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Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science,
and the Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea.

FOUNDED BY EDWARD C. HEGELER

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THE VENERABLE A. H. DHARMAPALA

The Venerable Anagarika H. Dharmapala, the greatest figure in the renaissance movement in Buddhism and the founder of the Maha Bodhi Society, passed away on April 29, 1933, at the "Mulagandhakuti Vihara", the Buddhist temple which he built at Isijatana, Sarnath, Benares. It was here that Buddha preached his first sermon after his enlightenment, and here the Venerable Dharmapala was admitted into the holy order of Bhikkus in January of this year. Dharmapala was one of the most distinguished of the delegates to the World's Congress of Religions held in Chicago in connection with the Columbian Exposition of 1893.

Frontispiece to The Open Court

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INDIA AT THE WORLD'S PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

BY J. V. NASH

AFTER the lapse of forty years, the World's Parliament of Religions, which met at Chicago in September, 1893, stands out as a significant landmark in the progressive evolution of human relations. Here, for the first time, there came together, in a spirit of brotherhood and good-will, representatives of different forms of organized belief from all the far-flung quarters of the earth. The occasion was unique, also, in the fact that the Roman Catholic Church was officially represented by many of its highest dignitaries. For the work of organizing the Parliament, much of the credit was due to Dr. John Henry Barrows, a Presbyterian clergyman of Chicago, who served as Chairman of the General Committee.

Let us imagine ourselves among the audience of some 4,000 persons who packed the spacious Columbus Hall, in the then newly erected Art Institute building on Michigan Avenue. It is the morning of September 11, and the waiting throng has been singing "Jerusalem, the Golden." At ten o'clock, ten strokes on the new Liberty Bell (symbolizing the ten great religions) announce the opening of the Parliament.

A hush falls upon the vast assemblage as the colorful procession comes into view. Cardinal Gibbons, in scarlet robes, arm in arm with the Hon. C. C. Bonney, President of the World's Congress Auxiliary, and immediately followed by Mrs. Potter Palmer and Mrs. Charles Henrotin, officials of the Woman's Branch of the Auxiliary, heads the long line of delegates as, two by two, they march down the aisle of the auditorium and up to the platform.

"The sight," says a contemporary account, "was most remarkable. There were strange robes, turbans and tunics, crosses and

crests, flowing hair and tonsured heads... Buddhist monks were attired in garments of white and yellow; an orange turban and robe made the Brahman conspicuous; and the Greek Archbishop of Zante, from whose high head-gear there fell to the waist a black veil, was brilliant in purple robe and black cassock, and glittering as to his breast in chains of gold. Dharmapala, the reformed Buddhist, was recognized in his woolen garments; and, in black clothes, hardly to be distinguished from European dress, was Mozoomdar, author of the 'Oriental Christ,' a most touching history of a soul struggling homeward to God. In a golden bond of friendship, the oldest of the religions of the world greeted the youngest of the religions."

Many nations were represented at the Parliament. But it was India, the ancient Mother of Religions, that had the most numerous and impressive of all foreign delegations. Its personnel included the following:

- Siddhu Ram, Mooltan, Punjab.
- Vichand Raghavji Gandhi, Honorary Secretary of the Jain Association, Bombay.
- Professor G. N. Chakravarti, Allahabad.
- Swami Vivekananda.
- B. B. Nagarkar, of the Brahmo Somaj, Bombay.
- Manilal Ni Dvivedi, Bombay.
- P. C. Mozoomdar, of the Brahmo Somaj, Calcutta.
- Jinda Ram, Attorney and Temperance Leader, Muzaffargah.
- H. Dharmapala, of Ceylon, General Secretary, Maha Bodhi Society, Calcutta.
- Jinanji Jamshodji Modi, of the Parsee Community.
- Narasima Chaira, Brahman, of Madras.
- Lakeshnie Narain.
- Miss Jeanni Serabji, Parsee Christian.

There were also present two Christian missionaries from India—Rev. Maurice Phillips, of Madras, and Rev. T. E. Slater, of Bangalore.

The addresses of the various representatives of Mother India are noteworthy for their spiritual insight, their broad human sympathy and tolerance, and their intellectuality. India certainly has reason to take satisfaction in her spokesmen at this historic gathering.

