CHAPTER V.

THE DIVINE CALL AND THE CHICAGO PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

I do not take into any consideration whether people accept Sri Ramakrishna's name or not, but I am ready to lay down my life to help his teachings, his life and his message spread all over the world.

I am called by the Lord for this. I have been dragged through a whole life full of crosses and tortures; I have seen the nearest and dearest die, almost of starvation: I have been ridiculed, distrusted, and have suffered for my sympathy for the very men who scoff and scorn me.

I do not care for liberation, or for devotion; I would rather go to a hundred thousand hells, "doing good to others (silently) like the spring" - this is my religion.

Yes, my own life is guided by the enthusiasm of a certain great personality, but what of that? Inspiration was never filtered out to the world through one man!

It is true I believe Ramakrishna Paramahamsa to have been inspired. But then I myself am inspired also.

I belong as much to India as to the world...What country has any special claim on me? Am I any nation's slave?

I see a greater Power than man, or God, or devil, at my back.

I do not believe in any politics. God and truth are the only politics in the world, everything else is trash.
Truth is my God, the universe my country.

Before proceeding to America, I wrote to Mother (Sri Sarada Devi) to bless me. Her blessings came and at one bound, I cleared the ocean.

1893: The Parliament of Religions is being organised for this (pointing to himself) - My mind tells me so. You will see it verified at no distant date.

Bombay: 24-5-93 - Arrangements are all ready for my starting for America on the 31st next. The Private Secretary to the Maharajah of Khetri has come here to see me off.

I want to give them dry, hard reason, softened in the sweetest syrup of love and made spicy with intense work, and cooked in the kitchen of Yoga, so that even a baby can easily digest it.

To put the Hindu ideas into English and then make out of dry philosophy and intricate Mythology and queer startling psychology, a religion which shall be easy, simple, popular, and at the same time, meet the requirements of the highest minds - is a task only those can understand who have attempted it. The abstract Advaita must become living - poetic in everyday life; out of hopelessly intricate Mythology must come concrete moral forms; and out of bewildering Yogi-ism must come the most scientific and practical psychology - and all this must be put in a form that a child may grasp it; that is my life's work.

From Bombay we reached Colombo. Our steamer remained in port nearly the whole day, and we took the
opportunity of getting off to have a look at the town. We drove through the streets and the only thing I remember was a temple in which there was a gigantic Murti (image) of the Lord Budha in a reclining posture, entering Nirvana.

The next station was Penang, which is only a strip of land along the sea in the body of the Malay Peninsula. On our way from Penang to Singapore, we had glimpses of Sumatra with its high mountains, and the captain pointed out to me several places as the favourite haunts of pirates in days gone by.

Singapore has a fine botanical garden with the most splendid collection of palms. The beautiful fan-like palm called the traveller’s palm, grows here in abundance, and the breadfruit tree is everywhere. The celebrated mangosteen is as plentiful here as mangoes in Madras, but mango is nonpareil. Singapore possesses a fine museum, too.

Hong Kong next. You feel you have reached China, the Chinese element predominates so much. All labour, all trade seems to be in their hands. And Hong Kong is real China. As soon as the steamer casts anchor, you are besieged by hundreds of Chinese boats to carry you to the land. These boats with two helms are rather peculiar. The boatman lives in the boat with his family. Almost always the wife is at the helms managing one with her hands and the other with one of her feet. And in ninety per cent cases, you find a baby tied to her back, with the hands and feet of the little Chin left free. It is a quaint sight to see the little John Chinaman dangling very
quietly from his mother's back, while she is now setting with might and main, now pushing heavy loads, or jumping with wonderful ability from boat to boat. And there is such a rush of boats and steam launches coming in and going out, Baby John is every moment put into the risk of having his little head pulverised, pigtail and all; but he does not care a fig. This busy life seems to have no charm for him, and he is quite content to learn the anatomy of a bit of rice cake given to him from time to time by the madly busy mother. The Chinese child is quite a philosopher, and calmly goes to work at an age when your Indian boy can hardly crawl on all fours.

Hong Kong is a very beautiful town. It is built on the slopes of hills and on the tops too, which are much cooler than the city. There is an almost perpendicular tramway going to the top of the hill, dragged by wire-rope and steam-power.

We remained three days at Hong Kong and went to see Canton, which is eighty miles up a river. What a scene of bustle and life! What an immense number of boats almost covering the waters! And not only those that are carrying on the trade, but hundreds of others which serve as houses to live in. And quite a lot of them so nice and big. In fact, they are big houses two or three stories high, with verandahs running round, and streets between and all floating.

We landed on a strip of ground given by the Chinese Government to foreigners to live in. Around us on both sides of the river for miles and miles is the big city - a
wilderness of human beings, pushing, struggling, surging, roaming. But, with all its population, all its activity, it is the dirtiest town I saw. Yet not a speck of filth is allowed by the Chinese to go waste; every house is a shop, people living only on the top-floor. The streets are very very narrow, so that you almost touch the shops on both sides as you pass.

I went to see several temples. The biggest in Canton is dedicated to the memory of the first Buddhistic Emperor, and the five hundred first disciples of Buddhism. The central figure is of course Buddha, and next beneath Him, is seated the Emperor, and ranging on both sides are the statues of the disciples, all beautifully carved out of wood.

From Canton back to Hong Kong, and thence to Japan. The first port we touched was Nagasaki. We landed for a few hours and drove through the town, What a contrast! The Japanese are one of the cleanliest peoples on earth. Everything is neat and tidy. Their streets are all broad, straight and regularly paved. Their little houses are cagelike, and their pine-covered ever green little hills form the background of almost every town and village. Japan is the land of the picturesque! Almost every house has a garden at the back, very nicely laid out according to Japanese fashion with small shrubs, grassplots, small artificial waters and small stone bridges.

From Nagasaki to Kobe. Here I gave up the steamer and took the land route to Yokohama, with a view to see the interior of Japan.
I have seen three big cities in the interior - Osaka, a great manufacturing town; Kioto, the former capital, and Tokyo, the present capital. Tokyo is nearly twice the size of Calcutta with nearly double the population.

The match factories are simply a sight to see.

I saw quite a lot of temples. In every temple, there are some Sanskrit Mantras written in old Bengali characters. Only a few of the priests know Sanskrit. But they are an intelligent sect.

I have heard in Japan that it was the belief of the girls of that country that their dolls would be animated if they were loved with all their heart. The Japanese girl never breaks her doll.

There in Japan, you find a fine assimilation of knowledge...They have taken everything from the Europeans, but they remain Japanese all the same, and have not turned Europeans...They are great as a nation because of their art.

And one special feature about them (the Japanese) is this: that while in Europe and elsewhere Art generally goes with dirt, Japanese Art is Art plus absolute cleanliness...The Japanese think that everything Hindu is great, and believe that India is a holy land. Japanese Buddhism is entirely different from what you see in Ceylon. It is the same as Vedanta. It is positive and theistic Buddhism.

I hold the Mahayana to be older of the two schools of Buddhism.
The theory of Maya is as old as the Rik Samhita. The Shvetashvatara Upanishad contains the word "Maya". I hold that Upanishad to be at least older than Buddhism.

I have had much light of late about Buddhism, and I am ready to prove:

1. That Shiva worship in various forms antedated the Buddhists, that the Buddhists tried to take hold of the sacred places of the Shaivas but failing in that, made new places in the precincts just as you find now at Bodh-Gaya and Sarnath (Benares).

2. The story in the Agni-Purana about Gayasura does not refer to Budha at all - as Dr. Rajendralal will have it - but simply to a pre-existing story.

3. Gaya was a place of ancestor-worship already, and foot-print worship the Buddhists copied from the Hindus.

4. That Buddha went to live on Gaya-sirsha moun-
tain proves the pre-existence of the place.

5. About Banaras, even the oldest records go to prove it as the great place of Shiva-worship etc. etc.

In China and Japan, on the walls of all temples I have observed various monosyllabic Mantrams written in big gilt letters, which approach the Bengali characters so much that you could easily make out the resemblance.

I thought, I have tried India; it is time for me to try another country. At that time the Parliament of
Religions was to be held, and someone was to be sent from India. I was just a vagabond, but I said, "If you send me, I am going. I have not much to lose, and I don’t care if I lose that." It was very difficult to find the money, but after a long struggle, they got together just enough to pay for my passage - and I came - came one or two months earlier, so that I found myself drifting about in the streets here, without knowing anybody.

That I went to America was not my doing, or your doing, but the God of India, who is guiding her destiny sent me.

In view specially of the poverty and ignorance (in India), I had no sleep. At Cape Comorin, sitting in Mother Kumari’s temple, sitting on the last bit of Indian rock - I hit upon a plan: the first thing we need is men, and the next is funds. Through the grace of the Guru, I was sure to get men. I next travelled in search of funds. I have come to America to earn money myself and then return to my country, and devote the rest of my days to the realisation of this one aim of my life:

*Metcalf (Mass. U.S.A) 20-8-1893* - From Japan I reached Vancouver. The way was by the Northern Pacific. It was very cold and I suffered much for want of warm clothing. However, I reached Vancouver anyhow, and thence went through Canada to Chicago. I remained about 12 days in Chicago. And almost everyday I used to go to the Fair. It was a tremendous affair. The lady to whom Varada Rao introduced me, and her husband, belong to the highest Chicago society, and they were so very kind to me. I took my departure from
Chicago and came to Boston. Mr. Lulloobhoy was with me up to Boston. He was very kind to me.

The expense I am bound to run into here is awful... On an average it costs me £1 everyday; a cigar costs eight annas of our money. The Americans are so rich that they spend money like water, and by forced legislation keep up the price of everything so high that no other nation on earth can approach it. Every common coolie 'earns nine or ten rupees a day, and spends it. All those rosy ideas we had before starting have melted, and I have now to fight against impossibilities. A hundred times I had a mind to go out of the country and go back to India. But, I am determined and I have a call from above; I see no way, but His eyes see. And I must stick to my guns, life or death...

