MEMPHIS AND DETROIT

Swami Vivekananda's life in America seemed to personify the eighteenth century maxim, "It is better to wear out than to rust out." In the two months following the Parliament of Religions he sojourned in and around Chicago, took a whirlwind tour of the states of Wisconsin, Illinois, and Iowa, travelling about seven hundred miles by rail, delivered a few dozen talks, gave interviews to the press, conversed with the seekers of oriental wisdom, acquired into the Eastern way of life, expected upon the problems of India, and inspired his friends and disciples to work for the poor masses.

But with standing some obscurity about Swami Vivekananda's activities from November 22, 1893 to January 7, 1894, it is evident that he was fulfilling his lecture engagements by taking a regular barnstorming tour of different parts of America.

Since the adjournment of the Parliament of Religions the Nineteenth Century Club was keen to invite Swami Vivekananda to Memphis, and some of its members had heard him at

1. The International Library of Quotations, p. 6.
2. Swami Vivekananda's own account of his lecture tour in the United States, "Makers of Travel by rail to the centres of Canada one day and the next day finds he lecturing in a southern state of America." This information, as you may not be literal in regard to the time element, but it somehow characterises the lecture tour.  ED. Note, p. 115.
Chicago and were enthralled by his "eloquence", his "eloquence", his "eloquence", his "eloquence", his "eloquence", his "eloquence", his "eloquence", his "eloquence", his "eloquence", his "eloquence". The jehuites knew no bounds when Swami Vivekananda accepted their invitation and reached
Kempf on January 15, 1894. A great reception to honour him
was held in the evening of the next day he was invited by Col.
A.H. Borden to a dinner party were his assistant Bishop
Thomas K. Miller, Rev. Ernest H. Anderson and a number of other
dignitaries. Swami Vivekananda spent the rest of the time at his
Kempf residence and as the guest of one Mr. H. Trinkley.

The local press welcomed Swami Vivekananda by describing
him as "the most interesting visitor Europe has ever seen",
"one of the giants of the platform", "a model representative
of his race", "a sensation of the world's fair Parliament",
"an aspirant by divine right" and "striking in his personality".

A day after his arrival in Chicago, Swami Vivekananda was
interviewed by a press reporter who was allured by his
photography. "He is quite dark of complexion", he wrote, "his
intellectual foreheads, his fine eyes and black hair, his
expression, peaceful manners and fine figure and carriage were his
very passport man". In response to the said reporter's

3. <name> United, January 13, 1894, facsimile in <name>,
4. it was sponsored by <name> <name>,<name>,<name>,<name>,<name>,<name>,
5. <name> United, January 16, 1894, facsimiles in the
6. <name> <name>, p.162, 163.
7. <name> Commercial, January 15, 1894, facsimile in <name>,
8. <name> United, January 16, 1894, <name>, p.163.
9. <name> United, January 16, 1894, <name>, p.162.
10. <name>
queries, Swami Vivekananda answered a wide variety of questions ranging from the introductions of America to some recent aspects of Hinduism. He landed the World's Parliament of Religions for "It has a new touch towards broadening ideas," reckoned the American society among the affluent ones in the world and paid rich encomiums to American women. He stressed that all religions were good only those who hold them must not quarrel.

When asked about the veracity of amazing feats such as conjuration, levitation, succeeded anitation and the like which were so common in India he calmly remarked that even though a vast amount of literature existed on these subjects and some people developed a propensity to acquire supernatural powers by resorting to ascetic practices, mind i.e., as such did not believe in miracles. But he held that by practicing sadasa Yaga one could prophesicate future events and become an adept at clairvoyance while remaining "under the operation of natural laws". Regarding levitation he remarked that though he knew many persons who tried to float in the air, he had never seen anyone overcome levitation. He also disavowed the claim of some writers that the feat of climbing up a pole after throwing it into the air and then suddenly "disappearing out of sight in the distant heights" had been performed in India.
Swami Vivekananda, however, argued that the Yogis can exercise voluntary control over certain involuntary autonomic functions of the body. From his personal experience, he narrated the story of one such person who remained in a sealed cave for many years without food. At another occasion he remarked that there was not a single muscle in the body over which man could not establish perfect control by practice—even the heart could be made to stop, or, on the yogi's bidding, even asked whether he had ever been buried alive as a part of his installation in the brotherhood of monks and if he could perform any miracle he reported: "What have those things to do with religion? The sixes of your bible in powerful but useless from God in not being pure."

On the afternoon of January 15, 1894, Swami Vivekananda spoke before a large and fashionable audience composed of the Nineteenth Century club. Though the contents of the talk were not reported by any newspaper, the Appeal & Vol. The reported that the audience of Swami Vivekananda... and the "race then given after the lecture marked) one of the pleasant events of the eventful year in club calendar."

12 Recent researches prove that yogis can have voluntary control over the metabolic and autonomic functions of the body. The All India Institute of Medical Sciences studied the metabolic pattern of one yogi named Tod after placing him in an air-tight sealed box where he stayed for ten hours. The yogi drew oxygen on an average of 15.3 liters per hour as against his basic requirement of 1.5 liters per hour, he did not show any after-shock or hang-over. The yogi was reported to have stopped the pulse and muscular contraction of the respiratory muscles and the arm muscles. It could even stop the heart sounds audible at will—Rajagopalachari of Madras, January, 1961, pp. 87-94.

13 It is.
14 The Modern Commercial, January 15, 1894.
Conspicuous in his black trousers, yellow turban and a rose of pink silk which was fastened at the waist with "a little box", Swami Vivekananda delivered his first public lecture at Kophic on January 16, 1894. The venue was Auditorium, and was introduced by Justice H.J. organ who established on an ethnic tension between Europeans and Hindus thereby arguing that a "social kinship" existed "between the people of India and the European was to address them". Swami Vivekananda was warmly received as he moved towards the dais to speak on Hinduism.

Instead of discussing the legends, myths or fables that cluster around Hinduism, Swami Vivekananda delineated its spirit. He established the raison d'être of the doctrine of re-inarnation, disavowed the Christian belief in original sin and emphasized the divinity of human beings. "The development of man," he said, "is a return to an original perfection. This perfection must come through the practice of holiness and love." He mentioned that his countrymen had always cherished such virtues, or else, how could they welcome the Jews when Roman Emperor Titus sacked Jerusalem and "destroyed the Temple".

17. L vivid.
Miming to the monotheistic character of Hinduism, Swami Vivekananda argued that the Hindus worshipped the same God as Christians. The Trinitiy of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva was not tantamount to a belief in the existence of three Gods but reflected the essential attributes of the "Supreme Soul"—his power to create, to preserve and to destroy. He argued that the material images of Hindu gods were not lifeless representations, but symbolised the very presence of the deity. In a way, he justified idolatry by referring to the deeper psychological implications of iconolatry as propounded in the *Jnana Jnani Shastram*: "Images are meant only as aids to meditation for the ignorant". Just as "when one holds a red cloth to a mirror, the mirror will become red, so the image of the God is reflected in the mind and the mind receives from the image its spiritual colour and power and a comprehension of the divine qualities".

Swami Vivekananda argued that the Hindus did not "lay much stress on forms but worshipped God by worshipping the spirit of Love which was his essential attribute". Though the people of India adhered to different sects they regarded all religions to be "Veda". To stress his point he quoted a Vedic hymn in which all religions were symbolised as vessels of different sizes and shapes "with which different men come to bring water from a spring". The forms of the "Vessel" were many, he said, but the water of the truth was what all sought to fill their

vandal with. "God knows all forms of faith and will recognize
his own more no matter what it is called or what may be the
fashion of the homage paid him". If the fear of the Lord
was the beginning of religion, he remarked, the love of God
was its end.

Srii Vivekananda created a juxtaposition between the
ideas and Christian doctrines of incarnation by comparing
Lord Arisna to Jesus Christ— the former was born of
"immaculate conception", the latter to a virgin. In doing so
he might have reminiscend what Srii Siva-Krisna used to say:
"incarnations are all the personifications of Iswara. In
the ocean of sat-chit-Ananda a wave rises up in one place
at one time and it is called Arisna. Another wave rises at
another place some time later and it is called Christ".

According to Hindu belief the function of the incarnation is to induce sattva, the chief and foremost of the
tree gunas into society. "For the protection of the good,
for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment
of Iswara in an age after age", said Lord Arisna in the
Chisvad Gita. "Fools disregarded me as one clad in human form,
not knowing my higher nature as the great Lord of Being".

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1. Srii Siva-Krisna used to say: "Fools are the name of God
and inf eighteen forms through which He may be approached.
In whatever form and form you worship Him, through that
He will be realised by you. Srii Bhar, R.K., Sivashtava
Srii Arisna, p.251.

20. Srii Siva-Krisna, january 17, 1994, Facsimile in The


22. Guna is a material quality of which there are three—
Satvaguna (goodness), Rajasguna (passion), and Tamasguna (ignorance).

