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SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

HIS GURU,

WITH

LETTERS FROM PROMINENT AMERICANS.

THE ALLEGED PROGRESS OF YEDANTISM

IN
THE UNITED STATES.

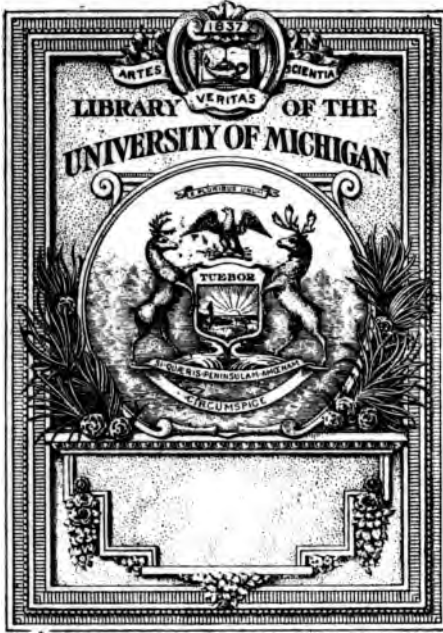
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THE GIFT OF
Dr. James B. Angell

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Smith, W. M. - 1888

Statements by Swami Vivekananda.

“The great Srí Ramakrishna to-day is worshipped literally by thousands in Europe and America, and to-morrow will be worshipped by thousands more.”
Seventeen Lectures, p. 185.

“Before ten years elapse a vast majority of the English people will be Vedántists.”*

“I helped on the tide of Vedánta which is flooding the world.”*

Misery of American Homes.

“In the United States scarcely is there a happy home. There may be some, but the number of unhappy homes and marriages is so large that it passes all description.”†

**Husbands and Children turned out
by American Women.**

“Scarcely could I go to a meeting or a society but I found three-quarters of the women present had turned out their husbands and children. It is so here, there, and everywhere.”†

* Swami Vivekananda interviewed by a representative of the *Madras Mail*, Feb. 1, 1897.

† Lecture in England printed in the *Brahmavádin*, Vol. II, p. 251.

Vivekānanda, swāmi.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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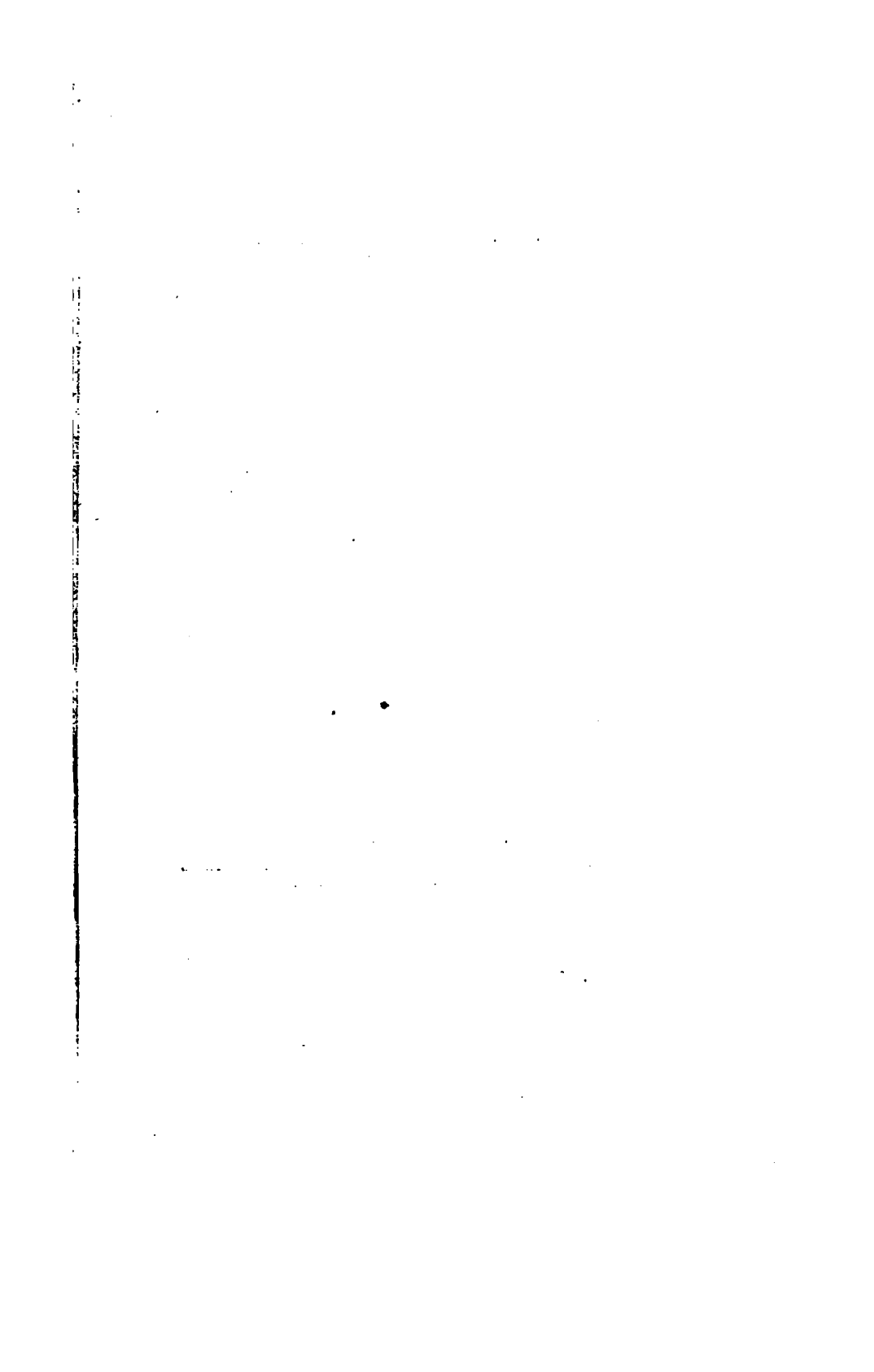
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**"The Vedanta, the highest conclusion of Indian thought, is based on a mistaken and pessimistic view of life; on a formulated dogma unsupported by any evidence and untaught in the hymns of the Rig-Veda; the whole an elaborate and subtle process of false reasoning."**—Rev. T. M. Slater, *Studies in the Upanishads*, p. 47.

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# SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

AND

## HIS GURU.

### INTRODUCTION.

**The Swami's reception in India.**—No Hindu, for many years, has received such an ovation from his countrymen as Swami Vivekananda. During his journey from Colombo to Almora, he was generally addressed in terms of highest respect; as "Revered Sir," "Your Holiness," &c. At Madras and Calcutta, the horses of his carriage were taken out, and it was drawn by students.\* At Madras, "in most places the offerings were in the right Hindu style, the presentation of fruits and cocoanuts—something in the nature of offering to a god in the temple."† At a Colombo temple, the Swami was received with shouts of "*Jai, Maha Dev*," literally, 'Victory, great god.'‡ Miss Müller, in the Prefatory Note to his Lectures, might well say :

"His progress through Ceylon to Southern India, through Southern India to Madras, and thence to Calcutta and Almora, was marked by all those signs of veneration, reverence and devoted love which Indian people are wont to show to those whom they look upon as Divine Messengers."

This fervid enthusiasm was awakened on account of the Swami's supposed triumphant success in America and Europe. Had he not, at the Chicago Parliament of Religions, the grandest arena in the world, demonstrated the superiority of Hinduism over Christianity? which, the Swami declares, "with all its boasted civilization, is a collection of little bits from the Indian mind—the very patchy imitation."§

---

\* This did not commend itself to the Calcutta *Indian Nation*. "Carriage-pulling is a prank that Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjea has possibly taught our boys, and they might well reserve it for him and others such as he." The young gentlemen are recommended rather to show respect to their parents and elders—an advice supposed to be needed. Feb. 22, 1897.

† *The Hindu*, Feb. 6th, 1897.

‡ *Colombo to Almora, Seventeen Lectures*, p. 19.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 192. References not given in full are to the same volume.

**His Glowing Descriptions of India and its Institutions.**—The enthusiasm was kept alive, or even heightened, by the way in which India was exalted to the very pinnacle of religious greatness. The following are some quotations :—

“India is the *Punya Bhumi*” (the land of religious merit), “the land of spirituality.” Lectures, p. 6.

“Our sacred motherland is a land of religion and philosophy—the birthplace of spiritual giants—the land of renunciation, where and where alone, from the most ancient to the most modern times, there has been the highest ideal of life open to man.” p. 48.

“This is the land from whence, like tidal waves, spirituality and philosophy have again and again marched 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.” p. 203.

“The eyes of the whole world are now turned towards this land of India for spiritual food, and India has to work for all the races. Here alone is the best ideal for mankind, and western scholars are now struggling to understand this ideal which is enshrined in our Sanskrit Literature and Philosophy, and which has been the characteristic of India all through the ages.” p. 47.

“We Hindus have now been placed, under God’s Providence, in a very critical and responsible position. The nations of the West are coming to us for spiritual help.” p. 50.

The Swami had a good word for caste, and other Indian institutions :

“Have not one word of condemnation, even for the most superstitious and the most irrational of its (our thrice holy motherland) institutions, for they all must have served to do us good in the past. Remember always that there is not in the world one other country whose institutions are really better in their aims and objects than the institutions of this land. I have seen castes in almost every country in the world, but nowhere is their plan and purpose as glorious as here.” p. 114.

**His view of India’s Mission and its successful Commencement.**—The Swami says : “India must conquer the world, and nothing less is my ideal.” p. 236.

The “Apostle of India” was urgently needed in Europe and America : his visit was most opportune :

“To-day, when religion in the West is only in the hands of the ignorant, and the knowing ones look down with scorn upon anything belonging to religion, here comes the philosophy of India, the highest religious aspirations of the Indian mind where the grandest philosophical facts have been the practical spirituality of the people.” pp. 12, 13.

The Swami thus describes the progress which has been made in four short years :

Paramahansa Sri Ramakrishna Deva, the Swami's guru, or spiritual teacher,

"To-day is worshipped literally by thousands in Europe and America, and to-morrow will be worshipped by thousands more." p. 185.

"Before ten years elapse a vast majority of the English people will be Vedántic."\*

"I helped on the tide of Vedánta which is flooding the world."\*

Like Cæsar of old, the Swami, according to his own account, may say, "I came, I saw, I conquered." Well might he be greeted at Ramnad by a band playing "See the conquering Hero comes!" p. 55.

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### SWAMI VIVEKANANDA IN AMERICA.

**The Swami at Chicago.**—The Swami's own account of his brilliant success in the West has been quoted. An attempt will now be made to describe his actual work, with its real import. There is a full report of what he said at the "Parliament of Religions"; but the materials afterwards are incomplete, consisting chiefly of scattered notices in the *Brahmavâdin* and the *Prabuddha Bhârata* or *Awakened India* and other journals.

**The Swami at Chicago.**—The principal countries in the world were invited to send representatives to the "Parliament of Religions," to be held at Chicago in connection with the Columbian Exposition of 1893. The Swami was nominated a representative at a meeting held in Calcutta. The Index to the Report of the Parliament thus summarises the part he took :

"Vivekananda, Swami, on platform at opening, 65; response to welcome, 101; declares Brahmanical doctrine of universal toleration and acceptance for their truth of all religions, 102, 242; criticises Christian anxiety for souls in India with indifference to sufferings of famine, 128; address at final session, 170; paper on Hinduism, 968—978; portrait, 973.

**Causes of the Swami's Popularity.**—The *Indian Mirror* says that "the name of Swami Vivekananda was unknown to the public till he made his *début* on the platform of the Parliament

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\* Swami Vivekananda interviewed by a representative of the *Madras Mail*, February 6th, 1897.

of Religions at Chicago." The Swami there suddenly found himself famous. Among a section of the audience, he was probably the most popular member of the Parliament. The *Chicago Daily Interior Ocean* says :—

"Great crowds of people, the most of whom were women, pressed around the doors leading to the hall of Columbus, an hour before the time stated for opening the afternoon session, for it had been announced that Swami Vivekananda, the popular Hindu Monk, who looks so much like McCullough's Othello, was to speak. Ladies, ladies everywhere filled the great auditorium."\*

The *Indian Mirror* says: "In going in and coming out of the building, he was daily beset by hundreds of women who almost fought with each other for a chance to get near him, and shake his hand." Nov. 30, 1894.

What was it that so captivated the ladies? Did they appreciate the "sublime philosophy of the Vedānta" more than the gentlemen? This is not likely to be the solution. The Swami knew their weakness, and skilfully adapted himself to the circumstances. At the Parliament he, doubtless, was attired similarly to subsequent occasions, which are thus described :—

"Swami Vivekananda is coming to Boston in all the glory of his gorgeous orange turban." Another paper says: "His finely poised head is crowned with either a lemon-coloured or a red turban, and his cassock (not the technical name for his garment), belted in at the waist, and falling below the knees, alternates in a bright orange and rich crimson."

The Swami judiciously varied his costume. In an account of an address which he delivered at Brooklyn, it is said "he presented a very picturesque appearance when he stood up to deliver his lecture. He was attired in Oriental garb, consisting of a scarlet robe of soft cloth, which reached below the knee, and bound round the waist with a crimson girdle. On his head was a turban of white silk, which set off to advantage the swarthy complexion of his cleanly shaven face."†

It is admitted that several causes, besides his dress, contributed to the popularity of the Swami in America; as his pleasing address, his Bengali fluency as a speaker, his command of English, his judicious silence on some points, his claiming some important Christian doctrines as Hindu. The main cause, however, was *curiosity*, of which the Americans have such an abundant supply. Any great novelty attracts attention.

\* Quoted in the Madras reprint of the Address, p. 23.

† Quoted in *The Hindu*, March 22, 1895.



Crowds would flock to see a tattooed New Zealander, with stone hatchet in his hand, going through the war dance. The Swami was the first Indian who visited America in the supposed dress of a sannyasi.

**The Swami's Audiences.**—The inhabitants of the United States now number about seventy millions. The vast majority are professing Christians. That America is not losing faith in Christianity is shown by the facts mentioned by Dr. Barrows and by other witnesses whose evidence is given in the letters. On the contrary, it was never making more rapid progress.

There is, however, a small, but noisy, section of a different character, chiefly of foreign extraction. The Census Tables show that they form only about one per cent. of the population. Some of them are thus described by K., an admirer of the Swami, in the *Brahmavádin*, a journal established at Madras by the advice of the Swami for the spread of Vedántism :

“ We Americans are a very receptive nation ; and this is why our country has become the hot-bed of all kinds of religious and irreligious monstrosities that ever sprang from a human brain. There is no theory so absurd, no doctrine so irrational, no claim so extravagant, no fraud so transparent that it cannot find numerous believers and a ready market. This morbid craving for the abnormal, the occult, the sensational, has, at the end of this nineteenth century of the Christian era practically brought about a revival of the middle ages.” Feb. 15th, 1896.

Among the “ queer fish ” of the above description found in the United States, Colonel Olcott, well-known in India, is an example. The single Cock Lane ghost set all London agog ; Colonel Olcott, in his single person, has seen “ five hundred apparitions from the other world.” Spirits are generally supposed to be imponderable. Colonel Olcott has proved, by actual experiment, that this is a vulgar error. Nor is this all. He has shown that spirits have the remarkable power of varying their weights at will. To avoid any error in his investigations on such a delicate point, he obtained one of Howe’s best Standard Platform Scales. The two new important facts discovered by Colonel Olcott are proved by the spirit “ Honto ” weighing successively 88, 58, and 65 lbs. ; while “ Katie Brink ” weighed 77, 59, and 52 lbs.\*

The Colonel seems scarcely aware of the importance of his own discoveries. He says, “ The mighty modern epiphany which was ushered in with a shower of raps . . . is inexplicable

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\* People from the other World, p. 487.

upon any known hypothesis of science." \* It would indeed be inexplicable if spirits had no weight ; but one of 88lbs. could give a tolerably loud rap. Colonel Olcott has explained what was a great mystery. The "Hierophant," under which title he was "chaffed" by the *New York Sun*, claims the acquaintance of fifteen Mahatmas, and gives a list in his *Addresses* of eleven marvels † which he witnessed, adding :

"I have not even half exhausted the catalogue of the proofs that have been vouchsafed to me during the last five years as to the reality of Asiatic psychological science." *Addresses*, pp. 73, 74.

But Colonel Olcott is too wise to believe, with "ignorant men" like Socrates, Sir Isaac Newton, and Lord Kelvin, in a personal God, one conscious of His own existence. In a Catechism which he compiled in Ceylon, where he professed Buddhism, he says :

"A personal god Buddhists regard as only a gigantic shadow thrown upon the void of space by the imaginations of ignorant men." No. 112.

Yet this "psychologised baby" of Madame Blavatsky is still the "guide, philosopher and friend" of some so-called educated Hindus !

Perhaps, from the high pressure of American life and the influx of foreigners, the proportion of men of the Olcott type is higher in the United States than in other countries, but they are found, more or less, everywhere. Dean Farrar says of the present day :

"Every variety of blasphemy and folly has its apostles. Every negation, however audacious and desolating, has its defenders on the platform and press. Every superstition, however grotesque and discredited, has its fanatical partisans and devotees."

K. says of the Swami's audiences :

"In the beginning crowds of people flocked to his lectures. But they were not of the kind that a teacher of religion would be pleased to have for his auditors. They consisted partly of curiosity-seekers who were more interested in the personality of the preacher than in what he had to preach, partly of the representatives of the cranky and fraudulent elements mentioned before, who thought they had found in the Swami a proper tool to forward their interests. Most, if not all, of this latter type tried to induce him to embrace their

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\* *Addresses*, p. 56.

† They are quoted in *The Theosophic Craze*, 8vo., 3 As. Sold by Mr. A. T. Scott.

cause, first by promises of their support, and then by threats of injuring him if he refused to ally himself with them. But they were grievously disappointed.\*

In a lecture on *Máyá*, delivered in London in the autumn of 1896, and reported in the *Brahmavádin*, June 5th, and 19th, 1897, at page 251, the Swami makes the following astounding statement regarding the women present at meetings which he attended :

“*Scarcely could I go to a meeting or a society but I found three-quarters of the women present had turned out their husbands and children. It is so here, there, and everywhere.*”

Further remarks are reserved.

After the Parliament of Religions, the Swami visited several cities in the United States, where, as it appears from notices already quoted, his dress was a great attraction.

**Classes.**—His public addresses at first were well attended, but when curiosity was satisfied his audiences seem to have declined. Thereafter he worked chiefly through more private meetings—classes and societies.

One result of the “Parliament of Religions” was the increased study of the religions of the world. An “American Society of Comparative Religion” has been established. The Chicago University has a lectureship on the subject, and, in course of time, all the great Universities will have a similar department. All this does not indicate a tendency towards Vedántism or any fear of the study affecting the truth of Christianity. Dr. Ellinwood, President of the American Society above mentioned, is a Mission Secretary; the Rev. Dr. Barrows is the “Haskell Lecturer on Comparative Religion in the University of Chicago.” Every educated man should have more or less acquaintance with the principal religions of the world. In the United States several small associations have taken up the subject. The Swami would naturally be supposed to be a high authority on Vedántism, and the opportunity would be gladly embraced of having it explained by a professed adherent. The following are brief notices of the Swami’s doings gleaned from the few sources available.

The *New York Herald*, quoted in the *Brahmavádin*, February 29th, 1896, thus describes his work in that city :

“Last winter his campaign centred in the reception room of a prominent hotel on Fifth Avenue. Having gained for his teachings and himself a certain vogue in society, he now aims to visit the common people, and for that reason is giving a course of free lectures

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\* Letter to the *Brahmavádin*, February 15th, 1896.

on Sunday afternoons at Hardman Hall. When I visited one of the Swami's classes recently, I found present a well-dressed audience of intellectual appearance. Doctors and lawyers, professional men and society ladies were among those in the room. Swami Vivekananda sat in the centre, clad in a ochre colored robe. The Hindu had his audience divided on either side of him, and there were between fifty and a hundred persons present."

"At present while the lectures and classes are popular and the number of pupils daily increases, the Swami has only two proclaimed disciples, both Americans of foreign extraction." (Abridged.)

The *Brahmavádin*, March 14th, 1896, says :—

"His lectures before the Metaphysical Society in Brooklyn and the People's Church in New York were, as usual, well attended and highly appreciated. In February he will lecture before the Metaphysical Society at Hartford, Conn., and the Ethical Society, Brooklyn, where his numerous followers are eagerly anticipating the pleasure of his coming."

"At the close of a second series of lectures in New York, the Swami will accept an urgent invitation extended to him repeatedly by the Harvard University to lecture before the Graduate Philosophical Club, which is the leading philosophical organization at Harvard."

The *New York Herald*, quoted in the *Brahmavádin*, March 28th, 1896, mentions that the Swami was invited by Dr. Wright to lecture before the Dixon Society of New York.

A letter in the *Brahmavádin*, April 25th, 1896, states that on the 20th February several young men and women took the *Diksha* (initiation).

Of all places in the United States, the Swami seems to have met with the warmest reception at Harvard University, noted for its "liberal theology." It is situated in Cambridge, a suburb of Boston, where Mrs. Ole Bull, apparently a wealthy lady, was his frequent hostess. *The Boston Transcript*, quoted in the *Brahmavádin*, May 9th, 1896, gives the following account of the Swami's work not long before he left for England :

"The Swami Vivekananda has, during the past few days, conducted a most successful work in connection with the Procopeia. During this time he has given four class lectures for the Club itself, with constant audiences of between four or five hundred people, at the Allen Gymnasium, 44, St. Botolph Street; two at the house of Mrs. Ole Bull in Cambridge, and one before the professors and graduate students of the Philosophical department of Harvard University."

Before leaving America, the Swami received an address, signed by seven gentlemen and three ladies. The following is the first paragraph :

“ As members of the Cambridge Conferences devoted to comparative study in Ethics, Philosophy, and Religion, it gives us great pleasure to recognize the value of your able expositions of the Philosophy and Religion of Vedánta in America, and the interest created thereby among thinking people. We believe such expositions as have been given by yourself and your co-labourer, the Swami Sâradânanda, have more than a mere speculative interest and utility,—that they are of great ethical value in cementing the ties of friendship and brotherhood between distant peoples, and in helping us to realize that solidarity of human relationships and interests which has been affirmed by all the great religions of the world.”\*

The Brooklyn Ethical Association sent a letter addressed to “ Our Indian Brethren of the great Aryan Family.”

After an expression of fraternal regard, the letter thus states the benefit derived from the Swami’s addresses :

“ We wish also to testify to our high appreciation of the value of the work of the Swami Vivekananda in this country. His lectures before the Brooklyn Ethical Association opened up a new world of thought to many of his hearers, and renewed the interest of others in the comparative study of religions and philosophic systems, which gives breadth to the mind, and an uplifted stimulus to the moral nature.”

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## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA IN ENGLAND.

The Swami left America for England on the 15th April, 1896. The details regarding his movements in that country are very scanty. A cutting from *The Daily Graphic*, without date, gives the earliest account of him available :

“ He has now a considerable following in London. It would not be too much to say that his weekly audience here numbers in the aggregate 500, and on the strength of his preaching a room in Victoria Street has just been engaged permanently for meetings of those people interested in the Swami’s message, while the nucleus of a lending library finds a place along the walls.”

“ The Swami’s audiences are motley ; they include persons of title and fashionable ladies with pretensions to culture, and others, half-educated, to whom the oracular is always irresistible ; the men

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\* *Awakened India*, March, 1897.

of the kind always found in such an environment, and others of both sexes, whose earnestness in the pursuit of will-o-the-wisp Truth, it would be discourteous to question. The Swami lectures in an upper chamber—literally, for it is six storeys high, but there is a lift. He is a stalwart, good-humoured looking man, with long black hair and clean shaven face, with nothing of the ascetic about him."

In England the Swami seems to have resided chiefly with E. T. Sturdy, Esq., who also sometimes presided at his meetings. Mr. Sturdy is chiefly known by his translation of the *Nārada Sūtra*, made with the aid of the Swami. He evidently agrees with the Swami that Christianity is a "collection of little bits from the Indian mind—the very patchy imitation." He has the audacity to make the following statement :

"It is far more probable that the Indian doctrine of love found its way to Judea, perhaps through Buddhist priests who wandered far and wide in the reign of the Buddhist Emperor Asoka, and by his direction to Judea, Alexandria, etc., for details as to which the Asoka inscriptions can be studied." p. 2.

The Rev. Dr. K. S. Macdonald thus notices this assertion :

"Mr. Sturdy either read the inscriptions and wrote about them what he knew was false, for the most superficial reading of the inscriptions will inform the readers that there are no details, and no mention of Judea or Alexandria; or in ignorance of the contents of the inscriptions, he was quite ready to say as much of that of which he had no knowledge, presuming that his readers would be equally ignorant."\*

To use an Americanism which the Swami picked up, we can thus "size" Mr. Sturdy.

The *London Daily Chronicle*, June 10th, 1896, states that the Swami's lectures may be heard at 63, St. George's Road, † on Tuesday and Thursday, at half-past eleven A.M., and at half-past 8 P.M., up to the end of July. It is also announced that the Swami will lecture in one of the rooms of the Royal Institution of Water Colours, 191, Piccadilly, at half-past three P.M., on Sundays.

A "Disciple," dating from 63, St. George's Road, † in a letter to the *Brahmavādin*, dated June 23rd, 1896, says :

"These classes and Sunday lectures do not by any means cover the work the Swami is doing. He addressed a large meeting at the house of Mrs. Biddulph Martin a few days ago, in addition to another at Notting Hill Gate, at the resi-

\* *Indian Evangelical Review*, January 1897, p. 370.

† Apparently the residence of Mr. Sturdy.



dence of Mr. Hunt. He also spoke at a large meeting at Wimbledon."

Miss Müller, who made a noble stand on behalf of purity at the Madras National Congress, invited residents in Wimbledon, near London, to her house to hear an address from the Swami on the "Philosophy of the Vedas." "Some 30 or 40, nearly all ladies, gathered." Mr. J. F. Schwann presided. "His own knowledge of the subject which was to be dealt with," he said, "was exceedingly vague, and he expected it was the same with a great many of them." \*

The *Brahmavádin*, January 16, 1897, contains a notice of the Swami's departure from London :

"At a large meeting of the Swami Vivekananda's friends and sympathisers held at the galleries of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours, Piccadilly, London, on December 13th, 1896, the Chairman, E. T. Sturdy, Esq., was requested to present an address to the Swami on the motion of H. B. M. Buchanan, Esq., B.A., (Cantab.), seconded by Mrs. G. C. Ashton Johnson, and unanimously supported."

The Swami left England by the steamer "Prince Regent Leopold," and reached Colombo, January 15th, 1897.

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## THE SWAMI'S GURU.

