

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Life and Teachings

Published on the occasion of
150th Birth Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda

BRAHMACHARI AMAL



RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND RAMAKRISHNA MISSION
Belur Math, Howrah District • West Bengal 711202, India

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This illustrated handy book on the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) is published on the occasion of the celebration of his 150th birth anniversary, on behalf of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, District Howrah, West Bengal.

Swami Vivekananda is a household name in India. He was one of the greatest spiritual leaders of the modern world. Through the lectures he delivered at the World Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893 and subsequent lecturing and teaching work for four and a half years in the USA and England, he succeeded to a great extent in changing the opinion of Western people about India, and raised the image of India to a high pedestal as the land of spirituality, harmony, and rich cultural heritage.

After his return to India Swami Vivekananda through his stirring lectures awakened the minds of Indians to their glorious cultural heritage, infused self-confidence and positive outlook in them, and drew their attention to the immediate need to uplift the downtrodden masses of India. He was the first spiritual leader in modern India to speak for the poor masses and to take up different forms of selfless service to them.

Above all, Swamiji is a universal ideal for modern youths. He passed away at the age of thirty-nine and a half years. But before that he achieved so much in his life and contributed so much to the welfare, progress,

and spiritual elevation of humanity during the short period of his youth that it has few parallels in history.

The second part of the book consists of the teachings of Swami Vivekananda. These teachings are modern, rational, and universal, that is, they are meant for all people without any distinctions of gender, caste, religion, region, race, or occupation. They provide a roadmap to modern youths to attain success, prosperity, health and happiness. These powerful teachings infuse self-confidence and inner strength to face the problems of life such as failure, criticism, depression, and so on. They also infuse in the hearts of young people love for all, compassion for suffering people, and the spirit of service. Above all, the teachings of Swami Vivekananda enable young people to lead a moral and spiritual life, and attain true fulfillment and peace in life.

Written in a simple language, this book is primarily meant for youths, but others will also derive benefit from it. The illustrations have been drawn by the well known artists Biswaranjan Chakravarty, Dilip Bhattacharya, and Sibsankar Bhattacharya. To bring it within the reach of all it is made available at a subsidized price. We hope all people, particularly the youth of the country, will find this little book a perennial source of inspiration and guidance in life.

Belur Math
1 May 2011

PUBLISHER

CONTENTS

Publisher's Note	3
Foreword	9
Young Naren	10
Young Naren At School And At Play	14
Naren And His Friends	17
Naren Grows Up	20
Naren Meets Sri Ramakrishna	22
The Master And The Disciple	24
At The Cossipore Garden-House	27
At The Baranagore Math	28
Wandering Days	30
To America	37
At The Parliament Of Religions.....	40
The Spiritual Teacher In America	44
At The Thousand Island Park	45
England And Europe	47
The Hero Returns	50
To Calcutta	53
Calcutta And North India	55
Swamiji And His Disciples	56
To The Himalayas	59
At Belur Math	62
Second Visit To The West	63
To Europe	67
Return To India	68
Last Days	70
The Passing	73
Teachings Of Swami Vivekananda	78
Divinity Of Man	78

Call To The Youth Of India	82
Self Confidence	85
Faith - The Source Of Strength	88
The Power Of Will	92
The Power Of Mind	96
Self Motivation.....	101
Education	104
Religion.....	107
Love & Purity	109
Give Up Superstition	112
True Effort	117
Be Brave	119
Service	120
Way To Success	121
Leader & Organization	123
Secret Of Work	124



Swami Vivekananda

FOREWORD

ALTHOUGH there are several books in English about Swami Vivekananda, there is none among them which may be said to have been written specially for young boys and girls. This book written by a young American who is now a member of the Ramakrishna Order and is engaged in teaching young Indian students, will, we believe, go some way to fulfil that need. Written in simple English and giving only the barest facts, it tries to introduce Swami Vivekananda to young readers in the hope that when they grow up they will want to know more about this great man and get acquainted with his ideas and draw inspiration from them. There is enough material in the book to bring out in bold relief the great qualities of head and heart that Swami Vivekananda possessed—his courage, selflessness, love for fellow men, thirst for knowledge, etc. The book, written as it is, may serve as an excellent rapid reader for school students, and it is hoped that it will be welcomed and widely used as such. This is not to say that grown up persons may not find any interest in the book, for, as has been already stated, the book is intended to serve as an introduction to Swami Vivekananda and in so far as this is the case, it will be of interest even to adults, specially because the book is highly readable.

Ramakrishna Mission
Ashrama, Narendrapur
1964

SWAMI LOKESWARANANDA

I YOUNG NAREN

ONCE a young man was walking along the streets of Calcutta. Suddenly, he heard a great noise. What was it? Then he saw a carriage rushing along the street. The horse pulling the carriage was running as fast as it could. Something had frightened it and it was running away. A lady was riding in the carriage and she was badly frightened. She was in great danger because the carriage might be upset at any moment. No one was able to help her.

The young man saw what was happening. He was very brave. When the horse came close he ran towards it at the risk of his own life, seized the reins and forced the horse to stop. The life of the lady was saved and she was very grateful to the young man.

Who was he? He was then called Narendranath, but he later became famous as Swami Vivekananda. He was born in a famous Datta family who lived in the Simla section of Calcutta. Sri Viswanath Datta was a lawyer. He had studied many things and was respected by everyone. His wife was Bhuvaneshwari Devi. She was like a queen in appearance as well as behaviour. Everyone loved and respected her.

On the 12th of January, 1863, their first son was born. They named him Narendranath.

Naren was a naughty child, and sometimes Bhuvaneshwari Devi found it extremely hard to control him.



If cold water was poured on his head at the same time chanting the name of Shiva in his ear, the child would quiet down.

However, she found that even when Naren grew extremely restless, if cold water was poured on his head at the same time chanting the name of Shiva in his ear, the child would quiet down. Indeed, at times this was the only method with which to bring him under control.

Young Naren learned many things from his mother, and she told him stories from the Mahabharata and the



*Once a cobra came gliding along the ground.
The other boys were frightened and ran away.*

Ramayana. Naren loved to hear the story of Sri Rama. He bought a small clay image of Sita-Rama and worshipped it with flowers. He liked to listen to the reading of the Ramayana. Once he stayed in a banana grove for a long time, hoping to see Sri Hanumana, for he had heard that that was a favourite place of this heroic devotee of Rama.

He also liked to play at meditation. He would take one or two of his friends to a lonely place and they would sit in front of an image of Sita-Rama or Shiva. Then Naren would meditate and would think about God. He would get lost in his thoughts about God and for a time he would not see or feel anything around him. Once a cobra came gliding along the ground. The other boys were frightened and ran away, but Naren stayed where he was. They shouted at him but he did not hear them. After some time the snake went away. Later, his parents asked Naren why he had not run away. He replied, "I did not know anything about the snake. I was feeling very happy."

Naren was happy when Sadhus visited their house. He sometimes gave them valuable things. Once he gave a piece of new cloth which he was wearing to a Sadhu. After that his parents locked him up whenever Sadhus came to the house. But when Naren saw the Sadhus he would throw things to them through the window. Now and then he said that he would become a Sadhu himself some day.

Naren's father, as we have said, was a lawyer. Many people came to see him. He entertained them and offered them tobacco to smoke. There were different pipes for the different castes. But caste was a great mystery to Naren. Why was a member of one caste not allowed to eat with members of other castes? Why were there different tobacco pipes for the different castes? There was a pipe for the Muslims also. What would happen if he smoked from all the pipes? Would there be an explosion? Would the roof fall down? Naren

decided to find out for himself. He took a whiff from one pipe. Nothing happened. He tried all the pipes in turn and took a whiff from each of them. Still nothing happened. Just then his father walked into the room and asked him what he was doing. Naren replied, "O father, why, I was trying to see what would happen if I broke caste." His father laughed and went into his study.

II

YOUNG NAREN AT SCHOOL AND AT PLAY

WHEN he was six years old Naren began his studies. He did not go to school at first as his parents got a teacher for him. He quickly learned to read and write. His memory was very good and he could understand a lesson after hearing his teacher read it once.

When he was seven Naren was sent to the Metropolitan Institution. This school was started by Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar. Narendranath was very intelligent and learned his lessons quickly. He became a leader among the boys. He enjoyed games very much. He would eat his lunch quickly and would be the first to run to the playground. Some of the games were jumping, running, boxing and playing with marbles. Sometimes he invented new games.

Sometimes Naren turned the classroom into a playground. He would talk to his friends and tell them stories even while the teacher was present. Once the teacher saw them talking. He turned to Naren and his

friends and asked them to repeat the lesson. All were silent except Naren, who was able to listen to the lesson and talk to his friends at the same time. He was able to answer correctly all the questions put by the teacher. Then the teacher asked them who had been talking. The boys pointed to Naren. The teacher did not believe them and made them stand up as a punishment. Naren stood up also. The teacher told him that he need not stand, but Naren continued to do so. He said, "I must, for it was I who was talking."

One of Naren's favourite games was "King and Court". Naren, of course, was always the King. The Court was held on a flight of stairs leading from the courtyard to the worship room. Naren took the highest step for his royal throne. He would then appoint his officials. One boy would be made Prime Minister and another the Commander-in-chief of the armies. Some were made Tributary Princes or other government officers. Then they took their places on the lower steps according to their rank. In this way Naren, the King, held his Court. As King he gave orders, settled disputes, or put down rebellions. No one was allowed to disobey the King's orders. Sometimes he would order severe punishment to be given to a supposed rebel. The rebel would try to escape but the King's men would chase him around the house and would finally capture him amidst much noise and excited shouting.

Naren liked animals very much and he would play with the family cow. He also kept pet animals and birds. Among these were a monkey, a goat, a peacock, some pigeons and two or three guinea-pigs.



But Naren and one or two of his friends stayed to help the sailor.

The coachman was a special friend of Naren, and he would often be found having intimate talks with him. Naren also thought that the syce or groom was a very grand person. He sat in the front of the carriage wearing a big turban and swinging a whip. Naren sometimes said that when he grew up he would like to be a syce.

He tried his hand at many games. Once in a while he played at cooking also. He bought vegetables and

spices and cooked various dishes. He was really a good cook. Another time he organized a group of boys to stage plays. Then he became interested in physical exercise. He first started a gymnasium in his own courtyard, and later joined the gymnasium of a neighbour. He took lessons in fencing, lathi-play, wrestling and other sports.

Once, Naren and his friends were trying to set up a heavy trapeze. It was a difficult job for young boys, but though many people gathered to watch no one offered to help them. Naren noticed a strong British sailor in the crowd. He went to him and asked him to help them. The sailor agreed. He started to help them, but suddenly the trapeze slipped and hit the sailor. He fell down unconscious. Most of the people thought the sailor had been killed and ran away from the scene, but Naren and one or two of his friends stayed to help the sailor. Naren tore his dhoti to make bandages. He bandaged the wound and then sprinkled water on the sailor's face and fanned him gently. After some time the sailor regained consciousness. Naren then helped him to go to a neighbouring school-house where he could stay, and then sent for a doctor. After a week the sailor recovered and went away. Before he left Naren collected some money from his friends and gave it to the sailor.

III **NAREN AND HIS FRIENDS**

NAREN and his friends went to see many interesting places in Calcutta. One day Naren and a group of boys

visited the Nawab's Zoological Gardens at Metiaburuz, near Calcutta. They went by boat. As they were returning one of the boys got sick and dirtied the boat. The boatmen became angry and ordered the boys to clean the boat. They refused, and instead offered to pay double the fare. The boatmen would not accept the offer. When they reached the ghat they would not allow the boys to go ashore. They threatened and abused the boys. Naren, however, was able to jump ashore. He found two British soldiers walking nearby and asked them for help. They went with him. They guessed what was happening and shouted at the boatmen, ordering them to release the boys. The boatmen got frightened and at once set the boys free.

Once, when Naren was about eleven, a British man-of-war (a warship) visited the port of Calcutta. Many people went to see the ship and Naren and his friends also wanted to see it. In order to do so they had to obtain a pass from an important British official. Naren filled in an application form and went to the building where the official stayed. Many people were going in, but the doorkeeper thought that Naren was too young and would not let him go in. Naren stood outside wondering what to do. He saw that all the people were going to a certain room on the first floor. He thought that perhaps there was another entrance, so he walked round to the back of the building, where he found a staircase. There was no doorkeeper there, so he went up to the first floor. He pushed aside a curtain and found himself in the room where the other people were waiting. He took his place in the queue



A Brahma-daitya lives there. If you disturb him he will break your necks. Beware that you don't climb that tree again.

and the British official signed his application without question. Naren went out by the main entrance. The doorkeeper was surprised to see him leave. He said, "How did you get in?" Naren replied, "Oh, don't you know that I am a magician?"

There was a flowering tree in the compound of one of Naren's friends. Naren and his friends used to climb this tree and swing from the branches. Naren would hang from a branch by his legs, swing back and forth and finally somersault to the ground. An old man lived at that house, and he did not like to see them swinging in the tree, for it was risky. One day he called Naren and his friends and said, "Look, don't you know there is a ghost in that tree? A Brahma-daitya lives there. If you disturb him he will break your necks. Beware that you don't climb that tree again."

This was enough to frighten the other boys, but not Naren. As soon as the old man was out of sight Naren went and climbed the tree again. His friends asked, "How do you dare do that, Naren? Didn't you hear what the old man said?"

Naren laughed and said, "Oh what fools you are! I have climbed this tree so many times. If the old man's story were true my neck would have been broken long ago."

IV **NAREN GROWS UP**

As Naren grew older he took more interest in reading books and did not play games so much. He did well in his school work, but his father took him away from Calcutta for two years and he stopped going to school. When he returned he had to do three years' work in one year. When the time for examination drew near he

studied very hard. He passed the Entrance Examination in the first division. He was the only student from his school to do so that year. He then went to the Presidency College for one year. The next year he joined the General Assembly's Institution, now known as the Scottish Church College. The professors at the latter college were surprised to see how intelligent Naren was. The Principal, Prof. W. W. Hastie, said that he had never seen another boy like Naren. Naren studied hard and read many books of all kinds and on all subjects. He passed the First Arts Examination in 1881 and obtained his B.A. degree in 1884.

Naren also studied music for four or five years. He learned to play several instruments, and he became known as a very good singer also. Because he sang well he was often invited to parties. He enjoyed the fun at parties, but he found more pleasure in intellectual discussions. He would often argue about serious subjects with his friends and sometimes with older people. He was very good at argument and few people could match his skill.

At this time Naren became interested in the problems of religion. Like many other young men at that time Naren became a member of the Brahmo Samaj and attended the lectures of Sri Keshab Chandra Sen. He was often asked to sing songs at the Samaj. But the question which troubled him most was whether there is a God or not and whether anyone had seen Him. He visited many religious leaders, including Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, for an answer to this question, but none could satisfy his doubts.

V

NAREN MEETS SRI RAMAKRISHNA

NAREN was interested in religion, but he had lost faith in many of the teachings of Hinduism. He did not know what to believe. He had gone to many religious people, but they could not help him. One day he decided to visit Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna was a great Hindu



Naren sang two songs at his request

saint. He came from a village called Kamarpukur in the Hooghly District. At that time he was living at the Kali Temple of Dakshineswar, near Calcutta. He lived a life of prayer and meditation and thought always of God. Many people came to him and he solved their spiritual problems.

Naren had heard about Sri Ramakrishna from his teacher, Prof. Hastie, and from one of his relatives. He had also seen him at the house of this relative in Calcutta. Now he decided to visit him at Dakshineswar, to see whether Sri Ramakrishna could help him in any way. Naren took a few friends with him. Sri Ramakrishna received them kindly, and Naren sang two songs at his request. Then Sri Ramakrishna took him into another room. He treated Naren as if he were a dear friend who had just returned from a long journey. He even wept for joy, and fed Naren with sweets with his own hands. Naren could not understand all this. He thought that perhaps Sri Ramakrishna was a madman, but he promised to come again. When they returned to the other room Sri Ramakrishna began to speak about God. He said that we can see and speak to God just as we see and speak to our friends. Naren did not know what to think. Sri Ramakrishna had acted in a strange way but he also seemed to be a great saint.