23. पुजारंगत्वम् लाभतनां श्रीकालकु मुक्तं भगवान् सुपरम्मस्यमस्।
पर भावाचलो भवति भूतेः प्रजां| ||

24. "अपजननति सं शहासु मनुष्यां सुनुसाधारणम्!
पर भावाचलो भवति भूतेः प्रजां||"
It may be noted that the theory of the incarnation which was hotly debated by the Gnostics, Gnostics, Gnostics, and other groups during the first four centuries of the Christian era, has come to be accepted by a good number of Christian sects. The fact that Jesus Christ took human form in order to accomplish the work of 'our salvation', "He was born of a woman, his body grew; for he was made of a lowly soul which was made to manhood, he died and was buried. If he had not ascended his heavenly abode on the arm of his Mother, he would not then have been truly man and the semblance of it would in reality have been a deception, but having been
early he became the Son of God; true man as he was true God;
possessed of flesh and blood, of God and soul, like ourselves." Max Mueller disbelief in the theory of
restitution and described it as "metaphysical twaddle, 
and scholastic hair-splitting".

Swami Vivekananda's concluding remark that he revered Jesus Christ as he did Lord Krishna or Buddha,
evoked much applause from the audience. He thereby
indicated that all religious prophets preached the
doctrine of love but their adherents committed heinous
crimes in the name of religion. Swami Vivekananda was
tacitly referring to the seven crusades, also known
as wars of the Cross, the ten persecutions in

50. The Dictionary of Religion, p. 34.
52. The medieval wars between the Christian nations of
western Europe and the Muslims have been termed as
"Wars of the Cross" because all those who partici-
pated in them wore the "flag of the Cross" on their
shirts. They were seven in number: the first Crusade
was taken sometime in the 11th Century A.D.; the
second in 1147 . . . ; the third in 1191 . . . ; the
fourth in 1209 A.D.; the fifth in 1249 . . . ; the
sixth in 1270 . . . ; and the seventh in 1278 . . . .
ecclesiastical history, the pugnacious battles between catholics and protestants, the extermination of

of thequisition, the hostility were one so on. but he did not hold Jesus Christ responsible for "the
crimes of progress"—which were the work of religious sects. The local press hailed Swami Vivekananda's

"full of original thought, information, and broad vision," a masterly appeal for brotherly love

and "an eloquent defence" of Hinduism. The daily

appreciated Swami Vivekananda's choice of words and

corrctness of use in the construction he pointed

out an inaccuracy in his pronunciation regarding the

"accented, or words at times u on a wrong syllable".

33. Names of the persecuted. 258.

1. Mero 64-68 a. D.

2. Ignatius 76-78 a. D.

3. Trajan 105-117 a. D.


5. Septimus 202-211 a. D.


7. Severus 222-235 a. D.

8. Galerius 253-253 a. D.


10. Aurelian 270-275 a. D.


For details see The dictionary of religion, p. 113.

34. Leaders of a religious sect that arose after 1170

in southern France, under the leadership of Pierre

Malond, and joined the reform that movement in the

16th century. Ibid. pp. 1094-95.

35. Julian or Scottish followers of the religious


36. Members of an ascetic Christian sect that arose in

the 14th century. Ibid. pp. 77-25.

37. A tribunal in the Church of Rome for the trial and

punishment of heretics. Ibid. pp. 593-94.

38. Censura Controversi, January 17, 1834. Facsimiles

in The complete works, vol. iii, pp. 446-80; same,

pp. 166-68.
Swami Vivekananda spoke on "The Destiny of Man" in the rooms of the Women's council on January 17, 1894, before the elite of the city. In his previous lecture on and disapproved of the Christian belief in the sinfulness of man and propounded the idea of "the perfect-ness of humanity" thereby implying that the human soul was basically pure and its imperfection which existed in its bondage to matter was entirely involuntary. In his point more presently at the woman's council room, Swami Vivekananda observed that God was not a king sitting away in some distant corner of the universe to punish or reward human beings according to their deeds. "Say teach that God is far away", he said. "Then our real nature, our heart's principle is lost". A famous Svetambara ascetic once said: एक श्रद्धा जिद्ध लिंगम, तीन दिबां जिद्ध लिंगम, i.e., "God in the only being, nothing else exists".

Swami Vivekananda asked Christians not to be deluding their religion which teaches original sin, "for the same religion teaches original purity". He too loudly cheered when he repeated: "When Adam fell he fell from purity. Purity is our real nature and to
remain that is the object of all religion... That can
you call a brute is like the dogs in the Dial and
you
it may be noted that the concept of "original sin"
that is the object of all religion... What nan
you. call a brute
like the do ••

is the bedrock on which the Christian theology
rests. "Be sure", says the Bible, "your sin will find
you out". Though the Bible does not define sin, the
whole tenor of it indicates that this consists in
failure to recognize and do the will of God. man, we are
and live in the image of God. So in conscious of
a free will and can choose between good and evil. "And
sin is the rebellious choice, the choice of that which
the exercise forbids, the choice of an atmosphere that
we to choose when we free will be given in opened,
the choice of sloth and insobriety in place of life and
strength and energy.

Christianity believes that the suffering caused by
sin is a discipline—"the furnace of affliction separ-
ates the dross from the gold". Martin Luther used to
say that the recognition of sin was the beginning of
salvation. The great revival divine, John (1706-79)
claimed that there were three things which the true
Christian desired in respect of sin: "Justification,
that it may condemn; sanctification, that it may not reign; and

10. The Biblical Sublime, January 11, 1844. Sacrifices in
15. ibid., p. 613.
Catholics and Protestants profess faith in the doctrine of original sin yet they interpret it differently. The Protestants hold that all sin is deadly in its nature and would ruin the soul but for the intercession of Christ. Even infirmities and frailties in us such as they injure the soul are fatal; "but our advocate with the father pleads for us". When a man does not strive against his infirmities "he is contending the divine intercession". The Roman Catholics, on the other hand hold that there are really love God and are incapable of committing sins. No human being is perfect then classify sin into two categories: mortal and venial. The former are those committed against God wilfully and deliberately and can be excused either by good works in the present life or purgatory. 

47. ibid., p.324.
48. ibid., pt.1030-61.
49. ibid., p.725.
Swami Vivekananda's remark at the Chicago Parliament that it was a sin to call even a sinner had given a seismic shock to the Christian orthodoxy. At Memphis, he observed in a similar vein: "Let us not think we are sheep but lions, or don't bleat and eat grass like a sheep".

Religion, Swami Vivekananda observed was not the outcome of the weakness of human mind— an idea which went contrary to a recent a creedence that religion was a daughter of hope and fear explaining to ignorance the nature of the unknowable. He agreed with Robert Ingersoll that most of the creeds hated men but could not God, he described religion as love—"unselfish, enchainning, growing", and told his audience that they were like the spring, in a watch which tried to remain in its natural state when wound up, it was not necessary that all watches had the same kind of a spring and it was not necessary that we all had the same religion. "Why should we quarrel?" he asked, "if we all had the same ideas the world would be dead....Whirlpools show the strength of the current; stop the current and stagnation ensues. Motion is life". Swami Vivekananda

52. An over-lined section, cited in The International Dictionary of quotations, p. 537.
53. See Diction of Names, ibid., p. 730.
pledged for unity and variety in religion. He argued that
the rose would smell sweet by any other name, and it did not matter what "your religion" was called.

Jinendra Kishore pronounced fanaticism unequivocally.
Taking a cue from the Gita, he explained the reason for so much variance in religions. "The little streams that riddle down a thousand mountain sides are destined to come at last to the mighty ocean. So with the different religions. They are destined at last to bring us to the ocean of God."
Referring to the religious bigotry of Christian nations he sarcastically remarked: "For 1900 years you have been trying to crush the Jews. Why, could you not crush them? Echo answers: ignorance and bigotry can never crush truth." Swami Vivekananda concluded by saying: Let us help and not destroy.

The appeal-ivalence on January 13, 1894 applauded Swami Vivekananda as an eloquent orator whose genius could not be equal to that of Ingersoll. "He advances his ideas with as much deliberation," he wrote the paper, "as a professor of mathematics demonstrates an example in algebra to his students."

On January 13, 1894, Swami Vivekananda spoke on "Buddhism, pantheism" a subject which he had discussed at Stanford and Los Angeles. The venue was an Autotte Assembly; the audience consisted mostly of women who regarded him as a marvel and thought every word that dropped from his lips "as if the most profound secrets were being given us by the bottomless sea". Swami Vivekananda started his speech by elaborating the historical antecity of the theory of incarnation which holds that the earth's life represented a stage through which the soul-proceeding from God had to pass in order to return to its original source. This belief existed among the Mahayana, the Jains, the Buddhists, the first of whom are the Christians also. To this day it is accepted by Hindus and Buddhists.

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Justifying the theory on metaphysical and moral grounds he remarked: "All of us believe in a moral governor of the universe, yet nature reveals to us instead of Justice, injustice". The man is born under the best of circumstances, neither suffers in misery from his birth. If one as much as this contradicts, because of God's will it would amount to injustice to punish and make the Almighty "not a moral creature". The doctrine of metempsychosis, based on the theory of our (action) which determined a man's next life (life after death), reconciled this disarranged order.

