BOSTON, NEW YORK AND OTHER PARTS OF AMERICA

Definite information about Swami Vivekananda's activities from March 31 to April 12, 1894 is not available. Marie Louise Burke held that before launching his Eastern tour the Swami went to Chicago to spend some time with the Hale family home that served as "his headquarters". However the Swami's letter from Detroit to Miss Mary Hale on March 30 makes no reference to such a stay.

Swami Vivekananda visited Boston sometime in the second week of April. The Boston Evening Transcript of April 5, 1894 anticipated his arrival in an article "Our Coming Hindoo Guest". In all "the glory of his gorgeous orange turban" wrote the paper, "he is coming with letters to a dozen of the best known people here from leaders of thought, action and fashion". Most probably Swami Vivekananda did not deliver any public lecture during this visit. He, however, attended a function in his honour where he answered various questions put to him on philosophy, science and religion.

Swami Vivekananda visited Northampton— a stronghold of Presbyterians, on April 13 and delivered two lectures: one at the City Hall on April 14 and the other at the Smith College on April 15. In the first lecture he sought to prove ethnologically that all human races had cognate relationship and that they differed only "a trifle in color, language, customs and religion".

1. Burke, p.396.
Beside that he made a critical appraisal of the daily life of a Hindu, the customs pertaining to his birth, his educational training, his marriage and his home life. He compared the customs and manners of Hindus to those of the English speaking races and tried to establish the superiority of the East over the West. Hailing him as "the Silver tongued Hindu monk" and "one of the finest representatives of his race," the local daily newspaper, notwithstanding its reservations on some of the observations of the Swami, commented: "The rebuke to the greed for gain, the national vice of luxury-seeking, the 'dollar-caste' sentiment which taints the dominant white European and American races to their mortal danger, morally and civilly, was only too just and superbly well-put, the slow, soft, quiet, unimpassioned musical voice embodying its thought with all the power and fire of the most vehement physical utterance, and went straight to the mark like the 'Thou art the man' of the prophet".

In his lecture at the vesper service of Smith College Swami Vivekananda delineated the idea of the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. He exhorted the youth to rise above prejudice, jealousy and "petty claims of superiority" over others. "We must take care", he said, "lest we become like the frog of the well in the old Hindoo story...." The Northampton Daily Herald reported that "the broadest liberality of true religious sentiment and precept was the hallmark of the discourse. Martha Brown

Fincke, a student of Smith College who was captivated by Swami Vivekananda's "imposing figure" and his "universal gospel" wrote in her Memoirs that after the lecture was over she was visited by "the black-coated and somewhat austere" priests and professors who vainly tried to impress upon him the idea that Christianity was the only true religion. "To me that night he personified power", she wrote, "No doubt these great men of our college-world were narrow-minded, of closed convictions, 'wise in their own conceits'. How could they accept the saying 'Whosoever comes to Me through whatsoever form, I reach Him?"... To them love would not appeal, but power can awe even when it does not force agreement. The discussion beginning with the utmost courtesy became less cordial, then bitterness crept in, a resentment on the part of the champions of Christianity as they felt that it was "thumbs down" for them. And truly it was. The repercussion of the triumph that filled me then is with me to this day".

From Northampton Swami Vivekananda proceeded to Lynn—a sea port in E.Massachusetts on Massachusetts Bay—on invitation of a prominent social leader, Mrs. Francis W. Breed. On the
8. His Eastern and Western Admirers, pp. 150-51.
9. "Mrs Breed wrote to me a stiff burning letter first and then today I got a telegram from her inviting me to be her guest for a week". So wrote Swami Vivekananda to Miss Mary Hale on March 30, 1894. The Complete Works, Vol.VIII, p. 304. Mrs. Breed owned a leather company and was extremely affluent. According to Marie Louise Burke, she was something of a grande dame, strikingly handsome, commanding, majestic and lavish with her money. New Discoveries, p. 409. "I had a very good time in Boston at Mrs Breed's and saw Professor Wright", wrote Swami Vivekananda to Miss Isabelle McKindley on April 26, 1894. The Complete Works, Vol.VII, p. 460.
evidence of the *Lynn City Item* of April 13, 1894, Marie Louise Burke and S.N. Dhar argue that Swami Vivekananda delivered two lectures in the city— the first at the North shore club on April 17 and the second at the Oxford Hall on April 18. It may however, be stated on the basis of the same *Journal* of April 20, that Swami Vivekananda addressed the *Lynn* public on two more occasions at the Oxford hall. It is difficult to find whether Swami Vivekananda created a lasting impression in the city or not for the local press did not report the contents of his lectures. But he did fascinate the women of *Lynn*. "Shades of Parson Cooke defend us" wrote the *Lynn City Item* of April 20, 1894, in a lampooning way, "And one of the addresses to the club composed wholly of women. How would that sound in Hindusthan? The World is making rapid strides".

From Lynn Swami Vivekananda went to New York at the invitation of Mrs Arthur Smith, and Dr. Guernsey. He remained in the city from April 24 to May 6 and delivered two lectures—the first at Mrs Smith's Conversation circle in the Waldorf Hotel on April 24 and the second at Miss Mary Phillip's residence on May 2. Besides that he gave many informal talks, influenced the

11. According to a notation in the Calendar of the North Shore Club the April 17 lecture was entitled "The Manners and Customs of India". Burke, p.408. "I made a hundred dollars at Lynn", wrote Swami Vivekananda to Miss Isabelle McKindley on April 26, 1894, "which I do not send because I have to make my new gown and other nonsense". *The Complete Works*, Vol.VII, p.460.
elite of the city and dined with some prominent men of New York.

From the brief reports of lectures that appeared in the *New York Daily Tribune* of April 25 and May 3, we learn that Swami Vivekananda's topics were "India and Hinduism" and "India and Reincarnation" respectively. In his first lecture Swami Vivekananda justified the doctrine of metempsychosis, explained the mystery of the soul and ridiculed the idea of a "Judgement day". The purport of his talk centred around the theory of Reincarnation. "The Soul", he remarked, "passed from one body to another until it had become a perfect spirit, able to do without the limitations of a body".

