



YUVA BHARATI

Voice of Youth

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Wake Up Bharat / Enliven the World

150

1863-2013

Birth Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda

Swamiji Jayanthi Special

YUVA BHARATI

Voice of Youth

Vol.40 No.6 Paush-Magh 5114 January 2013 ₹.15/-

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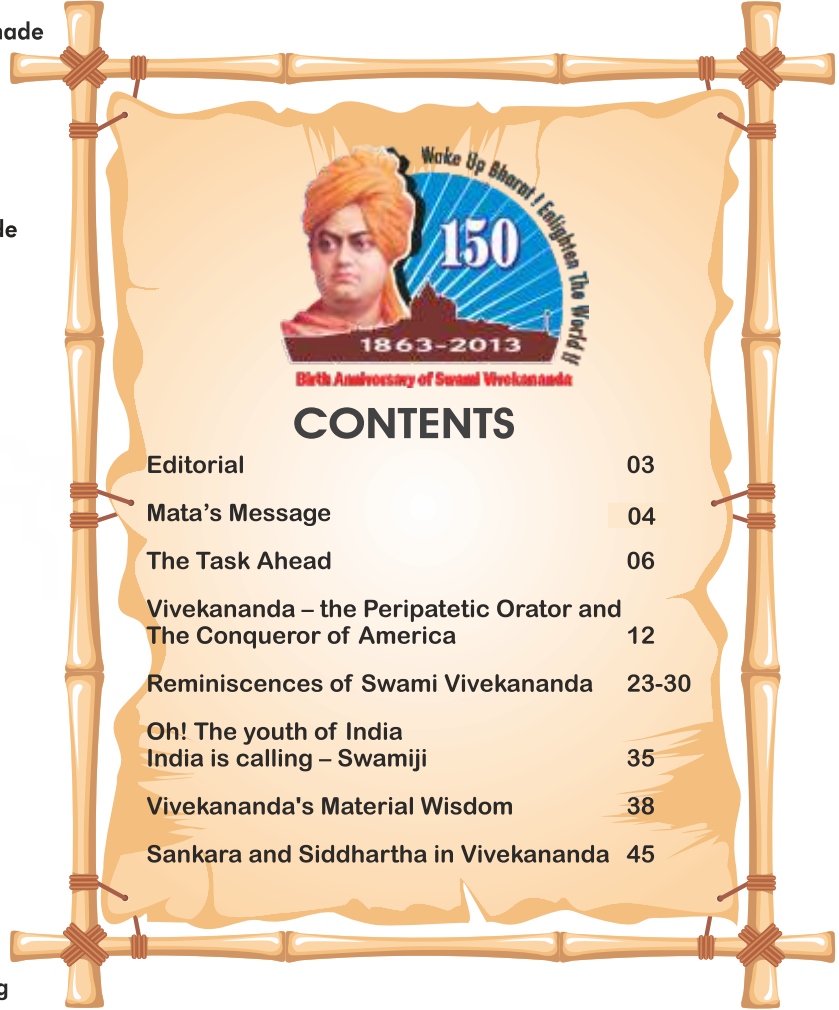
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Invocation



**Namah Shri Yatirajaya Vivekananda Suraye
Saccitsukha svarupaya svamine tapaharine**

**Salutations to the great monk, seer and Guru (teacher) Vivekananda
Surya who is an embodiment of existence, consciousness and bliss.**

LET US INITIATE...

Swami Vivekananda...

For more than a Century his thoughts are holding Sway over Nationalists and Spiritually Oriented persons. Now on the occasion of his 150th birth anniversary, Vivekananda Kendra along with other likeminded organisations have planned for a grand and wide spread celebrations throughout the year. These celebrations are going to be different from the celebrations that we are used to.

We have praised him a lot, worshipped him, read him, and written a lot about him. Adjectives are exhausted in his praise. Libraries are stacked full with his books. We have worked his ideas too. But this is an area where we need to double up. The enormity of the problems, which our society is facing and the vastness of the masses that are untouched by his life giving message imply that the work which we have done so far is not enough. To address these specific needs Vivekananda Kendra has designed 5 Special programs which will take Swamiji's ever relevant messages to the 5 important segments of our society. Youth, Women, Intellectuals, Rural people and Tribal people are these five. Vivekananda Kendra has prudently joined hands with other organisations to ensure that this goal is achieved. These events are going to be Historic. They are going to be memorable not just for the people who are going to take an active part in it, but for the millions who are going to get benefited. The Centenary Celebrations saw the launch of Vivekananda Kendra, a nationwide Service Organisation. This 150th birth anniversary celebration will see the regeneration of the Spirit of Dharma and Spiritual Nationalism.

Let us all take part in these celebrations which will be a Yagna in our life. Among our midst there will be many who are uninitiated to Swamiji's message. Let us make a vow that we will take Swamiji's message to these hitherto uninitiated people. Let us use this opportunity to make our life more meaningful.

A generous dose of his Vedantic humanism is needed for the Present World which is sick due to the Religious fundamentalism.

If words the ethics, Morality, Compassions, and Truthfulness are not to become archaic in our usage, this work is vital.

V.V.Balasubramanian
YB-ET



MATA'S MESSAGE

name 'Vivekananda', a certain awakening and vitality fill us. A revolutionary in the true sense of the word, a man of unimpeachable logic, an exemplar of self-sacrifice, an impassioned orator- diverse were the facets of Swami Vivekananda's personality.

He was the representative and voice of the greatest culture and the loftiest thoughts the world has ever seen. Once mistaken for a land of ignorance, blind

faith and darkness, he proved to the world that India was, indeed, the land

of the soundest philosophy and the most enlightened culture.

The first meeting of the Swami Vivekananda Sardhashati Samaroh Samiti was held on 4th December, 2012.

The meeting was addressed by Mananeeya P. Parmeshwaran ji and the concluding remarks were made by Dr. Subhash Kashyap, Honorary chairman of the Samiti. Swami Amritaswarupananda Puriji was present as a nominee of Hon'ble Mata Amritanandmayi Deviji. The message of Mataji was read out. The blessings of Mataji is a source of inspiration for furtherance of our work.

Amma's Message:

Children, the very moment we hear the

His personality combined the loftiness of tradition with the expansiveness of progressive thinking most harmoniously. He assimilated both occidental and oriental streams of thoughts in equal measure. He exhorted people of all faiths and sects tounderstand each other and to walk the path of harmony.

Although a patriotic Indian through and through, he was a true citizen of the world as well. In truth, there is no contradiction here because he was an emissary of the Indian philosophy, which sees unity in the entire creation.

Three traits were inextricably woven

THE VICTORY THAT VIVEKANANDA ATTAINED IN AROUSING MANLINESS IN THE OPPRESSED AND THE WEAK WAS TRULY AMAZING. HE THUS BECAME THE ARCHITECT OF THE NEW NATIONAL AWAKENING.

into Swami Vivekananda's personality. One, an indomitable passion for realizing the truth; two, his soulful love for India, Indian culture and the Indian people; and three, a burning desire to uplift all the downtrodden and suffering, wherever they may exist in the world.

By promulgating service to the world and compassion to humanity as being fundamental to Sanyasa (monkhood), he imparted a new dimension to the tradition of Indian Sanyasa. His personality, in which Kshatriya valour and brahminical purity blended, became the source of inspiration for youth all over the world.

Swami Vivekananda strove hardest to

awaken the ethos of diligence in Indians, who were wallowing in the mire of inferiority and indolence. Declaring man making as his goal he dedicated every moment of his life for this cause. The victory that Vivekananda attained in arousing manliness in the oppressed and the weak was truly amazing. He thus became the architect of the new national awakening.

Whereas Indians were externally enslaved during British rule, today, most are still enslaved internally and culturally. Forgetting their own lofty tradition, the people of India are today engrossed in pursuing their own selfish interests. Whereas the leaders of yesterday were representatives of the ancient Indian Heritage and lofty values, we see that, today, even leaders have abandoned satya and dharma. In this situation, more than ever before, we realized the relevance of Swami Vivekananda.

Not just today, but for as long as people fight with each other in the name of narrow beliefs, so long as injustice prevail in society, and so long as people are enticed by the outward glitter of materialism, Swami Vivekananda and his words will continue to be relevant. The task before us is to spread his teachings to more and more people, and to initiate activities along the path he advised.

- Sri Mata Amritanandamayi Devi.

THE TASK AHEAD

Nivedita Raghunath Bhide

'I shall not cease to work! I shall inspire men everywhere, until the world shall know that it is one with God', said Swami Vivekananda. True to these words, we see Swami Vivekananda continue to inspire the people all over the world. His message is relevant; his words are inspiring and his predictions about the problems that future human society may face proving true. But then he did not just predict about the problems that man may face but he also gave the solution. Thus on the eve of 150th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda we find ourselves more in the need of working out his message.

Wake up, Bharat! Enlighten the World!