### BHAGAVAN SRI PARAMAHANSA RAMAKRISHNA DEVA.

**Titles.**—The history of the Swami and his associates may be fitly preceded by an account of his illustrious Guru. But his long array of titles should first be explained.

*Bhagavan* is an epithet of gods, demigods, and other holy personages. *Srí* is a prefix to the names of deities, revered persons, and books; as *Srí Vishnu*. The term *Paramahansa* is thus explained in *Hindu Castes and Sects*, by J. N. Bhattacharya, M.A., President of the College of Pandits, Nadiya:

"After a period of probation which properly ought to extend to twelve years, the Sannyasi becomes qualified to be *Parama Hansa*. The word *Hansa* ordinarily means a 'goose.' But it is also one of the names of *Vishnu*, and the expression '*Parama Hansa*' evidently means the '*Supreme Vishnu*.' The *Parama Hansa* is a self-worshipper. He has only to repeat constantly the mystic syllable *Om*. He is required also to assert, every now and then, his identity with the Divine Spirit, *Soham*, 'I am He.'" p. 385.

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\* *Brahmavádin*, Oct. 24, 1896.

*Deva*, allied to *theos* and *deus*, God, is like the *divus* of the Roman Emperors, who were deified after death. According to the Swami, the latest accession to the already well-stocked Hindu Pantheon must at once have taken his place among the *dii majores* (the greater gods), if not as Rama Krishna *optimus maximus* (best and greatest). When the Swami wished to invoke a blessing on his country and the whole human race, it was to his late Guru, now deified, he appealed :

“ May He, the same Ramakrishna Paramahansa, for the good of our nation, for the welfare of our country, and for the good of humanity, open your hearts, make you true and steady to work for the immense change which must come, whether we work or not.” *Lectures*, p. 235.

India, according to the Swami, is “ the birthplace of spiritual giants,” and the race is not extinct. One who towered above the rest lived within our own time. Max Müller vainly attempted to describe him under the title of *A Real Mahátman* (Great Soul). He can only be compared to Krishna when he appeared in his Divine form to Arjuna, “ as if the lustre of a thousand suns were to burst forth at once in the sky.”\* The Swami says that his Guru “ was so great that I or any one of his disciples, if we spent hundreds of lives could not do justice to a millionth part of what he really was.” p. 235.

The halo that encircles the head of the Swami is only a dim reflection from that of his Divine Master. It is said that “ giants breed giants.” Although the Swami speaks with characteristic humility, it may be that he conceives himself to belong to the same family.

**Sources of Sketch.**—The following notice of the life of Ramakrishna is chiefly based on a series of articles that appeared in the *Prabuddha Bhárata*, or *Awakened India*, a Madras journal for junior students of the Vedánta, established with the support of the Swami. The journal says : “ The details of Ramakrishna’s life are mostly from a biography of his in Bengali, by Ramachandra Datta, B.A., one of his most devoted *grihasta* (domestic) disciples.” It is published by S. C. Mitra, 2, Nayan Chund Datta’s Lane, Calcutta.

Some facts have also been gleaned from the article of Professor Max Müller, in the *Nineteenth Century*, August, 1896, and from *A Modern Hindu Saint*, by C. H. Tawney, formerly

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\* With the bathos that sometimes mingles with Hindu attempts at sublimity, it is said that, amid this glorious appearance of Krishna, “ rulers of the land” were to be seen “ sticking between his teeth with their heads smashed !”





Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, reprinted by S. C. Mitra.

**Early Life.**—Ramakrishna was born at the village of Sripoor Kamespoor, in the Hugly District, in the year 1834. He was the last of three sons, and was known in his childhood as Godádhar, or familiarly *Gadai*, signifying Vishnu. "As a boy, Ramakrishna was somewhat lean, and fair in complexion, spoke sweetly and was liked by every one."

To magnify his Guru, the Swami asserted that "he was without any book-learning whatsoever, with his great intellect never could he write his own name." (p. 184). This is not quite correct. "Ramakrishna's school education was of the poorest kind. A copy of the *Râmâyan* which he made with his own hand, and which is still preserved, showing how little he learned at school. He was sent to a *pâtásála* (school) where Vedic mantras and hymns were taught, but even there he did not learn anything. He had, however, a good memory, and accumulated a rich store of *Kirthanás* (songs of praise) lyrics and stories. He sang well and with a sweet voice.

"When a boy he enacted the religious stories he had eagerly learnt. Thus he would take his companions to a lonely field, dress himself as Krishna and play the immortal sports of Krishna with the milkmaids. At other times he would make idols and worship them.

"When he was 15 years old, he was married. The last school he attended was a free school under the direction of his eldest brother. From thence he passed on in the year 1852 to the temple of Dhakshineswar, along with his brother, who was appointed the presiding pundit of the place by Ráni Ráshmani Dási, who established the idols of Káli and Rádhá Krishna in the temple. When the idols were consecrated, Ráma Krishna fasted the whole day, and in the evening bought in the bazaars a pice worth of fried rice and ate it."

Dakshineswar is situated six miles north of Calcutta, the garden of the temple being on the eastern bank of the Hugly. At the temple Ráma Krishna was first employed in dressing and adorning the idols; then in the *púja* of Rádhá Krishna;† and on his brother's death, Ráshmani Dási appointed him for the *púja* of Káli. Ramakrishna worshipped with extraordinary *bhakti*, decorating the idol with sweet-smelling flowers, or thrown vilva and jaba leaves at its feet, or singing the songs

\* *Awakened India*, vol. I, p. 79.

† Rádhá was the wife of the cowherd Ayana-ghosha, whom Krishna took as a mistress, and with whom he is usually associated.

of the worshippers of the Maternal Divine Energy. He devoted all his time to the worship and contemplation of Kálí.

**Ascetic Exercises.**—Thorough-going selflessness was his ideal, and to reach this he cried every day to Kálí, ‘Mother, destroy my *aham* (self) and take your place there. I am the meanest of the mean, the poorest of the poor. May this idea become present in my mind. May I constantly feel that every being on earth, be he a Brahman or a Chandála, or even a beast or worm or an insect is superior to me.’ People thought him mad or possessed, but he heeded not their gibes, the none less uttering ‘Ma,’ ‘Ma,’ Mother, Mother, and whatever he proposed to do, he first brought to Mother’s notice. Sometimes he threw himself on the banks of the Ganges, and cried aloud ‘Ma,’ ‘Ma,’ in such a pathetic tone that people attracted by it, guessed he was suffering from some incurable disease or was mad, and blessed him or prayed for him. He replied to no questions, while in this state.

The above conduct was perhaps an imitation of Chaitanya, now celebrated as ‘Lord Gourang,’\* which is thus described by the late Rev. Lal Behari Day :

“Immediately before commencing the great work of preaching ‘the love of Krishna’ as he termed it, he fell into an enthusiastic fit of devotion. The intensity of his feelings sought expression in the movements of his body. He fell on the ground, rolled on the dust, wept, laughed, and danced. During this *Prem Pralap*, or fit of love, which lasted for hours, he neither ate nor drank. When it was day he would ask what part of the night it was, and when it was night he would ask what part of the day it was ; while ever and anon he uttered the words ‘ Krishna, Krishna! Haribol, Hari Bol,’ (say Hari, *i.e.*, Vishnu).”

The chief difference between the two is that Chaitanya called on Krishna ; Ramakrishna, on Kálí.

**Kali.**—It is curious that Ramakrishna should have selected for his “mother” the most blood-thirsty deity of the Hindu pantheon. She is frequently represented as a black woman, with four arms. In one hand she has a weapon, in another the head of the giant she has slain ; with the two others she is encouraging her worshippers. For earrings she has two dead bodies ; she wears a necklace of skulls ; her only clothing is a girdle made of dead men’s hands. After her victory over the giant, she danced so furiously that the earth trembled beneath her weight. At the request of the gods, Siva asked her to stop ; but, as owing to her excitement, she did not notice him,

\* See *The Hindu*, Sept. 4th, 1897.



"THE BLESSED MOTHER."

he lay down among the slain. She continued dancing till she caught sight of her husband under her feet; upon which, in Hindu fashion, she thrust out her tongue to express surprise and regret.

Such is the popular idea. Babu J. N. Bhattacharya says in his *Hindu Castes and Sects*, "What its real meaning is cannot possibly be explained here. Those inclined to dive into such filth must study the ritual for Káli worship." p. 408. Káli, it may be added, was the protectress of that noble fraternity the Thugs, and the divinity who especially delighted in human sacrifices.

Professor Max Müller says "Nothing, I believe, is so hideous as the popular worship of Káli in India." He thinks, however, that Ramakrishna had completely purged his mind "from all that is repulsive in her character;" to him it was "as it were non-existent, and there remained nothing but the motherhood of the goddess."

**Crowning Proof of Sanctity.**—Swami Vivekananda thus describes the crowning act of Ramakrishna, showing his unparalleled sanctity. Probably the Indian *Acta Sanctorum* (acts of the saints) might be ransacked in vain for a similar instance :

“ A Brahman of Brahmans he wanted to cleanse the house of a Pariah, and of course the Pariah would not allow him ; how could he ? That this Brahman Sannyásin should come and cleanse his house ! And this man woke up in the dead of night, entered surreptitiously the house of this Pariah, cleansed his W. C., and with his long hair wiped the place, and that he did, day after day, in order that he might make himself the servant of all.” pp. 125, 126.

The gauntlet is thus thrown down to Madras reformers, with the Editor of the *Indian Social Reformer*, at their head :

“ Let any one of our reformers bring out that life, ready to cleanse the W. C. of a Pariah, and wipe it with his hair, and then I sit at his feet and learn, and not before that. One ounce of practice is worth twenty-thousand tons of big talk.” p. 126.

The Swami said of his Guru, “ I bear the feet of that man on my head ; he is my hero ; that hero’s life I will try to imitate.” (p. 126). It may be asked has he done *once* what Ramakrishna, according to the Swami’s account, did “ day after day ?” If not, it is but “ big talk.”

The Swami said in his Calcutta address, “ We Bengalees have been credited with imagination, and I believe it.” (p. 237.) We also believe it.

The above event has apparently been embellished by the imagination of the Swami. The narrative of Ramakrishna’s life in *Awakened India*, gives it simply as a report. “ To practically realise that every one was superior to him he went and cleaned, it is said, the W. C. of a Pariah.” April, 1897.

Monier Williams complains of the “ disregard of all delicacy in laying bare the most revolting particulars of certain ancient legends which now and then disfigure the Indian Epics.”\* A similar remark applies to the Swami with regard to this supposed incident.

**Ramakrishna and Keshub Chunder Sen.**—Babu P. C. Mozumdar, in his *Life of Keshub Chunder Sen*, thus refers to the former :—

“ Some time in the year 1876, in a suburban garden at Belgharia, a singular incident took place. There came one morning in a

\* *Epic Poetry*, p. 44.

rickety ticca gari (hired carriage) a disorderly looking young man, insufficiently clad,\* and with manners less than insufficient. He was introduced as Ramakrishna, the Paramhansa (great devotee) of Dakshineswar. His appearance was so unpretending and simple, and he spoke so little at his introduction, that we did not take much notice of him at first. But soon he began to discourse in a sort of half delirious state, becoming now and then quite unconscious. What he said, however, was so profound and beautiful that we soon perceived he was no ordinary man. The acquaintance of this devotee, which soon matured into intimate friendship, had a powerful effect upon Keshub's catholic mind. The very first thing observable in the Paramhansa was the intense tenderness with which he cherished the conception of God as Mother. To him the female principle in the Hindu idea of Godhead, *Shakti*, the incarnation of force, popularly called Káli, was the Mother Supreme... Keshub's own trials and sorrows about the time of the Cuch Bihar marriage had spontaneously suggested to him the necessity of regarding God as Mother. And now the sympathy, friendship, and example of the Paramhansa converted the Motherhood of God into a subject of special culture with him." pp. 357-359.

The influence of Ramakrishna led to some of the worst vagaries of Keshub Chunder Sen. As "the supreme mother's apostle," he issued a proclamation that she was "Mother of India." In her honour he instituted a dance in his place of worship, which is thus described in his organ :

"The shout and the gallop and the joyous whirl round and round went on, and it was quite a blessed sight to see so many boys and youths and men of mature years all dancing around their invisible mother in the centre."†

Max Müller has given the most charitable explanation of such proceedings on the part of Keshub Chunder Sen :

"His utterances of late have shown signs, I am sorry to say, of an overwrought brain and an over-sensitive heart. He sometimes seems to me on the verge of the very madness of faith."‡

Barth says of some of the practices enjoined by Hinduism : "Conscientiously observed, they can only result in folly and idiocy."§ Max Müller says of Ramakrishna, "It seems

\* Ascetics aiming at a pre-eminent degree of sanctity would desire to be "sky-clad;" only police regulations do not permit it in cities. In his portrait, Ramakrishna is represented with a loin-cloth, and a strip of cloth hanging down from his shoulder.

† *The New Dispensation*, Sept. 10, 1882. Quoted by Miss Collett.

‡ *Biographical Essays*, p. 92.

§ *Religions of India*, p. 53.

from the very first to have practised that very severe kind of asceticism (*yoga*) which is intended to produce trances (*samádhi*) and ecstatic utterances. We cannot understand them, but in the case of our Mahátman we cannot doubt their reality, and can only stand by and wonder, particularly when so much that seems to us the outcome of a broken frame of body and overwrought state of mind, contains nevertheless much that is true and wise and beautiful." (pp. 316, 317.)

Max Müller acknowledges that perhaps he himself should be placed among the number of those who exhibit solitary fragments of pure gold without the refuse from which they had to extract them. Some may think that it is a parallel case with "*The Real Mahátman*"—the swan may be only a goose.

It is true that there are some beautiful sayings attributed to Ramakrishna. The question is, how far are they original? This is admitted in some cases :

"The light of the gas-lamps illumines various localities with varying extensity, but the life of the light, namely, the gas, comes from one common reservoir. So the religious teachers of all climes and ages are but so many lamp-posts through which is emitted the light of the spirit flowing constantly from one Almighty source."\*

"The locomotive engine reaches the destination itself, and carries a long train of waggons also. So are the Saviours. They carry multitudes of men heavily laden with sin to the presence of the Almighty.†

It is possible to cull from Indian literature quite a thesaurus of beautiful sayings. Although Ramakrishna was no student, we are told that he had a good memory, in which he laid up a large number of songs and stories. His figures are generally the stock ones, used *ad nauseam* in Hindu writings. A large number of them might easily be traced. One is a variation of the common saying, "As there are several roads to the same city, so all religions lead to God." Max Müller quotes the rendering of Ramakrishna :

"11. As one can ascend to the top of a house by means of a ladder, or a bamboo, or a staircase, or a rope, so divers are the ways and means to approach God, and every religion in the world shows one of these ways."

Ramakrishna's argument amounts to this, "As there are several ways of getting to the top of a house, so the most contradictory statements are all true." The logic of this is worthless.

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\* *Brahmavádin*, vol. I, p. 14.

† *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 174.

The Swami was merely repeating at Chicago what he learnt from his Guru when he said, "WE ACCEPT ALL RELIGIONS TO BE TRUE." This will be noticed under another head.

**Departure of Ramakrishna.**—His place of "departure" was a garden house in Kashipur, two miles north of Calcutta. He died on the 16th August, 1886, and was cremated in the Baranagore burning-ghat. A vilva or bel tree now marks the spot.\* His ashes were interred in the garden of the temple of Kakurgachee, about a mile east of the Manicktolla Bridge, Calcutta.

**The Worshippers of Sri Ramakrishna Deva.**—That the illustrious Guru should be worshipped by his followers, or even by Hindus generally, is nothing strange. Monier Williams says that the Hindu will worship anything :

"There is not an object in heaven or earth which a Hindu is not prepared to worship—sun, moon, and stars; rocks, stocks, and stones; trees, shrubs, and grass; sea, pools, and rivers; his own implements of trade; the animals he finds most useful, the noxious reptiles he fears, men remarkable for any extraordinary qualities—for great valour, sanctity, virtue or even vice; good and evil demons, ghosts, and goblins, the spirits of departed ancestors; an infinite number of semi-human and semi-divine existences, inhabitants of the seven upper and the seven lower worlds—each and all come in for a share of divine honours or a tribute of more or less adoration."†

Flint says in his *Anti-theistic Theories* :

"The union of pantheism with polytheism does not correct but stimulate the extravagances of the latter. Pantheism, instead of elevating and purifying Hindu polytheism, has contributed to increase the number, the absurdity, and the foulness of its superstitions." p. 391.

But the Swami contends that the worship of his Guru is not confined to Hindus. He asserts that he "to-day is worshipped literally by thousands in Europe and America, and to-morrow will be worshipped by thousands more." *Lectures*, p. 185. "Within ten years of his passing away, this power has encircled the globe." p. 235.

The worship of "Bhagavan Ramakrishna" is claimed to have the approval of Max Müller. The Swami wrote a long letter to the *Brahmavadin* about a visit which he paid to the Professor

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\* *A Modern Hindu Saint, and The Nineteenth Century.*

† *Brahmanism and Hinduism*, p. 350.

at Oxford. The principal references to the Guru are given below :

“ What an extraordinary man is Professor Max Müller . . . . He was first induced to inquire about the power behind, which led to sudden and momentous changes in the life of the late Keshava Chandra Sen; and since then he has been an earnest student and admirer of the life and teaching of Sri Ramakrishna. ‘ Ramakrishna is worshipped by thousands to-day, Professor,’ I said. ‘ To whom else shall worship be accorded if not to such ?’ was the answer.

“ Max Müller is a Vedántist of the Vedántists.”\*

The “ Replies ” from about forty prominent men in the United States disprove the statement about the worship of the Guru in America, and it is still more absurd, with reference to England.

**The Swami's Guru incapable of teaching the Vedanta to his disciples.**—No man can claim to have a thorough knowledge of the Vedánta unless he has studied the Upanishads, the different systems of Hindu philosophy, and especially the Vedánta-Sútras, with the commentaries of Sankara, Rámanuja, and other writers. Of all these, so far as we can judge, the Guru was profoundly ignorant. What the Guru did not possess himself, he could not impart to the Swami, nor to his other disciples who have also set up as teachers of Vedánta.

**The Guru's knowledge of Sanskrit how acquired.**—It was thus described to Dr. Barrows :

“ The learned Oxford Professor told me that he asked Vivekananda if Ram Krishna knew Sanskrit. The answer was at first evasive, but finally he said, ‘ When Ram Krishna was in the jungle an ascetic, a beautiful woman, came down from heaven and taught him the language.’ Max Müller's very natural reply was ‘ Nonsense ! The only way to learn Sanskrit is to get a grammar and a dictionary and go to work.’ ”†

**Estimates of the Guru.**—The Swami admits that his Guru was “ without any book learning whatsoever,” although he was incorrect in saying that “ with his great intellect never could he write his own name.” (p. 184.) Max Müller confesses that his “ Real Mahátman ” was a man of unsound mind ; and the specimen given of his reasoning shows that his logic was also unsound. Like Hindus generally, he accepted illustration as argument. To magnify his Guru, and, indirectly, to magnify himself, the Swami, as already quoted, says that

\* *Brahmavádin*, July 4, 1896. It is desirable to have the Professor's account of the interview.

† Quoted in *The Interpreter*, Sept. 1897.



his "character was so great that I, or any one of his disciples, if we spent hundreds of lives could not do justice to a millionth part of what he really was." (p. 235.) "Quisquis," a correspondent of the *Indian Daily News*, says of some of the assertions of the Swami that "he spoke à la Baron Munchausen." The Swami's imagination seems as vivid as that of the far-famed veracious chronicler of his own exploits.

In plain language, "Bhagavan Sri Paramahansa Ramakrishna Deva," the latest addition to the Hindu Pantheon, was a half-crazy ascetic, unlearned, but with some poetic talent and personal magnetic influence.

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### SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S PRETENSIONS TO BE A SANNYASI.

Before considering the Swami's qualifications as a teacher of Vedānta, it may be well to take up a simpler question.

**India, the land of Beggars.**—India has been called the "Land of Charity." It may be called, with equal truth, the "Land of Beggars." In no other country in the world is begging so respectable. The Brahmans, by precept and example, have made it an honourable profession. Manu says of the Brahman, "Let him ever subsist by alms" (x. 188). He may live even by "truth and lying," or trading; but "service is termed dog's livelihood, therefore one should avoid that" (iv. 6). People are stimulated to give by promises of great rewards in another world. A cow secures heaven; rice, land, silver, gold, &c., have their respective rewards. On the other hand, to deny gifts to Brahmans is sinful and dangerous. Now-a-days, however, Brahmans prefer "dog's livelihood" to begging. The best paid offices are usually held by them.

Although the highest rewards are supposed to be received from gifts to Brahmans, charity is not confined to them. Almsgiving is taught as a daily religious duty. "Give alms, then eat." Many poor women, before cooking, will lay aside a handful of rice to be given in charity.

The love of laziness is natural to human beings. They are unwilling to work if they can get others to labour for them. Taking advantage of the charitable disposition of the Hindus, there are lakhs of men who have chosen to subsist by begging from door to door. This is done as a hereditary profession, and not as a necessity forced upon them by misfortune. While

these men think it no disgrace to beg, they consider it a dishonour and a great hardship to do honest work.

Besides the professional beggars, there are lakhs of able-bodied men who wander about, in the name of religion, from shrine to shrine. To feed them is supposed to be a special work of merit.

*The General Report on the Census of India, 1891, says :*

“The army of mendicants, which, as before remarked, must be taken with the class demanding alms as a religious obligation on the part of the giver, based on the sectarian or ascetic character of the applicant. Taken in this way, the mendicant band amounts to about five and a quarter millions of persons.” p. 111.

It is not strange that now and then Indian graduates should be induced to join this “noble army of martyrs.” The market value of a second class B. A., as a teacher in Calcutta, is not high. Ramakrishna’s temple, as already mentioned, is pleasantly situated in a garden on the banks of the Hugly, shaded by a large banyan tree. Instead of the drudgery of teaching, the Babu might at Dakshineswar enjoy *otium cum dignitate* (ease and dignity), pleasantly diversified by occasional outings. Judging from the number who adopt it, the wandering mendicant life seems to have a kind of fascination to the people of India. “Scrape a graduate,” and underneath you will find a Hindu. “Collegiate impressions” says Cotton, “are at present like a tinselled outdoor decoration, discarded by their professor as a superfluity in private.”\*

**Sannyasiship discouraged by Manu.**—He who is styled by the Swami “the great and peerless legislator, the divine Manu,” (p. 64), wisely sought to restrict this tendency to a life of mendicancy, and gave the preference to that of a householder.

“Since men of the three other orders are each day nourished by them, a housekeeper is for this reason of the most eminent order.” III. 78.

According to Manu, none should become a sannyasi till he has passed through the three antecedent stages of unmarried student, married householder, and hermit. Babu J. N. Bhattacharya says :

“It was not consistent with the policy of our holy lawgivers to declare that there was no merit whatever in the life of an ascetic.

\* *New India*, p. 147.

They knew too well how to maintain the dignity of the holy orders, to expose even the impostors to infamy. So, instead of discrediting asceticism, they actually recommended it, though at a period of life when it can have no attraction even to the most adventurous spirits. Manu says :

1. When the father of a family perceives his muscles become flaccid and his hair grey, and sees the child of his child, let him then seek refuge in a forest.

2. Abandoning all food eaten in towns and all his household utensils, let him repair to the lonely wood.

16. Let him not eat the produce of ploughed land though abandoned by any man, nor fruits and roots produced in a town, even though hunger oppresses him.

29. For the purpose of uniting his soul with the divine spirit, let him study the various Upanishads.

33. Having thus performed religious acts in a forest during the third portion of life, let him become a *Sannyasi*, for the fourth portion of it, abandoning all sensual affections." Book VI.\*

But the mendicant instinct was too strong to be curbed. The law was broken from very early times.

**The Swami's twofold breach of the laws of Manu.**—It is true that many disregard the laws of the venerable Rishi; but considering the high estimate in which he is held by the Swami, better things might reasonably be expected from him. The Swami became a full-fledged Sannyasi while yet quite a young man, without a previous stage of incubation—Babu Norendra Nath Dutt merging into Swami Vivekananda (bliss discrimination). Several other companions of similar ages underwent a like transformation.

It may be urged that it was only his enthusiastic desire for sanctity which impelled the young sannyasi to transgress the law of the "Divine Manu." Let us examine if this agrees with recorded facts.

A *Sannyasi* denotes "an abandoner of all worldly concerns. He is supposed to have renounced all family ties and live a life of asceticism, self-denial, and austerity." Manu would restrict his diet to wild fruits and roots. How far did the Swami exhibit the characteristics of a Sannyasi in America?

Sannyasis are supposed to wear a mean dress, with unkempt hair. The quotations given (p. iv.) show that, certainly at times, the Swami was decked in "gorgeous" apparel.

The New York *Independent* says that at Baltimore the Swami "was refused admission to every first class hotel to which he

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\* *Hindu Castes and Sects*, pp. 377, 378.



A SIVITE SANNYASI—THE GENUINE ARTICLE.

applied but one." The servants in American hotels are generally negroes, who at Baltimore seem to have regarded the Swami as a "cullud pusson" (coloured person) like themselves.

The above shows that the Swami was in the habit of frequenting first class hotels. At Baltimore he seems to have tried

them all rather than go to a second or third class establishment. Travellers know that American "first class hotels" are like palaces, with every luxury, but correspondingly expensive. The notices of the Swami's proceedings in America show that, at least for a time, he resided in a Fifth Avenue Hotel, situated in the most aristocratic part of New York.

Did the Swami eschew the delicacies of American hotels and live as a vegetarian? Dr. Barrows says:

"After the first session of the Parliament of Religions I went with Vivekananda to the restaurant in the basement of the Art Institute, and I said to him, 'What shall I get you to eat?' His reply was 'Give me beef!'"\*

The Swami is more enlightened than orthodox Madras. At Calcutta he said:

"That is why people get mad with me when I say religion has got into the kitchen, and if you had been in Madras with me now you would have agreed with me. You Bengalees are better than that. In Madras they throw away food if anybody looks at it, and with all this I do not see that the people are any better there." (p. 259.)

**Excuses for the Swami.**—The Swami may say that if he ate beef, he was only following the example of the ancients, including some of the most celebrated Rishis. Vasishta slaughtered the 'fatted calf' when entertaining Visvamisra, Janaka, and other sages.

Panini explains *Goghna* as one for whom a cow is killed, that is a guest. III. 4. 73. Beef in Vedic times was a favorite food, and eaten by all. Dr. Rajendralala Mitra, in "Beef in Ancient India," quotes overwhelming testimony in support of this.† Dr. Macdonald says "only on great occasions."

If the Swami drank wine or refreshed himself when fatigued with whisky and soda, he was only imitating Indra, the chief of the Vedic gods, and Balarama, the incarnation of the white hair of Vishnu, both of whom are well known to have been toppers.

