first Vedanta Society in the United States, in New York in 1894, also founded the Northern California Society in 1930.

Its headquarters are a handsome, buff-coloured, three-story building at the edge of



San Francisco's Pacific Heights district. This new temple, dedicated in October of 1959, was built through the efforts of the Society's membership of about two hundred twenty-five.

Until the new temple was built, the Hindu Temple, four blocks away, served as the main centre. This grey and red wooden structure, built in 1905 by Swami Trigunatita, is crowned with four terra-cotta-coloured turrets, a harmony of Hindu, Mohammedan, and Anglo-Saxon architectural forms.

Within the New Temple, the altar represents the Vedantic concept of divinity, with a figure of Christ enshrined at the extreme left, Buddha on the extreme right, and Sri Ramakrishna in the center, with Sri Sarada Devi (his wife and disciple) and Swami Vivekananda (founder of the Ramakrishna Order) at either side.

The auditorium is open daily for meditation. Sunday morning and Wednesday evening services are held in the New temple and a class on Indian philosophy on Friday in the old temple, all attended by members, and an equal number of interest non-members.

Another class, restricted to members, is devoted to the study of Western knowledge; and for many years, classes in Sanskrit have been carried on by and for members.

Since 1941, a Sunday school for children from six to sixteen years has been conducted at the old temple.

Monastery

The Society maintains a monastery and a convent in San Francisco and branches of the monastery at the Olema Retreat and the Sacramento Centre. Members of the monastery and convent are citizens of the United States United States of America who have embraced the religious life.

Both the old and new temples have book-shops, and the New Temple maintains a library for members of the Society.

Two branch centres of the Society have been established at Sacramento and at Berkeley, California. The Sacramento branch, informally started in 1949 at the home of a devotee of Vedanta, was affiliated with the Society in 1952.

Monastic and lay members of the centre have also built a chapel, dedicated in 1953, just outside the old city limits of Sacramento.

A number of special events emphasize the Society's ideal of harmony among religions. The birthdays of the world's great religious teachers, such as Sri Krishna, Buddha, and Christ, are observed special celebrations which have a consistently strong appeal for members and non-members alike. And each year before the summer recess, a reception is held jointly by and for the members of the San Francisco Society, and the Berkeley and Sacramento Centres, usually in the auditorium of the new San Francisco temple. Classical and religious of a specially prepared paper on some religious or philosophical subject, all presented by the members, is followed with discussion by the audience. Attendance includes friends, as well as members and sometimes approaches 200 in number.

Pilgrimage

Another popular event is the Pilgrimage to the Olema Retreat, originated by the Berkeley Branch Centre, established in 1939. Held on May 30 of each year, the Pilgrimage includes a programme of religious music, readings and meditation, out of doors.

The Olema Retreat is a 2,000-acre tract of fir forest and meadow, an hour's drive from San Francisco. In a secluded garden of the Retreat is a shrine to Lord Buddha—the first of the shrines to the great spiritual leaders of all religions which the Society plans to establish eventually at Olema.

Two other retreats maintained by the Society are a 150-acre tract on Lake Tahoe for use of the Swamis, and the Shanti Ashrama, about 80 miles from San Francisco at Livermore, in the San Antonio Valley. The latter was given to Swami Vivekananda in 1900. It is little used since it has practically no water, and is not easy of access, but is kept for its historical association.

The Vedanta Society of Southern California, one of the most active of the Ramakrishna's Order's centres in the United States, has its headquarters in Hollywood, California. It was founded in 1930 by Swami Prabhavananda, also the founder of the Portland, Oregon centre.

The main centre, a beautiful three-domed white temple flanked by cypress trees, sits serenely near the intersection of Hollywood Boulevard and Vine Street with its sound-proofed walls impervious to the rearing traffic of two of Hollywood's main arteries.

Classes

The Society held its classes and lectures in a rented hall until 1930 when Sister Lalita, who was Mrs. Carrie Mead Wyckoff before she joined the Order, put her Hollywood home and modest annuity at the disposal of Swami Prabhavananda. Mrs. Wyckoff's home, then become the Vivekananda Home. A further gift by Mrs. Wyckoff of a \$10,000 insurance policy helped to complete the temple, now the main centre.

Today, in addition to the centre at Hollywood the Society maintains the Vedanta Temple at Santa Barbara, the Sri Sarada Math, or convent, also at Santa Barbara, and the Ramakrishna Monastery at Trabuco Canyon in California.

In all establishments, morning and evening meditation periods are observed, daily worship is performed, and Rama Nama sung every fortnight. The Kali Puja and Shivratri are celebrated annually, as are the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Brahmananda, and Sri Sarada Devi—the Holy Mother, wife of Sri Ramakrishna, who carried on his work after his death. There are also special services on Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter.

Sunday lectures are given at both the Santa Barbara and Hollywood temples, and two classes are held weekly at the Hollywood centre, and one fortnightly at the Santa Barbara Centre.

Since 1950, a bookshop featuring books on all religions has been maintained at the Hollywood centre. Through the Vedanta Press, the Society's Publishing Department, Indian books are stocked for distribution in the United States, and new titles on Vedanta are issued. The Vedanta Press also publishes *Vedanta And The West*, a monthly periodical began in 1938.

In the three establishments of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, there are fourteen brahmacharinis (women novitiates), and

Mme. Emma Calve

noted singer of Metropolitan Opera Company, first met Swamiji in Chicago. "Tempestuous, Headstrong and Sensuous," Mme. Calve's only comfort was her daughter, the tragic death of her only child, who died of severe burns when she was performing, left her desolate. She wanted to commit suicide. On three different occasions, she left her house to drown herself and proceeded in the direction of the lake, and each time, as though in a daze, she found herself on the road to Swamiji's house. The last time she went to his house. Swamiji brought peace to Mme. Calve's grief-stricken heart, and for the rest of her life she remained grateful to him, (see below)

twelve brahmacharis (men novitiates) as well as, two Swamis.

Nuns

The Ramakrishna Monastery, maintained by the Vedanta Society of Southern California, was originally founded by Gerald Heard, British writer and philosopher, as a religious college. It was established as a College not only for resident students, or postulants, but as a Retreat for other followers of Vedanta.

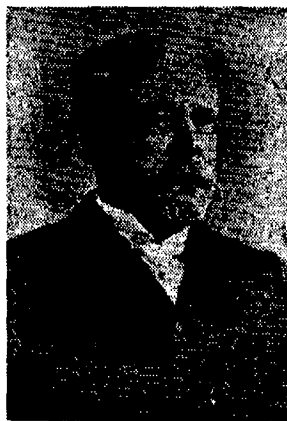
Heard built Trabuco College in Trabuco



Prof. John. Henry Wright

'Here is a man who is more learned than all our learned professors put together',— Wrote professor John Henry Wright of Harvard University in a letter introducing Swami Vivekananda to a friend who happened to be the Chairman of the Committee Selecting delegates. This letter from professor Wright opened Swamiji's way to the Parliament of Religions. Swamiji spent a week-end with the Wrights and they became great friends. This association and later meetings are now a part of the Wright family tradition and even today the Wrights speak in the family idiom of "Our Swami". Mrs. John Henry Wright prepared an account of their association with Swamiji sometime in or after 1897 (See Below)

Canyon, sixty-five miles south of Los Angeles, high in the Santa Ana mountains, and it was opened in 1942. Assistance was given to the project by those interested in Vedanta. Among them were author Aldous Huxley, Alan Hunter of the Hollywood Congregational Church; Spencer Kellogg, Jr., retired businessman and Eugene Exman, religious editor of Harper and Brothers, publishers. It was, in fact, at the Trabuco monastery that Huxley wrote *The Perennial Philosophy*, and several of Heard's works were also written there.



Life at Trabuco College was modelled on Western monasticism, and principally according to the rules of St. Benedict. However, financial problems arose, and the experiment was discontinued. Gerald Heard then deeded the 300-acre establishment to the Vedanta Society of Southern California who, in 1949, formally dedicated it as the Ramakrishna Monastery.

At present, eight Americans and their Swami are resident at the monastery where, like the neighbouring farmers, they raise hens, chickens, dairy cows and daily products, and vegetables.

Convent

The Sri Sarada Math, or convent, at Santa Barbara is another one of the units maintained by the Vedanta Southern California.

The convent's origin and growth was due largely to the devotion of a few individuals. The original property, with a generous bequest, was provided by Spencer Kellogg, retired businessman, on his death in 1944.

In 1953. Mrs. Ruth Sheets of Montecita, California, visited the convent and became very much interested in building a temple. Although suffering from a fatal illness, she turned her whole energies to the project. Lulah Maria Riggs, architect, was hired to design the structure. On her death in 1955, Mrs. Sheets left a substantial bequest to the building fund.

The temple, with its thirty-eight Douglas fir trees as supporting pillars, was completed and formally dedicated in February of 1956.

Women were first formally accepted in the Ramakrishna Order in 1947. At that time, seven young women left the Society's Hollywood centre to help in the establishment of the Order's first convent. At the present time there are about twelve of the Sisters who divide time between the Sri Sarada Math and the Hollywood centre.

When Swami Vivekananda Visited Germany

And how the Swami loved his own disciples ! Miss MacLeod writes : 'We arrived in Boinboy on the twelfth of February, where Mr. Alasinga met us, who wore the vertical red masks of the Vaisnavaites sect. Later on, once when I was sitting with Swami on our way to Kashmir, I happened to make the remark : "What a pity that Mr. Alasings wears those Vaisnavaites marks on his forehead !" Instantly Swami turned and said with great sternness : "Hands off ! What have you ever done ?" I did not know what I had done then. Of course, I never answered. Tears came to my eyes and waited. I learnt later that Mr. Alasinga Perumal ... had gone from door to door to beg the money to send Vivekananda to the West. Perhaps, without him, we never would have met Vivekananda.'

Swamiji was a man who truly walked with God. May his blessings be over on us.

Sister Christine

One of the memorable events during the Swami's stay in England was his meeting with celebrated Orientalist, Professor Max Muller of Oxford University, at his residence, by special invitation, on May 28, 1896. Of that pleasant experience the Swami himself wrote as follows on June 6:

"...What an extraordinary man is Professor Max Muller ! I paid a visit to him a few days ago. I should say that I went to pay my respects to him for whosoever loves Shri Ramakrishna, whatever be his or her sect, or creed, or nationality, my visit to that person hold as a pilgrimage...

Admiration For Shri Ramakrishna

"The Professor was first induced to inquire about the power behind, which led to sudden and momentous changes in the life of the

late Keshab Chandra Sen, the great Brahmo leader ; and since then he has been an earnest student and admirer of the life and teachings of Shri Ramakrishna. 'Ramakrishna is worshipped by thousands today, Professor', I said. 'To whom else shall worship be accorded, if not to such ?' was his answer. The Professor was kindness itself.....He showed us several colleges in Oxford and the Bodleian Library. He also accompanied us to the railway station, and all this he did because, as he said, 'it is not every day one meets with a disciple of Ramakrishna Paramahansa'.

'The visit was really a revelation to me. That nice little house, its setting of a beautiful garden, the silverheaded sage, with a face calm and benign and forehead smooth as a child's in spite of seventy winters, and every line in that face speaking of a deep-seated mine

of spirituality somewhere behind; that noble wife, the helpmate of his life through his long and arduous task of exciting interest, overiding opposition and contempt, and at last creating a respect for the thoughts of the sages of ancient India—the trees, the flowers, the calmness and the clear sky—all these sent me back in imagination to the glorious days of ancient India, the days of our Brahmarshis and Rajarishis, the days of the great Vana-prasthas, the days of Arundhatis and Vasishthas.

Oneness with the Brahman

"It was neither the philologist nor the scholar that I saw, but a soul that is every day realising its oneness with the Brahman, a heart that is every moment expanding to reach oneness with the Universal.....

"...And what love he bears towards India ! I wish I had a hundredth part of that love for my own motherland. Endued with an extraordinary, and, at the same time, an intensely active mind, he has lived and moved in the world of Indian thought for fifty years or more, and watched the sharp interchange of light and shade in the interminable forest of Sanskrit literature with deep interest and heart-felt love, till they have all sunk into his very soul and coloured his whole being. Max Muller is a Vedantist of Vedantists ..

"When are you coming to India ? Every heart there would welcome one who has done so much to place the thoughts of their ancestors in the true light'. I said, 'The face of the aged sage brightened up—there was almost a tear in his eye, a gentle nodding of the head, and slowly the words came out : 'I would not return then; you would have to cremate me there'. Further questions seemed an unwarrantable intrusion into realms wherein are stored the holy secrets of man's heart'".

"A Real Mahatma"

This letter was written by the Swami shortly after the Professor had written an article, from information gathered in India, concerning Shri Ramakrishna, which was to appear in the *Nineteenth Century*, under the title "A Real Mahatman". Later on, he also wrote a large and fuller account under the title *Ramakrishna: His Life and Sayings*.

Exhausted with the strenuous exertions of his London work, the Swami accepted the invitation for a tour and a holiday on the Continent. He was "as delighted as a child" at the prospect. In the afternoon of one of the last days in July, the Swami and his friends left London with the best wishes of all his students and disciples.

Invitation from Paul Deussen

At an out-of-way village in Switzerland the Swami received news which changed the course of his continental tour ; it was in the form of an urgent letter, an invitation from the well-known Orientalist, Paul Deussen, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Kiel. He had written to the Swami's London address, cordially inviting him to visit him in Kiel. The Professor had been studying the Swami's lectures and utterances, and found in him an original thinker and a spiritual genius.

[Paul Deussen (1845-1919) was a well-known Indologist. A disciple of Schopenhauer and a founder of the Schopenhauer Society, he was known for his profound learning in Indian philosophy and for his interpretations of Indian thought. He wrote a number of works on this subject.

Paul Deussen considered the system of Vedanta as founded on the Upanishads and Vedant Sutra's with Shankara's commentaries, to be some of the majestic structures of philosophical thought and valuable products of the genius of man in his search for truth.]

At the invitation of Prof. Paul Deussen, the Swami proceeded to Kiel where Paul Deussen was Professor of Philosophy at the University, after visiting Switzerland on the way. Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Sevier and Miss Henrietta Muller, friends of the Swami, accompanied him.

The following is a reproduction in parts of the account of the tour, as published in *Swami Vivekananda in Germany*, a souvenir issued on the occasion of the Swami Vivekananda Centenary Exhibition, Calcutta, 1962. This report was itself a reproduction from *The Life of Swami Vivekananda* published by the Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta,

Writing about Kiel, Mrs. Sevier, who along with her husband was the guest of the Deussen family, wrote :

"...My recollection of Kiel, a town in Germany which is beautifully situated on the Baltic, is bright with agreeable memories of a pleasant day spent in company of Dr. Paul Deussen, Professor of Philosophy at the University there—a man of rare philosophical grasp, standing foremost in the rank of European Sanskrit scholars.

Cordial Reception

"On hearing that the Swami had arrived at the hotel, the Professor immediately sent a note requesting his company at breakfast on the following day, courteously including my husband and myself in the invitation. Punc-

that will, in the future, probably make India the spiritual leader of the nations, the highest and greatest spiritual influence on earth.

"The Swami interested himself in some translations which Deussen was making, and a discussion arose on the precise significance and correct understanding of various obscure passages. The former pointed out that clearness of definition was of primary importance and elegance of diction of secondary importance. The vigorous and lucid interpretations given by the Oriental exegetist with such firmness or conviction, and yet such delicacy of preception, eventually quite won over the German savant...

Captain J. H. Sevier

Mrs. C. E. Sevier



सत्यमेव जयते

ually at 10 o'clock the next morning we ushered into the library where we received a cordial reception from Prof. and Mrs. Deussen who were expecting us. After a few preliminary inquiries regarding the travels and plans of Swamiji, I noticed the Professor directing his eyes to some volumes lying open on the table, and with a scholar's appreciation of learning he soon turned the conversation to books... He considered the system of the Vedanta as founded on the Upanished and Vedant Sutras, with Shankaracharya's commentaries, some of the most majestic structures of thought and valuable products of the genius of man in his search for Truth and that the highest and purest morality was the immediate consequence of the Vedanta...

"It seems, the Professor added, that a movement is being made back towards the fountain-head of spirituality, a movement

Returning to the narration of the Swami's stay in Kiel, the account added: Some time during the day, the Professor found the Swami turning over the pages of a poetical work. He spoke to him but got no response. When the Swami came to know of it afterwards, he apologised, saying that he was so absorbed in reading that he had not heard him. The Professor was not satisfied with this explanation until, in the course of conversation, the Swami quoted and interpreted verses from the book. Prof. Deussen was dumbfounded, and asked the Swami how he could accomplish such a feat of memory. Thereupon the concentration of the mind, as practised by the Indian Yogi with such perfection that the Swami said from personal experience that, in that state, he would be unconscious even if a piece of burning charcoal was placed on his body.

A Look Around Kiel

At this time, there was an exhibition in Kiel, which Prof. Deussen insisted that the Swami must visit and offered to take him there. So immediately after tea the Swami's party accompanied their host to the exhibition, and some time was spent in studying the various arts and industries of Germany. After partaking of light refreshments there the party returned to the hotel where the Swami was staying. The Professor suggested that the Swami should see the objects of interest in and around the city, and it was decided that on the next day they would all make an excursion to some of the outlying districts, notably to the famous harbour of Kiel opened only a few days previously by the Kaiser.

About six weeks had been spent in holiday-touring, and the Swami felt that he could now take up his London work again with renewed vigour. Accordingly, he asked Mr. and Mrs. Sevier to make plans for returning immediately. Prof. Deussen had hoped that the Swami would prolong his visit so that he could have opportunities of discussing many philosophical topics with him in the quiet retreat of his own residence, where his treasure room of learning and of books would have added much to the interest of their discussions. He tried to persuade the Swami to remain if only for a few days, but when he was told that the Swami was anxious to put his work on a solid basis before returning to India, which he intended to do in the near future the Professor understood and said: "Well, then, Swami, I shall meet you in Hamburg, and thence, via Holland, we shall both journey to London, where I hope to spend many hours with you".

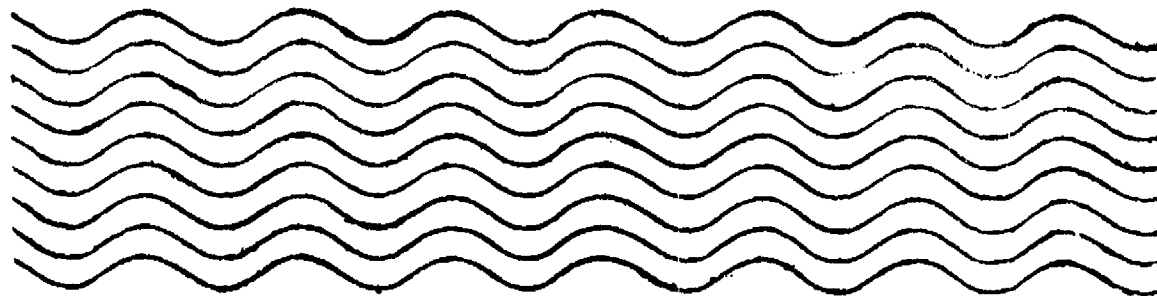
At Hamburg Professor Deussen joined them. The party, with the additional member, went to Amsterdam for three days during which time they visited the art galleries, the museums, and other places of interest.

The Channel crossing, a most unpleasant voyage, was fortunately soon over...The Swami was much improved in health and felt that he could meet the demands of his work with renewed energy and enthusiasm.

Discussion on Vedanta

Professor Deussen often visited the Swami, discussing with him the principles of the Vedanta and gaining from him a much clearer insight into the whole body of Vedanta thought. He was in thorough agreement with the Swami when the latter pointed out to him the difficulties that lay in the way of a complete understanding of the Vedanta metaphysics by Western minds, the trouble resting in the fact that the Western philosopher was apt to regard Indian idealism through the lens of preconceived ideas. And as he came to know the Swami more intimately, he understood that one must become de-Occidentalised, as it were, in order to master the spirit of the Hindu philosophical systems of logic as methods of spiritual vision. For two whole weeks during his stay in London the Professor was with the Swami. At the same time Professor Max Muller was also in communication with Swami Vivekananda.

(Courtesy German News Weekly New Delhi)



VIVEKANANDA

ON

NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

Every work uttered by Swami Vivekananda has become a saying. Here some extract is reproduced covering subjects like poverty, work and welfare, education and character, women's role etc. etc.

THE CURSE OF POVERTY

The only hope of India is from the masses.

* * *

Do you love your fellow-men ? Where should you go to seek for God ? Are not all the poor, the miserable, the weak, Gods ? Why not worship them first ? Why go to dig a well on the shores of the Ganges ?

* * *

The only way of getting our divine nature manifested is by helping others do the same. If there is inequality in nature, still there must be equal chance for all; or, if greater for some and for some less, the weaker should be given more chance than the strong.

* * *

I do not believe in a God or religion which cannot wipe the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth. However sublime be the theories, however well-spun may be the philosophy, I do not call it religion so long as it is confined to books and dogmas. Where should you go to seek for God ? Are not all the poor, the miseries, the weak, Gods ? Why not worship them first ?

* * *

Yesterday, the lady superintendent of a women's prison was here. They don't call it prison but reformatory here. It is the grandest thing I have seen in America. How the inmates are benevolently treated, how they are reformed and sent back as useful members of society: how grand, how beautiful, you must see to believe ! And, oh ! how my heart aches to think of the poor, the low in India. They have no chance, no escape, no way to climb up. The poor, the low, the sinner in India have no friends, no help. They cannot rise, try however they may. They sink lower and lower every day. They feel the blows showering upon them by a cruel society, and they do not know whence the blow comes. They have forgotten that they too are men. And the result is slavery.

* * *

Him I call a Mahatma (great soul) whose heart bleeds for the poor, otherwise he is a Duratman (wicked soul). So long as the millions live in hunger and ignorance, I hold every man a traitor who, having been educated at their expense, pays not the least heed to them. I call those men wretches, who strut about in their finery having got all their money by grinding the poor, so long as they do not do anything for those millions who are now no better than hungry savages.

* * *

In this fertile country with abundant water supply, where nature produces wealth and harvest a thousand times more than in others, you have no food for your stomach, no clothes to cover your body : In this country of abundance, the produce of which has been the cause of spread of civilisation in other countries, you are reduced to such straits ! Your condition is even worse than that of a dog. And you glory in your Vedas and Vedants !

A nation that cannot provide for itself simple food and clothing, which always depends on others for its subsistence—what is there for it to vaunt about ? Throw your religious observances overboard for the present and be first prepared for the struggle for existence.

* * *

Sitting down these hundreds of years with an ever-increasing load of crystallised superstition on your heads, for hundreds of years spending all your energy upon discussing the touchableness or untouchableness of this food or that, with all humanity crushed out of you by the continuous social tyranny of ages—are you ? And what are you doing now ? Promenading the seashore with books in your hands, repeating undigested stray bits of European brain-work, and the whole soul bent upon getting a thirty rupees clerkship, or at best becoming a lawyer—the height of young India's ambition—and every student with a whole brood of hungry children cackling at his heels and asking for bread ? Is there not water enough in the sea to drown you, books, gowns, university diplomas, and all ?

Laziness, meanness, and hypocrisy have covered the whole length and breadth of the country. Can an intelligent man look on all this and remain quiet ? Does it not bring tears to the eyes ? Madras, Bombay, Punjab, Bengal, whichever way I look, I see no signs of life. You are thinking yourselves highly educated. What nonsense have you learnt ? Getting by heart the thoughts of others in foreign language, and stuffing your brain with them and taking some university degrees, you consider yourselves educated ! Fie upon you ! Is this education ? What is the goal of your education ? Either a clerkship, or being a roughish lawyer, or at the most a Deputy Magistracy, which is another form of clerkship. What good will it do you or the country at large ? Open your eyes and see what a piteous cry for food is rising in the land of Bharata, proverbial for its wealth ! Will your education fulfil this want ? Never.

With the help of Western science set yourselves to dig the earth and produce foodstuffs, not by means of mean servitude of others but by discovering new avenues to production, by your own exertions aided by Western science. Therefore I teach the people of this country to be full of activities, so as to be able to produce food and clothing for themselves. For want of food and clothing and plunged in anxiety for it, the country has come to ruin.

What are you doing to remedy this ? Throw aside your scriptures in the Ganges and teach the people first the means of procuring food and clothing, and then you will find time to read to them, the scriptures. If their material wants are not removed by the rousing of intense activity, none will listen to the words of spirituality. Therefore I say, first rouse the inherent power of the Atman within you, and then, rousing the faith of the general people in that power as much as you can, teach them first of all to make provision for food : only then teach them religion. There is no time to sit idle. Who knows when death will overtake one ?

* * *

And over and above all, we must cease to tyrannise. To what a ludicrous state are we brought. If a Bhangi comes anywhere as a Bhangi, he would be shunned as the plague; but no sooner does he get a cupful of water poured upon his head with some mutterings of prayers by a Padre, and get a coat to his back, no matter how threadbare, and come into the room of the most orthodox Hindu, I don't see the man who then dares refuse him a chair and a hearty shake of the hands. Irony can go on farther.

* * *

Is it a religion that fails to remove the misery of the poor and turn men into gods ! Do you think our religion is worth the name ? Ours is only "Don't-touchism", only "Touch me not", "Touch me not". Good heavens ! A country, the big leaders of which have for the last two thousand years been only discussing whether to take food with the right hand side or from left, if such a country does not go to ruin what else will.

* * *

Come, be men ! Kick out the priests who are always against progress, because they would never mend, their hearts mould never become big. They are the offspring of centuries of superstition and tyranny. Root out priestcraft first. Come, be men ! Come out of your narrow holes and have a look abroad. See how nations are on the march ! Do you love your country ? Then come let us struggle for higher and better things. Look not back, no not even if you see the dearest and nearest cry. Look not back, but forward !

* * *

Seeing the poor people of our country starving for food, a desire come to me to overthrow all ceremonial worship and learning, and go round from village collecting money from the rich by convincing them through force of character and Sadhana, and to spend the whole in serving the poor.

Alas ! nobody thinks of the poor of the country. They are the backbone of the country who by their labour are producing food—the poor people, the sweepers and labourers, who if they stop work for one day will create a panic in the town. But there is none to sympathise with them, none to console them in misery. Is there any compassion or kindness of heart in the country ? Only a class of "Don't touchists". Kick such customs out ! I sometimes feel the urge to break the barriers of "Don't touchism", go at once and call out, "Come all who are poor, miserable, wretched, and down-trodden", and to bring them all together in the name of Shri Ramakrishna. Unless they rise, the Mother won't awaken. We could not make any provision for food and clothes for them. What have we done then ? Alas ! they know nothing of worldliness, and therefore even after working day and night cannot provide themselves with food and clothes. Let us open their eyes. I see clear as daylight that there is the one Brahman in all, in them and me, one Shakti dwells in all. The only difference is of manifestation. Unless the blood circulates over the whole body, has any country risen at any time ? If one limb is paralysed, then even with the other limbs are whole, not much can be done with that body. Know this for certain.