Swami Vivekananda was a person who had studied in depth Indian and Western philosophies had observed very closely the strength and weakness of Indian and Western

society and had boundless affection for all irrespective of their creed or colour; region or religion. He could foresee the future afflictions of human society like ir-religiosity and at the same time as a reaction to it religious fanaticism; disintegration of families, communities due to excessive importance to enjoyments, selfish interests and individualism; increasing skepticism and meaninglessness of life resulting in 'no holes bared' immorality and crime. Swami Vivekananda realized that these problems can be tackled only when the oneness of existence becomes the basis of human life; the man is brought up since his childhood by imbibing this oneness, this respect and feeling of oneness with whole creation through living cultural forms; the family and all social systems are based on this oneness. He found that India has the inherent capacity to guide the world. Actually that has been the ordained



mission of India. But India was under British rule then and was not free to decide her destiny. Today we are apparently independent but we know that it is not total freedom. Though apparently independent, still today in India, the soul of India cannot express itself through its education, commerce, polity,

entertainment etc. Thus the first task that is ahead of us is to work for the total freedom of India.

To work for total freedom of India

The message of Swami Vivekananda inspired young men and the freedom movement gathered momentum in the beginning of 20th century. Today the fight for nation's total freedom is not of guns and bombs but is more of words and concepts. The challenge is more of thinking like Indians and working with Indian ethos. But the tragedy is many do not even know what Indian ethos are. To be politically correct, the truth remains unexpressed. We can very well learn from Swami Vivekananda the skill to say truth in clear and yet acceptable and appealing terms. The speech on "Hinduism" in the Parliament of Religions by Swami Vivekananda is the best example of this skill. In front of learned Christians he could challenge their basic tenets without creating any ill-feeling. Actually he was the most appreciated delegate in the Parliament of Religions. It was not the creed that he criticised but only the exclusive approach. In him, nothing was negative and everything was positive. The Vedantic vision that he put forward did not reject anyone but could correct the fanatic. He had conviction in truth, commitment to the good of humanity

and competence to put forward effectively the message without mincing words and yet not hurting anyone. We need to imbibe these conviction, commitment and competence from Swami Vivekananda. These are his gifts to us.

Beyond the existing gloomy situation, we need to see India in the context of world situation, in the context of problems faced by the humanity and then we would realize the worth of India. We also can see that all the upheavals whether at national scene or at world level are actually to prepare the ground for the delivering of the message of Vedanta - the great vision of Oneness of India. Thus we have to work to develop – to rebuild our family system, social system, educational system, economical systems, political systems, village systems on the basis of oneness, on the basis of the fact that whole existence is inter-related, inter-connected and interdependent. In whichever field we may be working we have to think deeply about how the systems in our respective field could be built on oneness, on the truth of interconnectedness and interdependence and then we have to work out the systems, we have to work to actualize the spiritual paradigm of Oneness.

Beware of the religious fanatics who interfere with your spiritual aspirations

To rebuild our nation on the Vedantic truth of Oneness, the main obstacle is our imitation of the West or getting carried away by the alien thoughts whether religious or material. The real growth is in freedom. If someone is asking people to believe in him or his god just because he can heal or hypnotise, through his songs and prayers then such things actually harm the person as there is no freedom but a sort of pressure, bondage. Swamiji puts forth very boldly,

“Every attempt at control which is not voluntary, not with the controller’s own mind, is not only disastrous, but it defeats

the end. The goal of each soul is freedom, mastery -- freedom from the slavery of matter and thought, mastery of external and internal nature. Instead of leading towards that, every will - current from another, in whatever form it comes, either as direct control of organs, or as forcing to control them while under a morbid condition, only rivets one link more to the already existing heavy chain of bondage of past thoughts, past superstitions. Therefore, beware how you allow yourselves to be acted upon by others. Beware how you unknowingly bring another to ruin. ...

Therefore use your own minds, control body and mind yourselves, ...avoid everyone, however great and good he may be, who asks you to believe blindly. ...One’s heart sinks to think of the amount of injury done to humanity by such irresponsible yet well - meaning religious fanatics. They little know that the minds which attain to sudden spiritual upheaval under their suggestions, with music and prayers, are simply making themselves passive, morbid, and powerless, and opening themselves to any other suggestion, be it ever so evil.

Little do these ignorant, deluded persons dream that whilst they are congratulating themselves upon their miraculous power to transform human hearts, which power they think was poured upon them by some Being above the clouds, they are sowing the seeds of future decay, of crime, of lunacy, and of death. Therefore, beware of everything that take away your freedom. Know that it is dangerous, and avoid it by all the means in your power.” (Volume I –

172-75)

"Thus India has always had this magnificent idea of religious freedom, and 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." (Volume II 115)

How prophetic Swami Vivekananda was! He could foresee that for humanity caught in the snares of decay, crime, violence, dogmatism and death, only the great message of Vedanta - of Oneness - could save humanity. Only India can give to the world the philosophy and also the way of life to live in freedom of thought. Thus we have a great task ahead of validating all the religious traditions and allowing man to grow from where he is.

The greatest Task: Are we ready to pay the price?

Where every man has a freedom to grow as per his spiritual aspiration; where each person respects, worships the whole creation as the manifestation of Divine; where the way of life which includes family system, social system etc are based on Oneness; where man strives to control his body and mind to experience his potential divinity; where thus not self-aggrandizement but self-sacrifice becomes natural; such a great vision of oneness cannot be actualized unless those who own it as heritage, as legacy are ready to sacrifice themselves. Are we - the children of Rishis ready to pay the price? Whether we want it or not the great sacrifice is on if we are willing the

joy of giving is more and the pain is less. Swami Vivekananda wrote to Sister Christine movingly,

I am afraid... what rest and peace I seek for will never come. But "Mother" does good to others through me -- at least some to my native land and it is easier to be reconciled to one's fate as a sacrifice. We are all sacrifices, each his own way. The great worship is going on -- no one can see its meaning, except it is a great sacrifice. Those that are willing, escape a lot of pain. Those who resist are broken into submission and suffer more. I am now determined to be a willing one.... To work am I born -- and I will -- till I drop down. I am content now -- that is all.... Cheer up, Christina. This world has no time for despondence, none for weakness. One must be strong or pass out. This is the law. (Vol II 501 502)

Crying over the present situation in the country or the world and feeling depressed about it is not a solution. Are we ready to give, to sacrifice? We always get as per the price we pay. Are we ready to pay the price for the highest that we want to achieve? Without paying price we cannot grudge that we got only this much. The success in any endeavor is directly proportionate to the time and energy spent on it. Perhaps the destiny is providing the occasion for us to give maximum of our time and energy and money to take the thoughts of Swami Vivekananda on large scale to people. That occasion is the 150th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda in 2013. Let us rise to the occasion!

VIVEKANANDA — THE PERIPATETIC ORATOR AND THE CONQUEROR OF AMERICA

Fulfilling the divinely ordained mission of Human
regeneration

Dr.K.M.Rao Ph.D.,

Part I

It is very difficult to fathom the phenomenal impact of Vivekananda's lectures have created on the American people. In a few short years, he sowed the seeds of a regeneration of a young nation. A quiet revolution took place across the country. A message was given to the American people in words of such universal wisdom and power that those who heard him at the time found their lives changed and their spirits freed. It was a message of humanism in depth, a ringing declaration of science of human development that did not deny but deepened America's achievements in science and humanistic philosophy. It was not a call to a new religion... a call to a universal science of spiritual life that affirmed man as God and

asked him to look within, to turn inward in order to discover the ground of his "Being" and there to discover the same ground of "Being" in all! An attempt is made here to portray the import of his message as reported in the news papers at that time.

Vivekananda wanted to propagate the essential tenets of Indian thought, to remove remaining misconceptions about India and to acquire funds for his Indian work, through his own labour, without appealing publicly for contributions. The first invitation for his work came from the Slayton Lyceum Lecture Bureau to make a tour of America to get funds for the educational philanthropic and religious works in India.

He lectured in most of the larger cities of the eastern, Midwestern and southern states, including Chicago, Iowa city, Des Moines, Memphis, Indianapolis, Minneapolis, Madison, Hartford, Buffalo, Boston, Cambridge, Baltimore, Washington, Brooklyn and New York. Unfortunately our knowledge of Swamiji's tour is not yet complete, but as time goes on, more and more information comes to light. In the contemporary daily news papers, for instance, or in the reminiscences of those who met him and heard him lecture, one finds records of his illuminating or glowing descriptions of his personality. One also discovers details of his itinerary. It is now known, for instance, that through October and most of November of 1893, Swamiji remained in Chicago, lecturing in and around that city.