Another line of defence may also be adopted. The Swami of Akulkot was so holy that he could eat beef and drink brandy without prejudice to his sanctity. With the Lord Sri Krishna, in the Bhagavad Gita (IV. 16), the Swami may say, "Actions

\* *The Outlook*, July 17th, 1897.

† See *Indo-Aryans*, Vol. I., pp. 354-388. An abstract of it is given in *The Cow Question in India*, Price 1½ As. Post-free, 2 As. Sold by Mr. A. T. Scott, Tract Depot, Madras.

defile me not." No *prayaschitta* ceremony should be necessary on his return to India. He should not require to become, in the words of the late Kristo Das Pal, "an imbecile swallower of penitential pills."\*

**The Sannyasiship a Fraud.**—The *Sunday Times* speaks of the Swami as "savouring of anything but the popular idea of asceticism."† He is sleek, and has apparently been living on the "fat of the land." How does the life he led in America and England comport with his profession? How much *punya* (religious merit) will accrue therefrom to his supporters? India's "great and peerless legislator, the divine Manu" being judge, the Swami's sannyasiship is a mockery.

There is no objection to an Indian, if he can afford it, living in a New York Fifth Avenue Hotel; but to make, at the same time, pretensions to sannyasiship, is what is condemned.

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## IS SWAMI VIVEKANANDA QUALIFIED TO TEACH VEDANTISM?

### DIFFICULTY OF THE TASK.

"What is Vedānta?" is the most abstruse problem of Hindu philosophy.

Hegel, when dying, is reported to have said in despair, "Only one man understands my system;" but, correcting himself, he added, "even he does not understand it!" Much the same may be said of Vedāntism.

Max Müller, now in ripe old age, a life-long student of Sanskrit literature and translator of the principal Upanishads, the basis of Vedāntism, might well be supposed to have mastered the subject. His translations of the Upanishads was criticised in severe terms by the late Professor Whitney of Yale, probably the most distinguished Sanskritist which America has yet produced.

Max Müller delivered three *Lectures on the Vedānta Philosophy* at the Royal Institution in 1894.‡ Colonel G. A. Jacob resided in India for 37 years, and Hindu Philosophy is his

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\* The validity of this reasoning was not recognized by the high priest of Dakshineswar. When the Swami sought to revisit the spot consecrated by his divine Master, he was repelled.

† *Swami Vivekananda in England*, 1896, p. 23.

‡ Published by Longmans.

specialty. He has translated the *Vedānta-Sāra* with copious annotations, and compiled a *Concordance to the Upanishads*. Max Müller's Lectures were reviewed by Colonel Jacob in *The Academy*. While giving them credit for presenting the system in "an extremely lucid and attractive form," it is claimed that the author apparently does not clearly understand one of the leading features of the system :

"The great philosopher Sankara gives clear definitions of God and Brahman, but, not infrequently, as I have shown in my recent edition of the text of the *Vedānta-Sāra*, he ignores the distinction between them, although that distinction is one of the main features of his system. Amongst us, at any rate, to avoid confusion, the term Brahman (neuter) should be strictly confined to the pure, unassociated, Brahman; whilst God is Brahma-associated-with ignorance. In the work before us Prof. Max Müller has not preserved this distinction with sufficient care. We read :

"The Self can never be known as objective, but can only be itself, and thus be conscious of itself . . . it knows, but it cannot be known." (p. 67). "Whose very being is knowing, and whose knowing is being," (p. 70). "The only attributes of this Brahman, if attributes they can be called, are that he is, that he knows, and that he is full of bliss." (p. 71). "The soul or Self has but three qualities. It is, it perceives, and it rejoices." (p. 94). "Brahman was before the creation of the world, and had always something to know and think upon." (p. 139).

"Now a Vedāntist of Sankara's schools would take exception to every one of these statements, and rightly so; for to attribute to pure Brahman perception, knowing, thinking, rejoicing, or even consciousness, is to destroy his system of non-duality."

Thibaut, translator of the *Vedānta-Sūtras*, and Gough, author of the *Philosophy of the Upanishads*, are other noted Vedāntic scholars. They, as well as others previously mentioned, differ more or less from each other.

Swami Vivekananda may urge that this arises from the dull Western intellect being unable to grasp the subtle phases of Hindu thought. The reply is that the most distinguished Indian Vedāntists, as Sankara, Rāmanuja, Madhava, Vallabha and others differed as much or more among themselves. *Awakened India* frankly confesses that the "confusion" about Vedānta, "is not confined to our Christian brethren alone, but it also extends to some of the highly intelligent and learned Sanskrit scholars, Eastern and Western alike." Oct. 1876.

It is evident, therefore, that any teacher of the Vedānta worth listening to should not only be of great intellectual grasp, but a profound student of the works on which Vedāntism is

based. How far these qualifications are possessed by Swami Vivekananda will now be considered.

#### EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

Babu Norendra Nath Dutt, who has assumed the title of Swami Vivekananda (bliss' discrimination), belongs to a well-known Calcutta family, some of whose members are Christians. He was a student in the General Assembly's Institution, and at the age of 21 took the B. A. Degree in 1884, in the second class. His father was a lawyer, and he himself studied law with a view to practise; but he relinquished his design. For some years he was a professed Brahma. *The Indian Mirror* says: "He used to attend divine services held in the Brahma churches, and was one of the actors on the stage which was erected at the house of the late Babu Keshub Chunder Sen to represent a religious drama." He also sang hymns in one of the Brahma Samajes of Calcutta.

The *Bangabasi* states that he was for a time a teacher in the Metropolitan Institution established by Vidyasagar, "and tried to prove the hollowness of Hinduism by various arguments. Afterwards he became the disciple of Ramakrishna Paramahansa."\* A student who took the B. A. Degree in the second class cannot be supposed to rank very high intellectually.

*Quisquis* says in *The Indian Daily News*, (Feb. 23, 1897):

"'Of his early life,' writes the *New York Herald*, 'he never speaks, save to talk in a general way about the great master.' The Brahma and Christian Missionaries to whom he was indebted for much of the religious thought he taught, and for the English by which he made his reputation, he never acknowledged till forced from him, and even then most reluctantly."

When interviewed by a correspondent of the *Madras Mail*, he said, "I learn that these missionaries who howl come from the lowest classes in England."† There is a Tamil proverb that one who lives among jackals learns to howl. The Swami can now "howl" as vigorously as any of his preceptors.

The Swami gained in the General Assembly's Institution a fair knowledge of English, but it cannot be supposed that the Vedānta was a special study. Neither could he have mastered the Brahmavidyā under his unlearned guru. It is evident therefore, that the Swami has had few advantages as a student of Vedānta.

\* Quoted in the *Indian Christian Herald*, March 20, 1897.

† *Madras Mail*, Feb. 6, 1897.



THE SWAMI'S ADDRESSES AND WRITINGS EXAMINED.

Any one reading the commentaries of Sankarácárya on the Vedánta-Sútras must allow that he possessed a vigorous intellect, however he may differ from his conclusions. On the other hand, the impression left by the Swami is rambling intellectual feebleness.

It may be supposed that the Chicago address received special attention. When it reached Calcutta, it was thus criticised by *The Indian Nation*, one of the ablest Hindu journals :

“In truth there is no more difficult subject to discuss than Hinduism, and the difficulty borders on impossibility when an attempt is made to compress the exposition into a discourse of a few pages, capable of being read out in about half an hour . . . We cannot help thinking that it exhibits other evils than those of mere over-compression. It is not merely inadequate, but it is inaccurate, inconsistent, inconclusive.

“It is amusing to observe how the writer appropriates the doctrines and motives of Christianity and flings them in triumph at the Christians. The doctrine of love may be Hindu, but it is also and mainly Christian.

“It is very strange indeed that a writer should seize some of the commonplaces of all religions, and try to make them out to be the *differentia* of Hinduism. It is little short of ridiculous for instance to argue that it is the Hindu alone who refuses to regard man as a mass of matter.”

“‘The Hindu does not want to live upon words and theories.’ Here also are the same preposterous claims of a monopoly.”

“**All religions are true.**”—The Swami, at the Parliament of Religions, said, “we accept all religions to be true.” Christians admit that there are *truths in all religions*, but they deny the statement that *all religions are true*. This is considered a proof of the bigotry of Christianity compared with the tolerance of Hinduism.

Max Müller thus speaks of the contradictions of the Upanishads :

“The early Hindus did not find any difficulty in reconciling the most different and sometimes contradictory opinions in their search after truth ; and a most extraordinary medley of oracular sayings might be collected from the Upanishads, even from those which are genuine and comparatively ancient, all tending to elucidate the darkest points of philosophy and religion, the creation of the world,

the nature of God, the relation of man to God, and similar subjects. That one statement should be contradicted by another seems never to have been felt as any serious difficulty." \*

Dr. Muir, in his Sanskrit Texts,† quotes from the sacred Books of the Hindus fourteen conflicting accounts of the origin of the Vedas. The explanations of creation and the origin of the castes are shown by Dr. Muir to be similarly contradictory; yet all are accepted as true.

Keshub Chunder Sen justly says :

"In science there cannot be sects or divisions, schisms or enmities. Is there one astronomy for the East and another for the West? Is there an Asiatic optics as distinguished from European optics? Science is one. It is one yesterday, to-day and for ever; the same in the East and in the West; it recognises neither caste, nor colour, nor nationality. It is God's science, the eternal verity of things."

The Hindus have one system of astronomy in which the sun moves round the earth and is nearer than the moon; there is what is called the Ptolemaic system in which all the heavenly bodies move round the earth; Tycho Brahe made the sun move round the earth, and all the other planets move round the sun; and lastly there is the Copernican system which makes the earth move round the sun. What would be thought of the intellect of the man who said, "I accept all these systems as true?" It is equally absurd to say "I accept all religions to be true." It is the same in religion as in science. It is God's truth "the eternal verity of things."

The Swami, in his Lectures (p. 246), describes Kapila as "perhaps the greatest name in the history of India in psychological and philosophical lines." In the first book of his *Sankhya Aphorisms*, Kapila says :

**"There is no acceptance of the inconsistent else we come to the level of children, madmen, and the like."‡**

When the Swami accepted the most contradictory religions to be true, according to Kapila, he "descended to the level of children, madmen and the like." Such is the charity of Hinduism contrasted with the bigotry of Christianity.

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\* *Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, pp. 320, 321.

† Vol. III., pp. 3—18. The heads are quoted in the Pice Paper, No. 11, *Who wrote the Vedas?*

‡ *Ballantyne's Translation*, quoted by Col. Jacob. *Hindu Pantheism*, p. 48.

The Swami said in his Chicago address :

“From the high spiritual flights of Vedāntic philosophy of which the latest discoveries of science seem like echoes, from the agnosticism of the Buddhist and the atheism of the Jains to the low ideas of idolatry and the multifarious mythologies, each and all have a place in the Hindu's religion.” page 7.

The editor of *The Indian Nation* agrees with Kapila. The preceding extract is thus criticised :

“Each and all of what? Of beliefs or religions we take it. If, however, Hinduism is able to embrace atheism and low ideas of idolatry and every variety of mythology, it is universal to be sure, but can it claim any organic unity, can it even claim to be a spiritual religion? A mechanical juxtaposition is not unification. Theism and Atheism, Monotheism and Polytheism, Spiritualism and Materialism, are no more reconciled or unified by arbitrarily giving to them a common name like Hinduism, or binding their written expositions in one volume, than A is identified with Not-A by writing the two symbols together.” March 26th, 1894.

In another issue the same journal says :—

“He (the Swami) is beating his head against the rocks when he tries to prove that a religion which lays claim to organic unity and to spirituality may embrace theism and atheism, vedāntism and low ideas of idolatry. ‘Religion,’ of course, may be so defined as to be applicable to atheism, agnosticism, &c. Carlyle gave such a definition. But no *one* religion can claim at once to affirm and to deny God, to ignore Him and worship Him, to believe in Him as a subtle essence inconceivably fine, and to have ‘low ideas of idolatry.’ It is useless speaking of the conflicting doctrines as different paths leading to a ‘common goal.’ We should very much like to know what this common centre is, for we must confess we can conceive of none which can be reached by theism and atheism alike. We are past that stage when a mere phrase would charm us into slavery, and until more light dawns upon us we must hold ‘common centre’ and ‘convergence of diverging radii’ to be mere phrases.” April 9th, 1894.

The Swami said at Chicago :

“The Vedas teach us that Creation is without beginning or end.” page 8.

Upon this *The Indian Nation* remarks :—

“The Vedas cannot be guilty of any such solecism as that. Creation is a thing created and necessarily implies a beginning.”

It may be asked which Veda makes such an assertion? Hymn 129, Book X. asserts that creation had a beginning.

The Swami adds :—

“Science has proved to us that the sum total of cosmic energy is the same throughout all time. Then if there was a time when nothing existed, where was all this manifested energy? Some say it was in a potential form in God. But then God is sometimes potential and sometimes kinetic, which would make him mutable, and everything mutable is a compound, and everything compound must undergo that change which is called destruction. And thus God would die. Therefore there never was a time when there was no creation.” page 8.

*The Indian Nation* has the following remarks on the above :—

“After a little metaphysical dogmatizing the writer concludes : ‘Therefore there never was a time when there was no creation.’ There is a certain fitness in this reconciliation, for one contradiction—a creation without a creator and an act of creating—is made to reconcile another, that of theism and atheism. The writer is apparently unaware that he does not very much exalt the conception of God when he thinks that He must be either potential or kinetic energy,—expressions applicable to mechanical energy alone, and not to any spiritual power, like will, for instance.

The Swami claimed to find “the latest utterances of science” in Vedāntic Philosophy. *Prāna* usually means breath, and Mr. Manilal N. Dvivedi, in his translation of the Sūtras of Patanjali, defines *Prānāyāma* as “the control of the breath.” The Swami had heard something of “cosmic energy,” so in his *Yoga Philosophy*, he identifies it with *prāna*, and endows it with magical powers. In the glossary *prāna* is defined as “The sum-total of the cosmic energy, the vital forces in the body” (p. 232). “*Prānāyāma* means the control of the *Prāna* (p. 30). Of course the yogi who can control “cosmic energy” may well control the universe. p. 32.\*

The Swami, during his travels, heard something about Darwin’s theory of evolution. In his *Yoga Philosophy* he thus impiously applies it to the Deity :

“Starting from some fungus, some very minute, microscopic bubble, and all the time drawing from that infinite storehouse of energy, the form is changed slowly and slowly, until, in course of time, it becomes a plant, then an animal, then man, ultimately God.” page 43.

The Swami’s Chicago address is truly characterised by *The Indian Nation* as “INADEQUATE, INACCURATE, INCONSISTENT, AND

\* See *Yoga Sastra*, 8vo., 78 pp. Sold by Mr. A. T. Scott, from 2½ As; post free 3 As.

INCONCLUSIVE." An equally unfavourable verdict has been given with regard to his Calcutta address, "The Vedánta in all its Phases."

A Brahman auditor describes the lecturer as "a self-styled Europeanised Swami, with his head stuffed with the hash of self-taught Shruti and Shastra." He exclaims, "*O tempora, O mores!*" at the sickening spectacle of Brahmans sitting, "at the leather-shod feet of a Kayastha Swami." He characterises the lecture as "marred by many faults, injudicious remarks, misconceptions, misinterpretations, and misrepresentations."

The revivalist journal *Hope* is also severe :—

"Those who will look for deep thought or wide scholarship in the latest utterance of Swami Vivekananda in Calcutta will be doomed to disappointment. The lecture lacks unity and strength, and one must confess . . . a perusal of his lecture makes one in no way the wiser so far as a correct and comprehensive grasp of the Vedánta is concerned. The lecture does not seem at all to have been either well thought out or well expressed . . . We wonder if that was the sort of Vedántism, that the Swami preached in England and America. We do not at all wonder that the Swami's last lecture in Calcutta should have failed to make any deep impression upon the intelligent Calcutta public." \*

The exposition of Vedánta by the Swami is something like the Esoteric Buddhism of Madame Blavatsky—a system *sui generis*. He has picked up a smattering of modern science, and some of this new wine he seeks to pour into the old bottles of Hinduism.

On the return of the Swami to Calcutta, he was thus advised by *The Indian Nation* :

"But Vivekananda has here a more serious duty to perform. He has not only to teach but to learn. For where is Hinduism better learnt than in the land of Hindus? It is here then that he must add to his learning, enlarge his thought, perfect his wisdom. It is here that he has to face the stiffest problems of life." Feb. 22, 1897.

For genuine undefiled Vedánta, people must resort to the Vedánta-Sútras of Bádaráyana and the Vedánta-Sára of Sadánanda, both accessible though trustworthy English translations, and not to the concoction compounded by the Swami.

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\* Quoted in *The Christian Herald*, March 20th, 1897.

## ARE THE SWAMI'S ASSOCIATES QUALIFIED TO TEACH VEDANTISM ?

It has been shown that neither the Guru nor his chief disciple is a trustworthy exponent of the Vedánta philosophy. This applies, *a fortiori*, to the other Swamis, of whom of late there has been such an abundant crop.

It must be confessed that, with the exception of the two Mlechha Swamis, little is known of most of them but their names. They all apparently belonged to the Dakshineswar Temple, and their claims to Swamihood rest on the eminence of their now deified Guru.

SWAMI AVEDANANDA, the Swami's deputy in England at present, is Babu Kali Prasad Chandra, a Calcutta *matriculate* ! His brother is a well-known Christian in Calcutta.

SWAMI AKHANDANANDA is reported to be engaged in famine relief.

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA, with his head-quarters at the monastery, Triplicane, is working in Madras.

SWAMI SIVANANDA has gone to Ceylon, where he will remain for several months.

SWAMI SARADANANDA, of the Alambazar Math, left early in 1896 for England to assist the Swami in the spread of Vedántism in the West. A letter from a "Disciple," dated June 23, 1896, states that he was to lecture before a Women's Vegetarian Society on vegetarianism, after which he was to sail for New York. The inference is that he does not eat beef like the Swami. He arrived in America on July 3rd. He delivered his first Sunday discourse in the New Century Hall, No. 509, Fifth Avenue. Among other things he said :

"To call a man a sinner was regarded as blasphemous. By the different experiences of pleasure and pain, man gained knowledge and expanded until he found out his real nature, which is God."

"All religions are so many different ways leading to the same God."\*

He lectured before the Metaphysical Society of Boston, took part in the School of Comparative Religion of Greenacre, and in the parting Harvard Address to the Swami, Saradananda received honourable mention.

## MLECHHA SWAMIS.

"His Holiness," the Vedántic Pontiff, is invested with such plenary powers that he can confer Swamihood on those whom

\* *Brahmavádin*, March 13, 1897.

“the peerless legislator, the divine Manu” calls “abhorred barbarians.”\* It must, however, be allowed that he has used his powers sparingly and with great discrimination. Only two, so far as known, are yet so denominated.

SWAMI KRIPÁNANDA. The following brief notice appeared in the *New York Herald* :

“The Swami Kripánanda, before he was taken into the circle and took the vow of poverty and chastity, was a newspaper man, employed on the staff of one of the most prominent New York papers. By birth he is a Russian Jew, named Leon Sandsberg, and, if it were known, his life history is probably as interesting as that of Swami Abhayananda. He is a man of middle age, medium height, possessed of a shock of curly hair, and a pair of eyes in which the fire of the true fanatic undoubtedly burns. He may be found at any time at the house in West Thirtiyninth Street.”

The *Detroit Evening News* contains the following brief autobiographical sketch :

“I have always been a seeker of truth. I have studied many religions, and found some truth in all, but all too much encrusted with superstitions; until I became a materialist, and remained so until I met the Swami in New York just after he came here, and has helped me to find the truth. I am an American citizen, and was educated in Germany and France; I have lived in this country for years; I used to have a paper in the South myself, and was later connected with one of the largest dailies in New York.”

Like his master, Swami Kripánanda accepts all religions as true :

“All roads lead to Rome; and so all religions lead to God. The various religions are, as it were, so many universal dramas in which one and the same actor God—appears in different roles—Jehova, Allah, Krishna, Jesus, and so forth—but in all alike good, grand and perfect.”†

SWAMI ABHAYANANDA has the honour of being the first Sanyasini ever initiated in the Western World. The following brief sketch of her history is taken from the *New York Herald*, quoted in the *Brahmavádin* of February 29th, 1896 :

“The Swami Abhayananda is a Frenchwoman, but naturalized and twenty-four years a resident of New York. She has a curious history. For a quarter of a century she has been known to liberal circles as a materialist, socialist (some say anarchist) friend of Emma Goldman and others of that ilk. Twelve months ago she

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\* *Manu* XII, 43, Burnell's Translation.

† Quoted in *Brahmavádin*, April 11, 1896.

was a prominent member of the Manhattan Liberal Club. Then she was known in the press and on the platform as Mme. Marie Louise, a fearless, progressive, advanced woman, whose boast it was that she was always in the forefront of the battle and ahead of her times."

On July 7th, 1896, the first anniversary of the Swami's initiation, Miss Malvina A. Meadley, of Brooklyn, commemorated the event by a letter to the *Brahmavadin* inserted in the issue of August 1st. She concludes by giving a specimen of the progress she has made in Vedántism under her beloved teacher :

That I am Braham !  
Tat Twami Asi,  
Om, Tat Sat, Om !

**Miss Ellen Waldo.**—This lady apparently has not yet been invested with Swamihood, but she is taking an active part in teaching Vedántism. One of her students, in a letter to the *Brahmavadin* (March 13, 1897), gives the following brief account of her :

"The classes in the Vedánta Philosophy conducted by Miss Ellen Waldo have been very successful. She is distantly related to Ralph Waldo Emerson, and was a close student of his writings and also Max Müller's before the arrival of Swami Vivekananda in America ; and soon after his coming she became one of his ablest and most thorough students. She became well acquainted with Swami Saradananda at the Monslavat School of Comparative Religions last summer at Green Acre, Eliot, Maine, and it is largely due to her influence that the New York students are able to have his valuable assistance."

The *Brahmavadin*. (Dec. 19, 1896) says :

"Miss Ellen Waldo's first lecture of a series of lectures on the Vedánta Philosophy was listened to last evening by a large gathering of students at the home of Miss Mary Phillips, No. 19, Thirty-eighth Street."

The *Brahmavadin* (Jan. 16th, 1897) gives a Lecture by Miss Waldo on "The Methods of the Vedánta." The first method is "*Karma-Yoga*, the method of the worker." The second is "*Raja-Yoga*, the psychological method," said to be clearly explained in Swami Vivekananda's lectures on the subject. With these two methods belief in God is a negligible quantity.

"The belief in God may be a great help to some, but these two *Yogas* claim that man can work out his own salvation as surely without that belief as with it. If you believe in a God, well and



good ; there is nothing in these *Yogas* to disturb that belief in the least. If you say that you do not believe in any God, these *Yogas* tell you that there is no absolute need for you to do so, and that you can reach liberation even without doing so." p. 118.

The liberated soul may proudly exclaim, *Hic Deus nihil fecit* (Here God did nothing).

"The third method, *Bhakti-yoga*, is for those who believe in a personal God . . . The last method and the one which most peculiarly distinguishes the Vedánta is called *Jnána-yoga*, or the method of pure reason." "All that we call the world is really the Brahma, because nothing else exists." "One only without a second." p. 118.

It will be seen from the foregoing accounts that both the Swami and his associates are but scantily equipped as exponents of such a difficult system of philosophy as the Vedánta.

But, according to the Vedánta, there are still stronger objections to their posing as teachers.

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### SUDRAS AND MLECHHAS DISQUALIFIED EVEN TO STUDY VEDANTA.

The three higher castes, Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas are entitled to study the Vedas and other sacred books of the Hindus ; but the Brahmans claim as their peculiar privilege the right of expounding them. Babu J. N. Bhattacharya says :

"According to the commandments of his religion, the proper avocations of Brahmans are the following :—

1. Studying the Shastras.
2. Teaching the Shastras.
3. Performance of religious rites for the three superior classes.
4. Acceptance of gifts from the three superior classes."\*

Kshatriyas rank next to the Brahmans, but Manu sternly forbids their arrogating sacerdotal functions :

95. A military man in distress may subsist by all these means, but at no time must he have recourse to the highest, or *sacerdotal* function. Book X.

Sudras are so low that a Brahman should not perform religious rites for them nor even accept gifts from them.

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\* *Hindu Castes and Sects*, p. 24.

Hear what the "great and peerless legislator, the divine Manu," says about Sudras :

413. But a Sudra, whether bought or not bought, (the Brahman) may compel to practise servitude ; for that (Sudra) was created by the Self-existent merely for the service of the Brahman.

417. A Brahman may take possession of the goods of a Sudra with perfect peace of mind, for, since nothing at all belongs to this (Sudra) as his own, he is one whose property may be taken away by his master. Book VIII.

125. The leavings of food should be given (him) and the old clothes ; so too the blighted part of the grain ; so too the old furniture. Book X.

It may easily be inferred that such degraded beings are unfit to study the "sublime philosophy" of the Vedánta. But this is not left to inference : there is positive command on the subject. Veda-Vyása, the arranger of the Vedas, is so highly esteemed on account of the imperishable nature of his work that he is called Sáswatas, 'the Immortal.' Under the name of Bádaráyana, he is held to be the author of the Vedánta Sútras, the founder of the Vedánta philosophy. It is the custom of Hindu writers on important subjects, to consider who are qualified to engage in the study. In Adhikarana, x. 34—38, Bádaráyana shows that Sudras are altogether disqualified for Brahmavidyá. In Dr. Thibaut's translation of the Vedánta-Sútras (Sacred Books of the East) the Sútras are given in full, with the commentary of Sankaráchárya, occupying pp. 223—228. Space permits only a few quotations to be made from the commentary.

Sankara thus shows that Sudras have no claim to study Vedánta :

"A person who has studied the Veda and understood its sense is indeed qualified for Vedic matters ; but a Sudra does not study the Veda, for such study demands as its antecedent the upanayana ceremony, and that ceremony belongs to the three (higher) castes only. The mere circumstance of being in a condition of desire does not furnish a reason for qualification, if capability is absent. Mere temporal capability again does not constitute a reason for qualification, spiritual capability being required in spiritual matters. And spiritual capability is (in the case of the Sudras) excluded by their being excluded from the study of the Veda. The Vedic statement, moreover, that the Sudra is unfit for sacrifices intimates, because founded on reasoning, that he is unfit for knowledge also ; for the argumentation is the same in both cases." (Vol. I., pp. 224-225).

Bádaráyana's decision is confirmed by another high authority, he whom Swami Vivekananda calls "our great and peerless legislator, the divine Manu." In Book X., 126, he says :

"In the Sudra there is not any sin, and he is not fit for any ceremony."

Not only are Sudras forbidden to study Brahavidyá, but the most terrible consequences ensue both to teachers and taught if it is attempted :

80. One may not give advice to a Sudra, nor (give him) the remains (of food) or (of) butter that has been offered. And one may not teach him the law or enjoin upon him (religious) observances.