Some philosophers argue that nature saw around us,
"not creation but manifestation", everything not to create that never was a thing, molecules did not exist, because the cause was always existing. But for that being's sake, real to, if one admitted that nothing existed at the time where line all the need of a turn to exist in matter was before the mind to introduce such being into the universe, with this impossibility.

Some philosophers attribute an incident of his mother with a child, on the woman was believing in the transmission of moral actions to a child, opposite in nature, as if she was churning a lot, or some misfortune of her child to be
a child never entering to the mind as such, which was often not noticed. But wrongly supposed as evidences to prove the theory of our existence. To support the argument that

CO. SIV.
4. "What is the difference (VI.6.3) says: कथनादि: निरन्तरं?
"no can something come out of nothing".
as the soul migrated, the man suffered the actions and reactions of his past activities. Swami Vivekananda was applauded during his speech, "his popal rity", wrote the Appeal Avalaude, "has increased wonderfully since his arrival in this city and especially is this noticeable soon, the lecture."

Swami Vivekananda spoke on "The manners and customs of life" at the La Salle Academy on January 20, 1894. The weather was small because of inceament weather and the lecture received a very brief coverage in the Appeal Avalaude of the next day. He recounted the history and traditions of India and portrayed the vast treasure house of sacred sciences and cities spread over the whole country from cape crevice to the Hindustan, and from the Indus to the Ganges river. A description of ancient temples and sanctuaries was described in beautiful language and it was noted that "the ancient possessing scientific knowledge far superior to the most expert innovators of the present day". In all, since, at least beneath the hindu customs of marriage and divorce, occasionally giving examples of his treatment and parent. In the same lecture was presented the custom of the permanent marriage a union, current among the principal and the major social institutions of the Hindus. For

68. Historical perspective in the hindu custom of marriage and divorce are: unter, e., the hindu law of marriage and divorce in India, India, India, India, India.
69. Historical perspective in the hindu custom of marriage and divorce are: unter, e., the hindu law of marriage and divorce in India, India, India, India.
of not only in this life but in the life hereafter. Jean
observed that for a woman marriage was "for all time, irrevoca-
ble, and indissoluble". In reply to a question Jean Vivien-
na na observed that divorce was an extremely rare proceeding
in his, but if after fourteen years of married life there were no children in the family, the husband was allowed to
marry another with the wife’s consent, or if she objected she
could not marry again. During his speech the ladies frequently
interrupted him and asked questions which he answered with
great patience.

During his confabulations with the pupils of the Daubigny Academy on the afternoon of January 21,
1924, Jean Vivien na na replied to a flurry of questions and
criticized certain points he had made during his lectures. Then
said, "It must be as satisfying as it has been to the millions of the world, he
considered internal development was not the source of any
religion. "Your lasted Christianity, does not prove an excep-
tion in this respect", he remarked. "Your Darwin, your Mills,
your great have never received the endorsement of your pro-
blem, or, then, criticize my religion on this account". As
however, pointed out that the people of India were the most
moral in the world, "as quite as much as any other race".

When someone in the gathering, reported that he would not
care for a religion which did not "elevate man’s lot
on earth" as Christianity did, Jean Vivien na na replied that
the West owed its development to many factors other than Christianity. The purpose of religion was to develop our spiritual and make him free from greed, lust and fear. "Our religion helps you to build firms and is an efficient source," but does it aid you in the development of your inner life?" In a dig at the materialistic West, he remarked: "You Americans worship what the dollar. In the mad rush for gold, you forget the spiritual until you have become a nation of materialists. Even your preachers and churches are tainted with this self-pervading desire. Now go back in the history of your people, who has led the spiritual life that those whom I can note at how have done. There are those who, when death comes, can say, 'A brother went to a welcome tree.'"

a reporter of the Annual Sermon, present at the occasion observed that invoked vividness and made correctly felt his voice rich and well modulated came through the dust that pervaded the apartment, half dead, half accusingly. There was so much of the wise in the context of this stranger from a land whose history dates back six thousand years upon the civilization of the nineteenth century America".

as the discussion progressed, invoked a synthesis between the materialism of the West and the spiritualism of the East, decide that he justified it only as it could help people in "attaining the subjective through the objective." He declared religion as realization,

6. 20.
6. 20.
70. 20.
few faiths, and observed that the believer in the existence of a sixth sense and in telepathy.

Therefore even Yizhar Sharet lectured for various local societies. He, however, did not give away the proceeds of his last lecture at Emekim on January 21, 1894. A gathering of more than two hundred persons listened to his views on "Creative Theology" at the Young Men's Hebrew Association Hall. According to the appeal avalanche it was the blue vision because the series so incisively enhances the possibility of an invisible force.

Connecting the various phases in the development of religion Ben Yizhar observed that the primitive culture a polytheist. From ancestral worship, he proceeded to worship animals and nature. "The beauty of the morning, the splendor of the sunset, the mysticism, the order of the earth, the wisdom of nature and the wonderment of the mind in listening impresses primitive man with a sense that he could not explain, and the idea of a higher and more powerful being controlling the infinitude that flocked before his eyes." In the early hours the sky was the bed of the god Kronos; the form of the godess Silverse; the earth, of the goddess; the sea of the god, and their everywhere in the world was the god Pan. In the early morning the creation, the world seemed inhabited with gods, elves, trolls, giants, dwarfs, heroes, gnomes - "as they in Wonderland and fairyland." The American
Indians sometimes ascribed their degeneration to the fact that "the white man cut down the trees, whose spirits had protected the Redman".

Then appeared the period of monotheism and the external objects began to be considered the manifestation of God. "All the gods disappeared and blended into one, the God of Gods, the ruler of the universe". It was followed by the period of pantheists who repudiated both polytheism and monotheism, discarded the idea that "God was the universe" and said: "The soul of my soul is the only true existence. My nature is my existence and will expand to me". Swami Vivekananda offered a brief appraisal of Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, and remarked that the ultimate goal of religion was but one—reunion with God. "Unity is the object of religion" he remarked, "The multiple of phenomena that is seen at every hand, is only the infinite variety of unity".

"One thing is not fit for all; everything is not fit for one". Basing his argument on this maxim of Goethe, he observed that all religions were true and essential for mankind. "Like the eddies to a river, take them away and stagnation follows. Kill the difference in opinions, and it is the death of thought".

Swami Vivekananda's delineation of the propensity of human soul to go back to its origin evoked immense applause from the audience. "If you put a simple molecule of air in

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77. Cited in *The Brahmavadin*, February 1, 1896.
the bottom of a glass of water", he said, "it at once begins a
struggle to join the infinite atmosphere above. So it is with
the soul". He argued that it was true of all human beings
whatever their religion might be. Pleading for the right of
every human being to profess a faith of his choice he remar-
ked in a resonant tone: "A river flows a thousand miles down
the circuitous mountain side to where it joins the seas and
a man is standing there to tell it to go back and start a new
and assume a more direct course! That man is a fool. You are a
river that flows from the heights of zion. I flow from the
lofty peaks of the Himalayas. I don't say to you, go back and
come down as I did, you're wrong. That is more wwrong than fool-
lish. Stick to your beliefs".

Swami Vivekananda's six lectures at Memphis created "a
79 profound sensation in all cultured circles". The Memphis
Commercial of January 21, 1894 summed up: "His learning embar-
ces such a wide range of subjects and his knowledge is so tho-
rough that even specialists in the various sciences, theology,
art and literature learn from his utterances and absorb from
his presence".

Swami Vivekananda left Memphis for Chicago on January 22,
80 1894. Not much is known about his whereabouts and activities
from January 23 to February 11, except that he delivered a
lecture at Chicago on 25th, the contents of which are not known

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78. Appeal Avalanche, January 22, 1894, facsimiles in The
79. Memphis Commercial, January 21, 1894, facsimile in Burke,
p.184.
80. Appeal Avalanche, January 21, 1894, facsimile in The
and dined with Mr. & Mrs. Woodhead and Carl Von Bergen on February 11. He left Chicago for Detroit on February 12, and was given a rousing reception by "an exceptionally large and representative assemblage" which had gathered at the house of Mrs. John J. Bagley - "the widow of the ex-governor of Michigan and a lady of rare culture and unusual spirituality". Her "fair and madonna like face framed in its Characteristic bands of smooth hair and the pale gray gown shading into delicate old lace at the the throat and wrists" lent charm to the function. The visitors included the cream of Detroit society - bishops and clergymen, rabbis, and professors, the mayor and his wife. Swami Vivekananda looked dignified in his orange robe, with its scarlet mash and pink turban. He impressed the gathering with his polished english, dignified manners and beatific smile. The Detroit Journal reported: "There has not gathered in a home in Detroit in many a day and perhaps never such a distinguished assemblage of Detroiters as were present last evening to meet the polished Hindoo monk. The reception with its dignities and formalities was entirely worthy of its reason".