* * *

My whole ambition in life is to set in motion a machinery which will bring noble ideas to the door of everybody, and then let men and women settle their own fate. Let them know what our forefathers as well as other nations have thought on the most momentous questions of life. Let them see specially what others are doing now, and then decide. We are to put the chemicals together, the crystallisation will be done by nature according to her laws. Work hard, be steady and have faith in the Lord. Set to work, I am coming sooner or later. Keep the motto before you: "*Elevation of the masses without injuring the religion.*"

Remember that nation lives in the cottage. But, alas ! nobody ever did anything for them. Our modern reformers are very busy about widow remarriage. Of course I am a sympathiser in every reform, but the fate of a nation does not depend upon the condition of the masses. Can you raise them ? Can you give them back their lost individuality without making them lose their innate spiritual nature ? Can you become an occidental of occidentals in your spirit of equality, freedom, work and energy, and at the same time a Hindu to the very backbone in religious culture and instincts ? This is to be done and we will do it. You are all born to do it. Have faith in yourselves, great convictions are the mothers of great deeds. Onward for ever ! "Sympathy for the poor, the downtrodden, even unto death", this our motto.

ON WORK AND WELFARE

Every duty is holy, and devotion to duty is the highest form of the worship of God. By doing well the duty which is nearest to us, the duty which is in our hands now, we make ourselves stronger; and improving our strength in this manner step by step, we may even reach a state in which it shall be our privilege to do the most coveted and honoured duties in life and in society.

* * *

Duty of any kind is not to be slighted. A man who does the lower work is not for that reason only a lower man than he who does the higher work. A man should not be judged by the nature of his duties, but by the manner in which he does them. His manner of doing them and his power to do them are indeed the test of a man. A shoemaker who can turn out a strong, nice pair of shoes in the shortest possible time is a better man, according to his professor who talks non-sense everyday of his life.

* * *

That society is the greatest, where the highest truths become practical. That is my opinion, and if a society is not fit for the highest truths, make it so, and the sooner the better.

* * *

If the Shastras can only help men when they give up all work and retire into the forests, and cannot show the way by lighting the lamp of hope in the hearts of men of the workaday world—in the midst of their daily toil, disease, misery and poverty; in the despondency of the penitent; in the self-reproach of the down-trodden; in the terror of the battle field; in lust, hunger and pleasure; in the joy of victory, in the darkness of defeat; and, finally, in the dreaded night of death—then weak humanity has no need of such Shastras, and such Shastras will be no Shastras at all !

It is the force of character, of purity and of truth, of personality; it is life that is the highest and the only way to stir the hearts of people. It carries the personal magnetism. Work, work, work ! Life is too short to be spent in talking about frauds and cranks.

* * *

Work, work, live the life. What do doctrines and opinions count ? Philosophy and penance, the worship-room, your sunned rice or vegetable offerings—all these constitute the religion of one man or one country. Doing good to others is the one great, universal religion. Men and women, young and old, down to the pariah, nay, the very animal, all can grasp this religion. Can a merely negative religion be of any avail ? The stone is never unchaste, the cow never tells a lie, nor do trees commit theft or robbery, but what does it matter ?

I heard in Japan that it was the belief of the girls of that country that their dolls would be animated if they were loved with the heart. The Japanese girl never breaks her doll. O you of great fortune ! I too believe that India will awake again if any one could love with the whole heart the people of the country, a people bereft of the grace of affluence, of blasted fortune, their discretion totally lost, down-trodden, ever-starved, quarrelsome and envious. Then only will India awake, when hundreds of large-hearted men and women, giving up all desires of enjoying the luxuries of life, will long and exert themselves to their utmost for the well-being of the millions of their countrymen who are gradually sinking lower and lower in the vortex of destitution and ignorance. I have experienced even in my insignificant life that good motives, sincerity and infinite love can conquer the world.

* * *

Love makes no distinction between man and man, between an Aryan or a Mlechchha, between a Brahmin or a pariah, nor even between a man or a woman. Love makes the whole universe as one's own home. True progress is slow but sure. Work among those young men who can devote heart and soul to this one duty, the duty of raising the masses of India. Awake them, unite them, and inspire them with this spirit of renunciation: it depends wholly on the young people of India

* * *

If in the attempt to carry morsels of food to starving mouths, name and possession and all be doomed even—thrice blessed art thou ! It is the heart, the heart, that conquers, not the brain. Books and learning, Yoga and meditation and illumination—all are but dust compared with love. It is love that gives you the supernatural powers; love that gives you Bhakti; love that gives illumination; and love, again, that leads to emancipation. This indeed is worship of the Lord in the human tabernacle.

ON EDUCATION AND CHARACTER

Will you consider a man as educated if only he can pass some examinations and deliver good lectures ? The education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life, which does not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy, and the courage of a lion—is it worth the name ? Real education is that which enables one to stand on his own legs. The education that you are receiving now in schools and colleges is only making you a race of nyspeptics. You are working like machines merely, and living a jellyfish existence.

The peasant, the shoemaker, and such other lower classes of India have much greater capacity for work and self-reliance than you. They have been silently working through long ages, and producing the entire wealth of the land, without a word of complaint. Very soon they will get above you in position. Gradually capital is drifting into their hands, and they are not so much troubled with wants as you are. Modern education has changed your fashion, but new avenues of wealth lie yet undiscovered for want of the inventive genius. You have so long oppressed these forbearing masses; now is the time for their retribution. Never mind if they have not read a few books like you, if they have not acquired your tailor-made civilisation. What do these matter ? But they are the backbone of the nation in all countries. If these lower classes stop work, from where will you get your food and clothing ? If the sweepers of Calcutta stop work for a day, it creates a panic; and if they strike for three days, the whole town will be depopulated by the outbreak of epidemics. If the labourers stop work, your supply of food and clothes also stops. And you regard them as low class people and vaunt your own culture.

Engrossed in the struggle for existence, they had not the opportunity for the awakening of knowledge. They have worked so long like machines, and the clever educated sections have taken the substantial part of the fruits of their labour. In every country this has been the case. But times have changed. The lower classes are gradually awakening to this fact and making a united front against this, determined to exact their legitimate dues.

Therefore, I say, get yourselves to the task of spreading education among the masses. Tell them, and make them understand: "You are our brothers, a part and parcel of our bodies, and we love you and never hate you". If they receive this sympathy from you, their enthusiasm for work will be increased a hundredfold. Kindle their knowledge with the help of modern science. Teach them history geography, science, literature, and along with these the profound truths of religion. In exchange for that teaching, the poverty of the teachers will also disappear. By mutual exchange both parties will become friendly to each other.

Without sympathy for and co-operation with the masses, there is no well-being for your upper classes. You will be destroyed by internecine quarrels and fights, which you have been having so long. When the masses will wake up, they will come to understand your oppression of them, and by a puff of their mouth you will be entirely blown away. It is they who will then pull it down. Think how at the hands of the Gauls the mighty ancient Roman civilisation crumbled into dust.

Therefore, I say, try to rouse these lower classes from slumber by imparting learning and culture to them. When they will awaken—and awaken one day they must—they also will not forget your good services to them and will remain grateful to you.

* * *

No one can teach spoils everything by thinking that he is teaching. Within man is all knowledge, even in a boy it is so, and it requires only an awakening; and that much is the work of a teacher. We have to do only so much for the boys, that they may learn to apply their own intellect to the proper use of their hands, legs, ears, eyes, etc., and finally everything will become easy.

* 7 *

You cannot teach a child any more than you can grow a plant. All you can do is on the negative side; you can only help. It is manifestation from within; it develops its own nature, you can only take away obstructions.

सत्यमेव जयते

ON WOMEN'S ROLE

I never define anything: still education may be described as a development of faculty, not an accumulation of words; or, as a training of individuals to will rightly and efficiently. So shall we bring to the need of India great fearless women—women worthy to continue the traditions of Sanghamitta, Lila, Ahalya Bai and Mira Bai, women fit to be mothers of heroes, because they are pure and selfless, strong with the strength that comes of touching the feet of God.

* * *

Women must be put in a position to solve their own problems in their own way. No one can or ought to do this for them. And our Indian women are as capable of doing it as any in the world. Our right of interference is limited entirely to giving education.

* * *

In these modern days there is a greater impetus towards higher education on the European lines, and the trend of opinion is strong towards women getting this higher education. Of course, there are some people in India who don't want it, but those who do want it carry the day.

Our religion does not prevent a women from being educated. In the old books we find that the universities were equally resorted to by both girls and boys; but later the education of the whole nation was neglected. What can you expect under foreign rule? The foreign conqueror is not there to do good to us; he wants his money. I studied hard for twelve years and became a graduate of Calcutta University; now I can scarcely make five dollars a month in my country. Would you believe it? It is actually a fact. So these educational institutions of foreigners are simply to get a lot of useful, practical slaves for a little money, to turn out a host of clerks, postmasters, telegraph operators, and so on.

* * *

The ideal of womanhood in India is motherhood—that marvellous, unselfish, all-suffering, ever-forgiving mother. The wife walks behind, the shadow. She must imitate the life of the mother; that is her duty. But the mother is the ideal of love; she rules the family, she possesses the family. It is the father in India who thrashes the child and spansk when there is something done by the child, and always the mother who puts herself between the father and the child. You see it is just the opposite here (America). It has become the mother's business to spank the children in this country and poor father comes in between. The two ideals are different. Our way is what we have been taught for ages. You never hear of a mother cursing the child; she is forgiving, always forgiving. Instead of 'Our Father in Heaven', we say 'Mother' all the time; that idea and that word are ever associated in the Hindu mind with infinite love, the mother's love being the nearest approach to God's love in this mortal world of ours.

* * *

In what scriptures do you find statements that women are not competent for knowledge and devotion? In the period of degradation, when the priests made the other castes incompetent for the study of the Vedas, they deprived the women also of all their rights. Otherwise, you will find that in the Vedic or Upanishadic age, Maitreyi, Gargi and other ladies of revered memory had taken the places of Rishis through their skill in discussing about Brahman. In an assembly of a thousand Brahmins who were all erudite in the Vedas, Gargi boldly challenged Yajnavalkya in a discussion about Brahman. When such ideal women were entitled to spiritual knowledge, then why shall not the women have the same privilege now? What has happened again. History repeats itself. All nations have attained greatness by paying proper respect to the women. That country and that nation which do not respect. The women have never become great, nor will ever be in future. The principal reason why your race has so much degenerated is that you have no respect for these living images of Shakti. Manu says: "Where women are respected, there the gods delight; and where they are not, there all works and efforts come to naught". There is no hope of rise for that family or country where there is no esteem for women, where they live in sadness. For this reason, they have to be raised first.

* * *

Then there is the *yajna* or worship of learning. That is the most beautiful of all. Do you know that every book is holy in India, not the Vedas alone but the English and Moham-medan also? All are sacred.

Revive the old arts. Teach your girls fruit-modelling with hardened milk. Give them artistic cooking and sewing. Let them learn painting, photography, the cutting of designs in paper, and gold and silver filigree and embroidery. See that everyone knows something by which she can earn a living in case of need.

And never forget Humanity ! The idea of a humanitarian man-worship exists in nucleus in India, but it has never been sufficiently specialised. Let your students develop it. Make poetry and art of it. Yes, a daily worship at the feet of beggars, after bathing and before the meal, would be wonderful practical training of heart and hand together. On some days, again, the worship might be of children, of your own pupils. Or you might borrow babies and nurse and feed them. What was it that Mataji said to me ? "Swamiji, I have no help. But these blessed ones I worship, and they will take me to salvation !" She feels, you see, that she is serving Uma in the Kumari, and that is a wonderful thought with which to begin a school for girls.

On Language And Art

In every nation you will have to work through their methods. To every man you will have to speak in his own language. Now, in England or in America, if you want to preach religion to them, you will have to work through political methods, *i. e.*, make organisations and societies, with voting, balloting, a president and so on, because that is the language, the method of the Western race. On the other hand, if you want to speak of politics in India, you must speak through the language of religion. You will have to tell them something like this : "The man who cleans his house every morning will acquire such and such an amount of merit. he will go to heaven, or he comes to God". Unless you put it that way, they won't listen to you. It is a question of language. The thing done is the same. But with every race, you will have to speak their language in order to reach their hearts. And that is quite just. We need not fret about that.

* * *

Simplicity is the secret. My ideal of language is my Master's language, most colloquial and yet most expressive. It must express the thought which is intended to be conveyed.

* * *

Every man is capable receiving knowledge if it is imparted in his own language. A teacher who cannot convince others should weep on account of his own inability to teach the people in their own language, instead of cursing or cursing them and dooming them to live in ignorance and supersition, setting up the plea that the higher knowledge is not for them. Speak out the truth boldly, without any fear that it will puzzle the weak.

* * *

In our country, owing to all learning being in Sanskrit from the ancient times, there has arisen an immeasurable gulf between the learned and common folk. All the great personages, from Buddha down to Chaitanya and Ramakrishna, who came for the well-being of the world, taught the common people in the language of the people themselves. Of course, scholarship is an excellent thing; but cannot scholarship be displayed through any other medium than a language that is stiff and unintelligible, that is unnatural artificial ? Is there no room for art in the spoken language ? What is the use of creating an unnatural language to the exclusion of the natural one ? Do you not think out your scholastic researches in the language which you are accustomed to speak at home ? Why then do you introduce such a queer and unwieldy thing when you proceed to put them in black and white ? The language in which you think philosophy and science in your mind, and argue with others in public—is not that the language for writing philosophy and science ? If it is not, how then do you reason out those truths within yourselves and in company of others in that very language ?

* * *

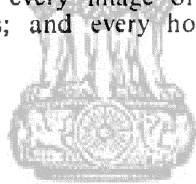
The language in which we naturally express ourselves, in which we communicate our anger, grief or love, there cannot be a fitter language than that. We must stick to that idea,

that manner of expression and that diction. No artificial language can ever have that force, and that brevity and expressiveness, nor admit of being given any turn you please, as the spoken language. Language must be made like pure steel; turn and twist it any way you like, it is again the same; it cleaves a rock in twain at one stroke without its edge being turned. Our language is becoming artificial by imitating the slow and pompous movement -- and index of a nation's progress.

Language is the vehicle of ideas. It is the ideas that are of prime importance; language comes after. Does it look well to place a monkey on a horse that has trappings of diamonds and pearls? Just look at Sanskrit. Look at the Sanskrit of the Brahmins, at Sabara Swami's Commentary on the Mimamsa philosophy, the Mahabhashya of Patanjali and, finally, at the Sanskrit of comparatively recent times. You will at once understand that so long as a man is alive he talks a living language, but when he is dead he speaks a dead language. The nearer death approaches the more does the power of original thinking wane the more is there the attempt to bury one or two rotten ideas under a heap of flowers and scents.

This is true not only of language but of all the arts. A building now neither expresses any ideas nor follows any style; the columns are turned till they have all their strength taken out of them. The ornaments pierce the nose and the neck and convert the wearer into a veritable ogress. Again, in music, whether it is singing, or weeping, wrangling, what meaning or purpose it seeks to convey! Nobody, not even the sage Bharata, the originator of dramatic performances, can understand. And what an abundance of intricacies! What labyrinths of flourishes, enough to strain all one's nerves!

Now-a-days there is an indication of correcting this tendency. People will gradually understand that a language or art or music that expresses no meaning and is lifeless is no good. They will understand that the more strength is infused into the national life, the more will language, art and music, etc., become spontaneously instinct with ideas and life. The volume of meaning that a couple of words of everyday use will convey, you may search in vain for it in two thousand set epithets. Then every image of the Deities; every girl decked in ornaments will appear to be a goddess; and every house and room and furniture will be animated with vibration of life.



India's Destiny

In each nation, man or woman represents an ideal consciously or unconsciously being worked out. The individual is the eternal expression of an ideal to be embodied. The collection of such individuals is the nation, which also represents a great ; towards that it is moving. It is, therefore, rightly assumed that to understand a nation you must first understand its ideal, for, each nation refuses to be judged by any other standard than its own.

* * *

We find that Indian race never stood for wealth. Although they acquired immense wealth, perhaps more than any other nation ever acquired, yet the nation did not stand for wealth. It was a powerful race for ages, yet we find that this nation never stood for power, never went out of the country to conquer. Quite content within their own boundaries, they never fought anybody. The Indian nation never stood for imperial glory. Wealth and power, then, were not the ideals of the race.

What then were those ideals? Whether they were wrong or right is not the question we discuss. The Indian nation, among all the children of Man, has believed, and believed intensely, that this life is not real. The real is God, And they must cling unto that God, through thick and thin. In the midst of their degradation, religion came first. The Hindu man drinks religiously, sleeps religiously, walks religiously, marries religiously, robs religiously.

Did you ever see such a country? If you want to set up a gang of robbers, the leader

will have to preach some sort of religion, then formulate some bogus metaphysics, and say that his method is the clearest and quickest way to get God. Then he finds a following : otherwise, not. That shows that the vitality of the race, the mission of the race is religion : and because that has not been touched, therefore the race lives.

See Rome's mission was imperial power, expansion. And as soon as that was touched, Rome fell to pieces, passed out. The mission of Greece was intellect, as soon as that was touched. Greece passed out. Similarly in modern times, each nation has a mission for the world. So long as that mission is not hurt, that nation lives, despite every difficulty. But as soon as its mission is destroyed, the nation collapses.

Now, that vitality of India has not been touched yet. They have not given up that and it is still strong, in spite of all their superstitions. Hideous superstitions are there, most revolting some of them. Never mind. The national life current, the mission of the race, is still there.

* * *

The Indian nation never will be a powerful conquering people, never. They will never be a great political power : that is not their business, that is not the role India has to play in the great harmony of nations. But what has she to play ? God, and God alone. She clings unto that like grim death. Still there is hope there.

So then, after your analysis, you come to the conclusion that all these things, all this poverty and misery, are of no consequence : the man is living still, and therefore there is hope.

* * *

What India is like. It is like a gigantic building all tumbled down in ruins. At first sight, then, there is little hope. It is a nation gone and ruined. But you wait and study, then you see something beyond that. The truth is that so long as the principle, the ideal, of which the outer man is the expression, is not hurt or destroyed, the man lives, and there is hope for that man. If your coat is stolen twenty times, that is no reason why you should be destroyed. You can get a new coat. The coat is unessential. The fact that a rich man is robbed does not hurt the vitality of the man, does not mean death. The man will survive.

* * *

India has always had this magnificent idea of religious freedom. You must remember that freedom is the first condition of growth. What you do not make free, will never grow. The idea that you can make others grow and help their growth, that you can direct and guide them, always retaining for yourself the freedom of the teacher, is nonsense, a dangerous lie which has retarded the growth of millions and millions of human beings in this world. Let men have the light of liberty. That is the only condition of growth.

We, in India, allowed liberty in spiritual matters, and as a result we have a tremendous spiritual power in religious thought, even today. You in the West grant the same liberty in social matters. While ours is a cramped society. You have never given any freedom in religious matters, but with fire and sword have enforced your beliefs, and the result is that religion is a stunted, degenerated growth in the European mind. In India, we have to take off the shackles from society, in Europe, the chains must be taken from the feet of spiritual progress. Then will come a wonderful growth and development of man.

* * *

India has to learn from Europe the conquest of external nature, and Europe has to learn from India the conquest of internal nature. Then there will be neither Hindus nor Europeans. There will be the ideal humanity which has conquered both the natures, the external and the internal. We have developed one phase of humanity, and they another. It is the union of the two that is wanted, 'The word 'freedom' which is the watchword of our religion really means freedom physically, mentally and spiritually.

THE HISTORIC ADDRESS

in

RESPONSE TO WELCOME

At the World's Parliament of Religions, Chicago, 11th September, 1893

Sisters and brothers of America,

It fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome which you have given us. I thank you in the name of the world ; I thank you in the name of the mother of religions ; and I thank you in the name of the millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects.

My thanks, also, to some of the speakers on this platform who, referring to the delegates from the Orient, have told you that these men from far-off nations may well claim the honour of bearing to different lands the Idea of toleration. I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true. I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth. I am proud to tell you that we have gathered in our bosom the purest remnant of the Israelites, who came to Southern India and took refuge with us in the very year in which their holy temple was shattered to pieces by Roman tyranny. I am proud to belong to the religion which has sheltered and is still fostering the remnant of the grand Zoroastrian nation. I will quote to you, brethren, a few lines from a hymn which I remember to have repeated from my earliest boyhood, which is every day repeated by millions of human beings : *‘As the different streams having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so, Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee.’*

The present convention, which is one of the most august assemblies ever held, is in itself a vindication, a declaration to the world, of the wonderful doctrine preached in the Gita : *“Whosoever comes to Me, through whatsoever form, I reach him ; all men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to Me.”* Sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendant, fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it often and often with human blood, destroyed civilisation, and sent whole nations to despair. Had it not been for these horrible demons, human society would be far more advanced than it is now. But their time is come ; and I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honour of this convention may be the death knell of all fanaticism, of all persecutions with the sword or with the pen, and of all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal.

RELIGION NOT THE CRYING NEED OF INDIA

20th September, 1893

Christians must always be ready for good criticism, and I hardly think that you will mind if I make a little criticism. You Christians, who are so fond of sending out missionaries to save the soul of the heathen—why do you not try to save their bodies from starvation? In India, during the terrible famines, thousands died from hunger, yet you Christians did nothing. You erect churches all through India, but the crying evil in the East is not religion—they have religion enough—but it is bread that the suffering millions of burning India cry out for with parched throats. They ask us for bread, but we give them stones. It is an insult to offer them religion; it is an insult to a starving man to teach him metaphysics. In India a priest that preached for money would lose caste and be spat upon by the people. I came here to seek aid for my impoverished people, and I fully realised how difficult it was to get help for heathens from Christians in a Christian land.

BUDDHISM, THE FULFILMENT OF HINDUISM

26th September, 1893

I am not a Buddhist, as you have heard, and yet I am. If China, or Japan, or Ceylon follow the teachings of the Great Master, India worships him as God incarnate on earth. You have just now heard that I am going to criticise Buddhism, but by that I wish you to understand only this. Far be it from me to criticise him whom I worship as God incarnate on earth. But our views about Buddha are that he was not understood properly by his disciples. The relation between Hinduism (by Hinduism, I mean the religion of the Vedas) and what is called Buddhism at the present day, is nearly the same as between Judaism and Christianity. Jesus Christ was a Jew, and Shakyamuni was a Hindu. The Jews rejected Jesus Christ, nay, crucified him, and the Hindus have accepted Shakyamuni as God and worship him. But the real difference that we Hindus want to show between modern Buddhism and what we should understand as the teachings of Lord Buddha, lies principally in this: Shakyamuni came to preach nothing new. He also, like Jesus, came to fulfil and not to destroy. Only, in the case of Jesus, it was the old people, the Jews, who did not understand him, while in the case of Buddha, it was his own followers who did not realise the import of his teachings. As the Jew did not understand the fulfilment of the Old Testament, so the Buddhist did not understand the fulfilment of the truths of the Hindu religion. Again, repeat, Shakyamuni came not to destroy, but he was the fulfilment, the logical conclusion, the logical development of the religion of the Hindus.

The religion of the Hindus is divided into two parts, the ceremonial and the spiritual the spiritual portion is specially studied by the monks.

In that there is no caste. A man from the highest caste and a man from the lowest may become a monk in India and the two castes become equal. In religion there is no caste, caste is simply a social institution, Shakyamuni himself was a monk, and it was his glory that he had the large-heartedness to bring out the truths from the hidden Vedas and throw them broadcast all over the world. He was the first being in the world who brought missionarising into practice—nay, he was the first to conceive the idea of proselytising.

The great glory of the Master lay in his wonderful sympathy for everybody, especially for the ignorant and the poor. Some of his disciples were Brahmins. When Buddha was teaching Sanskrit was no more the spoken language in India. It was then only in the books of the learned. Some of Buddha's Brahmin disciples wanted to translate his teaching into Sanskrit, but he distinctly told them, "I am for the poor, for the people: let me speak in the tongue of the people." And so to this day the great bulk of his teachings are in the vernacular of the day in India.

Whatever may be the position of philosophy, whatever may be the position of metaphysics, so long as there is such a thing as death in the world, so long as there is such a thing as weakness in the human heart, so long as there is a cry going out of the heart of man in his very weakness, there shall be a faith in God.

On the philosophic side the disciples of the Great Master dashed themselves against the eternal rocks of the Vedas and could not crush them, and on the other side they took away from the nation that eternal God to which every one, man or woman, clings so fondly. And the result was that Buddhism had to die a natural death in India. At the present day there is not one who calls himself a Buddhist in India, the land of its birth.

But at the same time, Brahminism lost something—that reforming zeal, that wonderful sympathy and charity for everybody, that wonderful leaven which Buddhism had brought to the masses and which had rendered Indian society so great that a Greek historian who wrote about India of that time was led to say that no Hindu was known to tell and no Hindu woman was known to be unchaste.

Hinduism cannot live without Buddhism nor Buddhism, without Hinduism. Then realise what the separation has shown to us, that the Buddhists cannot stand without the brain and philosophy of the Brahmins, nor the Brahmin without the heart of the Buddhist. This separation between the Buddhists and the Brahmins is the cause of the downfall of India. That is why India is propulated by three hundred millions of beggars, and that is why India has been the slave of conquerors for the last thousand years. Let us then join the wonderful intellect of the Brahmin with the heart, the noble soul, the wonderful humanising power of the Great Master.

ADDRESS AT THE FINIAL SESSION

27th September, 1893

The World's Parliament of Religions has become an accomplished fact, and the merciful Father has helped those who laboured to bring it into existence, and crowned with success their most unselfish labour.

My thanks to those noble souls whose large hearts and love of truth first dreamed this wonderful dream and then realised it. My thanks to the shower of liberal sentiments that has overflowed this platform. My thanks to this enlightened audience for their uniform kindness to me and for this appreciation of every thought that tends to smooth the friction of religions. A few jarring notes were heard from time to time in this harmony. My special thanks to them, for they have, by their striking contrast, made the general harmony the sweeter.