81. For he who tells him the law and he who enjoins upon him (religious) observances, he indeed, together with that (Sudra) sinks into the darkness of the hell called Asamvrtta (unbounded). Book IV.

If these words are true, well may Swami Vivekananda, a Sudra, and those who heard his lectures, be deeply alarmed about their fate in another world.

If Sudras are disqualified from the study of Brahavidyá, much more are Mlechhas, whom Manu styles "abhorred barbarians." (XII. 43.) Such is their vileness that even a knowledge of Sanskrit does not prevent their touch from necessitating purification. When Sir Monier Williams, the Oxford Professor of Sanskrit, visited India, the Pandits always called on him early in the morning to avoid a second bathing after shaking hands with him.

Unless the Swami is prepared to cast overboard Veda-Vyása, the founder of the Vedánta philosophy, and the "peerless legislator, the divine Manu," he must give up both the study and the teaching of Vedánta, and earnestly enquire if there is any *prayaschitta* adequate to cleanse him from the enormous amount of guilt which he has already contracted.

The above view of Manu as confirmed by Pandit Chandra Kanta Tarkalankar, Professor of Philosophy in the Government Sanskrit College, Calcutta. When nominated Lecturer on Vedánta by the Calcutta University, he refused to accept the appointment if Sudras and non-Hindus were allowed to attend his classes. A compromise was afterwards made; but he refused to recite the sacred texts before them.

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## THE BOASTED SUCCESS OF THE SWAMI IN THE WEST.

Under this head the Swami accepted, without any disclaimer, the most wonderful statements in the addresses presented to him by his admirers. The Colombo address says :

“ To your self-sacrificing zeal, Western nations owe the priceless boon of being placed in living contact with the spiritual genius of India.” p. 3.

The Calcutta address says of his teaching :

“ The general effect was a revolution in the religious ideas of a large section of cultivated Americans.” p. 226.

The Almora address says :

“ Which of us ever dreamt that a descendant of the old Indian Aryans by dint of *tapas*,\* would prove to the learned people of England and America the superiority of the ancient Indian religion over other creeds.” p. 272.

The Trichinopoly address says :

“ The praises of Hindu Theology are heard in every nook and corner of the mighty British Empire.” p. 89.

The Manamadura address says that the Swami's influence, in extent, could be likened only to that of “ your contemporary” Queen Victoria, but it was of a far more exalted character :

We “ hope that at no distant date you, just like your contemporary in the political sphere, will rule an empire over which the sun never sets, with this difference that hers is an empire over matter, and yours will be over mind.” pp. 76, 77.

To the foregoing may be added the editorial in *The Indian Mirror*, quoted in full. When the editor of that paper heard of the Swami's proceedings at Chicago, with deep spiritual insight, he concluded that “ the sublime doctrines of the higher Hinduism ” were what were wanted to “ SATISFY THE FAMISHING SOULS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.” To supply this, he advocated the prolonged stay of the Swami in “ a grossly materialistic West.”

It may be mentioned that some Japanese were equally confident that Buddhism was the spiritual nutriment needed for the

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\* Bodily Mortification !

above purpose. The *Indian Messenger* quotes the following from an English exchange :

“ A surprising account of the effect of the Parliament of Religions at the Chicago Exposition is given by a Japanese Buddhist to his co-religionists on his return from Chicago. He says that while the Parliament was undertaken in the interest of Christianity, it resulted, contrariwise, in displaying the glory of Buddhism. So strongly has America been impressed with the revelation of the inferiority of Christianity, that Buddhist temples and images are now being erected in many places on the Pacific coast. He adds that in Europe, also, Christianity is decaying, and Buddhism gaining ground and showing promise of supplanting Christianity. ‘ The people of Europe are indeed eager,’ he says, ‘ for the coming of Buddhist priests of Japan.’ Ludicrous as this sounds, it is merely a case of the familiar fact that people see what they desire to see.” Nov. 11th, 1894.

But the Swami may claim to be judged by his own utterances. The following are some of them :

“ The great Śrī Rāmakrishna to-day is worshipped literally by thousands in Europe and America, and to-morrow will be worshipped by thousands more.” Lectures, p. 185.

“ Before ten years elapse a vast majority of the English people will be Vedāntic.”

I helped on the tide of Vedānta which is flooding the world.\*

An account has been given in the preceding pages, as far as information is available, of what the Swami actually did in the United States and England. He obtained some little celebrity for a time in America through the Parliament of Religions ; but during the greater part of his stay his influence was confined to small meetings which had no effect whatever on public opinion. The interest in them arose chiefly, from Vedāntism forming part of the programme in meetings organized by the Societies for the study of Comparative Religion. Buddhism and Islamism had their expounders as well as Hinduism. The Swami was invited, under the natural supposition that, as a Hindu, he was competent to explain the abstruse doctrines of the Vedānta. The Harvard address to “ the great Aryan Family,” quoted the words of the Rev. Dr. Everett :

“ We are not so near to actual conversion as some seem to believe ; but Vivekananda has created a high degree of interest in himself and his work.”†

\* Swami Vivekananda interviewed by a representative of the *Madras Mail*, Feb. 6, 1897.

† *Awakened India*, March, 1897.

Attention is invited to the "Replies" from about forty well-informed men in America about the alleged progress of Vedântism in the United States. They show that the majority had scarcely heard even of the Swami himself, or that he has been forgotten.

Some had heard of a few converts ; but what are they ? Dr. Boardman of Philadelphia says :

"My impression is that, if he has made any converts at all, they have come either from the ranks of those who already were or thought themselves to be theosophists, or from people of restless, vague, adjustable unbelief." p. 16.

As far as known, the few converts of the Swami *were not from Christianity*. Swami Kripananda, as already mentioned, originally a Jew, was a materialist. Swami Abayananda passed through about as many phases of belief as Mrs. Besant herself.

It has been mentioned that the Swami, of all places, seems to have been best received at Cambridge, the seat of Harvard University. The reply of Dr. C. W. ELLIOTT, President of the University, about the Swami, is reproduced :

"The report circulated in India that Swami Vivekananda has made converts in America from Christianity to Hinduism is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, absolutely without foundation. I have never heard in this country of a single convert from Christianity to either Hinduism or Mahometanism. The article which you sent me from the *Indian Mirror* of January 21st is simply silly so far as it undertakes to describe Swami Vivekananda's performances in America." p. 17.

Dr. W. F. WARREN, President of Boston University, thus describes the effect upon himself of the *Indian Mirror's* editorial :

"As an admirer of that which is best and most enduring in the thought and teaching of the Hindu people, I am always pained to see such reckless or ignorant declarations as the above. They are not calculated to 'raise the Hindu nation in the estimation of the Western world.'" p. 31.

Dr. Warren had not even heard of Swami Saradananda ; showing how little impression he had produced :

"For more than twenty years, I have been a University Professor, lecturing weekly in our Boston University on the religions of the world—the only such lecturer in the city—yet I have never before heard of this Swami Saradananda, who is said in this article to be busy in teaching Hinduism." p. 32.

Unbelievers have always been predicting the extinction of Christianity. Colonel Olcott, whose care in weighing spirits, has already been mentioned, in his Addresses (p. 119) assured Hindus that Christianity was "a dying superstition." Its death-blow was to be given by Madame Blavatsky. *Isis Unveiled* was to "tear it to tatters," though some think the result has been only to "tear to tatters" her own reputation.

Several of the "Replies" show that Christianity in America, instead of being about to give up the ghost, is more vigorous than ever. Dr. J. H. BARROWS mentions the following proofs of this :

"America is not losing faith in the Christian Religion. Its progress in the United States during the last 25 years has been more rapid than ever before. In the building of new churches, in the vast additions to Church membership, numbering nearly half a million every year, in the building of mission-schools in our great cities, and the pushing of mission-work on our wide frontier of new settlements, in the spread of Sunday Schools, in the marvellous growth of the Christian Endeavour Movement, and of similar Young People's Societies, which probably number 3,000,000 of members in the United States alone, in the great sums given to Christian colleges, and the many millions of dollars annually raised to send to other lands the messengers of the Gospel ; in all this, and in the steadily growing purpose to put the gentle and humane teachings of Jesus into the daily life, and to make them effective in the relations of men with each other, we have indisputable evidences that Christianity is a growingly powerful, beneficent influence." p. 14.

LUTHER LAFLEN MILLS, Attorney at Law, Chicago, says :

"At the close of the year 1896, the religious bodies of the Christian system in this country numbered over twenty-five millions of communicants, showing an increase of over seven hundred thousand in twelve months." p. 26.

Willingness to contribute towards an object is an excellent test of interest. Dr. Gray, Editor of *The Interior*, Chicago, says :

"Perhaps as impressive an exhibition of what Christianity is doing in this country was the fact that during the year 1896, the gifts to objects of Christian charity, counting no gift which was not of the amount of \$1000 and over, amounted to twenty-nine millions of dollars of the gold standard. This includes, as I have said, no gifts of less than a thousand dollars, no money given for the support of churches, ministers, missionary boards and societies, nor

the innumerable gifts which amount on the aggregate to a vast sum, the whole estimated at over a hundred million dollars of gold." p. 20.

The Hon. J. W. FOSTER of Washington, Ex-Secretary of State of the United States, and Ex-Minister of the United States to China, says of the present position of Christianity in America :

"The fact is that the Christian religion was never more strongly entrenched in the faith and affections of the people of the United States of America than at the present time." p. 18.

The assertions regarding England are still more ridiculous. That "thousands in that country literally worship the great Sri Rámakrishna," and that "before ten years elapse a vast majority of the English people will be Vedántists," are statements pardonable only in a lunatic.

The conversion of England to the "sublime philosophy of the Vedánta" is now intrusted to a Calcutta matriculate! Can absurdity farther go?

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## THE SWAMI'S REPRESENTATIONS OF AMERICAN WOMEN AND HOMES.

It has been mentioned that at the Chicago Parliament of Religions the Swami was the greatest attraction to the ladies. According to the *Indian Mirror*, they "almost fought with each other for a chance to get near him and shake his hand." See page iv.

One would have expected, under such circumstances, that, so far as the "dear creatures" are concerned, the Swami would have been to their "faults a little blind." Not so the Swami. As a faithful witness, without fear or favour, he must tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

**The "Church Women" of America.**—The Swami thus paints their portraits :

"When the woman tries her best to find a husband she goes to all the bathing places imaginable, and tries all sorts of tricks to catch a man. When she fails in her attempts she becomes what they call in America an 'old maid' and joins the Church. Some of them become very 'churchy.' These 'church women' are awful fanatics. They are under the thumbs of the priests there. Between them and the priests they make a hell of earth and make a mess of



religion. With the exception of these the Americans are a very good people. They loved me so much; I love them a great deal, I felt as if I was one of them."\*

**Unhappy Condition of American Homes.**—In a lecture delivered in England and published in the *Brahmavádin*, June 19, 1897, the Swami says :

"The Indian woman is very happy; there is scarcely a case of quarrelling between husband and wife. On the other hand, in the United States, where the greatest liberty obtains, scarcely is there a happy home. There may be some, but the number of unhappy homes and marriages is so large that it passes all description." p. 251.

**"Husbands and Children turned out" by American Women.**—It is not surprising that American homes should be unhappy if another assertion of the Swami in the same lecture is true :

"Scarcely could I go to a meeting or a society but I found three-quarters of the women present had turned out their husbands and children. It is so here, there, and everywhere."

The words refer primarily to the women attending the Swami's lectures and classes; but "It is so here, there, and everywhere," makes it general like the preceding assertion.

It is allowed that there are some unhappy homes in America, and the number of divorces is far too large; but the statements as they stand are outrageously false. Indian criticisms upon them may first be quoted. The *Christian Patriot* remarks :

"The Swami seems to have been moving in fine society in the United States, if we are to believe his own words. (Quotation.) Does the Swami really mean to say that this gives us a correct idea of the moral calibre of those who took an interest in his lectures in America? It would then be instructive to know if the Vedánta lectures induced such women to turn back and be reconciled to their husbands and children. This we dare hardly expect when we read in another part of this lecture that 'the Vedánta says that our evil is of no more value than good, and our good of no more value than our evil.'" July 10, 1897.

The comment of the *Indian Social Reformer* is as follows :

"We regret that the Swami should have made such statements, as they will merely tend to confirm the people of the West in the very old belief, which Prof. Max Müller has tried so much to

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\* Swami Vivekananda interviewed by a representative of the *Madras Mail*, February 6th, 1897.

† Some "society ladies" are included. See page viii.

explode, namely, that the Oriental has no regard for truth. For who will believe that whenever the Swami attended a meeting in America, he went about asking how many of the ladies present had quarrelled with their husbands, or deserted their children? . . . It is easy to perceive that the statement about there being scarcely a happy home in the United States is as tremendous an exaggeration, as its counterpart that there is scarcely an unhappy one from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin." June 13, 1897.

Even before the above extraordinary statements appeared, *Quisquis* thus wrote to the *Indian Daily News*, explaining why he could not join in the Swami's reception at Calcutta :

"I am grieved that the young men of Bengal, in whose well-being I am profoundly interested, should be fascinated by a man, the reading of whose own utterances prevents my being able to respect."

"The Bengali's character has not, throughout the English-speaking world, recovered from Lord Macaulay's description of the 'weapons, offensive and defensive\*' of the people of the Lower Ganges.' This description was, a few years ago, boiled down in a well-known American periodical into the words, 'Monumental Liars,' credited rightly or wrongly to an officer high in the Bengal Educational Service and of very extensive experience. The Bengali globe-trotter, who succeeds in taking the sting out of these words and helps in making the world regard this as a calumny, does service to his country. He deserves on his return, an ovation—a public reception as a public benefactor—nothing less than a marble statue in Harrison Road. On the other hand, the Bengali globe-trotter, whoever he may be, whose life and words tend to impress upon people the truthfulness of Macaulay's words, deserves, to say the least, not a public reception. This then is the trouble concerning Mr. N. N. Datta, B.A., better known by the assumed name of Swami Vivekananda." February 23, 1897.

While it is unjust to apply the epithet "monumental liars" to Bengalis generally, it is certainly deserved by some.

The above remarks on the state of society in America will tend to confirm the Swami's Hindu admirers in the belief of the perfection of their own institutions so highly lauded by him. (p. ii.)

The Swami has repaid the hospitality shown to him in the United States with base ingratitude. Should he venture to show face there again, he may expect a very warm reception from the ladies. It is doubtful whether his hostess at Cambridge will be prepared to welcome him.

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\* Falsehood chicanery, &c.

**Remarks on Freedmen in the United States.**—These are about as misleading as those about American homes :

“The slaves are a hundred times worse off to-day than they were before the abolition. Before the abolition these poor negroes were the property of somebody, and, as properties, they had to be looked after so that they might not deteriorate. To-day they are the property of nobody. Their lives are of no value; they are burnt alive on mere pretences. They are shot down without any law for their murderers; they are niggers, they are not human beings, they are not even animals; and that is the effect of such violent taking away of evil by law or by fanaticism.” *Lectures*, pp. 128, 129.

The above no more describes the condition of freedmen in the United States than the assertion about unhappy American homes, and the Swami is too wanting in judgment to see that the negro is no longer a “chattel” to be sold like a horse or a sheep, but a freeman.

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#### FLATTERERS THE WORST ENEMIES OF INDIA.

Hindus are peculiarly open to flattery. Skilfully employed, it will make them part almost with anything. When Franklin was a boy, a smiling man asked him to turn his father's grindstone to sharpen his axe. Pleased with the flattery of being called a “fine little fellow,” &c., Franklin toiled and tugged till he was almost tired to death. The school bell rang, but he could not get away; his hands were blistered, and the axe was not half ground. At length it was sharpened, and the man turned to him and said, “Now, you little rascal; scud to school or you'll have it!” The lesson that Franklin learned, was to be aware of flatterers: they have always some “axe to grind.”

When Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky came to India, they tried the flattery dodge, and met with a right royal reception. Addressing Parsis in Bombay, he said :

“I, a Western man, taught in a Western University, and nursed on the traditions of modern civilization, say that Zaratushta knew more about nature than Tyndall does, more about the laws of force than Balfour Stewart, more about the origin of species than Darwin or Hæckel, more about the human mind and its potentialities than Maudsley or Bain. And so did Buddha and some other proficients in Occult Science.” *Addresses*, p. 149.

A letter dated Umballa, November 26th, 1886, published in America, gives the following account of their success :

“ I am going to spend a week with the Maharaja of Benares and will then return to Bombay . . . Things are booming along splendidly. It is a rare thing for us to be able to travel around as we do for nothing. It is a good thing that it is so, as I have not got a cent. Neither has Blavatsky.”

Mr. Caine brought the historic message from Mr. A. O. Hume to the members of the Indian National Congress, “ Tell the beggars to pay up ;” which they did. The Bombay “ beggars,” at least some of them, did not pay Colonel Olcott what they promised ; so he changed his tune :

“ We have got beyond the preliminary stage of polite phrases on both sides. You know just how we keep our promises, and we know what yours are worth. The scented garlands Bombay brought us in February 1879, withered long ago, its complimentary speeches of welcome long since died away in the air.” 6th Anniversary Address, Bombay, 1882.

At another time he described the Hindus as “ intoxicated with self-adulation.” Mrs. Besant tried the same plan. The following is the dose of flattery administered by Anna Bhai in an address at Tinnevely :

1. The Hindu theosophy is the best of all philosophies.
2. The Hindus are the wisest of all nations.
3. The Sanskrit language is the best of all languages.
4. Western civilization, with all its discoveries in science, is nothing compared with Hindu civilization.
5. All that is best in the West has been borrowed from India.

Swami Vivekananda is the latest Hindu idol. Some of his flatteries have been quoted, and he has had his reward.

Max Müller has a book entitled, *India ; what can it teach us ?* According to the *Indian Mirror*, it can teach far more than the professor imagined. As already mentioned, the Editor sagaciously divined that the ‘ higher Hinduism ’ was what was wanted to meet the spiritual needs of the “ famishing souls of the American people.” He believes that India is equally competent to teach science to the West. Lord Kelvin and Sir George Stokes are mere babes compared with the scientists of India :

“ Modern science cannot prognosticate the occurrence of earthquakes, as the ancient science of the Aryans can do. That there will be frequent earthquakes this year was foretold by our Hindu

astrologers long ago, and every Hindu almanac for this year contains a forecast to that effect. Modern science is still very much in its infancy, and has yet to make much greater progress to enable it to even approach one-tenth part of the ancient Philosophy of the East. Our modern scientists are not fit to hold a candle to some of these learned men of our country, who are well versed in the scientific teachings of the East."\*

Some will think the first nostrum of the *Indian Mirror* is no better than its second.

Although more might reasonably be expected from a Calcutta M. A., it may be said in excuse that he faithfully represents native opinion. Twenty-five years ago it was thus expressed by the *Hindu Patriot* :

"The orthodox Hindu has a profound contempt for every *Shaster* but his own—nay, rather, he scouts the very idea of anybody but a Hindu having a *Shaster*. If the Englishman displays any knowledge of natural phenomena—say by predicting an eclipse or by anticipating the bore in the Hugli—that knowledge must have been derived from the Hindu *Shaster*, for there is nothing in hell, heaven or earth of which that *Shaster* doth not know or speak." November 11, 1872.

Smiles thus describes much of the patriotism of the present day :

"A great deal of what passes by the name of patriotism in these days consists of the merest bigotry and narrow-mindedness, exhibiting itself in national prejudice, national conceit and national hatred. It does not show itself in deeds, but in boastings."

The idea of a patriot, with some, is the man who brags most of the "ancient glories of India," and most depreciates modern progress; who defends every national belief and custom, and denounces everything foreign; and who most vilifies the English character and the English administration.

Happily there is an enlightened minority who see that it is the worst treachery to their countrymen to flatter them, to allow error and wrong to remain unchecked, and to stir up nationality against nationality.

Some years ago the late Mr. Manmohan Ghose said at a meeting of the Bethune Society, Calcutta :

"He felt a legitimate pride in the ancient civilization of India, but he was bound to say that an undue and exaggerated veneration for the past was doing a great deal of mischief. It was quite sickening to hear the remark made at almost every public meeting that the ancient civilization of India was superior far to that which

\* Quoted in the *Indian Witness*, July 18th, 1885.

Europe ever had. It must be admitted by all who had carefully studied the ancient literature of India that the much vaunted civilization of India was of a peculiar type, and that it never could bear any comparison to what we call modern European civilization. Whatever might have been the case in ancient times, he thought that this frequent appeal to our ancient civilization could serve no good purpose at the present day, while it was simply calculated to make the Bengalis more conceited than they were."

Dr. Bhandarkar, late Professor of Sanskrit in the Deccan College, Poona, expresses the same opinion :

" Here I feel myself in duty bound even at the risk of displeasing some of you, to make passing allusion to the most uncritical spirit that has come over us of praising ourselves and our ancestors indiscriminately, seeing nothing but good in our institutions and in our ancient literature, asserting that the ancient Hindus had made very great progress in all the sciences, physical, moral, and social, and the arts,—greater even by far than Europe has made hitherto—and denying even the most obvious deficiencies in our literature, such as the absence of satisfactory historical records, and our most obvious defects. As long as this spirit exists in us, we can never hope to throw light on our ancient history, and on the excellencies and defects of our race, and never hope to rise."\*

The ancient civilization of India was that of the pandits of the present day. As Sir H. S. Maine said in a Calcutta Convocation Address, " Oriental culture" means " false morality, false history, false philosophy, false physics." Macaulay's description of Europe in the Middle Ages, applies still more to ancient India :

**" We see the multitudes sunk in brutal ignorance, while the studious few were engaged in acquiring what did not deserve the name of knowledge."**

But a happier state of things is dawning upon India. Upwards of four millions are now under instruction, including twenty thousand University students. Instead of philosophers who sat in their chairs and imagined the heart with 101 arteries or Rahu swallowing the moon as the cause of eclipses, we have careful observers, like Professor Bose, respected by the first scientists in Europe. In literature, Dr. Bhandarkar has been invited to take part in the great *Encyclopædia of Indian Research*, edited by Dr. Bühler, of Vienna, with the aid of thirty leading experts of various nationalities. Let the feeling of all be

**" Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring out the false, ring in the true."**

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\* The Critical Comparative and Historical Method of Enquiry. p. 24.

## ESTIMATES OF THE VEDANTA.

Of late much importance has been attached to the favourable opinions of the Vedánta expressed by Schopenhauer and Max Müller. They may be briefly noticed. The former says :

“In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Oupnek’hat. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death.”

Schopenhauer’s knowledge of what he called the ‘Oupnek’-hat’ (Upanishads) was derived from a Latin translation made



SCHOPENHAUER.

by a Frenchman from a Persian translation. The Latin translation Max Müller admits was written "in an utterly unintelligible style."\*

Schopenhauer has been called the "Founder of Modern Pessimism,"—that everything in nature is the worst, that life is essentially an evil, and the duty of man is to seek extinction of being. This is Hinduism. Its grand enquiry is not what is truth? but how to cut short the 84 lakhs of births?

Schopenhauer defined himself as a "despiser of men."

"In woman he saw only a wayward, mindless animal—ugly too, he said—existing solely for the propagation of the species, an end which perpetuated the woe of the world."†

Schopenhauer claimed that the study of the Upanishads was "beneficial and elevating." It certainly failed to produce that effect on himself. His character is thus described: "His disposition was heavy and severe, dark, mistrustful and suspicious, preventing him from entering into permanent trustful relations with men or women."‡ After the death of his father, he treated his mother with such insolence, that she could not live in the same house with him.

Professor Max Müller is just the opposite, in some respects, of Schopenhauer. He

"loveth well  
Both man and bird, and beast."

In his intercourse with every one he seeks to be as pleasant as possible. It should, however, be remembered that he has "Two Voices." By listening only to one of them, a very erroneous conclusion may be drawn. The Professor's proviso must also be taken into account. Writing to the *Brahmavádin* he says:

"I spend my happiest hours in reading Vedántic books. They are to me like the light of the morning, like the pure air of the mountains—so simple, so true, if once understood." Dec. 7, 1895.

Observe the qualification, "if once understood." The fact is that the Professor, like Schopenhauer, has his private interpretation of Vedántism. He and Sankara differ on some important points. As already mentioned, Colonel Jacob contends that he "destroys Sankara's system of non-duality."

\* *Upanishads*, vol. I., p. lviii.

† *From Miss Zimmern's Life*.

‡ *Chambers's Encyclopædia*, vol. ix., p. 221.





MAX MULLER.

(See p. xxvii.) He seems to regard as blasphemous another doctrine of Sankara—the *identity* of Brahman and the individual Self or Soul.\*

The Professor "spends his happiest hours in reading Vedantic books." Tastes differ in this respect. The Upanishads are the basis of Vedantism, but the description given of them by the Professor himself does not present a very tempting bill of fare. (See p. xxix, xxx.)

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\* Lectures, p. 107.

The Professor's "Second Voice" may now be quoted. He says in his *Lectures on the Vedānta Philosophy* :

"I know I have often been blamed for calling rubbish what to the Indian mind seemed to contain profound wisdom, and to deserve the highest respect . . . Every attempt to discover reason in what is unreasonable is accepted as legitimate so long as it enables us to keep what we are unwilling to part with. Still it cannot be denied that the Sacred Books of the East are full of rubbish, and that the same stream which carries down fragments of pure gold carries also sand and mud, and much that is dead and offensive." pp. 112, 113.

"Much, for instance, that is said in the Upanishads about the sacred syllable Om, seems to my mind mere twaddle, at least in its present form." p. 115.

The Professor is most severe on the Bráhmanas. Here his voice is "no whisper breathing low." After allowing that they contain "no lack of striking thoughts," he adds :

"These works deserve to be studied as the physician studies the twaddle of idiots and the raving of madmen."\*

### EXAMINATION OF VEDANTA.

The Rev. T. E. Slater, in his *Studies in the Upanishads*, states the truth about Vedānta in a very compact form :

"The Vedānta, the highest conclusion of Indian thought, is based on a mistaken and pessimistic view of life; on a formulated dogma unsupported by any evidence and untaught in the hymns of the Rig-Veda; the whole an elaborate and subtle process of false reasoning." p. 47.

Some of the principal doctrines of Vedāntism will now be examined.

1. **Vedantism is based on a mistaken and pessimistic view of life.**—In the Rig-Veda the outlook is cheerful. There are many prayers for life to its full term : "May you live a hundred years !" was a common benediction. After the doctrine of transmigration arose, with its endless chain of births and deaths, life was regarded as a curse. The feeling was intensified by Buddha, the first of whose "four noble truths" is that "existence is suffering." How to escape from the miseries of *samsára* then became the grand question.

\* Ancient Sanskrit Literature, p. 390.

While it is true that sin, in the end, always leads to sorrow, life, properly used, is a blessing.