Swami Vivekananda paid two visits to Detroit (Michigan) in

81. Burke, p.194.
82. Detroit Tribune, February 14, 1894, facsimile in Burke, pp.200-2.
83. His Eastern and Western disciples, p.335.
86. Detroit is famous as "the automobile capital of the World". Time, March 19, 1979. In the 19th Century the city was "a turbulent vortex of the contemporaneous thought of the nation, both conservative and radical and this fact, together with the fact that Swamiji's power was rising to a peak, tended to make his visit there akin to the explosion of a long-brewing storm". Burke, p.197.
1894— from February 12 to 23 and from March 9 to 30. He delivered five public speeches during his first visit and three public speeches during the second. Besides that he addressed private gatherings and held discussions with many people. The first four lectures were delivered at the Unitarian Church, the fifth at Mrs. Bagley's home, the sixth at the Detroit opera house, the seventh at the auditorium and the last at the Unitarian Church. For about four weeks he was the guest of Mrs. John J. Bagley; the remaining two weeks he stayed with Thomas W. Palmer.

The general impression that the Detroiters nurtured about the East propped on the fairy tales of Arabian Knights. India was considered to be a land of "ghastly and beautiful mysteries". As a local Journal put it: "When it was ingeniously announced that a monk of the Hindoo religion, one of the eminent ecclesiastics of the country, was to be a guest in Detroit, Society turned its eyes in an easternly and heavenly direction and expected to see him appear on a white horse in mid air. Even after he had properly arrived on a railroad train and had been typographically announced by the reporters, there was still an eagerness to see realised in flesh and blood one of the fascinating figures of childhood dreams".

A day after his arrival in Detroit Swami Vivekananda was interviewed by a reporter of the Detroit Free Press who described him as "a person of medium stature, with the dusky complexion common with people of his nationality, gentle in manner, common with people of his nationality, gentle in manner, 

87 Thomas W. Palmer was President of the World's Fair Commission, a United States Senator and American Minister to Spain. Swami Vivekananda described him as a 'very jolly, good old man'. The Complete Works, Vol VIII, p.301.
deliberate in movement, and extremely courteous in every word, movement and gesture". But the most impressive feature of his personality, said the reporter, "are his eyes, which are of great brilliancy". During the course of interview Swami Vivekananda created a dichotomy between religion and creed— the former was the acceptance of all existing creeds "seeing in them the same striving towards the same destination", the latter was "something antagonistic and combative". He implied thereby that different creeds were but different paths to reach the Almighty. "My way would not be suited perhaps to the temperament of my western neighbour" and "his route would not commend itself to my disposition and philosophical way of thinking". It was because of this that the Hindus did not indulge in missionary work. Nevertheless, Hinduism had spread far and wide and manifested itself in the form of "Christian science, theosophy and Edwin Arnold's 'Light of Asia'." Even the catholics borrowed all their forms— "the confessional, the belief in saints and so on"— from the hindus. He ruefully regretted that a Catholic priest who dared to expatiate upon the debt of India to Christianity, was dethroned from his position.

When asked, was it below the dignity of a Hindu to resort to missionary effort, Swami Vivekananda turned to a little book and read a passage from an edict of the period of Ashoka: "It is true the prevalence of essential virtues differs in different

90. Sri Ramakrishna used to say: "One can ascend to the top of a house by means of a ladder or a bamboo or a stair case or a rope, so too diverse are the ways of approaching God, and each religion in the world shows one of the ways". Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna, p. 149.
91. Marie Louise Burke holds that Swami Vivekananda was referring to Bishop Brigandet's Life of Buddha. New Discoveries, p. 208.
sects, but there is a common basis. In this sentence, moderation in the use of功率 is morality. Thus one should not eat one's sector every evening, but tender them on every occasion to honor they deserve. It is observed that the benevolent Ananda was mild because it went against the principle of morality. For this reason" he remarked, "India has suffered in its internal aspect. Therefore strength and bloodshed has advanced other nations. India is a representative of brutal manifestations. By the law of the survival of the fittest... it has fallen under as a power on the earth in the material sense". We return the tremendous energy of the past to all as the lion and the lofty satisfaction of the past to the past sense of the time. There is plainer for a mention of the war, as it is in the best interest of all, to recall the events which are so important in the history during small days.

Other the question of the duty of Jinnah, Jinnah's son, delivered his first lecture on "The new and the ancient".

At the Islamic Council on January 14, 1944, "In large areas, the hazard is literally passed and the knowledge receive no action" so it is believed. Mr. C. R. Puck. "I can see his yet as we..."

... refers to the Glynway Press report on Indian. Mr. is minister was skilled in the work. It was said, the host of toleration, with its vast range, a better fact, is certainly. Mr. M. O. McAvoy, "Imagination from record is still of one's own past recall of at one".Hooker says, Agora, pp. 7-79, 16-37. Puck, ibid., p. 59. Mr. M. W. 18, 14, 4, from India, for e, India Press.

... Ananda. Mr. 19, 26, 1906, Indian. Mr.
stepped upon the platform, a regal, majestic figure, vital, forceful, dominant, and at the first sound of the powerful voice, a voice all music—like the plaintive silver strain of a solemn harp, a dirg, a dirg, vibrant, resonant—there was a rush, a stir which that could almost be felt, and the vast audience thrilled as never.

Some living voice was introduced to the audience by Bishop... ...since who tacitly reasserted that the day was not far off when people of all tongues and all races would “be one to you... ...love one another in the service of a common Divine Reckoner.” The first chapter to leave the reader an hour or two could hardly be said to contain the words of excitation and movement... ...relation and the thrill, and the one and the same in the mind of the individual. A religious...
had anything in the house a "guest" never went dissatisfied. India was a poor country yet no one died of hunger except in times of famine. For the Hindus all "non-self" was good and "all self" was bad.

The Swami argued that the caste system indicated only a man's profession and had nothing to do with religion. He implied thereby that the four castes were not meant to divide human society but to assign to different men the tasks for which they were fit. "According to the three modes of nature and the work ascribed to them", says Lord Krishna, the four divisions of human society were created by Me. They are the

101. Sri Ramakrishna used to say: "The 'I' which makes a man wordly and attached to lust and wealth is mischievous. The individual soul and the Universal Being are separated because this 'I' comes in between them. If a stick is placed on the surface of water, the water will appear to be divided into two sections. The stick is the 'I' or the 'I'. Take that away, and the water becomes again undivided". Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna, p.56.

102. The Bhagavad-Gita (IV/13)
The duties of Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras as evidenced by their Swabhavat(nature) are delineated in the following verses of the Bhagavad-Gita.

"Severenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, forgiveness, and also uprightness, knowledge, realisation, belief in a hereafter—are the duties of the Brahmanas born of their own nature" (xviii/42).

"Prowess, splendour, firmness, dexterity, and also not fleeing from battle, generosity, lordliness—these are the duties of the Kshatriyas, born of their own nature (xviii/43)

"Agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade are the duties of the Vaisyas and service is the duty of the Sudras, born of their own nature" (xviii/44).
Brahmanas- "with a major portion of Sattwa, a little of Rajas and with minimum Tamas; the Kshatriyas- mostly Rajas with some Sattwa, and a dash of Tamas; the Vaisyas- with more Rajas, less Sattwa and some Tamas; and the Sudras- mostly Tamas, a little Rajas, with only a (fraction) of Sattwa".

Swami Vivekananda tried to prove that India was more civilized than any other nation of the world. Like Emerson he believed that the true test of civilisation was not "the census, not the size of cities nor the crops" but the kind of men the country could produce. "The highest type of civilisation", he said, "is found in him who has learnt to conquer Self". This condition was found in India more than in any other country of the world, "for there the material conditions are subservient to the spiritual and the individual looks for the soul manifestations in everything that has life, studying nature to this end". He observed that Indian spirituality had survived the onslaught of foreign invaders. There was something "christlike in the humility of the people to endure the stings and arrows of outraged fortune". He contended that the Hindus did not need Christian missionaries for their spiritual upliftment- a dip into their own philosophy could goad them to become, "gentle, sweet, considerate and affectionate towards all God's creatures, whether man or beast". He exhorted the missionaries to come to India "and drink of the pure waters and see what a beautiful influence upon a great community have the lives of the multitude of good and holy men". Referring to the high moral

104. Cited in The International Thesaurus of Quotations, p.86.
standard of Indians he observed that while in England one in every four hundred persons happened to be a drunkard, the proportion was one to a million in India. He repudiated the belief that the women had a low status in Indian society. "In the christian creed", he remarked, "they are all prophets, while in India the holy women occupy a conspicuous place in the holy books".

Swami Vivekananda explained in detail the hindu way of worship, the ablutionary ceremonies performed during the time of marriage, and the funeral rites. He was frequently applauded during his speech. The Detroit Tribune, The Evening News and the Detroit Journal gave wide coverage to the Swami. "His eloquent and graceful manner pleased his listeners who followed him from beginning to end with the closest attention".