"Evanston Index" reported on October,7,1893: "His stay in Chicago has been a continual ovation". Three weeks later he wrote to his friend professor Wright of Oxford University: "I am very popular in Chicago." Little is known at present of his lecture engagements in and near the city during these seven or eight weeks. But we do know that at the end of September he gave a course of three lectures in nearby Evanston along with another delegate of Religions, Dr. Carl Van Bergen of Sweden. Vivekananda spoke on "Hindu Altruism" (September 30) "Monism" (October,3) and "Reincarnation" (October 5). On October 7th he lectured in Streater, Illinois, on "The customs of India"; and on October 27th, he spoke on "The history of Buddhism" at the fortnightly of Chicago, one of the most influential women's clubs of the Midwest. Through these engagements he got some money. He wrote to Mrs. Tennat Woods on October,10, from Chicago:

Just now I am lecturing about Chicago and am doing as I think very well; It is ranging from 30

to 80 dollars a lecture, and just now I have been so well advertised in Chicago gratis by the Parliament of Religions that is not advisable to give up this field now... yesterday I returned from Streater where I got 87dollars for a lecture. I have engagements every day this week. And hope more will come by the end of the week.

In her "Memoirs" of Swami Vivekananda Cornelia Conger wrote: "he seemed to feel especially close to my grandmother who reminded him of his own mother... when he began to give lectures, people offered him money for the work he hoped to do in India. He had no purse. So he used to tie it up in a handkerchief and bring it back home – like a proud little boy! – Pour it into my grandmother's lap to keep it for him. She made him learn the different coins and stack them. I was only six years old then.

He saw in America how much could be accomplished by organizing work. Once he said to my grandmother that he had the greatest temptation of his life in America. She liked to tease him a bit and said, "who is she Swami?" He burst out laughing and said, "Oh! It is not a lady, It is organization". He contemplated on what type of organization would be acceptable to the Indian character. He gave a great deal of thought and study to adopt what seemed good to him in our western world to the best advantage of his own people.

Referring to this period of the Swamiji's life, the Chicago news paper "Inter ocean" wrote in September of 1894, almost a year after the parliament:

Vivekananda lingered in Chicago for several months after the parliament.., studying many questions relating to the schools and the material advancement of civilization... he

visited Museums, universities, schools and art galleries trying to comprehend the spirit of western life. He became a keen student of the public and social life in America, and its massive towering palaces of Industry, the pomp and power of the western world with its complicated and highly sophisticated social and Industrial life, in contrast with the crowded misery of the Indian cities. The greatness of his spirit enabled him to hold the balance between the two worlds, the East and West. He saw each clearly and to its depths and the result of his continued and penetrating observations was later expressed in his two studies, "The East and West" and the "Modern India", written in Bengali. After the world fair, Chicago was at this period a meeting place of some of the best minds of the day. He was introduced to a group of scientists who had gathered in the city to attend the electrical congress held from August 21 through 25. A vegetarian dinner was given especially in his honour by Prof. Elisha Gray, the inventor of electrical equipment, and his wife in their beautiful residence in highland park, Chicago. Among the distinguished guests invited to meet him were Ariton Hopitalia, Sir William Thompson, afterwards Lord Kelvin, Professor Hermann Von Helmholtz the last two of whom were eminent in the field of physics. The Swamiji's knowledge of electricity amazed the scientists and his shining repartee bearing on matters of science was greeted with sincere pleasure. With one voice they acclaimed him a sympathetic confrère.

On the morning of November 20, 1893, the Swami left Chicago to begin his arduous lecture tour through the cold winter season of the mid-western and southern states. The first city he visited was Madison, Wisconsin where he lectured on the evening of November, 20, Swamiji spoke twice in Minneapolis at first

Unitarian church on 24th afternoon and 26th morning. On November 26th he travelled to Des Moines, the capital city of Iowa. The following excerpt from the "Iowa state Register" of December 3, 1893, show how appreciatively he was received in Des Moines. One catches a glimpse here of his personality, sharp as a rapier at one moment, and warm as a friendly hand the next:

Swami Vivekananda, the Hindu monk, spoke three times in Des Moines. During his stay in the city, which was happily prolonged by the cancellation of engagements farther west, Vivekananda met many of the best people in the city, who found their time well spent discussing religious and metaphysical questions with him. But it was owe to the man who undertook to combat the monk on his own ground and that was where they all tried who tried it at all. His replies came like flashes of lightening, and the venture some questioner was sure to be impaled on the Indian's shining intellectual lance. The workings of his mind, so subtle and so brilliant, so well stored and so well trained, sometimes dazzled his hearers, but it was always a most interesting study. He said nothing unkind, for his nature would not permit that. Those who came to know him best found him the most gentle and lovable of men, so honest, frank and unpretending, always grateful for many kindnesses that were shown to him. Vivekananda and his cause found a place in the hearts of all true Christians. Although the Swami's itinerary for December 1893 and the first part of January 1894 has not yet been traced we know that his lecture engagements carried him far and wide.

He wrote in January 1894 to his brother monks: "necessity makes me travel by rail to the borders of Canada one day, and the next day finds me lecturing in southern states of south America". In mid January he travelled as far

south as Memphis, Tennessee, where he had been invited by the members of the nineteenth century club, some of whom had heard him lecture at the Parliament of Religions. He gave a number of lectures in Memphis to large and enthusiastic audiences and was interviewed at length by local newspapers. He pleaded and did every where, for universal acceptance of all religions and for love; he explained the underlying unity of the world's rich variety of creeds, and he emphasized the basic divinity of man. Where ever he went, he not only spoke of the merits of Hinduism, but like a great sower, spread his master's message. He wrote to his brother monks on October 22, 1894: "Where ever the seed of his power will fall, there it will fructify, be it today, or in a hundred years". He was always aware that a great power was working in and through him. He wrote again to his brother monks in the early part of 1894: "I am amazed at his grace. What ever town I visit, it is in an uproar. They have named me "the Cyclonic Hindu". Remember it is his will – I am a voice without a form".

Every where, the Swamiji went as a guest during his lecture tour; but despite the cordiality with which he was received in many homes, the tour was not an altogether pleasant experience. Unaccustomed to the severe winters of the Midwest, he suffered intensely from cold; Travelling by train from each one-night stand to the next was grueling; accommodations in small town hotels, where he sometimes had to stay, were primitive in the extreme. Then too, the constant of the lecture platform told on him. Every where he went people flocked about him, and clergymen particularly Unitarians – beseeched him to lecture from their pulpits.

Through out the course of his lecture tours the Swamiji found his name blazoned in the papers. Reporters and editors literally

besieged him. He was made to answer endless questions with regard to his habits of life, his religion, his philosophy, his views on western civilization, his plan for future work, his diet, his antecedents, the manners and customs of his people, the political conditions of his land and a host of other matters. The news papers acquainted the American public with many details of his personal as well as his country's history-particularly of the latter, for India was his love, and the welfare of his country was his deep concern, of which he never was tired of speaking.

Apart from the fundamental, divinely ordained mission of giving his message to the west, about which he rarely spoke, the main object of his coming to America was to further the cause of his people. In his letter of December 28, 1893, to Haripada Mitra, he says:

"I came to this country not to satisfy my curiosity, nor for name or fame, but to see if I could find any means for the support of the poor in India. If God helps me, you will know gradually what those means are".

"A notable feature of the Swamiji's lectures at this time which the news papers high lighted and hailed, was his patriotism. To quote from one of those newspapers:

"His patriotism was perfervid. The manner in which he speaks of "My Country" is most touching. That one phraserevealed him not only as a monk, but as a man of his people".

Vivekananda received invitation after invitation to speak in churches and to clubs and private gatherings. He accepted most of these thinking each to be an opportunity of spreading the truths of Vedanta, of giving spiritual help, and of presenting the true needs of India before the American people. He gave

himself and his time unstintingly in service. He gave and gave until the mental and physical strain became intense. Often he had to deliver extempore twelve to fourteen lectures a week, sometimes even more.

The exertion was so great that after a time he felt as though he had exhausted himself intellectually. At such times he asked himself, 'What is to be done! What shall I say in my lecture tomorrow' ! In this difficulty he was aided in wonderful ways. For instance, at dead of night he would hear a voice shouting at him the thoughts that he was to speak on the following day. Some times it would come as from a long distance, speaking to him down a great avenue; then it would draw nearer and nearer. Or it would be like someone delivering a lecture along side of him, as he lay on his bed listening. At other times two voices would argue before him discussing at great length subjects that he would find himself repeating the following day from the platform or the pulpit. Some times these discussions introduced ideas that he had never heard of or thought of previously.

He interpreted them as manifestations of the wider powers of the mind. He was not at all puzzled at these strange happenings. He spoke of them as subjective, as automatic workings of the mind. Given certain forms of thought, the mind naturally works on and enlarges on them, calling to its aid the creative faculties for their perfect presentation and utterance. Vivekananda believed that the vedic Rishis must have had such revelations in composing the upanishads. Commenting upon these experiences to his intimate disciples, he would remark that they constituted what is generally regarded as inspiration.