2. **Vedantism rests on a dogma unsupported by evidence.**—The chief dogma is thus expressed, *Ekam-advitīyam*, ‘One without a second;’ *Sarvam Kalvidam Brahma*, ‘All this (universe) is Brahma.’ The first phrase does not mean that there is only one God, but that nothing else exists—a very different doctrine.

#### *Foundation of Vedāntism.*

In the twilight a rope is mistaken for a snake; mother-of-pearl, for silver.

#### *Conclusion.*

As the snake and silver are only imaginary, so our senses deceive us with regard to the existence of the world, which is all *Máyá*, illusion, a dream. Nothing exists but Brahma, “One without a second.”

On this very slender basis the lofty superstructure of Vedāntism rests.

The inveterate tendency of the Hindus to accept illusory analogies, mere illustrations, as arguments, may again be noticed. It is accepted as proof that atheism, theism, monotheism and polytheism are all true because there are different ways of getting up to the top of a house! The very opposite inferences may be drawn from two illustrations, like the following: ‘As there is only one sun in the heavens, so there is only one God.’ ‘As the stars in the sky are innumerable, so are the gods.’ The argument in both cases is equally unsound, although the inferences are in the one case true, and in the other false.

It will now be shown that the doctrine of “One without a second,” so far from being *supported* by evidence, is *contradicted* by the strongest evidence.

3. **It is contradicted by the evidence of all our senses under the most favourable circumstances for forming a correct judgment.**—If one sense, under unfavourable circumstances, deceive us; it is corrected when these are removed or by the other senses. All our senses at noon-day, when we are in the enjoyment of perfect health, testify to the real existence of an external world. Kanáda says that it is only when the senses are unsound or defective or when some bad habit is contracted that they deceive us. Gotama says, “If all evidence is to be rejected, the refutation itself is inadmissible.”

4. **It is refuted by our natural convictions.**—“An English philosopher says that while man has the exclusive privilege of forming general theorems, he has also a monopoly of the *privilege of absurdity*, to which no other living creature is subject. *And of men*, he adds, “*those are of all the most subject to it that profess philosophy.*”<sup>\*</sup> Cicero had the same opinion. “There is nothing so absurd,” said he, “which has not been held by some philosopher.” To none does it apply more than to Hindu philosophers. As Monier Williams remarks, “The more evidently physical and metaphysical speculations are opposed to common sense, the more favour do they find with some Hindu thinkers.” Mr. Slater says: “A system, however logical, condemns itself, when it contradicts any of those natural convictions which are intended, as Dr. Thomas Brown says, to save us from the folly of our own ratiocinations.”<sup>†</sup>

The Latin for ‘I’ is *ego*, and *non* means ‘not.’ We naturally distinguish between the *ego* and the *non-ego*, the “I” and the “not I,” the subject and the object, ourselves and the things around us. No one but a learned fool need ask like Ribhu in the Vishnu Purana (II. 16) “which is *you* and which is *I*?” The doctrine of non-duality is therefore refuted by our natural convictions.

5. **It is contradicted by Reason.**—Another “great sentence of the Vedānta is *Tat tvam asi*, ‘It thou art,’ or *Brahmāsmi*, ‘I am Brahma.’ As already mentioned, a sannyasi is enjoined frequently to repeat *soham* ‘I am He.’ *Awakened India*, a Vedāntic journal published in Madras, says that the Vedānta “is the one philosophy which dares to call man God himself, not merely the son of God or His servant (vol. I., p. 75). The *Brahmavādin* (Oct. 12, 1895, p. 80) makes the same claim in terms equally blasphemous :

“Man is not the mere creature of a God ; he is God himself. He has not simply the image impressed upon him of his Creator. He is himself the Creator.”

Sankara also maintains the identity of Brahma and the human self or soul. With reference to such a claim, Gaudapurnānanda thus replies :

“Thou art verily rified, O thou animal soul, of thy understanding, by this dark theory of Māyā because like a maniac, thou constantly ravest, ‘I am Brahma.’ Where is thy divinity, thy sovereignty, thy omniscience ? O thou animal soul ! thou art as different from

\* Dr. K. M. Banerjea's *Hindu Philosophy*, p. 14.

† *Studies in the Upanishads*, pp. 49, 50.

Brahma as is a mustard seed from Mount Meru. Thou art a finite soul, He is infinite. Thou canst occupy but one space at a time; He is always everywhere. Thou art momentarily happy or miserable, He is happy at all times. How canst thou say 'I am He?' Hast thou no shame?\*"†

Rámánuja's refutation is equally striking :

"The word *tat* (it) stands for the ocean of immortality, full of supreme felicity. The word *tvam* (thou) stands for a miserable person, distracted through fear of the world. The two cannot therefore be one. They are substantially different. He is to be worshipped by the whole world. Thou art but His slave. How could there be an image or reflection of the infinite and spotless One? There may be a reflection of a finite substance; how could there be such a thing of the Infinite? How canst thou, oh slow of thought! say, 'I am He,' who has set up this immense sphere of the universe in its fulness? By the mercy of the Most High a little understanding has been committed to thee: it is not for thee, oh perverse one, to say, therefore I am God."†

Taking the words in their plain meaning, the climax of Hindu philosophy is a blasphemous falsehood, too horrible almost to mention—for a puny, ignorant, proud, sinful mortal to say, "I am God!" Such assertions can be compared only to the ravings of a madman in a lunatic asylum who fancies himself a king. Yet, according to Hindu philosophy, he is the only wise man! How true are the words, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."

6. **The dogma is unknown to the four Vedas.**—Hindus regard the Vedas as the highest authority; they are supposed to be the fountain-head of wisdom, breathed forth by Brahma himself; yet from beginning to end such an expression as "One without a second," is not to be found. It originated with the writers of the Upanishads, hundreds of years later, and is only one of their many wild speculations, as true as that 101 arteries proceed from the heart.

7. **Vedantism stifles Religion.**—Brahma is represented as an utterly selfish being, caring only for his own happiness: He is like a Hindu raja slumbering in his palace, heedless of what is going on in his dominions. Love, prayer, worship are three great elements of religion: Vedántism destroys them all.

Miss Waldo says: "Brahma is too much of an abstraction to be thought of—far more to be loved.‡ "A Vedántic God,"

\* Banerjes's *Dialogues on Hindu Philosophy*, p. 378.

† *Ibid.*, p. 408.

‡ *Brahmavádin*, vol. II., p. 141.

says *The Hindu*, "is a cold, dreary, philosophic conception which the Hindu masses have never cared for, which the vast majority of mankind can never be brought to revere, and which is quite incapable of influencing them in the formation of character and life."\*

Prayer is a universal instinct. Guizot eloquently says :

"Alone of all beings here below, man prays ! Among his moral instincts none is more natural, more universal, more indestructible than prayer. The child inclines to it with eager docility. The old man betakes himself thither, as to refuge against decay and solitude. Prayer comes spontaneously to young lips which with difficulty stammer out the name of God, and to dying lips which no longer have strength to pronounce it. Among all nations, celebrated or obscure, civilised or barbarous, one meets at every step acts and forms of invocation."

Tennyson says :

"Speak, to Him thou for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—  
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

If Vedántism be true, says the Rev. T. E. Slater, "then prayer,—the universal religion, where men of every creed can meet at the feet of one heavenly Father—and worship—the noblest activities of the soul,—must be abandoned."† It is useless to address in prayer or worship a God unconscious even of its own existence.

The Vedánta, says Professor Flint :

"Would divest God of character : it denies to Him self-consciousness, fatherly love, providential care, redeeming mercy : under pretence of exalting Him above all categories of thought and existence it reduces Him to the level of dead things, of necessary processes, of abstract ideas, or even to the still lower level of the unknowable and non-existent ; and it thereby leaves no room for that union with God in rational, pure, and holy love, which is the only basis, the grand distinction, the power, and the glory of true religion."‡

It may be objected that the ignorant are recommended to pray to the personal gods of the Hindu Pantheon. Such, however, according to Vedántism, have no existence. Flint says :

\* Quoted by Rev. T. E. Slater, *Studies in the Upanishads*, p. 19.

† *Studies in the Upanishads*, pp. 61, 62.

‡ *Anti-theistic Theories*, p. 387.

“ If it look upon the popular deities as mere fictions of the popular mind, its association with polytheism can only mean a conscious alliance with falsehood, the deliberate propagation of lies, a persistent career of hypocrisy.” p. 390.

**8. Vedantism strikes at the roots of Morality.**—The *Brahmavádin* says :

“ If we know that there is nothing else but the A'tman, that everything else is but a dream, that the world's poverties, its miseries, its wickedness and goodness are mere delusions and hallucinations, then we become Jnána Yogins.” June 5, 1897.

“ Wickedness and goodness mere delusions and hallucinations!” Prahlada says to Vishnu, “ Thou art knowledge and ignorance, thou art truth and falsehood ; thou art poison and nectar.”\* The eternal distinction between right and wrong is thus blotted out. Flint says :

“ The worst passions and vilest actions of humanity are states and operations of the One Absolute Being. Man cannot be justly held responsible for what truly belongs to God—for affections or deeds which are necessarily manifestations of the Divine nature.” p. 395.

Man feels himself a free agent and responsible for his conduct. Conscience is the highest principle of the human spirit. Vedantism contradicts its most sacred and certain convictions, and directly tends to deaden and destroy it.

**9. Vedantism contradicts the great doctrines of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.**—It is a pleasing sign of progress that these two doctrines are beginning to be generally accepted among educated Hindus. They will be noticed separately.

**1. The Fatherhood of God.**—Some Hindus claim that this doctrine is taught in their own sacred books. In the Sastras Father may be one of the many names given to God ; but *not* is the source of our existence. What particularly distinguishes an earthly father is that, under God, he is the author of the child's existence. This can be said of no other person. In that sense neither Brahma nor any Hindu deity can be called Father. According to Vedantism and all other systems of Hindu philosophy, souls are as eternal as Brahma itself. The Bible, on the other hand, says, that God is our Father by creation. “ Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?” Christianity teaches us to address God as

\* *Vishnu Purana*, I. 19.

our "Father in heaven." It is true that we have been disobedient, rebellious children, but we are earnestly invited to return, asking forgiveness.

The ancestors of Europeans and Aryan Hindus once worshipped the same God under the same name, *Dyaush-Pitar*, Heaven-Father. Max Müller beautifully says :

"Thousands of years have passed away since the Aryan nations separated to travel to the North and the South, the West and the East : they have each formed their languages, they have each founded empires and philosophies, they have each built temples and razed them to the ground ; they have all grown older, and it may be wiser and better ; but when they search for a name for that which is most exalted and yet most dear to every one of us, when they wish to express both awe and love, the infinite and the finite, they can but do what their old fathers did when gazing up the eternal sky, and feeling the presence of a Being as far as far and as near as near can be ; they can but combine the self-same words and utter once more the primeval Aryan prayer, Heaven-Father, in that form which will endure for ever, ' Our Father, which art in heaven.'"<sup>\*</sup>

2. *The Brotherhood of Man.*—This is strongly denied by the system of caste, but it is so likewise by the Vedānta. Brothers are children of the same father. As already shown, according to the Vedānta, we have no father, and therefore we are not brothers.

Deussen, with a want of common sense worthy of a Hindu philosopher, tries to improve upon the second commandment of Christianity, " Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." We are brothers, being sons of the same great Father, and should therefore " love as brethren."

In his *Elements of Metaphysics*, he thus explains our duty to others :

" You shall love your neighbour as yourselves,—because you *are*, your neighbour, and mere illusion makes you believe that your neighbour is something different from yourselves. Or in the words of the Bhagavad Gitā : he, who knows himself in everything and everything in himself, *will not injure himself by himself, na hinasti ātmānā ātmānam*. This is the sum and tenor of all morality, and this is the standpoint of a man knowing himself as Brahman. He *feels himself as everything*,—so he will not desire anything, for he has whatever can be had ; he *feels himself as everything*,—so he will not injure anything, for nobody injures himself." p. 336.

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\* See Pice Papers, No. 39.



Test this practically. A starving beggar asks charity. The Professor says, "Why do you ask alms of me? You and I are the same; it is mere illusion makes you believe yourself to be different. You will not desire anything, for you have already whatever can be had." Would the beggar be satisfied with such reasoning?\*

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### VEDANTISM TESTED BY ITS FRUITS.

The Great Teacher says, "By their fruits you shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Although India may be said to have been "steeped" in Vedántism for two thousand years, other influences have also been at work. God has not left Himself entirely without a witness. The teaching of Hinduism has been a mixture of truth and falsehood, and the character of the people is a reflection of this compound influence.

It may first be mentioned that although the Swami claims for the Hindus the highest degree of "spirituality," he confesses that it is accompanied by several features in actual life of an undesirable character. He says:

"We are lazy; we cannot work; we cannot combine; we cannot love each other; we are immensely selfish; not three of us can come together without hating each other, without being jealous of each other. That is the state in which we are, hopelessly disorganized mobs, immensely selfish; fighting each other for centuries, whether a certain mark is to put this way or that way; writing volumes and volumes upon such momentous questions as whether the look of a man spoils my food or not!" *Lectures*, p. 157.

How all this comports with the pinnacle of religious greatness to which the Hindus are exalted, it is difficult to imagine.

In describing the fruits of Vedánta, only those which legitimately follow from its principal dogmas will be mentioned, and of these space permits only a few and briefly.

1. **It has increased the tendency to Idolatry for which the Hindus are notorious.**—Monier Williams has been quoted to the effect that there is nothing in heaven or earth which a Hindu will not worship. This to him is explicable on the

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\* See Pice Papers on *The Fatherhood of God and The Brotherhood of Man.*

principle that Brahma is the only existence. Whatever he worships, he is worshipping Brahma. As already mentioned, Vedántism, says Flint,

“ *Instead of elevating and purifying Hindu polytheism, it has contributed to increase the number, the absurdity, and the foulness of its superstitions.*”\*

2. **It benumbs the religious faculty.**—Worship, love, prayer are three great elements of religion. Like the withered arm of an ascetic, an organ which is not used shrivels up. If man is Brahma, why should he worship himself? Miss Waldo and *The Hindu* have been quoted to show that Brahma cannot awaken any feelings of love. It is useless to pray to a divinity unconscious even of its own existence. Flint says :

“ The mystical piety of India, when strictly pantheistic, knows nothing of the gratitude for Divine mercy and the trust in Divine righteousness which characterise evangelical piety. Instead of love and communion in love, it can only commend to us the contemplation of an object which is incomprehensible, devoid of all affections, and indifferent to all actions. When feelings like love, gratitude, and trust are expressed in the hymns and prayers of Hindu worship, it is in consequence of a virtual denial of the principles of pantheism ; it is because the mind has consented to regard as real what it had previously pronounced illusory, and to personify what it had declared to be impersonal.”†

3. **It deadens the Conscience.**—According to the *Brahmavádin*, to the *Jnána Yogin* “wickedness and goodness are mere delusions and hallucinations.” (June 5, 1897). Swami Vivekananda has also been quoted for the assertion that “our evil is of no more value than our good, and our good of no more value than our evil.” “The distinctions of right and wrong are mere appearances which will vanish as soon as the dream-state of life is dispelled.”‡ As Brahma is the only being that exists, every action that is performed, even the most wicked, is in reality done by it. Hence Hindu murderers often attribute their crimes to God, and show a callous indifference.

4. **It has promoted selfishness and discouraged philanthropic effort for the improvement of India.**—There is an Indian proverb, *Yathá deva, tahtah bhakta*, As is the God, so is the

\* *Anti-theistic Theories*, p. 391.

† *Brahmavádin*, June 19, 1897.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 388.

worshipper. "Show me your God," said an old Greek writer, "and I will show you your men." We naturally become like the gods, our highest ideals.

The Brahma, the Paramátman of the Vedánta, is a being without love or mercy. It neither sees, nor hears, nor knows, nor cares about any of its creatures. It has neither the power nor the will to do good or evil,—to reward the righteous, or punish the wicked. The more a Hindu is like Brahma, the more selfish will he be, and the less profitable to all around him.

Bishop Caldwell asks, what has the Vedánta done for the land of its birth ?

"Has it promoted popular education, civilization, and good government? Has it educated the people in generous emotions? Has it abolished caste or even mitigated its evils? Has it obtained for widows the liberty of remarriage? Has it driven away dancing girls from the temples? Has it abolished polygamy? Has it repressed vice and encouraged virtue? Was it this philosophy which abolished female infanticide, the meriah sacrifice, and the burning of widows? Is it this which is covering the country with a network of railways and telegraphs? Is it this which has kindled amongst the native inhabitants of India the spirit of improvement and enterprise which is now apparent? Need I ask the question? All this time the philosophy of quietism has been sound asleep or 'with its eyes fixed on the point of its nose,' according to the directions of the Gita, it has been thinking itself out of its wits. This philosophy has substantially been the creed of the majority of the people for upwards of two thousand years; and if it had emanated from God, the proofs of its divine origin ought long ere this to have been apparent; but it has all this time been too much absorbed in 'contemplating self by means of self' to have had any time or thought left for endeavouring to improve the world. What could be expected of the philosophy of apathy, but that it should leave things to take their course? There is much real work now being done in India in the way of teaching truth, putting down evil, and promoting the public welfare; but that work is being done, not by Vedántists or quietists of any school, but by Christians from Europe whose highest philosophy is to do good, and by those Natives of India who have been stimulated by the teaching and example of Europeans to choose a similar philosophy."

"The remarks of Lord Macaulay in his essay on Lord Bacon on the Stoical philosophy of the ancients as contrasted with the modern Baconian philosophy, which is developed from and leavened by the practical teaching of the Christian Scriptures, will illustrate the unprofitableness of the Vedántic philosophy better than can be done by any words of mine. I commend the study of that brilliant

Essay to the youthful Hindu. If Sanskrit words be substituted for the Greek technical terms quoted by Macaulay, every word that he says respecting the philosophy of Zeno may be said with equal truth of the philosophy of the Gita."

A few extracts are given below from Macaulay's Essay :—

"The chief peculiarity of Bacon's philosophy seems to us to have been this, that it aimed at things altogether different from those which his predecessors had proposed to themselves.

"What then was the end which Bacon proposed to himself? It was, to use his own emphatic expression, 'fruit.' It was the multiplying of human enjoyments and the mitigating of human sufferings. It was 'the relief of man's estate.'"

"Two words form the key of the Baconian doctrines, Utility and Progress. The ancient philosophy disdained to be useful, and was content to be stationary. It dealt largely in theories of moral perfection, which were so sublime that they never could be more than theories; in attempts to solve insoluble enigmas; in exhortations to the attainment of unattainable frames of mind. It could not condescend to the humble office of ministering to the comfort of human beings.

"The ancient philosophy was a treadmill, not a path. It was made up of revolving questions, of controversies which were always beginning again. It was a contrivance for having much exertion and no progress.

"It might indeed sharpen and invigorate the brains of those who devoted themselves to it; but such disputes could add nothing to the stock of knowledge. There was no accumulation of truth, no heritage of truth acquired by the labour of one generation and bequeathed to another, to be again transmitted with large additions to a third.

"The same sects were still battling with the same unsatisfactory arguments, about the same interminable questions. There had been plenty of ploughing, harrowing, reaping, threshing. But the garners contained only smut and stubble.

"Words and more words, and nothing but words, had been all the fruit of all the toil of all the most renowned sages of sixty generations. The ancient philosophers promised what was impracticable; they despised what was practicable; they filled the world with long words and long beards; and they left it as wicked and ignorant as they found it."

Much more do the foregoing remarks apply to Hindu philosophy. It is notorious that the men most steeped in it, the pandits are, of all classes, the most narrow-minded, bigoted,

and the greatest enemies of social progress. Judged by its fruits, Hindu philosophy, when tested, is found wanting.

It may be objected that the *Brahmavádin* is much more enlightened; but this is due to Western influence.

For further remarks on Vedántism, the reader is referred to *Hindu Pantheism*, from Professor Flint's *Anti-theistic Theories* (Price  $\frac{1}{4}$  anna), and to the *English Translation of the Vedánta-Sára, with an Examination of the System*.

## DUTY TO EXAMINE HINDUISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

**Religiousness of the Hindus.**—The Hindus are, in their way, one of the most religious people in the world. It has been said of them that “they eat religiously, drink religiously, bathe religiously, dress religiously, and *sin* religiously.” It is so far right that religion engages much attention. Our stay in this world is comparatively short, even in the case of the longest lived. To the man of fourscore, when he looks back, it seems as if it were only a few days since he was a child. Consider, on the other hand, the eternity to which we are speeding, and which we may enter at any moment. The man would justly be considered a fool who spent all his fortune in a single day, and had to starve the remainder of his life. That man is an incomparably greater fool who attends only to his body, which must so soon die, and neglects his soul which will live for ever either in happiness or misery.

**Duty of Religious Inquiry.**—There are two kinds of money, good and bad. Suppose a man is paid for his labour in bad rupees, however many he may have collected, he is, in reality, worth nothing. Just as there are coiners who make bad money and pass it off as good, so cunning wicked men, for their own gain, have devised false religions to impose upon the ignorant.

There are very many religions in the world. A North India proverb says, *Jitne muni, itne mat*, There are as many religions as there are Munis. In general, religions are opposed to one another. One religion says that there is only one God; another says that there are 33 crores of divinities. Some say that the soul of man is part of God; others say that it is quite distinct; one religion forbids the worship of idols; others enjoin it; one religion says that sin may be washed away by bathing at certain places; another says that all this is vain.

Religions so contradictory cannot all be true. Most of them must be false, and those who follow them are like men paid for their labour in bad money.

Many people, without inquiry, blindly follow the religion of their forefathers. They act more wisely in worldly matters. When a clerk receives his salary, he counts the rupees, and sees that they are all good. Even a woman when she goes to the bazaar to buy an earthen pot, taps it to find if it is sound before she gives the money. In religion, people generally act like a flock of sheep, which, if the first leap over a bridge, the rest follow and are drowned.

Bad money may be known from good by means of the touchstone. God has given us a touchstone to distinguish between true and false religions—our reason. If we do not use it, we will suffer like those men who take bad rupees without examination. The following remarks are intended to assist those who wish to investigate how far the religion of their forefathers is true and to be accepted.

**Religious Reform needed in India.**—It must be confessed that the great mass of the Hindus do not admit this. They are perfectly satisfied with their religion, and think it the best in the world. The Vedas are eternal and given from the mouth of Brahma; any change would be for the worse. There are even educated men who regard Hinduism as a “monument of ancient wisdom,” a “marvellously consistent and perfect system,” “inferior in respect to the purity and practical character of its sacred truths to no other religion in the world.”

On the other hand, the most intelligent Hindus admit that reforms are needed. *The Hindu*, a leading Indian journal, says:

“As in Christian countries, so in our country also, our moral and religious ideas are derived from our theology. But this theology as well as these ideas must be explained away, modified, and reformed in certain aspects at least, to suit the changes that in course of time take place in the intelligence of the people. It is no longer possible to justify to the young educated Hindu apparently immoral and crude practices because they are sanctioned in certain Puranas. The Hindu mythology has to be purged of the absurdities that have overgrown it during centuries of ignorance and of superstitious and timid isolation. In the same manner, the moral ideas of our common people have to be improved. An orthodox Hindu would tolerate falsehood, cowardice and self-abasement, but would damn to perdition his neighbour who swerves the least from accepted conventions even in the details of personal habits. Such moral

perversity does not indicate a healthy social condition. Similarly our ideas of charity, of social distinction, education, and social well-being in general have to be drawn out of the influence of an obsolete and backward civilization, and brought in harmony with the fresh spirit of the time." *June 24th, 1887.*

The foregoing proposals must commend themselves to every intelligent Hindu.

The reforms also should be thorough. An old insecure building may be whitewashed so as to look apparently strong; but it will bury in its ruins those who seek shelter in it during a storm.

**"No more destructive mistake."**—The late Sir H. S. Maine was one of the ablest Europeans that ever came to India, and he took a warm interest in educated Hindus. In one of his Convocation Addresses he thus referred to the **"irrationally reactionary purposes"** to which some of them apply the learning they have acquired :

"It is not to be concealed, and I see plainly that educated Natives do not conceal it from themselves, that they have, by the fact of their education, broken for ever with much in their history, much in their customs, much in their creed. Yet I constantly read, and sometimes hear, elaborate attempts on their part to persuade themselves and others, that there is a sense in which these rejected portions of Native history, and usage, and belief, are perfectly in harmony with the modern knowledge which the educated class has acquired, and with the modern civilization to which it aspires. Very possibly, this may be nothing more than a mere literary feat, and a consequence of the over-literary education they receive. But whatever the cause, there can be no greater mistake, and under the circumstances of this country, no more destructive mistake."

Babu J. N. Bhattacharya says :

"Reverence ought to be by all means shown to persons and institutions that have a just claim to it. But nothing can, in my opinion, be more sinful than to speak respectfully of persons who are enemies of mankind, and to whitewash rotten institutions by esoteric explanations and fine phrases."\*

Swami Vivekananda makes a similar remark :

"Shame on humanity that strong men should spend their time on these superstitions, spend their time in inventing allegories to explain the most rotten superstitions in the world." *Lectures, pp. 196, 197.*

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\* Preface to *Hindu Castes and Sects*, p. v.

The late Bunkim Chunder Chatterjee thus tried to whitewash Krishna.

The words of the Indian statesman, Sir Madhava Rao, should be deeply pondered :

*What is not TRUE is not PATRIOTIC.*

#### SWAMI VIVEKANANDA, AN UNSAFE RELIGIOUS GUIDE.

Miss Müller says in her Prefatory Note to his Lectures, that he was treated with the "veneration, reverence and devoted love wont to be shown by Hindus to those looked upon as Divine Messengers." Was this justified by the facts of the case ?

The following is a summary of the statements made in the foregoing pages, where references are given for their authority.

Babu Norendra Nath Dutt was educated at the General Assembly's Institution, Calcutta, and graduated as a B. A. in the second class. For a time he was a Brahma, and took part in Keshub Chunder Sen's religious plays. While a Brahma teacher in the Metropolitan Institution, the editor of the *Bangabasi* says, he tried "to show him the hollowness of Hinduism." Afterwards, with some other young men, he became a disciple of Ramakrishna, a Guru who, by his own account, was unlearned.

Going to Chicago as an Indian representative to the Parliament of Religions, he dubbed himself Swami Vivekananda. He there gave an address which has been well described as "inadequate, inaccurate, inconsistent, and inconclusive." His strange garb gained him popularity among ladies; but when the novelty wore off, he had to confine himself to smaller meetings. In America various societies have been formed to study the principal religions of the world, and the Swami was popular among some of them as a supposed correct exponent of Hindu Philosophy.

The Swami made the following assertions about his success in the West :

"The great Sri Ramakrishna is worshipped literally by thousands in Europe and America, and to-morrow will be worshipped by thousands more." Lectures, p. 185.