The orthodox clergymen were startled by some of the observations made by Swami Vivekananda. The Detroit Free Press expressed surprise that the Swami who was an inveterate critic of Christian missionaries should have been introduced by Bishop Ninde. The Bishop, in turn, wrote a rejoinder to the press in which he stated that he had been fooled by the organisers who assured him that "nothing would be said that could be at all offensive to christian ears". This was followed by a state of editorials and letters in the Detroit newspapers, both for and against Swami Vivekananda, who became a talk of the town. The Swami, however, retained the serenity of a Buddha and did not

106. Ibid.
107. Ibid.
108. Ibid.
participate in this controversy.

In his second lecture on February 15, 1894, Swami Vivekananda spoke on "Hindu philosophy" and delineated its ethics, metaphysics and epistemology. He said that the Hindus believed in the existence of a sixth sense and in Revelation. He glorified the spirit of tolerance among Indians and took pride in being a Hindu. He remarked that the Hindus had their faults and superstitions but they never resorted to persecution like Christians. He recalled the times when India gave shelter to the Jews and the Persians after they were driven from their homelands. Swami Vivekananda explained the Hindu belief that a man did not move from error to truth but from lower truth to higher truth. He, however, sarcastically remarked that a person who was converted to Christianity was asked to throw away all his former beliefs and "accept the newer in its entirety". He ridiculed the idea of some missionaries to Christianize the whole world, "for that would be the death of religion". "No emotion can be produced except by clashing elements upon the mind", he remarked. "It is the revulsion of change, the new light, the presentation of the new to the old, that elicits sensation". As usual he stressed that all religions were good in their own way. Besides that, he expounded the Hindu theory of creation, discussed the relationship between the microcosm and the macrocosm and made a brief appraisal of the agnostic...
schools of Indian philosophy. He was loudly cheered when he described Buddhism as the first missionary religion of the world which had "secured the largest number of converts" without shedding a drop of blood.

Swami Vivekananda praised the richness of the Sanskrit language in which the Hindu scriptures and literature were composed in ancient India. His description seemed akin to that of the Eighteenth century British Orientalist, Sir William Jones (1776-1794), who remarked that the language was wonderful in structure "more perfect than the Greek, more copious than Latin and more exquisitely refined than either".

The local press did not quite appreciate the discourse. One newspaper found it to be "disappointing" for "the whole lecture was made up of pointed little cracks at the Christian religion! Another newspaper noted that the audience was "gratified to only a limited extent" and regretted that while the Swami made "a number of cute little jabs" at Christianity and "alluded to the trouble and misery that had been caused by its introduction into heathen countries", he skillfully avoided any comparison between the social conditions of the people of India and America. The Detroit Tribune alone published the speech without any derogatory remark. Marie Louise Burke holds that Swami Vivekananda's "jabs" were directed for the most part towards the contention that the whole world must become Christian or be doomed. Such "jabs" even when embodied in a long lecture on

115. Ibid.
"Hindu philosophy" and spoken without rancour, entered the orthodox mind as lightening thrusts, obliterating everything else that had been said.

During his third lecture at the Unitarian Church on February 17, 1894, Swami Vivekananda repudiated a widespread belief that the people of India threw their children into jaws of crocodiles, killed themselves under the wheels of the juggernaut and burnt the widows with their husbands. Later he spoke on "The Divinity of Man"—a subject which he discussed almost ubiquitously in America. For nearly two hours, reported the Detroit Free Press, Swami Vivekananda wove "a metaphysical texture on affairs human and divine, so logical that he made science appear like common sense. It was a beautiful logical garment... replete with as many bright colours and as attractive and pleasing to contemplate as one of the many-hued fabrics made by hand in his native land and scented with the most seductive fragrance of the Orient". He argued that every human being was the embodiment of an individual soul—"a spiritual atom". Human body was but a shell; it was subject to various transformations. But the soul was immutable and unchangeable. It reflected itself in all activities of life; mind was but a manifestation of it. He implied thereby that the material body minus consciousness was a dead body. He compared human souls to the numberless reflections of the sun in a lake and thereby argued that human beings were divine in nature. The

122. Ibid.
realisation of individual infinity was tantamount to achieving salvation. He made a reference to Emanuel Swedenborg, who had received much inspiration from this doctrine.

The science of the soul is explicitly delineated in the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-gita. While speaking, Swami Vivekananda profusely borrowed from these scriptures. The comparison of the soul to sun-shine molecules was based on the Prasnopanisad. Its description as a particle of the Supreme Soul was based on the Mundakopanisad. Its equation with consciousness was derived from the Katha Upanishad. Its relation

123. The Prasnopanisad (III/12) says:

उपासिः प्राणम् प्रात्मं प्राप्तं प्राणम् प्राप्तं ---

"The wise man attains immortality having known the origin of the Prana (the life air), its advent, place, all-pervasiveness, its five fold distribution, and its internal aspect."

124. Swedish natural scientist and mystic (1688-1772).

125. Sister Christine records: "From the Upanishads he quoted constantly, first chanting in the original Sanskrit then giving a free poetic translation. Great as was the impression which his spoken words made, the chanting produced an even greater effect". His Eastern and Western Admirers, p.163.

126. The identification of the soul with the sun forms a significant part of Vedantic metaphysics. The Prasnopanisad (1/8) says:

"(The wise know him who is) of universal form, full of rays, omniscient, the basis of all (life), the effulgent one, and (great) giver of heat. There rises the sun of thousand rays who is manifold in existence and the life of all creatures."

127. The Mundakopanisad (III. 1.9) says:

"The soul is atomic in size and can be perceived by perfect intelligence."

128. According to Hindu scriptures consciousness does not fall in the domain of matter. It is the proof of the presence of the soul as 'light is the proof of the existence of the sun'.
with material body and mind was taken from the Isavasyopanisad. The general purport of the lecture was based on the Bhagvad-gita. He argued that each soul was struggling for the attainment of its individual infinity through various mediums. "A bubble of air in a glass of water", he remarked, "strives to join with the mass of air without; in oil, vinegar and other materials of differing intensity, its efforts are less or more retarded according to the liquid". Thus by bringing in the relative densities of the medium through which the air-bubble forces its way upwards, he vividly illustrated the idea that all religions were true. He observed that conversion was nothing...
but perversion. To try abruptly to change a nation's religion would be as irrational as an Asian asking the Mississippi "to go back to the starting place and commence all over again". Or, an Americal visiting the Himalayas and directing the Ganges to change its course.

Swami Vivekananda added that the Hindu religion was not "egotistical in its aspirations" nor it held up promises of reward or threats of punishment. It animated human beings to attain "infinity by non-self". On the other hand the Christian creed was guided by the precept: "Always self! always self". The system of bribing men to become Christians was "atrocious" and "horribly demoralising". As regards religion, he remarked that there were two extremes, the bigot and the atheist. "There was some good in the atheist but the bigot lived only for his little self". He concluded that while the Hindu communed with the inner spirit during meditation, the Christian saw God "seated somewhere above us".

In an editorial entitled "The Hindu Among Us" the Detroit Tribune remarked that those whose knowledge of India was based on the school book pictures of the Hindu mother standing on the bank of the Ganges and throwing her baby to a crocodile, and of the great car of juggernaut rolling over and crushing scores of devotees, must be astonished to see Swami Vivekananda talk before "intelligent Americal audiences, and hold their attention to the point of absolute silence". After applauding his

134. Ibid.
135. Ibid.
oratorical skill and "nicety of expression", the paper noted that it was a good sign when Christians were willing to hear all that can be said about religions other than their own.

What the Detroit Tribune wrote about the change in the attitude of Christians was true only of the liberal and broad-minded people. The orthodox Christians were annoyed when on February 18, the Reverend Reed Stuart of the Unitarian Church delivered a sermon entitled, "The Gate Opening Towards the East" and Rabbi Grossman of the Temple Beth El spoke on "what Vive Kananda Has Taught Us". On the basis of a letter that one lady wrote under the pseudonym "Justitia" to the Detroit Free Press of February 23, it may be said that Swami Vivekananda faced hostility from many quarters after he said some "caustic truths" about Americans. "He has been preached against in almost savage terms; she remarked, "from some of our orthodox pulpits by ministers who know nothing of what he has said.... How dare these men pronounce upon him without first hearing him"! "Judge not that ye be not Judged", she warned. The letters sparked off a controversy in the Detroit Free Press which continued even after Swami Vivekananda had left the city.

Swami Vivekananda's original programme was to remain in Detroit till February 19, but at the persistent demand of people he extended his stay till February 23 and delivered two more lectures. Sister Christine reluctantly set out one cold February

139. The Detroit Tribune, February 19, 1894, A., pp. 250-56.
night to listen to Swami Vivekananda "found the touchstone for which she had searched so long". "The audience listened spellbound", she wrote, "while he wove the fabric as glowing and full of colour as a beautiful Kashmir Shawl. Now a thread of humour now one of tragedy, many of serious thought, many of aspiration, of lofty idealism, of wisdom... Those who came to the first lecture at the Unitarian Church came to the second and to the third, bringing others with them. "Come", they said, "hear this wonderful man. He is like no one we have ever heard, and they came until there was no place to hold them".