Just now I am living as the guest of an old lady in a village near Boston. I accidently made her acquaintance in the railway train, and she invited me to come over and live with her. I have an advantage in living with her, saving for some time my expenditure of £1 per day; and she has the advantage of inviting her friends over here, and showing them a curio from India! And all this must be borne. Starvation, cold, hooting in the streets on account of my quaint dress, these are what I have to fight against. But, my dear boy, no great things were ever done without great labour.

This is the land of Christians, and any other influence than that is almost zero. Nor do I care a bit for the enmity of any "ists" of the world. I am here amongst
the children of the Son of Mary, and the Lord Jesus will help me. They like much the broad views of Hinduism and my love for the Prophet of Nazareth. I tell them I preach nothing against the Great One of Galilee. I only ask the Christians to take in the Great Ones of India along with the Lord Jesus, and they appreciate it.

Yesterday, Mrs. Johnson, the lady superintendent of the women's prison, was here. They don't call it prison but reformatory. It is the grandest thing I have seen in America. How the inmates are benevolently treated, you must see to believe! And, oh, how beautiful, you must see to believe! And, oh, how my heart ached to think of what we think of the poor, the low in India. They have no chance, no escape, no way to climb up. The poor, the low, the sinner in India have no friends, no help - they cannot rise, try however they may. They sink lower and lower every day, they feel the blows showered upon them by a cruel society, and they do not know whence the blow comes. They have forgotten that they too are men. Thoughtful people within the last few years have seen it, but unfortunately laid it at the door of the Hindu religion, and to them the only way of bettering is by crushing this grandest religion of the world. Hear me, my friend, I have discovered the secret through the grace of the Lord. Religion is not at fault. On the other hand, your religion teaches you that every being is only your own self multiplied. But it was the want of practical application, the want of sympathy - the want of heart. The Lord once more came to you as Buddha and taught you how to feel, how to sympathise with the poor, the miserable, the sinner, but you heard him not...
I have travelled twelve years with this load in my heart and this idea in my head. I have gone from door to door of the so-called rich and great...

With a bleeding heart I have crossed half the world to this strange land, seeking for help. The Lord is great. I know He will help me.

From the village Breezy Meadows, I am going to Boston tomorrow. I am going to speak at a big Ladies’ Club there, which is helping Ramabai...People gather by hundreds in the streets to see me. So what I want is to dress myself in a long black coat, and keep a red robe and turban to wear when I lecture. This is what they advise me to do.

In America, there are no classes in the railway except in Canada. So, I have to travel first class, as that is the only class; but I do not venture in the ‘Pullmans’. They are very comfortable - you sleep, eat, drink, even bathe in them, just as if you were in a hotel, - but they are too expensive.

It is very hard work getting into society and making yourself heard...After such a struggle, I am not going to give up easily. Rome was not built in a day...I hope everything will come right...I am trying my best to find any plank I can float upon.

Even now it is so cold in New England that everyday we have fire night and morning. Canada is still colder. I never saw snow on such low hills as there.
Metcalf, Mass: Aug. 20, 93 - I am going to speak before a large society of ladies in Salem on Monday. And that will introduce me to many more.

I do not know whether I shall go back to Chicago or not. My friends there wanted me to represent India and the gentleman whom V introduced me to is one of the Directors of the Fair. But, I refused as I would have to spend all my little stock of money in remaining more than a month in Chicago.

Salem (USA): 30-8-93 - I am going off from here today. I have received an invitation with full directions from Mr. Sanborn. So I am going to Saratoga on Monday.

Salem: Sept. 4, 93 - I have received a letter from Mr. Theles of Chicago giving the names of some of the delegates and other things about the Congress.

Mr. Sanborn has written to me to come over to Saratoga on Monday (6th) and I am going accordingly. I would stop then at a boarding house called Sanatorium.

I am the first monk to come over to these western countries. It is the first time in the history of the world that a Hindu monk crossed the ocean.

When I, a poor, unknown, friendless Sannyasin was going to America, going beyond the waters to America without any introductions or friends there, I called on the leader of the Theosophical Society. Naturally I thought, he being an American and a lover of India, perhaps, would give me a letter of introduction to some-
body there. He asked me, “Will you join my society?” “No”, I replied, “How can I? For I do not believe in most of your doctrines.” “Then, I am sorry I cannot do anything for you,” he answered. That was not paving the way for me. I reached America through the help of a few friends in Madras. I arrived in America several months before the Parliament of Religions began. The money I had with me was little, and it was soon spent. Winter approached and I had only thin summer clothes. I did not know what to do in that cold, dreary climate, for if I went to beg in the streets, the result would be that I would be sent to jail. There I was with the last few dollars in my pocket.

I sent a wire to my friends in Madras. This came to be known to the Theosophists, and one of them wrote, “Now the devil is going to die; God bless us all.” Was that paving the way for me? I would not have mentioned this, but as my countrymen wanted to know, it must come out. For three years, I have not opened my lips about these things. Silence has been my motto; but, today the thing has come out. That was not all. I saw some Theosophists in the Parliament of Religions, and I wanted to talk and mix with them. I remember the looks of scorn which were on their faces as much as to say, “What business has this worm to be here in the midst of the Gods?”

Chicago: 20–9–93 – I came here to seek aid for my improverished people, and I fully realised how difficult it was to get help for the heathen from Christians in a Christian land.
I must try to the end. First I will try in America, and if I fail, I will try in England; if I fail there, too, I can go back to India, and wait for further commands from On High.

It must be particularly remembered that the same ideals and activities do not prevail in all societies and countries. Our ignorance of this is the main cause of much of the hatred of one nation towards another. It is very harmful; it is the cause of half the uncharitableness found in the world. When I came to this country (America) and was going through the Chicago Fair, a man from behind pulled at my turban. I looked back and saw that he was a very gentlemanly looking man, neatly dressed. I spoke to him, and when he found that I knew English he became very much abashed. On another occasion, in the same Fair, another man gave me a push. When I asked him the reason, he also was ashamed and stammered out an apology saying, "Why do you dress that way!" The sympathies of these men were limited within the range of their own language and their own fashion of dress. Much of the oppression of powerful nations on weaker ones is caused by this prejudice. It dries up their fellow feeling for fellow-men. That very man who asked me why I did not dress as he did and wanted to ill-treat me because of my dress, may have been a very good man, a good father and a good citizen; but the kindliness of his nature died out as soon as he saw a man in a different dress!

Before I knew the customs of this country (America) I received such a shock when the son, in a very refined
family, got up and called the mother by name! However, I got used to that. But with us (in India) we never pronounce the name of our parents.

I belong to an Order very much like what you have in the Mendicant Friars of the Catholic Church; that is to say, we have to go about without very much in the way of dress and beg from door to door, live thereby, preach to people when they want it, sleep where we can get a place - that way we have to follow. And the rule is that the members of this Order have to call every woman "mother". Coming to the West, that old habit remained and I would say to ladies, "Yes mother," and they were horrified. I couldn't understand why they should be horrified. Later on, I discovered the reason; because that would mean that they were old!

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 any more think over or prepare myself for any lectures on a subtle subject as philosophy. Suppose I have to lecture tomorrow, all that I shall speak about will pass tonight before my eyes like so many pictures; and the next day, I put into words during my lecture all those things that I saw.

I can know them (all about my previous births) - I do know them - but I prefer not to say anything in detail.
Chicago: 2-10-93 - I dropped on the Congress in the eleventh hour, and quite unprepared, and that kept me very busy for some time. I was speaking almost everyday in the Congress. The Congress is now over.

I was so afraid to stand before that great assembly of fine speakers and thinkers from all over the world and speak, but the Lord gave me strength and I almost everyday heroically faced the audience. If I have done well, He gave me the strength for it.

Prof. Bradley was very kind to me and he always cheered me on. And oh! everybody is so kind here to me who am nothing. Glory unto Him in the highest in whose sight the poor ignorant monk from India is the same as the learned divines of this mighty land. And how the Lord is helping me every day of my life - I sometimes wish for a life of million ages to serve Him through the work dressed in rags and fed by charity.

Here were some of sweet ones from India - the tender-hearted Buddhist Dhammapal and the orator Mazoomdar.

Col. Higginson, a very broad man, was very sympathetic to me. I am going to Evanston tomorrow and hope to see Prof. Bradley there.

At first in America I was almost out of water. I was afraid I would have to give up the accustomed way of being guided by the Lord and cater for myself - and what a horrid piece of mischief and ingratitude was that. I now clearly see that He who was guiding me on the snow tops of the Himalayas and the burning plains of India is here to help me and guide me. Glory unto Him.
in the highest. So I have calmly fallen in my old ways. Somebody or other gives me a shelter and food and somebody or other comes to ask me to speak about Him and I know He sends them and mine is to obey. And then He is supplying my necessities, and His will be done.

So it is in Asia, so in Europe, so in America, so in the deserts of India, so in the rush of business in America, for is He not here also?

Oh, He is so full of fun. He is always playing - Sometimes with great big balls which we call the sun and earth, sometimes with little children, and laughing. How funny to see Him and play with Him!

When I come to Chicago, I always go to see Mr. and Mrs. Lyons, one of the noblest couples I have seen here.

**Chicago: 10-10-93** — Just now I am lecturing about Chicago, and I am doing, as I think, very well — it is ranging from 30 to 80 dollars a lecture and just now I have been so well advertised in Chicago gratis by the Parliament of Religions. Yesterday I returned from Streeter where I got 87 dollers for a lecture. I have engagements every day this week.

**26-10-93** — I am doing very well here. Almost everybody has been very kind to me, except of course the very orthodox. Many of the men brought together here from far off lands have got projects and ideas and missions to carry out. But I thought better and have given up speaking about my project entirely — because I am sure now — the heathen draws more than his project.
So I want to go to work earnestly for my own project only keeping the project in the backround and working like any other lecturer.

He who has brought me hither and has not left me yet will not leave me ever. Of course, I am too green in the business (of getting money), but would soon learn the trade. I am very popular in Chicago. So I want to stay here a little more and get money.

Tomorrow, I am going to lecture on Buddhism at the ladies' fortnightly club— which is the most influential in this City. I think the success of my project probable.