About a month later Naren came again, this time alone. Sri Ramakrishna treated him kindly and asked him to sit by his side. Then he touched Naren. At this touch Naren had a strange experience. The walls and the room seemed to whirl round and round and then vanish. He thought that he was about to die and he

became frightened. He cried out, “What is this that you are doing to me? I have my parents at home.”

Sri Ramakrishna laughed and began to stroke Naren’s chest. He said, “All right, let it rest now. Everything will come in time.” At his touch the strange experience was gone and Naren found everything the same as it had been before.

A similar thing happened when Naren visited Sri Ramakrishna for the third time. He again lost consciousness at the touch of Sri Ramakrishna. He could not understand what had happened. He had a strong body and mind, but this saint could do with him whatever he liked by a mere touch. He could not explain how it happened. However, he understood that Sri Ramakrishna was no ordinary person. He came to have deep respect for him though there were still many unanswered questions in his mind.

VI **THE MASTER AND THE DISCIPLE**

NAREN now began to visit Sri Ramakrishna as often as he could. He felt that Sri Ramakrishna loved him more than anyone else did. He was always eager to see him.

Sri Ramakrishna was confident that Naren would some day become a great man. He mentioned this to his other devotees telling them about Naren’s many good qualities. He said that other devotees were like stars, but Naren was like the sun. He said that Naren was a liberated soul who had been born to help other people. Sri



*Sri Ramakrishna said, “If you do not accept my views
why do you come to me?”*

Ramakrishna had great confidence in Naren; he knew that he could never do anything wrong.

Naren also felt deep love for Sri Ramakrishna. Although busy with his studies he often went to Dakshineswar. Sri Ramakrishna was delighted with Naren's songs and often went into Samadhi listening to them. Naren had an independent mind; he would not believe any-

thing unless he could understand it for himself. Many times he would argue with Sri Ramakrishna if what he said was not logical to him. Once Sri Ramakrishna said, “If you do not accept my views why do you come to me?”

Naren replied, “I come because I love you. But that does not mean that I will accept your words without thinking for myself.” Instead of being annoyed Sri Ramakrishna was pleased to hear this; he was glad that Naren was so independent-minded.

And so time went on. Naren became more and more devoted to Sri Ramakrishna, who gave him various instructions which he followed. Sri Ramakrishna taught him how to meditate, and he became more and more interested in meditation and other spiritual practices.

But Naren had to pass through a time of great trouble. Early in 1884 his father died. Naren was the eldest son and so he became the head of the family. His father had never saved any money and Naren found it difficult even to get enough food for the family to eat. He often went without food so that his family might have more. He began to look for a job, but without success. Later, he worked in a lawyer’s office, as a school teacher and at other such jobs. They were not permanent and he had difficulty in supporting his family. In spite of these difficulties they at least had a house to live in. But some dispute arose over this also. Some of his relatives chose this time to claim a large part of the house as theirs. The case went to court where it dragged on for a long time. Luckily the case was decided in favour of Naren’s family.

VII

AT THE COSSIPORE GARDEN-HOUSE

NAREN'S life had been completely upset by his father's death. His mind was in a turmoil. He found peace only at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna. In 1885 Sri Ramakrishna began to suffer from a sore in his throat. It became worse and worse and finally it was learned that he had cancer, a terrible disease. His disciples and devotees came forward to help him. A garden-house was rented for him at Cossipore. He moved there and many of his young disciples began to stay there and nurse him.

Naren was one of those who spent most of their time at Cossipore. He sometimes had to go to Calcutta on family business, but he spent the rest of his time with Sri Ramakrishna. Naren and the other disciples devoted themselves to the service of their Master. Naren was their leader. When they had time they would gather together and sing, study, or discuss the great qualities of Sri Ramakrishna. Naren wanted very much to realize God, to see God, for he felt that this was the only purpose of life. Sri Ramakrishna gave him many hints about how to meditate, and he spent much time in meditation. He had wonderful experiences during meditation; sometimes he would completely forget the outside world.

Once Naren and Sri Girish Chandra Ghosh, the great poet and dramatist, sat under a tree for meditation. Girish tried to meditate, but there were too many mosquitoes. They buzzed around his head and bit him and he could not meditate. He wondered if Naren was able to meditate, so he opened his eyes to see what he was doing. He was

surprised to see that mosquitoes covered Naren's body like a blanket. But Naren did not seem to feel anything since he was lost in meditation.

One evening Naren had the highest spiritual experience. While meditating he forgot the outside world and even his own body. He thought of nothing but God and God alone. His mind was literally filled with God. He felt great joy and happiness. This experience is called Samadhi.

Sri Ramakrishna began to prepare Naren for the work he was to do later. He asked Naren to look after the other young devotees and to see that they continued to practise meditation. One day Sri Ramakrishna asked them to beg their food from door to door as the Sadhus do. The food they collected was offered to Sri Ramakrishna. He ate it with great joy and said that such food was pure. He also gave ochre robes to the boys and in this way initiated them as monks.

The end came all too soon. On August 16, 1886 Sri Ramakrishna passed away, leaving his disciples full of sorrow. Some stayed at the Cossipore garden-house for a time and others returned home and began to study: Naren, however, started to organize them into a monastic brotherhood.

VIII AT THE BARANAGORE MATH

THE young monks could not stay at Cossipore for long, since the rent of the house was too high, but with the

help of a devotee they rented a smaller house at Baranagore. Here they established the first monastery of the Ramakrishna Order. The house was old and decayed; the garden was full of weeds; cobras lived under the ground floor of the house and local people believed there were ghosts in the house. It was a strange place, but the young monks lived there because the rent was



*Swamiji went to Banaras and many other places
and then wandered through the Himalayas.*

cheap. It was also quiet and peaceful. They were very poor. There were hardly enough clothes and their food was not good. For months they had nothing to eat but rice and some boiled leaves.

Naren and the others cared nothing for this. They thought only of God. Naren was the leader. He went to those boys who had returned home and persuaded them to join the monastery. Naren looked after them and inspired them to think of God. They meditated for long hours. They sang songs. They discussed the religious ideas of all sects and religions. They tried to follow everything that Sri Ramakrishna had taught them.

During this period they took the monastic vows of sannyasa. They also took new names. Naren, however, did not take a permanent name, and when he wandered through India he changed his name now and then. Sometimes he used the name ‘Swami Vividishananda’ and sometimes other names. When people speak of him now they often call him ‘Swamiji’.

IX

WANDERING DAYS

SWAMIJI (Naren) stayed at the Baranagore Math for two years. Some of the other monks left the Math and began to wander from one place to another. Hindu monks have been doing this for thousands of years. Swamiji also became restless. In 1888 he left the Math and went to Banaras for a week. While there, he met two famous saints—Trailanga Swami and Swami Bhaskarananda.

An interesting incident happened at that time. One day Swamiji was returning from a visit to the temple of Mother Durga. Suddenly, a troop of monkeys began to run after him. Swamiji was afraid they might bite him and he began to run away. But the monkeys kept on chasing him. He ran as fast as he could, but they still kept on his heels. He did not know what to do as he was losing his breath. Just then an old sannyasin who happened to pass that way called out to him, "Stop ! Face the brutes." Swamiji stopped, turned around and stood facing the monkeys. When he did this the monkeys got frightened and ran away. Swamiji then had a good laugh over this.

He later visited many other cities in north India. At Hathras the railway station master, Sri Sharat Chandra Gupta, became his disciple. He followed Swamiji and later took the name 'Swami Sadananda'. They went together to Hrishikesh and spent some time there in meditation. But the life was hard and their health suffered. They had to return to the Baranagore Math.

After a year Swamiji again began to wander. He went to Ghazipur where he met the famous saint, Pavhari Baba. He then returned to Calcutta. In 1890 he left the Baranagore Math and did not return for many years. One of his brother disciples went with him. They went to Banaras and many other places and then wandered through the Himalayas. They stopped at Hrishikesh but suffered from fever. Later, Swamiji came down and spent several weeks at Meerut. Some of his brother monks joined him there for a time.

Many things happened to Swamiji while he was wan-

dering, some good and some bad. Often he had nothing to eat for a long time and often he was tired and hungry. But he also met many kind-hearted people who helped him. Often it was the poor and lowly who gave him food and shelter. Once he was sitting in the hot sun at a railway station in Uttar Pradesh. He had not eaten anything for over a day and he could not even get a drink of water because he had no money. A Baniya began to taunt Swamiji. He did not think that men should become monks. He said to Swamiji, "See what nice food I am eating. See the nice cold water I have to drink. I earn money and so I have all these good things. You do not earn money and so you are starving." The Swami said nothing. But a wonderful thing happened after a little while. A sweetmeat seller appeared and offered food to Swamiji. He spread a mat and laid out food and water before Swamiji. He then begged him to eat the food.

Swamiji said, "You must be mistaken, my good man. I do not remember having seen you before."

But the sweetmeat-seller said, "No, Babaji, you are the man I saw in my dream. Sri Ramji himself appeared to me and told me to take these good things to you at the railway station. When I came here I recognized you at once. Please take your food while it is fresh." Tears of gratitude flowed from Swamiji's eyes and he thanked the sweetmeat-seller again and again. But the sweetmeat-seller said that it was all the will of Sri Ramji. The Baniya was thunderstruck to see all this. He stood staring at the scene. He understood his mistake and fell at Swamiji's feet and begged his pardon.

Leaving Meerut Swamiji decided to wander about

alone. He forbade his brother monks to follow him and left for Rajputana, the land of heroes. When Swamiji was at Alwar he had a very interesting discussion with Prince Mangal Singh. The Prince said that he did not believe in image-worship because he could not worship wood, stone or metal. In answer, Swamiji asked for a picture of the Prince to be given to him. Holding the picture in his hand, Swamiji asked the Dewan of the Prince to spit on it. At this the Dewan grew terrified and said: "What! Swamiji! This is the likeness of our Maharaja. How can I do such a thing?" Swamiji now said to the Prince: "See, Your Highness, though you are not actually present in the picture your devoted servant sees the shadow of your form in it. This picture is only a piece of paper; but your servants treat it with respect because it reminds them of Your Highness. Similarly, devotees worship God in an image because it brings to their mind some special form of God and helps them to concentrate. They actually worship the same one God and not the stone or metal as such. At this the Maharaja said with folded hands: "Swamiji, till now I did not understand the meaning of image worship. You have opened my eyes."

Swamiji visited many other places and at Mt. Abu he met the Maharaja of Khetri. Later he went to Khetri with the Maharaja. The Maharaja became his devoted disciple and they had many long talks together. The Swami loved the Maharaja dearly and there was a very wonderful relationship between them. The Maharaja was later able to help Swamiji in many ways.

But Swamiji again became eager to wander. He left Khetri and passed through the Bombay Presidency and



*Holding the picture in his hand,
Swamiji asked the Dewan of the Prince to spit on it.*

much of south India. He stayed for some time with the Maharaja of Mysore, who became his great friend and admirer. The Maharaja offered to help him with his mission. He made a recording of Swamiji's voice and kept it in the palace for many years.

Swamiji left Mysore for Rameswaram. He stopped on the way at Madurai where he met the Raja of Ram-

nad. The Raja was a very good man and a good ruler. He became an admirer and disciple of Swamiji, and Swamiji explained to him many of his ideas for the uplift of India. The Raja promised to help him. Swamiji next went to Rameswaram and then to Cape Comorin, the southernmost part of India. He crossed over to a big rock in the ocean and sat there and thought about his motherland. He had seen the whole of India, from north to south and from east to west. He had seen much poverty and suffering and was able to understand the difficulties of the people. Yes, the common people of India were very poor, but Swamiji also saw how good they were, how gentle and kind-hearted. They had to do much hard work for which they received very little money.

Swamiji felt deeply for the people and was anxious to do something for them. But what could he, a poor homeless monk, do? He had appealed to many princes, to rich and educated people; he had appealed to young students also. They all listened to him and admired him as a monk and teacher, but they did nothing to put his ideas into practice. He felt depressed and wondered what he should do next to help his countrymen.

But Swamiji was a follower of Sri Ramakrishna, and he always tried to carry out the will of his Master. He now felt that Sri Ramakrishna wanted him to go to America to attend a Parliament of Religions. It was a strange and distant land, and it would not be easy to go there. But he also felt that, somehow, he would be able to help his own country better from the West. To fulfil the will of God, then, he decided to make the journey



*Swamiji crossed over to a big rock in the ocean
and sat there and thought about his motherland.*

to America.... This is the resolve he made while sitting on the rock at Cape Comorin.

Swamiji next went to Madras where many intelligent young men became his enthusiastic followers. He gave several talks before different groups and met many important and educated people. He told them about his idea of going to America. His young disciples became very enthusiastic about this, and they began to raise

money for the ticket.

At this time the Maharaja of Khetri invited Swamiji to visit his capital again. It was the Maharaja who gave the Swami a first class ticket on a ship going to Canada and many things he needed for the trip. The Maharaja also suggested that he take the name 'Vivekananda'. Swamiji accepted this name and for the rest of his life he was known as Swami Vivekananda.

X TO AMERICA

SWAMI Vivekananda sailed from Bombay on May 31, 1893. The ship stopped at Ceylon, Singapore, Hong Kong and other ports in China and Japan. Swamiji enjoyed the trip very much. The ship then sailed to Vancouver, Canada. Swamiji left Vancouver by train for Chicago. On the train a rich, cultured lady named Miss Sanborn was impressed by his noble personality and her conversation with him. She said to Swamiji, "If you ever come to my home near Boston, I shall be happy to have you as my guest and introduce you to persons of learning and culture." Swamiji reached Chicago in the middle of July. It was a strange new world. He visited the Chicago World's Fair where the Parliament of Religions was to be held. He was surprised to see all the exhibits and scientific inventions. He marvelled at the machinery, the industrial products and the arts.

After a few days Swamiji went to the Information Bureau to find out about the Parliament of Religions.

He was dismayed to learn that the Parliament would not open until September. Moreover, they told him that he could not be accepted as a delegate at the Parliament because he had no papers to show that he represented any group or sect. They also told him that the time for admission was already past. This news was a great blow. Worse still, he was fast running out of money. He had to wait almost two months for the Parliament, but his money would soon be spent and then he would have to starve.

Swamiji left Chicago and went to Miss Sanborn's place near Boston, as he was told he could live there more cheaply than in Chicago. He also remembered Miss Sanborn's cordial invitation to visit her home. While in her home he met Prof. J. H. Wright of Harvard University. He had a long discussion with the Professor and talked about many different subjects with him. Prof. Wright recognized Swamiji's great scholarship and said that he should represent Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions. Swamiji told him that he had no official letter from any organization. The Professor replied, "To ask you, Swami, for credentials is like asking the sun to state its right to shine."

Professor Wright arranged everything for Swamiji. He wrote to the Chairman of the Committee of the Parliament of Religions introducing Swamiji. In this letter he said, "Here is a man who is more learned than all our learned professors put together." He also presented Swamiji with a ticket to Chicago. Swamiji was very happy to see how God's purpose was being fulfilled.

When Swamiji reached Chicago he found that he had lost the address of the Committee. He did not know



Swamiji sat down by the side of the street, determined to wait until something happened. Just then the door of a nearby house opened and a lady came out.

where to go. He was tired, and finding no other place he spent the night in a large empty box. In the morning he began to walk along a street where rich people lived in large houses. Like a sannyasin he began to beg for food from door to door. But he was treated rudely and even the servants insulted him, for begging is condemned in

the West. He did not know what to do. At last he decided just to wait for the will of God. If God had brought him to the West for some purpose, then he would look after him. So he sat down by the side of the street, determined to wait until something happened. Just then the door of a nearby house opened and a lady came out. She went up to Swamiji and asked him, "Sir, are you a delegate to the Parliament of Religions?" Swamiji told her all about himself. The lady invited him into her home and instructed the servants to look after him. She saw that he had breakfast and then took him to the office of the Parliament. Swamiji gave his letter of introduction and was gladly accepted as a delegate. The lady who helped him was Mrs. George W. Hale. She, her husband and their children became close friends of Swamiji.

XI AT THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

THE Parliament of Religions opened on Monday, September 11, 1893. It was held in a large building called the Hall of Columbus. Swami Vivekananda sat on the platform at the front with the other delegates. Cardinal Gibbons of the Roman Catholic Church sat in the centre. On both sides were delegates representing nearly all countries and religions. There were a few others from India. Majumdar and Nagarkar represented the Brahmo Samaj; Dharmapala represented the Buddhists of Ceylon, and Chakravorty and Mrs. Besant represented Theosophy. There was a large audience of four thousand people.