On February 20, 1894, Swami Vivekananda spoke on "The Love of God" at the Unitarian Church before an audience, which as, Detroit Free Press, reported, was the largest "that he has yet had". Unlike Sigmund Freud who "built astonishing castles of psychiatry out of the erotic possibilities of thumbsucking and nursing at the breast" to describe the physiological foundation of love, Swami Vivekananda laid down the spiritual bases of love, which was not passion but a pure and holy feeling for God. It was not being egoistic but becoming unselfish. Love, he said, was a sacrifice. "It never takes, but it always gives". The Hindu loved God for love's sake and not with any selfish motive in mind; he never prayed for salvation or "a happy hereafter". He observed that there were two classes of people who professed

140. His Eastern and Western Admirers, pp.160-63.
According to the Detroit Tribune of February 21, 1894 the audience was composed of people who hailed from Jefferson Avenue and the Upper part of Woodward Avenue - the two fashionable residential centres of Detroit. Facsimiles in The Complete Works, Vol.III, pp.503-4; Burke, pp.279-50.
142. Ibid.
religion—those who pursued knowledge and those who believed in devotion. The former achieved "experience"; the latter received "Love". He regretted that the Christians loved God for the fulfilment of their worldly desires. In their prayers they asked for "all kinds of selfish things". Religion was "a mere hobby and fashion" with them. In a lampooning way he remarked: Love for God in India is different from love for God elsewhere, because when you get into a country where the thermometer reads 40 degrees below zero, the temperament of the people changes. The aspirations of the people in the climate where the books of the Bible are said to have been written were different from the aspirations of the cold-blooded Western nations, who are more apt to worship the Almighty dollar with the warmth expressed in the songs than to worship God".

Swami Vivekananda described the songs of Solomon as "the most beautiful portion" of the Bible and compared them to the prayers of an Indian Saint, presumably Mira Bai. After marriage, she told her husband that she was already married, when asked, "To whom?", she replied: "To God". In one of her songs she made the prayer: "I ask not for wealth; I ask not for position; I asked not for salvation; place me in a hundred hells if it be

143. Ibid.
147. Swami Vivekananda expressed his anguish over the fact that there was proposal to remove the Songs of Solomon from the Bible, on the alleged plea that they were not addressed to God but to a young woman whom Solomon loved.

Ibid.
Thy wish, but let me continue to regard Thee as my love”.

The Swami clinched the argument by saying that a true lover of God would be so engrossed in Him that he would have no time to tell members of another sect that they were wrong “and strive to bring him to his way of thinking”. His illusion was, no doubt, to Christian missionaries, and notwithstanding the frequent applause theDetroit Tribune regretted: “The major portion of his address was an attack on the Christian religion. The religion of the Indian and the love of his God was the minor portion”.

In almost all his lectures at Detroit Swami Vivekananda pricked the aego of orthodox clergymen. But his criticism of christianity was never so pointed and piercing as on February 21, when he spoke to a large audience at Mrs. Bagley’s home on “The Ancient Hindu Philosophers and what they have taught”. He started by saying that the tendency of the Hindu was “not to destroy but to harmonise everything”, not to oppose new ideas but to synthesise them with the existing ones. He described Lord Krishna as the embodiment of God and quoted two hymns from the Bhagvad-gita—first, in which the Lord describes himself as the source of all knowledge and the inspirer

149. Ibid.
of all religions; the second in which He says that "for the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of righteousness, I am born in every age". He also quoted a hymn from the *Mundakopanisad* to show that all religions were but different paths to reach the Almighty. The Hindu never held that his was the only way to salvation. "We

151. It seems that Swami Vivekananda misquoted the *Bhagavad-gita*. The original version reads:

*“I am seated in everyone's heart, and from Me come remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness. By all the Vedas am I to be known; indeed I am the compiler of Vedanta, and I am the knower of the Vedas”. The *Bhagavad-gita* (XV/15). Certain hymns in the ninth chapter of the *Gita* appear to convey the same sense vis. verse 18 reads: “I am the father of this Universe, the mother, the support, and the grandsire. I am the object of knowledge, the purifier and the syllable Om. I am also the Rk, the Sama, and the Yajur(vedas)".

152. The *Bhagavad-gita*(IV/7-8).

153. The *Mundakopanisad*(III.2.9) says:

*“As rivers, flowing, disappear in the ocean, losing name and form, so the wise man, free from name and form, goes unto the highest of the high—The Supreme Divinity".*
never fight any religion", he said, "because we see the holiest of men in all countries". Svarga-kamo-yajeta- "The heaven-desiring must sacrifice". So goes a famous Vedic saying. Swami Vivekananda observed that while the "gentle" Hindu inured food as sacrificial offerings, the Christian nurtured "the idea of salvation through Jesus' blood", and the jew believed in "sacrificing" the lamb after transferring his sins upon it. He remarked that he would refuse to go to heaven by anyone's blood.

Swami Vivekananda argued that the hindu custom of image worship was different from what the westerners had heard about "the Babylonian and the roman idolatry". The "blocks of stone" were not lifeless representations. As the hindu prostrated before the Idol, he prayed: "O, Lord, I cannot conceive thee as spirit so let me conceive thee in this form". With his eyes closed, he chanted: I am Existence Infinite, Bliss Infinite and Knowledge Infinite; I am He, I am He. I am not bound by books, or holy places, or pilgrimages, or anything whatsoever; I am Existence Absolute, Bliss Absolute; I am He, I am He. He remarked that the Christian missionaries in India could tell the hindu that he would go to hell because of his beliefs but could not say the same to the muslim for 'the sword will be out'.

Taking a cue from the Mundakopanisad Swami Vivekananda contended that religion was not knowledge but realisation. "Can

155. Ibid.
156. Ibid.
157. The Mundakopanisad(III.2.2)says: सो प्रयत्न स्तन्यते स्तन्यते ते स्वयं देवताः
न स्तन्यते स्तन्यते ते स्वयं देवताः।

"The Self is not attained through discourses nor through intellectuality, not through much learning, it is gained only by him who longs for It with the whole heart. For to such a one the Self reveals Its own nature".
you think of spirit as spirit?" he asked. "...No matter how much theology you may learn— you may be a great philosopher and greater theologian— but the Hindu boy would say, 'Well that has nothing to do with religion'." Conscious of the hypocrisy of Christian missionaries he remarked: "You train and educate and clothe and pay men to do what? To come over to my country to curse and abuse all my forefathers... If I just touch you with the least bit of criticism, with the kindest of purpose, you shrink and cry, 'Don't touch us; we are Americans... we are sensitive plants... And whenever your ministers criticise us, let them remember this: If all India stands up and takes all the mud that is at the bottom of the Indian Ocean and throws it up against the western countries, it will not be doing an infinitesimal part of that which you are doing to us". "Did we ever send one missionary to convert anybody in the world?" he asked. "Welcome to your religion, but allow me to have mine". Arguing on the basis of statistics he remarked that the number of converts to Christianity had remained immeasurably small, despite the use of force. "With all your brags and boasting", he said in a voice choked with emotion, "where has your Christianity succeeded without the sword? Show me one place in the whole world. One, I say, throughout the history of the Christian religion— one; I don't want two". He warned the Christians not to be misled by the notion that violence would make them paramount in the world. The Arabs boasted that they were 'the only one' because they could kill others."And where is the Arab now?" he asked, "The Romans used to say that, and where are they now? Blessed are the peace-makers; they shall
Swami Vivekananda felt that the Western civilization which propped on selfishness, competition and enjoyment would not survive if it did not adhere to the ideals of Christ. "You are not Christians", he thundered. "No, as a nation you are not. Go back to Christ. Go back to him who had nowhere to lay his head.... Yours is a religion preached in the name of luxury. What an irony of fate! Reverse this, if you want to live, reverse this". The audience at Mrs. Bagley's home was roused to absolute frenzy. The Detroit Journal of the next day described the lecture as "His Parting Shot". The Swami left for Ada thereafter to reach Chicago. The orthodox clergymen were, however, stunned to hear a 'pagan' criticise them in their own land and began to vilify him or as the Detroit Journal put it "Swite Kananda on Hip and Thigh". The second International Convention of the student volunteer missionary movement which was held in the city

159. Ibid.
161. Swami Vivekananda's discourse at the Ada Opera House (February 23) on "The Divinity of Man" was more or less a repetition of the observations he had made in his third lecture at Detroit. He spoke for about half an hour and afterwards replied to a flurry of questions coming from a distinguished audience which the Ada Record of February 28 reported, consisted of preachers and professors, physicians and philosophers, saints and citizens. "The speaker responded to all... in an affable manner", said the weekly, "and in several instances turned the laugh on the inquirer". Facsimiles in The Complete Works, Vol. II., pp. 477-79; Burke, pp. 37-81.
from February 28 to March 4, 1894 strove to provide an antidote
to the impression created by the Swami on the mind of Detroiter.
A war of letters between his supporters and opponents
began in newspapers.

Swami Vivekananda's return to Detroit on March 9, 1894 was
"a direct reply to his antagonists". On March 11, he spoke for
two and a half hours to a crowded audience at the opera House
on "Christian Missions in India". According to the Detroit
Tribune, the lecture was intended as an answer to the caluminous
statements of missionaries made against him during the past few weeks. Hon.T.W.Palmer who introduced the Swami prefaced his
speech by narrating the famous tale of two knights of honour
who discovered a shield with copper on one side and silver on
the other but unfortunately saw it from different standpoints
and drew their swords to decide what metal it was. In the course
of fighting they fell on opposite sides and realised their mistake. Hon.Palmer stated that Swami Vivekananda was a pagan
in the eyes of Christian missionaries, but he belonged to a
religion which was older than theirs. "I am sure" he said, that it will be pleasant to hear from the copper side of the shield.
we have looked at it only from the silver side".