Much has been said of common ground of religious unity. I am not going just now to venture my own theory. But if any one here hopes that this unity will come by the triumph of any one of the religions and the destruction of the others, to him I say, "Brother, yours is an impossible hope." Do I wish that the Christian would become Hindu? God forbid. Do I wish that the Hindu or Buddhist would become Christian? God forbid.

The seed is put in the ground, and earth and air and water are placed around it. Does the seed become the earth, or the air, or the water? No. It becomes a plant, it develops after the law of its own growth, assimilates the air, the earth and the water, converts them into plant substance, and grows into a plant.

Similar is the case with religion. The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth.

If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity, and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance: "Help and not Fight". Harmony and Peace and not Dissension".

WHY WE DISAGREE

15th September, 1893

I will tell you a little story. You have heard the eloquent speaker who has just finished say, "Let us cease from abusing each other," and he was very sorry that there should be always so much variance.

But I think I should tell you a story which would illustrate the cause of this variance. A frog lived in a well. It had lived there for a long time. It was born there and brought up there, and yet was a little, small frog. Of course, the evolutionists were not there then to tell us whether the frog lost its eyes or not, but, for our story's sake, we must take it for granted that it had its eyes, and that it every day cleansed the water of all the worms and bacilli that lived in it with an energy that would do credit to our modern bacteriologists. In this way it went on and became a little sleek and fat. Well, one day another frog that lived in the sea came and fell into the well.

"Where are you from?"

"I am from the sea.

"The sea! How big is that? Is it as big as my well?" and he took a leap from one side of the well to the other.

"My friend," said the frog of the sea, "how do you compare the sea with your little well?"

Then the frog took another leap and asked, "Is your sea so big?"

"What nonsense you speak, to compare the sea with your well!"

"Well, then," said the frog of the well, "nothing can be bigger than my well; there can be nothing bigger than this; this fellow is a liar, so turn him out."

That has been the difficulty all the while.

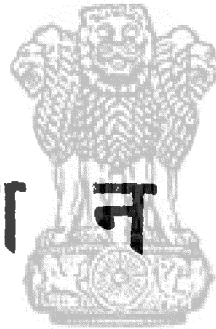
I am a Hindu. I am sitting in my own little well and thinking that the whole world is my little well. The Christian sits in his little well and thinks the whole world is his well. The Mohammedan sits in his little well and thinks that is the whole world. I have to thank you of America for the great attempt you are making to break down the barriers of this little world of ours, and hope that, in the future, the Lord will help you to accomplish your purpose.



वि वे का न न्द

स्वामी

शताब्दी
ग्रन्थ



सत्यमेव जयते

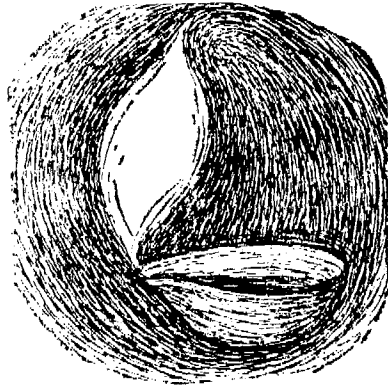




असां ने बहुत हंफू बगाये हन । हुन कोमल भाव धारण करन दा समय नहीं है । कोमल भावां दा साधन करदियां असी लोक जीदे जी मुदे वण रहे हां—रूंदे ढेर दी तरह कोमल बण गये हां । साडे देश लई इस वेले लोड़ है लोहें दी तरह ठोस पट्टे अते करड़ियां नसां बाले सरीरां दी । लोड़ है पक्के इरादे दी जिसदा कोई विरोध न कर सके । लोड़ है अजेही मन दी दृढ़ता दी जेहड़ी ब्रह्माण्ड दे सारे भेदां नूँ पा सकदी होवे । जेकर इस कम नूँ करण वास्ते अथाह समुद्र दी तह तक जाणा पावे अते सदा हर तरह दी मोत दा साहाणा करना पवे तां भी सातूँ इह काम करना ही पवेगा । इहो काम साडे वास्ते इक महान् कम है । अते इस कम नूँ शुरू करन लई तथा इसदियां जड़ां नूँ मजबूत करण लई जरूरत है अर्द्धत दे महान आदरश नूँ हृदय विच धारण करण दी ।

शरधा, शरधा, अपने आप उपर शरधा, परमात्मा दे उपर शरधा—इहो ही उन्नति करण दा साधन है । जेकर पुराणां विच कहे गये तैती करोड़ देवता उपर अते विदेशियां ने विच विच जिन्हा देवतां नूँ तुहाड़े अन्दर घर करा दिता है उन्हा सारियां ऊपर भी जेकर तुहाड़ी शरधा होवे पर आपणे आप उते न होवे तां भी तुहाडा कल्याण नहीं हो सकदा । अपने आप उते शरधा करना सिक्खो । आत्म विश्वास दे बल नास अपने पैरां उते खड़े हो जाओ अते ताकतवर बणो । इस समय सातूँ ऐसे दी लोड़ है । असी भी तीह करोड़ भारतवासी हजारों वरहियां तो मुठ्ठा भर विदेशियां दे आधीन अते: पैरां थले कुचले जाण क्योँ । इस दा इह ही कारण है साडे ऊपर राज करण बलियाँ विच सी आत्म विश्वास, अपने आप ते भरोसा । परन्तु साडे विच इह गल्ल नहीं सी ।...इस वास्ते वेदान्त दे अर्द्धत भावां दे परचार करन दी लोड़ है जिसदे नाल लोकां विच जागृति पैदा हो जावे अतै ओह आपणी आत्मा दी महत्ता समझ सकण ।

—'वेदान्त का मिशन' पर भाषण पंजाबी में ['भारत में विवेकानन्द' पुस्तक में]



अम्बास्तोत्रम्

का त्वं शुभे शिवकरे मुखदुःखहस्ते
आघूणितं भवजलं प्रबलोभिर्भंगं
शान्तिं विधातुमिह किं बहुधा विभगनां
मातः प्रयस्तपरमासि सर्वेव विद्महे ॥१॥

[हे कल्याणमयी मां मुख और दुख तुम्हारे दो दो हाथ हैं, तुम कौन हो ? संसाररूपी जल, प्रचण्ड तरंग-समूह के द्वारा घूर्णयमान हो रहा है। तुम क्या सदा नाना प्रकार से भग्न शान्ति को जयंत में प्रतिष्ठित करने के लिए यहां चेष्टा करने में मग्न हुए हो ॥१॥]

सम्पादयन्त्यधिरतं त्वविरामवृत्ता
या वं स्थिता कुतफलं त्वकृतस्य नेत्री ।
सा मे भवत्वनुविनं वरवा भवानी
जानाम्यहं ध्रुवमियं घृतकर्मपाशा ॥२॥

[जो नियम क्रियाशील देवी सदा कुतकर्म के फल को नियमित रूप से संयोजित करती हुई अवस्थित है, (जिनके कर्मों का क्षय हो गया है उनको) जो मोक्ष-पद को ले जाती हैं, वही भवानी मेरे प्रति सदा वरप्रदायिनी हो। मैं निश्चित जानता हूं, वे कर्म-रूपी रज्जू को धारण किए हुए हैं ॥२॥]

किं वा कृतं किमकृतं च कपाललेखः
 किं कर्म वा फलमिहास्ति हि यां विना भोः ।
 इच्छा गुणनियमिता नियमाः स्वतन्त्रं—
 यस्या सदा भवतु सा शरणं समाप्ता ॥३॥

[(हे नारायण !) इस जगत में जिनके बिना धर्म या अधर्म अथवा कपाल की भाग्य-रेखाएं या कर्म या (उसका) फल—ये सब कुछ भी हो नहीं सकते हैं, जिनकी स्वाधीन इच्छा-रूपी रज्जु द्वारा सारे नियम परिचालित हो रहे हैं, वही आदि-कारण स्वरूपा देवी सदा हमारी आश्रयस्वरूप हो ॥३॥]

सन्तानयन्ति जलधिं जनिमृत्युजालं
 सम्भावयन्त्यधिकृतं विकृतं विभग्नम् ।
 यस्या विभूतय इहा मितशक्तिपाला
 नाश्रित्य तां च व कुतः शरणं व्रजामः ॥४॥

[इस संसार में जिनकी अपरिमित शक्तिशाली विभूतियां जन्म-मृत्युजालरूपी समुद्र का विस्तार कर रही हैं और अविकारी वस्तु को विकृत और भग्न कर रही हैं, बोलो उनका आश्रय न लेकर किनकी शरण लेंगे ॥४॥]

मित्रे रिपौ त्यन्निषमं तव पद्मनेत्रं
 स्वस्थे सुखे स्वचित्तस्तव हस्तपातः ।
 छाया मृतेस्तव बया त्वमृतं मातः
 मंचन्तु मां न परमे शुभदृष्टयस्ते ॥५॥

[शत्रु और मित्र सब के प्रति ही तुम्हारे पद्मनेत्र समान भाव से निक्षिप्त हो रहे हैं, सुखी और दुःखी सब व्यक्तियों को तुम समान भाव से हाथ दे रही हो; अग्रि मां, मृत्यु की छाया और अमृत या जीवन—ये दोनों ही तुम्हारी दया है। अग्रि परमे, तुम्हारी शुभ दृष्टि मेरा परित्याग न करे ॥५॥]

श्याम्बा शिवा च गुणनं मम हीनबुद्धेः
 बोध्या विधर्तुमिव यामी जगद्विधात्रीम् ।
 चिन्त्यं धिया सुधरणं स्वभयप्रतिष्ठं
 सेवा परैरभिनुतं शरणं प्रपद्ये ॥६॥

[वह कल्याणकारिणी माता कहां और हीनबुद्धि मेरे ये स्तववाक्य कहां ? मैं अपने इस (क्षुद्र) दो हाथों से जगत की विधात्री को जैसे पकड़ने के लिये उद्यत हो रहा हूँ। लक्ष्मी जिनका चिन्तन करती हैं, जिनमें मुक्ति प्रतिष्ठित है, सेवा परायण जनगण जिनकी वन्दना करते हैं मैंने उन्हीं सुन्दर पादपथों का आश्रय लिया है ॥६॥]

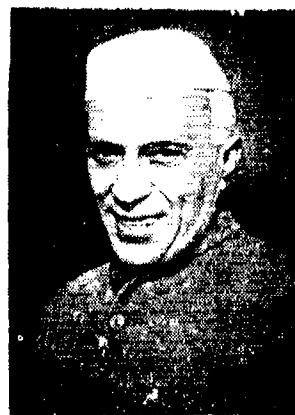
या मां चिराय विनयस्यतिदुःमार्गे
 रासिद्धितः स्वकलितैर्ललितैर्बिलासैः ।
 या मे मतिं सुविबधे सततं धरण्यां
 साम्बा शिवा मम गतिः सफले फले वा ॥७॥

[जो सिद्धिलाभ तक सदा-सर्वदा मुझे अपनी मनोहर लीला द्वारा अति दुःखमय रास्ते से ले जा रही है, इस पृथ्वी पर सदा मेरी बुद्धि को उत्तम रूप से चला रही है, मैं सफल ही होऊँ, या निष्फल ही होऊँ, वे कल्याणमयी जननी ही मेरी गति है ॥७॥]

—कवितावली (स्वामी विवेकानन्द), पृष्ठ ३८—४१

विवेकानन्द सन्देश आज भी उतना
ही सत्ययुक्त है जितना उनके
अपने समय में था

—नेहरू



स्वामी जी, बहनों, भाईयों और बच्चों। मुझ से कहा
कहा गया है कि एक सभापति का भाषण दूँ (Presid-
ential Address)। मेरे समझ में नहीं आता कि मैं
आपसे क्या कहूँगा या कोई भी क्या कहे ऐसे मौके पर।
शायद सबमें अच्छा होता, सबसे अच्छा (Presidential
Address) होता कि आपको स्वामी विवेकानन्द के
शब्द ही सुनाये जाते, क्योंकि जो कुछ वे कहते थे और
लिखते थे उसमें जान भरी होती थी और कोई उसका
अनुवाद करे, किसी और भाषा में आपको बताये तो वह
बेजान हो जाती है बात, क्योंकि विवेकानन्द एक अजीब
आदमी थे जैसे जाहिर है और हम सब जानते ही हैं कि
भारत में जो बड़े-बड़े महापुरुष हुये हैं पुराने जमाने से
और उन बड़े-बड़े महापुरुषों में विवेकानन्द स्वामी की
गिनती होती है और हमेशा जो बड़े-बड़े होते हैं वे खाली
एक हवा में बड़े नहीं होते पर समय में, समय के अनुकूल
बातें कहते हैं, जो बहुत ही उसको देखकर। पुरानी बातें,
पुराने सिद्धान्त और पुरानी बातों को नई दुनिया में मिला-

ते हैं। इसलिये उनका कहना, उनका आदेश एकदम पकड़
लेता है। अगर हम पुरानी बातें आपसे कहें तो आपको
अच्छी लगे, सुन्दर लगे और आप उसे सुनकर उसमें
विश्वास भी करें, मगर उसमें कोई पकड़ नहीं होती, अगर
आपसे खाली नई बातों की रिजबत कहें जैसे कि जो
(Politicians) राजनीति में काम करने वाले कहते हैं
उसमें आपको दिलचस्पी हो जैसे कि आपको आजकल की
बातों में दिलचस्पी होती है और हरेक को होती है लेकिन
उसमें कुछ गहराई नहीं होती, कुछ पकड़ नहीं होती और
इसलिए आपको दिलचस्प जरूर हो मगर आप थोड़ी ही
देर में बाद में उसे भूल जाते हैं। तो विवेकानन्द में दोनों
ही बातें थी, यानि बुनियादी बातें पुरानी बातें पुरानी
हमारी जो है इल्म है उस पर गढ़ हुए और आजकल की
दुनिया को देखकर वे लोगों को समझाते थे, और जो
समझाते थे वे थी खास उसकी आवाज। वे भारती में
भारत की विद्या में, भारत के ज्ञान में भरे हुए थे, लेकिन
फिर भी ऐसा न था कि वह खाली भारत में बंधी हुई हो,

इसलिए उनकी आवाज और देशों में भेजी गई और वहां भी उसका असर हुआ।

यहां बहुत सारे बच्चे बैठे हैं मुझ से कोई पूछे कि बच्चों को तुम क्या कहो, कि किस की तरफ देखकर सीखें बहुत सारी बातें हैं उनके सीखने की, लेकिन शायद मैं आपके सामने कोई नाम न रख सकूँ, भारत के इतिहास में से, जो इस तरह से मौजूद हो, ठीक हो, जैसे स्वामी विवेकानन्द जी के। उनको देखें, उनको पढ़ें, उससे बहुत बातें सीखें विशेषकर सीखें एक, जो बात उसमें सबसे अधिक मानी हुई थी, उसमें एक बड़ी भारती ताकत, भारती शक्ति थी, लेकिन जाहिर वह शक्ति के तौर पर होती थी। एक शक्ति थी, बड़ी ताकत थी लेकिन एक-एक शब्द में ताकत है और उस ताकत का प्रयोग इस तरह किया कि जवानी के उमर में ही उनका देहान्त हो गया। ४० वर्ष के भी नहीं हुए थे और इन ४० वर्षों के पहिले ही उन्होंने सारी भारत को हिला दिया, दुनिया के लोगों को, दुनिया के हिस्सों में और उनके मन पर भी असर डाला क्योंकि उन्होंने देखा कि भारत एक दुर्बल देश हो गया है, भारत के लोग अकलमन्द होते हैं तेज दिमाग हो, डाक्टर हो इंजीनियर हो, सब अच्छी बातें हैं लेकिन दुर्बल हैं, और पहली बात जो एक देश में चाहिए वह जान है, न हो तो उसकी सारी अकल, विद्या कमजोर हो जाती है, चुनावचे उन्होंने जो सबक सिखाया वह एक जान देने का, देश में व्यक्तियों में, और देश भर में और जो थोड़ा सा उन्होंने सिखाया फिर-फिर के हिन्दुस्तान भर में उनका बड़ा जबरदस्त असर हुआ।

उसके बाद महात्मा गांधी जी आये थे। बहुत सारी बातें उन्होंने बतायीं। सबसे बड़ी सबक थी अभय रहने की। वही बात जो स्वामी विवेकानन्द ने कही डरना नहीं, अभय होना क्योंकि जो आदमी जो अभय होता है, उसके लिए और बातें कहीं जरा आसान होती हैं। मगर भय-भीत हो जाये डर जाये उसके फिर अकल वगैरह सब कमजोर हो जाते हैं। जो आदमी अभय है उसको छिपकर काम करने का जरूरत नहीं होती। जैसे कि हम सब लोग बाज बातें करने में क्षमति हैं, बाज बातें छिपाते हैं छोटी मोटी बातें, उसके मायने क्या है कि हम डरते हैं, अपने में,

औरों से तौयह सबसे बड़ी बात है, स्वामी जी ने बताया कि अभय होना ताकत, शक्ति हमें में देश में हो। मैं तो आपसे यही कहूँगा कि आप लोगों को प्रौर खासकर हमारे नवयुवकों को मौका मिले, कुछ स्वामी जी के विचारों को जानने का। हमें यह सौभाग्य प्राप्त नहीं हो सकता कि हम उनकी आवाज सुन सकें लेकिन कम से कम जो उन्होंने सिखाया लिखा उसको तो हम पढ़ सकते हैं सीख सकते हैं और आप देखेंगे कि उसमें भी उनके शब्दों में शक्ति है, य जो पढ़ता है उसे आश्चर्य होता है आजकल यह, हमारा देश एक संकट में है प्रौर बड़े-बड़े प्रश्न आते हैं जिनको हमें हल करना है, एकदम से नहीं, कोई चाबी तो नहीं है कि हम चाबी को घुमाकर खोल दें और संकट हल हो जाये, लेकिन एक बड़ी आजमाईश है हमारे लिए, जो कि हलके हलके इस आजमाईश को हम पूरा करेंगे जो ऐसे मौके पर और भी आवश्यक हो जाता है कि हम निडर होकर इन बातों का सामना करें और इस तरह करने से जो बातें हमें दबाती है वो हट जायेंगी, तो इस मौके पर कहूँगा आपसे कि हम स्वामी जी से कुछ रोशनी लें, अपने मन में, और उस पर हमारा रास्ता ढ़ंडना कुछ आसान हो जायेगा क्योंकि स्वामी जी ने दोनों बातें मिलायी थी। भारत का जो सबसे बड़ा प्रश्न है, यानि भारत के सामने यह है कि किस मदियों से हम अपनी जड़ को क्या कहूँ मैं आपसे हमारी आप सबों की जिस जमीन में हम पैदा हुए जमीन का मतलब आज के इस भारत के हजार वर्ष पीछे इसकी कहानी है, भारत के विचार है, भारत का सोचना एक बड़ी भारी चीज है, एक बहुत बड़ा इतिहास है भारत के हजारों पुरुष गुजर गये, उसको हम छोड़ नहीं सकते क्यों छोड़ें, एक देश कीमती चीज है कैसे छोड़ इसे, इससे हम सीख सकते हैं लेकिन उसी साथ जो आदमी हमेशा प्राचीन समय को देखता है उससे बहुत कुछ अच्छी बातें सीख लें। लेकिन अगर आजकल के दुनिया को नहीं समझता तो वह पुराने जमाने में तो नहीं है, हम हैं आजकल के दुनियों में हम पुराने जमाने में पूरा रहना चाहें तो नहीं रह सकते, दुनिया दूसरी है और आजकल के जमाने में रहना चाहे कुछ उस जड़ के जिसमें हम पैदा हुए उससे कुछ सीखें कुछ

समझे बूझे हम कुछ ऊपरी आदमी हो जाते हैं। बगैर जड़ के कोई द्रव्य हो, बिना जड़ के कोई पेड़ हो गया खाली हम जड़ हो तो काफी नहीं, और बगैर जड़ के पेड़ के पेड़ हो को हिस्सा तो भी काफी नहीं है। दोनों बातों की जरूरत है, कि हम भारत के दोनों बातों का समन्वय करें, मिलाये। पुरानी दुनिया का पुरानी विचारों का जो कि आवश्यक हैं मैं समझता हूँ और नई दुनिया को समझो और आगे बढ़ो और कि यह बड़ा प्रश्न भारत के लिए हल करने का है यों तो हमारे राजनिति में, और जगह बरना, कुछ न कुछ नई नई बातें होती जाती हैं यही है कि हम अगर आजकल की दुनिया से अलग हो जायें, अलग होकर भी कर सकते हैं। मैं क्यों कहूँ किसी से कि नहीं कर सकता, लेकिन मैं अपना मन आपको बताता हूँ कि मेरी मन की भावना, अपनी समझ में आती है मुझे दुनियों में जो प्रश्न है उसका सामना करना है, और इस तरह से जहाँ तक बन पड़े जिसका अपनी काम करने की शक्ति हो औरों की सेवा करना देश की, जनता की दुनिया की जो कुछ कहिये, क्योंकि आजकल यह सब बातें मिल सी गई हैं लेकिन आजकल का समझना और करना अभी पूरी तौर से हो सकता है, जब हम अपनी पुरानी जड़ों को देखें भारत की और उससे सीखें और स्वामी विवेकानन्द जी ने दोनों बातों की हैं। पूरी उन्होंने भारत की विद्या, इत्म जो कुछ पुराना था, उसको समझा, बहुत ऊँचे ऊँचे दर्जे के महापुरुष थे। आजकल वो दुनिया को समझे और इसीलिए उनके शब्दों में इतनी शक्ति थी और उसी के पीछे भारतीय लोगों की शक्ति होनी चाहिए, यह बड़ा विचार, कि हमारे भारतीय लोगो में शक्ति होनी चाहिए बगैर शक्ति के इन्सान निकम्मा है, शक्ति खाली नहीं जो

पहलवान की शक्ति हो, वे भी अच्छा है, कोई भी शक्ति अच्छी है, दिल की शक्ति, मन की शक्ति, एक मजबूती, एक सिर झुकाना नहीं गलत बात की तरफ ऐसी शक्ति होनी चाहिए जब हमें कोई रोक नहीं सकता आगे बढ़ने में।

बहुत हमारे देश में कठिनाइयाँ हैं एवं हैं कमजोरियाँ हैं कैसे उनका मुकाबला करें उनसे खाली दूर से दुश्मन को देखना काफी नहीं। हम कहते हैं कि चीनी लोग हम पर हमला करते हैं, ठीक है हमले का मुकाबला करना है, करेंगे। लेकिन फिर एक इरादा कठिन होता है, अपनी कमजोरी का मुकाबला करना। रक्षक लोगों में ऐसी बातें होती हैं जो लोग सबसे ज्यादा दिल में कमजोर होते हैं, अपने दिल की कमजोरी छिपाने के लिए आवाज अँचा उठाते हैं जिससे छिप जाय दिल की कमजोरी चिल्लाने से नहीं छिप जाती है। पहले हमें अपने को तगड़ा करना है सही रास्ते पर चलकर मन को शुद्ध करना है और इन बातें करने में जैसे मैंने आपन से कहा कि एक नमूना जो मुझे नजर आता है जो किसी से कहो किसी बच्चे से कहो, तुम अपने सामने रखो, सीखों तो वह स्वामी विवेकानन्द का है उसमें यह सब बातें मिलती हैं और थोड़े से उम्र में कितना उन्होंने भारत को हिला दिया था, खाली थोड़े दिनों के लिए नहीं लेकिन उसके गुजर जाने के बाद खत्म हो जाय ऐसा नहीं। मैं तो आपसे कुछ कहने आया नहीं लेकिन अपनी थढ़ा पेश करने आया है। स्वामी जी के लिए और यह आशा करने के लिए कि आजकल के लोग भविष्य के लिए और सारे देश के लिए विशेषकर हमारे बच्चे नौजवान अपने सामने स्वामी विवेकानन्द जी का याद रखेंगे और सीखेंगे जो कुछ उन्होंने लिखा है और उनकी कहानी से।

अपनीयाँ रंगों नूँ ताकत वर बनाओ। सानू लोहे दी पट्टियाँ ते फौलाद दीयाँ रंगों दी लोड़ है। असीं बोहत दिन सौ चक्के हाँ। हुण होर सौण दी लोड़ नहीं है। हुण पराँ हर खलो जाओ। अते मनुष्य बणो: असाँनू हुण अगेहे धर्म दी लोड़ है जिस दे नाल असीं मनुष्य बणीये। असाँनू मनुष्य बनाणे वाली सिखया चार चक्फेरे फलाण दी लोड़ है। सच्च दी पछाण करन दा ऐह उपाये है जेहदे नाल तुहाडे अन्दर शरीर, मन, अते आत्मा दी कमजोरी आवे उहनुँ जेहर समझ के छड देयो। ओहदे बिच्च त्रिवि-प्रता है, सच्च ज्ञान देणे वाला है। सच्च नू जरूर ही बलवाण होना चाहिदा है जेड़ा हिरदे दे हनेरे नू दूर करके ओस दे बिच्च तेज दा प्रकाश कर देवे।

मैं अपनी जति दे नाल प्रेम करदा हाँ। मैं तुहानू हीण अते वर्तमान अवस्था तों नीवाँ नहीं देख सकदा। सानू तुहाडे वास्ते अते सब दे वास्ते शोर मचीणा पेवेगा। उपनिषदाँ दीयाँ गाल्लाँ तुहाडे साह्याणे हण, ओहणा दे नाल चल्लो, ओस नाल जरूर ही भारत दा उधार होयगा।

—‘भारत में विवेकानन्द,’ द्वितीय संस्करण, पृष्ठ १६६—१६७

भारत की साधना आत्म-परिचय की है। आत्म-परिचय के द्वारा ही हमारी संस्कृति समृद्ध होती आयी है। विश्व का परिचय हमें आघात के द्वारा होता आया है। लेकिन विश्व-परिचय को हम आत्ममात् कर सके हैं अपने को ही नये ढंग से पहचान कर।

महाभारत के कौरव असल में कौन थे ? पांडव कौन थे ? श्रीकृष्ण के यादव इन दोनों से अलग कैसे थे ? हम यथार्थ में कुछ नहीं जानते। विश्व-कुटुम्ब के रूपाल से हमने इन सबको एक दूसरे के पारिवारिक बनाकर ही देखा। महाभारत के भीषण संघर्ष के बाद हस्तिनापुर में एकछत्री साम्राज्य स्थापित हुआ। मयासुर चीन से स्थापत्यकला ले आया। श्रीकृष्ण की समन्वयी दृष्टि काम करने लगी, किन्तु आंतरिक क्षीणता दूर न हो सकी। हमें आत्म-परिचय पाने के लिए पाँच सौ या हजार वर्ष व्यतीत करने पड़े और आखिरकार बुद्ध और महावीर जैसे ज्ञानी ध्यानी कर्मयोगियों ने संस्कृतिव्यापी आत्म-