It was a grand occasion, and Swami Vivekananda felt nervous at the sight of so many people. The Chairman several times requested him to speak, but he would not agree. Late in the afternoon the Chairman announced his name without asking him. Swamiji now had no choice, so he stood up and faced the audience. He began by saying: "Sisters and brothers of America." He could not say more. The audience was tremendously moved by the way he addressed them and they began to clap their hands and cheer. Hundreds of people rose to their feet, shouting and cheering. The cheering continued for several minutes. When silence was restored Swamiji continued his speech. It was a short speech, but in it he presented Hinduism as a religion which taught that all religions are true and that all should be accepted. Other speakers had spoken only of their particular religion. Swamiji spoke of the truth in all religions. The audience liked the speech very much. In fact, they liked Swamiji better than any of the other speakers. Swamiji became famous overnight, and the newspapers were full of praise of him.

Swami Vivekananda gave several speeches at the Parliament, the most famous being his "Paper on Hinduism". Swamiji was always the favourite, and his speeches were always kept till the end so that the people would stay. Sometimes large numbers of people became tired and started to leave. Then the Chairman would say that Swami Vivekananda would give a short speech before the meeting closed. All the people would then wait happily to hear Swamiji. Large pictures of Swamiji were printed and displayed in the streets of Chicago. Everyone spoke



“Sisters and brothers of America.”

about him.

The newspapers of India were also filled with the news of his triumph at Chicago, and the Indian people were very proud of his great success. His brother monks at Baranagore were especially happy when they learned that their ‘Naren’ was the famous Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Vivekananda did not forget the poor people

of India. He kept thinking about them and how they could be helped. After he became famous many rich people invited him to their homes. But he could not enjoy the comforts which were offered to him. On the very night of his triumph at the Parliament he had been the guest of a rich man and had been given a big comfortable bed to sleep on. Swamiji could not use the bed.



Swamiji could not use the bed, and slept on the floor.

How could he? The thought of the poor people of India came to his mind and he slept on the floor.

XII

THE SPIRITUAL TEACHER IN AMERICA

THE Parliament of Religions was over and Swami Vivekananda was now a famous man. He received many invitations to speak before clubs, churches, and many other groups. Later, he accepted an offer from a lecture bureau and he then travelled far and wide giving lectures. He had all the qualities required to be a good speaker—voice, language and appearance—and his ideas also attracted people. What lofty things he said! He was in demand all over America. It was very hard work. He had to travel long distances and sometimes he had to give many lectures a day. He often felt very tired. Sometimes his mind also was tired and he would wonder what to say in his lecture the next day. Then a strange thing would happen. When he went to bed at night he would hear a voice talking to him or giving a lecture. He would get many new ideas in this way.

Yes, it was hard work, and yet he continued to travel and give lectures for about one year. There was great excitement wherever he went and the newspapers wrote long articles about him. Once he gave a lecture in a western town where there were some cowboys. They heard him say that a spiritual man was not disturbed by what happened around him. They decided to test him. He spoke to them in the open air, standing on a wooden

tub. Suddenly there was a terrible noise. The cowboys were shooting their guns and bullets went whizzing past Swamiji's ears. The men were testing him. But Swamiji paid no attention to the shots and continued his lecture. Afterwards, the cowboys came to him and said that he was "a right good fellow".

Late in 1894 Swamiji decided that he had done enough travelling. He now decided to stay in one place and train a number of disciples to carry on the work. He began to live in New York and gave a series of lectures. A group of sincere people gathered round him and followed his teachings. This work was so successful that he started a Vedanta Society there. He held classes and gave lectures in which he said that God is in all men. Men can see God if they pray and meditate. He taught them how to do this. He also taught them that all religions are true. People came to him for help and advice and some became his disciples. Among them there were many important people.

XIII AT THE THOUSAND ISLAND PARK

THE St. Lawrence River forms part of the boundary of New York State and in one place there are so many islands that they are called the Thousand Islands. Early in June, 1895, Swamiji went to the Thousand Island Park and stayed there for seven weeks. Twelve students also went at different times and stayed with him. It was a beautiful place. They could look out over the river and

see many islands. It was quiet, with nothing to hear but the wind and the songs of the birds. But the best thing for the disciples was to listen to Swamiji. Swamiji was at his best here. Every evening he would teach the students about Vedanta* and the Hindu religion. Once he spoke to them until very late at night. The full moon rose and set but none of them knew that so much time had passed.

But it was not always religion that they had. There was much laughter and joy also. Swamiji would cut jokes and make them laugh and laugh. Sometimes they would go for a picnic. Occasionally Swamiji would cook for them. This would alarm the devotees for it would mean much dish-washing for them afterwards. He would also use lots of spices making the food rich and hot. The devotees liked his cooking except for the spices, which burned their tongues. But they ate the food just the same. Had it not been cooked by Swamiji?

Swamiji was full of spiritual power and he had a great influence on the devotees. They all became his disciples. Two of them served him faithfully as long as they lived. One was Sister Christine, who later worked in India. The other was Mr. J. J. Goodwin, who took down many of Swamiji's lectures and who also followed him to India, where he died at a young age. Another of Swamiji's disciples, Miss Waldo, wrote down many of the things he spoke at the Thousand Island Park. These have been published in a book called "Inspired

*Vedanta is based on the Vedas and also includes the spiritual teachings of the saints and sages that India has produced.

Talks". He also wrote the poem "Song of the Sannyasin" at this time.

After he left the Thousand Island Park Swamiji went to England for two months. Then he returned to New York as he was badly needed to carry on the work there. As before, he gave lectures and talked to people who came to him for spiritual help. Three books were published from his lectures—"Jnana Yoga", "Raja Yoga" and "Karma Yoga". These books immediately became popular. Swamiji's fame as a religious teacher spread far and wide and many important people became his friends and disciples. He had the dream of combining the best qualities of India and America, of the East and the West. Religious teachers would go to the West and teach spirituality. The Western devotees would go to India and teach science, industry, organization and co-operation.

Swamiji was very tired when his work in America ended. He had not spared himself. Whenever he did anything he would think of nothing else. Swamiji was very strong, but he worked so hard that even his strong body became weakened.

XIV ENGLAND AND EUROPE

SWAMIJI, as we said, first visited England in September, 1895. He was received by friends, Miss Henriette Muller and Mr. E. T. Sturdy. After a few days he began to hold a few small classes in the evenings. During the day he visited many interesting places in London. He soon be-

came well known, and his classes grew bigger and bigger. Many people went to visit him and newspapers printed reports of his lectures. The work was a great success.

However, Swamiji could not stay long and he had to return to America to continue the work there. He sailed for England the second time on April 15, 1896. He was very happy when he reached London, for a brother monk, Swami Saradananda, was there waiting for him. It was a joyful occasion. He had not seen any of his brother monks for several years and they had much to talk about. Swamiji also had many plans for the work in India, which he told to Swami Saradananda.

Swamiji again began to hold classes and give lectures about Vedanta. His work was even more successful than before and he had to go to many places to give talks. One thing he enjoyed very much was a visit to Prof. Max Muller. The Professor was teaching at Oxford University. He was a great student of India, Hinduism and Sanskrit learning. They had a long conversation. Swamiji and Prof. Max Muller became fast friends and often wrote letters to each other.

The Professor had already written an article about Sri Ramakrishna, and he asked Swamiji for more information. Swamiji asked Swami Saradanada to help Prof. Muller. Material was sent from India and as a result Prof. Max Muller wrote a book about Sri Ramakrishna. It was a very good book, and it helped Swami Vivekananda in his work.

Swami Vivekananda made many other friends and disciples in England. The best known of these was Miss

Margaret Noble, who later became famous as Sister Nivedita. Two other faithful disciples were Mr. & Mrs. Sevier. They returned to India with Swamiji and were very helpful to him in his work there.

After some time three of Swamiji's friends invited him to go on a tour of Europe, and he was glad to accept this invitation. They went to Switzerland where Swamiji was very happy to see the mountains and snow-peaks of the Alps. The scenery was beautiful. He stayed for two weeks in a small village and enjoyed the beauty, peace and silence. He became again the silent, meditating monk of his earlier days. His health also improved. He often went on walks. Once he nearly had an accident. He was walking on a mountain path with his friends. He had been reciting passages from the Upanishads, and had become absorbed in spiritual thoughts. He fell behind the others and did not pay much attention to where he was going. As there was snow he carried a stick and planted it firmly on the ground at every step. Suddenly, the stick broke through the snow and ice, and a deep crevice appeared just in front of him. He nearly fell into it, but somehow kept his balance. He walked rapidly up to his friends and called out, "I have been saved by the grace of the Lord." His friends were careful not to let Swamiji walk alone after that.

Swamiji then visited Germany, where he enjoyed meeting Prof. Paul Deussen, a great German Sanskrit scholar. They had long conversations and visited many places together. Prof. Deussen also joined the party when Swamiji returned to London. Swamiji again plunged into work, meeting people and giving lectures. He sent Swami

Saradananda to carry on the work in America. He also sent for Swami Abhedananda to come to England from India. Swami Abhedananda came and began to give public lectures. Swamiji was very happy at their success.

XV

THE HERO RETURNS

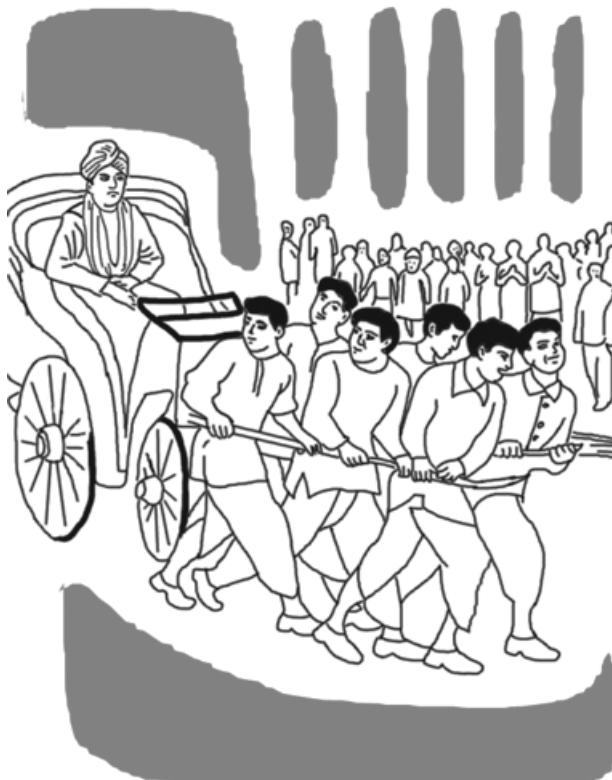
SWAMI Vivekananda knew that Swami Abhedananda would be able to carry on the work successfully and therefore he began to think about returning to India. It was arranged that he would sail from Naples. Mr. Goodwin and Mr. & Mrs. Sevier were to accompany him. Before he left, an English friend asked him, "Swami, how do you like your motherland now after four years' experience of the luxurious, glorious, powerful West?"

Swamiji's reply was, "India I loved before I came away. Now the very dust of India has become holy to me; it is now the holy land—the place of pilgrimage, the Tirtha."

Swamiji's homecoming was a great event. The people of India had learned to love and admire him ever since the days of the Parliament of Religions. His name had often been in the papers and on the lips of the people, and they looked upon him as a great hero. Previously, the people of India felt weak and helpless. Now they felt stronger. Swamiji's success in the West gave them self-respect. Therefore, when he returned, the whole country rose to do him honour.

The ship arrived at Colombo on January 15, 1897.

Swamiji was filled with joy and excitement. This was India! Once more he was to walk upon her holy soil ! He did not know about the preparations that had been made to receive him. Reception committees were formed in the large cities and newspapers wrote editorials about him. One of his brother monks was at Colombo to receive him, and others were on the way or in Madras. When he stepped ashore in Colombo he found a huge crowd of people waiting to see him. Those who were near rushed



The horses were taken away from Swamiji's carriage and the Raja himself and many others pulled the carriage through the streets.

to touch his feet. Then a huge procession was formed. Hymns were sung and many people threw flowers in the path before Swamiji. He stayed in Colombo for several days. He gave lectures and received visitors, the poor as well as the rich and powerful.

He had planned to travel from Colombo to Madras by steamer, but many telegrams poured in from different cities asking Swamiji to stop for at least a few minutes. He changed his plans and travelled over land, by train and carriage. At every town he would find people waiting to receive him. Often triumphal arches had been built for him and there were long processions with bands, fireworks, cannons and rockets. He would be presented with an address of welcome and in return would make a short speech.

He crossed over to the mainland by steamer, landing at Pamban. Here he was met by the Raja of Ramnad and many people, all of whom welcomed Swamiji with joy. The horses were taken away from Swamiji's carriage and the Raja himself and many others pulled the carriage through the streets. The next day Swamiji visited the temple of Rameswaram. This reminded him of his wandering days, for he had visited the same places four years earlier. What a difference ! Then he was an unknown monk who had travelled through India on foot. Now he was famous, and great men competed with each other to show him honour and respect.

The triumphant tour continued. Swamiji passed through town after town—Ramnad, Madura, Kumbakonam, and many other places. Everywhere immense crowds gathered to meet Swamiji, to see him and listen

to his words. The climax came when he reached Madras. As many as seventeen triumphal arches had been put up for him, and many groups presented him with addresses. Swamiji stayed in Madras for nine days. He delivered several important lectures and met many people.

XVI **TO CALCUTTA**

SWAMI Vivekananda became very tired as a result of the constant travel, meetings, lectures and interviews with people. He was not able to continue such strenuous work, so he decided to go to Calcutta by sea. He took a steamer with a few friends and disciples and enjoyed a few days of rest. The steamer docked at Kidderpore and from there Swamiji was taken by a special train to Sealdah station. Thousands of people were waiting at Sealdah to greet him and many of his brother monks were also there. Swamiji was given many flowers and garlands. There were so many people that Swamiji could hardly move to the carriage. A group of college boys pulled the carriage. There was a great procession with bands, music and singing, banners and flowers. Thousands of people lined the road to see Swamiji.

During the nights Swamiji stayed at the Alambazar Math with his brother monks. During the days he stayed at a large house in Cossipore called Seal's Garden. Hundreds of people went there throughout the day to see Swamiji and hear him speak about Vedanta and the way to make India strong. After a week a great meeting was held to welcome him. A large and distinguished

audience went to hear him speak. He gave one of his famous speeches on that occasion. He gave other talks and lectures while he stayed in Calcutta.

The birth anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was held soon after Swamiji reached Calcutta and he visited Dakshineswar. A large number of people had also gathered. He walked about from place to place, thinking about the old days when Sri Ramakrishna had lived there. Many other devotees of Sri Ramakrishna were present and he was glad to meet them.

Swamiji, of course, was especially glad to be with his brother monks at the Alambazar Math. They had much to talk about. Swamiji told them about his ideas for rebuilding India. He also told them what monks should do to serve others. His brother monks could not accept his ideas at first. They thought a monk should do nothing but pray, meditate and try to realize God. They did not think that a monk should work for others or run schools and hospitals. But Swamiji showed them that both ideas were good. What he wanted, he said, was to start an order of monks who would spend their lives helping and serving others. They listened to Swamiji and accepted what he said. Swamiji then sent Swami Ramakrishnanda to work in Madras. Swami Saradananda and Swami Abhedananda were already working in the West at the request of Swamiji. Swami Akhandananda then went to Murshidabad to start famine relief work in the villages. The other monks were also ready to take up such work.

Swamiji wanted the monks and devotees of Sri Ramakrishna to work together. Therefore, he called a meeting of the leading monks and devotees in May, 1891.

They discussed the matter and then agreed to start an organization, now called the Ramakrishna Mission. The Mission was to train men as teachers, help arts, crafts and industries, and spread religious ideas among the people. The Mission was also to start Maths in different parts of the country and send preachers of Vedanta to other countries.

XVII **CALCUTTA AND NORTH INDIA**

SWAMIJI stayed in Calcutta from February to May. Many people, as we said, came to talk with him. He was very much interested in the educated, unmarried young men and many came to him. Some joined the Ramakrishna Order and became his disciples. Many others were also helped by him. They tried to become better and stronger, more energetic, and also more religious.