He remained at Memphis, Tennessee from January 13, 1894 to the 22nd and returned to

Chicago. After this, his travels and his stays in various cities and towns have been fairly well traced, leaving but few gaps. In February, from the 13th to the 23rd, and most of March, from the 9th to the 30th, he lectured in Detroit, primarily at the Unitarian Church. During these two periods he was the guest for about four weeks at Mrs. John J. Bagley, the widow of the ex Governor of Michigan and a lady of rare culture and unusual spirituality. Of the Bagley family the Swamiji wrote to Mrs. Hale on Feb. 14th, "They are very rich, kind and hospitable. Mrs Bagley is especially interested in India. The daughters are very good, educated and good looking. The eldest gave me lunch at a club where I met some of the finest ladies and gentlemen of the city". On the evening following his arrival at Detroit, Mrs. Bagley, who had met the Swamiji five months earlier at the parliament of Religions, honored him with an enormous grand reception to which the whole town, as it were, was invited. The imposing invitation list included the names of Bishops, clergymen, rabbis, professors, the Mayor and his wife, and at least three hundred of the cream of Detroit society. The "Detroit Journal" of February, 14, reported, "The social Lion of the day is Swami (brother) Vivekananda". Mrs. Bagley often said that during his visit with her he constantly expressed the highest in word and action and that his presence was a "Continual benediction".

When the Swamiji came to Detroit for the second time, he at first stayed for nearly a week with the honourable Thomas W. Palmer, president of the World's Fair commission, and formerly United States's senator and minister of his country for Spain. The following was a news paper report:

"The cyclonic Hindu has come and is a guest

with Mr. Palmer.

Mr. Palmer has become a Hindu and is going to India".

In February and March of 1894, the Swamiji lectured three times, in three small towns, outside Detroit. On February 23 he spoke in Opera house of Ada, Ohio, where his lecture on the 'Divinity of man' drew a packed house last Friday evening (Ada Record, February, 28, 1894). The speaker said:

"I am a speaker and not matter. The religion of the west hopes to again live with their body. Ours teaches there can not be such a state. We say freedom of the soul instead of salvation".

On March 20 he spoke in Bay City, Michigan, on "Hinduism", and on the following evening (March 21) in Saginaw, Michigan, on the harmony of Religions" but the main scene of his activities during the months of February and March was Detroit. In all his Detroit lectures, he presented the religious and social customs of India in their true light and to shower upon his listeners the grand spiritual truths of Hinduism. Through his lectures and talks the Americans were able to see the depth and beauty of Hindu religion and culture for the first time. Indeed the Swami was himself a revelation with his powerful and radiant personality for through him worked a power that nothing could withstand. "The power behind me" he wrote in a letter of July 9, 1897, "is not Vivekananda but He the Lord". To thousands of Americans, he was a prophet of divine truths, awakening them to the life of the spirit. People hear him had their souls animated and their spiritual hopes were fulfilled. His utterances were authoritative, his realization genuine; He spoke of what he had felt and had seen himself. Many people found their gates of wisdom opened. Those who had

him as their guest or came in intimate contact with him, spoke of him as kaleidoscopic genius, enriching his surroundings with his many-sided greatness; they said that his was a soul of unutterable beauty and grandeur, that he transcended all their previous notions of greatness or of saintliness.

Of the Swami's first visit to Detroit, Mrs. Mary C. Funke, who was to become his ardent disciple, wrote many years after:

"February 14th, 1894, stands out in my memory as apart, a sacred, holy day; for it was then that I first formed and listened to the voice of that great soul, the spiritual giant, the Swami Vivekananda, who, two years later, to my great joy and never-ceasing wonder, accepted me as a disciple.

He had been lecturing in the large cities of this country, and on the above gave the first of a series of lectures in Detroit, in the Unitarian Church. The large edifice was literally packed and the Swami received an ovation. I can see him as he stepped upon the platform, a real, majestic figure, vital, forceful, dominant, and at the first sound of the wonderful voice, a voice all music – now like the plaintive minor strain of an Eolian harp, again deep, vibrant, resonant – there was a lush, a stillness that could almost be felt, and the vast audience breathed as one man.

The swamiji gave eight public lectures and he held his audiences, for his was the grasps of the "master hand" and he spoke as one with authority. His arguments were logical, convincing and in his most brilliant oratorical flights, never once did he lost sight of the main issue – the truth he wished to drive home".

During the five weeks or so that Swami Vivekananda lectured in Detroit, the press made the most of this extraordinary, famous

and controversial visitor from the East. It would be well to quote here what the "Detroit Free Press" one of the leading Journals not only of the city but of the nation, wrote concerning him, for the description of the Swamiji given in this paper, on February 11, 1894, was typical of what was printed of him throughout his tour :

"Since the parliament he has spoken to immense audiences in many towns and cities, who have but one opinion of praise and are enthusiastic over his magnetic power and his way of giving light and life to every subject he touches upon. Naturally his views of great questions, coming like him self from the other side of globe, are refreshing and stirring to American people. His hearers are pleasantly astonished when the olive-complexioned, dark-haired, dignified man rises in rich yellow robes and speaks their own language with fluency, distinctness and correctness".

Commenting on his lecture of February 17, 1894, the same paper (Detroit Free Press) reports:

Swami Vivekananda, Hindu philosopher, concluded his series of lectures or, rather, sermons, at the Unitarian Church last night, speaking on "The divinity of Man". In spite of the bad weather, the church was crowded almost to the doors, half an hour before the Eastern brother-as he likes to be called -

appeared. All professions and business occupations were represented in the attentive audience - lawyers, Judges, ministers of the Gospel, merchants, a Rabbi-not to speak of the many ladies who have by their repeated attendance and rapt attention, shown a decided inclination to shower adulation upon the dusky visitor, whose drawing-room attraction is as great as ability in the rostrum.

The lecture last night was less descriptive than preceding ones, and for nearly two hours Vivekananda wove a metaphysical texture on affairs human and divine, so logical that he made science appear like common sense. It was a beautiful logical garment that he wove, replete with as many bright colors and as attractive and pleasing to contemplate as one of the many - hued fabrics made by hand in his native land and scented with most seductive fragrance of the Orient. The dusky gentleman uses poetical imagery as an artist uses colors, and the hues are laid on just where they belong, the result being somewhat bizarre in effect, and yet having a peculiar fascination. Kaleidoscopic were the swiftly succeeding logical conclusions, and the deft manipulator was rewarded for his efforts from time to time by enthusiastic applause".

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Special Section

REMINISCENCES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

G. S. BHATE

I HAD the rare privilege of having the late Swami Vivekananda as our guest at Belgaum, I believe some time in 1892. I am not sure of the date, but it was about six months before he reached Madras and there became, better known than he was before. If I remember aright, it was his first visit to Madras that led to his selection as representative of India at the Congress of Religions held at Chicago. As very few people in India had the advantage of knowing him before he made a name for himself, I think it would be interesting to set down a few reminiscences, however hazy, of his visit and stay at Belgaum.

The Swami came to Belgaum from Kolhapur with a note from Mr. Golvalkar, the Khangi Karbhari of the Maharaja. He had reached Kolhapur with a note from the Durbar of Bhavnagar to the Durbar of Kolhapur. I do not remember whether the Swami had stayed in Bombay or merely passed through. I remember him appearing one morning about six o'clock with a note from Mr. Golvalkar who was a great friend of my father's. The Swami was rather striking in appearance and appeared to be even at first sight somewhat out of the common run of men. But neither my father nor any one else in the family or even in our small town was prepared to find in our guest the remarkable man that he turned out to be.

From the very first day of me Swami's stay occurred little incidents which led us to revise our ideas about him. In the first place, though he wore clothes bearing the familiar colour of a Sannyasin's garments, he appeared to be dressed differently from the familiar brotherhood of Sannyasins. He used to wear a banyan. Instead of the danda he carried a



long stick, something like a walking-stick. His kit consisted of the usual gourd, a pocket copy of the Gita, and one or two books (the names of which I do not remember, possibly they were some Upanishads). We were not accustomed to see a Sannyasin using the English language as a medium of conversation, wearing a banyan instead of sitting bare-bodied, and showing versatility of intellect and variety of information which would have done credit to an accomplished man of the world. He used to speak Hindi quite fluently; but as our mother-tongue was Marathi, often he found it more convenient to use English than Hindi.

The first day after the meal, the Swami made a request for betel-nut and pan (betel). Then either the same day or the day after, he wanted some tobacco for chewing. One can imagine the kind of horror which would be inspired by a Sannyasin who is commonly regarded as having gone above these small creature comforts, showing a craving for these things. We had discovered by his own admission that he was a non-Brahmin and yet a Sannyasin, that he was a Sannyasin and yet craved for things which only householders are supposed to want. This was really topsy-turvydom, and yet he succeeded in changing our ideas. There was really nothing very wrong in a Sannyasin wanting pan and supari (betel-nut) or tobacco for chewing, but the explanation he gave of his craving disarmed us completely. He said that he was a gay young man and a distinguished graduate of the Calcutta University and that his life before he met Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was entirely different to what he became afterwards. As a result of teachings of Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa he had changed his life and outlook, but some of these things he found it impossible to get rid of, and he let them remain as being of no very great consequence. As regards food, when he was asked whether he was a vegetarian or a meat-eater, he said that as a man belonging not the ordinary order of Sannyasins but to the order of the Paramahansas, he had no option in the matter. The Paramahansa, by the rules of that order, was bound to eat whatever was offered, and in cases where nothing could be offered he had to go without food. And a Paramahansa was not precluded from accepting food from any human being irrespective of his religious beliefs. When he was asked whether he would accept food from non-Hindus, he told us that he had several times been under the necessity of accepting food from Mohammedans.