2-11-93 — At a village near Boston, I made the acquaintance of Dr. Wright, Professor of Greek in the Harvard University. He sympathised with me very much and urged upon me the necessity of going to the Parliament of Religions, which he thought would give me an introduction to the nation. As I was not acquainted with anybody, the Professor undertook to arrange everything for me, and eventually I came back to Chicago. Here the oriental and occidental delegates to the Parliament of Religions and I were all lodged in the house of a gentleman.

On the morning of the opening of the Parliament, we were all assembled in a building called the Art Palace, where one huge and other smaller temporary halls were rented for the sittings of the Parliament. Men from all nations were there. From India were Mazoomdar of the Brahmo Samaj, and Nagarkar of Bombay, Mr. Gandhi representing the Jains, and Mr. Chakravarti
representing Theosophy with Mrs. Annie Besant. Of these, Mazoomdar and I were, of course, old friends, and Chakravarti knew me by name. There was a grand procession, and we were all marshalled on to the platform.

Imagine a hall below and a huge gallery above, packed with six or seven thousand men and women representing the best culture of the country, and on the platform learned men of all the nations of the earth. And I, who never spoke in public in my life, to address this august assemblage! It was opened in great form with music and ceremony and speeches; then the delegates were introduced one by one, and they stepped up and spoke. Of course, my heart was fluttering and my tongue nearly dried up; I was so nervous, and could not venture to speak in the morning. Mazoomdar made a nice speech, Chakravarti a nicer one, and they were much applauded. They were all prepared and came with ready-made speeches. I was a fool and had none, but bowed down to Devi Saraswati, and stepped up, and Dr. Barrows introduced me. I made a short speech. I addressed the assembly as “Sisters and Brothers of America,”—a deafening applause of two minutes followed and then I proceeded and when it was finished I sat down, almost exhausted with emotion. The next day all the papers announced that my speech was the hit of the day, and I became known to the whole of America. Truly has it been said by the great commentator Sridhara “मूके करोति वाचाकम्.” “Who maketh the dumb a fluent speaker.” His name be praised! From that day I became a celebrity and the day I read my paper on Hinduism, the
hall was packed as it had never been before. I quote from one of the papers: "Ladies, ladies, ladies packing every place—filling every corner, they patiently waited and waited while the papers that separated them from Vivekananda were read,' etc. Suffice it to say that whenever I went on the platform a deafening applause would be raised for me. Nearly all the papers paid high tributes to me, and even the most bigoted had to admit that "This man with his handsome face and magnetic presence and wonderful oratory is the most prominent figure in the Parliament' etc......

I have no more wants now. I am well off, and all the money that I require to visit Europe I shall get from here...

Many of the handsomest houses in this city are open to me. All the time I am living as a guest of somebody or other.

The Lord will provide evrything for me...Day by day I am feeling that the Lord is with me, and I am trying to follow His direction. His will be done... We will do great things for the world, and that for the sake of doing good and not for name and fame.

It is a great art to press the largest amount of thought into the smallest number of words. Even,—'s paper had to be cut very short. More than a thousand papers were read, and there was no time to give to wild perorations. I had a good long time given to me over the ordinary half hour, because the most popular speakers were always put down last, to hold the audience. And
Lord bless them, what sympathy they have, and what patience! They would sit from ten o’clock in the morning to ten o’clock at night—only a recess of half an hour for a meal, and paper after paper read, most of them very trivial, but they would wait and wait to hear their favourite.

Dharmapapala of Ceylon was one of the favourites... He is a very sweet man, and we became very intimate during the Parliament.

Lecturing is a very profitable occupation in this country and sometimes pays well. Mr. Ingersoll gets five to six hundred dollars a lecture. He is the most celebrated lecturer in this country.

I spoke at the Parliament of Religions; with what effect I may quote to you from a few newspapers and magazines ready at hand. I need not be self-conceited, but I say that no Hindu made such an impression in America, and if my coming has done anything, it has done this that the Americans have come to know that India even today produces men at whose feet even the most civilized nations may learn lessons of religion and morality. Don’t you think that is enough to say for the Hindu nation sending over here their Sannyasin?...

These I quote from the journals: “But eloquent as were many of the brief speeches, no one expressed as well the spirit of the Parliament (of Religions) and its limitations as the Hindu monk. I copy his address in full but I can only suggest its effect upon the audience for he is an orator by Divine Right and his strong intelli-
gent face in its picturesque setting of yellow and orange was hardly less interesting than these earnest words and the rich rhythmical utterance he gave them" (here the speech is quoted in extenso) - New York Critique.

"He has preached in clubs and churches until his faith has become familiar to us...His culture, his eloquence and his fascinating personality have given us a new idea of Hindu civilisation... His fine, intelligent face and his deep musical voice, prepossessing one at once in his favour... He speaks without notes, presenting his facts and his conclusions with the greatest art and the most convincing sincerity, and rising often to rich inspiring eloquence" Ibid.

"Vivekananda is undoubtedly the greatest figure in the Parliament of Religions. After hearing him, we feel how foolish it is to send missionaries to this learned nation." Herald (the greatest paper here.)

I cease from quoting more lest you should think me conceited...

I am the same here as in India; only here in this highly cultured land there is an appreciation, a sympathy. There our people grudge us monks a crumb of bread, here they are ready to pay one thousand rupees a lecture and remain grateful for the instructions for ever. I am appreciated by these strangers more than I was ever in India. I can, if I will, live here all my life in the greatest luxury, but I am a Sannyasin, and "India, with all thy faults I love thee still." So, I am coming back (to India) and go on sowing the seeds of religion and progress from city to city, as I was doing so long.
Now after these quotations, do you think it was worthwhile to send a Sannyasin to America? Please do not publish it. I hate notoriety in the same manner as I did in India.

I am doing the Lord’s work, and wherever He leads I follow.

He who makes the dumb eloquent and the lame cross a mountain, He will help me. I do not care for human help. He is ready to help me in India, in America, on the North Pole, if He thinks fit. If He does not, none else can help me. Glory unto the Lord for ever and ever!

The parliament of Religions was organised with the intention of proving the superiority of Christian religion over other forms of faith, but the Philosophic religion of Hinduism was able to maintain its position notwithstanding.

The Parliament of Religions was a failure from the Christian standpoint...But the Chicago Parliament was a tremendous success for India and Indian thought. It helped on the tide of Vedanta, which is flooding the world. The American people, of course, minus the fanatical priests and Church-women, are very glad of the results of the Parliament.

Of the name by which I am now known (Swami Vivekananda), the first is descriptive of a Sannyasin, or one who formally renounces the world, and the second is the title I assumed—as is customary with all Sannyasins—on my renunciation of the world; it signifies literally “the bliss of discrimination.”
What a wonderful achievement was the world's Fair at Chicago! And that wonderful Parliament of Religions where voices from every corner of the earth expressed their religious ideas! I was also allowed to present my own ideas through the kindness of Dr. Barrows and Mr. Bonney. Mr. Bonney is such a wonderful man! Think of that mind that planned and carried out with great success that gigantic undertaking, and he, no clergyman, but a lawyer presiding over the dignitaries of all the churches, the sweet, learned, patient Mr. Bonney with all his soul speaking through his eyes.

At the Parliament of Religions (in America) there came among others, a young man, a Negro born, a real African Negro, and he made a beautiful speech. I became interested in the young man, and now and then talked to him, but could learn nothing about him. But one day in England, I met some Americans and this is what they told me, this boy was the son of a Negro chief who lived in the heart of Africa; one day another chief became angry with the father of this boy and murdered him and murdered the mother also, and they were cooked and eaten; he ordered the child also to be killed and cooked and eaten; but the boy fled, and after passing through great hardships and having travelled a distance of several hundreds of miles, he reached the sea-shore, and then he was taken into an American vessel and brought over to America. And this boy made that speech!

Do your work with one hand and touch the feet of the Lord with the other; when you have no work in the world to do, hold His feet fast to your breast with both your hands—

-Sri. RAMAKRISHNA.

"Ours not to reason why, ours but to do and die". Be of good cheer and believe that we are selected by the Lord to do great things, and we will do them—

-SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.
CHAPTER VI
MARCH OF EVENTS

As our country is poor in social virtues, so this country (America) is lacking in spirituality. I give them spirituality, and they give me money. I do not know how long I shall take to realise my end. I shall try to carry out my plans or die in the attempt. You may perhaps think what Utopian nonsense all this is! You little know what is in me...Gurudeva will show me the way out.

I have heard many stories about the American home: of liberty running into licence, of unwomanly women smashing under their feet all the peace and happiness of home-life in their mad liberty-dance, and much nonsense of that type. And now after a year's experience of American homes, of American women, how utterly false and erroneous that sort of judgement appears! American women! A hundred lives would not be sufficient to pay my deep debt of gratitude to you! I have not words enough to express my gratitude to you.

Last year I came to this country in summer, a wandering preacher of a far distant country, without name, fame, wealth, or learning to recommend me-friendless, helpless, almost in a state of destitution. And American women befriended me, gave me shelter and food; took me to their homes and treated me as their own son, their own brother. They stood as my friend even when their own priests were trying to persuade them to give up the "dangerous heathen"-even when
day after day their best friends had told them not to stand by this "unknown foreigner, maybe, of dangerous character." But they are better judges of character and soul—for it is the pure mirror that catches the reflection.

And how many beautiful homes I have seen, how many mothers whose purity of character, whose unselfish love for their children are beyond expression, how many daughters and pure maidens, "pure as the icicle on Diana's temple" and withal with much culture, education and spirituality in the highest sense! Is America then full of only wingless angels in the shape of women? There is good and bad everywhere true; but a nation is not to be judged by its weaklings, but by the good, the noble and the pure.

And then the modern American women—I admire their broad and liberal minds.

There are thousands of women here (in America) whose minds are as pure and white as the snow of this country. And look at our girls (of India), becoming mothers below their teens!!

I have travelled all over India, and seen this country too. "Admist all the scriptures and Puranas, know this statement of Vyasa to be true, that doing good to others conduces to merit, and doing harm to them leads to sin."

"Fifty years ago," said Ingersoll to me, "You would have been hanged in this country if you had come to preach. You would have been burnt alive or you would have been stoned out of the villages."
When I came into this country (America), I was surprised to meet so many liberal men and women. But after the Parliament of Religions, a great Presbyterian paper came out and gave me the benefit of a seething article. This the editor called enthusiasm.