From May, 1897 to January, 1898 Swamiji went to the great cities of north India. Everywhere the people welcomed him with love and enthusiasm. He gave speeches, talked with people and delivered his message in many ways.

Wherever he went, from Colombo to Almora, Swamiji gave his message to the people of India. He told them what a glorious past India had. They should be proud of their ancestors, who built a civilization equal to any other in the world. Why should they look to foreign countries? They should look to their own past and then build a new and greater India. The heritage from the

past was religious. Therefore, the new India also had to be built around religion. The people need strength. They should have strong bodies, strong minds and strong characters. Young boys should play games and make their muscles strong. All should have courage, strength and self-respect. They should hold to the national ideals of truth, sacrifice and service. The future of India depends upon her own people. If the people become strong then they will make a great and strong India, great in every way. The way to do this is through education. All the people of India should have a good education. Then they will become strong and will make the nation great.

Many people heard Swamiji's message and were inspired by it. They regained their self-confidence. They began to serve the poor and helpless. They gave their lives in service of their motherland. This was a turning point in the history of India. The dawn of a new day had come, and India would be free within fifty years.

XVIII **SWAMIJI AND HIS DISCIPLES**

IN January, 1898, Swami Vivekananda returned to Calcutta. As before he was always busy meeting and talking with people and training members of the Order. The Math was soon shifted to Nilambar Mukherjee's garden-house on the western bank of the Ganga at Belur. Land was also purchased at Belur, where Swamiji wanted to build a permanent Math. There was a small house on this land and some of Swamiji's Western lady disciples

lived there for a while. Sister Nivedita was one of them. It was at this time that she took the vows of brahmacharya and was given the name ‘Nivedita’.

Swamiji spent much time with his Western disciples. He would go and talk with them every day. He told them many things about India and Vedanta. He wanted them to understand India and therefore he spoke about the



*Margaret Noble took the vows of brahmacharya
and was given the name ‘Nivedita’.*

history of India, the beliefs of the people, their customs and habits, the Hindu religion and many other things. All this was new to them, but Swamiji explained everything clearly and patiently.

Due to overwork Swamiji's health became worse. In March, 1898, he went to Darjeeling for rest. He stayed there for a month. Then, news came about the outbreak of plague in Calcutta. At once Swamiji returned



People who had plague were nursed in the relief camp.

to Calcutta and plunged into work. The people were very much frightened and many were running away. Swamiji decided to start relief work at once. One of his brother monks asked him, "From where will we get the money?"

Swamiji replied, "Why? We will sell the land for the new Math if necessary. We are sannyasins. We should be ready to live under trees and beg for our food."

Fortunately, it was not necessary to sell the land. Many people gave money and Swamiji was able to begin the relief work. A big plot of land was rented and a camp was set up there. People who had plague were nursed in this camp. Many workers came to help Swamiji and his disciples. They also cleaned the lanes and the houses and taught the people what to do.

This work helped the people very much and they began to lose their fear. They loved Swamiji even more than before. They saw that he was a practical Vedantin. He not only taught the highest religious truths, but also loved the people, even the poorest. He tried to remove their pain and suffering.

XIX TO THE HIMALAYAS

AFTER a few days the plague relief work was over and there was no more danger. Swamiji with some of his brother monks and the Western disciples then went to the Himalayas. The journey was an interesting one. They passed through Patna, Banaras, Lucknow and many

other places and Swamiji told them the history and greatness of every city. He told them about the Indian people and their life, their religion and culture.

They stopped first at Nainital and then went to Almora. As always, Swamiji met many people and talked with them. He also explained many things about India to his Western disciples. Sister Nivedita has recorded some of these conversations in one of her books.

After about a month, Swamiji went to Kashmir with his Western disciples. They travelled through much of Kashmir, part of the way in houseboats. They enjoyed the scenery very much. Swamiji explained many things about the people and history of Kashmir.

Swamiji thought and spoke much of Shiva at this time. He decided to make a pilgrimage to the cave of Amarnath, deep in the Himalayas, where there was an ice image of Shiva. Sister Nivedita was allowed to go with him. It was an interesting trip and they passed through some of the most beautiful scenery in the world.

Many other people were also in the party—men, women and children from all parts of India, and also monks of many Orders. When they halted for the night a town of tents would quickly spring up. Many of the monks went to Swamiji to learn from him. The journey was not an easy one. They had to climb high glaciers and once their camp was at 18,000 feet above sea level. Sometimes the path led close to the edge of a steep cliff. Swamiji followed all the customs of the pilgrimage and took baths in the streams, even though it was bitterly cold.

On August 2nd they reached Amarnath. Swamiji's mind at this moment was completely filled with thoughts

of Shiva. With great devotion he entered the cave of Amarnath and bowed before the ice image of Shiva. The cave was a huge one. Many people were standing there and they chanted songs in praise of Shiva. Swamiji had a great spiritual experience. Shiva was his all in all! Shiva the Great Monk! The Eternal One! ...such were his thoughts. For days afterwards Swamiji talked of nothing but of Shiva.

From Amarnath Swamiji returned to Srinagar where he stayed until the end of September. Here he spent more and more time in meditation. He often went by himself and stayed alone for days. But whenever he was with his disciples he thrilled them with his ideas and helped them to understand India.

While at Srinagar Swamiji began to think more and more about God as the Divine Mother. Often he was heard singing the songs of Ramprasad, a bengali mystic and writer of songs about the Divine Mother. Sometimes he behaved as if he was a mere child of the Divine Mother. He felt that Mother led him in everything that he did. Sometimes he meditated for long hours upon Her. He would take the boat to a lonely place and then meditate upon Kali the Mother. This continued for several days until he had a vision of Kali. Kali seemed to fill his whole mind. It was at this time that he wrote the poem, "Kali the Mother", one of his best poems.

He felt that it was Mother who did everything and that he was just a plaything in her hands. All his plans about the future of India disappeared. He was now only a child, without any wish of his own and depending always upon Mother.

XX

AT BELUR MATH

SWAMI Vivekananda had deep spiritual experiences but his health declined. It became so bad that he decided to return to Calcutta. He arrived at the monastery on October 18th. His brother monks were very glad to see him but they felt sorry when they saw how ill he was. However, Swamiji had talks with the monks and held classes for them.

One of Swamiji's wishes began to be fulfilled at this time. He had long wanted to help the women of India. They had great purity and other good qualities but had little education and were not very active in the world. Swamiji said they should have education and then they would solve their own problems. So he was very glad when Sister Nivedita began her work. She had come to India to be of service to Indian women and she now started a school for girls. She lived at first with Sri Sarada Devi and a few other lady devotees of Sri Ramakrishna. These ladies knew a great deal about the Hindu religion, the Ramayana, Mahabharata and many other things. Sister Nivedita learned much from them. Swami Vivekananda also continued to help her and he was very much interested in her school. Later, Sister Nivedita rented a separate house. She had to face many difficulties, but she succeeded in starting the school. The school is now a very big one and it has done much to uplift the women of India.

Swami Vivekananda wanted to establish the new Math at Belur as soon as possible. The land had been

purchased earlier and a Puja was held in March, 1898. Soon after, the work on the buildings was begun. In December, Swamiji and a few monks moved into the new monastery and soon all the monks began to live there. Swamiji believed that the new Math would become very great. It would be a centre where all religions and religious teachers would be honoured. The new ideas would spread from there and people would come to it from all over the world.

Swami Saradananda, who had been working in America, came back to India at the call of Swamiji. Swamiji asked him to help organize the new Math, and this work went on successfully. Much time was spent in spiritual talk and study of the scriptures. Strict rules were followed. Swamiji also began to train the monks as preachers. He made his disciples give speeches. Early in 1899 he sent two of his disciples to preach at Dhaka and a little later he also sent Swamis Saradananda and Turiyananda to Gujarat. They all had great success.

XXI

SECOND VISIT TO THE WEST

SWAMIJI's health grew worse when the weather became warm. The doctors said that it would be good for his health if he went to the West again. The sea voyage would do him good. He decided to go. Swami Turiyananda and Sister Nivedita were to go with him.

They sailed on June 20, 1899 in the steamer "Golconda". The sea was very rough due to the monsoons.

The ship stopped at Madras but the Indian passengers could not land because there had been plague in Calcutta. Many of Swamiji's friends and disciples came alongside the steamer in boats and talked with the Swami. The ship next stopped at Colombo, and again large crowds came to see Swamiji and he met many old friends.

The voyage was not an easy one, for the ship tossed and pitched constantly. And yet it was a wonderful time also, for Swamiji had long conversations with his companions. He said many interesting things about India and religious life. In this way the time passed, and then on July 1 the ship arrived at London. Swamiji stayed there for two weeks and then sailed for America. Two American ladies had gone to London to meet him, and they joined the party on the voyage across the Atlantic. They enjoyed the voyage very much. After ten days the ship reached New York. Swamiji did not stay in New York, but went to the country house of Mr. & Mrs. Leggett, his American friends. It was about one hundred and fifty miles from New York, near the Catskill Mountains. It was a beautiful and quiet place, and Swamiji stayed there until November. He had a good rest and his health improved very much. He was also glad to meet Swami Abhedananda who had been working in America and was in charge of the Vedanta Society in New York.

Swamiji then went to New York where he held a few classes and met many of his old friends and disciples. They were very happy to see Swamiji again. Others had read his books, and now they were able to come and meet him. After two weeks Swamiji went to California,

on the west coast of the United States. He went first to Los Angeles. Many people were eager to see and hear him. They had read about him in the papers and had read his books. Therefore, he had to give many lectures. He told stories from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata in some of his lectures.

In February, Swamiji went to San Francisco. Here also many people came to hear him. They were so much interested that Swamiji had to hold private classes. He taught them Vedanta philosophy, the Gita and how to meditate. He rented a big flat so that he might hold the classes there. He gave many public lectures and also visited nearby towns to give lectures. So many people began to come to the classes that Swamiji started a Vedanta Society in San Francisco.

Once, while in an American town, he was walking on the bank of a river. He saw some young men with guns shooting at some egg shells which were floating in the river. But their marksmanship was bad and they could not hit the shells. Swamiji smiled when he saw them miss the mark. They saw him smiling at their failure and felt annoyed. They told him that it was not easy, and asked him to try himself to shoot the shells. Swamiji took the gun and hit about a dozen shells. The young men thought that Swamiji had been trained by an expert. But he told them that he had never fired a gun before. His success was due to concentration of mind.

One of Swamiji's students gave him some land for an Ashrama. It was far from any town or village and very quiet. Later in the year Swami Turiyananda went there with twelve students. The place is called Shanti Ashrama.



Swamiji took the gun and hit about a dozen shells.

As usual, Swamiji worked too hard, and his health also was not good. Mr. & Mrs. Leggett of New York heard about his bad health and invited him to go with them to Paris. He was also invited to attend a Congress of the History of Religions in Paris. He wanted to stay for a few weeks in New York, so he left California. It was a long trip and Swamiji was very tired when he reached New York. He gave a few lectures, and talked with his

old friends. He was pleased to see the progress made by the Vedanta Society.

XXII **TO EUROPE**

SWAMI Vivekananda sailed from New York and reached Paris on August 1, 1900. Mr. & Mrs. Leggett had a beautiful house in Paris and Swamiji stayed with them. He met many important people and had conversations with them. In this way he was able to spread his ideas.

The main event during his stay in Paris was the Congress of the History of Religions. Swamiji had begun to learn French during his stay in America. Now he began to study the language in earnest so that he could speak to the Congress. He succeeded, and was able to explain difficult questions in French. His health was not good, but he was able to speak before the Congress twice. The other scholars liked his talks. He was very well-known and met many important people. Dr. J. C. Bose, the great Indian scientist, was in Paris at that time and Swamiji met him several times. He was very proud of the scientific discoveries of his fellow countryman. He then travelled through other parts of Europe. He visited Austria and Turkey. He stayed for several days in Constantinople (now called Istanbul) and saw many interesting places in the city. He also met a number of important people.

He next took a steamer to Greece, where he stayed for a few days. Then he sailed for Egypt. Several friends were with him during these travels. He was much inter-

ested to see the Pyramids and the museum at Cairo. And yet he was feeling tired of seeing all these things. His mind was fixed more and more on God, and he was not interested any more in seeing things in the world. He became eager to return to India. One day, he told his friends that he would soon sail for India. They felt very sad.

XXIII **RETURN TO INDIA**

SWAMIJI left by the first steamer bound for India. He was alone. He had told no one in India about his return. When the ship reached India Swamiji was very happy. It was late at night on December 9, 1900 when Swamiji reached Belur Math. No one knew he was coming. Swamiji was still dressed in European clothes, and the man at the gate did not know who he was. He did not let Swamiji in, but ran to the other Swamis, who were taking their evening meal. He called out, "A sahib has come."

The monks were puzzled at this news. Who had come? What did he want? Before they could go to the gate the 'sahib' came. When they saw who he was they were very excited and happy. "Swamiji has come ! Swamiji has come!" they cried. They spread a seat for Swamiji and gave him a large helping of Khichuri. Swamiji ate it happily, as he had not eaten any for several months. Then, they talked with him for hours while he told them about his experiences in the West.

But there was sad news waiting for Swamiji. One of

his best loved Western disciples, Mr. J. H. Sevier, had died. Mr. & Mrs. Sevier had given up everything for Swamiji, and had come to India with him when he returned from his first trip to the West. They had travelled through India with him and had then begun to live in the Himalayas. They had started an Ashrama at Mayavati, in the Himalayas. Now Mr. Sevier was dead. Swamiji knew that Mrs. Sevier was feeling great sorrow, and he wanted to go to Mayavati for a few days. He telegraphed at once to say that he was going to visit Mayavati.

It was the middle of the winter. There was deep snow in the Himalayas and it was very cold. But though the trip to Mayavati was very difficult and unpleasant Swamiji did not turn back. He reached Mayavati on January 3, 1901. Mrs. Sevier and the monks who lived there were very glad to see him. It was cold and the ground was covered with snow, but Swamiji went for long walks. He also had long talks with those who lived there. He stayed for two weeks and then returned to Belur Math.

Swamiji stayed at Belur Math for about seven weeks and then went to Dhaka in East Bengal. His health was becoming worse and worse, and it was hoped that the trip would do him good. On March 18 he left Calcutta with several other monks. His mother was also in the party. At Dhaka hundreds of people came to see Swamiji and listen to his words. He also gave two long speeches, in spite of his bad health. He visited a few places of pilgrimage and also stopped at Guwahati, where he gave three lectures.

Swamiji's health became worse. He was suffering from diabetes, and at Dhaka he also had an attack of

asthma. He decided to go to Shillong, in Assam, where it was thought that the dry air would help him. He spent some time talking with the Chief Commissioner, Sir Henry Cotton, who was a friend of India. He also gave a lecture which was attended by many people.

XXIV LAST DAYS

SWAMIJI returned to Belur Math in May. His health continued to become worse, but he received many visitors daily, talked to them and gave them spiritual help. He also held classes for the monks and brahmacharins. He would often sing. He made rules for life in the monastery and saw that the monks observed them. He made them get up early in the morning for meditation. He himself was always up very early. He was interested in many things about the life at Belur Math—the garden, the cows, the cooking and many such things.

He especially liked animals. There were many at the Math then. There was a dog called ‘Bagha’, a she-goat which Swamiji called ‘Hansi’ or ‘Swan’, and also cows, sheep, ducks, geese, an antelope, a stork, and a kid called ‘Matru’. These animals also loved Swamiji very much and Matru would follow him about and sometimes even slept in his room. But Bagha was the chief of the animals. Once he did something wrong, and the monks took him across the river and left him there. But Bagha came back. He jumped on a ferry boat and growled loudly at the boatman when he tried to make



He especially liked animals.

him leave. The boatman was afraid and let Bagha stay on the ferry. The next morning Swamiji found Bagha lying at his door. He patted him and told the other monks that Bagha was not to be sent away again.

In October, 1901, he had the Durga Puja performed at Belur Math. All the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna came on that occasion. The Puja was performed in a grand style and hundreds of people were served with prasad.

Later, the Swami also performed the Lakshmi Puja and Kali Puja.

After this, his health became much worse. He had to stay in bed for several days. After resting for some time he became better. However, he could not work as hard as before.