At the opening session, the first speaker to bring greetings from India was P. C. Mozoomdar. He received a tremendous ovation when, following the venerable Greek Archbishop of Zante, he rose to address the audience. He began as follows:

The recognition, sympathy, and welcome you have given to India to-day are gratifying to thousands of liberal Hindu religious thinkers, whose representatives I see around me, and, on behalf of my countrymen, I cordially thank you. India claims her place in the brotherhood of mankind, not only because of her great antiquity, but equally for what has taken place there in recent times. Modern India has sprung from ancient India by a law of evolution, a process of continuity which explains some of the most difficult problems of our national life. In prehistoric times our forefathers worshiped the great living spirit, God, and, after many strange vicissitudes, we Indian theists, led by the light of ages, worship the same living spirit, God, and none other.

Egypt, Greece, Rome, even Israel, he went on to observe, have passed away as nations, while India, "the old mother of nations and religions," after weathering many storms, and in spite of repeated waves of invasion and loss of political independence, lives on with no diminution of her spiritual vitality.

In his concluding remarks he said: "No individual, no denomination, can more fully sympathize or more heartily join your conference than we men of the Brahma Somaj, whose religion is the harmony of all religions, and whose congregation is the brotherhood of all nations. Such being our aspirations and sympathies, dear brethren, accept them. Let me thank you again for this welcome in the name of my countrymen, and wish every prosperity and success to your labors."

H. Dharmapala, the spokesman of the Buddhists, compared the Parliament of Religions to the memorable religious convention assembled by the Emperor Asoka some 2100 years before, saying:

At that time Asoka, the great emperor, held a council in the city of Patma of 1000 scholars, which was in session for seven months. The proceedings were epitomized and carved on rock and scattered all over the Indian peninsula and the then known globe. After the consummation of that programme the great emperor sent the gentle teachers, the mild disciples of Buddha, in the garb that you see on this platform, to instruct the world. In that plain garb they went across the deep rivers, the Himalayas, to the plains of Mongolia and the Chinese plains, and to the far-off beautiful isles, the empire of the rising sun; and the influence of that congress held twenty-one centuries ago is to-day a living power, because you everywhere see mildness in Asia. Go to any Buddhist country and where do you find such healthy compassion and tolerance as there? . . .

Why do I come here to-day? Because I find in this new city, in this land of freedom, the very place where that programme can also be carried out. . . . Yes, friends, if you are serious, if you are unselfish, if you are altruistic, this programme can be carried out, and the twentieth century will see the teachings of the meek and lowly Jesus accomplished. . . . And I hope that the noble lessons of tolerance, learned in this majestic assembly, will result in the dawning of universal peace, which will last for twenty centuries more.

Vichand R. Gandhi, the spokesman of the Jain communion of India, brought to the Parliament the official greetings of the high priest of his religion, Moni Atma Ranji. He said in part:

I represent Jainism, a faith older than Buddhism, similar to it in its ethics, but different from it in its psychology, and professed by 1,500,000 of India's most peaceful and law-abiding citizens. . . . This spectacle of the learned leaders of thought and religion meeting together on a common platform, and throwing light on religious problems, has been the dream of Atma Ranji's life. He has commissioned me to say to you that he offers his most cordial congratulations on his own behalf, and on behalf of the Jain community, for your having achieved the consummation of that grand idea, of convening a Parliament of Religions.

Professor G. N. Chakravarti spoke for the Theosophists of India:

I came here to represent a religion, the dawn of which appeared in a misty antiquity which the powerful microscope of modern research has not yet been able to discover; the depth of whose beginnings the plummet of history has not been able to sound. From time immemorial spirit has been represented by white, and matter has been represented by black, and the two sister streams which join at the town from which I came, Allahabad, represent two sources of spirit and matter, according to the philosophy of my people. And when I think that here, in this city of Chicago, this vortex of physicality, this center of material civilization, you hold a Parliament of Religions: when I think that, in the heart of the World's Fair, where abound all the excellencies of the physical world, you have provided also a hall for the feast of reason and the flow of soul, I am once more reminded of my native land."

He declared that his society has universal tolerance for a fundamental principle, and he took great satisfaction in seeing the Parliament of Religions open its arms to representatives of diverse points of view, and allowing himself—"a heathen," as he said—

to speak from the same platform. Toward the close of his remarks he expressed this thought:

The East enjoys the sacred satisfaction of having given birth to all the great religions of the world, and even as the physical sun rises ever from the East, the sun of spirituality has always dawned in the East. To the West belongs the proud privilege of having advanced on the intellectual and on the moral plane, and of having supplied to the world all the various contrivances of material luxuries and of physical comfort. I look, therefore, upon a union of the East and West as a most significant event, and I look with great hope upon the day when the East and the West will be like brothers helping each other, each supplying to the other what it wants—the West supplying the vigor, the youth, the power of organization, and the East opening up its inestimable treasures of a spiritual law, which are now locked up in the treasure boxes grown rusty with age."