अलैकजान्डर आया, मोहम्मद बिन कासिक आया। पठान आये, मुगल आये, और उन्होंने हमें जबरदस्ती अरबस्तान की धर्म जागृति के साथ और ईरान की संस्कृति-समृद्धि के साथ परिचय कराया।

लेकिन इस परिचय से हम तब लाभ उठा सके जब हमारे सन्तोंने सगुण-निगुण भक्ति मार्ग के द्वारा आत्म-परिचय की साधना हमें सिखाई।

जबतक हम भारत के बाहर जाते रहे, हमारे अन्दर ताकत और ताजगी बढ़ती रही। किन्तु हम लोगों ने आत्मशुद्धि के लिए बीजशुद्धि के लिए कूपमंडूक बनना पसन्द किया। अटककी अटक पैदा करके उसीके अन्दर हम अटक गये। और भगवान को समुद्र की दिशा से आक्रमणकारियों को भेजकर हमें विश्व-परिचय कराना पड़ा।

यह प्रक्रिया सन १८५७ तक चली। हमारे यहां फिरंगी आये, वलंदा आये फ्रांसीसों आये और अंग्रेज भी

नव-भारत का उद्बोधक संन्यासी

(काका कालेलकर)

सत्यमेव जयते

परिचय पाया। भारतीय महायुद्ध के फलस्वरूप भगवान महावीर की अहिंसा और बुद्ध भगवान का अवेर भारतीय आत्मा को जंचा। भगवान महावीर ने तपस्ता का रास्ता लिया और बुद्ध भगवान ने मध्यम मार्ग की परिब्रज्या धारण की। गौतम ने स्वयं मगधकोशल में और उत्तर भारत में विहार किया। लेकिन उनके भिक्षु शिष्यों ने देवानाम प्रिय अशोक की प्रेरणा से पूर्व, हस्चिम, दक्षिण, उत्तर—सब दिशाओं में संचार किया, जिसका असर सारे एशिया पर हुआ और पश्चिम के मनीषियों के ऊपर भी हो रहा है।

अशोक के बाद हमारे यहां फिर से ग्लानि आई। जहां हम पहले देश-विदेश के लोग हमारे यहां आने लगे।

आये। और हमारे यहां 'टोपीवालों' का राज्य हुआ। उनकी कवायद और उनकी तिजारतने हमें परास्त किया। हमारे यहाँ पश्चिमी विद्या के विश्वविद्यालयों की स्थापना हुई और हम आ मविश्वास खोकर किर्कतव्यतामूढ़ बन गये। पश्चिम से परिचय तो हुआ, लेकिन उसके सामने हम चकाचौध हो गये।

ऐसे समय अन्तर्मुख होकर आत्मपरिचय कराने का काम जिन मनीषियों ने शुरू किया उनमें आज हम याद करते हैं राजा राममोहन रायको और स्वामी विवेका नन्द को। दोनों की साधना एकसी थी। अन्तर्मुख होकर अपनी आध्यात्मिक पूंजी का जिवन्त परिचय पाना और

पश्चिम में जाकर अपने आत्मविश्वास को प्रगट करना ।

स्वामी विवेकानन्द ने देखा कि अध्यात्म के बिना धर्म निष्प्राण है। उन्होंने यह भी देखा कि गुफा में बंठकर आध्यात्मिक चिन्तन करने से परलोक की साधना शायद हो सकती है किन्तु धर्मजागृति तो लोगों के साथ, हीन-दीन पतित और परित्यक्त दरिद्र नारायण के साथ एक रूप होकर उनकी सेवा के द्वारा ही हो सकती है।

स्वामी विवेकानन्द की पूर्व तैयारी में हम तीन तत्व विशेष देखते हैं—पश्चिम की अंग्रेजी विद्या, ब्रह्म समाज के सामान्य संस्कार और संगीत के प्रति असाधारण अनुराग इस त्रिविध तैयारी के साथ नियति ने उनको रामकृष्ण परम हंस के पास भेजा। परमहंस जैसे आत्मसाक्षात्कारी पुरुष के संसर्ग के बिना नरेन्द्रनाथ की विभूति जाग्रत हो नहीं सकती। परमहंस के साथ उनका सम्बन्ध बढ़ा विचित्र था, मनसे श्रद्धा भी थी और विरोध भी था। गुरु महाराज को उन्होंने अनेक तरह से कसकर देखा। अपनी श्रद्धा को भी पूरा अवकाश दिया। और हम कह सकते हैं कि गुरुमहाराज ने अपने शिष्योत्तम को पहचान कर स्वयं ही उसको घेर लिया। क्योंकि उसके द्वारा उन्हें युगकार्य करना था। स्वामी जी की आध्यात्मिक तैयारी गुरुमहाराज के सहवास में पूरी हुई। किन्तु उनके मिशन के लिए इतना पर्याप्त नहीं था।

एक अज्ञात संन्यासी के रूप में उन्होंने सारे भारत वर्ष की यात्रा की। मान-अपमान सहन किये। गरीबों के घर की रोटी खाई। हिन्दू, मुसलमान, ईसाई जैसा कोई भेद नहीं रखा और भारत माता के हृदय को और उसके भावी को पूर्णरूप से देख लिया। अब भारत के भाग्य ने उन्हें अमरीका भेजा। जबतक अमरीका उनका स्वीकार न करे, दुर्भाग्य भारत पर उनका पूरा असर नहीं हो सकता। रवीन्द्रनाथ के बारे में मैं हम यही देखते हैं। उन्हें नोबल प्राइज देकर पश्चिम ने उनकी प्रतिभा को मान्यता दी, तभी जाकर उस विश्वकवि के अन्दर वर्तमान भारत ने अपना गौरव देखा। गांधी जी को भी आत्म-शक्ति का परिचय स्वयं पागे के लिये और दुनिया को कराने के लिए दक्षिण अफ्रीका जाना पड़ा। जब स्वामी जी विश्व-धर्म-परिषद के लिए अमरीका गये तब उनकी

उम्र तीस साल की थी। यकायक दुनिया के सासने वे चमके और उसके बाद नौ साल के अन्दर उन्होंने अपना जीवन कार्य पूरा किया। ज्ञानयोग, भक्तियोग, राजयोग आदि ग्रन्थों के द्वारा और अपने जीवन के उत्कट कर्मयोग के द्वारा स्वदेश को और पश्चिम के देशों को प्रभावित किया। और अपने उत्कट हृदय को व्यक्त करने वाले पत्रों के द्वारा उन्होंने भारत के अनेकानेक नययुवकों को जगाया पश्चिम से वे विशेष धन तो नहीं ला सके, लेकिन पश्चिम से उनको निष्ठावान शिष्य काफी मिले। इसका भी असर भारत के लोक मानसपर सविशेष हुआ। जहाँ गोरे लोग हमारे मालिक, सेठ और गुरु ही बन बैठे थे, वहाँ उनको भारत की शिष्यभाव से शुश्रूषा करते देखकर भारत का न्यूनगंड—Inferity Complex दूर हुआ। और यह भी एक बड़ी सिद्धि थी। मिशनरी लोगो ने हमारे धर्म के और हमारे समाज के छोटे-बड़े सच्चे भूँटे सब दोषों की और ऊँगलियाँ घुमाकर हमारा तेजोवध किया और हमारे उद्धार के लिए हम लोगों को ईसाई बनाने का कार्य जोरों से चलाया था। सन् १८५७ में लेकर १८९७ तक चालीस बरस में अंग्रेजों ने भारत को राजनैतिक, सामाजिक, शैक्षणिक, औद्योगिक और सांस्कृतिक क्षेत्रों में पूरा-पूरा जीत लिया था। इसके खिलाफ स्वामी जी ने प्रथम आवाज उठाई १८९३ में अमरीका जाकर। और बाद में पश्चिम की बाढ़ हटाने के लिए ही मानों उन्होंने हिंदू धर्म का प्रचार करने वाले अद्वैताश्रम अमरीका में खोले। यह कार्य विशेष रूप से प्रतीकात्मक हीं था। इसका असर पश्चिम पर तो हुआ ही, लेकिन अधिक हुआ भारत के क्षीण हुए आत्मविश्वास पर।

मैं अपने ही बाल्यकाल का और यौवनकाल का जब विचार करता हूँ तब स्वामी विवेकानन्द ने हमारे हृदय पर कैसा जादुई असर किया था उसे याद कर आज भी गद्-गद् होता हूँ। हमारे बचपन में श्रद्धा और बुद्धिवाद का संघर्ष चलता था। पश्चिमी संस्कृति को प्रधानता देनेवाले सुधारक और पश्चिम का अन्ध-विरोध करके पुराने जमाने को फिर से सजीवन करने की वृथा चेष्टा करने वाले दक्षिणानुसी उद्धारकों के बीच दारुण संघर्ष विशेष रूप से बंगाल और महाराष्ट्र में बड़ी तीव्रता से चल रहा था।

पूर्व और पश्चिम का तनाजा तो था ही। ब्राह्मणसमाज, आर्यसमाज और थियोसोफी अपने-अपने ढंग से धर्मजागृति का काम कर रहे थे। इन सब विरोधी प्रवृत्तियों में से भविष्य के लिए पोषक तत्वों को इकट्ठा करके अद्वैत का समन्वय कार्य स्वामी विवेकानन्द ने चलाया। स्वामी जी का अद्वैत केवल दार्शनिक नहीं था। सर्वसमन्वयकारी, दार्शनिक और सामाजिक अद्वैत का पुरस्कार उन्होंने किया। उसके हिंदू धर्म में इस्लाम के प्रति और ईसाई धर्म के प्रति भी आदर ही था।

भारत की यात्रा द्वारा उन्होंने जो देशनिरीक्षण किया था, भारत के इतिहास का रहस्य पाया था और सामाजिक आत्मा को पहचानना था, उसी संबलपर उन्होंने संन्यास आश्रम को एक नया ही रूप दिया। और देश में अनेकानेक अद्वैताश्रम और सेवाश्रम की स्थापना करके सांस्कृतिक उत्थान के लिए रचनात्मक कार्य की नींव डाली। स्वामी जी अधिक जीते तो उन्होंने वेदान्त के विश्व विद्यालय की स्थापना की होती। शिक्षण के द्वारा जीवन पविर्तन और संस्कृति संवर्धन करने का ही उनका सारा प्रयत्न था। उनके कार्य की उस बाजूका कुछ विकास भगिनी निवेदिता ने किया।

मैं तो मानना हूँ कि श्री रामकृष्ण परमहंस, स्वामी विवेकानंद और भगिनी निवेदिता—इन तीन धिभूतियों का त्रिवेणी संगम ही प्रबुद्ध भारत के लिए तीर्थोत्थान प्रयागराज है। भगिनी निवेदिता की ऐतिहासिक, सामाजिक, शैक्षणिक और सांस्कृतिक सेवा द्वारा ही स्वामी विवेकानंद का युगकार्य राष्ट्रीय स्वरूप पकड़ सका। कवि चर रविन्द्रनाथ, योगीराज अरविंद घोष और महात्मा गांधी—तीनों की जीवन दृष्टि पर और युगकार्य पर स्वामी विवेकानंद का असर हम स्पष्ट देखते हैं। और विवेकानंद असर आज भी कितना गहरा है यह यदि देखना हो तो मैं कहूंगा कि हम दो ही छोटे से निबन्ध देखें—एक राजाजी का *The Religion of the Future* और दूसरा डा० राधाकृष्णन का *The Religion we need*.

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति तदा तदा हिन्दू धर्म ने और हिन्दू संस्कृति ने कायाकल्प करके नया और

उज्ज्वलतर रूप धारण किया है। इस हिन्दू संस्कृति का एक विभाग है उसका संन्यास आश्रम। इस आश्रम के इतिहास में उत्थान और पतन के अनेक पहलु पाये जाते हैं। भारतीय संस्कृति का कोई प्रतिभावान इतिहासकार जब संन्यास आश्रम का इतिहास आमूलाग्र लिखेगा, तब हमारे पुरुषों ने जीवन के कैसे कैसे प्रयोग किये थे और सामाजिक जीवन का आध्यात्मिक संगठन करने के लिए कौन-कौन से तत्वों का अनुशीलन किया था, इस सारी हकीकतपर नया ही प्रकाश पड़ेगा। हमारे यहां संन्यासियों के प्रकार कम नहीं हुए हैं। शुक मुनिका एक तरह का संन्यास तो याज्ञवल्क्य का दूसरे ही प्रकार का। बुद्ध और महावीर का संन्यास रुढ़िविनाशक तो शंकराचार्य का संन्यास सब रुढ़ियों को हजम कर नई ही रुढ़ि पैदा करने वाला नव संगठनात्मक।

हमारे यजनमार्गी पूर्वमीमांसा ने संन्यास का सीधा इन्कार किया। और श्रीकृष्ण ने संन्यास आश्रम को यौग बनाकर संन्यासयोग को प्रधानता दी। मैं मानता हूँ कि याज्ञवल्क्य का संन्यास जीवन निष्ठ अधिक था और याज्ञवल्क्य स्वभाव से प्रोटैस्टेंट तो थे ही।

संन्यास आश्रम को निशानरियों का रूप दिया बुद्ध भगवान ने और उसको प्रोत्साहन दिया सम्राट अशोक ने। उन्हीं के समकालीन महावीर स्वामी ने अपने सब साधुओं के द्वारा अहिंसा और तपस्या की प्रयोगशालाएं चलाई। भारत के मध्ययुगीन संतों ने संन्यास के प्रति समाज का आदर कायम रखकर उसकी अनावश्यकता पर ही जोर दिया। संतों का कार्य भक्तिमार्ग के द्वारा और वैष्णव उपासना के द्वारा इतना बढ़ा कि संन्यास आश्रम आश्रम-व्यवस्था का एक उपेक्षित और आश्रित अंग ही बन गया।

हमारे पुरुषों ने संन्यास आश्रम को कलिवर्ज्य कहकर उसे पेन्शन दी ही थी, लेकिन बुद्ध भगवान ने धर्णव्यवस्था को गोण करने के लिए भी भिक्षु संस्था पर भार दिया। उनकी सकलता देखकर शंकराचार्य को संन्यास आश्रम की पुनः स्थापना करनी पड़ी। बहुत से संन्यासियों का केवल दार्शनिक नेतृत्व ही टिक सका। और सामाजिक नेतृत्व शंकराचार्य के चार मठों ने संभाला। शंकराचार्य का काम काफी प्रभावशाली सिद्ध हुआ। लेकिन यह वर्णाश्रम

जाल में फँस जाने के कारण धीरे-धीरे क्षीणप्राण हो गया संतोंका कार्य और पश्चिमी विद्या का असर—दोनों के सामने संन्यास आश्रम की विश्वास के साथ नया रूप दिया स्वामी विवेकानंद ने। कांचन और कामिनी का त्याग— इस एक ही तत्व की प्रधानता देकर, बाकी के सब यति-धर्म के विस्तार की उन्होंने कट छांट की और अपने संन्यासियों की सेवा और धर्म प्रचार की दीक्षा दी।

रामकृष्ण मिशन का कार्य जहाँ जनभाषा बंगाली में चला वहाँ वह जनता तक पहुँच गया। बंगाल के बाहर उन्होंने अंग्रेजी का सहारा लिया इसलिए उनका कार्य आंग्लविद्या विभूषित वर्गों तक ही सीमित रहा। वह बड़े दुर्दैव की बात है।

स्वामी विवेकानंद की जन्मशताब्दी के निमित्त राम-कृष्ण विवेकानंद निवेदिता साहित्य का प्रचार भारत की सब भाषाओं में होगा। और प्रचार करने में गांधी जी के कार्यकर्ताओं की मदद भी अच्छी मिलेगी। इसलिए हमारा खयाल है कि स्वामी विवेकानंद का संदेश और

कार्य भारत की जनता तक अब अधिक ज़ोरों से पहुँचेगा। लेकिन इसके लिए केवल साहित्यका प्रचार काफी नहीं है। मेवाश्रमों की संख्या भी बढ़नी चाहिए।

इसमें भी मैं मानता हूँ कि आज भारत की विशेष आवश्यकता है स्त्री संन्यासिनियों की। काम आसान नहीं है, किंतु समय की वही मांग है। भगिनी निवेदिताने इंग्लैंड की ओर से भारत की जो सेवा की, उसके फलस्वरूप रामकृष्ण मिशन की स्त्री शाखा ज़ोरों से बढ़नी चाहिए। इसका असर बहुत अच्छा और कल्पनातीत होगा।

रवीन्द्रनाथ ठाकुर, अरविंद घोष, स्वामी विवेकानंद और महात्मा गांधी...इन चारों युगपुरुषों के कार्यों की परम्परा अब समन्वित रूप से चलाने के दित आये हैं। यह युग है ही समन्वय का। अद्वैतचार्य गौडपादाचार्य ने कहा ही है और लोग भले ही आपस में लड़ें, हम अद्वैतवादियों का किसी से भगड़ा हो ही नहीं सकता। हमारी भूमिका यव समन्वयकी है। और समन्वय ही युगधर्म है।

आगामी अर्ध शताब्दी के लिए यह जननी मातृभूमि ही मानों तुम्हारी आराध्या देवी बन जाये। इस आधी शताब्दी के लिए अपने मस्तिष्क से अन्यान्य देवी देवताओं को हटाने में भी कुछ हानि नहीं है। अपना सारा ध्यान इसी एक ईश्वर पर लगाओ, देश को जगाओ, जाति को जगाओ, इसी में उस परब्रह्म परमात्मा को देखो। सर्वत्र उसके हाथ हैं, सर्वत्र उसके पैर हैं और सर्वत्र उसके कान हैं। समझ लो, कि अन्यान्य देवी-देवता सो रहे हैं। जिन देवी-देवताओं को देख नहीं पाते हैं, उनके पीछे तो हम बेकार दीड़ें और ईश्वर के जिस विराट रूप को हम अपने चारों ओर देख रहे हैं, उसकी पूजा ही न करें? जब हम इस सामने आये हुए देवता की पूजा कर लेंगे, तभी हम अन्यान्य देवी-देवताओं की पूजा करने योग्य होंगे, अन्यथा नहीं। आधा मोल चलने की तो हममें शक्ति ही नहीं और हम हनुमान जी की तरह एक छलांग में समुद्र पार करने की इच्छा करें? नहीं, ऐसा हो ही नहीं सकता। ये मनुष्य और पशु जिन्हें हम आस-पास और आग पीछे देख रहे हैं, ये ही हमारे देवी-देवता हैं। इन में सबसे पहले पूजा करो अपने देशवासियों की। इनकी सेवा करो, इनका सम्मान करो, ईर्ष्याद्वेष का भाव अपने मन से निकाल दो, यही सच्ची पूजा है। भगड़ा मिटाकर सद्भाव स्थापित करने का ही नाम पूजा है। हमारे लिए यह परम कर्तव्य है और जिसे न करने का फल हम त्यों-हाथ पा रहे हैं। फिर भी हमारी आंखें नहीं खुलती।

—'भारत का भविष्य' पर भाषण ('भारत में विवेकानंद' पुस्तक से)

संन्यासिनी-आश्रम

(काका कालेलकर)

“राजा जनक आदि गृहस्थाश्रमी लोगों ने जिस संन्यासयोग का अनुशीलन किया और जिस संन्यासयोग का पुरस्कार श्री गीता ने भी किया है वह तो एक मार्ग-भीम वृत्ति अथवा साधना है। वह चीज ही अलग है। हम आपसे प्रश्न करना चाहते हैं कि चार वर्ण के साथ चार आश्रम की जो व्यवस्था हिन्दू संस्कृति में पायी जाती है उसका पुरस्कार आप करते हैं या नहीं? आज तक आपने इस बारे में जो लिखा है इस पर से हम इतनी ही समझे हैं कि संन्यास आश्रम के बारे में आपके मन में सामान्यतया आदर है, किन्तु संन्यास आश्रम का आज की परिस्थितियों में आप आवश्यकता देखते नहीं। क्या यह बात सही नहीं है?

“सवाल इसलिए उठा कि आपने स्वामी विवेकानन्द के बारे में लिखते कहा है कि इन दिनों स्त्री-संन्यासिनी के स्वतंत्र वर्ग की आवश्यकता है।”

प्रश्नकर्ता ने ठीक ही पूछा है। मैंने गांधी जी का अभिप्राय स्पष्ट बताया है। उनके मन में संन्यास आश्रम के बारे में आदर था। तो वे भी नहीं चाहते थे कि समाज सेवक गेरुआ वस्त्र धारण कर समाजसेवा करने को निकलें। क्योंकि गेरुआ लिबास सेवा में विघ्नकारक है। सामान्य लोग गेरुआधारी से सेवा नहीं लेते : संन्यासी की सेवा लेने में प्रधर्म समझते हैं। समाज की सेवा परिणीत भी कर सकते हैं और अपरिणीत भी कर सकते हैं। मानसिक संन्यास कोई ले तो कोई उसे मना नहीं करेगा। किन्तु सेवक संन्यास आश्रम की पोशाक न पहने तो अच्छा।

जीवन के अनुभव से मेरी भी राय वही है। लेकिन मैंने यह भी देखा है कि वृत्ति में त्याग वैराग्य आने के बाद उसे दृढ़ करने में गेरुआ कपड़े का उपयोग बहुत कुछ है। मनुष्य के संकल्प में दृढ़ता होनी चाहिये। खास करके

वैराग्य में। लेकिन मनुष्य में कभी-कभी शिथिलता आ जाती है। वैराग्य में ज्वारभाटा पाया जाता है। ऐसे समय गेरुआ कपड़े की सामाजिक प्रत्यूष्ठा मनुष्य को मजबूत रखती है।

शीतकाल के दिनों में जिस तरह घर का वायुमंडल गर्म रखने के लिए अंगीठी की जरूरत होती है उसी तरह समाज के चरित्र की मात्रा उज्ज्वल रखने के लिए संत, मनुष्य, महात्मा और माधु का वर्ग जरूरी है। हमने देखा है कि आश्रम में ब्रह्मचारी संयमी गृहस्थी और संन्यस्त वृत्ति के लोग तो थे ही, किन्तु ऐसे कोई अलग-अलग वर्ग बंधे हुए नहीं थे। युवा ब्रह्मचारी राजन्म ब्रह्मचर्य का संकल्प करने के बाद भी अगर देखें कि उस के लिए दाम्पत्य-जीवन आवश्यक है तो वह वैसा कर सकता था। कोई कहता नहीं उसका-उसका पतन हुआ है। संयमी गृहस्थाश्रमी के बारे में भी आश्रम में यही वृत्ति रहती थी। इसका एक लाभ यह भी है कि आश्रम के व्रतों का पालन सदस्य के लिये सहज था और आश्रमों की प्रतिष्ठा का बोझ लेकर किसी को चलना नहीं पड़ता।

इस मुक्त वातावरण के कारण शिथिलता के खिलाफ कोई दिवाल नहीं रहती थी। इसे आश्रम-जीवन का दोष भी कह सकते हैं और गुण भी कह सकते हैं।

ऐसे सारे अनुभव के परिणाम स्वरूप मेरा अभिप्राय अब तटस्थ है। कोई आदमी ठीक समझे तो गेरुआ वस्त्र धारण करे और उसे निभाने की पूरी-पूरी कोशिश करे। कच्चे वैराग्य के साथ संन्यास लेना और पछताना चरित्र सिद्धि के लिए अच्छा नहीं। कहते हैं कि भर्तृहरिने कई बार संन्यास लिया और अपने को दुर्बल पाकर गृहस्थाश्रम में लौटे।

बौद्धों में संन्यासियों को अपने गुरु से आज्ञा पाकर संन्यास आश्रम छोड़ने की इजाजत है। उनका प्रधान सिद्धान्त है कि अगर दिल से वैराग्य उड़ गया तो गेरुआ

वस्त्र धारण करने से उस आश्रम की दिल्लगी ही है।

हमारे जमाने में बौद्ध साधु श्री धर्मानन्द कोसम्बी अपने गुरु से इजाजत लेकर फिर से गृहस्थाश्रम में आये थे। राहुल सांकृत्यायन ने भी रशिया जाकर विवाह किया था। दोनों के बारे में समाज ने तनिक भी क्षोभ नहीं बताया।

मैं समझता हूँ सनातन हिन्दू समाज के लिए इन दिनों कोई निश्चित नीति तय नहीं हो सकती। रामकृष्ण मिशन के संन्यासी समाज सेवा का और भ्रम प्रचार का कार्य करते ही हैं। दूसरे भी करते हैं।

एक बात स्पष्ट है। स्वामी विवेकानन्द जैसे उज्ज्वल उदाहरण के साथ जब कोई मिशन या संघ संन्यास आश्रम को चलाता है तब संन्यासियों की प्रतिष्ठा भी रहती है और परम्परा का तेज भी रहता है। बाकी संन्यास का और संस्था का तत्त्वतः संबंध बैठ नहीं सकता चन्द संन्यासी किसी भी संस्था या मठ के साथ संबंध न रखते हुए अपनी तेजस्विता संभाल सकते हैं और समाज की अच्छी सेवा भी करते हैं। और चन्द संन्यासी तो गेरुआ कपड़े का नाम आगे करके भिक्षा मांगते संकोच अनुभवते नहीं। अपने तीन बड़कों को गुरुकुल में या ऋषिकुल में दाखिल कराने की अर्जी लेकर आये हुये ब्रह्मचारी भी मैंने देखे हैं।

यह हो गया पुरुष संन्यासी के बारे में। स्त्रीसंन्यासिनी का वर्ण हो या नहीं इस बारे में प्रचीनकाल से दो मत हैं। एक मत कहता है कि स्त्री-स्वभाव में आत्यंतिक वैराग्य है नहीं। कुदरत ने ही स्त्री को ऐसा कार्य दिया है जिसके कारण उसके स्वभाव में पुरुषावलंबिता हमेशा पायी जाती है। लोग बड़ी-बड़ी प्रभावशाली स्त्रियों का उदाहरण देते हैं और कहते हैं कि उनको किसी न किसी ढंग से पुरुषों का प्रोत्साहन अथवा सहारा आवश्यक हुआ था।

बुद्ध भगवान् तत्त्वतः मानते थे कि स्त्रियों को निर्वाण-प्राप्ति का उतना ही अधिकार है जितना पुरुषों को है। तो भी वे स्त्रियों को प्रव्रज्या देने को राजी नहीं थे। स्त्रियों को संघ में लेने में खतरा देखते थे। शिष्योत्तम आनन्द के आग्रह के कारण उन्होंने स्त्रियों को संघ