In his second lecture Swami Vivekananda created a dichotomy between religion and sect and remarked that while the former accepted the truth of all creeds, the latter clung to one set of beliefs and held prejudices against others. He put Hinduism in the first and Christianity in the second category. Besides he explained the inexorable doctrine of *karma* which formed the totality of a man's thoughts, feelings and actions, and determined the conditions of his next birth. The relentless cycle of birth, death and rebirth explained the journey of the soul.

12. From Swami Vivekananda's letter to Miss Isabelle McKindley dated May 2 (actually May 1), 1894 we learn that he was invited at least twice in the first week of May 1894. "I have eaten a good slice of meat—just now", he wrote in a lighter vein, "because in the evening I am going to speak in a vegetarian dinner.... I have another invitation to lunch with Lyman Abbott day after tomorrow", *The Complete Works*, Vol.VII, p.462. Prominent among those who became his disciples were the renowned singer, Miss Emma Thursby who later joined the New York Vedanta Society and the popular journalist, Leon Landsberg.

from one birth to another. The process ceased when the Soul became perfect. The lecture was attended by prelates, Emersonians and the elite of the city.

Constance Towne's memoirs throw more light on Swami Vivekananda's activities in New York during this period. She wrote that the famous priest Dr. Guernsey once invited him to a dinner party at which every guest represented a different religious creed. Swami Vivekananda wore on that occasion "his orange cassock, a tincture of deep rose-red silk, and his turban of white shot with threads of gold. His feet otherwise bare, were covered by sandals of soft brown leather". There was a tacit understanding among the Christian guests that "everyone should be polite about his or her religious differences with the Swami and his so-called non-Christian ("Pagan" is a hard word!) attitude. Alas! as the dinner progressed the most heated dispute was not with the Swami at all. All of the differences were confined to the evangelical brethren". From time to time Swami Vivekananda explained the raison d'être of some Indian customs besides portraying the grandeur of "his native land". His remarks were succinct and he "always gained his point in philosophy and religion". "A mere broad-minded and tolerant man surely could not have been found anywhere in India", she writes, "to carry out the mission of founding Vedanta centres in America.

15. His eastern and western Admirers, pp.252-56. The exact date on which the dinner was given is disputed. Burke holds that "if the Guernsey's Sunday afternoon dinner was given during Swamiji's first visit to New York, as one can reasonably assume it was, it must have taken place on April 29, this being the only Sunday in his brief stay". New Discoveries, p.418.
"Don't expect to make any money at Boston. Still I must touch the brain of America and stir it up if I can". So wrote Swami Vivekananda to Isabelley McLindley on April 26, 1894.

He had received invitations to visit the city from persons of eminence namely Professor John Henry Wright, Col. Thomas Wentworth Higginson and Julia Ward Howe. Originally Swami Vivekananda's intention was to stay with Professor Wright at Annisquam— as it is evident from the two letters he wrote on April 25 and May 4, 1894 — but he changed his programme and put up in a city hotel instead of going to the suburb. Boston was the centre of Transcendentalists and Unitarians as also "the intellectual Capital" of America. The swami delivered six lectures in the city— the first at Mrs Julia Ward Howe's Women's club on May 7, the second at Radcliffe— a woman college affiliated to Harvard University— on May 9, the third at Mr Colliige's house on May 10, the fourth at the Association Hall on May 14 and the last two at the Association Hall and Sever Hall respectively on May 15. He also addressed on May 15 a women club at Lawrence in N.E. Massachussetts on the Merrimack river at a distance of about twenty five miles from Boston.

17. Colonel Higginson was a liberal Christian whose paper "The Sympathy of Religions" was highly appreciated at the Chicago Parliament of 1893.
18. Julia Ward Howe was President of the New England Woman's Club. She was famous for her expatriation "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and crusaded for universal suffrage and the rights of women. Along with Col. Higginson she was "the last of those men and women who represented the golden age of New England culture, which had reached its height before the civil war". Burke, p.427.
The Boston newspapers did not report the first three lectures of the Swami. However, from Mrs (Professor) Wright's Diary we learn a bit about his second and third lectures. In the former he discussed the fundamentals of Hinduism, the condition of Indian women especially that of widows and pinpointed the evils of America's society. The women wore blank faces when Swami Vivekananda questioned their demeanors and "laughed with the vexed laugh born of a sting". Mrs Wright described the lecture as "most poetic, full of reverence and deep feeling that for the moment makes converts". In his third lecture the Swami lampooned the American nation for "its plutocracy, its bad morals, its lack of religion". "When we are fanatical, he said, "we torture ourselves, we throw ourselves under huge cars, we cut our throats, we lie on spiked beds; but when you are fanatical you cut other people's throats, you torture them by fire and put them on spiked beds! You take very good care of your own skins".

The topics for the fourth and fifth lectures which were delivered in aid of a local charity were "The Manners and Customs of India" and "The Religions of India", respectively. In the former Swami Vivekananda delineated the Hindu ideal of womanhood, justified caste, discussed the pattern of education in India and disapproved of the tendency to criticize everything

23. Ibid. p. 429.
When you judge my religion", he remarked in a voice choked with emotion, "you take it that yours is perfect and mine wrong; and when you criticise the society of India, you suppose it to be uncultured just so far as it does not conform to your standard. That is nonsense". In his fifth lecture Swami Vivekananda analysed the religious beliefs of Muslims, Parsees, Hindus and Jains. The Muslims professed faith in the Old and New Testaments, regarded Jesus Christ as a prophet but "had no church organisation" and considered the Quran to be their Holy book. The Parsees who belonged to "the dualistic ancient Iranian religion" believed that the world was fraught with a struggle between good and evil in which the former would ultimately triumph. Their moral code was "Good Thought, Good Words, Good Deeds". While the parsees regarded the Zendevesta as a sacred scripture the Hindus sought guidance from the Vedas. The Hindu philosophy laid down three

24. Referring to the position of Indian women, Swami Vivekananda remarked: "You say we illtreat our women. What nation in the world has not ill-created its women? In Europe or America a man can marry a woman for money and after capturing her dollars can kick her out. In India, on the contrary, when a woman marries for money, her children are considered slaves... and when a rich man marries, his money passes into the hands of his wife, so that he would be scarcely likely to turn the keeper of his money out of doors."