B. B. Nargarkar, of Bombay, spoke of the development of the Brahma Somaj (Theistic Church):

The Brahma Somaj is the result, as you know, of the influence of various religions, and the fundamental principles of the Theistic Church, in India, are universal love, harmony of faiths, unity of prophets, or rather unity of prophets and harmony of faiths. The reverence that we pay the other prophets and faiths is not mere lip loyalty, but it is the fundamental love for all the prophets and for all the forms and shades of truth by their own inherent merit. We try not only to learn in an intellectual way what those prophets have to teach, but to assimilate and imbibe these truths that are very near our spiritual being.

The speaker concluded by pleading for a fruitful blending of the East and the West:

In the East we have a number of systems of philosophy; a deep insight into the spiritual nature of man. . . . Catch hold very firmly of what is permanent of the Eastern philosophy. Lay it down very strongly to the heart, and try to assimilate it with your noble Western thoughts. You Western nations represent all the material civilization. You who have gone deep into the outward world and tried to discover the forces of outward nature, you have to teach to the East the glory of man's intellect, his logical accuracy, his rational nature, and in this way it is that in the heart of the church of the new dispensation—call it by whatever name you will—you will have the harmony of the East and the West, a union between faith and reason, a wedding between the Orient and the Occident.

Miss Jeanni Serabji, a Christian of Parsee parentage, was one of the closing speakers on the first day's program. The lady told briefly of her pleasure in being present at the Congress. Her somewhat evangelical address was filled with earnest feeling. "When we meet one another in our land," she remarked, "the first thing we say to each other is 'Peace be with you.' I say it to you in all sincerity, in all love. I feel to-day that the great banner over us is the banner of love. I feel to-day more than ever that it is beautiful to belong to the family of God, to acknowledge the Lord Christ."

The sessions of the Parliament of Religions extended over a period of seventeen days. At the various ensuing sessions carefully prepared papers on special subjects were read by a number of the representatives of India.

On the second day, Rev. Maurice Phillips, of Madras, spoke on "The Ancient Religion of India and Primitive Revelation"; and Manilal Ni Drivedi, of Bombay, discussed "The Religious Belief of the Hindus." A few excerpts from this illuminating address will be of special interest:

Hinduism is a wide term, but, at the same time, a vague term. The word Hindu was invented by the Mohammedan conquerors of Aryavata, the historical name of India, and it denotes all who reside beyond the Indus. Hinduism, therefore, correctly speaking, is no religion at all. It embraces within its wide intention all shades of thought, from the atheistic Jainas and Bauddhas to the theistic Sampradaikas and Samajists and the rationalistic Advaytins. But we may agree to use the term in the sense of that body of philosophical and religious principles which are professed in part or whole by the inhabitants of India.

In discussing the God-idea as contained in the Vedas, he said:

In the Vedas there are marks everywhere of the recognition of the idea of one God, the God of nature, manifesting himself in many forms. This word, *God*, is one of those which have been the stumbling-block of philosophy. God, in the sense of a personal creator of the universe, is not known in the Veda, and the highest effort of rationalistic thought in India has been to see God in the totality of all that is. And, indeed, it is doubtful whether philosophy, be it that of a Kant or a Hegel, has ever accomplished anything more. . . .

I humbly beg to differ from those who see in monotheism, in the recognition of a personal God apart from nature, the acme of intellectual development. I believe that is only a

kind of anthropomorphism which the human mind stumbles upon in its first efforts to understand the unknown. The ultimate satisfaction of human reason and emotion lies in the realization of that universal essence which is the all. And I hold an irrefragable evidence that this idea is present in the Veda, the numerous gods and their invocations notwithstanding. This idea of the formless all, the Sat—i.e., esse-being—called Atman and Brahman in the Upanishads, and further explained in the Darsanas, is the central idea of the Veda, nay, the root idea of the Hindu religion in general.

The speaker concluded with the thought that there should be worked out a genuine science of religion, universal in its scope and application.