में लिया तो सही, लेकिन आज सीलोन में हम देखते हैं बौद्ध भिक्षुणियों का संघ नहीं है। पूछने पर कहते हैं कि स्त्रियों को दीक्षा कोई स्त्री ही दे सकती है और हमारे यहां इस वक्त कोई बौद्ध भिक्षुणी है नहीं।

स्वामी विवेकानन्द ने बड़े उत्साह के साथ संन्यास आश्रम को नये ढंग से चलाया। उनकी शिष्या भगिनी निवेदिता से प्रेरणा पाकर रामकृष्ण मिशन ने संन्यासिनियों का आश्रम चलाया है। मैं मानता हूँ कि स्त्री-जाति के लिए ऐसे आध्यात्मिक प्रोत्साहन की विशेष आवश्यकता है। पुरुष के ऊपर तनिक भी आधार रखे बिना और संसार चक्र में फंसे बिना निष्काम सेवामय जीवन व्यतीत करने का मौका स्त्री-जाति को मिलाना चाहिये। और ऐसे जीवन को समाज की ओर से बाकायदा मान्यता भी मिलनी चाहिये।

यूँ देखा जाय तो जिन स्त्रियों ने आजन्म वैधव्य का पालन करने का स्वीकार किया है, वे अब एक तरह से संन्यासिनियाँ ही हैं। हिन्दू समाज में ऐसी कई विधवायें हैं जिन्होंने अपने तेजस्वी शीतल वैराग्य के द्वारा अपने वैधव्य को उज्ज्वल करके दिखाया है। समाज के अनेक स्त्री-पुरुषों को उनके द्वारा आश्वासन, प्रोत्साहन और प्रेरणा मिली है। लेकिन अधिकांश विधवायें तो बेचारी समाज की ओर कुटुम्ब की उपेक्षित आश्रिता ही हैं।

इनसे भिन्न अपने त्याग वैराग्य की शीलता तेजस्विता के द्वारा और समाज शुद्धि के लिये समाज सेवा के नियमित कार्यक्रम चलाने वाली संन्यासिनियों की समाज को आज आवश्यकता है। सौ दो सौ बरस इसका प्रयोग करने के बाद समाज फिर से विचार कर सकता है कि संन्यासिनियों का आश्रम लाभदायक है या नहीं।

इस प्रयोग के लिए कोई समाजमान्य नियम बनाना जरूरी होगा। स्त्री-संन्यासिनी की पोशाक कैसी हो, रहन-सहन कैसा हो, उनके रहने का आजीविताका प्रबन्ध क्या हो? यह सब पूर्ण रूप से सोचकर समाज को तय करना होगा जिससे उस आश्रम की दुर्दशा न हो।

जिनका अधिकार है वे ही इस दिशा में प्रारम्भ कर सकते हैं।

पथ प्रदर्शक स्वामी विवेकानन्द

द्वारा बीना शर्मा

एम० ए० (प्रीवयस)

लेडी श्रीराम कालेज, देहली

[विवेकानन्द शताब्दी समारोह पर विद्यार्थी हिन्दी सपीच के मुकाबले का आयोजन किया गया। जिसमें लेखिका ने सर्वसम्मति से प्रथम घोषित होकर पुरस्कार प्राप्त किया।



महान विभूतियां काल प्रसूत हुआ करती हैं जो समय की मांग को पूरा करने के लिए प्रादुर्भूत होती हैं और भटकते हुए राहगीरों को मार्ग प्रशस्त कर जाती हैं। स्वामी विवेकानन्द ऐसे ही युग पुरुष थे जिन्होंने महानिद्रा में एक भारत की जनता को जागृति का स्वर दिया, एक ऐसा जीवन सन्देश दिया जिसकी ध्वनि आज भी दिशाओं से टकरा-टकरा कर एक गूँज पैदाकर देती है प्राणों में नवीन स्पन्दन भर देती है आज से कई वर्ष पूर्व स्वामी विवेकानन्द ने भारत की जनता का आह्वान करते हुए कहा था—“उठो ! जागो और तब तक आगे बढ़ते रहो जब तक अपने ध्येय को न पालो” लेकिन स्वतंत्रता प्राप्ति के पश्चात् अपनी शक्ति से आश्वस्त होकर हम इस आदेश को भूल गये थे, धर्मोपालन को ही अपना ध्येय स्वीकार कर सुखमय जीवन के स्वप्न लेने लगे परिणाम स्वरूप हमारी उत्तरी सीमा शत्रु की तोप और टैंकों की भंयकर ज्वाला से झुलस उठी है। हमारी भूमि चीनियों के बर्बर पदप्रहारों से त्रस्त हैं। आज फिर उसी आह्वान की आवश्यकता है स्वामी जी के निर्दिष्ट मार्ग को ही अपनाने की आवश्यकता है।

मानव की यह स्वाभाविक प्रवृत्ति है कि अपने दोषों को दूसरों पर आरोपित कर स्वयं अपनी विवशता पर आँसू बहा लिया करता है लेकिन इसके द्वारा न तो किसी समस्या का समाधान हो पाता है और न ध्येय की सिद्धि ही। इसीलिए विवेकानन्द जी ने स्पष्ट शब्दों में घोषणा

की—It is we who are responsible for all our degradation. अर्थात् हम अपने पतन के लिए स्वयं उत्तरदायी हैं। इस कथन की पृष्टि के लिए किसी प्रमाण की आवश्यकता नहीं, आवश्यकता इस मन्य की अंगीकार करने की है।

स्वामी जी मानवता में अटूट विश्वास लेकर चले थे उनका उद्धोष था—Love of man and service of man. अर्थात् मनुष्य के प्रति प्रेम, उसके प्रति सेवा का भाव ही एक ऐसा सोपान है जिसके माध्यम से ब्रह्म को पाया जा सकता है। इस सत्य को समझ कर उन्होंने कहा—‘यदि भगवान को पाना चाहते हो तो मानव की सेवा करो उसे अंगीकार करो। If you want to find god serve man। स्वयं स्वामी जी का व्यक्तित्व भागीरथी की उस पावन धारा के समान था जो प्रप्ति, ऊँच नीच सब प्रकार के बन्धन तोड़ कर बह निकली थी पीड़ित मानवता के घावों को सहलाने के लिए उसे शांति देने के लिए उन्होंने मानव को केवल मानव रूप में देखा था धर्म और जाति के परिधान में नहीं। आज फिर सम्पूर्ण भारत को एकता के सूत्र में पिरोने के लिए इस दृष्टिकोण की आवश्यकता है जिससे सभूचे भारत की आवाज उसकी शक्ति घनीभूत होकर एकरूप हो सके। उसमें ऐसी दृढ़ता का विकास हो जो शत्रु की शक्ति के भंयकर भूभावत में भी स्थिर रह सके। एक विशाल वृक्ष की भांति, इसकी जड़ें भीतर ही भीतर घनीभूत होकर शक्ति का संचय किया करती हैं।

यही नहीं क्रियाशीलता को स्वामी विवेकानन्द जीवन का सारभूत तत्व मानते थे। इसी की महत्ता के कारण कहीं-कहीं उन्होंने नेपोलियन और चंगेज खां जैसे तानाशाहों की प्रशंसा की है जो किसी सीमा तक ठीक भी है क्योंकि हमारी निष्क्रियता तो हमारी प्रगति के सभी द्वार बन्द कर देती है। स्वामी जी के अनुसार ब्रह्म तक पहुँचने के लिए दो मार्ग निर्धारित हैं—ज्ञान और साधना ! लेकिन इसके अतिरिक्त एक तीसरा मार्ग भी है—कर्म के माध्यम से उग्रामना जो अपेक्षाकृत सरल है और उचित भी क्योंकि चलना ही जीवन है और स्थिरता मृत्यु ऐसी। मृत्यु जिसमें कोई चेतना नहीं, कोई स्पन्दन नहीं। आज की इस संकटकालीन स्थिति में ब्राह्मण धर्म और क्षात्रधर्म के ऐसे नरसिंह रूप की आवश्यकता है जिससे विवेक और शक्ति में सन्तुलन रखकर शत्रु का सामना किया जा सके। यद्यपि उन सिद्धान्तों को भी विस्मृत नहीं करना है जिनका स्वर गीतम और गांधी की वाणी में मुखरित हुआ था लेकिन फिर भी शत्रु से जूझने के लिए अपनी बिखरी हुई शक्ति का संचय तो करना ही है और इसके लिए यदि एक ओर ब्राह्मण धर्म की आवश्यकता है तो दूसरी ओर कर्मयोग की जिसका सन्देश स्वामी विवेकानन्द ने दिया।

स्वामी जी शक्ति के उपासक थे। उन्होंने अपने भाषणों में स्थल-स्थल पर स्पष्ट संकेत दिया है कि मानव में शक्ति का होना अनिवार्य है। शक्ति और निर्भयता के अभाव में हमारी स्वतंत्रता पर भी आंच आ सकती है और ऐसा हुआ भी। स्वतंत्रता प्राप्ति के पश्चात् अहिंसा और शांति की रौ में बहकर हम भूल गये कि अहिंसा की सफलता के लिए उसके स्थायीत्व के लिए एक ऐसी जीवन शक्ति की भी आवश्यकता है जो किसी ब्राह्म शक्ति के समक्ष झुकना नहीं जानती। परिणाम स्वरूप बर्बर चीनियों ने हमारी और मित्रता का हाथ बढ़ाकर हमारी स्वतंत्रता पर प्रहार किया है। स्वामी जी स्वयं शक्ति का पुत्र थे। उसका मानो मूल रूप थे, और ऐसी ही शक्ति की आशा वे भारत की जनता से करते थे। हमें उनके उम स्वप्न को भूमिल नहीं साकार करना है।

कर्मशीलता, आत्मविश्वास और शक्ति के साथ ही साथ एक अन्य सिद्धान्त भी है त्याग का जिस पर स्वामी

जी ने अत्यन्त बल दिया। उन्होंने उपनिषद् के एक सूत्र का स्मरण कराते हुए कहा—“न धनेन न प्रजया त्यागेन कै अमृतत्वं मानुषुः” अर्थात् अमरत्व की प्राप्ति न धन से होती है और न सन्तति से वह मात्र त्याग से होती है। आज फिर अपनी शक्ति का विकास करने के लिए इसी त्याग की भावना का प्रसार करना होगा।

एक बात और है कि पाश्चात्य सभ्यता की चकाचौंध में हम भूल गये कि दूसरे के कंधे से बन्दूक चलाना कितना कठिन हुआ करता है। हमें खड़ा रहने के लिए एक ठोस आधार चाहिये, समृद्ध पृष्ठभूमि चाहिये—और पट आधार है हमारी चिन्तन पद्धति का उस आध्यात्मवादी विचार धारा का जिसने कभी सम्पूर्ण विश्व में जाग्रति का शंख-नाद किया था। हमें अपने घर की सम्पत्ति को ही सदैव अपने सम्मुख रखना है, इसी में कल्याण है।

आज अपनी भूलों पर पश्चात्ताप करने का समय नहीं, और न ही रुई के गालों के समान कोमल और विनम्र बनने की आवश्यकता है जिसे वायु का हल्का सा झोंका भी पतन के गर्त में ढकेल देता है। आज भारत को ऐसे लोहमानव की आवश्यकता है जिसकी धमनियों में इस्पात पिघल कर रक्त रूप में प्रवाहित हो रहा हो—ऐसा दृढ़ निश्चय चाहिये जिसे कोई भी शक्ति भुका नहीं सकती लेकिन इसके लिए चाऊ माऊ कोसने से या कुछ उत्तेजनापूर्ण नारे लगाने से काम नहीं चलेगा बल्कि स्वामी जी ने प्रत्येक आदर्श को अपने जीवन में ढालना होगा जिससे जीवन को नया प्रकाश मिल सके। स्वामी जी के विवेकानन्द के शब्दों में—“हमारी मातृभूमि अब जाग रही है, अब कोई उसकी उन्नति को नहीं रोक सकता, अब यह फिर सो भी नहीं सकती, कोई बाह्य शक्ति इसे दबा नहीं सकेगी।” लेकिन इसके लिए एक विवेकानन्द से काम नहीं चलेगा, कोटि-कोटि विवेकानन्दों की आवश्यकता है जिसका अदम्य साहस और दृढ़ निश्चय शत्रु के बारूद की ज्वाला में भस्म नहीं हो सकता, हिमालय की हिम घाटियाँ जिसकी गर्मी को जमा नहीं सकती मृत्यु का जिसे भय नहीं, जिसके कदम आगे बढ़ते हैं—सदैव—परिस्थितियों से जूझते हुए।



"स्वामी विवेकानन्द तथा देश के प्रति हमारा कर्तव्य"

लेखिका—मिस कोचर

[आप विवेकानन्द शताब्दी समारोह के समय हुए इन्डियन सपीच के
मुकाबले में प्रथम रही]

मानव में वह कौन सी शक्ति है, कौन सा आकर्षण है, जो अन्य व्यक्ति को अनायास ही प्रभावित कर देता है ? कोई भी व्यक्ति जन्म से ही महान उत्पन्न नहीं होता । वह जीवन के पथ पर अग्रसर हो कर, पर्वताकार विपत्तियों का सामना कर ही, महानता को प्राप्त करता है । वास्तव में महान वही है, जिसका मन, जिसके विचार उच्च तथा पवित्र हैं । जिसने अपनी इन्द्रियों पर विजय प्राप्त कर मनुष्य मात्र की मेवा ही अपना लक्ष्य माना जाता है ।

ऐसे ही महान शक्ति थे स्वामी विवेकानन्द जी, जिनकी महानता, एक घर से विरक्त हुए योगी की ईश्वर आराधना में नहीं, प्रत्युत, मानव जाति को ऊपर उठाने में थी ।

वह सूर्य थे, या चन्द्र थे,
हर नर नारी के अन्दर थे ।
हो गया विश्व दैर्घ्यमान,
पाकर उनका अथाप ज्ञान ॥

ऐसी ख्योतिर्मय आत्मा का, एक ऐसे युग में आविर्भाव हुआ था, जिसे पवन काल कहने में अत्युक्त न होगी । एक ऐसा युग, जब लोगो की विचारधारा कुछ शिथिल सी थी, और वे अतीत के सपनों की नोड़ में, विश्राम करने में संलग्न थे । चारों ओर निविड़ अन्धकार था । ऐसा प्रतीत होता था, कि विदेशी सत्ताधारियों की सभ्यता की चकाचौंध में, भारतीय, अपने प्राचीन गौरव तथा संस्कृति को सर्वथा भूल कर, आत्मविश्वास खो बैठे थे । धातन का कोई उगाय दृष्टिगत न होता था ।

काल की कठोर आवश्यकताएं ही महापुरुषों को जन्म देती हैं । और ठीक ऐसे समय में, भारत के प्रांगण में, स्वामी वि० के रूप में, एक दिव्य ज्योति अवतरित हुई, जिसके आत्मतेज के सम्मुख, सारा विश्व नतमस्तक हो गया ।

उनकी वाणी में एक विस्फोटक शक्ति थी । उनके ओजस्वी वचन—"मैं समुन्द्र को पी जाऊंगा । मेरी इच्छा से पर्वत टुकड़े-टुकड़े हो जाएंगे"—किसके हृदय में आशा उत्साह और शक्ति का संचार नहीं करते ?

भारत माता के उस सर्वश्रेष्ठ रत्न के हृदय में, स्वदेश प्रेम की अग्नि सतत् प्रज्वलित रहती थी । उन्होंने भारतीयों को स्वदेश कर्तव्य की ओर प्रेरित करते हुए कहा—हे भारतियो, क्या दूसरों की ही हाँ में हाँ मिला कर, दूसरों की ही नकल कर, दूसरों का ही मुँह ताक कर दासों की सी दुर्बलता, इस घृणित जघन्य निष्ठुरता से ही तुम बड़े-बड़े अधिकार प्राप्त करोगे ? तुम पुकार कर कहो कि मैं भारतवासी हूँ । भारत का समाज ही मेरे जीवन का भूला, जवानी की फुलवारी, और बुढ़ापे की काशी है । कहो, कि भारत की मिट्टी ही मेरा स्वर्ग है ।

उनकी ये शिक्षाएं हमारे कानों में प्रतिध्वनित होतीं प्रतीत होती हैं, और वह आज, सदियों के पश्चात भी, हमें कर्तव्य मार्ग की ओर प्रेरित करती है ।

यदि तुम प्रभु को पाना चाहते हो, तो मनुष्य-मात्र की सेवा करो । वह लोगों को सदा यही कह कर प्रेरित किया करते थे—

अमरीका में एक स्वामी

विचारों में एक प्रकार का अद्भुत अमरत्व होता है। भले ही वे वर्षों अथवा सदियों तक निष्क्रिय पड़े रहें, लेकिन वे मरते कभी नहीं और पुनरुत्थान के एक समय सापेक्ष क्रम में लग जाते हैं। सदाहरणार्थ, इमर्सन, थूरो तथा उनके साथियों के पश्चात् और भारत-अमरीका व्यापार के समृद्धतम समय के बाद ऐसा प्रतीत हुआ कि भारत में अमरीका की दिलचस्पी खत्म हो रही है। लेकिन इसे पूरी तरह सच नहीं माना जा सकता।

यह ठीक है कि इमर्सन के एक स्वप्न-दृष्टा मित्र ऐक्स ब्रान्सन ऐलकाट ने, १८८० में, सर एडविन आर्नल्ड की पुस्तक "द लाइट ड्रॉफ एशिया" के अमरीका में प्रकाशित होने की योजना बनाकर पौराण्य देशों के प्रति जनरल बनाए रखने में सहायता दी। बुद्ध के जीवन का यह काव्य निरूपण अपनी सभी अच्छाइयों-बुराइयों के साथ, अमरीका में अत्यन्त लोकप्रिय हुआ और एक के बाद एक इसके लगभग ८३ संस्करण निकले। लगभग इसी समय जेम्स फ्रीमैन क्लार्क की पुस्तक "टेन ग्रेट रेलिजन्स" (दस महान धर्म) प्रकाशित हुई और बुद्ध-धर्म तथा हिन्दू धर्म पर उसमें जो अध्याय थे, उनके कारण भारत के प्रति लोगों में एक हद तक दिलचस्पी पैदा हुई।

लेकिन, उन्नीसवीं सदी के बीच के और बाद के वर्षों के दौरान में, अमरीकी लोग अर्धिकांशतः अपना ध्यान और अपनी शक्ति उन उद्यमों में केन्द्रित कर रहे थे, जिन का सम्बन्ध उनके राष्ट्र के विकास से था, जैसे पश्चिम का अन्वेषण और बन्दोबस्त, संधि की एकता और गुलामी के प्रश्न को लेकर होने वाला भयंकर गृह युद्ध, रेलों, नहरों और औद्योगिक कारखानों का निर्माण। भारत और उसकी संस्कृति में लोगों की दिलचस्पी भले ही



सुप्तावस्था में न रही हो लेकिन लोगों के दिमागों में किसी कदर ऊपर भी न थी। १८९३ में, एक असाधारण भारतीय व्यक्ति अमरीका आया और उसने जीवन के प्रति भारतीय दृष्टिकोण की ओर लोगों की सोई हुई जिज्ञासा और आकर्षण को जागृत कर दिया। यह व्यक्ति थे—स्वामी विवेकानन्द।

स्वामी जी और अमरीका के बीच जो घनिष्ठ सम्बन्ध हुआ उसे समझने के लिए हमें पृष्ठभूमि की कुछ बातों और तिथियों की ओर भी ध्यान देना होगा—१८८६ में वेदान्त आन्दोलन के अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय ख्यातिप्राप्त संत श्री रामकृष्ण ने महासमाधि ले ली। उनके शिष्य नरेन्द्र नाथ दत्त जो बाद में स्वामी विवेकानन्द के नाम से प्रसिद्ध हुए आगामी चार वर्षों तक भारत की अध्यात्मिक समस्याओं का समाधान ढूँढने के लिये देश के एक कोने से दूसरे कोने तक भटकते रहे। कन्याकुमारी में उन्होंने अपनी तीर्थयात्रा के परिणामों पर गम्भीरतापूर्वक चिन्तन किया।

१८९२ के उत्तरार्द्ध में स्वामी विवेकानन्द ने उस धर्म-सम्मेलन के सम्बन्ध में सबसे पहले सुना जो कोलम्बिया के विश्व-समारोह से संलग्न होने के नाते शिकागो में होने को था। उक्त समारोह का उद्देश्य तो यह था कि मनुष्य को भौतिक प्रगति का दिग्दर्शन कराया जाए, (शेष पृष्ठ १६ पर)

(पृष्ठ १६ का शेष)

वह खेत में मिलेगा, खलिहान में मिलेगा ।

भगवान तो ऐ बन्दे, इन्सास मैं मिलेगा ॥

केवल राम-नाम जपने से ही भगवान की प्राप्ति नहीं होती । दरिद्रता और अज्ञान के गर्त में सदा डूबे हुए इन बीस करोड़ नर-नारियों के दुःखों का अनुभव करो । इन्हीं लोगों को तुम अपना ईश्वर समझो । निरन्तर इनका ध्यान करो । उनके लिये कार्य करो । उन्हीं के सुख में तुम्हारा सुख है, यह बात तुम्हें सर्वदा ध्यान में रखनी चाहिये । इस साधना के लिये यदि शरीर जाए भी, तो जाने दो—यही स्वामी जी का आदेश था ।

वह तो युग प्रवर्तक थे, और युगपुरुष की भांति ही उनकी शिक्षाओं ने हमारे जीवन के प्रत्येक क्षेत्र को प्रभावित किया । उनके मन्त्र के दीक्षित होते ही, मुद्दे सा पड़ा, भारत भंगड़ाई लेकर एकाएक उठ खड़ा हुआ । अज्ञान की दीर्घ रजनी, समाप्त होती सी दिखाई पड़ी ।

वह कहते थे—भारत अभी जी रहा है और जी रहा है इसलिये, कि विश्व संस्कृति के सामान्य-भंडार में, उसे भी अपनी देन देनी है । उनका यह आत्मविश्वास, निर्भीकता, तथा देशभक्ति, आज भी हमारे हृदय में, उस सोई हुई कर्तव्य भावना को जागृत करने में समर्थ है । उन्होंने कहा—यह अन्धविश्वास भरी मिथ्या-भावना छोड़ दो, कि हम दीन-हीन हैं । बनो और बनाओ । यदि आदर्श का अनुगमन नहीं कर सकते, तो अपनी दुर्बलता स्वीकार कर लो, पर उसे हीन न बनाओ ।

उन्होंने नारी को उच्च स्थान देते हुए कहा—सतीत्व और पवित्रता भारतीय नारी की अमूल्य निधि है । अतः आज प्रत्येक भारतीय नारी का यह कर्तव्य है कि वह शिक्षा ग्रहण कर, देश की उन्नति में अपना भी सहयोग दे सके ।

परन्तु यह सब तभी हो सकता है, यदि तुम्हें अपने देश से प्रेम है । प्रेम असम्भव को भी सम्भव कर देता है । जगत के सब रहस्यों का द्वार प्रेम ही है । अतएव, ऐ मेरे भावी सुधारको, तुम हृदयवान बनो । क्या तुम हृदय से अनुभव करते हो, कि अज्ञान के काले बादल ने सारे

भारत को ढक लिया है ? क्या तुम यह सब सोचकर कभी द्रवित हुए हो ? क्या यह भावना, तुम्हारे रक्त के माथ मिलकर, तुम्हारी धमनियों में बही है । क्या उसने तुम्हें कभी पागल बनाया है ?

यदि तुम अनुभव करते हो, तो क्या स्वदेश-वासियों को उनकी इस जीवन्मृत अवस्था से बाहर निकालने के लिये, कोई मार्ग ठीक किया है ?