Towards the end of the year two Japanese scholars came to see Swamiji at the Math. They wanted him to go to Japan to speak at a Congress of Religions. Swamiji was willing to go, but was unable to do so because he was too ill. However, he visited Bodh Gaya and Banaras with one of the Japanese gentlemen, Mr. Okakura. Many people came to him at Banaras. The Maharaja of Bhinga offered him money for establishment of a monastery in Banaras. Swamiji accepted the offer, and later sent Swami Shivananda to Banaras to start a Math.

Several young men in Banaras had tried to follow Swamiji's teachings. They rented a small house and tried to help the poor and sick people who had no home or friends. They worked hard without thinking of their own comfort. Swamiji was pleased to see this and was very proud of these young men. Swamiji enjoyed his stay in Banaras. The climate was good for his health and he felt much stronger. However he soon returned to Belur Math.

One interesting thing happened while he was living at Belur Math. The Math had a new edition of Encyclopaedia Britannica. There were twenty-five huge volumes. Swami Vivekananda began reading them. He had great powers of concentration and could read very quickly. He soon finished ten volumes and had started reading the eleventh. At that time a disciple came. He saw the

long line of huge volumes, and said, "It would be hard for anyone to understand so many volumes even if he read for his whole life."

Swamiji replied, "How is that? I have already read ten volumes. You can ask me any question you like from them."

The disciple then started asking difficult questions from each of the ten volumes. Swamiji answered them all correctly. In some cases he even remembered the exact words used in the encyclopaedia.

The disciple said, "This is beyond the power of man." But Swamiji explained that it was due to concentration. If anyone lived a pure life he could get such concentration.

XXV THE PASSING

THE last months of Swami Vivekananda were spent at Belur Math. He continued to teach and help people until the very end. He had great love for people and wanted to help them as much as he could. He knew that the end was near, and he prepared for it. He even told his disciples that he would not live much longer. They could not believe it, however, for he looked cheerful and his health seemed to be improving. They fondly hoped he would live for some more years.

Just three days before his passing he was walking in the Math grounds with Swami Premananda. Swamiji pointed to a particular place and said, "When I give

up the body, cremate it there.” Today, the Vivekananda Temple stands on that very spot.

Then came the last day, July 4, 1902. He went to the chapel in the morning and closed all the windows and doors. He meditated there for three hours and then began to sing a beautiful song about the Divine Mother. Coming down from the shrine he walked back and forth in the courtyard for a while. He took his meal with the monks in the dining hall.

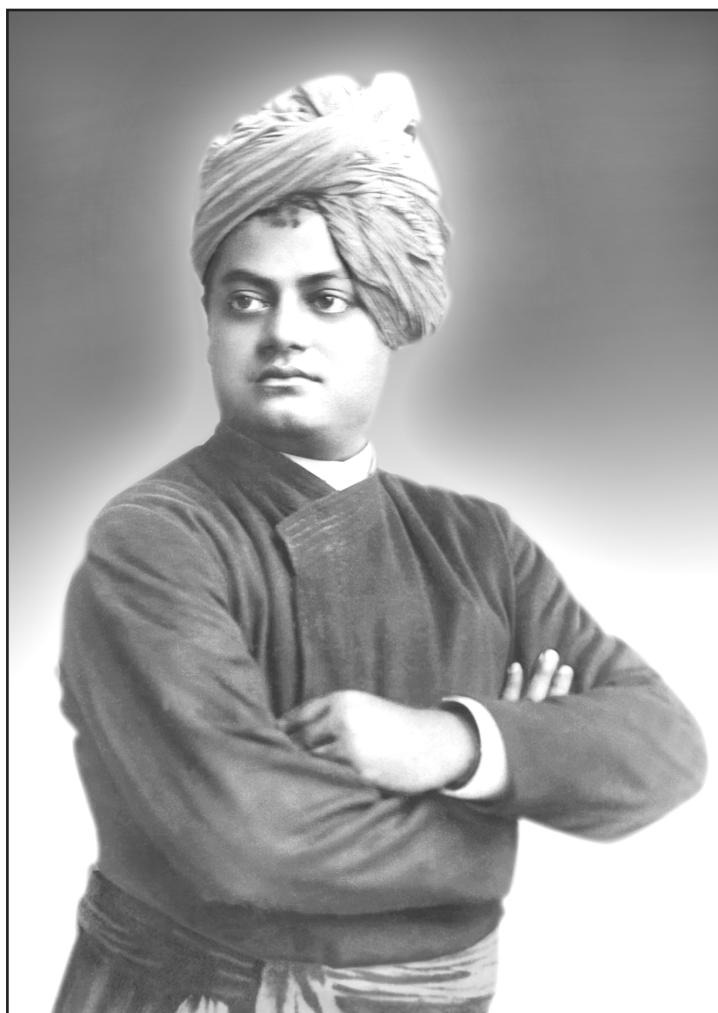
After lunch he held a class on Sanskrit grammar with the brahmacharins. The class lasted for over two hours, and he appeared a little tired afterwards. Later he went for a long walk with Swami Premananda. Swamiji spoke about his idea of starting a Vedic College at the Math. After returning from the walk the Swami talked for a while with the monks.

Evening came. Swamiji became more and more quiet and did not pay much attention to what was going on around him. The bell rang for the evening service and Swamiji went to his own room. He sat in meditation, facing the Ganga. After an hour, Swamiji called one of his disciples and asked him to fan his head. He lay on the bed and the disciple fanned him for a time and then began to massage his feet. The disciple thought that Swamiji was sleeping. Once Swamiji's hand shook a little. Then he took two deep breaths. The disciple saw that something strange had happened. He called a monk, who examined Swamiji. He found that there was no pulse and no breath. This was Swamiji's Mahasamadhi. It was a few minutes after nine o'clock in the evening.

Swamiji had worked hard throughout his life. Now

“the tired child slept in the lap of the Mother”. His life was finished but his work goes on. His call to his countrymen was “Arise ! Awake ! and stop not till the goal is reached!” His countrymen did hear his call. A great awakening began in the country followed by a period of intense activity. Men and women began to work selflessly for the poor and down-trodden. Many people trace India’s independence directly to the great movement that began after Swami Vivekananda.

TEACHINGS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA



TEACHINGS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(Unless mentioned otherwise, all references are from *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, 9 vols. (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1-8, 1989; 9, 1997).

Divinity of Man

My ideal, indeed can be put into a few words and that is: To preach unto mankind their divinity, and how to make it manifest in every moment of their life. (7.501)

Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy—by one, or more, or all of these and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are but secondary details. (1.257)

Everything that is strong and good and powerful in human nature is the outcome of that divinity, and though potential in many, there is no difference between man and man essentially, all being alike divine. (1.388)

All power is within you. ... Believe in that; do not believe that you are weak ... Stand up and express the divinity within you. (3.284)

We are the children of the Almighty; we are sparks of the infinite divine fire. How can we be nothings? We are everything, ready to do everything; we can do everything, and man must do everything. (3.376)

Our power, and blessedness, and wisdom, cannot but grow into the Infinite. ... Infinite power and existence

and blessedness are ours, and we have not to acquire them; they are our own, and we have only to manifest them. (2.339)

Manifest the divinity within you, and everything will be harmoniously arranged around it. (4.351)

Infinite perfection is in every man, though unmanifested. Every man has in him the potentiality of attaining to perfect saintliness, Rishihood ... or to the greatness of a hero in material discoveries. (4.437)

Man has infinite power within himself, and he can realize it.... It can be done; but you do not believe it. (8.101)

To me the thought of oneself as low and humble is a sin and ignorance. (6.311)

Infinite knowledge abides within every one in the fullest measure. You are not really ignorant, though you may appear to be so. ... You may laugh at me now, but the time will come when you will understand. You must. (8.137)

This Atman is the same in all, there is only a difference of manifestation in different individuals. Try to manifest this Atman, and you will see your intellect penetrating into all subjects. ... With the manifestation of the Atman you will find that science, philosophy, and everything will be easily mastered. (7.138)

Arise, awake, sleep no more; within each of you there is the power to remove all wants and all miseries. Believe this, and that power will be manifested. (6.454)

Man stands on the glory of his own soul, the infinite, the eternal, the deathless—that soul which no instruments can pierce, which no air can dry, no fire burn, no

water melt, the infinite, the birthless, the deathless, without beginning and without end, ... before whose glory space melts away into nothingness and time vanishes into non-existence. This glorious soul we must believe in. Out of that will come power. (3.130)

The infinite power of the spirit, brought to bear upon matter evolves material development, made to act upon thought evolves intellectuality, and made to act upon itself makes of man a God. (4.351)

Believe, therefore, in yourselves, and if you want material wealth, work it out; it will come to you. If you want to be intellectual, work it out on the intellectual plane, and intellectual giants you shall be. And if you want to attain to freedom, work it out on the spiritual plane, and free you shall be and shall enter into Nirvana, the Eternal Bliss. (3.427)

So is infinite power in the soul of man, whether he knows it or not. Its manifestation is only a question of being conscious of it. ... With the full consciousness of his infinite power and wisdom; the giant will rise to his feet. (2.340)

Proclaim to the whole world with trumpet voice, "There is no sin in thee, there is no misery in the; thou art the reservoir of omnipotent power. Arise, awake, and manifest the Divinity within!" (4.110)

The germ of infinite perfection exists in all. We should cultivate the optimistic temperament, and endeavour to see the good that dwells in everything. If we sit down and lament over the imperfection of our bodies and minds, we profit nothing; it is the heroic endeavour to subdue adverse circumstances that carries our spirit

upwards. (4.190)

The more I live, the more I become convinced everyday that every human being is divine. In no man or woman, however vile, does that divinity die. (8.186)

You must know what you are, what your real nature is. You must become conscious of that infinite nature within. Then your bondage will burst. (9.214)

Think all of you that you are the infinitely powerful Atman, and see what strength comes out. (6.276)

“Knowledge is power,” says the proverb, does it not? It is through Knowledge that power comes. Man has got to know. Here is a man of infinite power and strength. He himself is by his own nature potent and omniscient. And this he must know. And the more he becomes conscious of his own Self, the more he manifests this power, and his bonds break and at last he becomes free. (9.215)

The soul was never born and will never die, and all these ideas that we are going to die and are afraid to die are mere superstitions. And all such ideas as we can do this or cannot do that are superstitions. We can do everything. (2.294)

The Vedanta teaches men to have faith in themselves first ... Not believing the glory of our own soul is what the Vedanta calls atheism. To many this is, no doubt, a terrible idea; and most of us think that this ideal can never be reached; but the Vedanta insists that it can be realized by every one. (2.294)

Always talk and hear and reason about this Atman. By continuing to practise in this way, you will find in time that the Lion (Brahman) will wake up in you too. (7.121)

The Self Within is always shining forth resplendent.

Turning away from that people say, “I”, “I”, “I”, with their attention held up by this material body, this queer cage of flesh and bones. This is the root of all weakness. (6.474)

If matter is powerful, thought is omnipotent. Bring this thought to bear upon your life, fill yourselves with the thought of your almighty, your majesty and glory. (2.302)

These conceptions of Vedanta must come out, must remain not only in the forest, not only in the cave, but they must come out to work at the bar and the bench, in the pulpit, and in the cottage of the poor man, with the fishermen that are catching fish, and with the students that are studying. ... If the fisherman thinks that he is the Spirit, he will be a better fisherman; if the student thinks that he is the Spirit, he will be a better student. If the lawyer thinks that he is the Spirit, he will be a better lawyer, and so on. (3.245)

Call to the Youth of India

My faith is in the younger generation, the modern generation, out of them will come my workers. They will work out the whole problem, like lions. I have formulated the idea and have given my life to it. ... They will spread from centre to centre, until we have covered the whole of India. (5.223)

I am born to organise these young men; nay, hundreds more in every city are ready to join me; and I want to send them rolling like irresistible waves over India, bringing comfort, morality, religion, education to the doors of the meanest and the most downtrodden. And

this I will do or die. (8.298)

First of all, our young men must be strong. Religion will come afterwards. Be strong, my young friends; that is my advice to you. You will be nearer to Heaven through football than through the study of the Gita. These are bold words; but I have to say them, for I love you. I know where the shoe pinches. I have gained a little experience. You will understand the Gita better with your biceps, your muscles, a little stronger. (3.242)

An English boy will tell you, "I am an Englishman, and I can do anything." The American boy will tell you the same thing, and so will any European boy. Can our boys say the same thing here? No, nor even the boys' fathers. We have lost faith in ourselves. (3.191)

Have faith that you are all, my brave lads, born to do great things! Let not the barks of puppies frighten you—no, not even the thunderbolts of heaven--but stand up and work! (5.43)

Stand up, be bold, be strong. Take the whole responsibility on your own shoulders, and know that you are the creator of your own destiny. All the strength and succour you want is within yourselves. Therefore, make your own future. (2.225)

Men, men, these are wanted: everything else will be ready, but strong, vigorous, believing young men, sincere to the backbone, are wanted. A hundred such and the world becomes revolutionised.(3.223)

We are responsible for what we are; and whatever we wish ourselves to be, we have the power to make ourselves. If what we are now has been the result of our own past actions, it certainly follows that whatever we

wish to be in future can be produced by our present actions; so we have to know how to act. (1.31)

What we want are some young men who will renounce everything and sacrifice their lives for the country's sake. We should first form their lives and then some real work can be expected. (5.352)

Work among those young men who can devote heart and soul to this one duty—the duty of raising the masses of India. Awake them, unite them, and inspire them with this spirit of renunciation; it depends wholly on the young people of India. (5.78)

Make your nerves strong. What we want is muscles of iron and nerves of steel. We have wept long enough. No more weeping, but stand on your feet and be men. (3.224)

Go, all of you, wherever there is an outbreak of plague or famine, or wherever the people are in distress, and mitigate their sufferings. (5.383)

If you have any respect for my words...I will advise you...to throw open all the doors and windows of your room! In your quarter there are lots of poor people sunk in degradation and misery. You will have to go to them and serve them with all your zeal and enthusiasm. Arrange to distribute medicines to those who are sick, and nurse them with all care, supply food to him who is starving, teach with as much as lies in you the ignorant. (His Eastern and Western Admirers, Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda, (Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama, 2008), 320)

A hundred thousand men and women, fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy

for the poor and the fallen and the downtrodden, will go over the length and breadth of the land, preaching the gospel of salvation, the gospel of help, the gospel of social raising-up—the gospel of equality. (5.15)

Purity, patience, and perseverance are the three essentials to success and, above all, love. (6.281)

Arise, awake; wake up yourselves, and awaken others. Achieve the consummation of human life before you pass off—‘Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.’ (6.512)

If you are really my children, you will fear nothing, stop at nothing. You will be like lions. We must rouse India and the whole world. (5.61)

If you can think that infinite power, infinite knowledge and indomitable energy lie within you, and if you can bring out that power, you also can become like me. ... Go and preach to all, ‘Arise, awake, sleep no more; within each of you there is the power to remove all wants and all miseries. Believe this, and that power will be manifested.’ (6.454)

Self-confidence

You have in you all and a thousand times more than is in all the books. Never lose faith in yourself, you can do anything in this universe. Never weaken, all power is yours. (7.85)

We want Shraddha, we want faith in our own selves. Strength is life, weakness is death. ‘We are the Atman, deathless and free; pure, pure by nature. Can we ever commit any sin? Impossible!—such a faith is needed. Such a faith makes men of us, makes gods of us. It is by

losing this idea of Shraddha that the country has gone to ruin. (5.332)

Three things are necessary to make every man great, every nation great:

1. Conviction of the powers of goodness.
2. Absence of jealousy and suspicion.
3. Helping all who are trying to be and do good.