On the third day of the Parliament, P. C. Mozoomdar presented a paper discussing in detail the work of the Brahma Somaj, which was founded by Ram Dohan Roy, a man of Brahman caste, learned not only in Sanskrit but also in Arabic and Persian. While still in his teens, he made a journey to Tibet and studied there the lore of the lamas. In later life the title of *Rajah* was conferred upon him. It is interesting to note that the year 1933 is the centenary of the death of this noted leader, the father of the Theistic Hindu Church, which he established in 1830. The word *Brahmo*, the speaker explained, means "worshiper of God," and *Somaj* means "society."

"While on the one hand," continued Mozoomdar, "he established the Brahma Somaj, on the other he coöperated with the British government to abolish the barbarous custom of *suttee*, or the burning of widows with their dead husbands. In 1832 he traveled to England, the very first Hindu who ever went to Europe, and in 1833 he died, and his sacred bones are interred in Bristol, the place where every Hindu pilgrim goes to pay his tribute of honor and reverence."

Mozoomdar described the social reforms for which the Brahma Somaj has worked, such as inter-caste marriage and the remarriage of widows. It seeks inspiration from Bible and Koran as well as from the Hindu scriptures; it emphasizes both public morality and personal religion, "throwing ourselves entirely and absolutely upon the spirit of God and His saving love." It stands for "a new dispensation," for "the harmony of all religious prophecies and systems unto the glory of the one true, living God."

Rev. T. E. Slater, of Bangalore, spoke of "Concessions to Native Religious Ideas." "Hindus," said this speaker, "by instinct and tradition are the most religious people in the world."

The Parsees—the religious community of about 100,000 centering in Bombay, which preserves the ancient faith of Persia (whence their name is derived) as taught by Zoroaster—had an able spokesman in Jinanji Jamshodji Modi. "The greatest good," he observed, "that a Parliament of Religions, like the present, can do is to establish what Professor Max Müller calls 'that great golden dawn of truth that "there is a religion behind all religions."' . . . If this Parliament of Religions does nothing else but spread the knowledge of this golden truth and thus make a large number of men happy, it will immortalize its name." In his scholarly paper he discussed the philosophy of Zoroastrianism. He emphasized the tolerance of the Parsees and their cordial relations with those of other faiths.

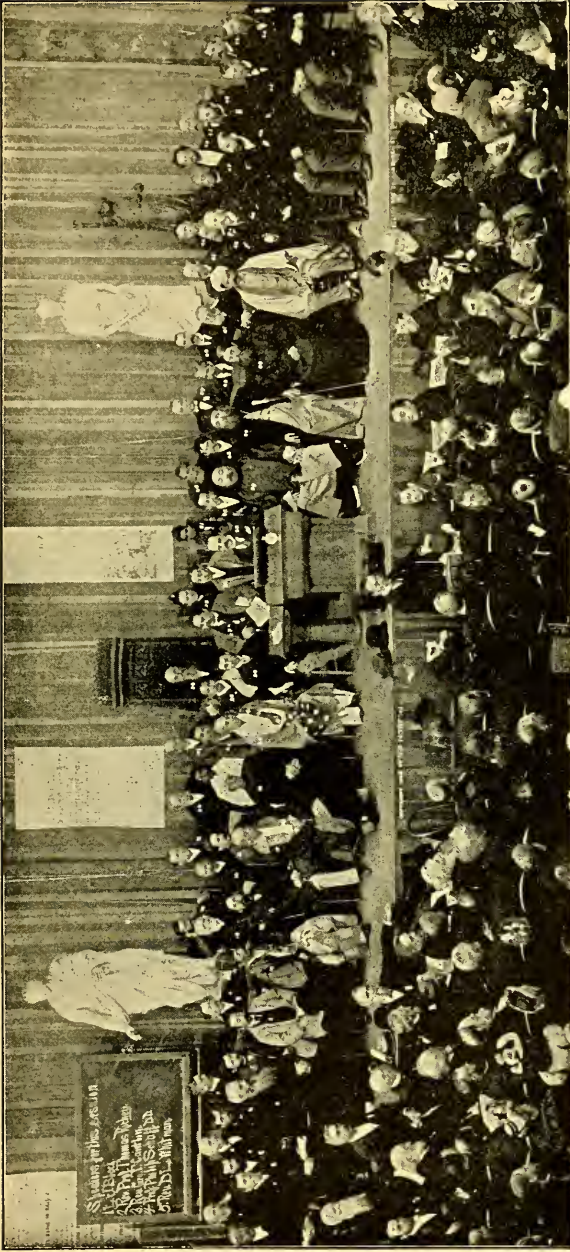
Sunday, the seventh day of the Parliament, there were sessions in the afternoon and evening, many of the delegates occupying Chicago pulpits in the morning. B. Nagarkar offered an informative paper on "The Work of Social Reform in India." He told of the social programs in which the Brahmo Somaj has been interested, emphasizing especially schools for both boys and girls. "The religion of the Brahmo Somaj," he asserted, "is essentially a religion of life—the living and life-giving religion of love to God and love to man. Its corner-stones are the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the sisterhood of woman. . . . While we advocate that every religion needs to be reformed, we also most firmly hold that every reform in order that it may be a living and lasting power for good, needs to be based on religion."