Swami Vivekananda lashed at the Western attitude towards Indians. "You say we are heathens", he said, "we are uneducated, uncultivated, but we laugh in our sleeves at your want of refinement in telling us such things. With us quality and birth make caste, not money.... Money has made warfare in the world and caused Christians to trample on each other's necks. Jealousy hatred and avariciousness are born of money-getters.... caste saves a man from all this. It makes it possible for a man to live with less money and it brings work to all. The man of Caste has time to think of his soul, and that is what we want in the society of India". Boston Herald, May 15, 1894, facsimiles in The Complete Works, Vol. II, pp. 488-90; Burke, pp. 431-33.

25. Ibid.
different schools of religious thought— the dualistic, the qualified monistic and the monistic— each of which constituted a stage in the process of spiritual development. Swami Vivekananda argued that religion did not mean a plethora of dogmas, ceremonies or books; 'it consisted of looking into the human heart and finding there the truths of God and immortality. Towards the end of his speech he discussed the legacy of Mahavira and applauded the Jainas for their compassion even towards the dumb animals. Their moral code was: "Not to injure others is the highest good".

In his last lecture which was delivered under the auspices of the Harvard Religious Union Swami Vivekananda argued that a truly religious man did not get enmeshed in the petty squabbles of sects or creeds; for he knew that there were many ways to realise the Almighty. He claimed that the Hindus belonging to various sects never bragged that theirs was the only right belief. Besides, he spoke on the order of monks in India who lead a life of "poverty and chastity" and remained above caste.

Though there is scant information regarding the activities of Swami Vivekananda during the summer of 1894 one could surmise on the basis of his epistles that he remained with the Hales throughout June of 1894. While in New York Swami Vivekananda visited Dr and Mrs Guernsey who as, Burke puts it "had evidently taken Swamiji into their family, much as the Hales had done in Chicago and the Bagleys in Detroit. From the

letter which Swami Vivekananda wrote to Mrs George W. Hale from Pishskill Landing we learn that he was reluctant to accept any invitations from the rich people. He made a special mention about a rich lady who had invited him to Swampscott which he declined to accept. However, he visited Swampscott in July which we learn from his letter to the Hale Sisters dated July 26, 1894. From the same we learn about his intentions of visiting Greenacre and Annisquam.

Since his arrival in America, Swami Vivekananda had been constantly on the move— fulfilling lecture engagements, giving interviews and rushing here and there. This hectic life perhaps brought a change in his idea regarding his mission in America. The enthusiasm seemed to be cooling down and he began to think and work along new lines. In his letter to the Hale Sisters he wrote: "I am going to make a Himalayas there (N.Y. State) 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, fighting, kicking, mad whirlpool of American religion. This indicates that Swami Vivekananda was thinking in terms of an Americal Ashrama. He also wished to

30. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. Swami Vivekananda to the Hale Sisters, July 26, 1894; The Complete Works, Vol. VIII, p.317/
expatriate on Hindu philosophy and abandon his plans for raising money in America. In a letter dated August 20, 1894 he wrote to Isabelle McKindley, "I have given up all money making schemes and will be quite satisfied with a bite and a shed and work on". Previously the two main objects of his mission in America had been lecturing about India and raising money for the down-trodden but this summer found him relinquishing both.

At the invitation of Miss Sarah Farmer whom Swami Vivekananda first met in New York he attended the Greenacre religious conference in 1894 in which symposiums were held on all varieties of religious thought- "from Vedanta to the wildest spirit-ualism". He held classes almost every morning under one of the

34. "At this time of the year", wrote Swami Vivekananda to Alasinga on July 11, 1894, "there is not much lecturing to be done here; so I will devote myself to my pen and write. I shall be hard at work all the time, and then, when the cold weather comes and people return to their homes, I shall begin lecturing again and at the same time organise societies". The Complete Works, Vol.V, p.38.

35. Ibid., p.39.

36. From the Greenacre Inn, Swami Vivekananda wrote to the Hale Sisters on July 31, 1894: "This is a big inn and farm house where the Christian scientists are holding a session....It is a beautiful and cool place, no doubt, and many of my old friends of Chicago are here. Mrs Mills, Miss Stockham 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 your scientific dress the whole day.... You will be astounded with the liberty they enjoy in the camp, but they are very good and pure people there- a little erratic and that is all. I shall be here till Saturday next". The Complete Works, Vol.VI, pp.259-60.
tall Lysekloster pines which became famous as "The Swami's Pine". Unfortunately very little is known about his talks but it appears that he spoke more of philosophy than of the manners and customs of India. It was here that he delineated the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta. "I teach them Shivo'ham, Shivo'ham and they all repeat it, innocent and pure as they are brave beyond all bounds", so wrote the Swami to the Hale Sisters on July 31, 1894. He meditated there and spoke in a mood of ecstasy on the most intricate aspects of Vedanta philosophy. The two weeks which Swami Vivekananda spent in Greenacre formed an atmosphere of intense spirituality which enlightened many truth seekers. He was quite satisfied with the outcome of the Greenacre religious conference. "The Greenacre meetings last summer", wrote Swami Vivekananda to Miss S. Farmer on December 29, 1894, "were so wonderful simply because you opened yourself