Swami Vivekananda was loudly cheered as he moved towards the dais. After giving a brief picture of Indian society he discussed the missionary efforts to christianize India. The

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165. Ibid.
Spaniards who were the first to come used violence to achieve this objective. He said amidst laughter that once in their missionary zeal they destroyed a foot-long tooth relic of Buddha preserved in a temple near Ceylon, considering it to be the original Hutchinson structure of the dental arch. They converted a few hundred and killed a few thousand and there, he said, "Spain stops in the history of missionary efforts among the Buddhists.

Then came the Portuguese on the Western Coast of India. They found a temple at Bombay built in the form of a body with three heads projecting the Hindu belief in the Trinity. But they could not make out any meaning and destroyed it. After that they slaughtered many people and converted a few at the point of bayonet. "But Catholic Christianity soon relaxed". When the East India Company acquired power it did not encourage the missionaries. The Hindus were the first to welcome them, "not the Englishmen". The early missionaries were amiable and humane and did not vilify the natives of India or spread falsehoods about them. Dr. Long was one such person who was put behind bars for rendering a Hindu drama into English which projected the cruelties of indigo planters. After the establishment of British paramountcy the missionary enterprise became stagnant.

"The great heart of India", is today absolutely untouched by missionary effort", said the Swami. The missionaries

did not mix up with the common people and stayed with their families in "the little white colony". There was not a single Christian missionary who knew the Sanskrit language. "How can a man", he asked, "absolutely ignorant of the people and their traditions get into sympathy with them?" The missionaries were incompetent and it was useless to spend money to make converts as no real purpose was being served. Besides that Swami Vivekananda described the methods of conversion as "absolutely absurd". The only band of converts around each missionary was composed of those dependent on him for a living. "We sometimes have famines in India", he said. "And so the young(Baptist)missionaries will hang about "the fag end of a famine and give a starving native 5 Shillings, and there you have him, a ready-made Christian....when a methodist missionary comes along he gives the same native 5 Shillings, and his name is again registered as a convert". Swami Vivekananda decried the use of force for conversion and remarked that the number of Buddhists who never used violence, was double the number of converts of any other religion. The muslims, on the other hand, could proselytise only to an infinitesimal degree, even after "waving the sword". Swami Vivekananda blamed the Christian nations for drenching the world with "bloodshed and tyranny". "You kill and murder and bring drunkenness and disease in our country, and then add insult to injury by preaching Christ and Him crucified. What Christian voice goes through the land protesting against such horrors?" he asked. "I have never heard any", he said.

169. Ibid.
Though Swami Vivekananda appreciated the efforts of missionaries for the spread of education, he observed that there could be no conversions from schools. "The Hindoo boy is very clever," he said, "He takes the bait but never gets the hook". The girls, like the boys, learnt practical things like knitting from the lady missionaries who came to their houses but they, too, would not be converted. He argued that "the atheism and scepticism at home" was pushing the missionaries out all over the world. Ironically, they did not rise above narrow national sentiments.

Nor were they "Christ-like". With a sarcastic ring in his voice he observed that Jesus did not go about among the English officials attending champagne suppers nor did "he care to have his wife get into high European society". "If your missionary does not follow Christ", he asked, "what right has he to call himself a Christian?" We want missionaries of Christ. Let such come to India by the hundreds and thousands. Bring Christ's life to us and let it permeate the very core of society. Let Him be preached in every village and corner of India. But don't have your missionaries choose their profession as a means of livelihood.

Swami Vivekananda ruled out the possibility of India being converted to Christianity. Even if it was feasible it ought not to be done. He argued that it was dangerous to have only one religion in the world. "Why couldn't you convert the Jew?" he asked, "why couldn't you make the Persians Christians....Why cannot you make an impression on India and China and Japan?

Because oneness of mental temperament all over the world would

173. Ibid.
175. Detroit Tribune, March 12, 1894, facsimile in Burke, pp.316-22.
be death. Nature is too wise to allow such things”. He asked
the Christians to cultivate the virtue of appreciating others.
"It is not enough that there be goodness in people; you must
have the appreciation of goodness within yourselves in order
to distinguish it". But he regretted: "You drink the idea in
your mother's milk that you are angels and we are devils".

Swami Vivekananda held that the quintessentials of all
religions were the same. In every religion there was the esse­
nential truth and the non-essential casket. The shell of an
oyster was not tempting but it contained a shining pearl.
He created a dichotomy between the philosophical and practical
aspects of religion, and observed that the Hindus deprecate
d"the fables and miracles" of the Bible and not the Sermon on
the Mount or the life of Jesus Christ, Similarly the Christians
disparaged the dogmas and superstitions of the Hindus, but they
did not speak against their morality or philosophy.

He exhorted the missionaries to give up, first, the idea of
nationality, and secondly, the idea of sects. "God's children
have no sects”. He lampooned the Christians who went about sav­
ing the souls of others, "in many instances forget their own
souls". As regards Indian women he remarked that they were not
elevated in the material sense of the term. Still they were
more virtuous as compared to their Americal counterparts who
were "devotees of novels and balls”. Swami Vivekananda concluded

176. Ibid.
177. Detroit Free Press, March 12, 1894, facsimiles in The
179. Ibid.
180. Detroit Free Press, March 12, 1894, facsimiles in The
181. Ibid.
his speech by reciting a Buddhist prayer which says: "I bow down to all the saints; I bow down to all the prophets; I bow down to all holy men and women all over the world".

The audience at the Opera house listened to the discourse with rapt attention and "once or twice applauded him heartily". Swami Vivekananda's critics were nonplussed at least for the time being. Hon'ble Palmer was in ecstasies. The Swami himself felt that it was his best lecture. The Detroit newspapers reported it in detail on the following day. The *Evening News* displayed courage by sermonising the missionaries to live up to the ideals of Jesus Christ.

"I got only 127 dollars by my last lecture. I am going to speak again in Detroit on Monday", so wrote Swami Vivekananda to the Hale Sisters on March 15, 1894, about his lecture engagements of the 11th and 19th instant. The topic for the latter date was "Buddhism". He was introduced by Hon. Don K. Dickinson to an audience of about five hundred at the Auditorium. Swami Vivekananda reviewed the legends appended to the birth of Buddha, his propensity to probe into the unknown phenomena, his queries regarding the cause of misery, agony, death and disease, his earnest struggle to know the origin of creation and the reasons for existence, his craving for peace and finally, his

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182. Ibid.
187. According to the *Detroit Tribune* of March 20, 1894, the audience numbered about 150. Facsimile in The *Complete Works*, Vol.VII, pp.427-28; Burke, pp.342-43. See Burke, p.342. Keeping in view the sensation created by the Swami in the city, the report of the *Journal* seems more reliable.
enlightenment. He portrayed the sweetness of his character, the majesty of his personality and the profundity of his thought. The Swami described Buddha as a perfect model of all the virtues he preached—his self abnegation, his charity, "his unalterable sweetness of disposition never failed him even once."

In the Buddha's philosophy there was no place for heaven or hell, worship or rituals, theology or metaphysics. He maintained silence over the existence of God and did not preach the transmigration of souls like the Hindu seers. He believed that the real treasure of man was laid up through charity and piety, temperance and self control and the perception of self. When his disciples asked him why should they be good, he replied: "Because you inherited good. Let you in your turn leave some heritage of good to your successors. Let us all help the onward march of accumulated goodness, for goodness' sake". He exhorted his disciples to keep an unprejudiced mind and incalculable faith in themselves. "Be ye lamps unto yourselves", he said, on his death bed, "be ye a refuge to yourselves; hold fast to the truth; look not for refuge to anyone besides yourselves". The Buddha prescribed a code of morality for the attainment of Nirvana (salvation) or the highest bliss. He was the first to speak against the evil of drinking, the first to protest against the inequality of man. He came as "a saviour to the downtrodden millions of India" and initiated missionary enterprise in religious history. He concluded by saying that Buddhism laid the

189. Ibid.
190. Ibid.
Swami Vivekananda's lecture on Buddhism was to be his "farewell lecture" in the city. He was, however, prevailed upon to speak on "The Women of India" on March 24. Meanwhile, he visited Bay City and Saginaw— the ports of East Michigan and delivered two lectures on March 20 and 21. At Bay City the venue was the Opera house; at Saginaw, the Academy of Music. He was introduced by Dr. C. T. Newkirk and Hon. Rowland Common, respectively. In Bay City he lodged at the Fraser House; in Saginaw at the Hotel Vincent. At both the places he was interviewed by the reporters of the Bay City Daily Tribune and the Saginaw Courier Herald on March 20 and 21 respectively.