(8.299)

You are the makers of your own fortunes. You make yourselves suffer, you make good and evil, and it is you who put your hands before your eyes and say it is dark. Take your hands away and see the light. (2.182)

Even the least work done for others awakens the power within; even thinking the least good of others gradually instills into the heart the strength of a lion. (5.382)

It is a weakness to think that any one is dependent on me, and that I can do good to another. This belief is the mother of all our attachment, and through this attachment comes all our pain. We must inform our minds that no one in this universe depends upon us; not one beggar depends on our charity; not one soul on our kindness; not one living thing on our help. All are helped on by nature, and will be so helped even though millions of us were not here. This is a great lesson to learn in life, and when we have learned it fully, we shall never be unhappy. ... By non-attachment you overcome and deny the power of anything to act upon you! (1.89)

Be obedient and eternally faithful to the cause of truth, humanity, and your country, and you will move the world. (5.108)

Be not afraid of anything. You will do marvellous

work. The moment you fear, you are nobody. It is fear that is the great cause of misery in the world. ... It is fear that is the cause of all our woes, and it is fearlessness that brings heaven even in a moment. (3.321)

The more opposition there is, the better. Does a river acquire velocity unless there is resistance? The newer and better a thing is, the more opposition it will meet with at the outset. It is the opposition which foretells success. (7.372)

A handful of men can throw the world off its hinges, provided they are united in thought, word, and deed—never forget this conviction. (7.372)

“It is the coward and the fool who says, ‘This is fate.’—so says the Sanskrit proverb. But it is the strong man who stands up and says, “I will make my fate.” It is people who are getting old who talk of fate. (8.184)

If what we are now has been the result of our own past actions, it certainly follows that whatever we wish to be in future can be produced by our present actions; so we have to know how to act ... by knowing how to work, one can obtain the greatest results ... Even the lowest forms of work are not to be despised. (1.31)

Feel that you are great and you become great. ... we all have the same glorious soul, let us believe in it. (3.243)

Never say, ‘No’, never say ‘I cannot’, for you are infinite. Even time and space are nothing compared with your nature. You can do anything and everything, you are almighty. (2.300)

Whatever you think, that you will be. If you think

yourselves weak, weak you will be; if you think yourselves strong, strong you will be. (3.130)

Faith—The Source of Strength

Have faith in yourselves, great convictions are the mothers of great deeds. (5.30)

The history of the world is the history of a few men who had faith in themselves. That faith calls out the divinity within. You can do anything. You fail only when you do not strive sufficiently to manifest infinite power. As soon as a man or a nation loses faith, death comes. (8.228)

What we want is this Shraddha. ... What makes the difference between man and man is the difference in this Shraddha and nothing else. What makes one man great and another weak and low is this Shraddha. ... This Shraddha must enter into you. (3.319)

Have faith that you are all, my brave lads, born to do great things! Let not the barks of puppies frighten you—no, not even the thunderbolts of heaven—but stand up and work! (5.43)

Have faith in yourself. You people were once the Vedic Rishis. Only you have come in different forms, that's all. I see it clear as daylight that you all have infinite power in you. Rouse that up; arise, arise. (7.176)

This faith in themselves was in the hearts of our ancestors, this faith in themselves was the motive power that pushed them forward and forward in the march of civilization; and if there has been degeneration, if there has been defect, mark my words, you will find that degradation to have started on the day our people lost this faith in themselves.(3.376)

Have faith in yourself—all power is in you - be conscious and bring it out. Say, “I can do everything.” “Even the poison of a snake is powerless if you can firmly deny it.” Beware! No saying “nay”, no negative thoughts!(6.274)

Losing faith in one’s self means losing faith in God. (3.376)

To advance we must have faith in ourselves first and then in God. He who has no faith in himself can never have faith in God.(1.38)

Faith, faith, faith in ourselves, faith, faith in God—this is the secret of greatness. (3.190)

Each one of you has a glorious future if you dare believe me. Have a tremendous faith in yourselves, like the faith I had when I was a child, ... Have that faith, each one of you, in yourself—that eternal power is lodged in every soul—and you will revive the whole of India.(3.303)

Let a man go down as low as possible; there must come a time when out of sheer desperation he will take an upward curve and will learn to have faith in himself. But it is better for us that we should know it from the very first. Why should we have all these bitter experiences in order to gain faith in ourselves? (2.301)

If you have faith in all the three hundred and thirty millions of your mythological gods ... and still have no faith in yourselves, there is no salvation for you. Have faith in yourselves, and stand upon that faith and be strong; that is what we need.(3.190)

Faith in ourselves will do everything. I have experienced it in my own life.(2.301)

The ideal of faith in ourselves is of the greatest help

to us. If faith in ourselves had been more extensively taught and practised, I am sure a very large portion of the evils and miseries that we have would have vanished. Throughout the history of mankind, if any motive power has been more potent than another in the lives of all great men and women, it is that of faith in themselves. Born with the consciousness that they were to be great, they became great.(2.301)

Whatever of material power you see manifested by the Western races is the outcome of this Shraddha, because they believe in their muscles and if you believe in your spirit, how much more will it work! Believe in that infinite soul, the infinite power, which with consensus of opinion, your books and sages preach. That Atman which nothing can destroy, in It is infinite power only waiting to be called out ... Be strong and have this Shraddha, and everything else is bound to follow.(3.319,320)

Have faith, as Nachiketa ... ay, I wish that faith would come to each of you; and every one of you would stand up a giant, a world-mover with a gigantic intellect—an infinite God in every respect. That is what I want you to become. (3.244)

Make men first. Men we want, and how can men be made unless Shraddha is there?(5.333)

What I mean to say is that want of Shraddha has brought in all the evils among us, and is bringing in more and more. My method of treatment is to take out by the roots the very causes of the disease and not to keep them merely suppressed.(5.334)

The idea of true Shraddha must be brought back once more to us, the faith in our own selves must be

reawakened, and, then only, all the problems which face our country will gradually be solved by ourselves. (5.332)

Infinite faith and strength are the only conditions of success.(5.78)

Every boy should be trained to practise absolute Brahmacharya, and then, and then only, faith—Shradhha—will come.(5.369)

Be possessed of Shraddha (faith), of Virya (courage), attain to the knowledge of the Atman, and sacrifice your life for the good of others—this is my wish and blessing. (7.267)

Sincerity of conviction and purity of motive will surely gain the day; and even a small minority, armed with these, is surely destined to prevail against all odds. (4.278)

Truth, purity, and unselfishness—wherever these are present, there is no power below or above the sun to crush the possessor thereof. Equipped with these, one individual is able to face the whole universe in opposition. (4.279)

Let people say whatever they like, stick to your own convictions, and rest assured, the world will be at your feet. They say, “Have faith in this fellow or that fellow,” but I say, “Have faith in yourself first,” that’s the way. (6.274)

What we want are Western Science coupled with Vedanta, Brahmacharya as the guiding motto, and also Shraddha and faith in one’s own self.(5.366)

The Power of Will

Can anything be done unless everybody exerts himself to his utmost? "It is the man of action, the lion-heart, that the goddess of wealth resorts to." No need of looking behind. FORWARD! We want infinite energy, infinite zeal, infinite courage, and infinite patience, then only will great things be achieved.(6.383,384)

Stand up and fight! Not one step back, that is the idea. Fight it out, whatever comes. Let the stars move from the spheres! Let the whole World stand against us! Death means only a change of garment. What of it? Thus fight! (1.461)

Most of our difficulties in our daily lives come from being unable to hold our minds ... Every reaction in the form of hatred or evil is so much loss to the mind; and every evil thought or deed of hatred, or any thought of reaction, if it is controlled, will be laid in our favour. ... Each time we suppress hatred, or a feeling of anger, it is so much good energy stored up in our favour; that piece of energy will be converted into the higher powers. (1.222,223)

You gain nothing by becoming cowards. Taking a step backward, you do not avoid any misfortune.(1.461)

This is the one question I put to every man ... Are you strong? Do you feel strength? ... Strength is the medicine for the world's disease.(2.201)

Do not say we are weak; we can do anything and everything. What can we not do? Everything can be done by us; we all have the same glorious soul, let us believe in it.(3.244)

Ay, let every man and woman and child, without respect of caste or birth, hear and learn that behind ... everyone there is that Infinite Soul, assuring the infinite possibility and the infinite capacity of all to become great and good. (3.193)

When the soul has wrestled with circumstance and ... has struggled forward again and again and yet again—then the soul comes out as a giant. (5.252)

Say, “Everything is in me, and I can manifest it at will.” (6.277)

What queer humility is this to say, “I know nothing!”, “I am nothing!” This is pseudo-renunciation and mock-modesty, I tell you. Off with such a self-debasing spirit!(6.315)

Cherish positive thoughts. By dwelling too much upon negativism, the whole country is going to ruin! ... What a botheration! In every soul is infinite strength; and should you turn yourselves into cats and dogs by harbouring negative thoughts? Who dares to preach negativism? ... That sort of self-deprecating attitude is another name of disease—do you call that humility? It is vanity in disguise! ... Hurl yourselves on the world like an avalanche—let the world crack in twain under your weight! (6.273)

If you have a clouded face, do not go out that day, shut yourself up in your room. What right have you to carry this disease out into the world?(1.265)

What makes you weep, my friend? In you is all power. Summon up your all-powerful nature, O mighty one, and this whole universe will lie at your feet. It is the Self alone that predominates, and not matter.(6.274,275)

I feel as if a thunderbolt strikes me on the head when I hear people dwell on negative thoughts.(6.273)

If you think yourselves pure, pure you will be. This teaches us not to think ourselves as weak, but as strong, omnipotent, omniscient. No matter that I have not expressed it yet, it is in me. All knowledge is in me, all power, all purity, and all freedom. Freedom. Why cannot I express this knowledge? Because I do not believe in it. Let me believe in it, and it must and will come out. (3.130)

If you can think that infinite power, infinite knowledge and indomitable energy lie within you, and if you can bring out that power, you also can become like me. (6.454)

To think there is any imperfection creates it. Thoughts of strength and perfection alone can cure it.(7.68,69)

Struggle is the sign of life. (7.219)

For fear of defeat shall I retreat from the fight? Defeat is the ornament the hero adorns himself with. What, to acknowledge defeat without fighting! (8.432)

Perseverance will finally conquer. Nothing can be done in a day.(2.152)

Mountain-high though the difficulties appear, terrible and gloomy though all things seem, they are but Maya. Fear not—it is banished. Crush it, and it vanishes. Stamp upon it, and it dies. Be not afraid. Think not how many times you fail. Never mind. Time is infinite. Go forward: assert yourself again and again, and light must come.(2.403)

Plod on through the dark, brave-heart, with all thy might and main.(4.390)

The struggle is the great lesson. Mind you, the great benefit in this life is struggle. It is through that we pass. If there is any road to heaven, it is through hell. Through hell to heaven is always the way. (5.252)

No need of looking behind. FORWARD! We want infinite energy, infinite zeal, infinite courage, and infinite patience, then only will great things be achieved.(6.384)

To succeed, you must have tremendous perseverance, tremendous will. "I will drink the ocean," says the persevering soul, "At my will mountains will crumble up." Have that sort of energy, that sort of will, work hard, and you will reach the goal.(1.178)

The will is stronger than anything else. Everything must go down before the will, for that comes from God and God Himself; a pure and a strong will is omnipotent.(3.224)

The world sympathises only with the strong and the powerful.(5.239)

My child, what I want is muscles of iron and nerves of steel, inside which dwells a mind of the same material as that of which the thunderbolt is made. Strength, manhood, Kshatra-Virya+ Brahma-Teja ... this I want.(5.117)

Men, men, these are wanted: everything else will be ready, but strong, vigorous, believing young men, sincere to the backbone, are wanted. A hundred such and the world becomes revolutionised. (3.223,224)

It is gentleness that has the strength to live on and to fructify, and not mere brutality and physical force.(3.188)

Men should be taught to be practical and physically strong. A dozen of such lions will conquer the world, and not millions of sheep can do so.(5.315)

I want iron wills and hearts that do not know how to quake.(5.93)

Give me a few men and women who are pure and selfless and I shall shake the world.

The Power of Mind

Strength, strength it is that we want so much in this life, for what we call sin and sorrow have all one cause, and that is our weakness. With weakness comes ignorance, and with ignorance comes misery. (1.381)

Never be weak. You must be strong; you have infinite strength within you.(4.11)

The only saint is that soul that never weakens, faces everything, and determines to die game.(1.479)

Know that all sins and all evils can be summed up in that one word, weakness. It is weakness that is the motive power in all evil doing; it is weakness that is the source of all selfishness; it is weakness that makes men injure others; it is weakness that makes them manifest what they are not in reality.(3.426)

You must retain great strength in your mind and words. "I am low, I am low"—repeating these ideas in the mind, man belittles and degrades himself.(7.135)

Sin may be said to be the feeling of every kind of weakness. From this weakness spring jealousy, malice, and so forth. Hence weakness is sin.(6.474)

What we want is strength, so believe in yourselves ... Make your nerves strong. What we want is muscles of iron and nerves of steel. We have wept long enough. No more weeping, but stand on your own feet and be men.(3.224)

What is sin and what is misery, and what are all these, but the results of weakness? ... Men are taught from childhood that they are weak and sinners. Teach them that they are all glorious children of immortality, even those who are the weakest in manifestation. Let positive, strong, helpful thought enter into their brains from very childhood. Lay yourselves open to these thoughts, and not to weakening and paralysing ones.(2.87)

First build up your physique. Then only you can get control over the mind.(7.155)

Never can hatred and malice vanish from one's heart unless one becomes a hero. (7.271)

It is very easy to say, "Hate nobody, resist not evil," but we know what that kind of thing generally means in practice. When the eyes of society are turned towards us, we may make a show of non-resistance, but in our hearts it is cancer all the time ... This is hypocrisy and will serve no purpose.(1.40)

This is the one question I put to every man, woman, or child, when they are in physical, mental, or spiritual training. Are you strong? Do you feel strength?—for I know it is truth alone that gives strength.(2.201)

Stamping down such weakness of mind and heart, stand up, saying, "I am possessed of heroism—I am possessed of a steady intellect ..." Never allow weakness to overtake your mind.(7.233,234)

Strength is the medicine for the world's disease. Strength is the medicine which the poor must have when tyrannised over by the rich. Strength is the medicine that the ignorant must have when oppressed by the learned.(2.201)

First you have to build the body by good nutritious food—then only will the mind be strong. The mind is but the subtle part of the body.(7.135)

The only test of good things is that they make us strong.(8.185)

As soon as you say, “I am a little mortal being,” you are saying something which is not true, you are giving the lie to yourselves, you are hypnotising yourselves into something vile and weak and wretched.(2.295)

The infinite strength of the world is yours. Drive out the superstition that has covered your minds. Let us be brave.(2.87)

By degrees the heart has to be strengthened. If one man is made, it equals the result of a hundred thousand lectures.(7.135)

Whatever you think, that you will be. If you think yourselves weak, weak you will be; if you think yourselves strong, strong you will be; if you think yourselves impure, impure you will be; if you think yourselves pure, pure you will be. This teaches us not to think ourselves as weak, but as strong, omnipotent, omniscient. (3.130)

In spite of the greatness of the Upanishads, in spite of our boasted ancestry of sages, compared to many other races, I must tell you that we are weak, very weak. First of all is our physical weakness. That physical weakness is the cause of at least one-third of our miseries.(3.241)

We speak of many things parrot-like, but never do them; speaking and not doing has become a habit with us. What is the cause of that? Physical weakness. This sort of weak brain is not able to do anything; we must strengthen it. (3.242)

You are lions, you are souls, pure, infinite, and perfect. The might of the universe is within you. Why weepest thou, my friend?(2.86)

The brain and muscles must develop simultaneously. Iron nerves with an intelligent brain—and the whole world is at your feet.(6.460)

You must learn to make the physique very strong and teach the same to others ... Body and mind must run parallel ... When the necessity of strengthening the physique is brought home to people, they will exert themselves of their own accord.(7.171,172)

This is not the time with us to weep even in joy; we have had weeping enough; no more is this the time for us to become soft. This softness has been with us till we have become like masses of cotton and are dead. What our country now wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and the secrets of the universe, and will accomplish their purpose in any fashion even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face.(3.190)

If you, my sons, can proclaim this message to the world—"Yield not to unmanliness, O son of Partha; it does not befit thee"—then all this disease, grief, sin and sorrow will vanish off from the face of the earth in three days.(4.109)

That is all I have to say to the world. Be strong! ... The sign of life is strength and growth. The sign of death is weakness. Whatever is weak, avoid! It is death. If it is strength, go down into hell and get hold of it!(1.479)

Be strong. Be manly. I have respect even for a wicked

person so long as he is manly and strong, for his strength will someday make him give up his wickedness, and even renounce all work for selfish ends. It will thus eventually bring him to the Truth.(His Eastern and Western Disciples, *Life of Swami Vivekananda*, 2 vols (Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama, 2008), 1.271)