I pity the Hindu who does not see the beauty in Jesus Christ's character. I pity the Christian who does not reverence the Hindu Christ.

_Detroit: 12-3-94_ – I am now living with Mr. Palmer. He is a very nice gentleman... I spoke at an opera house for two hours and a half. People were very much pleased. I am going to Boston and New York... I am not going to lecture in Michigan. Mr. Holden tried to persuade me this morning to lecture in Michigan... To tell the truth the more I am getting popularity and facility in speaking the more I am getting fed up. My last address was the best I ever delivered. Mr. Palmer was in ecstasies and the audience remained almost spell-bound, so much so that it was after the lecture that I found I had spoken so long.

_15-3-94_ – The funniest thing said about me here was in one of the papers which said, "The cyclonic Hindu has come, and is a guest with Mr. Palmer.........". The first lecture was not properly managed, the cost of the hall being 150 dollars.

I am pulling on well with old Palmer. He is a very jolly, good old man. I got only 127 dollars by my last lecture. I am going to speak again in Detroit on Monday.
Mr. Palmer makes me laugh the whole day.

This mixing with hundreds of varieties of the human animals has disturbed me. I will tell you what is to my taste; I cannot write and I cannot speak, but I can think deeply, and when I am heated, can speak fire. It should be, however, to a select, a very select few.

Just because this assertion of independence, this proving that man is not a machine, is the essence of all religious thought, it is impossible to think of it in the routine mechanical way. It is this tendency to bring everything down to the level of a machine that has given the West its wonderful prosperity. And it is this which has driven away all religion from its doors. Even the little that is left, the West has reduced to a systematic drill.

**Detroit: 17-3-94** — I have returned today to Mrs. Bagley's as she was very sorry that I should remain so long with Mr. Palmer. In Palmer's house, there was real 'good time'. He is a real jovial heartwhole fellow.

**18-3-94** — There was a letter from my brethren at Calcutta and it was written on the occasion of a private invitation to celebrate the birthday of my Master. The letter says that Mazoomdar has gone back to Calcutta and is preaching that Vivekananda is committing every sin under the sun in America... This is your America's wonderful spiritual man! It is not their fault; until one is really spiritual, that is, until one has got a real insight into the nature of one's own soul and has got a glimpse of the world of the soul, one cannot
distinguish chaff from seed, tall talk from depth and so on. I am sorry for poor Mazomdar that he should stoop so low! Lord bless the old boy!

The address inside the letter is in English and is my old, old name, written by a companion of my child-hood who has also taken orders. It is a very poetic name. That written in the letter is an abbreviation, the full name being Narendra, meaning the "Chief of men" "nara" means man and "Indra" stands for ruler in chief - very ludicrous, isn't it? But such are the names in our country; we cannot help, but I am glad I have given that up.

Chicago: 19-3-94 – I have no wants in this country, but mendicancy has no vogue here and I have to labour, that is, lecture in places. It is as cold here as it is hot. The summer is not a bit less hot than at Calcutta. And how to describe the cold in winter! The whole country is covered with snow, three or four feet deep, nay, six or seven feet, at places! In the southern parts there is no snow. Snow, however, is a thing of little consideration here. For it snows when the mercury stands at 32 degrees F. In Calcutta, it scarcely comes down to 60 degrees, and it rarely approaches zero in England. But here, your mercury sinks to minus 4 or 5 degrees. In Canada, in the north, mercury becomes condensed, when they have to use the alcohol thermometer.

When it is too cold, that is, when the mercury stands even below 20 deg. F., it does not snow. I used to think that it must be an exceedingly cold day on which the snow falls. But it is not so; it snows on
comparatively warm days. Extreme cold produces a sort of intoxication; no carriages would run; only the sledge, which is without wheels, slides on the ground! Everything is frozen stiff - even an elephant can walk on rivers and canals and lakes. The massive Falls of Niagara, of such tremendous velocity, are frozen to marble!!! But I am doing nicely. I was a little afraid at first, but necessity makes me travel by rail to the borders of Canada one day, and the next day finds me lecturing in South America! The carriages are kept quite warm, - like your own room, by means of steam pipes, and all round are masses of snow, spotlessly white, - oh the beauty of it!

I was mortally afraid that my nose and ears would fall off, but to this day they are all right. I have to go out, however, dressed in a heap of warm clothing surmounted by a furcoat. No sooner you breathe out than the breath freezes among the beard and moustache! Notwithstanding all this, the fun of it is that they won't drink water without putting a lump of ice into it. This is because it is warm indoors. Every room and the staircase are kept warm by steam pipes. They are first and foremost in arts and appliances, foremost in enjoyment and luxury, foremost in making money, and foremost in spending it. The daily wages of a coolie are six rupees as also are those of a servant; you cannot hire a cab for less than three rupees, nor get a cigar for less than four annas. A decent pair of shoes costs twenty-four rupees and a suit, rupees five hundred. As they earn, so they spend. A lecture fetches two hundred to three thousand rupees. I have got up to five hundred.
Of course, now I am in the very heyday of fortune. They like me, and thousands of people come to hear me speak.

As it pleased the Lord, I met here Mr. M-. He was very cordial at first, but when the whole Chicago population began to flock to me in overwhelming numbers, then grew the canker in his mind!... The priests tried their utmost to snub me. But the Guru is with me, what could anybody do? And the whole American nation loves and respects me, pays my expenses, and reveres me as a Guru. It was not in the power of the priests to do anything against me. Moreover, they are a nation of scholars.......What they want is philosophy, learning and empty talk will no more do.

Nowhere in the world are women like those of this country. How pure, independent, self-relying and kind-hearted! It is the women who are the life and soul of this country. All learning and culture are centred in them.

This is a very funny country. It is now summer—this morning it was as hot as April in Bengal, but now it is as cold as February at Allahabad! So much fluctuation within four hours! The hotels of this country beggar description. For instance there is a hotel in New York where a room can be hired for up to Rs. 5,000—a day, excluding board charges. —Not even in Europe is there a country like this in point of luxury. It is indeed the richest country in the world. I seldom live in hotels, but am mostly the guest of big people here. To them I am a widely known man. The whole country knows me now, so wherever I go they receive me with open arms into their homes. Mr. H's home is my centre in Chicago
I scarcely find a family so highly pure and kind. Oh, how wonderfully kind they are!

As for lectures and so forth, I don't prepare them beforehand. Only one I wrote out. The rest I deliver off-hand, whatever comes to my lips—Gurudeva backs me up. Once at Detroit I held forth for three hours at a stretch. Sometimes I myself wonder at my own achievement—to think that there was such stuff in this pate!

A friend criticised the use of European terms of philosophy and religion in my addresses...I would have been very glad to use Sanskrit terms; it would have been much more easy, as being the only perfect vehicle of religious thought. But the friend forgets that I was addressing an audience of western people; and although a certain Indian Missionary declared that the Hindus had forgotten the meaning of their Sanskrit books, and that it was the missionaries who unearthed the meaning, I could not find one in that large concourse of Missionaries who could understand a line in Sanskrit—and yet some of them read learned papers criticising the Vedas, and all the sacred sources of the Hindu religion!

**Detroit: 30-3-94**—I am very glad to receive the Khetri letter...He (the Raja) wants some newspaper clippings...Mrs. Breed wrote to me a stiff burning letter first, and then I got a telegram from her inviting me to be her guest for a week. Before this, I got a letter from Mrs. Smith of New York writing on her behalf and another lady Miss Helen Gould and another Dr., asking me to come over to New York. As the Lynn
Club wants me on the 17th of next month. I am going to New York first and come in time for their meeting at Lynn.

Next summer if I do not go away and Mrs. Bagley insists I should not— I may go to Annisquam where Mrs. Bagley has engaged a nice house. Mrs. Bagley is a very spiritual lady and Mr. Palmer a spiritual gentleman but very good...I am all right in nice health of body and mind...Mrs. Sherman has presented me with a lot of things, amongst which is a nail-set and letter holder and a little satchel, etc. etc. Although I objected, especially to the nail-set, as very dudish with mother of pearl handles. she insisted and I had to take them, though I do not know what to do with that brushing instrument. Lord bless them all! She gave me one advice—never to wear this Afrikee dress in society. Now I am a society man! Lord! what comes next? Long life brings queer experiences!

**New York: 9-4-94**—I have lectured in many of the big towns of America...I have made a good many friends here, some of them very influential. Of course, the orthodox clergymen are against me and seeing that it is not easy to grapple with me, they try to hinder, abuse and vilify me in every way...Lord bless them!

I believe that the Satya-yuga will come when there will be one caste, one Veda, and peace and harmony. This idea of Satya-yuga is what would revivify India.

I have an old mother. She has suffered much all her life and in the midst of all she could bear to give me for the service of God and man.
The cat is out of the bag—without my seeking at all. And who is the editor of one of our (Indian) papers which praises me so much, and thanks God that I came to America to represent Hinduism? Mazoomdar's cousin! Poor Mazoomdar—he has injured his cause by telling lies through jealousy. Lord knows I never attempted any defence.

I had a very good time in Boston at Mrs. Breed's and saw Prof. Wright. I am going to Boston again. The tailor is making my new gown; I am going to speak at Cambridge University (Harvard) and would be the guest of prof. Wright there. They write grand welcomes in the Boston papers inviting me.

I spoke last night at the Waldorf hotel. Mrs. Smith sold tickets at $2 each, I had a full hall which by the way was a small one.

I made a hundred dollars at Lynn which I do not send (to India) because I have to make my new gown and other nonsense.

Do not expect to make any money at Boston. Still I must touch the brain of America and stir it up if I can.

2nd May 94: — I could not find the exact orange color of my coat here; so I have been obliged to satisfy myself with the next best; a cardinal red with more of yellow. The coat will be ready in a few days.

Got about 70 the other day by lecturing at Waldorf and hope to get some more by tomorrow's lecture.

From 7th to 18th there are engagements in Boston but they pay very little.
In the evening, I am going to speak at a vegetarian dinner!