The Swami appeared to be very well grounded in the old Pandit method of studying Sanskrit. At the time of his arrival, I was getting up the Ashtadhyayi by rote, and to my great surprise as a boy, his memory even in quoting portions of the Ashsadhyaayi which I had been painfully trying to remember, was much superior to mine. If I remember aright, when my father wanted me to repeat the portions that I had been preparing, I made some slips which to my confusion the Swami smilingly corrected. The effect of this was almost overwhelming as far as my feelings towards him were concerned, When there was

another occasion for repeating some portions of the Amarakosha, I thought it better to be prudent than clever; and as I felt doubtful about my ability to repeat the portion with accuracy, I frankly confessed that I was unable to do so without committing mistakes. My father was naturally angry and annoyed at my failure to come up to his expectation; but I did not want to be caught once more, and I preferred the temporary annoyance of my father to what I regarded as a humiliation at the hand of our newly arrived guest.

For a day or two after his arrival my father was busy in trying to take a measure of his guest. In that period he made up his mind that the guest was not only above the ordinary, but was an extraordinary personality. So he got a few of his personal friends together in order to fortify his own opinion of the Swami. They soon agreed that it was quite worth while to get all the local leaders and learned men together. What struck us most in the crowded gatherings, which began to be held every day after the presence of the Swami became known to all in Belgaum, was the unfailing good humour which the Swami preserved in his conversations and even heated arguments. He was quick enough at retort, but the retort had no sting in it. One day we had a rather amusing illustration of the Swami's coolness in debate. There was at that time in Belgaum an Executive Engineer who was the best-informed man in our town, He was one of the not uncommon types among Hindus. He was in his everyday life an orthodox Hindu of the type that I believe Southern India alone can produce. But in his mental outlook he was not only a sceptic, but a very dogmatic adherent of what used to be then regarded as the scientific outlook. He almost appeared to argue inspite of his orthodox mode of life that there was practically no sanction for religion or belief in religion except that the people were for a long time accustomed to certain beliefs and practices. Holding these views he found the Swami rather an embarrassing opponent, because the Swami had larger experience, knew more philosophy and more science than this local luminary. Naturally, he more than once lost temper in argument and was discourteous, if not positively rude, to the Swami. So my father protested, but the Swami smilingly intervened and said that he did not feel in any way disturbed by the methods of show of temper on the part of this Executive Engineer. He said that in such circumstances the best method to adopt was the one adopted by horse-trainers. He said that when a trainer wants to break colts, he merely aims at first to get on their backs, and having secured a hold on the back, limits his exertions to keeping his seat. He lets the colts try their best to throw him off and in that attempt to exhaust their untrained energies; but when the colts have done their best and failed, then begins the real task of the trainer. He becomes the master, and soon makes the colts feel that he means to be the master; and then the course of training is comparatively smooth. He said that in debates and conversations this was the best method to adopt. Let your opponent try his best or worst, let him exhaust himself; and then when he has shown signs of fatigue, get control of him and make him do just

whatever you wish him to do. In short, conviction rather than constraint or compulsion must be the aim of a man who wants something more than mere silence from an opponent. Willing consent on the part of the opponent must be the inevitable result of such a procedure.

The Swami was a most embarrassing opponent for an impatient and dogmatic reasoner. He soon nonplussed in argument all the available talent in a mofussil town. But his aim appeared to be not so much victory in debate and argumentation, as a desire to create and spread the feeling that the time had come for demonstrating to the country and to the whole world that the Hindu religion was not in a moribund condition. The time had come, he used to say, for preaching to the world the priceless truths contained in Vedanta. His view of Vedanta was, it appears to me, a great deal different from the view that has become traditional. His complaint appeared to be that Vedanta had been treated too much as the possession of a sect competing for the loyalty of the Hindu along with other sects, and not as a life-giving perennial source of inspiration that it really was. He used to say that the particular danger of Vedanta was that its tenets and principles lent themselves easily to profession even by cowards. He used to say that the Vedanta may be professed by a coward, but it could be put into practice only by the most stout-hearted. The Vedanta was strong meat for weak stomachs. One of his favourite illustrations used to be that the doctrine of non-resistance necessarily involved the capacity and ability to resist and a conscious refraining from having recourse to resistance. If a strong man, he used to say, deliberately refrained from making use of his strength against either a rash or a weak opponent, then he could legitimately claim higher motives for his action. If, on the other hand, there was no obvious superiority of strength or the strength really lay on the side of his opponent, then the absence of the use of strength naturally raised the suspicion of cowardice. He used to say that that was the real essence of the advice by Shri Krishna to Arjuna. The wavering of mind on the part of Arjuna may have been easily due to other causes besides a genuine reluctance to use his undoubted and unflinching strength. Therefore the long and involved argument embodied in the eighteen chapters of the Gita.

(Courtesy Prabuddha Bharata, July 1923)

Bhupendranath Dutta

At the time of Narendranath's college career Herbert Spencer's 'Evolution' and 'Unknown and Unknowable' theories were the rage among students. Along with Spencer's works, John Stuart Mill's book *On Liberty* was a favorite with the literate Indian middle class which sought to follow its precepts and ideals in life. If the earlier generation was enamored of Priestley, Parker and the psychologist Hamilton, the present generation was reading with avid interest Spencer, Mill, Harrison,—the English protagonists of Positivism.

Narendranath became fascinated with Evolutionism of Herbert Spencer and thus moved far away from mid-Victorian ideologies. This made him part company with the social reformers of his country who attacked him in turn. We must say that instead of mud-throwing the reformers should have had the keenness of mind to realize that the mid-Victorian ideologies were evolved as a dialectical process when England was in full bloom of her colonial imperialistic expansion. But those ideologies could hardly claim to be the absolute truth for all ages. Dialectically, what evolves in one age in one country cannot hold good in another country and another age. The reformers were under mid-Victorian ideological influence that was no longer relevant to the requirements of the time. Hence their activities only retarded advanced political ideology and action. Even to the last days of the English colonial rule in India the reforming societies remained as the bulwark of political reaction.



In his youth Narendranath came in contact with Keshabchandra Sen and Pandit Shivnath Sastri and became a member of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. This was nothing unusual in those days among the youthful intelligentsia of the time. He used to sing in the choir of the Brahmo church. Pandit Shivnath Sastri once told the present writer : "Your brother took me to your house and introduced me to your father." The late Haramohan Mitra used to say to the writer that Swamiji often said: "But for Ramakrishna I would have been a Brahmo missionary." He was an enthusiastic Brahmo at that time. This trait never completely left him. But perhaps the mysticism of Keshabchandra seemed too irrational to appeal to him. In spite of Ramakrishna and medieval *Vedanta* he turned from being a social reformer to a social revolutionary. This the reformers failed to notice. *

During his college life at the General Assembly's Institution he met Ramakrishna, Narendranath's classmate Haramohan narrated the following incident to us : "One day our European professor was cross with the students. The students could not understand the state of trance referred to by Wordsworth. He banged the table, stamped the footstool with his boots and at last went out of the class-room in disgust. At this juncture I was going out of the class-room on some errand. But I saw Rev. Hastie, the Principal coming towards the class-room. So I returned *to it* and then heard Hastie's lecture. He said, 'Mr. *so-and-so* says that the boys are stupid and do not understand Wordsworth and his trance. Perhaps he himself does not understand the poet. While concentrating on the beauty of Nature Wordsworth had some experience of that ecstatic state.' Then he concluded by saying that there was a man living in Dakshineswar who often experienced a state of bliss through the- kind of trance referred to by Wordsworth. 'You go and see him'. That was the first time that the students of the class heard about

Ramakrishna."

During the time when Narendranath was visiting the Brahmo Samaj, Dr. Ramchandra Datta, his relative, once asked him why, although he used to go about here and there, he did not care to see Ramakrishna Paramhansa. Our mother said that it was Ramchandra who took Narendranath to meet Ramakrishna. Some biographers of the latter say that at the house of our neighbor Sureshchandra Mitra where Ramakrishna was expected, Sureshchandra invited Narendra *to* come and sing a few bhajans. It is in this way that acquaintance between the two began.

Narendranath had great proficiency in classical music. He inherited this trait from his father who practiced it in his youth. Narendranath learnt music from an *Ostad* (teacher) named Beni . The writer has heard from his mother that Kasi Ghosal had also been one of his *ostads*. It is said that Kasi Ghosal used *to* play *Pakhwaj etc. at* the Adi Brahmo Samaj. Perhaps Narendra learnt to play on the same instrument and along with it on *Banya* and *Tabla* from him. Narendranath wrote a book in Bengali on how to play on these instruments. It was published by Baishnavchandra Basak of Bartola. The writer has seen a copy of it in the Library of Belur Math.