37. Ibid., p.261.
38. It was in a mood of spiritual rapture that he advised the Hale Sisters to move from the mundane to the supernal side of life. "Instead of materialising the spirit, that is dragging the spiritual to the material plane as these folks do, convert the matter into spirit, catch a glimpse at least every day, of that world of infinite beauty and peace and purity— the spiritual and try to live in it day and night.... Let your souls ascend day and night like an "unbroken sting" into the feet of the Beloved whose throne is in your own hearts and let the rest take care of themselves, that is the body and everything else, life is evanescent, a fleeting dream; youth and beauty fade. Say day and night, "Thou art my father, my mother, my husband, my love, my God— I want nothing but Thee, nothing but thee. Thou in me, I in Thee, I am Thee. Thou art me". Ibid.
39. While at Greenacre Swami Vivekananda caught the fascination of a philanthropist, Mrs Pratt of Kenilworth, who wanted to donate $500 for his future work. "She became so much interested in me", he wrote to the Hale Sisters on August 11, 1894, "but I refused. She has made me promise that I would send word to her whenever I need money, which I hope the Lord will never put me in". The Complete Works, Vol.VIII, p.318.
fully to that thought which has found in you so competent a medium of expression, and because you took your stand on the highest teaching of this thought that the kingdom of heaven already exists".

On an invitation from Thomas Wentworth Higginson who was a famous writer and reformer, Swami Vivekananda visited Plymouth Massachusetts, on August 13, 1894. Two days before he wrote to the Hale Sisters from Greenacre: "On Sunday, I am going to lecture at Plymouth at the "Sympathy of Religions" meetings of Col. Higginson". Unfortunately the lecture delivered before the Free Religious Association at Plymouth is not available but the fact that he spoke before that body seems to indicate his intimacy with them.

Swami Vivekananda landed up with his friends Dr and Mrs Guernsey in New York after leaving Plymouth but stayed with them for a short period and proceeded to the summer resort of Mrs John Bagley at Annisquam, Massachusetts. "I shall be here till Tuesday next at least, on which day I am going to lecture here in Annisquam". So wrote the Swami to Miss Mary Hale on August 31, 1894. It was Swami Vivekananda's second visit to the city

41. Swami Vivekananda to the Hale Sisters, August 11, 1894; The Complete Works, Vol.VIII, p.318. Burke argues that the day on which Swami Vivekananda delivered a lecture at Plymouth was Monday, August 13, and not Sunday as mentioned by the Swami in his epistle to the Hale Sisters. New Discoveries, p.482.
of Annisquam. He first visited it as a guest of Professor J. H. Wright before the commencement of Parliament of Religions and made his lecture debut in a church. He was an unknown Hindu monk at that time—impecunious, forlorn and an object of sarcasm—but now he had become almost a celebrity and possessed sufficient resources for his personal maintenance and his future work in India.

Swami Vivekananda's lecture at Annisquam was briefly reported by the Gloucester Daily Times of September 6, 1894. The Daily noted that the Mechanic Hall was packed to the full to hear Swami Vivekananda, who after having been introduced to the audience by Professor Wright explained the religion of India "from a metaphysical standpoint". It described Swami Vivekananda's ideas as "broad and liberal when practically applied". While the Swami was in Annisquam the American press published extracts from the famous "Madras Address" in which the Hindu community of Southern India had expressed its gratitude to him for his lucid exposition of Hinduism at the Chicago Parliament. Burke held that the Madras Address was "a document that put the seal of official approval upon his year of labor in the West".

From Annisquam Swami Vivekananda went to Boston where he stayed during the month of September 1894. The local dailies

43. Facsimile in Burke, p.484.
44. For Madras Address to Swami Vivekananda, see The Indian Mirror, August 18, 1894.
45. Burke, p.483.
did not take any notice of him perhaps because his visit was not planned. From his epistles however, we learn that he delivered some lectures—most probably at private gatherings.

In his letter to Miss Mary Hale on September 13 he wrote: "I have been in this hotel (Bellevue) for about a week. I will remain in Boston some time yet." In another communication he informed Mrs Ole Bull: "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 have had enough of speaking; now I want to write. I think I will have to go to New York for it." It is certain that Swami Vivekananda did not go to New York for he proceeded to Mrs Bull's house in Cambridge on October 2 with his aim of peacefully writing a book. "I

47. Swami Vivekananda to Mrs Ole Bull, September 19, 1894; The Complete Works, Vol.VI, pp.267-68. It seems that Mrs Guernsey had offered to the Swami a place in her New York apartment where he could expatiate on Hindu philosophy and religion. "Mrs Guernsey was so kind to me", he wrote to Mrs Ole Bull, "and she is ever willing to help me. I think I will go to her and sit down and write my book", Ibid. By the middle of September the Swami had purchased the writing material. A letter to Miss Mary Hale dated September 13, 1894 reveals his propensity to write: "Today this vagabond lama was seized with a desire of going right along scribbling, and so I walked down and entering a store bought all sorts of writing material and a beautiful portfolio which shuts with a clasp and has even a little wooden ink-stand. So far it promises well. Hope it will continue". The Complete Works, Vol.VIII, p.321. Though the Swami failed to write, as he himself said, "a line yet for my proposed book" till September 21 he drafted the now famous "Reply to the Madras Address". The Complete Works, Vol.V, p.44; Vol.IV, pp.331-354.
cannot express my gratitude for your kindness", he had written to Mrs Bull on September 26, 1894, "For that is exactly what I wanted, a quiet place to write. Of course, much less space will suffice me than what you have kindly proposed to put at my disposal. I can bundle myself up anywhere and feel quite comfortable".