New York: April 26, 94 – Well, I am a vegetarian for all that, because I prefer it when I can get it. I have another invitation to lunch with Lyman Abbot day after tomorrow. After all, I am having very nice time, and hope to have very nice time in Boston—only that nasty, nasty lecturing: disgusting. However, as soon as 19th is over—one leap from Boston to Chicago and then I will have a long long breath and rest and rest for two weeks. I will simply sit down and talk and talk and smoke.

New York people are very good—only more money than brains.

I am going to speak to the students of the Harvard University. Three lectures at Boston, 3 at Harvard—all arranged by Mrs. Breed. They are arranging something here too, so that I will, on my way to Chicago, come to New York once more—give them a few hard raps and pocket the boodle and fly to Chicago!


Just think, with all the claims to civilisation in this country (America), on one occasion I was refused a chair to sit on, because I was a Hindu!

Chicago – May 24-94 – Had I not the “fad” in my head I would never have come over here. And it was with a hope that it would help my cause that I joined the Parliament of Religions, having always refused it when
our people wanted to send me for it. I came over telling them—"that may or may not join that assembly-and you may send over if you like." They sent me over leaving me quite free. I do not care for the attempts of the old Missionary, but the fever of jealousy which attacked Mazoomdar gave me a terrible shock, and I pray that he would know better—for he is a great and good man who has tried all his life to be good. But this proves one of my Master's sayings: "live in a room covered with black soot; however careful you may be, some spots must stick to your clothes."

So however one may try to be good and holy—so long he is in the world—some part of his nature must gravitate downwards.

I was never a missionary nor ever would be one—my place is in the Himalayas. I have satisfied myself so far that I can with a full conscience say, God—I saw terrible misery among my brethren. I searched and discovered the way out of it; tried my best to apply the remedy but failed—so Thy will be done."

24-5-94: "Some would call you a saint, some a chandala, some a lunatic; others a demon; go on then straight to thy work without heeding any," thus sayeth one of our great Sannyasins, an old Emperor of India, King Bhartrihari who joined the Order in old times.

Chicago: 28-5-94: I was whirling to and fro from New York to Boston. I do not know when I am going back to India. It is in the hands of Him who is at my back directing me.
I have done a good deal of lecturing here......The expenses here are terrible.

18-6-94: I am going to New York in a week. Mrs. Bagley seems to be unsettled by that article in the Boston paper against me. She sent me over a copy from Detroit, and has ceased correspondence with me. Lord bless her; she has been very kind to me.

Although there is much public appreciation of my work, it is thoroughly uncongenial and demoralising to me.

20-6-94: The backbiters, I must tell you, had not indirectly benefited me; on the other hand, they had injured me immensely in view of the fact that our Hindu people did not move a finger to tell the Americans that I represented them. Did our people send some words thanking the American people for their kindness to me and stating that I was representing them?...No, they told the American people that I had donned the Sannyasin’s garb only in America and that I was a cheat, bare and simple. So far as reception went, it had no effect on the American nation; but so far as helping me with funds went, it had a terrible effect in making them take off their helping hands from me. And it is one year since I have been here, and not one man of note from India had thought it fit to make the Americans know that I am no cheat. There again the missionaries are always seeking for something against me and they are busy picking up anything said against me by the Christian papers of India and publishing it here...the people here
Swami Vivekananda
Round him (the great Ramakrishna Paramahamsa) this band (of young educated Sannyasins) is slowly gathering. They will do the work...This requires an organisation, money - a little at least to set the wheel in motion...Who would have given us money in India? So, I crossed over to America. I begged all the money from the poor, and the offers of the rich I would not accept because they could not understand my ideas. Now lecturing for a year in this country, I could not succeed at all (of course, I have no wants for myself) in my plan of raising some funds for setting up my work. First this year is a bad year in America; thousands of their poor are without work. Secondly, the missionaries and the—try to thwart all my views. Thirdly; a year has rolled by, and our countrymen could not even do so much for me as to say to the American people that I was a real Sannyasin and no cheat, and that I represented the Hindu religion. Even this much, the expenditure of a few words, they could not do! (yet) I love them; He who has been with me through hills and dales, through deserts or forest, will be with me, I hope.

I am sincere to the backbone, and my greatest fault is that I love my country only to well.

23-6-94: Mrs. Potter Palmer is the chief lady of the United States. She was the lady President of the World’s Fair. She is much interested in raising the women of the world and is at the head of a big organisation for women. She is a particular friend of Lady Dufferin and has been entertained by the Royalties of Europe on account of her wealth and position. She has been very kind to me in this country.
Chicago: 29-6-94 - I am continually travelling. In Chicago there is a friend whose house is my headquarters.

Now as to my prospects here - it is well nigh zero. Why, because although I had the best purpose it has been made null and void by these causes. All that I get about India is from Madras letters. The letters say again and again how I am being praised in India. But, I never saw a single Indian paper writing about me except the three square inches sent to me by Alasinga. On the other hand, everything that is said by Christians in India, is sedulously gathered by the missionaries and regularly published and they go from door to door to make my friends give me up. They have succeeded only too well, for there is not one word for me from India. Indian Hindu papers may laud me to the skies, but not a word of that ever came to America; so that many people in this country think me a fraud. In the face of the missionaries and with the jealousy of the Hindus here to back them, I have not a word to say. I now think it was foolish of me to go to the Parliament on the strength of the Madras boys. They are boys after all. Of course I am eternally obliged to them, but they are after all enthusiastic young men without any executive abilities. I came here without credentials. How else to show that I am not a fraud in the face of the missionaries and the B - S - ?... There has not been one voice for me in one year and every one against me. More than two months ago I wrote to Alasinga about this. He did not even answer my letter. I am afraid his heart has grown lukewarm... On the other hand, my brethren
foolishly talk nonsense about Keshab Sen...Oh!, if only I had one man of some true abilities and brains to back me in India! But His will be done. I stand a fraud in this country. It was my foolishness to go to the Parliament without any credentials, hoping that there would be many for me. I have to work it out slowly.

Every moment I expected something from India. No, it never came. Last two months especially I was in torture every moment. No, not even a newspaper from India! My friends waited, waited month after month; nothing came, not a voice. Many consequently grew cold and at last gave me up. But, it is the punishment for relying upon man.

My thanks eternal to the Madras young men...May the Lord bless them for ever........I am praying always for their welfare and am I not in the least displeased with them, but I am not pleased with myself. I committed a terrible error of calculating upon others’ help-once in my life-and I have paid for it. It was my fault and not theirs. Lord bless all the Madras people. I have launched my boat in the waves, come what may. Regarding my brutal criticisms, I have really no right to make them...I must bear my own Karma and that without a murmur.

New York: July 94 - I came yesterday to this place, and shall remain here a few days. I did not receive any “Interior” for which I am glad. I want to keep aloof from rousing bad feelings towards these “sweet Christian gentlemen” in my heart........I do not care the least for the gambols these men play, seeing as I do through the
insincerity, the hypocrisy and love of self and name that is the only motive power in these men.

I am bearing the heat very well here. I had an invitation to Swamscott on the sea from a very rich lady whose acquaintance I made last winter in New York, but I declined with thanks. I am very careful now to take the hospitality of anybody here, especially rich. I had a few other invitations from some very rich people here. I refused; I have by this time seen the whole business through.

New York: 9-7-94 - Glory upto Jagadamba (the Divine Mother)! I have gained beyond expectations. The prophet has been honoured and with a vengeance. I am weeping like a child at His mercy - He never leaves His servant; ...the printed things are coming to the American people. The names there are the very flower of our country. The President was the chief nobleman of Calcutta and the other man Mahesh Chandra Nyayaratna is the Principal of the Sanskrit College and the chief Brahmin in all India and recognised by the Government as such. What a rogue am I that in the face of such mercies sometimes faith totters. Seeing every moment that I am in His hands, still the mind sometimes gets despondent. There is a God - a Father - a Mother who never leaves His children, never, never. Put uncanny theories aside and becoming children take refuge in Him. I cannot write more - I am weeping like a woman.

Blessed, blessed art Thou, Lord God of my soul!

U.S.A. : 11-7-94 - We will do great things yet! Last year, I only sowed the seeds; this year, I mean to reap.
In the Detroit lecture I got $900, i.e. Rs. 2,700. In other lectures, I earned in one $2,500, i.e. Rs. 7,500, in one hour, but got only 200 dollars! I was cheated by a roguish lecture bureau. I have given them up.

Swampscott: 26-7-94 – I had a beautiful letter from sister Mary. Sister Jeany can jump and run and play and swear like a devil and talk slang at the rate of 500 a minute; only she does not much care for religion, only a little. She is gone home today and I am going to Greenacre. I had been to see Mrs. Breed, Mrs. Stone was there, with whom is residing Mrs. Pullman and all the golden bugs, my old friends hereabouts. They are kind as usual. On my way back from Greenacre I am going to Annisquam to see Mrs. Bagley for a few days. Darn it, I forget everything. I had duckings in the sea like a fish. I am enjoying every bit of it. How nice and cool it is here, and it increases a hundredfold when I think about the gasping, sizzling, boiling, frying four old maids (the Hale Sisters), and how cool and nice I am here. Whooooo!

Miss Philips has a beautiful place somewhere in N. Y. State - mountain, lake, river, forest altogether - what more? I am going to make a Himalayas there and start a monastery as sure as I am living - I am not going to leave this country without throwing one more apple of discord into this already roaring, kicking, mad whirlpool of American religion.