"Before ten years elapse, a vast majority of the English people will be Vedántic."\*

"I helped on the tide of Vedánta which is flooding the world."\*

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\*Swami Vivekananda interviewed by a representative of the *Madras Mail*, Feb. 6, 1897.



The accounts given of the Swami's work and the letters from forty prominent Americans show that he speaks of his achievements à la Baron Munchausen, and that he has done nothing to disprove the charge that Bengalees are "monumental liars."

The Swami received much kindness in America, especially from the ladies. He repays it with base ingratitude. He makes the following slanderous and false statements :

*"In the United States scarcely is there a happy home. There may be some, but the number of unhappy homes and marriages is so large that it passes all description."*†

*"Scarcely could I go to a meeting or a society but I found three-quarters of the women present had turned out their husbands and children. It is so here, there, and everywhere."*†

According to the Swami's computation, Mrs. Ole Bull, of Cambridge, who showed him such hospitality, "three to one" had turned out her husband and children !

**Denial of Sin.**—Nothing shows more strongly the unfitness of the Swami to be a safe religious guide than his denial of sin. At Chicago he said :—

"Ye are the children of God, the sharers 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."

This is repeated in a New York lecture, quoted in *The Brahmavádin*, August 29, 1896 :

"The worst lie that you ever told yourself was that you were a sinner, or a wicked man."

The very reverse is the case. The worst lie that you ever told yourself is that you are *not* a sinner. Who can truthfully say that he has never spoken a lie or angry word, that he has never given way to envious, lustful thoughts ?

Nearly the whole human race, in all ages, with one voice, acknowledge themselves to be sinners.

The Rig-Veda contains some petitions for the pardon of sins. Varuna is thus addressed :

"Thou, O righteous king, have mercy on me ! Like as a rope from a calf, remove from me my sin." II. 28.

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† *Brahmavádin*, June 19, 1897.

In the Atharva-Veda the burden of mental sins is felt :

“ Whatever wrong we have committed, sleeping or waking, by ill wish, dislike or slander,

“ All these offences, which deserve displeasure, may Agni take from us and keep them distant.” VI. 45.

In the Brahmanas sacrifice is enjoined as the annulment of sin. Max Müller, referring to the whole continent of Africa, says :

“ Wherever we now see kraals and cattle-pens depend upon it there was to be seen once, as there is to be seen even now, the smoke of sacrifice rising up from earth to heaven.”

The many millions of Hindus, by bathing in the Ganges and other supposed sacred waters, with one voice, confess that they are sinners.

It is only pride and ignorance that make a man deny that he is a sinner. The holiest men are the first to acknowledge it. Some Brahmans daily make this acknowledgment :—

Pápa'ham pápakarmahám pápátma pápasambhava.

“ I am sin ; I commit sin : my soul is sinful ; I am conceived in sin.”

The first step in true religion is the heartfelt confession to God, “ Father, I have sinned, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son.” The Rev. F. W. Kellett, M.A., in a paper entitled, *The Sense of Sin in the Light of History*,\* shows that “ the deeper the sense of sin, the truer the religion.”

The Swami, by his denial of sin, shows that he knows nothing of true religion, and that he is a teacher of deadly error. Woe! woe! woe! to those who follow a blind guide to their own destruction.

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## EUROPEAN ESTIMATES OF HINDUISM.

According to the Swami, “ The eyes of the whole world are now turned towards the land of India for spiritual food, and India has to work for all the races.” The Editor of the *Indian Mirror* divined that it was “ the higher Hinduism ” which was needed to “ satisfy the famishing souls of the American people.”

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\* Sold by Mr. A. T. Scott, Tract Depôt, Madras, Price † Anna.

The opinions expressed of Hinduism by some eminent and able Europeans will show how far the foregoing statements are correct.

What Schopenhauer says about the 'Oupnek'hat' and the "Two Voices" of Max Müller have already been noticed.

**Sir H. S. Maine**—In a Convocation Address, he says that "Oriental culture" means "false morality, false history, false philosophy, false physics."

In *Ancient Law*, Caste, the main feature of Hinduism, is styled "the most disastrous and blighting of human institutions."

**Sir Alfred Lyall**—Hinduism is thus described :

"A mere troubled sea without shore or visible horizon, driven to and fro by the winds of boundless credulity and grotesque invention."

*Morality not expected from the gods :*

"Among most of those millions the religious conception has not yet reached that particular stage at which one object of divine Government is understood to be the advancement of morals. On the other hand, there is a considerable minority whose ideas have passed beyond this stage, and who conceive their Divinity as supremely indifferent to all things, material as well as moral."

"The gods in no way admit themselves to be bound by human views of morality, while the functions of popular religion very much resemble, in their highest range, the functions of a modern government; its business is confined to procuring material blessings, warding off evil, contending against such physical calamities as famine or pestilence, and codifying rules of social utility which have been verified by experience. . . . So long as the gods do not bring more tremendous misfortune upon the country they need not be particularly moral; their specialty not being the direction of morals, as in later faiths, but the distribution of temporal blessings and curses."\*

*Probable fate of the Hindu gods :*

"It seems possible that the old gods of Hinduism will die in these new elements of intellectual light and air as quickly as a net full of fish lifted up out of the water; that the alteration in the religious needs of such an intellectual people as the Hindus, which will have been caused by a change in their circumstances, will make it impossible for them to find in their new world a place for their ancient deities."†

\* *Asiatic Studies*, pp. 59, 62.

† *Ibid.*, p. 299.

**Macaulay.**—In a speech in Parliament he says of Hinduism :

“The great majority of the population of India consist of idolaters, blindly attached to doctrines and rites which, considered merely with reference to the temporal interests of mankind, are in the highest degree pernicious. In no part of the world has a religion ever existed more unfavourable to the moral and intellectual health of our race. The Brahmanical mythology is so absurd that it necessarily debases every mind which receives it as truth ; and with this absurd mythology is bound up an absurd system of physics, an absurd geography, an absurd astronomy. Nor is this form of Paganism more favourable to art than to science. Through the whole Hindu Pantheon you will look in vain for anything resembling those beautiful and majestic forms which stood in the shrines of ancient Greece. All is hideous, and grotesque, and ignoble. As this superstition is of all superstitions the most irrational, and of all superstitions the most inelegant, so it is of all superstitions the most immoral. Emblems of vice are objects of public worship. Acts of vice are acts of public worship. The courtesans are as much a part of the establishment of the temple, as much the ministers of the gods as the priests. Crimes against life, crimes against property, are not only permitted but enjoined, by this odious theology. But for our interference human victims would still be offered to the Ganges, and the widow would still be laid on the pile with the corpse of her husband, and burned alive by her own children. It is by the command and under the special protection of one of the most powerful goddesses that the Thugs join themselves to the unsuspecting travellers, make friends with him, slip the noose round his neck, plunge their knives into his eyes, hide him in the earth, and divide his money and baggage.”\*

**Dr. Duff.**—Probably to no European who ever came to India, are educated Hindus more indebted than to the late Dr. Duff. When he landed, Orientalism reigned supreme in Government education. Arabic and Sanskrit were the languages for which Government Colleges were maintained, the students of which had to be supported. In the Calcutta Madressa, 77 students of Arabic received about Rs. 500 a month in scholarships. Not only was no good done, but a great amount of evil. Macaulay wrote in his celebrated Minute :

“What we spend on the Arabic and Sanskrit Colleges is not merely a dead loss to the cause of truth ; it is bounty money paid to raise up champions of error. It goes to form not merely a nest of helpless place-hunters but of bigots prompted alike by passion and by interest to raise a cry against every useful scheme of education.”

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\* Speech on the Gates of Somnath.

Dr. Duff landed in India in 1830, four years before Macaulay, and had at once advocated the teaching of English. In Sir Charles Trevelyan, then a young civilian, he found a zealous co-adjutor. Trevelyan had married Macaulay's favourite sister, and through him the latter was gained over to Dr. Duff's view about English. Thus English education in India owes its origin mainly to Dr. Duff,—the beginning of a momentous revolution now in progress.

Dr. Duff devoted his life to India and laboured for its benefit with ceaseless zeal. What opinion did he express of Hinduism ?

"In that vast realm is the most stupendous fortress and citadel of ancient error and idolatry now in the world. Its foundations pierce downwards into the Stygian pool; its walls and battlements, crusted over with the hoar of untold centuries, start upwards into the clouds. It is defended by three hundred and thirty millions of gods and goddesses—the personations of evil—of types and forms to be paralleled only by the spirits of Pandemonium. Within are congregated two hundred and fifty millions of human captives, the willing victims of the most egregious 'falsities and lies' that have ever been hatched by the Prince of Darkness,—pantheisms and atheisms, transcendental idealisms and grovelling materialisms, rationalisms and legends, and all-devouring credulities,—with fastings and ablutions, senseless mummeries, loathsome impurities and bloody barbarous sacrifices, in number and variety vastly surpassing all that is to be found in the world besides. A dungeon so stupendous, no wonder though men—left to the blindness of their own perverted reason—should have attempted to prove to be altogether impregnable, its defenders invincible, its dungeoned inmates incurably wedded to their delusions and lies."\*

The above language is very strong, but, in its main features, it is strictly true.

It is admitted that in the "encyclopædia of religions," called Hinduism, there are contained some great truths and excellent moral maxims; but mixed up with them there is much deadly error.

In Milton's *Paradise Lost*, two evil spirits are conspicuous—*Satan*, representing pride, and *Belial*, the personification of lust. In Hinduism both have prominent places.

*Awakened India*† says that "Vedānta is the one philosophy which dares to call man God himself, not merely the son of God or His servant." Sankara asserts that Brahma and the soul are identical. This Satanic pride, this blasphemy is confined to

\* *India and its Evangelization*, pp. 144-146.

† Vol. I, p. 75.

Hinduism. Besides, as already shown, Vedántism cuts at the roots both religion and morality.

On the other hand, with Belial, some of its practices fall in degradation below the lowest savages. The Vallabhácháris, to merit heaven, give their wives and daughters to their gurus to be prostituted. The abominations connected with the five M's of the Vámácháris are too revolting to be described. Such, too, is their moral debasement that they call themselves "the perfect ones," while those not initiated into their vile practices are styled "beasts."\*

The President of the College of Pundits, Nadya, denounces strongly the "abomination worshipping sects" of India. Swami Vivekananda says in a Calcutta address :

"Give up this filthy *Vámáchára* that is killing your country . . . . When I enter my own country with all its boast of culture, it is a most disgraceful hellish place I find, when I see how much the *Vámáchára* has entered our society. The *Vámáchára* sects are honeycombing our society in Bengal, and it is those who carry on the most horrible debauchery at night, who in the daytime come out and preach most kindly about *Achára*, and in this way they are backed by the most dreadful books." p. 260.

Of the 33 crores of divinities included in the Hindú pantheon, there is not one represented as a holy being, to whom the words may be addressed, "Thou lovest righteousness and hatest iniquity." Such beings as Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva never existed. They are the mere inventions of men in the dark ages. The Hindus, like the ancient Greeks and Romans, "Instead of transferring to man that which is divine, transferred human sins to their gods."

Krishna, of the Bhagavad Gita, may be claimed to be an exception, and to represent the Hindu ideal divinity. It is true that he is a great advance upon the Krishna of the Bhagavat Purana ; but he is clearly the invention of a Vaishnava Brahman.

"Of all forgeries," says Dr. K. M. Banerjea, "the most flagitious and profane is that which connects the name of the Almighty with an untruth." Krishna claims divine origin for caste. Principal Caird says, "The system of caste involves the worst of all wrongs to humanity—that of hallowing evil by the authority and sanction of religion."†

\* *Brahmanism and Hinduism*, by Monier Williams, p. 191.

† See *The Bhagavad Gita*, with English Translation, Notes, &c., 108 pp., 4. As. Sold by Mr. A. T. Scott, or the Pice Paper *The Bhagavad Gita*.

"In the West," says the Rev. H. Whitehead, "religion upholds the principle of brotherhood against its foes; in India, she binds it hand and foot, and delivers it over as a helpless captive to its enemies."

Such are the very different estimates of Hinduism expressed by Swami Vivekananda and Europeans of exceptional ability. It is the duty of each person to examine for himself as far as means permit. The Bible says, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

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### STUDY OF HINDUISM.

An intelligent acquaintance with a religion should be possessed by its adherents. The sacred books of each creed are its most correct exponents. Happily, through the magnificent series of *THE SACRED BOOKS OF THE EAST*, edited by Professor Max Müller, and other translations, one can now form a fairly accurate idea of the principal religions of the world. It must be acknowledged, however, that on account of their cost, the translations are accessible to comparatively few. To meet this difficulty, the Christian Literature Society for India has commenced a cheap Series, entitled, *THE SACRED BOOKS OF THE EAST DESCRIBED AND EXAMINED*. The plan is to give complete translations of shorter works, like the Bhagavad Gita, and extracts of sufficient length to enable one to judge of larger works, with explanatory notes from the best authorities.

It is not enough merely to read the books written many centuries ago. Since then knowledge has increased wonderfully. Each work, therefore, of the above Series includes a review of it in the light of the nineteenth century. True doctrines will stand the test; false doctrines will deservedly be exploded.

Hindus studying their own religion should naturally begin with the *RIG-VEDA*, the oldest and most sacred book of their religion. There is a complete English translation by Mr. R. T. H. Griffith, formerly Principal of the Sanskrit College, Benares, where he had the assistance of the best Pandits. It is published in two volumes, price Rs. 14, by Messrs. Lazarus & Co., Benares. As this sum is beyond the reach of the great majority of Hindus, permission has kindly been given to quote, in whole or in part, about sixty of the most important hymns, with explanatory notes where necessary. The whole makes a pamphlet of 163 pp. octavo, and is sold at 4½ As. or 6 As. post-free.

Among the other translations may be mentioned a few of the principal UPANISHADS and the BHAGAVAD GITA. A complete list of them is given on the Wrapper.

With regard to the VEDANTA, the most important work for its earlier form is the *Vedānta* or *Brahma-Sūtras* of Veda-Vyāsa or *Bādarāyana*. Of this there is a good translation, with Sankara's commentary, by Dr. Thibaut, Principal of the Muir Central College, Allahabad. The Introduction gives an excellent summary of the system, showing the principal points upon which Sankara and Rāmānuja differ.

On the later Vedāntism the standard work is the VEDANTA-SĀRA, of which there is a good translation, with copious notes, by Colonel G. A. Jacob, under the title of, *A Manual of Hindu Pantheism*.\*

A translation of the *Vedānta-Sāra*, by Dr. J. R. Ballantyne, formerly Principal of the Sanskrit College, Benares, with notes and an examination of the system, revised by Colonel Jacob, is now in the press, and will shortly be published.

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### STUDY OF CHRISTIANITY.

In the United States, as already mentioned, classes have been formed for the study of the great religions of the world. If Americans seek to acquire some knowledge of Vedāntism, much more is it the duty of Hindus to gain some knowledge of Christianity. It is to be regretted that many educated Hindus are entirely ignorant of its character or have only false conceptions of it derived from its enemies. A Hindu gentleman, in high position, who took the chair at the Inaugural Lecture of Dr. Barrows in Madras, frankly stated that he "knew nothing" of Christianity.

Liddon justly says, "Not to be interested in the life of Jesus Christ, is to be, I do not say irreligious, but unintelligent. It is to be insensible to the nature and claims of the most powerful force that has moulded the thought and swayed the destinies of civilised men."

Even apart from its religious character, the Bible deserves to be studied by educated Hindus. Without some knowledge of it, the many allusions to it scattered through English liter-

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\* Published by Kegan Paul, Trübner, & Co., Price 5s.



ature cannot be fully understood. Professor Huxley, when advocating in the London School Board the Bible as a text-book, thus spoke of its claims :

“ Consider the great historical fact that, for three centuries this book has been woven into the life of all that is best and noblest in English history ; that it has become the national epic of Britain, and is familiar to noble and simple, from John O’Groat’s House to Land’s End, as Dante and Tasso were once to the Italians : that it is written in the noblest and purest English, and abounds in exquisite beauties of mere literary form ; and finally that it forbids the veriest hind whoever left his native village to be ignorant of the existence of other countries and other civilizations, and of a great past stretching back to the furthest limits of the oldest nations of the world. By the study of what other book could children be so much humanised and made to feel that each figure in that vast historical procession fills, like themselves, but a momentary space in the intervals between two eternities ; and earns the blessings and curses of all time, according to its effort to do good and hate evil, even as they also are earning their payment for their work ? ”

Christianity is the religion of the richest, the most civilised, the best educated, and most progressive nations of the earth. The great inventions which have done so much to promote human well-being, as the steam-engine, railways, the electric telegraph, originated among Christian nations. Hindu, Buddhist and Muhammadan Governments are despotic ; their rulers stand above law ; their kingdoms are regarded as their private property ; without trial they can take away the lives of their subjects. Christian nations, as a rule, have representative Governments, and law stands above kings and rulers.

The idea of *progress* is derived from Christianity. Among Hindus, the rule is to *follow the ancients*. Instead of things becoming better, this is regarded as the Kali Yug, when they are to grow worse and worse. China has had a stationary semi-civilization for 2,000 years. Muhammadans are governed by the Koran, any deviation from which is regarded as impiety. The English, before they embraced Christianity, were little better than savages, without a written language. What a difference now !

Christian nations are the only ones which are making persistent and systematic efforts to relieve the human race from the evils under which it has groaned for thousands of years,—from war, slavery, crime, disease, and ignorance. War has not ceased among them, but its ferocity has been softened, and a

desire for peace is spreading. Arbitration is now resorted to in many cases. Efforts will be continued

“Till the war drum throbbed no longer, and the battle flags were furled  
In the Parliament of men, the Federation of the world.”

Slavery is sought to be abolished everywhere. Reformatory schools have been established for young criminals; trades are taught in jails to enable prisoners to earn an honest livelihood. Dispensaries and hospitals have been opened; societies, like Lady Dufferin's, have been formed to afford medical relief to women. Education is considered the birthright of every human being; all the States which profess Christianity are seeking, more or less, to humanize, reform, and elevate mankind.

It is true that in countries nominally Christian misery and crime are found more or less; but these do not arise from Christianity, but from the breach of its laws. Nowhere also are such efforts put forth for their removal. In some of the worst parts of London, Students' settlements have been formed. Students from Oxford and Cambridge come to live there for a time to benefit the people.

In *Testimonies of Great Men to the Bible and Christianity*\* will be found the opinions expressed of Christianity by some of the greatest men that have ever lived. Only one or two can be quoted.

Gladstone, the most distinguished English statesman of the time, says :

“I see that for the last fifteen hundred years Christianity has always marched in the van of all human improvement and civilisation, and it has harnessed to its car all that is great and glorious in the human race.”

“Christianity continues to be that which it has been heretofore, the great medicine for the diseases of human nature, the great consolation for its sorrows; the great stay to its weakness, the main and only sufficient guide in the wilderness of the world.”

Referring to his own personal belief, he says :

“All I write, and all I think, and all I hope is based upon the divinity of our Lord, the one central hope of our poor wayward race.”

Lecky, in his *History of European Morals*, bears the following testimony to the EFFECTS of Christianity :—

“It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world a character, which, through all the changes of eighteen centuries,

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\* Price 1½ As. Post-free 2 as. Sold by Mr. A. T. Scott, Tract Depot, Madras.

has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love; has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, temperaments, and conditions; has been not only the highest pattern of virtue, but the strongest incentive to its practice; and has exercised so deep an influence, that the simple record of three years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the discussions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists."

The highest position which a lawyer can attain in England is that of Lord High Chancellor. He ranks after princes of the royal blood. The great work of lawyers is to weigh evidence. It is a remarkable fact that *five* Lord Chancellors in succession have been Christian men.

**Course of Study.**—This will depend upon the progress of the students. For those to whom the subject is new, the following may be recommended :

*Short Papers for Seekers after Truth.*—12mo., 112 pp., 1 An.

*Elements of Christian Truth.*—12mo., 71 pp., 1½ An., A series of Lectures by the Rev. Dr. Murray Mitchell.

But the study of the Scriptures themselves is specially urged. A commencement may be made with the *Gospel of Luke*, which was originally written for the benefit of a convert to Christianity. This was followed by its sequel, the *Acts of the Apostles*, written by the same author, which gives an account of the rise of the Christian Church. The two Scripture portions may be obtained in cheap editions at half an anna each at Bible Depôts.

To assist in the study of these two books of Scripture, a little work, *The Beginnings of Christianity*, has been published. Besides an Introduction to the two books, it contains two coloured Maps, and an explanatory Vocabulary of words presenting any difficulty. Price 1½ An. Post-free, 2 As.

The *New Testament* may form the next study. English editions may be obtained at prices varying from 1 to 4 As. An introduction to its study, called *The Founder of Christianity*, intended specially for Indian students, is sold at 4 As. post-free. The vernacular edition of the Scriptures would be helpful to many in understanding their meaning. The complete Bible may afterwards be studied, and even during the whole course portions of it may be read, especially the Psalms.

*Evidences of Christianity.*—There is an excellent manual on this subject by the Rev. Dr. Murray Mitchell, *Letters to Indian Youth on the Evidences of Christianity.*—12mo., 280 pp., price 6 As. post-free.

**Prayer for Light.**—One of the greatest helps to arrive at religious truth is to seek it earnestly from our Father in heaven. The following short prayer may be offered :

“O all-wise, all-merciful God and Father, pour the bright beams of Thy light into my soul, and guide me into Thy eternal truth.”

The following longer prayer has been attributed to Augustine, one of the greatest early Christian writers :

“O Lord, who art the Light, the Way, the Truth, the Life ; in whom there is no darkness, error, vanity, nor death ; the light, without which there is darkness ; the way, without which there is wandering ; the truth, without which there is error ; the life, without which there is death ; say, Lord, ‘Let there be light,’ and I shall see light and eschew darkness ; I shall see the way and avoid wandering ; I shall see the truth and shun error ; I shall see life and escape death. Illuminate, O illuminate my blind soul, which sitteth in darkness and the shadow of death ; and direct my feet in the way of peace.”

**Natural Light and Spiritual Darkness in India.**—India is thus addressed by an earnest friend now departed :

“Oh India ! in thee are found the types of all that is beautiful and magnificent. In thy land are the Creator’s glories peculiarly manifest, and providential gifts bestowed in richest profusion ; yet thou art without thy God. Thou art rich in all grains, and dyes, and minerals, in spices and perfumes ; but thou art not rich unto God. Thou displayest on thy unbounded surface all physical beauty and grace ; but thou art unto God a dreary wilderness. Thy sun scatters its vivid beams and makes thy day one of surpassing glory ; but thou art covered with the shroud of spiritual night. Thy people possess intellect and imagination ; but in the things of God thy wise men are fools,—thy learned are dotards—thine aged men grope as the blind.”

But light is breaking in the horizon, and it will shine more and more unto the perfect day.

Christianity has already exerted a powerful influence upon educated Indian thought. Several important Christian doctrines have been accepted as true. Educated Hindus are now *monotheists*. This has been derived from Christianity. Hinduism is both polytheistic and pantheistic. It teaches that souls are uncreated, self-existent, and eternal. Educated Hindus acknowledge the Fatherhood of God, that we owe our being to Him. Hinduism teaches that caste is of Divine origin—that men are unequal by the decree of God. Educated Hindus now generally acknowledge the Brotherhood of man, another great

doctrine of Christianity. There is now a greater desire than before to seek the common good, instead of selfishly consulting one's own ease and interests.

Higher ideas of morality are being diffused. Hindus excused the crimes of their gods on the maxim, "To the mighty is no sin." Educated Hindus admit the fallacy of this reasoning. For many centuries some Hindu temples had the most indecent sculptures, prostitutes took a prominent part in their religious services without a voice being raised against them. The Penal Code punishes people who sell or expose obscene books, pictures, or statues; but permits such things in the name of religion. Some educated Hindus, through the spread of Christian light, are beginning to protest against such abominations. A woman, according to Hinduism, is denied religious instruction, and taught that she has simply to consider her husband as her god. Under Christian influence, female education is spreading, and the just rights of women, long denied, are beginning to be acknowledged, though not yet conceded.

The change of religion which took place in Europe, in spite of the strongest opposition of the Roman Government, will also happen in India. The temples of Vishnu and Siva will yet be as deserted as those of Jupiter and Minerva in Europe. The Eastern and Western Aryans will kneel at the same footstool, and offer the same grand old prayer, beginning, "Our Father which art in heaven."

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### SUMMARY.

**Summary.**—In conclusion, the great truths of religion may be very briefly mentioned :

#### TWO GREAT DOCTRINES.

1. **The Fatherhood of God.**
2. **The Brotherhood of Man.**

#### TWO GREAT DUTIES.

1. **Love to God.**
2. **Love to Man.**

Let these eternal truths be firmly held. Let also the wondrous plan, unfolded in the New Testament, devised by our heavenly Father by which we, who have been unloving disobedient children, may become reconciled to Him, be attentively considered, with earnest prayer for His guidance.



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THE EDITORIAL.

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## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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SWAMI VIVEKANANDA was accorded a most enthusiastic reception at Colombo, where he landed on the 15th instant. All classes of the Colombo community, whether Hindus or Buddhists, forgot their differences, and went to work together to render fitting honour, where honour was so eminently due. The appreciation of his splendid record of work in the West is by no means confined to his brethren in the faith, for the fact of the Buddhists having co-operated with the Hindus in acknowledging the debt of gratitude, under which he has laid all followers of the several Eastern creeds, is a proof positive of his services having been estimated at their true worth, outside the ranks of Hinduism. The Swami stayed only for four days at Colombo, and then started for Madras, where arrangements are being made on a magnificent scale to extend to him an impressive and enthusiastic welcome. We learn from a letter from the Southern Presidency that the Hindu community there to a man is animated by a sincere desire to celebrate, in a fitting manner, the return of the "conquering hero," and, on this behalf, it has set about its work in sober earnest. It is but in the fitness of things that the Province, which was the first to recognise the Swami's genius, and which paid the greater portion of the expenses of his voyage, should also be the first to welcome him with open arms on his return to the country of his birth. The Swami, after stopping in Madras for a few days, will leave for Calcutta—his native city—where he is expected to arrive by the middle of February. A prophet, they say, is not honored in his own country, but, we hope, that, in this case, there will be a departure from this rule, and that all sections of our community will combine to welcome the

Swami home in a right royal fashion. He may not be a Roman hero, returning from the field of battle with the laurels of many victories on his brow. But peace hath her victories no less than war, and, in the bloodless battle that he has fought on behalf of a religion, which teaches the highest doctrines of peace and brotherhood amongst mankind, entitles him to the eternal gratitude of his fellow-believers. He has raised the Hindu nation in the estimation of the Western world, and has created for the Hindu faith an interest, which will last through all time. It is impossible to over-estimate the value of his services in America to the cause of Hinduism. Hundreds of men and women have enlisted themselves under the standard, which he unfolded in America, and some of them have even taken to the bowl and the yellow-robos. The work, that he had to do, speedily assumed such proportions as to necessitate the despatch of fresh re-inforcements from India to keep it live in America. Swami Saradananda is busy in Boston in watering the seeds, which were sown there by Swami Vivekananda. The classes opened in several places in America, and even in England, for the teaching of Hinduism in its purer form, are a sufficient token of the leaning towards Vedantism, which the West has begun to manifest under the inspiring and soul-stirring eloquence of Swami Vivekananda. Those that attended the lectures, delivered the other day at the Emerald Theatre by Mr. Turnbull of Chicago, must have been thoroughly impressed with the magnitude of the change, which has been wrought by Swami Vivekananda in the hearts and convictions of the American people. The Swami delivered his first memorable address on Hinduism in the Parliament of Religions, which was held in Chicago, in September, 1893. He made a tour of almost all the principal places in the United States, and wherever he went, he won fresh converts to his faith, and left behind him a lasting impression of his visit. The charming presence, the impassioned eloquence, the extraordinary strength of will and tenacity of purpose that he brought to bear upon the work which took him to America, carried conviction everywhere. It was, indeed, a sight to see this eloquent *Sannyasi* preaching the religion of his fathers in regions, which send missionaries to India to convert the Hindus into the Christian faith. The tide of conversion seemed to have rolled back from the East to the West—the tables were completely turned—and the Hindu mission in the West was crowned with a greater and more glorious success than what has ever been vouchsafed to Christian mission in the East.