आज प्रत्येक भारतवासी का यह कर्तव्य है, कि वह अपनी इस युग-युग की कुम्भकर्णी निद्रा को छोड़ कर, देश के प्रति अपने कर्तव्यों को यह समझे और पर्वताकाय विघ्न-बाधाओं को लांघकर कार्य करने के लिये तत्पर हो जाए ।

उसके लिये, पहले आदेश पालन करना सीखो, आदेश देना फिर स्वयं आ जाएगा । पहले सर्वदा सेवक होना सीखो, तभी तुम प्रभु हो सकोगे ।

स्वामी जी का सारा जीवन, देश-सेवा में ही व्यतीत हुआ, और उन्होंने इसी सेवा के पथ पर चलने का, हमें आदेश दिया । उनका प्रेम अणु बम्ब से भी अधिक शक्ति शाली था ।

उन्होंने तो निश्चय कर लिया था कि—‘जब तक मेरे देश का एक कुत्ता भी भूखा है, मैं चैन की नींद नहीं सो सकता ।’

उनकी वाणी में, मानव मात्र के लिये एक विशेष प्रेरणा और सन्देश था । उनकी विजय, मानव की दैवी शक्तियों की विजय थी । ऐसे युग पुरुष महा मानव की, किन शब्दों में अभ्यर्थना की जाय । किन पुष्पों से उनको अंजली दी जाय । वह तो एक महान, सघन ज्योति थी, जो विश्व के कल्याण के लिये, भारत के प्रांगण में प्रदीप्त हुई ।

तुम आए थे बन सब की आशा,

मिट्टा अन्धकार चारों दिशा ।

हे स्वामी तुम्हारे दर्शन कर,

कृतार्थ हुआ नर जन्म भर ॥

(पृष्ठ १० का शेष)

परन्तु धर्म-सम्मेलन अपने-आपमें एक असामान्य घटना थी और उसमें विश्व की अध्यात्मिक आकांक्षाओं के सारे उद्घोषक एक स्थान पर मिलने वाले थे ।

स्वामी विवेकानन्द के मन में भारत की आवश्यकताओं का जो कल्पना-चित्र था उसके प्रसंग में यह सम्मेलन उन्हें बहुत महत्वपूर्ण प्रतीत हुआ और उन्होंने अपने साथ काम करने वालों के जरिए आवश्यक धन एकत्र करके ३१ मई, १८९३ को अमरीका के लिए प्रस्थान कर दिया । आजकल जबकि संचार-साधन इतने द्रुत हो गए हैं, हमारे लिए यह कल्पना बर सकना कठिन है कि एक अज्ञात देश के लिए मन्द गतिवाले एक जलयान के लगभग १०,००० मील का सफर तय करने का निश्चय करके उन्होंने कितने अधिक सहस्र का परिचय दिया था । उनकी योजना के दो पहलू थे, एक तो यह कि भारत के करोड़ों लोगों में पुनर्जीवन लाने की उनकी योजना का अमरीका में समर्थन प्राप्त हो, और दूसरा यह कि वेदान्त दर्शन की महत्ता का परिचय पाश्चात्य संसार को दिया जा सके ।

आखिरकार, जब वे शिकागो में पहुँचे तब उन्होंने यह पाया कि वे धर्म-सम्मेलन से काफी पहले आ गये हैं और उसमें हिस्सा लेने के लिए उनके पास समुचित कागज-पत्र भी नहीं हैं । उनके पास रुपये की कमी भी पड़ गयी थी ।

फिर भी इस विश्वास के साथ जैसा कि उन्होंने व्यक्त किया, "कि इस देश (अमरीका) में बौद्धिकता का प्रभाव धन और यद-मर्यादा की तड़क-भड़क के प्रभाव से कहीं अधिक है," वे बोस्टन के लिए रवाना हो गए । सौभाग्यवश बोस्टन की एक बुद्धिवादी महिला कुमारी केट सैनबार्न से उनका परिचय हुआ और इनके जरिए वे अन्ततः हार्वर्ड विश्वविद्यालय के प्रोफेसर जान हेनरी राइट से मिले जहाँ बहुत से मित्रों के साथ उनका परिचय कराया गया । इन लोगों ने इस भारतीय व्यक्ति के सच्चे विश्वासों और पुरुषोचित आर्कषण को काफी पसन्द किया और शीघ्र ही स्वामी विवेकानन्द के लिए धर्म-सम्मेलन में भाग लेने का रास्ता खुल गया ।

उस सभा में वे एक अत्यन्त प्रमुख व्यक्ति सिद्ध हुए । उनके संदेश की सार्वभौमिकता से सभा के असंख्य श्रोता-

गण अभिभूत हुए और धर्म-सम्मेलन समाप्त होने के बाद दो वर्षों तक स्वामी विवेकानन्द अमरीका में ही रहे । यहां उन्होंने दूर-दूर तक भ्रमण किया, भाषण दिए और भारत के इतिहास तथा अपने प्रेम के संदेश से उन्होंने जनसमूह को प्रभावित किया ।

प्रश्न यह है कि उन्होंने इतना अधिक सम्मान एक ऐसे देश में कैसे पा लिया जो उनके दर्शन से अधिकतर अनभिज्ञ था और अक्सर अपरिचित लगनेवाले उनके विचारों के प्रतिकूल भी रहता था ? इसका कुछ कारण तो था—उनका समुच्च ही महान व्यक्तित्व और उनकी प्रेरक-शक्ति । लेकिन उतना ही सच यह भी है कि पूजा-पाठ की स्वतंत्रता के लिए आदर और आध्यात्मिक मामलों में मूलतः रुचि लेने के जो विशेष गुण अमरीकियों में हैं उनके कारण अमरीकी श्रोता विवेकानन्द के संदेश को आत्मसात करने में समर्थ हो सके थे । यह जरूरी नहीं कि भौतिक समृद्धि का कोई भगड़ा आध्यात्मिक महत्वा-कांक्षाओं से रहे ही ।

अमरीका में स्वामी जी के सभी अनुभव सरल ही रहे हो ऐसी बात नहीं है । उनमें से कुछ कठिन भी रहे हैं । उनके लिखित विवरण के लिए, और साथ ही उनकी प्रमुख सफलताओं के व्यौरे के लिए पाठकगण एक अत्यन्त रोचक पुस्तक पढ़ सकते हैं: "स्वामी विवेकानन्द इन अमेरिका" (कलकत्ता, अद्वैत आश्रम, १९५८) जिसे मेरी लुई बोर्क नामक एक अमरीकी महिला ने लिखा है ।

सन्तुलन की दृष्टि से, इसका लेखा भी रखना चाहिये कि भारत की आत्मा और समस्याओं के प्रति अमेरिका में फिर से और व्यापक रूप से दिलचस्पी पैदा करने का दायित्व भारत के इस सपूत ने पूरा किया तब से लेकर आज तक अमरीकी लोग इस असाधारण व्यक्ति की शक्तियों के प्रति जागरूक हैं । विश्वप्रेम और मनुष्य मात्र की सेवा के उनके सिद्धान्त के लिए उन्हें सबसे पहले एक विश्वव्यापी मंच अमरीका में ही सुलभ करके बहुत से अमरीकियों ने उनके सिद्धान्त को अपने हृदय में बसा लिया है । अधिकांश बड़े-बड़े अमरीकी नगरों में स्थित वेदान्त-केन्द्रों में स्वामी जी का नाम आदरपूर्वक लिया जाता रहा है । इसका प्रतीक यह है कि स्वामी विवेकानन्द की कांसे की बनी मूर्ति हालीवुड में अमरीकी वेदान्त सोसायटी के प्रधान कार्यालय का प्रमुख चिन्ह है ।

स्वामी विवेकानन्द

वेदान्त साम्राट स्वामी विवेकानन्द जी ने परमहंस रामकृष्णदेव का आशीर्वाद धारण कर पृथ्वी पर सनातन आर्य धर्म की जय घोषणा की। आपका जन्म कलकत्ता के प्रसिद्ध वकील श्री विश्वनाथ दत्त जी के घर १२ जनवरी सन १८६३ को हुआ था। आपकी माता भूनेश्वरी देवी श्री शंकर भगवान की उपासक थी। उनकी भक्ति व प्रार्थना से प्रसन्न होकर महादेव जी ने स्वप्न में बालक रूप में गोद में बैठते ही भूनेश्वरी देवी आनन्द भरे हृदय से जाग उठी और शिव-शिव कहकर स्तुति करने लगीं। स्वप्न की याद करके माता ने बालक का नाम श्री बीरेश्वर रख दिया, परन्तु नामकरण संस्कार के समय श्री नरेन्द्र नाथ नाम रखा था। बालक नरेन्द्र स्वभावतः चंचल व निडर थे। कभी-कभी माता कहती—‘शिव जी ने स्वयं ने आकर किसी भूत को भेज दिया है।’ और घड़ा भर पानी ला शिव-शिव कह कर मस्तक पर डाल देती, वस बालक नरेन्द्र शान्त हो जाता। कभी-कभी माता कहती—‘तू ऐसे हैरान करेगा तो तुझे शिवजी कैलाश में घुसने नहीं देंगे।’ छोटी आयु में खेलते २ आप इतने गंभीर ध्यान मग्न हो जाते कि बाहर का ध्यान ही नहीं रहता था। आपको घर की बड़ी फिटनगाड़ी की सवारी बहुत पसन्द थी। एक दिन जब पिता जी ने पूछा कि—‘तू क्या बनना पसन्द करता है?’ उन्होंने तुरन्त उत्तर दिया—‘कोचवान।’ वास्तव में नरेन्द्र आगे जाकर सारथी ही बने परन्तु जातीय जीवन रथ के! श्री सीताराम तथा महावीर जी नरेन्द्र के प्रिय उपास्य थे।

बाल्यकाल से नरेन्द्र साधु सन्तों के प्रति आदर भाव रखते थे और मांगने वाले की प्रत्येक इच्छा को पूर्ण करने का प्रयत्न करते। एक दिन एक बाबा जी आ पहुंचे और उन्होंने नरेन्द्र के पहने हुये वस्त्र को मांगा उन्होंने देने के लिए जिद्द पकड़ी परन्तु माता ने रोक दिया और कमरे में बन्द कर दिया। पर क्या देखती है कि खिड़की

में से नरेन्द्र कपड़ा फेंक कर कह रहा है—‘बाबा जी! इसे लेकर जल्दी चले जाओ’ एक दिन श्री रामकृष्ण परमहंस कलकत्ता के सिमला मुहल्ले में श्री सुरेश चन्द्र मित्र के यहां पधारे। परमहंस जी गये। इस प्रकार श्री परमहंस जी से इनकी प्रथम भेंट हुई। बाद में नरेन्द्र प्रतिदिन दक्षिणेश्वर जाने लगे। परमहंस जी ने इनका मन मोह लिया।

इन्हीं दिनों नरेन्द्र नाथ बी० ए० पास करके कानून का अभ्यास कर रहे थे। इधर श्री राम कृष्ण गले के रोग से बहुत अधिक व्याकुल थे। इन्होंने परमहंस जी की बहुत सेवा की। स्वर्ग सिंघारने से पहले परमहंस जी ने अपनी सारी अध्यात्मिक कमाई नरेन्द्र में संचारित कर दी और अपने अधूरे कार्य की पूर्ति के लिये उनसे वचन ले लिया।

परमहंस जी की महासमाधि लेने के पश्चात इन्होंने घर का त्याग कर दिया और दूसरे गुरुभाइयों के साथ सन्यास धारण कर लिया। आपने अपने गुरुभाइयों सहित कठोर साधना की और फिर भारत भ्रमण किया। भारत के सभी प्रान्तों में आप गए। इन्हीं दिनों में आपकी भेंट महाराजा खेत्री से हो गई। महाराजा के आग्रह पर आपने शिकागो, अमेरिका में हो रहे सर्व धर्म सम्मेलन में भाग लिया और भौतिकवादी अमेरिका निवासियों को ब्रह्म विद्या का सधुर रसपान कराया। आप जहां कहीं भी गये आप की भूरि-२ प्रशंसा हुई। आपने अद्वैत वेदान्त का आदर्श सबके सामने रखा। भारत में आकर आपने फिर भ्रमण किया और अपने इष्टदेव श्री रामकृष्ण का संदेश घर-घर पहुंचाया। अपने भाषणों, अपनी कृतियों और अपनी रचनाओं से अपने सारे भारत को जागृत किया। आपमें गुरुभक्ति, देश-भक्ति और मानवता से प्रेम कूट-कूट कर भरा हुआ था। परमहंस जी को दिये हुये वचन को पूरा करके आप ४ जुलाई सन १९०२ रात्रि ६ बजे बलूड मठ में महासमाधि में विलीन हुये।



स्वामी विवेकानन्द जर्मनी में

स्वामी विवेकानन्द जी जब लंदन गये तो वहाँ पर २८ मई सन १८९६ ई० के दिन जर्मनी के विद्वत् प्रसिद्ध दार्शनिक और संस्कृत के महान विद्वान मैक्स मूलर (Max Muller) से मिले जो उन दिनों आक्सफोर्ड विश्वविद्यालय में प्रोफेसर थे। स्वामी जी ने इस भेंट का वर्णन अपने एक पत्र में इस प्रकार किया है—

“प्रोफेसर मैक्स मूलर आत्माधारण व्यक्ति हैं पिछले दिनों मैं उनसे भेंट करने गया। जो कोई भी श्री रामकृष्ण जी से प्रेम करता है, उनका आदर करता है, उसका आदर करना तथा दर्शन करना मैं तीर्थ यात्रा के समान पवित्र समझता हूँ।”

“प्रोफेसर मैक्स मूलर ने स्वामीय श्री केशव चन्द्र सेन विख्यात ब्रह्म समाज के नेता के जीवन में किस प्रकार कैसे परिवर्तन आया और वह श्री रामकृष्ण के अनुयायी बने, इस विषय में पूछा। मैंने कह—“आज हजारों व्यक्ति परमरस की पूजा करते हैं।” प्रोफेसर ने उत्तर दिया—

“अगर वह उनकी पूजा न करें तो किसकी करें?” प्रोफेसर ने हमें आक्सफोर्ड के बहुत से कालेज दिखलाए और हमें रेलवे स्टेशन तक छोड़ने आए और उन्होंने कहा—“मेरा सौभाग्य है कि मुझे परमहंस जी के परम शिष्यों के दर्शन हुए।”

सत्तर वर्ष की अवस्था में भी उस ब्रह्म ऋषि का मुख मण्डल बच्चोंके समान खिला हुआ था। उनके मस्तक की प्रत्येक रेखा उनके हृदय में छिपे आध्यात्मिक खजाने की ओर संकेत कर रही थी। उनके निवास स्थान का शान्त गम्भीर वातावरण प्राचीन भारत के स्वर्ण युग का प्रतीक था। मैक्स मूलर को देखकर मुझे अरुन्धती और वशिष्ठ इत्यादि महान वानप्रस्थियों की याद आ गई। आप न केवल एक महान विद्वान और दार्शनिक थे बल्कि आध्यात्मिक दृष्टि कोण से भी ब्रह्म निष्ठ और ब्रह्म श्रोत्रिय थे। भारत के प्रति उनका कितना प्रेम था, मैं चाहता हूँ कि उनके प्रेम का सौवां भाग भी मुझे मिल जाये

बंगलोर में

सर्वोत्तम रिहाइश तथा खान-पान के लिये

वीनस होटल

तार : "वीनस होटल"

में पधारिये

कम्पोगोडा सर्कल के नज़दीक, सूबेदार चतुर्थ रोड, बंगलोर-६.

फोन : ७०१८१
३४६६

ताकि मैं अपनी मातृ भूमि से प्यार कर सकूँ। मैक्स मूलर एक महान वेदान्ती थे।"

"जब मैंने उनसे पूछा कि—“आप भारत कब आ रहे हैं ? प्रत्येक भारत वासी आपका हार्दिक स्वागत करेगा क्योंकि आपने उनके पूर्वजों के महान मित्रांतो का दिग्दर्शन कराया है।" यह सुनकर उस ब्रह्म ऋषि का मुख मण्डल चमक उठा, उनकी आंखों में आंसू आ गए और वह धीरे से सिर हिलाकर बहुत गम्भीरता के साथ यह वचन बोले—“तब मैं वापिस नहीं आऊंगा। आपको मुझे वहीं दफनाना होगा।"

उन्हीं दिनों मैक्स मेलर ने श्री परमहंस जी के आदर्शमयी जीवन के बारे में एक लेख लिखा, जो कई समाचार पत्रों में छपा। इसके पश्चात् प्रोफेसर मैक्स मूलर ने स्वामी जी से श्री राम कृष्ण के जीवन चरित्र तथा उनकी शिक्षाओं के बारे में पूछा और प्रार्थना की कि मुझे यह सब आवश्यक सूचनाएं भिजवा दें। उन्होंने श्री परमहंस जी के जीवन और शिक्षाओं के बारे में 'राम-कृष्ण' नामक पुस्तक लिखी।

लंदन से स्वामी विवेकानन्द स्विटजरलैंड गये। वहां पर उन्हें जर्मनी के प्रसिद्ध दार्शनिक डाक्टर पाल ड्यूसन (Paul Deussen) का पत्र मिला उसमें उन्होंने स्वामी जी से जर्मनी के कील [Kiel] नामक नगर में आने की। प्रार्थना की डाक्टर पाल ड्यूसन ने स्वयं भारत की यात्रा की थी और वह वेदान्त दर्शन के बहुत बड़े विद्वान थे। स्वामी जी स्विटजरलैंड की यात्रा समाप्त करके बरलिन [Berlin] पहुंचे। आपके साथ दो तीन भक्त भी थे। बरलिन से आप कील पहुंचे और एक होटल

में ठहरे। तब उन्होंने डाक्टर ड्यूसन को अपने आने का समाचार भेजा। दूसरे दिन प्रोफेसर ड्यूसनने नाश्ते के लिए स्वामी जी को निमंत्रण भेजा। स्वामी जी ठीक १० बजे वहां पहुंचे। डाक्टर ड्यूसन और उनकी पत्नी ने स्वामी जी का स्वागत किया। तब वेदान्त सूत्र, शंकर भाष्य और उपनिषदों के बारे में चर्चा चल पड़ी। डाक्टर ड्यूसन जर्मनी के कील विश्वविद्यालय में दर्शन शास्त्र के प्रोफेसर थे। आप महान दार्शनिक शोपन हावर, जो भगवद् गीता और उपनिषदों के महान ज्ञाता थे, के शिष्य थे। लगभग छः सप्ताह स्वामी जी कील में रहे। उन दिनों स्वामी जी ने कील के प्रसिद्ध दर्शनीय स्थलों को देखा। एक दिन स्वामी जी एक कविता की पुस्तक पढ़ रहे थे। वह पृष्ठ पर पृष्ठ उलटते जा रहे थे। डाक्टर ड्यूसन ने स्वामी जी से कुछ पूछा परन्तु स्वामी जी पढ़ने में इतने तल्लीन थे कि उन्होंने कोई उत्तर न दिया। बाद में जब स्वामी जी को पता चला तब उन्होंने क्षमा मांगते हुए कहा कि—“मैं पढ़ने में इतना खोया हुआ था कि मुझे आपकी आवाज सुनाई न दी।" प्रोफेसर उनके उत्तर से संतुष्ट न हुए। बाद में वार्तालाप के समय स्वामी जी ने उस पुस्तक से अनेक श्लोक जवानी सुनाये। यह सुनकर डाक्टर ड्यूसन एकदम स्तब्ध से रह गये और उन्होंने स्वामी जी से पूछा कि—“आपने इतनी तीक्ष्ण स्मरण शक्ति कैसे प्राप्त की?" तब स्वामी जी ने अपने अनुभव का वर्णन करते हुए कहा—“यह सब मन की एकाग्रता का परिणाम है। यदि समाधि अवस्था में मेरे शरीर पर कोई जलते हुए कोयले भी रख दे तो मुझे पता नहीं चलेगा।"

इस प्रकार स्वामी विवेकानन्द ने जर्मनी की यात्रा की।



इंग्लिश क्लब अलमोड़ा जहाँ स्वामीजी ने उपदेश दिये

ज ग द म्बा का ब र दा न

वेदान्त सम्राट स्वामी विवेकानन्द जी के पिता श्री विश्वनाथ एक प्रसिद्ध वकील थे। उन्होंने अपनी वकालत से बहुत धन कमाया परन्तु उनका स्वभाव बड़ा उदार और खर्चीला था, जिसका फल यह हुआ कि वह अपनी मृत्यु के पश्चात् पीछे कुछ भी नहीं छोड़ गये। अब घर का सारा भार नरेन्द्र पर पड़ा। नौकरी की खोज में इधर उधर भटकने लगे। तंगे पैर, भूखे प्यासे धूप में निरंतर घूमते रहते। बहुत दिनों तक भटकने पर जब नौकरी मिलने के कोई चिन्ह नहीं दिखाई दिये, जब उनका मन बहुत निराश हो गया। वह बहुत दिनों तक दक्षिणेश्वर में अपने गुरुदेव श्री राम कृष्ण जी के दर्शन के लिए भी न जा सके। निराशा यहाँ तक बढ़ी कि उन्होंने आत्महत्या करने का निश्चय कर लिया। वह सोचने लगे—“पैसा कमाने तथा कुटुम्ब का पोषण करने के लिए ही उनका जन्म नहीं हुआ?” इतने में यह सुना कि श्री राम कृष्ण कलकत्ता में किसी के घर आने वाले हैं। यह सुनकर इन्होंने सोचा—“बस ठीक हो गया। एक बार अन्तिम गुरुदर्शन करके संसार को सता के लिए राम-राम कर

लूंगा।” श्री राम कृष्ण से भेंट होते ही वह बोले—“आज तुमको मेरे साथ दक्षिणेश्वर चलना होगा।” इन्होंने बहुत टाल मटोल की पर वह एक न माने। बचने का कोई उपाय न देखकर उनके साथ गाड़ी में बैठकर रवाना होना पड़ा। मार्ग में वह एक भी बात नहीं बोले। गाड़ी से उतरते ही नरेन्द्र दूसरे लोगों के साथ ही कमरे में जाकर बैठ गये। थोड़ी ही देर में परमहंस जी को भावावेश हो आया और वह पलंग पर से उतर कर नरेन्द्र के पास आये और उसके गले में हाथ डालकर आंसू बहाते-बहाते गाने लगे—“बाने में बुरा लगता है, न बोलने में भी डर लगता है। मेरे मन में संशय होता है कि मैं शायद तुमको खो बैठूँ।”

इतने समय तक किसी प्रकार बड़े कण्ठ से नरेन्द्र ने अपने मन को रोक रखा था, पर अब उससे न रहा गया। कण्ठ भर आया और नेत्रों से आंसू बहने लगे। बाद में रात्रि के समय नरेन्द्र को पास बुला कर वह बोले—“मुझको मालूम है तू माता जगदम्बा के काम के लिये

यहां आया है। तू संसार में कभी नहीं रह सकता तो भी जब तक मैं हूँ तब तक तो तू मेरे लिए संसार में रह।' ऐसा कहकर श्री राम कृष्ण पुनः फूट-फूट कर रोने लगे।

श्री राम कृष्ण से विदा लेकर वह घर लौटे और फिर उन्हें संसार की अनेक चिन्ताएं लग गई। एक दिन इनके मन में आया कि श्री राम कृष्ण की बात तो ईश्वर मानता है न ! तो ऐसा ही करना चाहिए। जिससे घर के लोगों को खाने पीने का कष्ट न हो। यह निश्चय कर वह जल्दी-जल्दी श्री राम कृष्ण के पास दक्षिणेश्वर गये और उनसे प्रार्थना की कि—“महाराज ! मेरे घर के लोगों के लिए कोई अन्न व्यवस्था कर देने के लिए आपको जनदम्बा से प्रार्थना करनी ही चाहिये। मैं उनके कष्टों को नहीं देख सकता।”

श्री राम कृष्ण बोले—“अरे भाई ! यह इस तरह की बात मुझसे बोलते नहीं बनेगी। तू ही यह बात उनके कान में क्यों नहीं डालता ? तू माता को नहीं मानता इसीलिए तो तुझे ऐसे कष्ट होते हैं।” नरेन्द्र बोले—“मुझको तो माता की जानकारी ही नहीं है। आप ही मेरे लिये इतना कह दीजिए। आपको इतना करना ही चाहिये। मैं आप को आज किसी तरह भी नहीं छोड़ूंगा।” इस पर श्री राम कृष्ण बड़े प्रेम से बोले—“नरेन ! तुझे मैं क्या बताऊं ? मैंने कितनी ही बार माता से कहा होगा कि “माता ! नरेन्द्र के दुःख कष्टों को दूर कर, पर तू माता को नहीं मानता, इसीलिए तो माता इधर ध्यान ही नहीं देती। पर जब तेरा इतना आग्रह ही है तो ठीक है। आज मंगलवार है, मैं कहता हूँ कि तू आज रात को माता के मन्दिर में जाकर उसे प्रणाम कर और तुझको जो चाहिए सो तू ही मांग ले। माता तुझको अवश्य देगी। मेरी माता चिन्मयी, ब्रह्मशक्ति केवल इच्छा मात्र से संसार का निर्माण करने वाली है। यदि उसी ने ठन लिया तो वह क्या नहीं कर सकती ?”