Greenacre Inn, Eliot, Maine: 26-7-94 – This is a big inn and farm house where the Christian Scientists are holding a session. Last spring in New York, I was invited
by the lady projector of the meeting to come here, and here I am. It is a beautiful and cool place, no doubt, and many of my old friends of Chicago are here. Mrs. Mills, Miss Stockam and several other ladies and gentlemen live in tents which they have pitched on the open ground by the river. They have a lively time and sometimes all of them wear what you call the scientific dress the whole day. They have lectures almost everyday. One Mr. Colville from Boston is here; he speaks every day, it is said, under spirit control. The Editor (?) of the University Truth has settled herself down here. She is conducting religious services and holding classes to heal all manner of diseases, and very soon I expect them to be giving eyes to the blind, and the like! After all, it is a queer gathering. They do not care much about social laws and are quite free and happy. Mrs. Mills is quite brilliant and so are many other ladies...A very cultured lady from Detroit is going to take me to an Island fifteen miles into the sea. I hope we shall have a nice time... I may go over to Annisquam from here, I suppose. This is a beautiful and nice place and the bathing is splendid. Cora Stockham has made a bathing dress for me, and I am having as good a time in the water as a duck - this is delicious even for the denizens of Mudville.../

Here is Mr. Wood of Boston, who is one of the great lights of the Christian Science sect. But, he objects to belong to the sect of Mrs. Whirlpool. So he calls himself a mental healer of meta-physical-chemico-physico-religiosic what-not! Yesterday, there was a tremendous cyclone which gave a good "treatment" to the tents. The big tent under which they had the lectures, had developed
so much spirituality under the “treatment” that it entirely disappeared from mortal gaze and about two hundred chairs were dancing about the grounds under spiritual ecstasy! Mrs. Figs takes a class every morning; and Mrs. Mills is jumping all about the place - they are all in high spirits. I am especially glad for Cora, for they suffered a good deal last winter and a little hilarity would do her good. You will be astounded with the liberty they enjoy in the camps, but they are very good and pure people there - a little erratic, that is all.

I shall be here till Saturday next... The other night the camp people went to sleep beneath a pine tree under which I sit every morning a la Hindu and talk to them. Of course, I went with them, and we had a nice night under the stars, sleeping on the lap of mother earth, and I enjoyed every bit of it. I cannot describe that night’s glories - after a year of brutal life that I have led, to sleep on the ground, to meditate under the tree in the forest! The inn people are more or less well-to-do-, and the camp people are healthy, young, sincere and holy men and women. I teach them “Shivoham” “Shivoham” and they all repeat it, innocent and pure as they are and brave beyond all bounds. And so I am happy and glorified.

Thank God for making me poor, thank God for making these children in the tents poor. The Dudes and Dudines are in the Hotel, but iron-bound nerves and souls of triple steel and spirits of fire are in the camp. If you had seen them yesterday, when the rain was falling in torrents and the cyclone was overturning everything, hanging by their tent strings to keep them
from being blown down, and standing in the majesty of their souls - these brave ones - it would have done your hearts good - I will go a hundred miles to see the like of them. Lord bless them.

"Sweet one! Many people offer to You many things. I am poor-but I have the body, mind and soul. I give them over to you. Deign to accept, Lord of the Universe, and refuse them not." So have I given over my life and soul once for all. One thing—they are a dry sort of people here. They do not understand "Madhava", the Sweet One. They are either intellectual or go after faith cure, table turning, witchcraft, etc. etc. Nowhere have I heard so much about "love, life and liberty" as in this country, but no where it is less understood. Here God is either a terror or a healing power, vibration, and so forth. Lord bless their souls! And these parrots talk day and night of love and love and love!

Greenacre: 11-8-94 - I have been all this time in Greenacre. I enjoyed this place very much. They have been all very kind to me. One Chicago lady, Mrs. Pratt of Kenilworth, wanted to give me $500. She became so much interested in me; but I refused. She has made me promise that I would send word to her whenever I was in need of money, which I hope the Lord will never put me in. His help alone is sufficient to me.

On Sunday I am going to lecture at Plymouth at the "Sympathy of Religions" meetings of Col. Higginson... Miss Howe has been so kind to me. I think I am going to Fishkill from Plymouth, where I will be only a couple of days...I will be in New York next fall. New York is
a grand and good place. The New York people have a tenacity of purpose unknown in any other city. I had a letter from Mrs. Potter Palmer asking me to see her in August. She is a very gracious and kind lady. There is my friend Dr. Janes of New York, President of the Ethical Cultural Society, who has begun his lectures. I must go to hear him. He and I agree so much.

Annisquam: 20-8-94 - I am with the Bangleys once more. They are kind as usual. Professor Wright was not here. But he came day before yesterday and we have very nice time together. Mr. Bradley of Evanston was here. His sister-in-law had me sit for a picture several days and had painted me. I had some very fine boating and one evening overturned the boat and had a good drenching, clothes and all...

From here I think I will go back to New York. Or I may go to Boston to Mrs. Ole Bull, widow of the great violinist of this country. She is a very spiritual lady. She lives in Cambridge and has a fine big parlour made of woodwork brought all the way from India. She wants me to come over to her any time and use her parlour for lectures.

I have kept pretty good health all the time and hope to do in the future. I had no occasion yet to draw on my reserve, yet I am rolling on pretty fair. And I have given up all money making schemes and will be quite satisfied with a bite and a shed and will work on.

31-8-94: The letter from the Madras people was published in yesterday's "Boston Transcript"...I shall be
here till Tuesday next at least, on which day I am going to lecture here in Annisquam.

The greatest difficulty with me is to keep or even to touch money. It is disgusting and debasing...I have friends here who take care of all my monetary concerns.

**Boston: 13-9-94** — I have been in this hotel (Hotel Bellevue, Beacon St.) for about a week. I will remain in Boston some time yet...I am vagabondizing. I was very much amused the other day to read Abe Hue’s description of the vagabond lamas of Tibet—a true picture of our fraternity. He says they are queer people. They come when they will, sit at everybody’s table, invitation or no invitaion, live where they will and go where they will. There is not a mountain they have not climbed, not a river they have not crossed, not a language they do not talk in. He thinks that God must have put into them a part of that energy which makes the planets go round and round eternally. Today this vagabond lama was seized with a desire of going right along, scribbling and so I walked down and entering a store brought all sorts of writing materials and a beautiful portfolio which shuts with a clasp and has even a little wooden inkstand...Last month, I had mail enough from India and am greatly delighted with my countrymen at their generous appreciation of my work. Good enough for them. Prof. Wright, his wife and children were as good as ever. Words cannot express my gratitude to them.

Everything so far is not going bad with me, except that I had a bad cold. Now I think the fellow is gone.
This time I tried Christian Science for insomnia and really found it worked very well.

*Hotel Belle Vue, Boston: 19-9-94* — I am at present lecturing in several places in Boston. What I want is to get a place where I can sit down and write down my thoughts. I had enough of speaking; now I want to write. I think I will have to go to New York for it Mrs. Guernsey was so kind to me and she is ever willing to help me. I think I will go to her and sit down and write my book.

*U.S.A.: 21-9-94* — I have been continuously travelling from place to place and working incessently, giving lectures and holding classes.

I have made some nice friends here amongst the liberal people, and a few amongst the orthodox... Too much work is making me nervous. The giving of too many public lectures and constant hurry have brought on this nervousness...

*New York: 25-9-94* — Here in summer they go to the sea side—I also did the same. They have got almost a mania for boating and yatching. The yacht is a kind of light vessel which everyone, young and old who has the means, possesses. They set sail in them every day to the sea and return home to eat, drink and dance—while music continues day and night. Pianos render it a botheration to stay indoors!

I shall now tell something of the Hales. Hale and his wife are an old couple, having two daughters, two nieces and a son. The son lives abroad where he earns a living.
The daughters live at home. In this country relationship is through the girls. The son marries and no longer belongs to the family, but the daughter’s husband pays frequent visits to his father-in-laws’s house. They say,

“Son is son till he gets a wife,
The daughter is daughter all her life.”

All the four are young and not yet married. Marriage is a very troublesome business here. In the first place, one must have a husband after one’s heart. Secondly, he must be a moneyed man...They will probably live unmarried; besides they are now full of ‘renunciation’ through my contact and are busy with thoughts of Brahman!

The two daughters are blondes, that is, have golden hair, while the two nieces are brunettes, that is of dark hair. They know all sorts of occupations. The nieces are not so rich, they conduct a kindergarten school, but the daughters do not earn. Many girls of this country earn their living. Nobody depends upon others. Even millionaires’ sons earn their living, but they marry and have separate establishments of their own. The daughters call me brother, and I address their mother as mother. All my things are at their places, and they look after them, wherever I may go. Here the boys go in search of a living while quite young, and the girls are educated in the universities. So, you will find that in a meeting there will be ninety-nine per cent girls. The boys are nowhere in comparison with them.

There are a good many spiritualists in this country. The medium is one who induces the spirit. He goes behind a screen, and out of the latter come ghosts, of all
sizes and all colours. I have witnessed some cases, but they seemed to be a hoax. I shall test some more before I come to a final conclusion. Many of the spiritualists respect me.

Next comes Christian Science. They form the most influential party, nowadays, figuring everywhere. They are spreading by leaps and bounds, and causing heart-burn to the orthodox. They are Vedantins; I mean, they have picked up a few doctrines of the Advaita and grafted them upon the Bible. And they cure diseases by proclaiming, "अमेरिकात्याविद्या" "I am He" "I am He" - through strength of mind. They all admire me highly.

Nowadays the orthodox section of this country are crying for help. "Devil Worship" is but a thing of the past. They are mortally afraid of me and exclaim, "What a pest! Thousands of men and women follow him! He is going to root out orthodoxy!" Well, the torch has been applied and the conflagration that has set in through the grace of the Guru shall not be put out. In course of time, the bigots will have their breath knocked out of them.

The Theosophists have not much power. But, they too are dead against the orthodox section.

This Christian Science is exactly like our Kartabhaja sect (an offshoot of Vaishnavism during its degeneracy in Bengal). Say, "I have no diseases," and you are whole; and say, "I am He" - अमेरिकात्याविद्या - and you are quits - be at large. This is a thoroughly materialistic country. The people of this Christain land will recognise religion if only you can cure diseases, work miracles, and open up
avenues to money, and understand little of any thing else. But there are honourable exceptions.

People here have found a new type of man in me. Even the orthodox are at their wit’s end. And people are now looking up to me with an eye of reverence. Is there a greater strength than that of Brahmacharyam—purity, my boy?

...They are good-natured, kind, and truthful. All is right with them, but that enjoyment is their God. It is a country where money flows like a river, with beauty as the ripple and learning its waves, and which rolls in luxury.

They look with veneration upon women, who play a most prominent part in their lives...Well, I am almost at my wit's end to see the women of this country! They take me to the shops and everywhere, as if I were a child. They do all sorts of work— I cannot do even a sixteenth part of what they do.