The Theosophical Society had no doubt cleared the ground, and prepared the soil, but it was reserved for a native of Hindustan to sow in the West the seeds of the religion, bequeathed to him as a priceless legacy by his noble ancestors, whose benefit he wanted the entire world to share. The seeds have not fallen by the way-side, and been devoured by the fowls of the air. They have taken root in the soil, and will, as the years roll on, first put out the blade, and then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear. And all this has been effected within the short space of three years. Where is the Hindu, who can help a feeling of pride at this unique record, and who does not long to clasp Vivekananda in a close and fervid embrace. He deserves well of his brethren in the faith, for he has rendered yeoman's service to the cause, which is so dear and near to their hearts. His services to his country's cause, combined as they are in the sphere of religion, are on a par with the achievements of Rajah Ranjit Singji, Messrs. Chatterji, Bose, and Biswas, in the respective departments of human activity, on which they have shed so brilliant a lustre. We cannot yet understand the far-reaching consequences of the work, which Vivekananda has achieved. The gift of the Seer has not been vouchsafed to us, and the inspiration of prophecy is not one of our acquirements. But if the present be the best prophet of the future, "if coming events cast their shadows before," we may take it upon ourselves to say that Vivekananda has forged the chain, which is to bind the East and the West together, the golden chain of a common sympathy, of a common humanity, and a common and universal religion. Vedantism, as preached and inculcated by the Swami, is the bridge of love, which is to extend from the East right away to the West, and make the two nations one in heart, one in spirit and one in faith—a consummation so devoutly to be wished. Can humanity, then, be ever too thankful to Vivekananda? Can his fellow-countrymen be ever too proud of him or be ever too grateful to him? He is a Calcutta Bengali, and let all Bengalis of Calcutta greet him with the homage of their hearts. It will be a foul shame if we fail in the performance of a duty, which is so incumbent upon us. Let us follow in the wake of Madras, which, be it said, to her eternal honor, has set us a glorious example in this matter. Let us show that so far as his own countrymen are concerned, Vivekananda has not been "ploughing the sands on the seashore." A preliminary Committee should at once be formed and ways and means devised to present the Swami with an

address of welcome, setting forth fully our high appreciation of his invaluable services to our cause. All right-thinking men of the community ought to assist in the furtherance of so noble and patriotic an object. No pains or expenses should be spared to make the reception worthy of the Metropolis, worthy of the Swami, to whom it is to be accorded and worthy of the culture and patriotism on which Bengal so greatly plumes herself.

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ORIGINAL POETRY.\*

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CONQUEST OF AMERICA BY VIVEKANANDA SWAMI.

The Swami sailed to Western shore,  
 Not as Cortes did before,  
 To conquer with the fire and sword  
 A dark unillumin'd horde,  
 His weapons were of other mould  
 His aim not earthly power or gold;  
 Bravely he steered athwart the main,  
 With none to follow in his train;  
 With not a single shell in hand,  
 To raise his loved mother-land,  
 In the eyes of people far away,  
 Of master-minds as bright as day,  
 He told them in language clear,  
 They need not shed a drop of tear  
 For fallen Ind, who still doth own  
 A precious stone, to them unknown.  
 The Hindu is by culture mild,  
 Forbearing, generous, and kind;  
 The Hindu does not take delight  
 In hawking, hunting or in fight;  
 For birds and beasts as well as men  
 He always has a tender vein:  
 Feels in fact a brotherly love  
 For insects, worms and all above.  
 Though strongly wedded to his own,  
 He does not in his heart disown  
 The merits of another's creed  
 The piety of a pious deed,  
 Be it done by a Hindu true  
 An Arab wild or wand'ring Jew.  
 How quick did Swami gain his end,  
 And the ways of 'mericans mend!  
 When Cæsar went to conquer Gaul  
 He went and saw and conquer'd all.

C. C. M.

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\* This bit of "Original Poetry" is inserted here because it was published in "The Mirror" a short time after the Editorial appeared, and in its claims for the Swami is, in the light of the letters which follow, like the editorial, a *trifle extravagant*.

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THE LETTER.

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WILBERT W. WHITE, PH.D., D.D.,

*College Secretary,*

**College Young Men's Christian Association of Calcutta,**

86, COLLEGE STREET, *January 21, 1897.*

MY DEAR SIR,

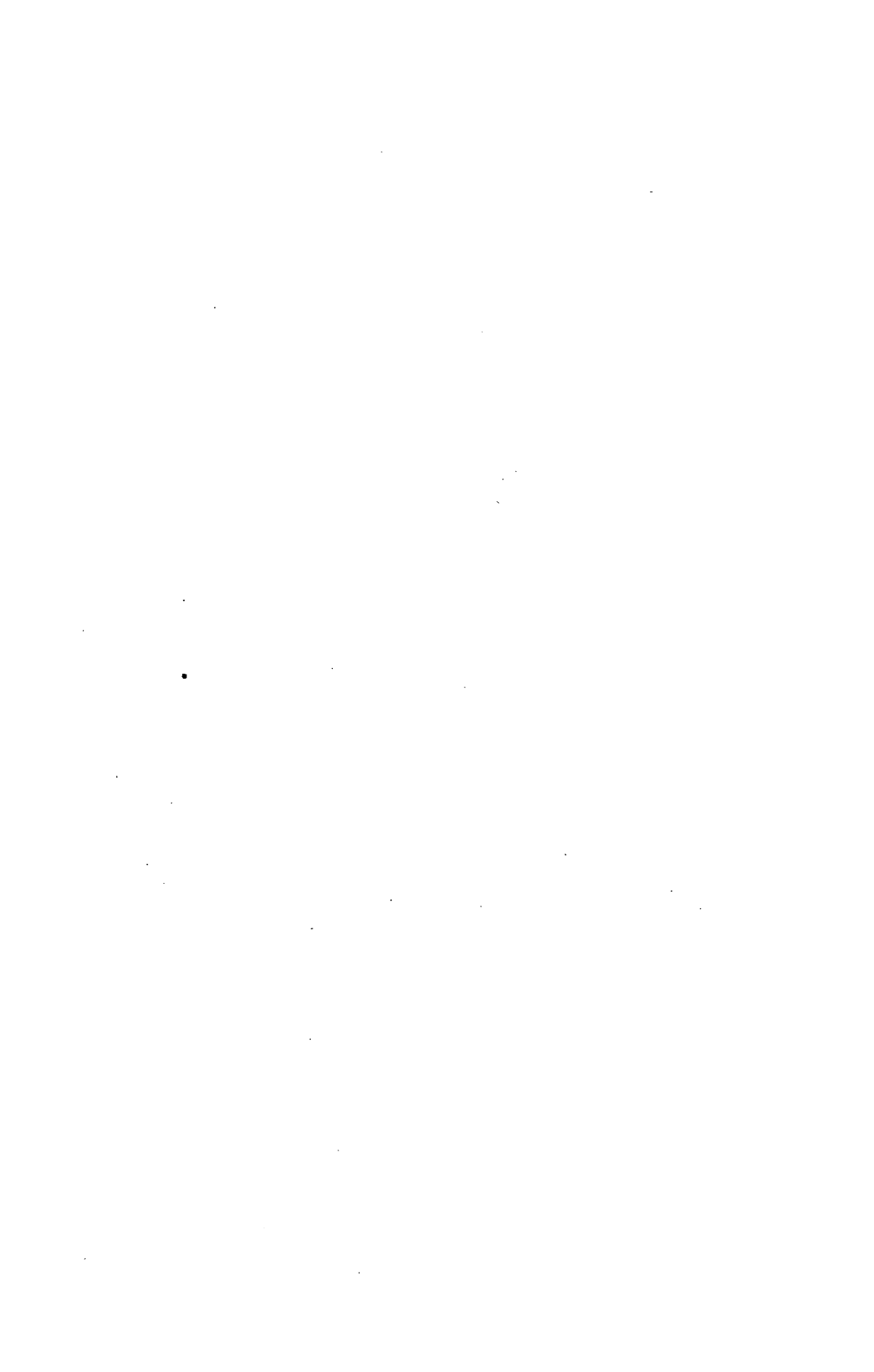
The report has been widely circulated in India that Swami Vivekananda has made many hundreds of converts in America from Christianity to Hinduism. In illustration of this I enclose the leading editorial of the *Indian Mirror* of to-day.

What have you to say of the likelihood of America abandoning Christianity and adopting either Hinduism or Mohammedanism in its stead? Will you kindly reply to this question, limiting your response to about one hundred words. You are one of a number of prominent men and women in my beloved land to whom I am writing, making of each the above request. I desire to secure for wide circulation in India a symposium on *Hinduism and Mohammedanism in America*. Or if you please to be more particular, *Swami Vivekananda in America*.

I am,

Yours very sincerely,

WILBERT W. WHITE.





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**THE REPLIES.**

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# REPLIES.

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## I.

DR. LYMAN ABBOTT, of Brooklyn, N. Y., Editor of "THE OUTLOOK," and successor to DR. HENRY WARD BEECHER :

The report that Swami Vivekananda has made hundreds of converts in America surpasses in its exaggeration anything I remember ever to have seen in the American press, given as it is to exaggeration. I do not know, nor have I heard of a single such convert. We have in the United States, especially in the great cities, considerable numbers of people who flock to see and hear the latest curiosity whether in art, music, literature or religion. From these classes Swami Vivekananda has gathered considerable audiences, especially in Boston and Chicago. The reaction against the rationalism which has captured some so-called Christian churches and Christian teachers has made grateful to certain sentimentalists the mysticism of Swami Vivekananda's teaching. But it has not affected the active Christian churches nor drawn from the congregations of Christian worshippers, nor enlisted any considerable number of Christian adherents. As I have said, I neither know nor have heard of even one such convert from Christianity. We are familiar with this phenomenon in America which gives in succession apparent converts now to Spiritualism, now to Hypnotism, now to Christian Science, now to Theosophy, now to Hinduism, a conversion rarely of either intellect or affections, still less of stable purposes, but partly of ardent impulses, partly of idle curiosity. Meanwhile the Church of Christ goes on its way increasing, as the statistics show, in numbers faster than the population, rapidly as that has increased, and as Christian activity shows, increasing also in rational and practical faith which believes more and more in deeds and less and less in dreaming.

## II.

JAMES B. ANGELL, LL.D., President of the University of Michigan, and lately appointed by President MCKINLEY, U. S. Minister to Turkey :

Swami Vivekananda has spent a good deal of time in this vicinity, especially in the city of Detroit, which is near us. He has been received with much politeness and his addresses have been listened to by many with interest, but I have yet to hear of a solitary convert whom he has made from Christianity to Hinduism.

The likelihood of America's abandoning Christianity and adopting either Hinduism or Mohammedanism is, I think, rather less than the probability that the Ganges will reverse its current and run up into the Himalaya mountains. No doubt the type of Christian doctrine and habits differs somewhat from age to age, but I believe that, in its essential principles, Christianity never had a stronger hold on the American people than it has to-day. The question which you ask, about the possibility of America's adopting Hinduism or Mohammedanism, strikes every one in this country as simply posteporous. It is difficult to treat it with soberness.

### III.

DR. JOHN HENRY BARROWS, President of the World's Parliament of Religions, in addresses in India :

"The Christian people of America were hospitable to the delegates from other lands and faiths and heard and read with much interest and genuine sympathy the representations of non-Christian religions. This interest and courtesy were, in some cases, misinterpreted. Some of the Japanese Buddhist delegates returned home with the idea, which they spread far and wide, that America was losing faith in Christianity and was hungering for the bread of life which Buddhism had to offer. Nothing could be more absurd. America is not losing faith in the Christian religion. Its progress in the United States during the last 25 years has been more rapid than ever before. In the building of new churches, in the vast additions to Church membership, numbering nearly half a million every year, in the building of mission-schools in our great cities, and the pushing of mission-work on our wide frontier of new settlements, in the spread of Sunday Schools, in the marvellous growth of the Christian Endeavour Movement, and of similar Young People's Societies, which probably number 3,000,000 of members in the United States alone, in the great sums given to Christian colleges, and the many millions of dollars annually raised to send to other lands the messengers of the Gospel ; in all this, and in the steadily growing purpose to put the gentle and humane teachings of Jesus into the daily life, and to make them effective in the relations of men with each other, we have indisputable evidences that Christianity is a growingly powerful, beneficent influence.

"People going to America from the Orient are easily liable to misunderstand the interest and courtesy with which they are received. Curious to hear all truth the American people listen eagerly to lectures on the Vedanta philosophy or on Esoteric Buddhism, and continue to go to their own churches, cherish their own Christian work as before. Naturally our Oriental visitors are most earnestly courted by Americans who for one reason or another

are not in sympathy with evangelical Christian beliefs. And I have noticed that persons who have gone away from historic Christianity sometimes think that everybody is about to follow them. But this is not so. Our carefully prepared Government Census shows that the evangelical believers in America out-number the non-evangelicals of all denominations more than one hundred to one."

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The following has been clipped from a report of a meeting of the Madras Native Christian Association published in the *Christian Patriot* of February 27, 1897 :

We are glad that at the M. N. C. A. meeting Dr. Barrows pricked with success some of the Swami's bubbles. According to the Swami the Parliament of Religions has resulted in a victory of Vedantism over Christianity. Half America has been won over to Hinduism, if the Swami is to be believed. Dr. Barrows says, "No" emphatically. "Nothing would appear more absurd to well-informed people in my own land and in Great Britain than the assertion that churches had been closed, and Christian faith shaken by the advocacy in Western Christendom of the claims of mental faiths. There is nothing more grotesque and ridiculous in any of the mythologies than the rumours as to the wide acceptance in America and England of mental philosophies as substitutes for Christianity. . . . To affirm that American Christianity has been shaken by the Eastern speakers at the Parliament of Religions is as absurdly incredible to every one who knows as to say that a child's hand has pushed back the current of the Ganges or that the buffalo's tread has unsettled the foundations of the Himalayas."

"The non-Christian mind of India has been ludicrously inflated with pride because its representatives made a pleasant impression as advocates of Hinduism. Such pride on such poor foundations 'goeth before a fall.' But I hope the non-Christian friends here will permanently cherish the assurance that the Christian West is not blind to the elements of truth discoverable in non-Christian faiths. We recognize their hungerings for God, and we hope and pray for additional wisdom, the wisdom of sympathy, kindness and love, enabling us to show that Christ only is the Bread of Life which can satisfy those hungerings.

"Now that absurd speeches and unfounded reports are again announcing that the Parliament was a triumph for Hinduism, I hope that missionaries will give the widest and most emphatic denial, and show, what well-informed people in America have always known, that as the President of the World's Congress Auxiliary, Hon. Chas. C. Bonney, has written, "The final outcome of the Parliament will be enormously beneficial to the cause of Christian missions."

## IV.

REV. GEORGE DANA BOARDMAN, D.D., LL.D., of Philadelphia, Pa :

I had the pleasure of meeting Swami Vivekananda at the Parliament of Religions, and was impressed by his brilliant costume, courtly manners, and graceful rhetoric. But the statement that he "has made many hundreds of converts in America from Christianity to Hinduism" is absolute news. My impression is that, if he has made any converts at all, they have come either from the ranks of those who already were or thought themselves to be theosophists, or from people of restless, vague, adjustable unbelief. My judgment is that there has never been a time in the history of our beloved America when Jesus Christ, practically speaking, has influenced so many persons, or influenced them so profoundly, as in these closing years of the nineteenth century of his grace. Christianity has made America what it is; and America will ever be true to Christianity.

I am delighted to hear that my dear friend, Rev. Dr. Barrows, has met with such a welcome in India. If ever there was a true knight-errant of the Cross, in quest—not of a lost holy grail—but of a lost mankind, to bring it back to the Friend of sinners, it is the President of the Parliament of Religions.

## V.

EX-GOVERNOR JAMES A. BEAVER of the Superior Court of Pennsylvania, Bellefonte, Pa :

Your letter of the 21st of January ult., enclosing an editorial from the *Indian Mirror* of that date, in regard to the visit of Swami Vivekananda in America, has been received. The distinguished representative of Hinduism referred to doubtless received in this country a respectful hearing. We believe, as you know, in freedom of speech, and no matter how much we may differ from others, we accord to them the right to make their views known publicly. The gentleman referred to, therefore, was doubtless accorded the fullest liberty to speak. Curiosity led many to hear him but the impression made upon our people was so slight that his visit is scarcely mentioned and was not known, outside the very few who heard him.

It is safe to say that never in the history of Christianity has its hold been so strong upon our people and never before have they been willing to give less credence to any doctrines not founded upon the life and teachings, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Notwithstanding our business depression, never has there been more enthusiasm in Missionary work, both at home and abroad, and never have results so completely justified the efforts which Christian nations are making for the evangelization of the entire world.

## VI.

REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D., of Brooklyn, N. Y. :

I have read with mingled amusement and amazement the editorial article of the *Indian Mirror* in regard to Swami Vivekananda; and I have sent it to be copied into one of the leading papers of New York that our people may know what enormous humbuggery can be swallowed in Calcutta.

That man Vivekananda wandered about our country for some time lecturing to the few persons who were attracted to hear him from sheer curiosity; but he produced *no impression*. There are not Hindu converts enough in this country to fill a railway-car. And there is no more danger from Hinduism or Mohammedanism than there is from icebergs on the coasts of Africa. When Vivekananda is spoken of at all, it is with derision; he will soon be utterly forgotten.

I am rather sorry for my dear old friend Dr. Barrows. He must be chagrined that the man he courteously "lionized" in Chicago has gone home to *lie* so awfully in India!

## VII.

PRESIDENT CHARLES W. ELLIOTT, LL.D., of Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. :

The report circulated in India that Swami Vivekananda has made converts in America from Christianity to Hinduism is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, absolutely without foundation. I have never heard in this country of a single convert from Christianity to either Hinduism or Mahometanism. The article which you send me from the *Indian Mirror* of January 21st is simply silly so far as it undertakes to describe Vivekananda's performances in America.

## VIII.

RICHARD T. ELY, PH.D., LL.D., Professor of Political Economy and Director of the School of Economics, Political Science, and History in the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, and Author of many books on Social Science :

I have received your letter of January 21st, and am much interested in what you write. It seems to me that there is no outlook whatever for Hinduism and Mohammedanism in America. Writing simply from the standpoint of a student of society, I must say that they are in every way inferior to Christianity. They are not at all adapted to modern civilization; certainly they do not answer our needs in America.

## IX.

Professor GEORGE P. FISHER, LL.D., of Yale University, New Haven, Conn., Author of various well-known Text-books :

I have a dim recollection of seeing in a newspaper a notice of a lecture, probably in New York, by a Native Hindu propagandist of the Hindu religion. As far as an impression goes, it is a ripple on the sea. The prospect of the spread of Hinduism in this country to a degree to attract any notice is about as great as the likelihood that the Himalayas will sink down into the earth and become level ground.

## X.

The HON. JOHN W. FOSTER of Washington, D. C., Ex-Secretary of State of the United States, and Ex-Minister of the United States to China :

I have received your letter of January 21st, and have read the article enclosed from the *Indian Mirror* of the same date respecting the work of Swami Vivekananda in the United States.

This report sounds very absurd to all intelligent people in this country. The gentleman named was treated with courtesy and kindness by all classes of society during his visit here, as was due to one of his talents, and as the representative in a certain sense of a great people; and many listened to his addresses, mainly out of curiosity. But I do not believe he has made a single convert to Hinduism. The fact is that the Christian religion was never more strongly entrenched in the faith and affections of the people of the United States of America than at the present time. In all departments of Christian activities there were never more signs of life and hope than to-day. Under these circumstances it is the height of folly to talk of Hinduism or Mohammedanism finding a lodgment in America, and the people of India will be grossly deceived if they give credence to any such reports.

## XI.

President MERRILL E. GATES, PH.D., LL.D., L.H.D., of Amherst College, Amherst, Massachusetts :

I was at Chicago in the fall of 1893, and made the opening address on Sunday evening, at the conference under the auspices of the Evangelical Alliance, which immediately followed the Parliament of Religions, where Vivekananda had spoken. I then heard many prominent persons speak of Swami Vivekananda. I have observed with interest during these last three years the indications of the opinion of this speaker which prevails in those parts of America where he has been best known and most closely observed. I have yet to learn of any friend of Christianity of any prominence in America who has the slightest fear that Vivekananda is making



converts from Christianity, or is in any way weakening the hold of the Gospel of Christ upon the people of America. I will not discuss the estimate in which Swami Vivekananda is held since fuller information with reference to him has reached the United States from India. The central truths of Christianity as they are expressed in the life, the words, the death and the resurrection of our divine Redeemer, Jesus Christ, have a hold upon the life of America which is not in the slightest degree affected by the words of Swami Vivekananda or of other advocates of Hinduism or Mahomedanism. The people of the United States welcome the light. Discussion makes clearer to them the truth that Jesus Christ is the Fountain of Life as he is the Light of the world.

## XII.

President GEORGE A. GATES, D.D., of Iowa College, Grinnell, Iowa :

I am very much surprised at the contents of the article from the *Indian Mirror* which your letter incloses : " For hundreds of men and women have enlisted themselves under the standard and some of them have taken to the bowl and the yellow robes." That is something I have never heard the remotest hint of in this country before. Wonderful things may happen in America without my knowing it, but I should be surprised if anything like that indicated by such a statement is true. I have never heard of even one case, though very likely there may be a few.

The impression that any significant movement toward Hinduism has arisen in America, is the most arrant nonsense.

## XIII.

WASHINGTON GLADDEN, D.D., of Columbus, Ohio, Pastor and Author :

I have heard of no converts from Christianity to Hinduism. Doubtless some cultivated people, who have lost their Christian faith and have become agnostics, have been interested in the ideal Hinduism attractively presented by Swami Vivekananda ; there are always many among us who eagerly welcome any new thing. But the acceptance of Hinduism is not seriously considered by more than a very small handful of persons in this country. There never was a day when the promise of the supremacy of Jesus Christ was so bright as it is to-day. We are just beginning to see that He is the Prince of Life and the Saviour of the world ; that He is able to give the law to the whole of our life ; that peace and prosperity can come to men and nations only by following Him. We are glad to receive from our Hindu brothers all the light they can give ; but we are sure that neither they nor we can find any other true leadership than that of Jesus Christ.

## XIV.

WILLIAM C. GRAY, LL.D., Editor of the *Interior*, Chicago :

Your letter of inquiry in regard to the work of Swami Vivekananda in this country, has been received, enclosing an article from the *Indian Mirror* of January 21, which describes the receptions accorded to that gentleman in India. The impression which he left here was that of a vain boaster, to whom curiosity for a short time accorded some attention. He made no other impression, certainly none whatever on the religious thinking of Americans. We are surprised that he has succeeded in imposing upon credulity in Calcutta and elsewhere to the extent indicated by the article in the *Indian Mirror*. Perhaps as impressive an exhibition of what Christianity is doing in this country was the fact that during the year 1896 the gifts to objects of Christian charity, counting no gift which was not of the amount of \$1,000 and over, amounted to twenty-nine millions of dollars of the gold standard. This includes, as I have said, no gifts of less than a thousand dollars, no money given for the support of churches, ministers, missionary boards or societies, nor the innumerable gifts which amount, in the aggregate, to a vast sum, the whole estimated at over an hundred million dollars, gold. Christianity in America was never so rich, never so liberal, never so consecrated, never so confident of the ultimate triumph of Christianity in every land, as now. The reports of Vivekananda's triumphs, as printed in the article above referred to, are very silly and very ridiculous.

## XV.

President F. W. GUNSAULUS, D.D., of Armour Institute of Technology, Chicago :

It is astonishing to me to learn that a single convert has been made in Chicago from Christianity to Hindooism. I have tried my best, and at considerable endeavor, to find any basis for the report that hundreds have thus been transformed, but I have not found anything upon which such a statement could be founded. I want to say that I know this city pretty well, and there has never, to my knowledge, been a moment in which a movement in behalf of Hindooism has had any serious importance in this city.

## XVI.

DANIEL S. GREGORY, D.D., LL.D., of New York, Ex-President of Lake Forest University, and late Managing Editor of the "Standard Dictionary" :

Nothing could be more absurd than the editorial in the *Indian Mirror* of January 21st, 1897, on the alleged wonderful work of Swami Vivekananda in America. He was looked upon by

the few Christian people who knew of his presence in this country, as a wandering fakir rather than a "conquering hero"—a fraud not to be tolerated, much less feted, by sensible people, whether Hindus or Christians. Nowhere did he start even a ripple in society of any kind, much less a tidal wave. There is as much probability of replacing Christianity in America by the religion of the man in the moon as by Hinduism.

## XVII.

President W. M. GRIFF, D.D., of Erskine College, Due West, S. C. :

Your letter was received yesterday. The editorial which it enclosed from the *Indian Mirror* was a genuine surprise. The statement that America is looking towards Vedantism is purely imaginary. Having been for years an editor of a religious newspaper I think I am somewhat familiar with the religious thought and sentiment of these United States and I say with profound thankfulness that the cause of evangelical Christianity never seemed stronger or more deeply entrenched in the hearts of the people. Vedantism finds no more favour amongst us than Fetichism.

## XVIII.

Judge P. S. GROSSCUP of the District Court of the United States, Chicago :

Yours of the 21st of January calling attention to the report that many hundreds of Americans are being converted to Hindooism, and asking my opinion of the likelihood of America abandoning Christianity, is at hand.

I have heard of but one American who is devoting herself to Hindooism, and I do not think the Christian Church will be much shattered by her going over.