On the eighth day, H. Dharmapala read the first section of his paper, "The World's Debt to Buddha," which he concluded on the following day.

On the eleventh day, Miss Serabji gave a talk on "The Women of India."

The next day, P. C. Mozoomdar spoke again. His subject was "The World's Religious Debt to Asia." He quoted Professor Tyn-dall as once having remarked to him, "True religion once came from the East, and from the East it shall come again."

Narasima Chaira, described as a learned Brahman who spoke



SCENE AT ONE OF THE SESSIONS OF THE PARLIAMENT

perfect English, was another speaker on the program of the twelfth day. In very plain terms he declared that Christian missionary effort in India had failed, if the conversion of Hindus be considered the test of success. He acknowledged freely the noble motives of the missionaries. "The religion which a conquering nation," he continued, "with an exasperating consciousness of superiority, condescendingly offers to the conquered, must ever be disgusting to the recipient, however good it may be." He thought that the missionaries would have a better chance of success if they adopted more of the humility of Christ's apostles.

On Sunday, September 25, Vichand R. Gandhi discussed "The Ethics and History of the Jains," and B. B. Nagarkar spoke on "The Spiritual Ideas of the Brahma Somaj."

H. Dharmapala was on the program again the next day, with a paper entitled "Buddhism and Christianity." He showed the similarity, in many ways, between the moral teachings of the two religions, and referred to the evidence for the penetration of Buddhist teachings into the Greek world before the birth of Christ.

The final session, on the evening of September 27, brought to an impressive close the deliberations of the Parliament of Religions. There were brief farewell addresses by a long list of speakers.

Thus far I have avoided any mention, beyond the listing of his name among the representatives of India, of the most popular and dynamic figure in the Parliament. I have reference, of course, to the Swami Vivekananda. (In civil life his name was Narendra Nath Dutt, A. B. Vivekananda, his religious name as a Sannyasin, or Hindu monk, is Sanskrit and means "Bliss in Discrimination.")

At the sessions of the Parliament, after his first appearance, it was customary for the Chairman to keep Vivekananda until the end of the program in order to hold the audience through long and sometimes tiresome hours of reading and speaking by less gifted individuals. I have reserved Vivekananda until the close of this article, for the reason that had I mentioned him earlier, the temptation to forget about the other speakers would have been almost irresistible. To have slighted them, however, would have been unjust, as they were persons of character and ability.

Unfortunately, the space now remaining is quite inadequate for a suitable discussion of Vivekananda. But my readers will perhaps forgive me, by reason of the fact that in a previous issue of

The Open Court (December, 1925) I made this Hindu religious genius the subject of a special article. It is entitled "The Message and Influence of Vivekananda," and to it I must refer those who wish a more extensive review of the part which he played in the Parliament of Religions.

There I have told the romantic and colorful story of this modest yet eloquent and magnetic young Sannyasin, the favorite disciple of that great spirit, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, with whom his name is indissolubly linked.

I have already alluded to the fact that the year 1933 is the centenary of the death of Ram Dohan Roy, the founder of the Brahmo Somaj or Theistic Church of India. It is also the centenary of the birth of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, who died in 1886, and the seventieth anniversary of the birth of Vivekananda, whose life prematurely closed in 1902, when he was not yet forty.

Coming to Chicago without credentials, representing no special religious group, never having made a public address, and without even a prepared speech, he took the Parliament by storm. On the opening day he was seated with the other delegates on the platform. Again and again when the Chairman would have introduced him, he whispered "Let someone else speak first." At last, about five o'clock in the afternoon, he could escape no longer. I quote from my article to which I have referred:

When he was introduced, he looked out upon a yawning audience which had sat through a tiresome day of manuscript reading. He hesitated, nervously. Then a sudden access of power and eloquence came upon him, and he began to speak. As by an electric shock, the assembly became galvanized into eager attention. Before half a dozen words had left his lips, the great hall was shaking with storms of applause as in a political convention, and when his brief extemporaneous address was concluded everyone began asking, "Who is this brilliant, eloquent, handsome, magnetic young Hindu, the Swami Vivekananda?"