**Boston: 26-9-94** I will have to go back to Melrose on Saturday and remain there till Monday.

I am busy writing letters to India last few days. I will remain a few days more in Boston.

**U.S.A- 27-9-94** - One thing I find in the book of my speeches and sayings published in Calcutta. Some of them are printed in such a way as to savour of political views; whereas I am no politician, or political agitator. I care only for the spirit - when that is right everything will be righted by itself...No political significance should be ever attached falsely to any of my writings or sayings.
What nonsense!...I heard that Rev. Kali Charan Banerji in a lecture to Christian missionaries said that I was a political delegate. This is their trick! I have said a few harsh words in honest criticism of Christian Governments in general, but that does not mean that I care for, or have any connection with politics or that sort of thing...

Uniform silence is all my answer to my detractors...

This nonsense of public life and newspaper blazoning has disgusted me thoroughly. I long to go back to the Himalayan quiet.

**Chicago. Sept. 94** - I have been travelling all over this country all this time and seeing everything. I have come to this conclusion that there is only one country in the world which understands religion—it is India; with all their faults, the Hindus are shoulders above and ahead of all other nations in morality and spirituality......I have seen enough of this country. I think, and so soon will go over to Europe and then to India.

**Baltimore. Oct. 94** - I am here now. From here I go to Washington, thence to Philadelphia and then to New York.

**Washington:** I am going to talk here today, tomorrow at Baltimore, then again Monday at Baltimore and Tuesday at Washington again. So, I will be in Philadelphia in a few days after that. I shall be in Philadelphia only to see Prof. Wright, and then I go to New York and run for a little while between New York and Boston and then go to Chicago, via Detroit, and then “whist”... as Senator Palmer says, to England.
I have been very well treated here and am doing very well. There is nothing extraordinary, in the meantime, except that I got vexed at getting loads of newspapers from India; so after sending a cartload to Mother Church and another to Mrs. Guernsey, I had to write to them to stop sending their newspapers. I have had "boom" enough in India. Alasinga writes that every village all over the country now has heard of of me. Well, the old peace is gone for ever and no rest anywhere from heretofore. These newspapers of India will be my death, I am sure...Lord bless them; it was all my foolery. I really came here to raise a little money secretly and go over but was caught in the trap and now no more of a reserved life.

23-10-94: I have become one of their own teachers. They all like me and my teachings...I travel all over the country from one place to another, as was my habit in India, preaching and teaching. Thousands and thousands have listened to me and taken my ideas in a very kindly spirit. It is the most expensive country, but the Lord provides for me everywhere I go.

26-10-94: I am enjoying Baltimore and Washington very much. I will go hence to Philadelphia.

The lady with whom I am staying is Mrs. Totten, a niece of Miss Howe. I will be her guest more than a week yet.

A lady from London with whom one of my friends is staying has sent an invitation to me to go over as her guest.

U.S.A.: 1894: Last winter I travelled a good deal in this country, although the weather was very severe.
Sri Ramakrishna
I thought it would be dreadful, but I did not find it so after all.

**Chicago : 15-11-94** — I have seen many strange sights and grand things...America is a grand country. It is a paradise of the poor and women. There is almost no poor in the country and no where else in the world women are so free, so educated, so cultured. They are everything in society.

This is a great lesson. The Sannyasin has not lost a bit of his Sannyasinship, even his mode of living. And in this most hospitable country, every home is open to me. The Lord who guides me in India, would He not guide me here? And He has.

You may not understand why a Sannyasin should be in America, but it was necessary...I am neither a sight-seer nor an idle traveller, but you will see...and bless me all your life.

**New York : 19-11-94** — Struggle, struggle was my motto for the last ten years. Struggle, still I say. When it was all dark, I used to say, struggle: when light is breaking in, I still say, struggle.

I have depended always on the Lord, always on Truth, broad as the light of day. Let me not die with stains on my conscience for having played Jesuitism to get up name or fame, or even to do good.

**Chicago : Nov. 94** — Here......they were all trying to lecture and get money thereby. They did something, but I succeeded better than they. Why? I did not put myself as a bar to their success. It was the will of the Lord. But
all these have fabricated and circulated the most horrible lies about me in this country, and behind my back......

I do not care what they say. I love my God, my religion, my country, and above all, myself, a poor beggar. I love the poor, the ignorant, the down trodden, I feel for them. The Lord knows how much. He will show the way. I do not care a fig for human approbation or criticism.

I have that insight through the blessings of Rama-krishna. I am trying to work with my little band, all of them poor beggars like me...

Cambridge: 8-12-94 — I have been here three days. We had a nice lecture from Lady Henry Somerset. I have a class every morning here on Vedanta and another topic...I went to dine with the Spaldings another day. That day they urged me, against my repeated protests, to criticize the Americans: I am afraid they did not relish it. It is, of course, always impossible to do so...I am kept pretty busy the whole day...I shall remain here until the 27th or 28th of this month.

Cambridge: 21-12-94 — I am going away next Tuesday to New York. The lectures are at an end.

U. S. A.: 26-12-94 — In reference to me every now and then, attacks are made in missionary papers (so I hear), but, I never care to see them.

Brooklyn: 28-12-94 — I arrived safely in New York and proceeded at once to Brooklyn, where I arrived in time. We had a nice evening. Several gentlemen belonging to the Ethical Culture Society came to see me.
Next Sunday we shall have a lecture. Dr. James was as usual very kind and good, and Mr. Higgins is as practical as ever...Mr. Higgins has published a pamphlet about me.

Through the Lord’s will, the desire for name and fame has not yet crept into my heart, and I dare say never will. I am an instrument and He is the operator. Through this instrument He is rousing the religious instinct in thousands of hearts in this far-off country. Thousands of men and women here love and revere me...I am amazed at His grace. Whatever town I visit, it is in an uproar. They have named me “the cyclonic Hindu”. It is His will — I am a voice without a form.

**Chicago : 3-1-95—**I lectured at Brooklyn last Sunday. Mrs. Higgins gave a little reception the evening I arrived and some of the prominent members of the Ethical Society including Dr. (Lewis G.) James were there. Some of them thought that such oriental religious subjects will not interest the Brooklyn public.

But the lecture through the blessing of the Lord proved a tremendous success. About 800 of the elite of Brooklyn were present and the very gentlemen who thought it would not prove a success are trying to organise a series in Brooklyn.

I am trying to get a new gown. The old gown is here, but it is shrunken by constant washings so that it is unfit to wear in public.

I saw Miss Couring at Brooklyn. She was as kind as ever.
6-1-95 – I have been in the midst of the genuine article in England. The English people received me with open arms and I have very much toned down my ideas about the English race. First of all, I found that those fellows, as Lund etc., who came over from England to attack me were nowhere. Their existence is simply ignored by the English people. None but a person belonging to the English Church is thought to be genteel. Again some of the best men of England belong to the English Church and some of the highest in position and fame became my truest friends. This was another sort of experience from what I met in America.

The English people laughed and laughed when I told them about my experience with the Presbyterians and other fanatics here (in America) and my reception in hotels etc. I also found the difference in culture and breeding between the two countries, and came to understand why American girls go in shoals to be married to Europeans.

Everyone was kind to me there (in England), and I have left many noble friends of both sexes anxiously awaiting my return in the spring.

As to my work there, the Vedantic thought has already permeated the higher classes of England. Many people of education and rank, amongst them not a few clergymen, told me that the conquest of Rome by Greece was being re-enacted in England...I had eight classes a week apart from public lectures, and they were so crowded that a good many people even ladies of high rank, sat on the floor and did not think anything of it. In England,
I find strong-minded men and women take up the work and carry it forward with the peculiar English grip and energy. This year my work in New York is going on splendidly. Mr. Leggett is a very rich man of New York and very much interested in me. The New Yorker has more steadiness than any other people in this country (America), so that I have determined to make my centre here. In this country my teachings are thought to be queer by the "Methodist" and "Presbyterian" aristocracy. In England, it is the highest philosophy to the English Church aristocracy.

Moreover those talks and gossips, so characteristic of the American women, are almost unknown in England. The English woman is slow, but when she works up to an idea she will have a hold on it sure, and they are regularly carrying on my work there and sending every week a report—think of that! Here (in America) if I go away for a week, everything falls to pieces.

**Chicago: 11-1-95** — I have been running all the time between Boston and New York, two great centres of this country, of which Boston may be called the brain, and New York, the purse. In both, my success is more than ordinary...I am indifferent to newspaper reports... A little boom was necessary to begin work.

I want to teach truth; I do not care whether here or elsewhere...

I shall work incessantly until I die, and even after death, I shall work for the good of the world.

Thousands of the best men do care for me; I am
slowly exercising an influence in this land, greater than all the newspaper blazoning of me can do...

It is the force of character, of purity and of truth and personality. So long as I have these things, no one will be able to injure a hair of my head. If they try they will fail, sayeth the Lord...The Lord is giving me a deeper and deeper insight every day. The Lord is always with me...

12-1-95—I do not care for name or fame, or any humbug of that type. I want to preach my ideas for the good of the world. My life is too precious to be spent in getting the admiration of the world...I have no time for such foolery.

Brooklyn : 20-1-95—I am to lecture here (Brooklyn) tonight, and two other lectures in the next month. I came in only yesterday. Miss Josephine Lock and Mrs. Adams were very kind to me in Chicago and my debt to Mrs. Adams is simply inexpressible.

New York : 24-1-95—This year, I am afraid I am getting overworked, as I feel the strain...

Tomorrow will be the last Sunday lecture of this month. The first Sunday of next month there will be a lecture in Brooklyn, the rest three in New York, with which I will close this year's New York lectures.

New York : 24-1-95—My last lecture was not very much appreciated by men but awfully by women. This Brooklyn is the centre of anti-women's rights movements and when I told them that women deserve and are fit for everything, they did not like it of course. Never mind, the women were in ecstasies.
I have got again a little cold. I am going to the Guernseys. I have got a room downtown also where I will go several hours to hold my classes.

New York: 1-2-95 — I have a message, and I will give it after my own fashion; I will neither Hinduisise my message nor Christianise it, nor make it any ‘ise’ in the world. I will only my-ise it and that is all.