The sign of vigour, the sign of life, the sign of hope, the sign of health, the sign of everything that is good, is strength.(6.62)

This I lay down as the first essential in all I teach: anything that brings spiritual, mental, or physical weakness, touch it not with the toes of your feet.(8.185)

Are not drums made in the country? Are not trumpets and kettle-drums available in India? Make the boys hear the deep-toned sound of these instruments. Hearing from boyhood the sound of these effeminate forms of music the country is well-nigh converted into a country of women. What more degradation can you expect? Even the poet's imagination fails to draw this picture! (7.232,233)

The Damaru and horn have to be sounded, drums are to be beaten so as to raise the deep and martial notes ... The music which awakens only the softer feelings of man is to be stopped now for some time. Stopping the light tunes such as Kheal and Tappa for some time, the people are to be accustomed to hear the Dhrupad music. Through the thunder-roll of the dignified Vedic hymns, life is to be brought back into the country. In everything the austere spirit of heroic manhood is to be revived. In following such an ideal lies the good of the people and the country.(7.233)

Self Motivation

[When a disciple pleaded helplessness, Swamiji thundered] What nonsense are you talking? Within you lies indomitable power. Only thinking, “I am nothing, I am nothing,” you have become powerless. (7.144)

You do not deserve to live if you cannot help yourselves.(5.67)

It is diabolism to say, “I am so miserable.” Every man has his own burden to bear. If you are miserable, try to conquer it, try to be happy.(4.11)

Stand up, be bold, be strong. Take the whole responsibility on your own shoulders, and know that you are the creator of your own destiny. All the strength and succour you want is within yourselves.(2.225)

It is a tremendous error to feel helpless. Do not seek help from anyone. We are our own help. If we cannot help ourselves, there is none to help us ... this is the last and greatest lesson, and oh, what a time it takes to learn it! ... Just think of that huge mass of misery, and all caused by this false idea of going to seek for help! (1.478)

There is no help for man. None ever was, none is, and none will be ... But you are spirit. Pull yourself out of difficulties by yourself! Save yourself by yourself! There is none to help you—never was. To think that there is, is sweet delusion. It comes to no good.(8.132)

You may pray to everyone that was ever born, but who will come to help you? ... Help thyself out by thyself. None else can help thee, friend ... Get hold of the Self, then. Stand up. Don’t be afraid. In the midst of all mis-

eries and all weakness, let the Self come out, faint and imperceptible though it be at first.(2.403,404)

The one great question asked by Vedanta is: why are people so afraid? The answer is that they have made themselves helpless and dependent on others. We are so lazy, we do not want to do anything for ourselves. We want a personal god, a saviour or a prophet to do everything for us ... If everything is done for a man by another he will lose the use of his own limbs. Anything we do ourselves, that is the only thing we do. Anything that is done by another never can be ours ... All this running after help is foolishness.(8.131)

You Know, there are bullock carts ... sometimes a sheaf of straw is dangled at the tip of the pole, a little in front of the animals but beyond their reach. The bulls try continually to feed upon the straw, but never succeed. That is exactly how we are helped ! We think we are going to get security, strength, wisdom, happiness from the outside. We always hope but never realize our hope. Never does any help come from the outside.(8.131,132)

We human beings are very slow to recognise our own weakness, our own faults, so long as we can lay the blame upon somebody else. Men in general lay all the blame of life on their fellow-men, or, failing that, on God, or they conjure up a ghost, and say it is fate. Where fate and what is is fate? We reap what we sow. We are the makers of our own fate. None else has the blame, none has the praise.(2.224)

You know in your inmost heart that many of your limited ideas, this humbling of yourself and praying and weeping to imaginary beings are superstitions. Tell me

one case where these prayers have been answered. All the answers that came were from your own hearts.(2.303)

In your ignorance, every prayer that you made and that was answered, you thought was answered by some being, but you answered the prayer yourself unknowingly. The help came from yourself, and you fondly imagined that someone was sending help to you. There is no help for you outside of yourself; you are the creator of the universe ... These are words that will burn up the dross that is in the mind, words that will bring out the tremendous energy which is within you already, the infinite power which is sleeping in your heart.(3.26)

Those that blame others—and alas! the number of them is increasing everyday—are generally miserable with helpless brains; they have brought themselves to that pass through their own mistakes and blame others, but this does not alter their position. It does not serve them in any way. This attempt to throw the blame upon others only weakens them the more. Therefore, blame none for your own faults, stand upon your own feet, and take the whole responsibility upon yourselves. Say, “This misery that I am suffering is of my own doing, and that very thing proves that it will have to be undone by me alone.” (2.225)

You have cried to all the gods in the world. Has misery ceased? The masses in India cry to sixty million gods, and still die like dogs. Where are these gods? The gods come to help you when you have succeeded. So what is the use? ... This bending the knee to superstitions, this selling yourself to your own mind does not befit you, my soul. You are infinite, deathless, birthless. Because you

are infinite spirit, it does not befit you to be a slave...
Arise! Awake!(1.461)

No books, no scriptures, no science can ever imagine the glory of the Self that appears as man, the most glorious God that ever was, the only God that ever existed, exists, or ever will exist ... Whenever you see a weak man, weeping and wailing for help from somewhere above the skies, it is because he does not know that the skies also are in him. He wants help from the skies, and the help comes ... but it comes from within himself, and he mistakes it as coming from without. (2.250)

Education

Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested, all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library.(3.302)

Every idea that strengthens you must be taken up and every thought that weakens you must be rejected. (3.27)

What we want is muscles of iron and nerves of steel. We have wept long enough. No more weeping, but stand on your feet and be men. It is a man-making religion that we want. It is man-making theories that we want. It is man-making education all round that we want.(3.224)

The remedy for weakness is not brooding over it, but thinking of strength. Teach men of the strength that is already within them.(2.300)

The powers of the mind are like rays of light dissipated; when they are concentrated, they illumine. This is our only means of knowledge ... How has all the knowledge in the world been gained but by the concentration of the powers of mind? The world is ready to give up its secrets if we only know how to knock, how to give it the necessary blow. The strength and force of the blow come through concentration. There is no limit to the power of the human mind. The more concentrated it is, the more power is brought to bear on one point; that is the secret.(1.129,130,131)

Never think there is anything impossible for the soul. It is the greatest heresy to think so. If there is sin, this is the only sin—to say that you are weak.(2.308)

Know that every thought and word that weakens you in the world is the only evil that exists. Whatever makes man weak and fear is the only evil that should be shunned. (2.236)

The greatest sin is to think yourself weak. (7.54)

I beg you to understand this one fact—no good comes out of the man who day and night thinks he is nobody. If a man, day and night thinks he is miserable low, and nothing, nothing he becomes ... That is the great fact which you ought to remember.(3.376)

Being reminded of weakness does not help much give strength, and strength does not come by thinking of weakness all the time. The remedy for weakness is not brooding over weakness, but thinking of strength.(2.300)

If you tell a man, “You are low, you are vile,” in season and out of season, then he is bound to believe in course of time that he is really such.(7.172)

To call another a sinner is the worst thing you can do. (7.76)

Everybody is hypnotised already. The work of attaining freedom, of realising one's real nature, consists in de-hypnotisation.(6.126)

Come up, O lions, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep; you are souls immortal, spirits free, blest and eternal; you are not matter, you are not bodies; matter is your servant, not you the servant of matter. (1.11)

“Children of immortal bliss”—what a sweet, what a hopeful name! Allow me to call you, brethren, by that sweet name—heirs of immortal bliss ... You are the children of God, the sharers of immortal bliss, holy and perfect beings. You divinities on earth—sinners! It is a sin to call a man so; it is a standing libel on human nature. (1.11)

Arise, awake! Awake from this hypnotism of weakness. None is really weak; the soul is infinite, omnipotent and omniscient. Stand up, assert yourself, proclaim the God within you, do not deny Him! Too much of inactivity, too much of weakness, too much of hypnotism has been and is upon our race ... De-hypnotise yourselves. (3.193)

Studying the external alone, man begins to feel himself to be nothing ... Therefore, it is not the study of external nature that makes[one] strong. But there is the internal nature of man—a million times more powerful than any volcanic eruption or any law of nature—which conquers nature, triumphs over all its laws. And that alone teaches man what he is. (9.214)

Do you know how much energy, how many powers, how many forces are still lurking behind that frame of

yours? What scientist has known all that is in man? Millions of years have passed since man first came here, and yet but one infinitesimal part of his powers has been manifested. Therefore, you must not say that you are weak. How do you know what possibilities lie behind that degradation on the surface? You know but little of that which is within you. For behind you is the ocean of infinite power and blessedness.(2.301,302)

Say not man is a sinner. Tell him that he is a God.
(4.351)

Silly fools tell you that you are sinners, and you sit down in a corner and weep. It is foolishness, wickedness, down-right rascality to say that you are sinners! You are all God.(2.237)

The greatest error, says the Vedanta, is to say that you are weak, that you are a sinner, a miserable creature, and that you have no power and you cannot do this and that. Every time you think in that way, you, as it were, rivet one more link in the chain that binds you down, you add one more layer of hypnotism into your own soul. Therefore, whosoever thinks he is weak is wrong, whosoever thinks he is impure is wrong, and is throwing a bad thought into the world.(2.295)

Religion

Religion gives you nothing new; it only takes off obstacles and lets you see your Self.(7.62)

You must remember that humanity travels not from error to truth, but from truth to truth; it may be, if you like it better, from lower truth to higher truth, but never from error to truth.(4.147)

The Tapas and the other hard Yogas that were practised in other Yugas do not work now. What is needed in this Yuga is giving, helping others. What is meant by Dana ? The highest of gifts is the giving of spiritual knowledge, the next is giving secular knowledge and the next a saving of life, the last is giving food and drink. He who gives spiritual knowledge saves the soul from many and many a birth.(3.133)

Neither seek nor avoid; take what comes. This is freedom, to be affected by nothing. Do not merely endure; be unattached.(7.14)

If a man with an ideal makes a thousand mistakes, I am sure that the man without an ideal makes fifty thousand. Therefore it is better to have an ideal.(2.152)

The old religions said that he was an atheist who did not believe in God. The new religion says that he is the atheist who does not believe in himself.(2.301)

India's gift to the world is the spiritual light... Slow and silent, as the gentle dew that falls in the morning, unseen and unheard yet producing a most tremendous result.(3.109,110)

Beware of everything that is untrue; stick to truth and we shall succeed, may be slowly, but surely.(4.370)

The road to good is the roughest and steepest in the universe. It is a wonder that so many succeed no wonder that so many fall. Character has to be established through a thousand stumbles.(8.383)

Be of good cheer and believe that we are selected by the Lord to do great things, and we will do them. (5.23)

Great indeed are the manifestations of muscular power, and marvellous the manifestations of intellect

expressing themselves through machines by the appliances of science; yet none of these is more potent than the influence which spirit exerts upon the world.(3.137)

Let us be true. Nine-tenths of our life's energy is spent in trying to make people think of us that which we are not. That energy would be more rightly spent in becoming that which we would like to be.(9.281)

Pray day and night, “ ...O Thou Mother of the Universe, vouchsafe manliness unto me! O Thou, Mother of Strength, take away my weakness, take away my unmanliness, and make me a Man!”(4.480)

The older I grow, the more everything seems to me to lie in manliness. This is my new gospel. (8.264)

Religion is the manifestation of divinity already existing in man.(3.482)

Love & Purity

Let him who has courage in his mind and love in his heart come with me. I want none else.(6.315)

Truth, purity and unselfishness—wherever these are present, there is no power below or above the sun to crush the possessor thereof. Equipped with these, one individual is able to face the whole universe in opposition.(4.279)

Purity, patience, and perseverance are the three essentials to success, and above all—love.(6.281)

Know that talking ill of others in private is a sin. You must wholly avoid it. Many things may occur to the mind, but it gradually makes a mountain of a molehill if you try to express them. Everything is ended if you forgive and forget.(6.304,305)

Whatever others think or do, lower not your standard of purity, morality and love of God.(8.382)

So long as you have love for God and Guru, and faith in truth, nothing can hurt you, my son.(5.92)

If you are pure, if you are strong, you, one man, are equal to the whole world.(6.145)

The man who is pure, and who dares, does great things.(8.336)

Neither money pays, nor name, nor fame, nor learning; it is character that can cleave through adamantine walls of difficulties. Bear this in mind.(7.487)

Well, my boy, this is the school of misery, which is also the school for great souls and prophets for the cultivation of sympathy, of patience, and, above all, of an indomitable iron will which quakes not even if the universe be pulverised at our feet.(5.15)

Be a man first, my friend, and you will see how all those things (money, name, fame) and the rest will follow of themselves after you. Give up that hateful malice, that dog-like bickering and barking at one another, and take your stand on good purpose, right means, righteous courage, and be brave. When you are born a man, leave some indelible mark behind you.(5.462)

What the world wants is character. The world is in need of those whose life is one burning love, selfless. That love will make every word tell like thunderbolt... Bold words and bolder deeds are what we want. Awake, awake, great ones! (7.501)

Brahmacharya should be like a burning fire within the veins!(9.423)

Follow me, if you will, by being intensely sincere,

perfectly unselfish, and, above all, by being perfectly pure. My blessings go with you. (5.65)

Holiness is the greatest power. Everything else quails before it.(6.89)

Out of purity and silence comes the word of power. (7.16)

What brutality is there which purity and chastity cannot conquer?(1.67)

Be pure first and you will have power. The chaste brain has tremendous energy and gigantic will-power. Continence gives wonderful control over mankind. The spiritual leaders of men have been very continent and that is what gave them power.(3.296 & 1.263)

Is there a greater strength than that of Brahmacharya—purity, my boy?(6.271)

There is no allegiance possible where there is no character in the leader, and perfect purity ensures the most lasting allegiance and confidence.(6.135)

Disciple:“But who can aspire to be like you, Swamiji? ... Who can come by that oratorical power of expounding philosophy which you have?”