It was the fashion in those days of political awakening to practice body-building exercises. Surendranath Banerjea and Anandamohan Basu were thundering from the platform of the Students' Association founded by them that the young Bengalees must be physically strong and aggressive. Being inspired with an awakened zeal in this matter, Narendranath joined Ambu Guha's Gymnasium (*Akhara*) to practice wrestling (*Kusti*). He was also proficient in the English system of physical exercises. Many young men of good families used to throng the gymnasium of Ambu Guha. The late Swami Brahmananda told the present writer that he also used to frequent that place and learnt there how to turn a man on his back. But he gave it up after meeting Ramakrishna.



Surendranath's influence on the young men was then on the ascendant while that of Keshabchandra was waning. It is also said that Narendranath used to frequent the Hindu Mahamela of Nabagopal Mitra. It was an organization *to* resurrect the Hindu life in order *to make* the Hindus a nation. It was purely a national organization with national revival as its ideal. The ladies of our house used to send their handicrafts at the exhibition of the Mahamela. In this way, all the traits in Swami Vivekananda's character and life had their origin in his family characteristics and the then social cross-currents.

Bala gangadhara Tilak.

ABOUT the year 1892, i.e., before the famous Parliament of Religions in the World's Fair at Chicago, I was once returning from Bombay to Poona. At the Victoria Terminus a Sannyasin entered the carriage I was in. A few Gujarati gentlemen were there to see him off. They made the formal introduction and asked the Sannyasin to reside at my house during his stay at Poona. We reached Poona, and the Sannyasin remained with me for eight or ten days. When asked about his name he only said he was a Sannyasin. He made no public speeches here. At home he would often talk about Advaita philosophy and Vedanta. The Swami avoided mixing with society. There was absolutely no money with him. A



deerskin, one or two clothes and a kamandalu were his only possessions. In his travels some one would provide a railway ticket for the desired station.

The Swami happened to express a strong hope that as the women in the Maharashtra were not handicapped by the purdah system, it was probable that some of the widows in the higher classes would devote their lives to the spread of spirituality and religion alone like the old yogis of the Buddhist period. The Swami also believed like me that the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita did not preach renunciation but urged every one to work unattached and without the desire for fruits of the work.

I was at that time a member of the Deccan Club in the Hirabag which used to hold weekly meetings. At one of these meetings the Swami accompanied me. That evening the late Kashinath Govind Nath made a fine speech on a philosophical subject. No one had to say anything. But the Swami rose and spoke in fluent English presenting the other aspect of the subject very lucidly. Every one there was thus convinced of his high abilities. The Swami left Poona very soon after this.

Two or three years thereafter Swami Vivekananda returned to India with world-wide fame owing to his grand success at the Parliament of Religions and also after that both in England and America. He received an address wherever he went and on every one of such occasions he made a thrilling reply. I happened to see his likeness in some of the newspapers, and from the similarity of features I thought that the Swami who had

resided at my house must have been the same. I wrote to him accordingly inquiring if my inference was correct and requesting him to kindly pay a visit to Poona on his way to Calcutta. I received a fervent reply in which the Swami frankly admitted that he was the same Sannyasin and expressed his regret at not being able to visit Poona then. This letter is not available. It must have been destroyed along with many others, public and private, after the close of the Kesari Prosecution of 1897.

Once after this, during one of the Congress sessions at Calcutta, I had gone with some friends to see the Belur Math of the Ramakrishna Mission. There Swami Vivekananda received us very cordially. We took tea. In the course of the conversation Swamiji happened to remark somewhat in a jocular spirit that it would be better if I renounced the world and took up his work in Bengal while he would go and continue the same in Maharashtra. "One does not carry," he said, "the same influence in one's own province as in a distant one."

(Vedanta Kesari, January 1934)

Subhash Chandra Bose

- I cannot write about Vivekananda without going into raptures. Reckless in his sacrifice, unceasing in his activity, boundless in his love, profound and versatile in his wisdom, exuberant in his emotions... 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. He was a Yogi of the highest spiritual level, in direct communion with the Truth, who consecrated his whole life to the moral and spiritual uplift of humanity.
- "Swamiji harmonized the East and the West, religion and science, past and present. And that is why he is great. Our countrymen have gained unprecedented self-respect, self-reliance and self-assertion from his teachings."
- "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



OH! THE YOUTH OF INDIA INDIA IS CALLING — SWAMIJI

Prof. Ramani

The Call

Our National poet Mahakavi Subramania Bharathi invoked the blessings of Bharath Matha for the sake of his brethren of this great country at the height of the freedom struggle.

“Oh! (people of India)
Mother Bharath is an
ancient nation and a very
great country. Thou art
the son of Her never ever
try to remove this thought
from your mind”.

Swamiji, by then, had already completed the tour of the west and lectured at the World Parliament of Religious at Chicago to draw the attention of millions of people across the globe to the greatness of the vibrant India.

Perhaps, Swamiji's great adoration for Mother Bharath has rekindled in him the flame already burning bright. In the light, he saw millions of our brothers and sisters suffering and struggling in India and also around the world. Swamiji wanted to kindle the same spirit in the minds of one hundred thousand young men and women in India so that they may carry forward his message across the length and the breadth of this country and also across the globe for ever to enable humanity to receive



Mother Earth's bounteous gifts in full without being ever exploited by the powerful and rich. It is very well to make an introspection to seek truths what Swamiji has felt as the panacea for all the ills humanity faced. Let us, at least now, get rid of our deep slumber and free ourselves from the fear of an alien's reprisal. Let us keep away the slavish attitude or mind which kept us in dark for countries since the first invaders looted us our riches and culture.

Every Indian has the responsibility to

remember the monk's call to regenerate the static mind and make it a resurgent force so that the entire humanity may benefit from the Vedantic spirit of Mother Bharath.

“The Clarion Call”

Swamiji gave a strong message in unequivocal terms to enhance the quality of life of the people of India and the world on his return from the World Parliament of Religions on September 11, 1893 at Chicago. Swamiji had always believed that India alone can throw more light and steer clear of all the hurdles the world faced with its rich spiritual thoughts and life-giving principles. We must have initiated sincere efforts towards this direction at least after our independence. But we continued to be in deep slumber in spite of the clarion call, “Arise! Awake!! Stop not till the goal is reached” of the Patriot Monk, Swami Vivekananda.

An Introspection: Swamiji analysed and listed the following causes for our downfall:

- The neglect of the masses
- Loss of Self-Confidence
- Laziness and meanness manifested in the form of jealousy
- Neglect of women
- Lack of man making education

The Problems and Solution

Swamiji said, we are lazy, we cannot work. We cannot combine, we don't love each other, we are intensely selfish, no three of us can come together without hating each other, without being jealous of each other....” We speak of many things parrot like, but never do them, speaking and not doing has become a

habit with us. How do we build a modern India?” It is better to begin with an indepth understanding of Swamiji's beliefs. Rabindranath Tagore said, “If you want to know India, study Vivekananda. In him, everything is positive and nothing negative”. Swamiji was fond of all human beings. However, he loved India most for her rich philosophy, Spirituality, Culture, Fine Arts, Sciences and other values. Swamiji wanted India to be Jagath Guru (World leader of knowledge) to guide humanity in its state of turmoil and wean it away from its present status. One must be aware of the very fact that Swamiji had a very great understanding of the modern and ancient wisdom, the philosophy of the East and the West, the ideal and the practical, the national and the universal perspectives, scientific principles and the spiritual dimensions.

Dharma (or the Religion of India)

Swamiji had always felt that Dharma (or Religion as used by Swamiji) is the very soul of India.. We may know there is no equivalent word in English to convey the meaning of “Dharma” The regeneration of Mother India can begin with Dharma.

“In religion lies the vitality of India, so long as the Hindu race does not forget the great inheritance of their forefathers, there is no power on earth to destroy them. When the life-blood is strong and pure, no disease germ can live in that body. Our life blood is spirituality. If it flows clear, if it flows strong and pure and vigorous, everything is right, political, social, any other material defects, even the poverty of the land, will be cured, if that blood is pure. Political greatness or

military power is never the mission of our race, it never was, andit never will be”.

Materialism versus Spirituality

Indian race never stood for wealth. Perhaps, the Indian believed that the purpose of life is reaching higher levels such as realizing oneself and through self realization realizing God. After all, we are made of the five elements physically but there is an eternal truth beyond. We must make our efforts to realize the nature beyond as Swamiji said, “Although they acquired immense wealth, perhaps more than any other nation very acquired, yet the nation did not stand for wealth. It was a powerful race for ages, yet we find that the nation never stood for power never went out of 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 race. Our Motherland has religion and religion alone for its basis, for its backbone, for the bed rock upon which the whole building of its life has been based.”

Wake Up Bharth: Enlighten the World

150 years have passed we must have made sincere efforts ever since Swamiji's made his address at the World Parliament of Religious. It is always better later than never. Let us pledge ourselves now on the occasion of the 150 Birth Anniversary celebrations that we will not leave any stone unturned till we realize Swamiji's dream.

The Divine Soul

The soul by nature is pure and perfect, infinite in power.

“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”.