इम आश्वासन से नरेन्द्र के मन में दृढ़ निश्चय हो गया कि जब श्री राम कृष्ण ही इस तरह कह रहे हैं, तब तो केवल प्रार्थना करते ही सारे दुःख अवश्य ही दूर हो जाएंगे। मन अत्यन्त उत्कण्ठित हो गया और दिन कब जाता है और रात कब होती है, ऐसा सोचने लगा। धीरे

धीरे रात आई। एक पहर रात्रि बीतने पर श्री रामकृष्ण ने नरेन्द्र को माता के मन्दिर में जाने के लिए कहा। “मैं रवाना तो हुआ पर मन से एक प्रकार का विचित्र नशा सा छा गया था। पैर थर थर काँप रहे थे और अब मुझे माता का दर्शन होगा और उसके शब्द सुनने को मिलेगे इसी भावना में अन्य सभी चिन्ताओं तथा विचारों का विस्मरण हो गया और यही एक बात मन में घूमने लगी। मन्दिर में गया। मैंने ब्रह्म भावापन्न होने के कारण कभी मन्दिर में किसी मूर्ति के आगे सिर नहीं झुकाया था। दण्डवत् प्रणाम कर, हाथ जोड़ खड़े होते ही मैंने देखा कि माता सचमुच ही चिन्मयी है और जीवित है। उसके शरीर में रूप, प्रेम, लावण्य, कसूणा मानो प्रवाहित हो रहे हैं। यह देख कर मेरा हृदय भक्ति और प्रेम से भर आया और मैं विह्वल होकर गद्गद अन्तःकरण से बारम्बार प्रणाम करते हुए कहने लगा—“माता विवेक दे, वैराग्य दे, भक्ति दे और जिस प्रकार मुझे तेरा दर्शन निरन्तर प्राप्त हो, वही उपाय कर।” मन को बहुत शांति मिली। जगत माता के सिवाय और सभी विचारों को मैं भूलकर और अत्यन्त आनन्द के साथ श्री राम कृष्ण के कमरे की ओर वापिस लौटा। मुझ को देखते ही उन्होंने पूछा—“क्यों रे, संसारिक दुःख और कष्टों को दूर करने के लिए तूने माता की प्रार्थना की या नहीं ?” इतना सुनते ही जैसे कोई हिलाकर जगादे, उस तरह चकित होकर बोला—“अरे रे, सचमुच ही मैं तो यह सब भूल ही गया। अब क्या कहूँ ?” श्री राम कृष्ण बोले—“जा, जा, पुनः प्रार्थना करके आ मैं पुनः मन्दिर में गया और जगन्माता के सामने जाते ही सब भूल कर भक्ति और ज्ञान देने के लिए उससे प्रार्थना करके लौट आया। मुझको देखते ही हंसते हुए श्री राम कृष्ण बोले—“क्यों रे, अब भी ठीक प्रार्थना की या नहीं ?” इसे सुनकर मुझे पुनः स्मरण हो गया और मैं बोला—“नहीं महाराज ! माता को देखते ही मैं सारी बातें भूल गया और पुनः भक्ति ज्ञान के लिए ही प्रार्थना करके चला आया। अब कैसे होगा ?” श्री राम कृष्ण बोले—“वाह रे पण्डित ! थोड़ा सावधान रह कर इतनी सीधी सादी प्रार्थना भी तुझ से ठीक करते न बनी। इधर देख, चाहता है तो तू फिर एक बार और जा फिर प्रार्थना कर के आ।

(शेष पृष्ठ ३६ पर)

स्वामी विवेकानन्द

की

गुरु भक्ति



परम हंस स्वामी रामकृष्ण

शास्त्रों में गुरु को 'भव रोग वैद्य' कहा गया है। साधक ईश्वर प्राप्ति के मार्ग में चलते हुए जिन अवस्थाओं में से पार होता है, उसे सद्गुरु तुरन्त पहचान लेते हैं। स्वामी विवेकानन्द जी की श्री रामकृष्ण परमहंस जी के प्रति अत्यन्त दृढ़ श्रद्धा और निष्ठा थी। अपने परम शिष्य नरेन्द्र को भी स्वामी रामकृष्ण कुछ कम नहीं चाहते थे। नरेन्द्र के सम्बन्ध में वह कहते थे कि 'नरेन्द्र मेरी ससुराल है' (अपनी ओर उंगली दिखाकर) "इसके भीतर जो कोई है वह मानो सादा है और (नरेन्द्र की ओर उंगली दिखाकर) इसमें जो कोई है वह मानो नर है।' आप अधिकतर कहा करते थे—'यहाँ इतने लोग आते हैं पर उनमें नरेन्द्र के समान एक भी नहीं है। किसी समय मालूम पड़ता है कि कोई दशदल, शोडश दल और कोई अधिक से अधिक शतदल कमल है, पर मेरा नरेन्द्र तो सहस्रदल कमल है। दूसरे लोग कोई लोटा, कोई कलसी और यदि कोई अधिक है तो गागर है पर नरेन्द्र तो हण्डा है। और लोग कोई गड्ढा, कोई कुआँ और अधिक से अधिक तालाब है, पर नरेन्द्र तो सरोवर

है।' नरेन्द्र को जब सर्व प्रथम निर्विकल्प समाधि प्राप्त हुई तब श्री रामकृष्ण बोले—'तू अब कुछ दिनों तक दूसरों के हाथ का मत खाया कर, स्वयं रसोई बना-कर खाया कर।'

नरेन्द्र को देखकर स्वामी रामकृष्ण परमहंस जी का प्रेम उमड़ पड़ा। परम हंस जी अपने भक्त सुरेशचन्द्र मिश्र के घर आये हुये थे। उन्हें कुछ भजन सुनने की इच्छा हुई। वहाँ बैठे हुए लोगों में से किसी की श्रद्धा गाना नहीं आता था, इसलिये सुरेश ने अपने घर के पास ही रहने वाले विद्वनाथ बाबू के लड़के नरेन्द्र को गाने के लिये बुलाया। इस प्रकार उनकी अपने मुख्य लीला सहायक स्वामी विवेकानन्द जी से प्रथम भेंट हुई। उस नरेन्द्र को देखते ही श्री रामकृष्ण का ध्यान उसकी ओर खिंच गया। अपनी भक्त भण्डली में इसका वर्णन करते हुए उन्होंने बताया उस दिन नरेन्द्र इस दरवाजे से कमरे के भीतर आया। उसका ध्यान अपने शरीर की ओर बिल्कुल न था। उसका सब कुछ निराला ही था। उसकी आँखों में ऐसा दिखाई दिया कि इसके मन

को किसी ने जबरदस्ती अर्न्तमुख बना दिया है। यह सब देखकर मैंने यह सोचा कि विषयी लोगों के आगार कलकत्ता में इतना बड़ा सत्सोगुणी अधिकारी कहां से आ गया ? गाने के लिये उसने कहा तब उसने यह गाया 'चल मन निज निकेतने।' इसे सुनकर मुझे भाव अवस्था प्राप्त हो गई। नरेन्द्र के चले जाने के बाद उससे फिर भेंट करने के लिए मेरा मन चौबीसों घण्टे इतना व्याकुल रहता था कि मैं कह नहीं सकता। बीच-बीच में तो ऐसी वेदना होती थी कि मानों कोई कलेजे को निचोड़ रहा हो। वह वेदना असह्य सी हो जाती तब मैं उठकर भाऊतला की ओर चला जाता था और वहां लोक लज्जा को एक ओर समेट कर रख देता और 'आरे नरेन्द्र आ' तेरे बिना मेरे प्राण निकल रहे हैं।" इस तरह बिल्लाकर जोर २ से गला फाड़ कर रोता। कुछ समय तक इस प्रकार रोने से मन ही मन कहीं थोड़ा शांत होता था। यह एक दो दिन की बात नहीं लगातार छः महीने ऐसा ही रहा।"

उसी भेंट के बारे में स्वयं नरेन्द्र ने इस प्रकार कहा—'गाना तो मैंने गाया, पर गाना समाप्त होते ही श्री रामकृष्ण शीघ्रता से उठकर मेरे पास आए और मेरा हाथ पकड़ कर मुझे उत्तर की ओर के बरामदे में ले गये। बरामदे में पहुंचकर कमरे के उस ओर के कवाड़ बन्द कर देने से किसी बाहर वाले को वहां पर क्या हो रहा है, दिखाई नहीं देता था। उस बरामदे में पहुंचते ही मेरे हाथों को अपने हाथ में पकड़कर निरन्तर आंसू बहाते, जोर से सांस लेते, किसी अत्यन्त परिचित मनुष्य के समान मुझ से प्रेम से कहने लगे—'यहां आने में क्या इतने दिन लगाने चाहिए ? मैं यहाँ कितनी उत्सुकता से तेरी राह देखता रहता हूँ, इसका तू विचार तक नहीं करता। विषयी लोगों की राम कहानी सुनते २ मेरे कान जलने की नौबत आ रही है। मन की बातें बताने के लिये कोई मनुष्य न मिलने के कारण वह भीतर ही भीतर उबल कर मेरा पेट फुला रही है।' कुछ देर में मेरे सामने हाथ जोड़कर रोते हुए कहने लगे—'प्रभु ! मुझे मालूम है कि तू तो पुरातन नारायण ऋषि हैं और

जीवों की दुर्गति का निवारण करने के लिये फिर शरीर धारण करके आया है।'

'इसके पश्चात् श्री राम कृष्ण ने स्वयं अपने हाथों से मुझे मिठाई खिलाई और मेरा हाथ पकड़कर बोले— 'तू ऐसे ही यहाँ और एक बार अकेला ही जितनी जल्दी हो सके आ।' नरेन्द्र से दुबारा शीघ्र आने का वचन लेकर वापिस कमरे के अन्दर आ गये। नरेन्द्र सोचने लगा, कहीं यह पागल तो नहीं ? तभी उनके कानों में श्री राम कृष्ण के यह वचन गूँजने लगते— "जैसे मैं तुमको देखता हूँ और जिस तरह मैं तुमसे बातचीत करता हूँ, ठीक वैसे ही ईश्वर को भी देखा जा सकता है और उससे बात की जा सकती है परन्तु ऐसा करने की इच्छा ही किस को होगी ? लोग स्त्री पुरुष के शोक में धड़ों के हिसाब से आंसू बहाते हैं। इच्छित वस्तु न मिलने या सम्पत्ति का नाश हो जाने पर तो रोते २ आंखों में सूजन तक आ जाती है पर ईश्वर की प्राप्ति के लिये भला कितने लोग इस प्रकार का शोक करते ?

इसके बाद लगभग एक मास बीत गया। एक दिन नरेन्द्र अकेले ही पैदल दक्षिणेश्वर गये। उस दिन की बात मुनिये— "मैं पैदल दक्षिणेश्वर पहुंचा और श्री रामकृष्ण के कमरे में गया। वह अकेले ही विचार मग्न हाकर पलंग पर बैठे थे। मुझे देखते ही बड़े आनन्दित होकर पलंग के एक ओर बिठाया। थोड़ी ही देर में मुझे दिखाई दिया कि उन्हें भावावेश प्राप्त हो गया है और वह अस्पष्ट स्वर में कुछ कहते हुए मेरी ओर सरकते आ रहे हैं। तब उन्होंने अपना दाहिना चरण मेरे शरीर पर रखा। ऐसा करते ही जो चमत्कार हुआ सो क्या बताऊँ ? मुझे ऐसा प्रतीत होने लगा कि वह कमरा और उसकी सारी चीजें बड़े वेग से घूम २ कर कहीं अर्न्तध्यान हो रही हैं और सारा विश्व और उसके साथ मेरा अहंकार भी महाशून्य में विलीन होने के लिए बड़े वेग से चला जा रहा है। यह हाल देखकर मैं भयभीत हो गया। मुझे ऐसा मालूम पड़ा कि मैं पन (अहंकार) का नाश ही तो मृत्यु है। तब फिर अब मृत्यु में क्या

कमी ? इतने में मेरा धैर्य जाता रहा और मैं एकदम चिल्लाया—‘अर्जी यह आप मुझे क्या कर रहे हैं ? मेरे माता पिता हैं न अभी ! यह सुनकर वह खिल-खिलाकर हसने लगे और अपने हाथों से मेरे वक्षस्थल को मलते हुए कहने लगे—‘प्रच्छा ! तो फिर अभी रहने दे !’ मेरे मन में हलचल मच गई । यह मनुष्य है कौन और इसने जो प्रयोग किया, क्या उसे हिपना-टिजम (मोहनो विद्या) कहा जाय ? पर वह बात भी मन में नहीं जचती ।’

नरेन्द्र के सम्बन्ध में श्री रामकृष्ण को जो २ दर्शन हुए, उनमें से किसी किसी के बारे में वह कभी २ कहा करते थे—‘नरेन्द्र के समान अधिकारी पुरुष इस युग में पृथ्वी पर आज तक कभी नहीं आया । नरेन्द्र पुरुष है और मैं प्रकृति हूँ । नरेन्द्र अखण्ड के राज्य का पुरुष है । यह सप्त ऋषियों में से एक ऋषि है । कभी वह कहते थे—‘शुकदेव के समान ही नरेन्द्र को माया स्पश नहीं कर सकती ।’ जब कुछ दिनों तक नरेन्द्र दक्षिणेश्वर नहीं गये तो श्री रामकृष्ण बहुत व्याकुल हो गये । और कहने लगे—‘क्या बताऊँ ? नरेन्द्र के लिए प्राण छटपटा रहे हैं । उसको एक बार यहां आने के लिए कह देना । नरेन्द्र शुद्ध सत्तोगुणी साक्षात् नारायण है । बीच २ में उससे भेंट हुए बिना मैं जीवित नहीं रह सकता ।’

उपरोक्त वर्णन से श्री रामकृष्ण का नरेन्द्र से कितना अद्भुत प्रेम था, इसकी कल्पना पाठकों को कुछ २ हो चुकी होगी । कई बार परमहंस जी ने नरेन्द्र की परीक्षा भी ली । उनका दृढ़ विश्वास था कि अच्छी तरह परीक्षा लिये बिना मैं किसी को अपने शिष्य समुदाय में नहीं लेता । जैसे काँच की अलमारी के भीतर की सब चीजें दिखाई देती हैं, उसी प्रकार मनुष्य के भीतर क्या है और क्या नहीं है, यह सब मुझको माता दिखा देती ।

एक बार निरन्तर कई दिनों तक नरेन्द्र दक्षिणेश्वर में जाते रहे । श्री रामकृष्ण दूसरों से उसके बारे में पूछा करते पर उसके आते ही कुछ भी न बोला करते थे । पर नरेन्द्र ने अपना आना बन्द नहीं किया । बाद में एक दिन नरेन्द्र के आते ही श्री रामकृष्ण उनसे बोले—‘क्यों

रे नरेन्द्र ! मैं तो तुमसे एक शब्द भी नहीं बोलता । तब भला तू यहां क्यों आया करता है ? नरेन्द्र ने उत्तर दिया—‘मैं यहां आपका भाषण सुनने थोड़े ही आता हूँ । मुझे तो आप से प्रेम है, इसलिये आपको देखे बिना मुझे चैन नहीं पड़ता, इसी कारण मैं रोज चला आता हूँ । यह सुनकर श्री रामकृष्ण को कृष्णा आ गई और बोले—‘नरेन्, नरेन्] मैंने तेरी परीक्षा ले ली है । तेरा लाड़ प्यार नहीं किया, तुमसे बोला नहीं, तू भागता है या नहीं, यही देखना था ।’

श्री रामकृष्ण बहुत चाहते थे कि वह जैसे दूसरों की परीक्षा लेते हैं, वैसे ही दूसरे लोग भी उनकी परीक्षा लेने के बाद ही उनपर विश्वास करें । वह सदा कहा करते थे—‘भाइयों ! साधू को दिन में देखो, रात में देखो और तभी उस पर विश्वास करो । साधू जैसा उपदेश दूसरों का देता है, वैसा ही स्वयं आचरण करता है या नहीं, इस बात का ध्यान रखो । जिसकी कथनी और करनी में मेल नहीं है, उस पर कभी विश्वास मत करो ।’ जब नरेन्द्र के पिता की मृत्यु हो गई और उनके परिवार की आर्थिक स्थिति बहुत बिगड़ गई, तब तो रामकृष्ण बहुत चिंतित हुए । उन्होंने सभी सत्संगियों से नरेन्द्र की सहायता के लिए कहा । सत्संग की समाप्ति पर नरेन्द्र कुछ निराश हो गये । श्री रामकृष्ण की आंखों में पानी आ गया और यह आंसू बहाते हुए बोले—‘नरेन्द्र ! आवश्यकता पड़ने पर हाथ में भोली लेकर मैं तेरे लिए घर २ भिक्षा मांगने के लिए तैयार हूँ रे ! फिर तेरे लिए लोगों के पास इतनी सी बात कहने में मुझे तुच्छता कैसे मालूम हो सकती है ।

सत्य है जिसके प्रति अपने इष्टदेव भगवान का इतना अधिक प्रेम और कृपा हो, वह क्यों न विश्व विख्यात वेदांत सम्राट बनें । स्वामी विवेकानन्द के मन में अपने आदर्श इष्टदेव के प्रति किन्तनी श्रद्धा और निष्ठा थी, इसे उनके शब्दों में सुनिये—‘सचमुच लूट मची हुई है, प्रेम कहो, भक्ति कहो, ज्ञान कहो, मुक्ति कहो । जिसको जो चाहिये उसको गौरांग (श्री राम कृष्ण) वही बांटता जा रहा है । यह कैसी अद्भुत शक्ति है ?

श्री राम कृष्ण जी की व्याधि अब अधिक पीड़ा देने लगी थी। तरल, दूध, और सूजी भी कठिनाता से खाया जाता था। नरेन्द्र को साथ लेकर शिष्य मण्डली ने उनके पास जाकर प्रार्थना की—‘आप जगदम्बा से यह रोग मिटा देने के लिए कहिए।’ उनके पास तो एक ही उत्तर था—‘ऐसी बात तो बेटा मैं कह नहीं सकता।’ श्री राम कृष्ण जी को यह पक्का निश्चय हो गया कि अब जगदम्बा इस शरीर को रखना नहीं चाहती। शुभ दिन देख देह त्याग करने के लिए मन ही मन तैयार हुए। इसके पूर्व नरेन्द्र को अग्रामी कर्म के लिये समर्थ बनाना था। एक दिन रात्रि ६ बजे के लगभग नरेन्द्र को उन्होंने अपने पास बुलाया। उसे अपने पास बिठाकर उनकी

आंखों में अपनी आंखें डालकर स्थिर दृष्टि से देखते २ एकदम समाधि स्थित हो गये। इधर नरेन्द्र एक अद्भुत शक्ति, विद्युत् प्रवाह अन्दर प्रवेश कर रही हैं, अनुभव करने लगे। उनका सारा शरीर थर-थर कांप रहा था। धीरे-धीरे होश भी चला गया। जब फिर सुद्धि हुई तो क्या देखा कि श्री राम कृष्ण जी अश्रुपात कर रहे हैं। वह बोले—‘आज तुम्हें सब देकर मैं फकीर हो गया हूँ। अब माता ने मुझे सब कुछ दिखा दिया है। उस सारे अनुभव को तेरे हृदय में बंद करके उसकी कुंजी माता ने मेरे हाथ में दे दी है। अब आगे तुम्हको मेरा काम करना है। उस काम को पूरा किये बिना तू यहां से जा नहीं सकता। तेरी ढड़ियां तक यह काम करेंगी।’

मनुष्य—केवल मनुष्य भर चाहिए। बाकी सब कुछ अपने आप हो जायेगा। आवश्यकता है वीर्यवान, तेजस्वी, श्रद्धासम्पन्न और दृढ़ विश्वासा, निष्कपट नवयुवकों की। ऐसे सौ मिल जायें, तो संसार का काया-कल्प हो जाय ! इच्छा-शक्ति संसार में सबसे अधिक बलवती है। उसके सामने दुनिया की कोई चीज नहीं ठहर सकती, क्योंकि वह भगवान—साक्षात् भगवान से आती है। विशुद्ध और दृढ़ इच्छा-शक्ति सर्वशक्तिमान है। क्या तुम इसमें विश्वास नहीं करते ? सबके समक्ष अपने धर्म के महान सत्यों का प्रचार करो, संसार इनकी प्रतीक्षा कर रहा है।

सैकड़ों वर्षों से लोगों को मनुष्य की हीनावस्था का ही ज्ञान कारया गया है। उनसे कहा गया है कि वे कुछ नहीं हैं। संसार भर में सबत्र सर्वसाधारण से कहा गया है कि तुम लोग मनुष्य ही नहीं हो। शताब्दियों से इस प्रकार डराए जाने के कारण वे बेचारे सचमुच ही करीब करीब पशुत्व को प्राप्त हो गए हैं। उन्हें कभी आत्मतत्त्व सुनने का मौका नहीं दिया गया। अब उनको आत्मतत्त्व सुनने दो, यह ज्ञान लेने दो कि उनमें से नीच से नीच में भी आत्मा विद्यमान है वह आत्मा, जो न कभी मरती है, न जन्म लेती है, जिसे न तलवार काट सकती है, न आग जला सकती है और न हवा सुखा सकती, जो अमर है, अनादि और अनन्त है, जो शुद्धस्वरूप, सर्वशक्तिमान और सर्वव्यापी है।

उन्हें अपने में विश्वास करने दो। तुम्हें सिखाते आए हैं कि तुम कुछ भी नहीं हो, तुम कुछ भी नहीं कर सकते, और फलस्वरूप तुम आज इस प्रकार अकर्मण्य हो गए हो। अतएव आज हम जो चाहते हैं, वह है—बल, अपने में अटूट विश्वास।

हम लोग शक्तिहीन हो गये हैं। इसीलिए गुप्तविद्या और रहस्यविद्या ने धीरे-धीरे हममें पर कर लिया है। भले ही उनमें अनेक सत्य हों, पर उन्होंने तो हमें नष्टप्राय कर डाला है। अपने स्नायु बलवान बनाओ। आज हमें जिसकी आवश्यकता है, यह है—लोहे के पुट्टे और फीलाद के स्नायु।

मेरी समर-नीति [स्वामी विवेकानन्द] पृष्ठ ५६—५६



विवेक सम्राट विवेकानन्द

श्री दिलीप कुमार राय

(श्री दिलीप कुमार राय आज के भारत के विख्यात दार्शनिकों में से एक हैं। जागीरदार के पुत्र थे परन्तु बचपन से ही आप साधु वृत्ति रखते थे। संगीत के आचार्य थे और इनकी आवाज़ को जादू भरी आवाज़ कहा जाता था। विद्या प्राप्ति के लिए विलायत गए पर वहाँ भी अपने संगीत के कारण प्रसिद्ध हुए। भारत आए तो परमहंस स्वामी रामकृष्ण, स्वामी विवेकानंद और महाप्रभु के जीवनों से प्रेरित होकर महर्षि अरविंद जी के चरणों में पहुँचे। उन से मंत्र दीक्षा ली और इस प्रकार एक महान संगीतकार, महान दार्शनिक और तेजस्वी साधु बने। मीरा और सूरदास के भजन जब आप गाते हैं तो लगता है कि भक्ति की गंगोत्री में बाढ़ सी आ गई है, जो हर सुनते वाले के विचारों को बहाती अपने ही रंग में रंगती जा रही है। इंग्लैंड के फिलासफर साईंसदान, ब्रंटन रसल भी इनके भजन पर मोहित हुए बिना न रह सके, गांधी जी का तो कहना ही क्या? श्री राय इन दिनों पूना में हरि कृष्ण मन्दिर में निवास रखते हैं। भारत में और विदेशों में महर्षि अरविंद के इस परम शिष्य के कितने ही मंत्र दीक्षित शिष्य हैं। हमारी प्रार्थना पर आपने स्वामी विवेकानंद के बारे में एक अंग्रेजी कविता भेजी है, जिसका स्वतंत्र अनुवाद दीचे दिया जा रहा है।

—सारथी)

ओ, भारत की ज्योतिर्भय आत्मा ! हम दुःख सागर में घिरे तूझों के लिए प्रकाश स्तम्भ बन जाओ। आप विशुद्धता के अभय गीतकार थे। कोई संकट के मार्ग में बाधा न डाल सका। कोई निन्दक आपका कुछ न बिगाड़ सका। आप के राजकीय, भय चरण पाद की अद्भुत मृगीली ध्वनि आज भी कोलाहल भरे जगमगाते संसार को मतवाला वाला बना देती है। आप आए थे कि हम, काली के पुत्रों की को, जो प्राकृतिक पंख रखते हैं, यह

संदेश देने कि उठो आकाशों को चीरने का साहस करो विवेकानन्द ! यह आप थे जिन्होंने गाया था—‘भारत मां बुलाती है, तुम कैसे सो सकते हो?’ कायरता भरे भय में भटकते हुए जीवों के लिये आपका यह उपदेश विश्रान्ति का संदेश था कि उठो, जागो और प्यार की सत्यता को निभाओ।”

हम पराधीनता में जकड़े हुए आतुर नाद कर रहे थे, रुदन कर रहे थे, अनाथ बने, निस्सहायता में कराह रहे

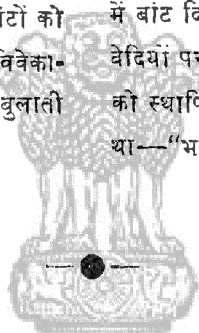
थे। उस समय तुम मुक्ति दान बनकर हाथ में वेदान्त का खंडा लेकर हमें स्वतंत्र करने आए। हम हर साय को देखकर कांप उठते थे, उन शिखरों को देखना ही क्या था, जहां वीरता का तेज दहकता है। परन्तु आप के प्रज्वलित आगमन ने आख भपकते ही नास्तिकों की निराशा को कैसे समाप्त कर दिया, यह कोई भी जान नहीं पाया। विवेकानन्द यह आप थे जिन्होंने गाया था—“भारत मां बुलाती है, तुम कैसे सो सकते हो?”

प्रेम प्रकाश के अवतार श्री रामकृष्ण ने आप को धर्म प्रचार के लिये नियुक्त किया था कि आप हम संसारियों को अपनी खोई हुई धर्म परायणता और ईश्वरता को फिर से पाने के मार्ग पर आरुढ़ करें।

ऐ भगवान शिव की चमत्कार भरी किरण! आप काली मां की सब शक्तियों से सुशोभित होकर इस संसार में आए और आप ने विवेक की कीमयागरी से कांटों को सदा बहार फूलों में परिवर्तित कर दिया था। विवेकानन्द यह आप थे जिन्होंने गाया था—“भारत मां बुलाती है, तुम कैसे सो सकते हो?”

आप आए थे ताकि कटे हुए पूर्व और पश्चिम को जोड़ने के लिए एक बहुरंगी पुल बना सकें। यह गाते हुए कि सब एक ही माता की सन्तान हैं, कोई भी अछूत नहीं, सब पुन्यात्माएं हैं। आश्चर्य है कि कैसे आप के सूर्य नाद ने घृणा के भयानक बादलों का दमन कर दिया? आप यह घोषणा करते हुए कि इन सब को, जो अमरत्व के याचक हैं, एक दूसरे से प्रेम करना चाहिए। विवेकानन्द यह आप थे जिन्होंने गाया था—“भारत मां बुलाती है, तुम कैसे सो सकते हो?”

आपके कोमलता भरे विशाल हृदय में समूह संसार समाया हुआ था। आपके लिये न कोई बैरी था, न बेगाना यहां तक कि दरिद्रों और कङ्गालों में भी अपने भगवाइ नारायण को देखा। सच्चिदानंद ईश्वर ने आपको जिन बहुमूल्य अनन्त हीरों से मालामाल किया, अपने इन्हें सब में बांट दिया। भगवान करे कि हम अपने हृदय की बलि-वेदियों पर आपकी प्रतिमा और आपकी ज्योतिर्मय करुणा को स्थापित कर लें। यह आप थे विवेकानन्द जिन्होंने गाया था—“भारत मां बुलाती है, तुम कैसे सो सकते हो?”