Swamiji :“You don’t know! That power may come to all. That power comes to him who observes unbroken Brahmacharya for a period of twelve years, with the sole object of realising God. I have practised that kind of Brahmacharya myself, and so a screen has been removed, as it were, from my brain. For that reason, I need not anymore think over or prepare myself for any lectures on such subtle subject as philosophy. (5.357,358)

The chaste brain has tremendous energy and gigantic will power. Without chastity, there can be no spirit-

ual strength. Continence gives wonderful control over mankind.(1.263)

The ideal of faith in ourselves is of the greatest help to us. ... Throughout the history of mankind, if any motive power has been more potent than another in the lives of all great men and women, it is that of faith in themselves.(2.301)

Give up Superstition

Superstition is a great enemy of man.(1.15)

I would rather see everyone of you rank atheists than superstitious fools, for the atheist is alive and you can make something out of him. But if superstition enters, the brain is gone, the brain is softening, degradation has seized upon the life. (3.278)

You had better die as an unbeliever than be played upon by cheats and jugglers. The power of reasoning was given you for use. Show then that you have used it properly.(4.59)

I am sure God will pardon a man who will use his reason and cannot believe, rather than a man who believes blindly instead of using the faculties He has given him. (6.12,13)

One must have a strong brain, a clear mind free of nonsensical ideas; he must pierce through the mass of superstitions encrusting his mind to the pure truth that is in his inmost Self. Then he will know that all perfections, all power are already within himself, that these have not to be given to him by others.(8.94)

Believe not because an old manuscript has been produced, because it has been handed down to you from

your forefathers, because your friends want you to - but think for yourself; search truth for yourself; realize it yourself ... Soft-brained men, weak-minded, chicken-hearted cannot find the truth.(8.104)

Brave, bold men, these are what we want. What we want is vigour in the blood, strength in the nerves, iron muscles and nerves of steel, not softening namby-pamby ideas ... Avoid all mystery. There is no mystery in religion.(3.278)

In religion, as in all other matters, discard everything that weakens you, have nothing to do with it. Mystery-mongering weakens the human brain.(1.134)

Mystery-mongering and superstition are always signs of weakness. These are always signs of degradation and of death. Therefore beware of them; be strong, and stand on your own feet.(3.279)

Anything that makes you weak physically, intellectually and spiritually, reject as poison; there is no life in it, it cannot be true ... These mysticisms, in spite of some grains of truth in them, are generally weakening.(3.225)

Anything that is secret and mysterious in the systems of Yoga should be at once rejected. The best guide in life is strength.(1.134)

I must frankly state that in my life-long experience in the work, I have always found "Occultism" injurious and weakening to humanity. What we want is strength. We Indians, more than any other race, want strong and vigorous thought. We have enough of the superfine in all concerns. For centuries we have been stuffed with the mysterious; the result is that our intellectual and spiritual digestion is almost hopelessly impaired, and the

race has been dragged down to the depths of hopeless imbecility.(9.76)

Every system, ... which weakens the mind, makes one superstitious, makes one desire all sorts of wild impossibilities, mysteries, and superstitions, I do not like, because its effect is dangerous. Such systems never bring any good; such things create morbidity in the mind, make it weak, so weak that in course of time it will be almost impossible to receive truth or live up to it. Strength, therefore, is the one thing needful.(2.201)

There must be freshness and vigour of thought behind to make a virile race. More than enough to strengthen the whole world exists in the Upanishads ... But it requires to be applied.(9.76,77)

Religion is the manifestation of the natural strength that is in man ... It is always a manifestation of strength. (8.185)

I love my nation. I cannot see you degraded, weakened any more than you are now. Therefore I am bound for your sake and for truth's to cry, "Hold!" and to raise my voice against this degradation of my race. Give up these weakening mysticism and be strong ... The truths of the Upanishads are before you. Take them up, live up to them, and the salvation of India will be at hand.(3.225)

Go back to your Upanishads—the shining, the strengthening, the bright philosophy—and part from all mysterious things, all weakening things.(3.225)

Despondency is not religion, whatever else it may be. By being pleasant always and smiling, it takes you nearer to God, nearer than any prayer.(4.11)

Those who are always down-hearted and dispirited

in this life can do no work; from life to life they come and go wailing and moaning.(7.136)

Self-deprecation! What is it for? You are the child of the Infinite, the all-powerful Divine Mother. What means disease, or fear, or want to me? Stamp out the negative spirit as if it were a pestilence, and it will conduce to your welfare in every way.(6.276)

Laziness, meanness, and hypocrisy have covered the whole length and breadth of the country. Can an intelligent man look on all this and remain quiet? Does it not bring tears to the eyes? ... Therefore I say, first rouse the inherent power of the Atman within you. (7.182,183)

All weakness, all bondage is imagination ... Do not weaken! ... Stand up and be strong! ... That is all the religion I know.(1.479,480)

Infinite strength is religion and God.(7.13 & 8.31)

What we need is strength; who will give us strength?... Upanishads are the great mine of strength. Therein lies strength enough to invigorate the whole world; the whole world can be vivified, made strong, energised through them.(3.238)

Strength, strength is what the Upanishads speak to me from every page. This is the one great thing to remember, it has been the one great lesson I have been taught in my life. Strength, it says, strength, O man, be not weak. Are there no human weaknesses?— says man. There are, say the Upanishads, but will more weakness heal them? Would you try to wash dirt with dirt? Will sin cure sin? Will weakness cure weakness? Strength, O man, strength, say the Upanishads, stand up and be strong.(3.237).

First step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads, and believe—"I am the soul," "Me the sword cannot cut; nor weapons pierce; me the fire cannot burn; me the air cannot dry; I am the Omnipotent, I am the Omniscient." So repeat these blessed saving words.(3.244)

You have now to make the character of Mahavira [Hanuman] your ideal ... He was a perfect master of his senses and wonderfully sagacious. You have now to build your life on this great ideal of personal service. Through that, all the other ideals will gradually manifest in life. Obedience to the guru without questioning, and strict observance of Brahmacharya—this is the secret of success. As on the one hand Hanuman represents the ideal of service, so on the other he represents leonine courage, striking the whole world with awe. (7.232)

Keep aside for the present the Vrindavan aspect of Shri Krishna, and spread far and wide the worship of Shri Krishna roaring the Gita out, with the voice of a lion ... We now mostly need the ideal of a hero with the tremendous spirit of Rajas thrilling through his veins from head to foot ... the hero whose armour is renunciation, whose sword is wisdom. We want now the spirit of brave warrior in the battlefield of life, and not of the wooing lover who looks upon life as a pleasure-garden!(5.388)

This is the only prayer we should have ... to tell ourselves, and to tell everybody else that we are divine. And as we go on repeating this, "I am divine, I am divine," strength comes. He who falters at first will get stronger and stronger, and the voice will increase in volume until the truth takes possession of our hearts, and courses

through our veins, and permeates our bodies. (2.202)

In the Shastras real self-surrender and reliance on God has been indicated as the culmination of human achievement. But... nowadays the way people speak of Daiva or reliance on Divine dispensation is a sign of death, the outcome of great cowardliness.(7.126)

Can anyone, my dear friend, have faith or resignation in the Lord, unless he is a hero? Never can hatred and malice vanish from one's heart unless one becomes a hero, and unless one is free from these, how can one become truly civilised? ... Where in this country is that sturdy manliness, that spirit of heroism? (7.271)

True Effort

The more opposition there is, the better. Does a river acquire velocity unless there is resistance? The newer and better a thing is, the more opposition it will meet with at the outset. It is opposition which foretells success. Where there is no opposition there is no success either.(7.372)

But it is a tremendous truth that if there be real worth in you, the more are circumstances against you, the more will that inner power manifest itself. (7.249)

It is my firm conviction that no great work is accomplished in this world by low cunning; so without paying any heed to these vile slanders, I used to work steadily at my mission. The upshot I used to find was that often my slanderers, feeling repentant afterwards, would surrender to me and offer apologies, by themselves contradicting the slanders in the papers. (7.125)

People will call us both good and bad. But we

shall have to work like lions, keeping the ideal before us.(7.231,232)

The greater a man has become, the fiercer the ordeal he has had to pass through. (7.126)

This world is the great gymnasium where we come to make ourselves strong.(5.410)

One must work as the dictate comes from within, and then if it is right and good, the society is bound to veer round, perhaps centuries after one is dead and gone.(6.301)

Good motives, sincerity, and infinite love can conquer the world. One single soul possessed of these virtues can destroy the dark designs of millions of hypocrites and brutes.(5.127)

The fact is, my son, this whole world is full of mean ways of worldliness. But men of real moral courage and discrimination are never deceived by these. Let the world say what it chooses, I shall tread the path of duty - know this to be the line of action for a hero. Otherwise, if one has to attend day and night to what this man says or that man writes, no great work is achieved in this world(7.125,126).

We are the sons of Light and children of God. Glory unto the Lord, we will succeed ... Do not care for the heartless intellectual writers, and their cold-blooded newspaper articles. Faith ... fiery faith ...! Glory unto the Lord—march on, the Lord is our General. Do not look back. ... forward-onward ! Thus and thus we shall go on brethren.(5.17)

Go on bravely. Do not expect success in a day or a year. Always hold on to the highest. Be steady. Avoid

jealousy and selfishness. (5.108)

Each work has to pass through these stages—ridicule, opposition, and then acceptance.(5.91)

But, mind you, this is the life's experience; if you really want the good of others, the whole universe may stand against you and cannot hurt you. It must crumble before your power of the Lord Himself in you if you are sincere and really unselfish.(8.83)

Each man who thinks ahead of his time is sure to be misunderstood. So opposition and persecution are welcome, only you have to be steady and pure and must have immense faith in God.(5.91)

I want each one of my children to be a hundred times greater than I could ever be. Every one of you must be a giant—must, that is my word. Obedience, readiness, and love for the cause—if you have these three, nothing can hold you back.(7.509)

Be Brave

This I have seen in life—he who is overcautious about himself falls into dangers at every step; he who is afraid of losing honour and respect gets only disgrace; he who is always afraid of loss always loses.(8.433)

None will be able to resist truth and love and sincerity. Are you sincere? Unselfish even unto death, and loving? Then fear not, not even death.(5.43)

Never lose heart. In eating, dressing or lying, in singing or playing, in enjoyment or disease, always manifest the highest moral courage. Then only will you attain the grace of Mahashakti, the Divine Mother.(7.233)

Not one step back, that is the idea ... Fight it out,

whatever comes. Let the stars move from the sphere! Let the whole world stand against us! ... What of it? Thus fight! you gain nothing by becoming cowards. ... Taking a step backward, you do not avoid any misfortune. (1.461)

My faith is in the younger generation, the modern generation, out of them will come my workers. They will work out the whole problem like lions.(5.223)

We want some disciples—fiery young men—do you see?—intelligent and brave, who dare to go to the jaws of death, and are ready to swim the ocean across. Do you follow me? We want hundreds like that, both men and women.(6.292)

To cowards what advice shall I offer?—nothing whatsoever have I to say ... To me, cringing, fawning, whining, degrading inertia and hell are one and the same. (8.432)

Hold on, boys, no cowards among my children ... Are great things ever done smoothly?... I want iron wills and hearts that do not know how to quake ... The Lord bless you. (5.93)

If you are really my children, you will fear nothing, stop at nothing. You will be like lions. ... My prayers and benedictions follow every step you take.... Everything will come to you if you have faith. (5.61,62)

Service

This life is short, the vanities of the world are transient, but they alone live who live for others, the rest are more dead than alive.(4.363)

In the world take always the position of the giver; help, give service, give any little thing you can, but keep out barter.(7.5)

My boy, when death is inevitable, is it not better to die like heroes than as stocks and stones? And what is the use of living a day or two more in this transitory world? It is better to wear out than to rust out—specially for the sake of doing the least good to others.(7.176)

Then only will India awake, when hundreds of large hearted men and women, giving up all desires of enjoying the luxuries of life, will long and exert themselves to their utmost for the well being of the millions of their countrymen who are gradually sinking lower and lower in the vortex of destitution and ignorance.(5.127)

My hope of the future lies in the youths of character—intelligent, renouncing all for the service of others and obedient—who can sacrifice their lives in working out my ideas and thereby do good to themselves and the country at large. Otherwise, boys of the common run are coming in groups and will come. Dullness is written on their faces—their hearts devoid of energy, their bodies feeble and unfit for work, and minds devoid of courage. What work will be done by these? (7.230, 231)

I want some strongly built, energetic serviceable boys of character.

If in this hell of a world one can bring a little joy and peace even for a day into the heart of a single person, that much alone is true; this I have learnt after suffering all my life; all else is mere moonshine.(5.177)

Way to Success

Our mistakes have places here. Go on! Do not look back if you think you have done something that is not

right. Now, do you believe you could be what you are today, had you not made those mistakes before? Bless your mistakes, then. They have been angels unawares ... Hold on to the ideal. March on? Do not look back upon little mistakes and things. In this battlefield of ours, the dust of mistakes must be raised. Those who are so thin-skinned that they cannot bear the dust, let them get out of the ranks. (5.253)

I have committed many mistakes in my life; but mark you, I am sure of this that without everyone of those mistakes I should not be what I am today, and so am quite satisfied to have made them. I do not mean that you are to wilfully commit mistakes; do not misunderstand me in that way. But do not mope because of the mistakes you have committed.(2.356)

What is done is done ... Do not repent, ... do not brood over past deeds ... You cannot undo, the effect must come, face it, but be careful never to do the same thing again.(7.91)

In all our actions, errors and mistakes are our only teachers. Who commits mistakes, the path of truth is attainable by him only. Trees never make mistakes, nor do stones fall into error; animals are hardly seen to transgress the fixed laws of nature; but man is prone to err and it is man who becomes god-on-earth. (4.473)

Onward! Upon ages of struggle character is built. Be not discouraged. (5.57)

Never talk about the faults of others, no matter how bad they may be. Nothing is ever gained by that. You never help one by talking about his fault; you do him an injury, and injure yourself as well.(6.127)

Never mind failures; they are quite natural. They are the beauty of life, these failures. What would life be without them? It would not be worth having if it were not for struggles. Where would be the poetry of life? Never mind the struggles, the mistakes. I never heard a cow tell a lie, but it is only a cow—never a man. So never mind these failures, these little backslidings! Hold the ideal a thousand times, and if you fail a thousand times, make the attempt once more.

Character has to be established through a thousand stumbles.(8.383)

One stumbles more than another, and him who stumbles more we call bad, him who stumbles less we call good ... the difference is not one of kind, but of degree.(2.127)

Leader & Organization

Be the servant while leading. Be unselfish. ... Have infinite patience, and success is yours. (4.369)

The history of the world is that of six men of faith, six men of deep pure character. We need to have three things: the heart to feel, the brain to conceive, the hand to work. (6.145)

Make yourself a dynamo. ... If you are pure, if you are strong, you, one man, are equal to the whole world. (6.145)

The more we grow in love and virtue and holiness, the more we see love and virtue and holiness outside. All condemnation of others really condemns ourselves. Adjust the microcosm (which is in your power to do) and the macrocosm will adjust itself for you. (7.27)

Great enterprise, boundless courage, tremendous energy, and, above all, perfect obedience—these are the only traits that lead to individual and national regeneration. (6.336)

Have patience and be faithful unto death. Do not fight among yourselves. Be perfectly pure in money dealings. ... So long as you have faith and honesty and devotion, everything will prosper. (5.98)

From all of you I want this, that you must discard forever self-aggrandisement, faction-mongering, and jealousy. You must be all forbearing, like Mother-Earth. If you can achieve this, the world will be at your feet. (6.313)

Give up criticism altogether. Help all as long as you find they are doing all right, and in cases where they seem to be going wrong, show them their mistakes gently. It is criticising each other that is at the root of all mischief. That is the chief factor in breaking down organisations. (6.313)

What is wanted is a power of organization—do you understand me? Have any of you got that much brain in your head? If you do, let your mind work. (6.279)

Be unselfish, and never listen to one friend in private accusing another. (4.369)

I want that there should be no hypocrisy, ... no roguery. ... There should not be a breath of immorality, nor a stain of policy which is bad. (4.369)

Secret of Work

Work unto death—I am with you, and when I am gone, my spirit will work with you. This life comes and

goes—wealth, fame, enjoyments are only of a few days. It is better, far better to die on the field of duty, preaching the truth, than to die like a worldly worm. Advance! (5.114)

Work as if on each of you depended the whole work. (4.370)

No great work can be achieved by humbug. It is through love, a passion for truth, and tremendous energy that all undertakings are accomplished. ... Therefore manifest your manhood. (6.315)

Multitude counts for nothing. A few heart-whole, sincere, and energetic men can do more in a year than a mob in a century. (8.346)

My hope and faith rest in men like you. Understand my words in their true spirit, and apply yourselves to work in their light. ... I have given you advice enough; now put at least something in practice. Let the world see that your listening to me has been a success. (7.176)

Take courage and work on. Patience and steady work—this is the only way. Go on; remember—patience and purity and courage and steady work—this is the only way. ... So long as you are pure, and true to your principles, you will never fail. (5.96)

You have to be practical in all spheres of work. The whole country has been ruined by masses of theories. (7.136)

Opposition to a righteous work initiated with moral courage will only awaken the moral power of the initiators the more. That which meets with no obstruction, no opposition, only takes men to the path of moral death. (7.219)

We need a heart to feel, a brain to conceive, and a strong arm to do the work. ... Make yourself a fit agent to work. ... In a conflict between the heart and the brain, follow your heart. (8.223)

If you have not even a little imagination, if you have no ideal to guide you, you are simply a brute. So we must not lower our ideal, neither are we to lose sight of practicality. We must avoid the two extremes. ... You must try to combine in your life immense idealism with immense practicality. (3.447)

On you lie the future hopes of our country. I feel extreme pain to see you leading a life of inaction. Set yourselves to work—to work! Do not tarry ... Do not sit idle, thinking that everything will be done in time, later on! Mind you - nothing will be done that way! (5.384)

Idleness won't do. Throw overboard all idea of jealousy and egotism, once for all. Come on to the practical field with tremendous energy; to work, in the fullness of strength! (6.265)

You have not caught my fire yet—you do not understand me! You run in the old ruts of sloth and enjoyments. Down with all sloth, down with all enjoyments here or hereafter. (5.66)

That you may catch my fire, that you may be intensely sincere, that you die the heroes' death on the field of battle—is the constant prayer of Vivekananda. (5.66)

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Life of Vivekananda and the Universal Gospel

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Swami Vivekananda on Himself

Vivekananda :A Biography in Pictures

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