The Road Ahead

Thus, it is mandatory on the part of every Indian Youth to seek a way to regeneration of his/her spirit to rejuvenate India Swamiji presented a blue print and recommended the following steps as priority areas:

- Do not destroy
- Elevate the masses
- Know your past
- Respect the great men of the country
- Fulfill the primary need, namely, Education
- Trust youth

To the youth coming forward to do this work of nation building, he listed three pre-requisites:

- Feel from the heart
- Know the remedy
- Have pure motives and indomitable will

The society at large and the Government of India and the State Governments in particular will do well to dwell upon this and deliberate to evolve a new youth policy on the occasion of the 150th Anniversary celebrations of Swamiji incorporating the salient features of the thoughts and philosophy of Swamiji.

VIVEKANANDA'S MATERIAL WISDOM

He had instincts of a cutting-edge economist and used deductive logic to enunciate economic principles

Bibek Debroy

Swami Vivekananda was born on January 12, 1863. So, in a few days, his 150th birth anniversary will be celebrated in various ways. A lot has been written on Swami Vivekananda and more will be written, with additional volumes in 2013. They will focus on religious, philosophical, political and nationalist aspects. Let me give a few instances that aren't that well-known.

"In a conversation concerning the material condition of the Hindu working men, the learned monk said that the poor lived on porridge alone... A day labourer on a farm received only 12 pence a day, but a dollar in India brought 10 times as much as it would in this country. Cotton was raised, but its fibre was so short it had to be woven by hand, and even then it was necessary to import American and Egyptian cotton to mix with it." This is from Detroit Journal, dated February 23, 1894, and is nothing but purchasing power parity (PPP), though understandably, that expression wasn't used. I am not sure how many economists would have used PPP notions in 1894.

Here is another quote, on the issue of widow remarriages, a complicated socio-cultural phenomenon. "In the higher castes of every country, you will find the statistics show that the number of women is always much larger than the number of men... The number of girls in the higher castes is much larger than in the



lower. Conditions are quite opposite in the lower castes. Relative to such questions as to widows not marrying: among the first two castes, the number of women is disproportionately large, and here is a dilemma. Either you have a non-marriageable widow problem and misery, or the non-husband-getting young lady problem. To face the widow problem, or the old maid problem? There you are; either of the two." Now go back again to the idea that the Indian

mind is socialistic. It says, "Now look here! We take the widow problem as the lesser one." Why? "Because they have had their chance; they have been married. If they have lost their chance, at any rate, they have had one. Sit down, be quiet and consider these poor girls — they have not had one chance of marriage." So, the Indian mind said to the widows, "Well, you have had your chance, and now we are very sorry that such mishaps have come to you, but we cannot help it; others are waiting. Then religion comes into the question." As every economist will appreciate, this is a remarkable way of stating the problem. Leaving aside the broader issue, if one looks at the quote, it is almost in an economist's language: an excess supply of women and a fair means of allocating them.

Let us move on to a third quote. "To protect the state, to meet the expenses of the personal comforts and luxuries of himself and his long retinue, and, above all, to fill to overflowing the coffers of the all-powerful priesthood for its propitiation, the king is continually draining the resources of his subjects, even as the sun sucks up moisture from the earth..."

The power of the populace is struggling to express itself in indirect and disorderly ways without any method. The people have not as yet the conscious knowledge of the existence of this power. There is neither the attempt on their part to organise it into a united action, nor have they got the will to do so; there is also a complete absence of that capacity, that skill, by means of which small and incoherent centres of force are united together, creating insuperable strength as their resultant. Is this due to want of proper laws? — no, that is not it. There are laws, there are methods, separately and distinctly assigned for the guidance of different departments of government, there are laws laid down in the minutest detail for

everything, such as the collection of revenue, the management of the army, the administration of justice, punishments and rewards... The laws have, it can almost be said, no elasticity in them. Under the circumstances, it is never possible for the people to acquire any sort of education by which they can learn to combine among themselves and be united for the accomplishment of any object for the common good of the people, or by which they can have the concerted intellect to conceive the idea of popular right in the treasures collected by the king from his subjects, or even such education by which they can be fired with the aspiration to gain the right of representation in the control of state revenues and expenditure." This is essentially about countervailing pressure by civil society, public revenue and public expenditure, not to speak of devolution and decentralisation of decision-making. As a final quote, "The great difficulty in the way of educating the poor is this. Supposing even your Highness opens a free school in every village, still, it would do no good, for the poverty in India is such that the poor boys would rather go to help their fathers in the fields, or otherwise try to make a living, than come to the school. Now, if the mountain does not come to Mohammed, Mohammed must go to the mountain. If the poor boy cannot come to education, education must go to him." These quotes aren't that well-known. People should read more of what Swami Vivekananda wrote or said, and less of what people have written about him.

(The author is professor at the Centre for Policy Research)

Courtesy - Economic Times - 17.12.12.

SANKARA AND SIDDHARTHA IN VIVEKANANDA

Dr.K.Subrahmanyam

It is popularly believed that Swami Vivekananda is born with Adi Sankara's intellect and Gautama Buddha's kind heart. Sri Sankara wanted mankind to use the God-given intellect for knowing the truth through analysis, logic and rationalism. When truth dawns, misery which is born of ignorance disappears. All suffering is due to ignorance. If only we are trained to discard the unreal and journey towards the absolute reality, there will be no need to be worried of anything. Therefore, we have the age-old prayer 'Asatoma Sadgamaya': May we be taken from the unreal to the real. But unfortunately, all are not of the same intellectual caliber. Nor are the attachments thin or weak to be cut off quickly by the sword of discrimination. One may preach the profoundest philosophy and soar high in the skies of Advaitic infinity. But like an eagle, he may have his eyes on the carrion below. Creature comforts pull the intellect down to the earth. It may then be difficult to practice what one preaches. The great Arjuna, the listener of the profound Gita is unable to stand erect and be composed when his son Abhimanyu is dead. It is easy to be a preaching theorist, but it is very difficult to put into practice the thoughts of Adi Sankara. Bhaja Govindam of Sri Sankara is indeed a sweet song of reality. But in spite of its repeated rendering, there are people who are unable to remain sober when sufferings accost them. Sankara's philosophy is therefore reduced to a mere intellectual analysis in many cases. It is

more an academic exercise than a practical treatise for establishing oneself in sobriety and peace. Vivekananda, contrary to the common folks, has been able to remain strong and serene on account of his sharp and robust



intellectual soundness. He has imbibed the spirit of Adi Sankara and goes to the extent of declaring that the future of religion if rationally pursued will be Advaita.

Gautama the Buddha is a person of concern and compassion for all the species. His heart throbs with pity and kindness all the 24 hours. He cannot afford to remain a silent spectator to the sufferings of anybody anywhere. He cannot bear to see a flower or leaf cut off from the parent tree. He offers to die in the place of a lamb or a goat. His kindness is so overflowing that he longs for happy eternity to everyone. He cannot see anybody die anywhere. Sickness and suffering, old-age and misery, dejection and death and a host of discomforts draw his attention and therefore he prays for everybody's happiness. We find therefore the ancient prayer 'Mrutyorma Amritangamaya' reverberated in Gautama Buddha's heart beats. 'May we be taken from death to

deathlessness'. In Swami Vivekananda we find Buddha's heart as humanism. Swamiji is first and foremost a humanist. He wanted every human being to be humane, since everybody is endowed with a heart of fellow-feeling. Any number of sentences can be quoted from Vivekananda's exhortations to highlight his humanism. But it is not that easy to alleviate the sufferings without any strain. There must be a method and a procedure for anyone either to be established in truth or to be freed from all sufferings. Therefore, in Vivekananda we have an action plan for realizing Adi Sankara's intellectual outlook and Gautama Buddha's compassionate pourings of the heart. And that action plan is promulgated on that single rock at Kanyakumari, at the southern most tip of mother Bharat, when he roared 'Arise, awake, stop not till the goal is reached'.

The age-old prayer has three sentences. One is Adi Shankara's pet formula 'Asatoma Sadgamaya'. The second is Siddhartha's heart rending cry 'Mrutyorma Amritangamaya'. And in Vivekananda, we find a roaring ideal as a blending of the earlier two prayers, and that is 'Tamasoma Jyotirgamaya'. It is because of the Tamas or ignorance or darkness that we face all ills and evils. Also it is because of one's inertia and laziness, one suffers from all ailments and sickness. If Tamas is erased or eradicated, one is sure to rise high towards Truth and towards Immortality. For full three days, 25th, 26th and 27th of December 1892, Swami Vivekananda sat on that rock at Kanyakumari and meditated on mother Bharat, her past, present and future. India had a very glorious past and it is going to have a very bright future. Only in the present, there is a little decay or downfall. It is due to her slumber which is a transient state of Tamas. If only India and Indians can be shaken to wake up from the lethargic nap, there is going to be a dynamic and vibrant brightness in the

face of everyone. Poverty and ignorance, sickness and suffering can, in one stroke be removed, if Tamas is shattered. Therefore, step by step, Swamiji has offered ways for the rise of India from Tamas to Jyoti. May we be taken from Tamasika prakruti to Jyotirmaya eternity.