Swami Vivekananda made a short trip to Melrose— a town in E.Massachussets near Boston— on September 29. On the evidence of a letter written by the Swami to Mrs Ole Bull Burke wrote that Swami Vivekananda lectured at least twice in the town. However, no contemporary newspaper corroborates this view. What Swami Vivekananda wrote was that he will go back to Melrose on Saturday and remain there till Monday. Most probably he went on someone's invitation to spend his week-end and not to give a public discourse. After that he went to Cambridge where he stayed for about nine or ten days. There is nothing on record to show the amount of writing he did when he was a guest of Mrs Ole Bull. From Cambridge Swami Vivekananda went to Baltimore,

49. Ibid.
50. Burke, p.489.
Maryland on October 12 at the invitation of Vrooman brothers. They had perhaps contacted him in Boston "and lured him to Baltimore with talk of plans for an international university-

project which..."

52. The three Vrooman brothers were: Rev. Hiram Vrooman, Pastor of New Jerusalem Church; Rev. Walter Vrooman, a member of the Arena magazine staff and Carl Vrooman, who, at the time of the Swami's visit was 'still studying for the ministry'. They were adolescents but sensible and energetic. Mr. Carl was the most eloquent among them and had won the prestigious debate for the championship between Harvard and Yale Universities. He was also the President of Inter Collegiate Debating Union. Though it is not known how, when and where they first contacted the Swami for delivering lectures in the city of Baltimore, it is certain that they spoke highly of him. During the course of an interview with the Sunday Herald of October 14, 1894, Rev. Hiram Vrooman described Swami Vivekananda as one of "the most intelligent men" he had ever met. To quote him: "He is one of the widest-informed men on religious topics I ever knew. It may be of interest to Roman Catholics to know that he was the first man to translate the works of Thomas a' Kempis, the great theologian of their faith, the favorite philosopher of Pope Leo into the Sanscrit tongue. He carries a volume of the works of St. Thomas about with him constantly". Facsimile in Burke, pp.499-500. Though the Vrooman brothers were learned they seem to have been ignorant of the art of hospitality. Did they believe in Max Beerbohm's adage: "The hospitable instinct is not wholly altruistic. There is pride and egoism mixed up with it". It is sometime alleged that they were careless in making arrangements for lodging the Swami. Burke, for example, argues, that the Vrooman brothers must have been well aware that racial prejudice existed in Baltimore and that the Swami would be treated "with distrust and rudeness by undiscriminating hotel clerks". Despite this, the Reverend Walter Vrooman "conducted him to one third-rate hotel after another only to have him turned away". New Discoveries, p.498. Obviously Swami Vivekananda was tantalised at the treatment he received, "You need not be sorry on account of the ill-treatment I received at the hands of a low-class hotel-keeper at Baltimore", he remorsefully expressed to Mrs Ole Bull on October 27, 1894. "It was the fault of the Vrooman brothers; Why should they take me to a low hotel?" The Complete Works, Vol.VI, p.279. As at other places Swami Vivekananda was warmly received by the Baltimore women. "And them the American women, as everywhere", he wrote, "came to my rescue and I had a very good time". Ibid.
a project which was dear to Swamiji's heart". The local press caught fancy for him immediately after his arrival and portrayed his physiognomy and his mission in their respective issues on the following day. The Baltimore American, for example, described Swami Vivekananda as "a picturesque character" whose countenance was "both handsome and striking". It remarked that besides being "a profound scholar" whose English was "beyond criticism" he was "good-natured and jolly" and "a charming conversationalist". "He is familiar with the works of all the great writers in a dozen different tongues", remarked the daily "and he quotes long selections from Spencer, Darwin, Mill or others of the great philosophers with a fluency that is surprising". Swami Vivekananda's arrival created a furore in the religious circles of Baltimore. As a daily put it: "He was the observed of all observers".

Swami Vivekananda delivered his first lecture on October 14, 1894 at the Lyceum Theatre. The topic was "Dynamic Religion". In the discussion that followed, the three Vrooman brothers also took part. The Baltimore American and the Sun reported this

53. Burke, p.498. It appears that Swami Vivekananda himself condescended to this idea and expressed it to the reporter of the Baltimore American on October 12, 1894. "He favors the establishment in this country of an international University, where all the religions of the world can be taught, for, he thinks there is no more need of American missionaries going to India than there is of Indian missionaries coming to America". Ibid., p.495.

54. Ibid., pp.494–95.

55. The Sunday Herald, October 14, 1894, Ibid., p.499.
symposium in their issues on the following day. However none of the two dailies gave a detailed account of what the Vrooman brothers spoke but they dealt at length with Swami Vivekananda's discourse. The Swami urged the necessity of more practice and less preaching in overcoming evil. He observed that he did not object to the sending of Christian missionaries to India but felt nevertheless that "it would be better to send fewer men and more money". He argued that India had "bushels full of doctrines and to spare". "Living up to the doctrines was deemed more than mere doctrines". As regards prayer he observed that one should pray with one's heart and not with lips. He contended that life was love and when a man ceased to do good to others, he was dead spiritually. Swami Vivekananda's speech was brief but impressive. He was heard "with marked attention" and was "frequently applauded". The Baltimore American recommended his English and described his "mode of delivery" as "excellent".

Swami Vivekananda delivered his second lecture at the Lyceum Theatre, Baltimore, on October 21. While the Vrooman brothers spoke on political chicanery and expressed concern over the increasing corruption and immorality in public life, Swami Vivekananda delineated the precepts of Buddha to pinpoint the root of all evil. He went back to the times when Buddha was born. As in the China of Confucius and the Alexandria

59. Ibid.
60. Ibid.
of Hypatia—so in Buddha's India the society had lost its former splendour and was plagued with multifarious rituals and superstitions. The predominance of the priestly class, the performance of sacrificial rites, self-torture, expensive yajnas and caste distinctions—these were some of the features that characterised Indian society. When monotheism of the most crude type and materialism ranging from anthropomorphic deism to transcendental dualism was rampant, Buddha appeared to free the society from the metaphysical jargon of intellectuals and the religious dogmas of priests. He did not found a new religion but led "a movement of reformation". He pointed out the existence, the cause and the cure of human suffering. In his view the seed-bed of evil lay in "our desire to be superior to others and our selfishness". So long as society tried to cure evil by laws and institutions it would fail in its aim. "Force", he concluded, "could not cure it; dirt cannot wash dirt; hate cannot cure hate". The remedy lay in "making unselfish men and women". Swami Vivekananda's discourse created immense interest in the audience, half of whom were ladies. He spoke in "an easy, unembarrassed manner", wrote The Morning Herald of October 22, 1894, "his diction being perfect and his accent similar to that of a cultured member of the Latin race familiar with the