I have a message to give; I have no time to be sweet to the world, and every attempt at sweetness makes me a hypocrite. I will die a thousand deaths rather than lead a jelly-fish existence and yield to every requirement of this foolish world — no matter whether it be my own country or a foreign country.

I am living with Landsberg at 54 W, 33rd Street. He is a brave and noble soul; Lord bless him. Sometimes I go to Guernseys' to sleep.

9-2-95 — In this dire winter I have travelled across mountains and over snows ât dead of night and collected a little fund; and I shall have peace of mind when a plot is secured for Mother (Sri Sarada Devi).

10-2-95 — Three lectures I delivered in New York. These Sunday public lectures are now taken down in shorthand and printed. Three of them made two little pamphlets...I shall be in New York two weeks more, and then I go to Detroit to come back to Boston for a week or two.

My health is very much broken down this year by constant work. I am very nervous. I have not slept a
single night soundly this winter. I am sure, I am working too much, yet a big work awaits me in England.

I will have to go through it and then I hope to reach India and have rest all the rest of my life. I have tried at least to do my best for the world, leaving the result to the Lord.

Now I am longing for rest. Hope I will get some and the Indian people will give me up. How I would like to become dumb for some years and not talk at all!

I was not made for these struggles and fights of the world. I am naturally dreamy and restful. I am a born idealist, can only live in a world of dreams; the very touch of fact disturbs my vision and makes me unhappy. Thy will be done!

The whole life is a succession of dreams. My ambition is to be a conscious dreamer, that is all.

14-2-95 – Perhaps, these mad desires were necessary to bring me over to this country. And I thank the Lord for the experience.

I am very happy now. Between Mr. Landsberg and me, we cook some rice and lentils or barley and quietly eat it, and write something or read or receive visits from poor people who want to learn something, and thus I feel I am more a Sannyasin now than I ever was in America.

I went to see Miss Corbin the other day, and Miss Farmer and Miss Thursby were also there. We had a half-hour and she wants me to hold some classes in next Sunday.
I was told once by a Christian missionary that their Scriptures have a historical character, and therefore are true. To which I replied, "Mine have no historical character and therefore they are true; yours being historical they were evidently made by some man the other day. Yours are man-made and mine are not; their non-historicity is in their favour."

I have myself been told by some of the Western scientific minds of the day how wonderfully rational the conclusions of the Vedanta are. I know one of them personally, who scarcely has time to eat his meals, or go out of his laboratory, but who yet would stand by the hour to attend my lectures on the Vedanta; for, as he expresses it, they are so scientific, they so exactly harmonise with the aspirations of the age and with the conclusions to which modern science is coming at the present time.

It struck me more than once that I should have to leave my bones on foreign shores owing to the prevalence of religious intolerance.

By improper representation of the Hindu Gods and Goddesses, the Christian missionaries were trying with all their heart and soul to prove that really religious men could never be produced from among their worshippers; but like a straw before a tidal wave that attempt was swept away; while that class of our countrymen - interested organized bodies of mischief-makers - which set itself to devise means for quenching the great fire of the rapidly spreading power of Sri Ramakrishna, seeing all its efforts futile, has yielded to despair. What is human will in opposition to the Divine?
I am not a fool to believe anything and everything without direct proof. And coming into this realm of Mahamaya, oh, the many magic mysteries I have come across alongside this bigger conjuration of a universe! Maya, it is all Maya!

There is nothing higher than the knowledge of the Atman, all else is Maya, mere jugglery. The Atman is the One unchangable truth. This I have come to understand, and that is why I try to bring it home to all.

While I was in America, I had certain wonderful powers developed in me. By looking into people’s eyes, I could fathom in a trice the contents of their minds. The working of everybody’s mind would be patent to me, like the fruit on the palm of one’s hand.

To some I used to tell these things, and of those to whom I communicated these, many would become my disciples; whereas those who came to mix with me with some ulterior motive would not, on coming across this power of mine, even venture in to my presence any more.

When I began lecturing in Chicago and other cities, I had to deliver every week some twelve or fifteen or even more lectures at times. This excessive strain on the body and mind would exhaust me to a degree. I seemed to run short of subjects for lectures, and was anxious where to find new topics for the morrow’s lecture. New thoughts seemed altogether scarce. One day, after lecture I lay thinking of what means to adopt next. I induced a sort of slumber and in that state nobody standing by me was lecturing
many new ideas and new veins of thought which I had scarcely heard or thought of in my life. On awaking I remembered them and reproduced them in my lecture. I cannot enumerate how often this phenomenon took place. Many, many days did I hear such lectures while lying in bed. Sometimes the lecture would be delivered in such a loud voice that the inmates of the adjacent rooms would hear the sound and ask me the next day. “With whom, Swamiji, were you talking so loudly last night?” I used to avoid the question somehow. Ah, it was a wonderful phenomenon.

When people began to honour me, then the Padris were after me. They spread many slanders about me by publishing them in the newspapers. Many asked me to contradict these slanders. But I never took the slightest notice of them. It is my 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 for my mission. The upshot, I used to find, was that often my slanderers feeling repentant afterwards, would surrender to me and offer apologies, themselves contradicting the slanders in the papers. Sometimes, it so happened that learning that I had been invited to a certain house, somebody would communicate those slanders to my host, who hearing them, would leave home, locking the door. When I went there, to attend the invitation, I found it was deserted and nobody was there. Again a few days afterwards, they themselves learning the truth, would feel sorry for their previous conduct, and come to offer themselves as disciples. The fact is... this whole world is full of mean ways of worldliness. Bu
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. "Let those versed in the ethical codes praise or blame, let Lakshmi, the Goddess of fortune, come or go whenever she wisheth, let death overtake him today or after a century, the wise man never swerves from the path of rectitude."

I stand for truth. Truth will never ally itsself with falsehood. Even if all the world should be against me, Truth must prevail in the end.

Missionaries and others could not do much against me in this country (America). Through the Lord's grace, the people here like me greatly, and are not to be tricked by the opinions of any particular class. They appreciate my ideas.

When I was in America, I heard once the complaint made that I was preaching too much of Advaita, and too little of Dualism. To preach the Advaita aspect of Vedanta is necessary to rouse up the hearts of men, to show them the glory of their souls. It is, therefore, that I preach this Advaita, and I do so not as a sectarian, but upon universal and widely acceptable grounds.

U. S. A.: 6-3-95 - The Maharaja of Mysore is dead—one of our greatest hopes. Well! the Lord is great. He will send others to help us.

I am going to have a series of paid lectures in my rooms (downstairs), which will seat about a hundred
persons, and that will cover the expenses. Miss Hamlin has been very kind to me and does all she can to help me.

N. Y.: March 27, 95 – Mrs. Bull has been greatly benefitted by Mrs. Adam’s lessons. I also took a few but no use; the ever-increasing load in front does not allow me to bend forward as Mrs. Admas wants!

My classes are full of women. Sometimes, I get disgusted with eternal lecturings and talkings; want to be silent for days and days.

When I was a boy, I thought that fanaticism was a great element in work, but now, as I grow older, I find that it is not.

My experience comes to this, that it is rather wise to avoid all sorts of fanatical reforms.

To make a man take in everything and believe it, would be to make him a lunatic. I once had a book sent to me, which said I must believe everything told in it. It said there was no soul, but that there were Gods and Goddesses in heaven, and a thread of light going from each of our heads to heaven! How did the writer know all these things? She had been inspired, and wanted to believe it, too, and because I refused, she said, “You must be a very bad man; there is no hope for you!” This is fanaticism.

N. Y.: 10-4-95 – Tomorrow I have a class at Miss Andrews’ of 40, W. 9th Street.

11-4-95 – I am going away to the country tomorrow to Mr. L - for a few days. A little fresh air will do me good, I hope.
Everyone of my friends thought it would end in nothing, this my living and preaching in poor quarters by all myself, and that no ladies would ever come here. Miss Hamlin especially thought that "she" or "her right sort of people" were way up from such things as to go and listen to a man who lives by himself in a poor lodging. But, the "right kind" came for all that, day and night, and she too. Lord! how hard it is for man to believe in Thee and Thy mercies! Shiva! Shiva!

24-4-95 — I am perfectly aware that although some truth underlies the mass of mystical thought which has burst upon the western world of late, it is for the most part full of motives unworthy or insane.

For this reason, I have never had anything to do with these phases of religion, either in India or elsewhere, and mystics as a class are not very favourable to me...

Only the Advaita philosophy can save mankind, whether in East or West, from "devil worship" and kindred superstitions, giving tone and strength to the very nature of man. India herself requires this, quite as much or even more than the West. Yet, it is hard up-hill work, for we have first to create a taste, then teach, and lastly proceed to build up the whole fabric.

Perfect sincerity, holiness, gigantic intellect, and an all-conquering will—let only a handful of men work with these, and the whole world will be revolutionised. I did a good deal of platform work in this country last year, and received plenty of applause but found that I was only working for myself. It is the patient upbuilding of character, an intense struggle to realise truth, which alone
will tell on the future of humanity. So this year I am hoping to work along this line—training up to practical Advaita realisation a small band of men and women. I do not know how far I shall succeed...... I can teach, and preach, and sometimes write. But, I have intense faith in Truth. The Lord will send help and hands to work with me. Only let me be perfectly pure, perfectly sincere, and perfectly unselfish.

**New York: 25-4-95** - The day before yesterday, I received a kind note from Miss F—including a cheque for a hundred dollars for the Barbar House lectures. She is coming to N. Y. next Saturday.

I have arranged to go to the Thousand Islands. There is a cottage belonging to Miss Dutcher, one of my students, and a few of us will be there on rest and peace and seclusion. I want to manufacture a few "Yogis" out of the materials of the classes.

**New York: 5-5-95** - I always thoughgth that although Prof. Max Muller in all his writings on the Hindu religion adds in the last a derogatory remark, he must see the whole truth in the long run...His last book "Vedantism"—there you will find him swallowing the whole of it: *re-incarnation* and all...it is only a part of what I have been telling...Many points smack of my paper in Chicago.

I am glad now the old man has seen the truth, because that is the only way to have religion in the face of modern research and science.

I know very little; that little I teach without reserve; where I am ignorant, I confess it and never am I so glad as when I find people being helped by Theosophists,