In his lecture at Bay City Swami Vivekananda justified the doctrine of Reincarnation, discussed the origin of creation and stressed the divinity of human beings. According to him the chief characteristic of Hinduism was "its tolerance of other religions and beliefs". He criticised the religious history of Christians especially that of the presbyterian church and scored the Americans "for their worship of the almighty dollar". Even the priests were not an exception. "He wanted to know how long they would stay in the church if they had to depend on getting their pay from God". A criminal in India would lose his position in the social hierarchy even if he had money. But in America even a murderer could reach the top if he possessed "a million dollars". It may be noted that Swami Vivekananda was...
not the first to ridicule the megalomaniac materialism of the
West. A famous English proverb goes: "An ass loaded with gold
climbs to the top of a castle". The English lexicographer
Samuel Johnson remarked: "Go into the street, and give one man
a lecture on morality, and another a shilling, and see which
will respect you most. "The 19th century American essayist,
Emerson ruefully admitted that the value of a dollar was social,
'as it is created by society'. Swami Vivekananda asked Americans
to be austere, and cultivate the ideal of toleration. The Bay
City Times Press described the lecture as interesting. "It is
rarely", wrote the paper, "that Bay City people have the oppo­
tunity of listening to a lecture similar to the one given last
evening by Swami Vivekananda".

At Saginaw Swami Vivekananda spoke on "The harmony of
religions" and repeated what he said at Detroit in his lecture
"Christian Missions in India". "Be pure", he urged,"give up
superstition and see the wonderful harmony of nature...each
creed has had something to add to the wonderful structure". He
dilated at some length on the life and teachings of Buddha and
remarked that "the entire system of the Roman Catholic Church
had been taken from the books of Buddhā". He referred to the

196. Ibid.
197. Bay City Times Press, March 21, 1894, facsimile in Burke,
p.383.
198. Saginaw Evening News, March 22, 1894, facsimiles in The
Complete Works;Vol.II,pp.482-84;Burke,pp.388-90.
199. Ibid.
wretched condition of Blacks in America and pleaded for the
200
universal brotherhood of man. In conclusion, he asked Americans
to follow the Buddhist apothegm: "Be good, be moral, be perfect".

The Saginaw Evening News of March 22 reported that several
among the audience "expressed a desire to hear him again". But
Swami Vivekananda returned to Detroit to fulfil his lecture
engagement of the 24th instant. At a number of occasions he had
answered questions regarding the women of India. The informa-
tion he thus imparted and the interest he aroused "suggested
a public lecture from him on the subject.

Swami Vivekananda stated that the woman in India was a
visible manifestation of God. She was as free as perfect. Some
of them were included in the pantheon of prophetesses in the
holy books. In the Vedic age they enjoyed equal rights with
with the menfolk. They took an active part in the sacrifices,
sang the Saman Chants and performed ritual acts. He argued that
it was unfair to judge the women of the East by the Western
standard. "In the West, woman is the wife, in the East she is
the mother". ”Accept mother as a goddess", is a famous

200. Saginaw Courier Herald, March 22, 1894, facsimiles in The
201. Saginaw Evening News, March 22, 1894, facsimiles in The
202. One such occasion was an informal afternoon talk on March
16. It was reported by the Detroit Tribune on the follow-
ing day. See Burke, pp.337-41.
203. Detroit Tribune, April 1, 1894, facsimiles in The Complete
204. It may be mentioned that certain sacrifices could be per-
formed only by women such as the Sita harvest sacrifice,
the Rudrabali sacrifice to ensure the fecundity of cattle
and the Rudrayoga to secure good husbands for daughters.
205. Detroit Free Press, March 25, 1894, facsimiles in The
Vedic saying. Even the monks were required to pay obeissance to their mothers. Chastity was the hallmark of women. "The girls of India", he said, "would die if they like American girls, were obliged to expose half their bodies to the vulgar gaze of young men". Swami Vivekananda repudiated the belief that Indian mothers threw their children to crocodiles in rivers and challenged if any one in the audience could prove to the contrary. Referring to Suttee he observed that it was not exclusively a Hindu custom. "If it were remembered, that the Christian Church burned old women at the stake there would be less horror expressed regarding the burning of Hindu widows". Besides, he discussed the custom of dowry and the laws of inheritance concerning women.

With an amused twinkle in his eye Swami Vivekananda remarked that American men professed to worship women. Infact they worshipped youth and beauty and never fell in love with "wrinkles and gray hair". He admonished that the future of the world did not depend on law-makers of the present day but on the women.

The Detroit Free Press described the lecture as one of the most interesting Swami Vivekananda had delivered in the city. He left shortly afterward, not to return until the early part of 1896, when, on invitation, he held classes and lectures in

208. Ibid.
Detroit for a period of about two weeks.

Thus ended the most hectic period of Swami Vivekananda’s itinerary in Detroit. It was full of trials and tribulations, adoration and vilification, brawls and broils, tumult and good will. He drew larger audiences than the renowned agnostic Ingersoll—only at Saginaw he talked to “empty seats”. Even his inveterate critics could not resist the temptation of hearing him. His logic was biting but delectable. When he “stabbed” a Western belief he did it ‘with’ a needle and not with a pikestaff. His method was different from that of “conventional” speakers. In his habit of moving about on the stage and talking sometimes in a way that suggested a soliloquy he reminded the Americans of John Fiske. It was said of him that he could apparently go on without much effort and talk for a dozen successive evenings with a new topic and fresh thoughts for every night. It would be hard to imagine him reading from a manuscript of coming to an end of his discourse except for the reason that the time was up. His oriental dress made him a “curiosity”, his eloquence evoked admiration, and his wit, applause. To the liberal Americans he appeared a second Joseph Cook and was placed on the pedestal along with Dr John Elliot and Dr Norman Angell. To American ladies he was “like the latest

213. Ibid.
sensation" and they never grew tired of "talking about him.
They vied with one another to have a close glimpse of him and if he shook hands with anyone she felt blessed. One such lady could not bear to wash her hands for three days after experiencing the thrill of his touch. The daughter of a stern baptist turned a Vedantin.

It may be asked what made Swami Vivekananda a celebrity among American women—his shapely features, his shining eyes, his resonant voice or his gospel? Could this "fascination" for the Swami be interpreted in Freudian terms that opposite sexes attract each other? Of course not. Swami Vivekananda's handsome appearance might have evoked the gamut of "primary emotions" in some women but it would be ludicrous to suggest that everyone who went to his lecture had a depraved mind. The craze for the Swami was mainly due to what psychologists would describe as 'the tendency to be attracted by the novel or strange'. Not all

216. She was Miss Marguerite Cook, a teacher of German language in a Detroit High School.
217. Her name was Charles Erskine Scott Wood, better known as Sara Bard Field—a renowned poetess of her times. Burke, pp. 213-14.
218. Swami Vivekananda wrote to Manmatha Nath Bhattacharya on September 5, 1894: "The women in America are very sentimental and have a mania for romance. I am, however, a strange sort of animal who hasn't any romantic feeling, and therefore they could not sustain any such feeling toward me and they show me great respect. I make all of them call me "father" or "brother". I don't allow them to come near me with any other feeling and gradually they have all been straightened out". The Complete Works, Vol. VII, p. 472.
the women were seriously interested in Hinduism but after listening to Swami Vivekananda they seemed to have developed a genuine appreciation for the oriental thought. If the 'pagan' was so learned how recondite would be his faith which formed the fountain of his thought. No surprisingly some prominent women such as Mrs Mary G. Punke and Miss Greenstidel became his disciples.

The Memphis and Detroit Press blazoned his name. Besides public lectures, his private conversations and his day-to-day engagements were also reported. An orthodox Christian reminisced that for weeks he could not pick up a daily paper without any news about the Swami. He was described as "an artist in thought, an idealist in belief and a dramatist on the platform". As a companion he was found to be 'a most charming man' and as a conversationist he could not be surpassed "in the drawing rooms of any city in the Western world". It was said that his general bearing matched with the "most cultured people of Western etiquette and custom". His popularity was evinced by the fact that he was impersonated in miniature at the children fancy carnival in the famous Strassburg's Hall of Detroit. The orthodox Christians, were, however, scornful of "Detroit's uninhibited excitement over Swami Vivekananda". They denounced him from the

222. Ibid.
pulpit and sent rejoinders to his lecture reports in the press. To some extent their anger was justified for Swami Vivekananda had not only rummaged out the evils of Christianity but also derided the work of missionaries with sarcasm. It would, however, be remembered that he drew a distinction between "true" and "fake" Christianity and told the Americans that he, too, would like to be classed as a Christian 'in a better sense'. "We want missionaries of Christ", he said, and not the mountebanks—hypocritical or self-deceiving men" whose task was incommensurable with their abilities. He knew that he was raising the hornet's nest by ventilating his opinion. Robert G. Ingersoll is said to have cautioned the Swami not to be too bold and outspoken, to be careful in his preaching of new doctrines and his criticisms of the ways of life and thought of the people. "Fifty years ago", he said, "you would have been hanged if you had come to preach in this country, or you would have been burned alive. You would have been stoned out of the villages, if you had come even much later". But Swami Vivekananda stuck to his guns. He might have said with Emily Wolfe: "Truth is on the march; nothing can stop it now".

227. Cited in His Eastern and Western Disciples, p. 327.
228. Ibid.
229. The International Theatrum of Quotations, p. 992.