62. Ibid.
From Baltimore Swami Vivekananda went to Washington on October 22 or 23 and stayed with Mrs Enoch Totten who was "an influential lady" and a "metaphysician". At the invitation of the Pastor of the People's Church, he gave two lectures in the Typographical Temple on October 28. In his morning lecture he argued that all religions, like languages "descended from a common stock" and each one of them was good "in its corporal and spiritual aspects" so long as it remained free from "dogma and fossilism". In his afternoon lecture he traced the history of the Aryan race and explained the origin of different nationalities in terms of their religion, language and customs. A Press reporter who interviewed the Swami described him as "something of a rarity" who claimed no affiliation to any religious sect but was a teacher to mankind, who did not boast...
religious sect but was "a teacher to mankind", who did not boast of occultist powers and to whom miracles were repugnant in matters of religion. Swami Vivekananda delivered two more lectures in Washington the contents of which are not known. While in the city he had a mind to go to Baltimore twice to fulfil his lecture engagements but he could go only once on November 2 when he spoke on "India and its religion". For reasons best known to him he returned to New York and made first attempts to establish his American Work by organising a society sometime in the month of November. The purpose was definitely not to create a new sect or religion but to bring harmony in society by reconciling different faiths. "We must not only tolerate others, but positively embrace them", he wrote to Alasinga, "and that truth is the basis of all religions".

On December 5, 1894 Swami Vivekananda went to Cambridge and stayed with Mrs Ole Bull till December 28. "I have a class every morning except Vedanta and other topics", he wrote to Miss Mary three days after his arrival. The eye is in the forehead and not in the back. Move onward and carry into practice that which you are proud to call your religion, and God bless you!.... Where should you go to seek for God- are not all the poor, the miserable, the weak, God?" The Complete Works, Vol.V, p.50-52, 1894. Ibid, p.331.

68. Ibid.
69. Ibid. It was in Washington that Swami Vivekananda expounded his social philosophy and his mission in a letter to Alasinga dated October 27, 1894. "Do not believe in a God or religion which cannot wipe the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth. However sublime be the theories however, well-spun may be the philosophy- I do not call it religion so long as it is confined to books and dogmas. The eye is in the forehead and not in the back. Move onward and carry into practice that which you are proud to call your religion, and God bless you!.... Where should you go to seek for God- are not all the poor, the miserable, the weak, God?"

70. Swami Vivekananda to Alasinga, November 30, 1894. Ibid, pp. 52-54.
71. Ibid.
morning here on Vedanta and other topics", he wrote to Miss Mary Hale three days after his arrival, "I will have to be very 73 busy in the morning till 12 or 1". Besides holding classes Swami Vivekananda delivered public lectures about which the only information available is a letter he wrote to Miss Mary Hale: "I have time now as the lectures are at an end, except 74 Sunday next".

Swami Vivekananda arrived in New York from Cambridge on December 28, 1894 and proceeded at once to Brooklyn where he delivered seven lectures between December 30, 1894 and April 8, 1895 which included two parlour lectures. Charles M. Higgins, a prominent member of the Ethical Cultural Society gave a warm reception in honour of Swami Vivekananda, the purpose of which was to introduce him to the elite of Brooklyn. The Swami delivered his first public lecture at the Pouch Mansion on December 30, 1894. According to the Brooklyn Daily Eagle of December 31, 1894 "the gallery, the parlor adjoining and the hall were filled to overflowing, many of the audience standing throughout the entire lecture". Swami Vivekananda spoke on "The religions of India". As in other American cities he argued that Truth had always been universal. "The same truth has manifested itself in different forms, and the forms are according to the different

73. Ibid.
circumstances of the physical or mental nature of the different nations. Delineating the raison d'être of the study of comparative religions he remarked: "I am able to read my Bible the better by knowing Bible. The varying religions of mankind represented so many attempts to reach the Almighty. Therefore none was wrong. "Just as a child becomes a young man and a young man becomes an old man, so they are travelling from truth to truth". Religions became torpid and deceased when they ceased to "grow". If the child refused to become a young man or a young man refused to become an old man he was diseased. But if he steadily grew, each step would lead him onward until he reached the final stage. There were three steps in the spiritual development of a human being: first, when he saw God in "the far beyond"; secondly, when he came nearer to him and "gave Him omnipresence"; thirdly when he realised "We are He". Swami Vivekananda argued that whatever ceased to expand, to live. His plea was that one should love God for love's sake and perform one's duty without looking for any award. He thus expounded the philosophy of Kārama Yoga as it is explained in the Bhagvad-gīta: "The right is to work only, but never to its fruits; let not the fruit-of-action be thy motive, nor let thy attachment be to inaction". Besides, Swami Vivekananda justified the Vedantic

79. Ibid.
80. Ibid.
81. Ibid.
84. The Bhagvad-Gīta, II/47.
theory of creation and the existence of a past life. He gave scientific evidence to the doctrine of transmigration of Souls from one body to the other and exhorted the audience to realise the divinity with in them. "Teach your children that they are divine", he said, "that religion is a positive something and not a negative nonsense; that it is not subjection to groans when under oppression, but expansion and manifestation". After the lecture Swami Vivekananda was asked numerous questions which he answered with clarity and precision. To the question as to whether he intended to introduce the practices and rituals of the Hindu religion in America he replied in the negative and said: "I am preaching simply philosophy". When asked as to whether the spirit passed at death into the El dorado of happiness he retorted: "Time and space are in you. You are not in time and space. It is enough to know that as we make our lives better here as every opportunity is given us, we come nearer and nearer to the perfect man". Swami Vivekananda enraptured the audience at the Pouch mansion by his pungent logic and convincing arguments. The local press gave a wide coverage to his discourse and lauded him as "a prophet of a new religion, combining the morality of the Christians with the philosophy of the Buddhists". Miss Ellen Waldo who was a member of the

Ethical Cultural Society recorded in her memoirs how the Swami achieved "immediate" success after his first appearance in Brooklyn. Swami Vivekananda was elated over his performance. To Mrs Bull he wrote that the lecture, "through the blessings 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 for organising a series in Brooklyn".