Prakruti is nature. Nature is feminine, full of three qualities or Gunas. They are Tamasik idleness, Rajasik dynamism and Sattvik serenity. Since prakruti is feminine, we can call her 'Stri' in whom is hidden Ishwara. If prakruti is transcended, Ishwara of truth (Sat), eternity (Amrit) and Jyoti (Jnana) can be attained. Ishwara is free from the three Gunas, whereas prakruti or nature is full of them. One after the other, one has to shatter the Gunas and travel towards Ishwara or Purusha transcending prakruti or nature or Stri. The first Guna (quality) to be transcended is Tamas. When Tamas (T) is removed from Stri, there remains 'Sri' which is all round prosperity due to the dynamic activity and overall effort. And if that Rajasik dynamism too is transcended, there remains the Sattvik Prakriti 'S' and eternal Ishwara 'I'. This Sattvik prakruti takes us and leaves us with Ishwara and goes back.

Strangely, Sita devi is imprisoned in Lanka (Prakruti) where the three brothers Ravana, Kumbhakarna and Vibhishana are symbolic of the three qualities. Kumbhakarna or Tamas is eliminated first. Ravana or Rajas is killed next. Vibhishana or Sattva escorts Sita (Jiva) to the presence of Rama (Ishwara).

If India is to rise to its pristine glory and reestablish herself in her spiritual splendour, she has to go beyond the three Gunas. Swami Vivekananda therefore is a blending of Adi Sankara and Siddhartha when he roars like a lion 'Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached' or 'Tamasoma Jyotirgamaya'.

Let
New India
arise..... 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 the grocer's shop, from
beside the oven of the
fritter-seller. Let her
emanate



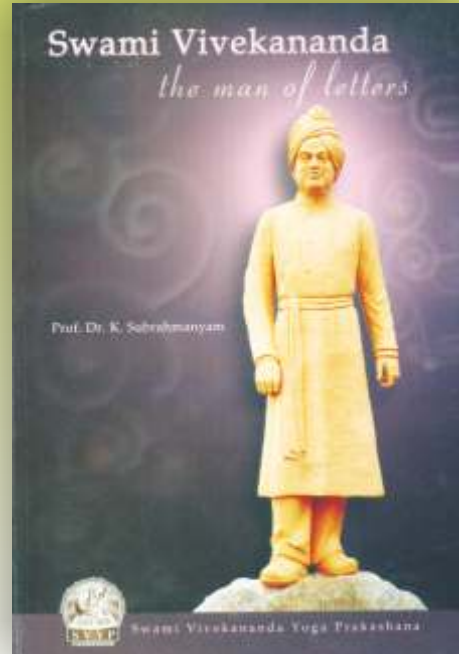
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA THE MAN OF LETTERS.

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Publisher : Swami Vivekananda Yoga Prakashana
19, Eknath Bhavan Gavipuram Circle
Kempe Gowda Nagar, Bangalore 560 019.
Hardbound 518 pages Price : Rs.350/-

A man of letters has once said, that the Englishmen would have rued their decision to teach the English language to Indians, had they known that leaders like Swami Vivekananda and Gandhiji would use the very language to beat the English rulers back.

The English that was used by the British to subjugate India was not the English of Milton, the Bible or Shakespeare. It is the poor substitution to the language of the bard, a slang of the mercenary, the lingo of the shopkeepers. But the language was capable of adapting itself to local conditions and of borrowing liberally from the local languages and enrich itself.

Swamiji found in English a tool to unite mankind. He has said that whenever the rulers of the world try to unite countries and build bridges, the Vedantin walks on the unifying road to spread his message of spirituality. Swamiji says that in history there have been four such attempts to unite the people of the world, and every time India has responded to the call of the opportunity, with the message of Vedanta. May be the English language and modern science are the fifth and sixth such attempts to unify the humankind and India knows that its role has been cutout-propagation of the life giving Vedantic message to mankind, through the new media.



How do saints use a language? They pick up a language worn out with clichés, shorn of creativity by its spiritless users and reduced to be a materialistic exchange-medium by its wrong application. But the saint infuses new meaning into its words, and sentence structures, idioms and usages and invests the language with a power it never had previously.

Swamiji himself refers to Valmiki who forged a new *chandaa*, a metre, to compose his RAMAYANA, inspired by the pathos of the Krauncha bird. Shri Krishna chose words like Sankhya, Yoga, Yajna, Dana and Tapa and endowed them with new meanings. Sankhya became Sannyasa, Yoga came to mean Karma Yoga. Yajna pointed out to mean all human interactions with the external world. Dana come to refer to all social interactions and Tapa

signified a man's encounter with himself.

In the same tradition of re-using languages to enhance their expressive power, Sri Ramakrishna chose the worn out rural Bengali and lifted it to a Veda-like stature. Swami Vivekananda, whose creative edge was not dulled by his schooling, would have chosen even a Timbuctoovian dialect and utilized it to express his man-making, strength giving and ennobling spiritual ideas. English, spoken in four continents in his days and spreading its tentacles with the growth of science and trade came in handy for Swamiji. Swami Vivekananda used English to talk about human destiny, Indian culture and civilization and Vedanta. The language acquired a vocabulary and usage it never had earlier. And scholar Vedantins like Swami Gambhirananda and Swami Chinmayananda translated the entire Vedanta – scriptures into English and raised it to a new use, a new correspondence.

The book under review is the PhD thesis. Its author Dr.K.Subrahmaniam is well known as a speaker, educator and author in Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda circles. Trained by the legendary Swami Chidbhanananda, Dr.Subrahmaniam chose for his PhD the theme *Swami Vivekananda the man of letters*. He says he has made two changes in converting his academic thesis into the book form. He has excised the opening chapter on the English language as the Vehicle of its literary tradition. He has added a chapter on Swami Vivekananda's poetry to the book form.

Beginning with a useful eight page abstract, the book has 8 chapters 1. Swami Vivekananda's place in English 2. Swami

Vivekananda the poet 3. His sociological outpourings 4. Swami Vivekananda on Religion and philosophy 5. His letters and pen pictures 6. His art of Narration 7. His rhetoric and style 8. Swami Vivekananda's literary output.

A separate set of eight volumes, each containing one chapter of this book has been published.

It was Sister Nivedita who first declared the immortal nature of Swami Vivekananda's prose in her forward to the complete works of Swamiji.

The second chapter describes the melody, music and drum beat of Swami Vivekananda's poetic words-expressions of a man of feelings, fine, spiritual, poetic and most beloved-of the people, talking of themes in which he passionately believed-His Nation, His Dharma, His teacher and His people.

Swamiji's social thoughts called forth his people to give up untouchability, to be self-confident, to become self-reliant, to grow fearless and to stand upright morally. Here the teacher in him stands out inspiring cajoling, inviting his listeners to come forward. Swamiji's Ramnad lecture in which he describes the sleeping leviathan rising up, a speech which perhaps compelled Romain Rolland to compare Swamiji with Jesus calling to life the dead Lazarus, shows from what depths of feelings, Swamiji has to pour out his words, to rouse a half-dead people.

The chapter on the Religious and philosophical writings of Swamiji shows how he broke complex and difficult-to-understand-

ideas into simpler concepts, the foreigners and even the common people can understand. At the same time he also lifted the English language to a spiritual height the language was never capable of, earlier.

There are readers who are partial to Swamiji Vivekananda's letters because they are written from the calmness of the writing desk, they are addressed to the particular problems of a specific person and they always go with a personal touch. The letters are a class by themselves and are discussed in the next chapter.

Swami Vivekananda's narrative art, always engaging his listeners, never letting the audience go away, is full of tales, anecdotes drawn from his bottomless fund of pauranic knowledge and his observation of the world around him is studied next.

Next is line of study are Swami Vivekananda's rhetoric and style, their simplicity directness, clarity, loftiness, beauty and majesty.

Drawing his literary profile as messianic, the book pays tributes to the excellence of the Master.

Swamiji was a man in a hurry. Not for him the luxuries of searching for words to enshrine his ideas. His art, his grace, his style, his rhetoric the repetitiveness all served but one purpose, to rouse his countrymen to claim their heritage and scatter its message broad cast all our the world. Not for Swamiji the question, is it art for art's sake or art for the sake of the society? Sincerity is the only art. In his bid to stirrup his Gods who were wrongly called 'Men' Swamiji would have used any method that served his purposes. Like Krishna of yore, persuasion, scolding, inspiring, tempting, dehypnotising—Swamiji would have employed a million techniques if they would serve his ONE PURPOSE-MAN-MAKING AND NATION BUILDING.

Beautifully produced, well bound, nicely printed, this book is a true homage both to Swami Vivekananda and Swami Chidbhanandaji who dreamt of researching through his disciples the writings of Swami Vivekananda and Sister Nivedita. Buy the book, read it again and again. Don't lend it to others; make others buy their own copies that are the least we can do to deserve to read and possess this book a product of sincere labour of love.

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