Probably never in any similar gathering did so short a speech create so profound an effect. It consisted of only six brief paragraphs. After saluting the audience as "Sisters and Brothers of America," he waited for two minutes until the applause subsided, and then began:

It fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome which you have given us.

I thank you in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world; I thank you in the name of the mother of religions; and I thank you in the name of the millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects.

My thanks, also, to some of the speakers on this platform who have told you that these men from far-off nations may well claim the honor of bearing to the different lands the idea of toleration. I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true.

I belong to a religion into whose sacred language, the Sanskrit, the word *exclusion* is untranslatable. I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth. We have gathered in our bosom the purest remnant of the Israelites, a remnant which came to Southern India and took refuge with us in the very year in which their holy temple was shattered to pieces by Roman tyranny. I belong to the religion which has sheltered and is still fostering the remnant of the grand Zoroastrian nation....

He went on to say:

The present convention, which is one of the most august assemblies ever held, is in itself a vindication, a declaration to the world of the wonderful doctrine preached in the *Gita*: "Whosoever comes to me, through whatsoever form I reach him, they are all struggling through paths that in the end always lead to me."

In conclusion, he pleaded for an end to sectarianism, bigotry, and fanaticism. "Had it not been for this horrible demon," he declared, "human society would be far more advanced than it is now. But its time has come, and I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honor of this convention may be the death-knell to all fanaticism, to all persecutions with the sword or the pen, and to all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal."

Vivikananda made several other addresses at the Parliament. He was one of the speakers at the closing session, and in his farewell remarks he said:

If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity, and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character.

After the Parliament adjourned, Vivekananda was so overwhelmed with demands for speaking engagements and the conducting of class groups for the study of Hindu philosophy, that he was kept in the United States two and a half years. He met leaders of every type of religious thought, from orthodox clergymen to Ingersoll, the famous agnostic, who remarked to him that if a non-Christian religious teacher had ventured to visit America fifty years earlier he probably would not have escaped with his life. Friendly crowds greeted him everywhere. He spoke in Jewish synagogues as well as in Christian churches. In Detroit, on his second visit to America, the crush at the Temple Beth-El, where he was to speak, was so great that a panic was feared. At the Harvard Graduate School of Philosophy he easily held his own under a cross-fire of questions from probably the most sophisticated audience in America.

Returning home at last by way of Europe, on reaching India he received a series of ovations that a conquering general might have envied. His work in America had, however, proved a heavy tax upon his strength. In 1899 he was seriously ill. It was hoped that a sea voyage might restore his health; accordingly, he planned another visit to America. One who saw him when he spoke in Detroit, on July 4, 1900, remarked: "He had grown so thin, almost ethereal,—not long would that great spirit be imprisoned in clay." As it turned out, the end came on that very day two years later.

On his return to India, however, he was able to devote his brief remaining time to labor in the spreading of his gospel. An institution near Calcutta still serves as a center for the carrying on of Vivekananda's work. Vedanta societies sprang up in leading American cities. The education of Indian youth, particularly of the girls, was one of the objects closest to the heart of Vivekananda. "Education," he declared, "is what they need."

Though Vivekananda did a good deal of writing, he was, like many other spiritual leaders, most at home in extemporaneous address and informal conversation. Many of his talks were reported stenographically, but it is said that he did not care to look at the transcripts when they were handed to him for revision and approval. *Raja Yoga* (The Royal Way of Attainment) seems to be the only volume of his teachings published during his lifetime with his personal coöperation. It was printed in America, as were two other volumes of his authorship: *Karma Yoga* (The Way of Work)

and *Jnana Yoga* (The Way of Knowledge). *Raja Yoga* has gone through several editions and is still in print. After Vivekananda's death, his disciples (among whom were a number of Americans and English as well as natives of India) brought out a collected memorial edition, in seven large volumes, of Vivekananda's various works, covering an extraordinarily wide range of subject matter.

To Vivekananda's mission is largely due the growing penetration of Hindu philosophy into Occidental thought and literature. The process has been much hastened by the advent of the new physics, following the discovery of atomic structure and the consequent downfall of the old materialistic conception of the universe.