In his second lecture at the Pouch Mansion on January 20, 1895 Swami Vivekananda spoke on "Ideals of womanhood- Hindu, Mohammedan and Christian". He started by arguing that the product of the slums of any nation could not be the criterion of our judgement of that nation. One should not judge an apple tree from its rotten fruit. "Only in the highest and best can we judge a nation- the fallen are a race by themselves. Thus it is not only proper, but just and right, to judge a custom by its best, by its ideal". The ideal of womanhood in India could be traced to the time of Aryans when a man was considered "only half a being" without a woman. However, with the rise of a distinct and separate priestly class and the development

89. His Eastern and Western Admirers, p.124.
91. There was a long gap between Swami Vivekananda's first lecture in Brooklyn on December 30, 1894 and his second one on January 20, 1895. In a letter to Mrs Bull on January 3, 1895 the Swami wrote: "I owe much to the Hale family and I thought to give them a little surprise by dropping in on New Year's day". The Complete Works, Vol.V, p.630. It seems that Swami Vivekananda spent most of his time in Chicago.
of monasticism, the position of women declined and she came to be regarded as intrinsically evil, and an obstacle to salvation. But the concept of "personal purity" of woman did not die altogether. Swami Vivekananda cited the examples of Rajput women who "perished in the flames" to preserve their chastity at the time of Muslim invasions. Eventually another idea of womanhood arose. "In the West it found its ideal in the wife; in India in the mother". But the priests were not responsible for this change. The emancipation of women in the West was brought about by the English and French philosophers. "Religion has done something, no doubt, but not all", he argued. Why in Asia Minor, Christian bishops to this day keep a harem?" As regards the rights of inheritance he remarked that a western man could disinherit his wife but in India the property rights of women were recognised since thousands of years. In conclusion he stressed the aspect of chastity of Indian women and described her as "the centre of the family and our highest ideal". "She is to us the representative of God, as God is the mother of the Universe. It was a female sage who first found the unity of God and laid down this doctrine on one of the first hymns of the Vedas. Our God is both personal and absolute, the absolute is male, the personal, female. And thus it comes that we now say: "The first manifestation of God is the hand that rocks the cradle".

93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
95. Ibid.
Though the reporter of the Standard Union described the lecture as interesting he remarked that the Swami often digressed into subjects "only distantly related to the theme thereby mystifying and confusing his hearers". Nonetheless, he felt that no one could regret "the two hours spent last night at the feet of this oriental philosopher and sage." Swami Vivekananda himself felt that the discourse was not very much applauded by men "but awfully so by women". The Swami was wrong in his judgement.

With in a month of the publication of this lecture in the Brooklyn press a controversy was raged by the Ramabai circle challenging some of the observations made by Swami Vivekananda. The religious circles were in tumult. The local dailies published articles vindicating or deprecating the Swami's viewpoint.

From a letter of Leon Landsberg to Isabelle McKindley dated January 26, 1895 we learn about the two parlour lectures which Swami Vivekananda delivered in Brooklyn on January 25, and January 29 respectively. The first parlour lecture was held at Mrs Aurel's residence and was attended by about sixty five persons. Swami Vivekananda spoke on "The Upanishads and doctrine of the Soul" and was "highly appreciated" by the gathering.

Regarding the second parlour lecture of January 29 no information is available at the present.

In his fifth lecture at the Pouch Mansion in Brooklyn on February 3, 1895 Swami Vivekananda spoke on "Buddhism as

96. Ibid.
98. Cited in Burke, pp.545-47.
understood in India". He portrayed the life of Sakya Muni who never performed "a deed except for the good of others" and who was ready "to give up his life for the highest angels as well as for the lowest worm". Buddha gave to mankind the noblest principles of morality. He derided priestcraft at the very door of temples, "yet to-day he is worshipped by them". Like Jesus Christ who roused the rancour of jews, Buddha antagonized the contemporary religion of India. But while the former was crucified by his tribe, the latter was accepted as "God Incarnate". Buddha was born at a time when religious dialecticians were involved in argument about existence and non-existence, life and death, the discerning and the non-discerning and many such topics. Indian Society had degenerated into "iron-bound caste" and a militia of priests "stood upon the neck of the nation". The gospel of Buddha proved to be "the culmination of an attempt at a religious and a social reformation". Swami Vivekananda thus argued that Buddhism was not a separate sect but the child of Hinduism. At a time when the Indian intellectual was embroiled in academic jargon, Buddha prescribed his moral code and proved the shallowness of intellectualism. Swami Vivekananda, however, created a dichotomy between the gospel of Buddha and Buddhism and remarked that the Hindus drove the later out as soon as it degenerated. Swami Vivekananda held the audience spell bound by "the earnestness of his speech". Never before, was he more eloquent or impressive, remarked the Brooklyn Standard Union of 99. Brooklyn Standard Union, February 4, 1895, facsimile in The Complete Works, v1, p.507-10. 100. Ibid. 101. Ibid.
February 4, 1895, "than last evening....Buddha has no truer
disciple than this youthful priest,(whose)words....were not
those of a paid exponent of a peculiar system of philosophy,
but rather those of an apostle, preaching a creed which has
become a part of his very self".