There is no more danger of America's abandoning Christianity for Hindooism, Mohammedanism, or any other religion, than of our planet shooting off from her orbit in search of some centre of light and gravitation, other than the good, old-fashioned solar system sun.

## XIX.

President G. STANLEY HALL, PH.D., LL.D., of Clark University, Worcester, Mass. :

I have met Vivekananda and his lectures here have attracted considerable attention in some quarters. That he has made any converts from Christianity to Hindooism I had never heard. We have here in this country a few hyper-susceptible women, very

cultured intellectually but without emotional balance, who have thought themselves converts to Mr. Webb's Mohammedanism or to Vivekananda's Hinduism. These, however, are such an exceedingly small and insignificant group and Vivekananda's hearers are so essentially pervaded by curiosity only that the possibility of America's abandoning Christianity for any other faith is preposterous and absurd. I have yet to hear of a single genuine convert he has made in this country.

## XX.

BENJAMIN HARRISON, LL.D., of Indianapolis, Indiana, Ex-President of the United States :

I have your letter of January 21st. The story that any impression has been made by the preacher of Hindooism in America has no foundation. This country is as likely to return to the habits of the aborigines as it is to substitute Hindooism for Christianity.

## XXI.

President WALTER L. HERVEY, PH.D., of the Teachers' College, New York :

In reply to your question of January 21st, I can say most emphatically that there is no likelihood whatever of America abandoning Christianity. The curiosity which led people like myself to listen to a Hindoo, and the admiration which even those of us who are sound in the faith could give to an exhibition of strong character and earnest zeal, are only surface indications, while those who have apparently gone over to some form of Hindooism or Mohammedanism are not worth consideration either in numbers or in any other way. There are always those who are eager for some new thing and this certainly is some new thing, but it is not indigenous to the soil or the race or the traditions or the civilization, and in my opinion it will not stand or make headway against the Christian religion. The only danger is that the Christian religion itself will not remain pure; that those who profess it will be unworthy in life or in dogmatic insistence on that which is not vital.

## XXII.

JOHN F. HURST, D.D., LL.D., Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Washington, D. C. :

Christianity is not only holding fast whereunto it has attained in American life and thought, but is making substantial progress in the numerical strength of its professed adherents, in the number and architectural beauty of its houses of worship, in the breadth and scope of its manifold works of beneficence, in its periodical and

general literature, in its leadership in the higher education, and in its pervasive power as a moral leaven among the masses of our citizenship. The probability of the American people abandoning Christianity for either Hindooism or Mohammedanism is of the same degree as the danger of the earth withdrawing from the solar system.

## XXIII.

Archbishop IRELAND, St. Paul, Minn., of the Roman Catholic Church :

Replying to your letter I beg leave to say that the so-called influence of Swami Vivekananda in America is only a fancy. This gentleman passed through our country and the people went to hear him because he was from a strange land and spoke strange things, as they would go to hear a stranger from the interior of Africa or from some Pacific Island ; but no one put the least faith in his words, and the chances of Hinduism to spread itself in America may be dreams of Vivekananda, but they are not realities.

I know America well and I have never heard of any followers of this gentleman or of his doctrine.

America is a Christian country, its civilization is a Christian civilization, and it would no more depart from Christianity than it would from all the conquests of its civilization.

## XXIV.

President DAVID L. JORDAN, LL.D., of the Zeland Stanford Junior University, Palo Alto, California :

In reply to your favour of January 21st, permit me to say that I have paid very little attention to the movement in question, and I am sure that it is not making any great headway in this country beyond the interest which broad-minded people always feel in the spiritual development of other races.

There are, of course, a certain number of people every year converted to Buddhism. These are largely of the class who have no stable opinions, and who, as Dr. Nordau has keenly said, have only to hear of Buddhism to become converted to it. People who become followers of Oriental religions simply because their philosophy is mystic and mysterious, and because they are not able to attach any meaning to its statements, have very little influence in the intellectual life of the world.

But there is naturally a growing interest in knowing the Hindoo point of view and in knowing what the best Hindoo sages have thought. This interest, however, is largely among those who have not the slightest intention of casting away the Christian religion for any of the dream philosophies that come from the Orient.

## XXV.

DR. HENRY C. KING, Professor of Philosophy in Oberlin College, Ohio :

Your letter to President Ballantine in his absence has been referred to me for answer.

I certainly do not anticipate any widespread movement for either Hinduism or Mohammedanism in America. The impression of either upon the American people has been, so far as I can judge, exceedingly small. The statements made concerning Mr. Vivekananda must be tremendously exaggerated; for the notice you sent is the first tidings I have had even of his presence in America, and I am reading every week three of the ablest and most widely circulated religious weeklies, besides other newspapers. There is not the slightest possible likelihood of America's dropping Christianity and adopting either Hinduism or Mohammedanism in its stead.

## XXVI.

President SETH LOW, LL.D., of Columbia University in the City of New York :

In answer to your favor of the 21st ultimo, I beg to say that nobody over here knows anything of the facts rehearsed in the *Indian Mirror* of the twenty-first of January.

Swami Vivekananda is an unimportant factor here, and any talk of America abandoning Christianity is, on the face of it, as apparent to unbelievers as to adherents of the faith, an absurdity.

The best thought of America recognizes with gratitude what is good in Hinduism, or any other religion. It believes that any religion is better than none, and that Christianity is the best of all; the last and completest revelation of God to man, telling him all he can comprehend, and meeting better than any other religion every human need.

## XXVII.

Chancellor W. F. McDOWELL, PH.D., of the University of Denver, University Park, Colo :

America is just as likely to abandon Christianity as she is to abandon freedom. Hinduism and Mohammedanism, like any other ism, can always get a few followers in any country. But as for reaching or getting the allegiance of the American people, it is simply out of the question. As for the alleged revival of Hinduism in this country, one must go to India to learn that it has been so extensive. Any bright, intelligent Hindu can obtain a hearing, as you know, in the United States, and any earnest man can obtain a

sympathetic hearing. But from all the advices I have been able to get concerning the alleged revival, it amounts to just next to nothing. The Christian workers in foreign fields need give themselves no concern on account of the loyalty of the United States to Christianity.

## XXVIII.

PRESIDENT J. B. McMICHAEL, D.D., of Monmouth College, Monmouth, Ill. :

The claim of the *Indian Mirror*, that America is growing weary of Christianity and that hundreds of converts to Hinduism are the fruits of Swami Vivekananda's mission to the United States, is even more absurd, than should one light a tallow dip at noon-day and insist that the light of the sun is fading out under the greater and purer light of the greasy taper. Jesus Christ and Him crucified is the only hope of America, of India, and of the world. The Christians of America were never so aggressive, active, earnest and confident in the propagation of the Gospel of the Son of God as to-day.

If Swami Vivekananda is desirous to know of the impression of his mission here let him stick a cambric needle into the Indian ocean, then pull it out and look for the hole. That will be the size of the Swami in America.

Yes, we cannot be too thankful for Christian America, and India will yet be thankful for the same.

## XXIX.

REV. B. FAY MILLS, Lecturer and Evangelist, Fort Edward, New York :

Swami Vivekananda made a very pleasant impression upon Americans at first. I am afraid some of it was dissipated later.

He did not produce a ripple in the stream of Christian thought and progress. Except for a mild curiosity to see how far Hindu dogmas might be strained to suggest Christian Ethics, I do not know that he produced any effect on American Christian thought or practice.

The receiving him as a converter of American Christianity to Hinduism is too ridiculous to demand any contradiction. Most of us did not even know he had been here since the Parliament.

## XXX.

LUTHER LAFTEN MILLS, Attorney at Law, Chicago :

The statement that many hundreds of converts from Christianity to Hinduism have been made in America by Swami Vivekananda is

without foundation in fact; and a person making it in this country would be pleasantly ridiculed for his ignorance or criticized for his exaggeration. This distinguished man, in the Parliament of Religions in the year 1893, delivered an address which was kindly received because of his fine personality and his manifest sincerity; and he subsequently made several public utterances to our people. A few curious minds may have been attracted, by what he said, to a study of his religious faith. But no appreciable impression has come upon the American mind from him, or his doctrines.

Neither Hinduism nor Mohammedanism, can find adoption in this land. They bear no credentials from the East which can secure for them a reception from a people which for the last two centuries and a half—a period of time, which in the intensity of its human life, its achievements for the race, its signal progress of humanity towards righteousness, has equalled many centuries of older history—has recognized its constant obligation to the mighty influence of the gospel of Christ in the upbuilding of the world's noblest edifice of civilization.

America is a Christian nation; its founders were Christians; Christianity is an essential element in the fibre of its being.

At the close of the year 1896 the religious bodies of the Christian system in this country numbered over twenty-five millions of communicants, showing an increase of over seven hundred thousand in twelve months.

Yet this actual membership of the churches is not the full test of their power and growth. Outside the church walls the spirit of our religion permeates the life of the people, is subduing selfishness and sin in the individual man of the world, is inspiring countless, vast charities for the welfare of the race, is creating an atmosphere of brotherhood among men and now, as never before, is leading the nation to the gentle philosophy of Jesus as the sure solution of the hard social problems which confront our patriots and philanthropists.

America stands, and will remain, the great Christian nation of the world, and obedient to the teachings of the Master of its faith will seek to bring to all lands which are in darkness the blessed and redeeming illumination of His gospel.

### XXXI.

D. L. MOODY, Evangelist and Author:

I have visited many of the leading cities of America this winter and have heard nothing of any movement toward Hinduism or Mohammedanism.



## XXXII.

RICHARD C. MORSE, General Secretary for the International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Associations, New York :

In reply to your request concerning the impression made in America by Swami Vivekananda in regard to Hinduism or Vedantism, I am amazed that anyone should believe he had really accomplished anything in propagating among us that form of worship, or faith, or idolatry. I can obtain no evidence that he has made the slightest impression upon any genuine and devout Christian believers or has in any way effectively antagonized the Christian faith and worship in America. He has indeed revealed how infinitely inferior to the truth as it is in Jesus Christ is the meagre and unsatisfying substitute which he advocates. Upon the minds of those in this country who are not under the sway of Christian truth the influence he exerted has been as insignificant and evanescent as it has been misleading. Not the slightest evidence comes to me of his having made any impression whatsoever upon thoughtful, scholarly and influential men, whether these are in active connection with the Christian faith and church or not.

## XXXIII.

Prof. W. F. OLDHAM, D.D., of the Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware, O. :

Your letter of enquiry regarding the work of Swami Vivekananda in America has been put into my hands for reply. In answer:—

The American people are warm-hearted and hospitable. They receive kindly any stranger who comes among them. Their deep interest in Oriental life makes peculiarly agreeable to them the presence of an educated Indian who in his dress and habits of thought and descriptions of his native land gives them the information they seek at first hand. This accounts for the crowds of curious listeners that any intelligent Hindu or Buddhist or Muhammadan can at any time gather.

The defaming of the English Government by these lecturers is another factor in commending them to the anti-English section of our Press and community. Commercial rivalry makes England a bug-a-boo to a large and not well-informed section of the people and these receive with much favor the denunciations of strolling Indian lecturers.

America is very far behind England in her knowledge of Orientalism and the dreamy metaphysics of India are only now being investigated here. When once understood, the sturdy practical

sense of the American looks upon the Indian philosophies as the incoherent and fanciful disportings of a perfume-laden dream-land. The whole subject interests him as do the tales of the Arabian Nights. That he is supposed to take these vaporings seriously would fill the average man with surprise. They are to him so absolutely nonsensical as not to excite in him any thought of serious rejoinder. To him they are the queer cerebations of lotus-eaters who have never caught a glimpse of the rushing practical many-sided busy life which he calls "civilization." These philosophies and their expounders he is perfectly willing to patronise to the extent of affording them generous hospitality *but to become a disciple* or even to spend very much of his valuable time in running down their elusive and tenuous truths through all their devious windings—the thought has never seriously occurred to him. The Swami's reports therefore of multiplied converts is a pure fabrication of a kind that alas! Hindu philosophy will scarcely condemn very greatly.

The real fact is that America has been deeply moved this winter through all its borders by such a wide-spread revival of experimental Christianity as has not been known in years. In our schools and colleges, in our city churches, and in the villages and hamlets, tens of thousands of men and women have bowed before God in humble penitence asking forgiveness in the name of Jesus Christ. In Boston at the very time that a dilettanti handful were curiously considering Mr. Vivekananda's successor's claims for Hinduism (which by the way he sought to set forth as the mother of Christianity) tens of thousands were being deeply stirred by Mr. Moody and his associates preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified. No, we are not taking our Hindu friends seriously. The sight of a great nation that has remained stagnant for a thousand years stirs our deep compassion, but scarcely gives us any desire to import the religious thinking which produced the stagnation.

#### XXXIV.

President FRANCIS L. PATTON, D.D., LL.D., of Princeton University, Princeton, N. J. :

I received your letter of January 27th, 1897, and regret that it has passed unnoticed until this moment. In reply to it let me say : There is not the slightest danger that any considerable number of people in America will be converted from Christianity to Hinduism. The Anglo-Saxon race will never leave Christianity for any other religion. The fight on the part of the friends of Christianity is with infidelity and those who deny the supernatural.

## XXXV.

President HENRY WADE ROGERS, LL.D., of the North-western University, Evanston, Illinois :

I have read the editorial contained in the *Indian Mirror* of Calcutta in reference to the converts Swami Vivekananda is said to have made in the United States, the aim of which is to create the impression that the people of America, under the influence of his teachings, are showing a decided leaning towards Vedantism. Nothing could be more absurd, nor farther from the truth. Vivekananda attracted some attention in this country on the part of a few who were curious to see him and hear what he had to say. But he has not made the slightest impression on the thought of the American people. No man in his senses can be found in this country who will say that there is the remotest possibility of the abandonment of Christianity by America in favor of Hinduism, Mohammedanism, or any other of the isms—such a thing is absolutely impossible.

## XXXVI.

President SYLVESTER F. SCOVEL of the University of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio :

I can well believe that Vivekananda has the effrontery to make almost any representation since he was willing to say after my address as he followed on the platform of the Parliament of Religion that "the acme of intolerance had been reached in the assertion that Mohammedanism had been propagated by the sword." I fear he mistook the kindly temper of our American people for something like acceptance of his view, or at least indifference to our own religion.

But greater mistake could not be made, as the future will plainly show.

## XXXVII.

President C. N. SIMS, D.D., LL.D., of Syracuse University, N. Y. :

I assure you that the advocates of Hinduism and Mohammedanism who visited this country have not even attracted public notice beyond the little local attention shown them where they have happened to lecture. Christianity was never stronger or more hopeful than to-day.

## XXXVIII.

President M. WOOLSEY STRYKER, D.D., LL.D., of Hamilton College, Clinton, New York :

I have read the excerpt you enclosed from the *Indian Mirror* of January 21, 1897. That *Mirror* must be a *speculum*—its reflections are

speculative! There is no such thing as it affirms. Some faddists have affected to accept the novelties of Hindu Pantheism : but they are as unrepresentative as they are esoteric. The people of America are no more likely to turn from the "Light of the World"—in whom is the life of men, than Boston is likely to be towed over to Bombay or the Earth to reverse its motion toward the Sun. The Bread of Heaven will not be set aside for the Occultism of Haschish! May God forgive the few who are paltering with a Moribund Orientalism and may the healing Christ arise upon those who do not know His purity of power, in all the East and in the West. Appalled by the work but undauntedly confident in the power of Jesus and the Resurrection, I am, yours etc.

## XXXIX.

President J. M. TAYLOR, D.D., of Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N. Y. :

I am in receipt to-day of your letter of the 21st of January, asking a few words from me relative to the likelihood of the abandonment of Christianity by America in favor of Hinduism or Mohammedanism. In the light of the press reports which you have received in Calcutta the question probably does not seem a strange one, but to us in this country who have watched the missionary efforts of Vivekananda they have seemed but a passing excitement, leaving behind them no real result. I have heard numbers of people speak of his remarkable presentation of his subject, but again and again on the occasions of his speaking he has been challenged by men who have known quite as much of his subject as himself, and the result on the great life of America has been—nothing. That there are always people who are ready to follow every new cult, whether it be one of these ancient religions or the madness of some new prophet, is to be expected ; but there is no danger of any considerable impression from such presentations in America where Christianity not only has a strong hold but where among intelligent people its superiorities to the religion of India, both doctrinally and morally, are well understood.

## XL.

REV. HENRY CLAY TRUMBULL, D.D., Pastor, and Editor of the *Sunday School Times*, Philadelphia, Pa. :

Christianity was never making more rapid or more steady progress in America than at the present time. The membership of Christian churches increases more rapidly than the population. It is one of the glories of Christianity that it secures liberty of conscience to all, welcomes free discussion as to religious belief, and gives protection even to its enemies while they strive for its

overthrow. Brahmanism, Muhammadanism, Theosophy, Agnosticism, and other forms of belief or of non-belief, are privileged to advocate their views, and to win followers as they are able. Among our seventy millions of inhabitants, any religion, true or false, may win a few hundreds, without attracting attention, and without having any influence in the community. In most cases, a person who comes to any positive religious belief makes a gain over a condition of doubt or indifference, and Christianity rejoices in even this sign of progress outside of its broad limits.

## XLI.

Bishop JOHN H. VINCENT, D.D., LL.D., Chancellor of the Chautauqua University, Buffalo, N. Y. :

I am greatly surprised by your letter and by the quotation from the *Indian Mirror* which it contains. I have not heard of a single convert made in America by Vivekananda. He was for a short time a literary and religious "curiosity." He has a fine personal appearance, ability in speech, affability in the social circle; but he has produced about as much impression on American thought as the dropping of a stone from Sandy Hook would have on the Atlantic Ocean. He *may* have made a few converts. Anybody with any theme can make a few converts in America. Never was Christianity so strong and never were converts to Christ so numerous as now in their great lands.

## XLII.

President W. F. WARREN, D.D., LL.D., S.T.D., of Boston University :

Before me is an article which purports to have been printed in the *Indian Mirror* of January 21, 1897. It is entitled "Swami Vivekananda," and the following sentences are fair specimens of the whole:

"He has raised the Hindu nation in the estimation of the Western world, and has created for the Hindu faith an interest which will last through all time. It is impossible to over-estimate the value of his services in America to the cause of Hinduism. Hundreds of men and women have enlisted themselves under the standard which he unfolded in America, and some of them have even taken to the bowl and the yellow-robos. The work that he had to do speedily assumed such proportions as to necessitate the dispatch of fresh reinforcements from India to keep it alive in America. Swami Saradananda is busy in Boston in watering the seeds which were there sown by Swami Vivekananda."

As an admirer of that which is best and most enduring in the thought and teaching of the Hindu people, I am always pained to

see such reckless or ignorant declarations as the above. They are not calculated to "raise the Hindu nation in the estimation of the Western world." For more than twenty years I have been a University Professor, lecturing weekly in our Boston University on the religions of the world—the only such lecturer in the city—yet I have never before heard of this Swami Saradananda who is said in the article to be busy here teaching Hinduism. Furthermore, though in this University we stately teach the Sanskrit language and literature, and some years have had a larger class in these studies than any other university in the New World, I have never heard of one American who under the teachings of Swami Vivekananda or any one else, ever abjured the Christian religion and adopted any form of Hinduism. That our distinguished guests at the Parliament of Religions should have been shown many courtesies and been listened to with respectful interest, was only fitting; it is to be hoped that these attentions have not been misunderstood either by the guests or by their countrymen.

### XLIII.

HENRY WATTERSON, Editor, *The Louisville Ky. Courier-Journal*.  
The following is the leading editorial of March 21st, 1897 :

#### CHRISTIANITY STAYS.

The *Courier-Journal* has received a peculiar appeal from far-off Calcutta. It is reasonable enough, doubtless, from the standpoint of those who send it, surrounded as they are by the atmosphere of Hinduism and Buddhism, but to us here, with an entirely different environment, it has in it something that borders on the ludicrous. The appeal comes from the "College Young Men's Christian Association of Calcutta," and is signed by its Secretary, W. W. White, D.D., PH.D. We are asked: "What have you to say of the likelihood of America abandoning Christianity and adopting either Hinduism or Mahommedanism in its stead?"

Along with this letter comes a long editorial from the *Indian Mirror*, Calcutta, under the caption "Swami Vivekananda." That our readers may not be misled, it is necessary to explain that Swami Vivekananda is not a religion, a dogma, a tropical fruit or other Indian product, an idol, or an insect, but the title and name of a person who is supposed to have set on foot the conversion of the United States to Vedantism, or some other sort of Indian religion. In fact, he is reported to have made Eastern religious ideas so popular in the United States that both Hindus and Buddhists—we follow the *Mirror's* spelling—are said to have forgotten their own differences and joined to welcome him back, recognizing the gratitude which they both owe him. It appears *that* on his return to India he was hailed everywhere as a

"conquering hero," not of war but of peace, as one who has spread "a religion which teaches the highest doctrine of peace and brotherhood among mankind." It is also stated that he has "raised the Hindu nation in the estimation of the Western world, and has created for the Hindu faith an interest which will last, through all time."

It is perhaps natural that statements of this sort, made with such confidence in a city largely populated by people of another faith, should disturb the minds of Christian residents there. Not that they doubt the ultimate triumph of Christianity, for on that point the letter of Dr. White speaks in no uncertain tone. But the *Mirror's* editorial is well calculated to awake apprehensions in the minds of those who do not know that it is the very "madness of the moon," unsupported by any facts that can possibly serve as the basis for generalizations so broad and sweeping, or, indeed, for any generalizations at all.

The specifications in the editorial referred to are not so alarming. It is stated that "hundreds of men and women have enlisted under the standard that he (Vivekananda) unfolded in America, and some of them have even taken to the bowl and the yellow robes." Very likely this is true. It is certain that hundreds had taken to the bowl before the Swami arrived, and other hundreds had appeared in yellow robes; but this, we take it, was in an entirely different sense from that in which the *Mirror* uses the terms. Possibly some hundreds of people have professed to believe in Hinduism, but these are not converts. They are mere diletanti, who, having grown weary of a course of hypocritical adherence to Christianity, are seeking some new diversion and possible social distinction by professing conversion to a religion whose tenets they no more understand than they comprehend the religion which they have renounced. Among them there are probably a very few real inquirers, but the mass of them have no capacity for weighing evidence, and if they had are not really in earnest. Their temporary interest in Hinduism, Buddhism or Mohammedanism is a mere dissipation of idle people craving a new sensation.

Even if these few hundred men and women were in deadly earnest, it would not signify anything whatever. So many converts may be easily commanded in this country for any fantastical scheme under the name of religion that any one chooses to invent. There is an arrant fakir out in Illinois who claims to be Jesus Christ, who has captured a number of people by his transparent lies, and is running a harem which he calls Heaven, giving out that the children born there have the Holy Ghost for their father. That many of his disciples are in earnest is evinced by the fact that they have surrendered their property to him, and work for him like slaves. In various other parts of the country there are similar fakirs, teaching all sorts of follies, and devoutly believed in by small bands of

foolish men and women, who accept their confident statements as divine revelations.

Do these things afford any evidence that Christianity is being superseded in the United States by other religions? Not the slightest. They are mere ripples on the surface of the ocean. The various Christian churches are going on from year to year growing stronger in numbers, in influence, in financial ability, in the range and scope of their work, both for the conversion of the world and for ameliorating the condition of mankind in this life. More and more the churches realize the necessity that civilization must accompany Christianity; that education must crystallize the teachings of the missionary; that the moral and social condition of the converts must be bettered with the change of faith. Hence the teacher and the physician are going with the missionary, healing the bodies and enlightening the minds of the heathen at the same time that efforts are made for the salvation of their souls. The progress of the Christian work is not noticeably impeded by the few hundreds that are crying out in favor of some foreign creed, or some domestic fakir claiming divine honors. The mass of the people are hardly aware of the existence of these erratic believers, and entirely unacquainted with their beliefs.

So far as the religions of India are concerned, they can make little impression in the United States, even among those who never believed in Christianity or have renounced that belief. They are not adapted to the Western mind, to Western habits of thought or Western customs. In fact, the teachings of Hinduism or Buddhism are largely incomprehensible to our people. We have unbelievers enough in Christianity, but most of them still recognize the fact that it is the religion of the most enlightened and most progressive people of the world, and that a reversion to Hinduism or Mohammedanism would be a distinctly backward movement in the scale of civilization. The prospect of the United States becoming Hindu, or Buddhist, or Mohammedan, is just about equal to the probability that scientific discovery will convince people that snakes are developed from horse-hairs. Christianity is here to stay, and our friends at Calcutta are fully justified in making a note of it.

#### XLIV.

MISS FRANCES E. WILLARD, President of the World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Evanston, Ill. :

What you have written reads to me like an unknown tongue. If "Swami Vivekananda" has been a "conquering hero" in America or "has raised the Hindu nation in the estimation of the Western world," or "created for the Hindu faith an interest which will last for all time," or "rolled back the tide of conversion from east to west, the tables being completely turned," I have never



heard of it, nor do I think the intelligent people of this country have the faintest idea that any such preposterous claim can have been made by anybody anywhere for one of whom very few of our American people have ever heard. Christianity was never so thoroughly entrenched in the foundations of our people as it is to-day. We rejoice in the admirable work being done in India by Dr. Barrows. Every word uttered by him can be taken at its full value; we have no better type of a progressive and whole-hearted Christian minister.

## XLV.

LUTHER D. WISHARD, Foreign Secretary of the International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations, New York City, Foreign Department:

I have no reliable information whatever concerning the movements of Swami Vivekananda. I am not even aware that he is now in this country. He is certainly attracting very slight general attention. You of course understand how much truth there is in P. T. Barnum's oftquoted remark that the American people like to be humbugged. I would not be at all surprised if there were some Americans who had professed to believe statements which Vivekananda represents as Hinduism.

I doubt not that you are in possession of all the points that I could make in answer to your circular of inquiry. You are of course aware of the fact that the members of evangelical churches form over one-fifth of our population, whereas at the beginning of the century they did not constitute more than one-fourteenth. You are also aware of the fact that whereas in the beginning of the century colleges like Yale and Princeton had at certain times less than a half dozen Christian students, the same colleges now have many hundreds of Christians. There are over 1,300 members now in the Yale Young Men's Christian Association. We know that during the past twenty years the number of evangelical Christian communicants in our colleges has increased from one-third of the student body to over one-half. Dr. McCosh declared at the close of the fifteenth year of his presidency in Princeton that among the one thousand students whom he had graduated he only knew about a half dozen who were avowed unbelievers in Christianity. Dr. Dorchester states that in answer to a question put to the last 1,400 graduates of Harvard as to their attitude toward Christianity, only two avowed themselves as out and out unbelievers, one being a materialist, the other an agnostic. After discounting the value of this testimony from Harvard and Princeton many-fold, there is still a very strong testimony in support of the position long maintained by the leaders of our movement that the American colleges are the strongholds of American Christianity.

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