सत्यमेव जयते

देश को वीरों और वीरांगनाओं की आवश्यकता है। तुम वीर और वीरांगना बनो। भूलो नहीं केवल सत्य की ही विजयी होती है। सत्यगापी बनकर देश की नस २ में एक नया उल्हास भर दो। मृत्यु केवल एक बार आती है। मेरे शिष्य बनना है तो कायरता छोड़ो, मुझे कायरता से धृणा है। मन की शान्ति और स्थिरता के साथ बलवान बनो। दूसरे तुम्हें क्या कहते हैं इसकी चिन्ता छोड़कर आगे बढ़ो। मार्ग की अड़चनों को हटाओ। धन और वासना के दास क्या कहते हैं, उसकी चिन्ता मत करो।”

“तुम रोते क्यों हो, शक्ति के पुंज तुम हो। अपनी सोई हुई आत्म शक्ति को जगाओ, सकल ब्रह्मांड तुम्हारे चरणों पर झुक जायेगा। आत्म विश्वासहीन पुरुष जैसा जीवित वैसा भरा हुआ भूलो नहीं तुम यह शरीर नहीं। मैं उन्हें मूर्ख कहता हूं जो अपने आप को शरीर समझ कर दिन रात चीखते हैं कि मैं निर्बल हूं मैं मर रहा हूं। जो स्वयं मरे हुए हैं, वह देश को क्या उठायेगे। शेर मर्द बनो, लक्ष्मी तुम्हारे चरणों को छुयेगी। पीछे मत भाँको आगे बढ़ो अनन्त बल के साथ, अनन्त तेज के साथ अनन्त शक्ति के साथ। फिर देखो सारे वायुमण्डल में क्रान्ति घाती है या नहीं।”

—स्वामी विवेकानन्द

पथ प्रदर्शक स्वामी विवेकानन्द

स्वामी विवेकानन्द नये भारत की प्राण ज्योति हैं। एक ऐसी प्रकाशमई ज्योति जिसने परमहंस श्री रामकृष्ण को प्रज्वलित किया। वह एक ऐसे प्रदीप थे जिनसे सारा भारत जगमगा उठा। उन्होंने न केवल पश्चिम को भारत के अध्यात्मवाद से परिचित कराया वरन् भारत वामियों को भी सच्चे धर्म के लक्षण बतलाए और उस धर्म का अनुसरण करने का उपदेश दिया। उनकी सि- गर्जना से पूर्व और पश्चिम दोनों हिल गये। इनका या इनके गुरुदेव, परमहंस श्री रामकृष्ण का धर्म कोई निराला नहीं था। वही धर्म था जिसकी गंगोत्री शताब्दियों से भारत में बहती चली आ रही है परन्तु कहना होगा कि उन्होंने हिन्दू धर्म को पुनर्जीवित किया।

स्वामी जी का जीवन एक आदर्श जीवन है। वह परमहंस जी के पास पहुँचे तो उस समय यदि नास्तिक नहीं थे तो आस्तिक भी नहीं थे। अंग्रेजी सभ्यता ने इन्हें साधारण हिन्दू धर्म का विद्रोही सा बना दिया था। वह न मूर्ति पूजक थे, न गुरु भक्ति में विश्वास रखते थे। हर बात को तर्क और बुद्धि की कसौटी पर परखते। तर्क और बुद्धि समर्थन कर दे तो बात मानते थे, नहीं तो स्पष्ट शब्दों में वे भिन्नक निन्दा कर देते थे।

परम हंस के पास वह ऐसा ही मन लेकर पहुँचे थे परन्तु देखते-देखते इनके जीवन ने इतना पलटा खाया कि पूर्ण पूजा भी करने लग गए और गुरु भक्ति में आरुढ़ हो गये। मुंह आई बात कहने में वह संकोच से कार्य नहीं लेते। बल्कि इस बात का निषेध करने के लिए कटुवचनों का प्रयोग कर देते थे। इसी वृत्ति के कारण उन्होंने परम

हंस जी को पागल, सिर फिदा, बेअकल पाखण्डी और न जाने क्या कुछ कह डाला परन्तु संसार ने देखा कि यहाँ तर्कवादी मुँह फट नरेन्द्र एक दिन गुरु दीक्षा लेने दोपहर के समय घर से भाग खड़े हुए। दौड़ते हुए एक चप्पल पांव से गिर गई। यह रुके नहीं। चप्पल का दूसरा पैर भी पांव से निकाल, परे फेंक कर बेतहाश दौड़ते चले गए और दम परम हंस जी के चरणों में दंडवत करके ही लिया।

परम हंस जी ने नरेन्द्र को एक अद्भुत प्यार दे कर अपना बना लिया। जिस बात को तर्कवादी नरेन्द्र का मन ग्रहण करने को तैयार नहीं होता था, परमहंस ने कृपा करके अध्यात्मवाद के वही भेद इन्हें ग्रहण करने में सहायता से इनके मन में भर दिए। मानों उन्होंने अपना सब कुछ नरेन्द्र ही के अर्पण कर दिया हो। शिष्य गुरु का नाता कैसा होना चाहिए? यह विवेकानन्द के जीवन से सीखा जा सकता है।

अध्यात्मवाद के वह भेद जो कोई चिरले तत्व ज्ञानी ही पा सके, परमहंस की कृपा से नरेन्द्र को मिल गए। परन्तु वह नहीं जानते थे कि वह किस कार्य के लिए इस संसार में आए हैं? परमहंस जी नश्वर शरीर का त्याग करते हुए इन्हें केवल इनना ही आदेश दे गये थे कि मैंने अपनी सभी शक्तियों का संचार तुम में कर दिया है ताकि तुम मेरा काम कर सको। पर वह काम कौन सा था? नरेन्द्र इसका निश्चय नहीं कर पाया। आरम्भ में परम हंस जी की स्मृति को ताजा रखने के लिए और गुरु भाईयों को सात्वना देने के लिए, कभी कभी अपने घर से निकल इनके पास रहते थे। फिर इन्होंने घर बार छोड़ दिया और जीवन गुरु ऋण चुकाने के लिए अर्पण कर

दिया। फिर दूसरों की देखा देखी इन्होंने आश्रम से निकल देश भ्रमण आरम्भ किया। सब तीर्थ देखे और जहाँ कहीं किसी महापुरुष, संत अथवा योगी की प्रशंसा सुनी निस्संकोच उनके पास गए। उनसे वार्तालाप किया और नये शास्त्र पढ़ने या योग क्रिया सीखने के लिए सदा तत्पर रहे। हिमालय की बर्फ से ढकी चोटियों से उतर कर वह मध्य भारत और पश्चिमोत्तर के साथ-साथ रामेश्वरम पहुँचे, साथ-काल का समय था सामने दो पहाड़ियों को सागर की लहरों में मिर उठाये हुए देखा। डूबते सूर्य की सोमा लुटाती हुई किरणों में इन पहाड़ियों का दृश्य देख वह सुद्धि बुद्धि भूल बैठे। कपड़े ममेत सागर में कूद गए और एक पहाड़ी पर पहुँचे। उत्तर की ओर मुँह करके माँ को प्रणाम करने लगे। भजन अभ्यास के बाद जब उठे तो यह प्रण करके आसन छोड़ा कि मैं सीये हुए भारत का फिर से जगाऊँगा इसके गौरव को पुर्नजागृत करूँगा और इसकी संस्कृति को नया जीवन दूँगा। उसी रात परमहंस न स्वप्न में दर्शन दिये और कहा—“यही है वह कार्य जो मैं तुम से कराना चाहता हूँ।” बस फिर क्या था, विवेकानन्द दीवानावार इस काम में जुट गए।

कई श्रद्धालुओं से सुना था कि अमेरिका में सर्व धर्म सम्मेलन हो रहा है, पर यह गौरव एक मुसलमान नवाब को नसीब हुआ कि उसने स्वामी जी को इस सम्मेलन में भाग लेने के लिए अमेरिका जाने के लिए कहा और पाँच सौ रुपया दिया। परन्तु अगले ही दिन अपने देशवासियों को नंगे और भूखे देखा तो यह रुपया उनमें बाँट दिया। श्रद्धालुओं ने कहा—“तो फिर अमेरिका जाने के लिए रुपया कहाँ से आयेगा?” विवेकानन्द बोले—“मेरी माता (जगदम्बा) और गुरुदेव को स्वीकार हुआ तो यह रुपया सर्व साधारण जनता से मिलेगा।” रुपया इकठ्ठा हुआ, टिकट ले ली परन्तु माराजा खेत्री, जो इनके परम श्रद्धालुओं में से एक थे, के आग्रह पर खेत्री चले गए और फिर एक महीने के बाद अमेरिका को रवाना हुए। अमेरिका पहुँचे तो मालूम हुआ कि सर्व धर्म सम्मेलन दो तीन महीने के बाद होगा। जो रुपया पास था वह खर्च हो गया। कई दिन भूखे रहना पड़ा। यहाँ तक निश्चय कर बैठे कि लन्दन चला जाऊँ परन्तु परम हंस की गुप्त शक्ति

इन्हें रोकती रही और सर्व धर्म सम्मेलन में जब इनका भाषण शुरू हुआ तो मानो एक क्रांति का लावा बह निकला। सारा पश्चिम इनका भाषण सुनकर मुग्ध हो गया। घर घर में विवेकानन्द की जय जय कार होने लगी।

भारत वासियों ने विवेकानन्द की मान बढ़ाई की तो पश्चिम की देखा देखी। समाचार पत्रों में स्वामी जी के गणपण और चित्र छपे देखते तो भारतवासी चकित रह जाते। भारत के एक “साधारण” से साधु ने, जिससे भारत वासी भी पूरी तरह परिचित नहीं थे, ने अमेरिका को पराजित कर दिया। विवेकानन्द भारत से गए थे तो एक अनजाने से साधु थे, लौटे तो विश्व विख्यात ब्रह्म वेत्ता पुरुष! जहाँ कहीं गए इन्होंने एक ईश्वर की सच्ची उपासना और अद्वैत वेदान्त का प्रचार किया।

स्वामी जी के जीवन से, जो सबसे बड़ी बात ग्रहण करने योग्य है, वह यह है कि मनुष्य यदि अध्यात्मिक प्रगति करना चाहता है, आत्म बोध का जिज्ञासु है तो इसे दृढ़ निश्चय के साथ निरन्तर तप और साधना का मार्ग अपनाना होगा। वह कहा करते थे कि—‘जो पुरुष अपने पूर्वजों की शान और बढ़ाई का काम लेते हैं परन्तु स्वयं उनके बतलाये हुए मार्ग पर नहीं चलते। इनका जीवन मृत्यु से बदतर है। हर मनुष्य बुद्ध और शंकराचार्य बन सकता है, यदि वह स्वयं उनके समान अपने आपको तप की भट्टी में डाले।

पश्चिम और पूर्व, दोनों के लिए उनका एक ही उपदेश था—

‘उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरत्रिबोधत’

“उठो! जागो! और श्रेष्ठ महापुरुषों के समीप जाकर ज्ञान प्राप्त करो।”

“Arise! Awake! and stop not till the goal is reached!”

आइये, हम स्वामी विवेकानन्द जी के इस कथन को पद प्रदर्शन बनाकर अपने अध्यात्मिक ध्येय की प्राप्ति के लिए तन मन धन से जुट जायें।

माया और ब्रह्म का विवेक

(श्री स्वामी अनमोल प्रेमानन्द जी)

रे—रूप ते नाम को छीड़ दीजे, बाकी सच्चिदानंद स्वरूप तेरा ।
निरावरण अजाने से रहित हैं तू, तोड़ भ्रम दा पिंजरा गज्ज शोरा ॥
जाति वण फाही बिच फस रहियो, ब्रह्म अपना आप न लखि नेरा ।
सुख रूप भूमा भाई आप हैं तू, कहेया वेद दा मन्न लै हो नबेरा ॥

संसार में पांच वस्तुएं हैं—अस्ति, भानि, परे, नाम और रूप । इनमें पहले तीन तो ब्रह्म के निरविशेष रूप और सामान्य चेतन हैं तथा सर्व व्यापक रूप में परिपूर्ण होकर स्थित हैं । नाम और रूप यह दो माया के लक्षण हैं जो परिच्छिन्न और बदलने वाले हैं । इस परिच्छिन्न माया ने ही उस परम ब्रह्म परिपूर्ण को छुपा लिया है । यदि आत्मा पर कोई पर्दा है तो वह पर्दा नाम रूप का ही है । वृक्ष, नाम और उसका रूप अर्थात् फेंदाव और मनुष्य नाम और उसका रूप अर्थात् हाथ-पांव उतवादि । यदि वृक्ष और मनुष्य दोनों ही रूपों में दृष्टि डटाकर देखेंगे तो एक आश्चर्य सा प्रतीत होगा । इस भेद के दूर होते ही एक अस्ति, भानि, परे, रूप अर्थात् सच्चिदानन्द ब्रह्म ही परिपूर्ण रूप में भासमान होगा । इसलिए यह दृष्टि तो नाशवान रूप को ही देस सकती है । उस भूत्व को जानने के लिए गुरुदेव भगवान से दिव्य दृष्टि प्राप्त करनी होगी ।

‘नाम रूप पर्दा का पाके जलवा यार छुपाई दा’

इस नाम रूप के घूँघट में यह सच्चिदानन्द आत्मा छुप गया है । यदि आप इस घूँघट को हटा सकते हैं । तो हर समय दीदार ही दीदार हैं । यह पर्दा भी वास्तव में भ्रम मात्र है । भ्रम के दूर होते ही सत्यता दिखाई देगी । इसलिये नाम रूप का जब तक त्याग नहीं करोगे, तब तक सच्चिदानन्द स्वरूप का जानना कठिन है ऐ निजामु ! तेरा स्वरूप तो हर समय आवरण रहित है । जिस प्रकार सूर्य भगवान हर समय अपने अपने मंडल में आवरण रहित हैं, उसमें न कभी दिन न कभी रात होती है । दिन और रात तो पृथ्वी अपने चक्कर अर्थात् गर्दश में आकर ही अपने ऊपर उत्पन्न करती है । सूर्यदेव तो अपने स्वरूप में स्थित हैं । पृथ्वी ही माया रूप में अपने स्वामी सूर्यदेव के चारों ओर चक्कर काटती रहती है और दिन रात ऋतुएं और उत्तरायण दक्षिणायन बनाती रहती हैं । इसलिए आत्मदेव तो साक्षी रूप से स्थित है और यह नाम रूप माया ही खेल रचकर अपने स्वामी आत्म देव उसके तमाशा देखने में इतना तल्लीन

हो चुका है कि वह अपने स्वरूप को भूल कर तमाशे को सत्य समझ रहा है। ऐ आत्मा देव रूपा सूर्य भगवान ! तेरे अन्दर तो लेशमात्र भी अन्धकार तथा अज्ञान नहीं। तू अपने आपको जब भों पहचानेगा भी सच्चिदानंद ब्रह्म ही तेरा अपना आप निकलेगा। ऐ जिज्ञासु ! अपने स्वरूप की पहचान कर ! तू शेर है और भेड़ों की संगत से अपने स्वरूप को भूल कर भेड़ बन रहा है। इनकी संगत से तू गर्जना छोड़ बैठा है। यदि तू अब भी अपने स्वरूप को जानकर गरजेगा तो यह सभी भेड़ें स्वयं भाग जाएंगी और तू द्वैत का त्याग कर अद्वैत को प्राप्त होगा। तब तुम्हारा मनुष्य जन्म लेना सार्थक हो जाएगा। यह मनुष्य जन्म वह नौका है जो दूसरे किनारे के पास खड़ी है। कहीं इस नौका को अपने अज्ञान रूपी तूफान से फिर वापिस इस किनारे पर न लगा लेना और कहीं यह जन्म अकार्थ न चला जाए।

वर्ण, आश्रम अथवा जाति भी एक प्रकार का बन्धन है जो तुम्हारे परमार्थ के मार्ग में एक रुकावट है। यदि तू इनको एक भ्रम समझकर त्याग देगा तो वह ब्रह्म बिल्कुल तुम्हारे समीप आ जाएगा। तब तुम्हारा अपना आप ही ब्रह्म हो जायेगा। ऐ जिज्ञासु ! तू अब भी पूर्ण सच्चिदानंद ब्रह्म है परन्तु देहाध्याय के कारण अपने आपको दीन होत और निर्बल समझ रहा है और अनेक वासनाओं में

जकड़ा हुआ है। जिज्ञासुओं ! देह अभिमान रखते हुए कभी भी यह न समझ बैठना कि मैं ब्रह्म हूं, नहीं तो नरको में वास होगा। इसलिए जब तक देह अभिमान दूर न हो, कभी भी 'अहम ब्रह्मस्मि' मत कहो। भूटे वेदान्त या कथनी ज्ञान से तो जीव पना ही अच्छा है। क्योंकि जीव भाव से भक्ति तो हो सकेगी, जिससे अंतःकरण शुद्ध हो जाएगा और बाद में तुम लोग ज्ञान के अधिकारी बन जाओगे और तुम्हारा सदा के लिए कल्याण हो जाएगा। इसलिए वेद भगवान नवकारे पर चोट लगा कर पुकार पुकार कर कह रहा है कि ऐ जिज्ञासु ! जिस मुख की खोज में तू इधर उधर भटक रहा है, वह मिथ्या है। यदि कोई व्यक्ति पीड़ा से कराह रहा हो तो क्या उस समय स्त्री, धन, पुत्र इत्यादि इसकी पीड़ा को दूर कर सकेंगे ? कदापि नहीं। वेद भगवान कहता है कि यदि तू सुखी है तो सभी वस्तुएं सुख रूप प्रतीत होगी। दुख तेरे पास देह अभिमान से आता है, को परिच्छिन्न है। जब तू अपने आपको भूमा अर्थात् व्यापक देखेगा तो सभी दुख तुफसे स्वयं दूर भाग जायेंगे क्योंकि व्यापक वस्तु ही सुख स्वरूप हो सकती हैं, परिच्छिन्न नहीं। तू वेद भगवान के वचन पर निश्चय कर ले तो तेरा निवेड़ा हो जायेगा। देह अभिमान का त्यागकर तू आप्तकाम और आत्मराम हो जाएगा और तुम्हारा जन्म सफल हो जाएगा।

सत्यमेव जयते



“अपने आप पर भरोसा रखो कि आपका जन्म बड़े काम करने के लिए हुआ है। पृथ्वी की अड़चनें तो क्या आकाश भी गरज कर आपका मार्ग रोकना चाहे तो पर्वत के समान डट जाओ और अपने कार्य में सफलता प्राप्त करके रहो।”

—स्वामी विवेकानन्द

मृत्यु पर विजय

(स्वामी सार शब्द आनन्द जी)

गीता के तेरहवें अध्याय के सातवें श्लोक में मृत्यु पर विजय पाने के लिए जो साधन बतलाए गए हैं, वह यह हैं—अमानस्व, अवम्भतव, अहिंसा, शांति, आर्जव, आचार्य उपासना, शीघ्र, स्पष्ट आत्मनिग्रह। अमानस्व का अर्थ है अहंकार से खाली होना। अपनी बढाई, ऊंचाई, कुलीन पवित्र, विद्या, बुद्धि, रूप यौवन, शक्ति, धन, आदर, इन सबके मान से हीन होना।

किसी भी महापुरुष के जीवन को देख लें, उनमें यह गुण चमकते हुए पाए जायेंगे। स्वामी विवेकानन्द और उनके सद्गुरु परमहंस रामकृष्ण ही का जीवन देख लें, जैसे इन्हीं गुणों की कहानी है। जहाँ अपने आपको योगी कहलाने वाले, अपने नाम के साथ परिव्राजक और दूसरी उपाधियाँ लगाने वाले, सैकड़ों थे, वहाँ श्री रामकृष्ण या विवेकानन्द में कभी भी अपने आपको बड़ा कहलाने या अपने जीवन के बारे में अहंकार करने की लेश मात्र भी इच्छा नहीं थी। विवेकानन्द कहते हैं कि “हजारों बार मैंने यह आजमाना चाहा कि परमहंस जी के जीवन में कोई भी त्रुटि दिखाई दे तो मैं उनके विरुद्ध बोलूँ। मेरे जीवन में कितनी ही घटनाएँ आती हैं जो कुछ मेरे भाव में आया अपनी तर्क बुद्धि के कारण परमहंस के विरुद्ध अपनी जवान पर ले आया। यहाँ तक कि मैं इन्हें पागल, सिर फिरा, दीवाना और सनकी कह डाला। परमहंस जी ने यह गालियाँ सुनी परन्तु उन्होंने कभी क्रोध न किया। मेरी “बकवास” सुनकर वह हंस कर कहते—“विज्ञान शील, तर्क बुद्धि वाला नरेन्द्र, सुनी सुनाई बातों पर विश्वास नहीं करता, आँखों देखी मानता है। जब कुछ देखेगा तब मानेगा।”

परमहंस जी के बारे में इनकी भक्त मंडली में भाँति भाँति के विचार के लोग थे। कोई इन्हें किसी रूप से देखता, कोई किसी रूप से देखता। एक वह जो इन्हें अवतार कहते थे—महाप्रभु गौरांग का अवतार ! एक वह थे

जो इन्हें सिद्ध पुरुष कहते थे—चमत्कार भरी सिद्धियों के स्वामी। कुछ वह थे तो इन्हें परमहंस समझते थे। विवेकानन्द की गणना इन किसी में नहीं थी, वह तो परमहंस को इनके जीवन के अन्तिम दिनों में भी साक्षात् ईश्वर समझते और कहने लगे थे। परन्तु दोनों दिशाओं में परमहंस का व्यवहार एक जैसा रहा। गालियाँ सुनकर भी मुस्कराये और जब विवेकानन्द इन्हें ईश्वर रूप कहने लग गए, तब भी हंसते रहे। न मान मिलने की खुशी, न गालियाँ मिलने का दुःख।

परमहंस की कृपा से विवेकानन्द का अपना जीवन भी इन्हीं गुणों पर आधारित हुआ, जिनका वर्णन गीता के ऊपर के श्लोक में आया है। परमहंस की सारी साधना, कमाई और ईश्वरीय शक्तियों के स्वामी बनने के बावजूद भी भारत भ्रमण के समय और उसके पश्चात् जीवन भर वह दम्भ और मान के पास नहीं फटके। जिस किसी साधु महात्मा की स्तुति सुनी, खुले दिल से उन्हें मिलने के लिए गए और कभी दूसरों से वार्तालाप करते हुए अहंकार को पास न फटकने दिया। एक शेर के समान वह गरजे। जिस-जिस न इनकी गरज सुनी, इनके सामने झुकता चला गया परन्तु विवेकानन्द थे कि जीवन की अंतिम घड़ी तक यही कहते चले गये कि यह सब कुछ परमहंस जी की प्रभुसत्ता है। मैं तो उनका दास और उनके गुणों का गायक था।

कई बार ऐसा हुआ कि बड़े-बड़े पूर्व और पश्चिम के विद्वानों के साथ वार्तालाप करते हुए इनसे पूछा गया कि “क्या आप अमुक विषय के बारे कुछ में जानते हैं ?” मान और दम्भ से रहित विवेकानन्द का एक ही उत्तर होता था—“कुछ, कुछ।” अमेरिका जाने से पहले दक्षिणी भारत के प्रसिद्ध विद्वान के साथ ज्ञान चर्चा चल रही थी। विवेकानन्द ने देखा उनके पास पश्चिमी दार्शनिक की एक बहुत मोटी पुस्तक पड़ी हुई थी। इन्होंने पूछा—“यह

पुस्तक किनकी है ?” विद्या ने उत्तर दिया—“आपके काम की नहीं।” “क्यों ? लाईये मैं भी देखू।” “तो क्या आप अंग्रेजी जानते हैं ?” उत्तर मिला—“कुछ, कुछ।” और फिर जब विवेकानंद ने इस किताब से बीसों उल्लेख दे दिए तो वह विद्वान भी चकित रह गया। प्रसन्नता से बोला—“मुझ पता नहीं था कि आप इतने विद्वान हैं। सोये हुए भारत को जगाने का काम आपके अतिरिक्त कोई नहीं कर सकता। आपको विदेश यात्रा करनी चाहिए ऐसी यात्रा के लिये धन की आवश्यकता होगी। मैं अपने प्रसिद्ध पूंजी पति, सरकारी अधिकारियों और बड़े राज्य कर्मचारियों की एक सभा आज रात को बुला रहा हूँ ताकि सब आप से परिचित हो जायें।” ढीले ढाले कपड़े पहने हाथ में तबुरा पकड़े विवेकानंद जब इस सभा में पहुँचे तो संगीत कार्यक्रम चल रहा था। सब एक स्वर से बोल उठे—“स्वामी महाशय ! क्या आप संगीत जानते हैं ?” उत्तर मिला “कुछ कुछ।” विवेकानंद ने तानपुरा पकड़ा और भजन गाना आरम्भ किया। उस समय रात्रि के आठ बजे थे। जब उनकी स्वर लहरी बन्द हुई, सब यह देख कर चकित रह गये कि उस समय सबरे के साढ़े पाँच बज चुके थे।

उन्होंने पश्चिम को जीता, भारत को जगाया, हिन्दू धर्म में नव चेतना का संचार किया, जगत प्रसिद्धि प्राप्त की परन्तु दक्षिणेश्वर मन्दिर की मिट्टी को मस्तक पर लगाकर यही कहा करते थे—“मां ! यह तेरी ही देन है, इसमें मेरी क्या बढ़ाई ?”

आज घरीर के नाते हमारे मध्त् में न परमहंस है, न विवेकानन्द। परन्तु उनकी ज्योतिर्मय स्मृति से आज भी हृदय गद्-गद् हो उठता है। कारण यह कि उन्होंने मृत्यु पर विजय पा ली थी, जीते जी अमरत्व प्राप्त कर लिया था।

(पृष्ठ २४ का शेष)

जा भला जल्दी।” मैं फिर गया परन्तु मन्दिर में प्रवेश करते ही मुझे मन में बड़ी लज्जा होने लगी। मैंने मन में कहा—‘यह कितनी क्षद्र वस्तु में जगन्माता से मांगने जा

रहा हूँ। राजा प्रसन्न हो गया और उससे क्या मांगा-आलू, बंगन ! मेरी भी तो इसी प्रकार की मूर्खता होगी।’ ऐसा सोच कर मैं जगन्माता को बार-बार प्रणाम करके कहने लगा—“माता मुझे और कोई वस्तु नहीं चाहिये। मुझे विवेक, वैराग्य, ज्ञान और भक्ति दो।” मन्दिर से लौटते समय मेरे मन ने धिक्कारा कि मांगना क्या था और मांगा क्या बैठे ? यह सब परमहंस जी की ही कारस्तानी है। नहीं तो तीन बार मन्दिर जा कर मां से मन चाही वस्तु क्यों न मांग सका ? श्री राम कृष्ण जी के कमरे में जाते ही मैं उनके पास धरना देकर बैठ गया और बोला—“यह सब आपका ही खेल है। अब आप ही को मेरे लिये माता से प्रार्थना करनी होगी।” इस पर वह बोले—“क्या करूँ रे ! मैं किसी के लिए भी ऐसी प्रार्थना आज तक कभी भी नहीं कर सका। ऐसी बात मेरे मुँह से बाहर नहीं निकली इसीलिए तो तुझ से कहा कि तू माता के पास जो चाहे सो मांग ले। माता तुझे वह वस्तु अवश्य ही देगी। पर तुझ से इतनी सीधी सी बात भी कहते नहीं बनी। तेरे भाग्य में संसार सुख नहीं है, इसलिए मैं क्या करूँ !”

“पर मैं इस पर थोड़ी ही चुप बैठने वाला था। मैं पुनः बोला—“आज मैं आप को छोड़ूँगा ही नहीं। आप को इतनी बात तो करनी ही पड़ेगी। मुझे निश्चय है कि आप यदि मन में निश्चय कर लें तो सब कुछ हो जायेगा।” उन्होंने जब देखा कि किसी तरह भी नहीं मानता तो वह बोले—“अच्छा तो जाओ। तुम लोगों को रुखे सूखे अन्न और वस्त्र की कमी नहीं रहेगी।” तब उन्होंने मुझे एक गीत सिखा दिया जो रात्रि भर मैं गाता रहा—

“मा त्वहि तारा, तुमि त्रिगुणधारा परात्प्रा।”

सुबह, शांति दयनी, कलेश हरिणी, निद्रावश हो सो रहा था। तब श्री राम कृष्ण जी सब की आनन्द पूर्वक बताने लगे—‘देखो नरेन्द्र ने रात भर काली माता को माना है और रात भर भजन गा-गा कर पुकारा है और अब सो गया है।’ इसके पश्चाद किसी न किसी प्रकार हमारी सब कठिनाईयाँ दूर होती गईं और मैंने अपने आप को निश्चिन्त समझ परम हंस जी के अर्पण कर दिया।