Swami Vivekananda delivered his sixth lecture entitled
"India's gift to the World" at the hall of the Long Island
Historical Society on February 25. He spoke of the scenic sple­
ndour of India "where stood the earliest cradle of ethics, arts,
103
sciences and literature...." On the basis of historical evidence
he argued that Christianity was the direct offspring of
Buddhism. He quoted from the works of European and American
scientists to show the points of similarity between Jesus Christ
and Sakya Muni. The former's birth, "his seclusion from the
world, the number of his apostles, and the very ethics of his
teachings" were the same as those of Buddha who lived about
six hundred years before him. It was not mere coincidence or a
matter of chance. The inscriptions of the period of King Ashoka
reveal that he had sent Buddhist missionaries to Greece and
other territories to spread the gospel of Sakya Muni. When
Christianity flourished in these regions much later it was
influenced by the Buddhist religion. It was because of this,
he remarked "why you have our doctrine of trinity, of incarna­
tion of God, and of our ethics, and why the service in our
temples is so much alike to that in your present catholic
104
churches, from the mass to the chant and benediction". Apart

102. Ibid.
103. Brooklyn Standard Union, February 27, 1895; facsimile in
104. Ibid.
from religion, the world owed most of its knowledge in the realm of medical science, algebra, geometry, astronomy, philosophy and mathematics to India. Most of the great discoveries and inventions of which Europe can boast of would have been impossible without a knowledge of the ten numerals, which "are, in reality, Sanskrit words". He argued that all European languages were nothing "but jargonized Sanskrit". In the field of music India contributed to the world "her system of notation, with the seven cardinal notes and the diatonic scale". While India had such knowledge as early as 350 B.C. the European countries learnt it in the eleventh century A.D. India produced classical literature even before the Christian civilisation was conceived. The influence of Indian epics, poems and dramas was immense on the West. The fables of Aesop, the Arabian Nights and the stories of Cinderella and the Bean Stalks of which the West was so proud were taken from ancient Sanskrit texts. In economic field too, India excelled. It was the first to spin cotton and dye it, to invent the word "sugar" and produce it. India was the home of a wide variety of games and sports and gave to the world the games of chess, cards and dice. India was so superior and famous that it attracted "the hungry cohorts of Europe and thereby, indirectly brought about the discovery of America". But he ruefully remarked that in lieu of its above contributions India received nothing but misery, poverty, slavery and injury. To add insult to injury the West was preaching to her, a religion which would only thrive on the

105. Ibid.
106. Ibid.
elimination of others. In conclusion, Swami Vivekananda remarked that India's message to the world was that of peace and goodness. He was hopeful that his country would come out of its ordeal with flying colours. According to the Brooklyn Times dated February 26, 1895, Swami Vivekananda was "frequently and heartily applauded". He was asked a number of questions after the lecture was over. One of the questions related to an observation made in a local daily, the day before, that widows were ill-treated in India. Swami Vivekananda refuted the statement and observed that the law guaranteed the woman not only her own property before marriage but also entitled her to inherit the assets of her husband. He remarked that the custom of suttee or "the fanatical self-destruction" under the wheels of juggernaut were no more in vogue and asked the audience to look for proof to Sir William Wilson Hunter's "History of the Indian Empire".

Swami Vivekananda delivered his seventh and last lecture at the Rough Gallery, Brooklyn on April 7, 1895. The topic "Some Customs of the Hindus: What they mean and how they are misinterpreted" seems to have been inspired by the controversy raised by the Ramabai circle over some of the observations he had made in his previous lectures. Or should one say it came as an answer to the accusations of his detractors? Moving up and down the platform- "his eyes bright and a flush mantling his face"- he ridiculed the West for cooking up lies against India. The English, he said, used three B's- Bible, brandy...
and bayonets—to civilise India. Their observations about the
social conditions of India were gross exaggerations. They got
their ideas about the Hindus from the pariahs "who were a sort
of human scavenger". No self respecting Hindu, he declared,
would hobnob with an Englishman. Swami Vivekananda was criti-
cal of the foreign educated Hindus who returned to their
country "full of champagne and new ideas". While justifying
the caste system he admitted that it was plagued with some
defects. But he did not make a plea for eliminating it. "To
abolish caste one must change the social conditions completely
and destroy the entire economic system of the country." "Better,"
he said, "that the waves of the (Bay of) Bengal flow and drown
all rather than this." Swami Vivekananda got excited while
speaking and said in conclusion: "It matters not as long as
India is true to herself and to her religion. But a blow has
been struck at her heart by this awful godless West when she
sends hypocrisy and atheism into her midst. Instead of sending
bushels of abuses, carloads of vituperation and shiploads of
condemnations, let an endless stream of love go forth. Let us
all be men!" After the lecture the Ethical Cultural Society
unanimously adopted a resolution to thank Swami Vivekananda for
his enlivening talks in Brooklyn.

It has been mentioned earlier that Swami Vivekananda formed
a society towards the end of November 1894 to establish his

110. Daily Eagle, April 8, 1895, facsimile in Burke, pp.597-98.
111. Ibid.
112. Brooklyn Standard Union, April 8, 1895, facsimile in The
113. Ibid.
114. Ibid.
work in America. He then proceeded to Cambridge and returned to New York on December 28, 1894 to keep up his appointment with the Ethical Cultural Society of Brooklyn on the 30th instant. While the Vedanta classes at New York had begun in the last week of January 1895, Swami Vivekananda continued to go to Brooklyn for delivering lectures till April 7, 1895. While in New York he also made short trips to Chicago and Boston. From Chicago where he had gone to the Hale family on New Year's day he wrote: "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".

115. Swami Vivekananda to G.G. Narasimhacharar, January 11, 1895; The Complete Works, Vol. V, p. 64. In a letter to Mrs Bull on January 3, 1895 Swami Vivekananda wrote that though he had not fixed any date for opening the "New York Course" it was "nearly ready". Miss Phillips and Miss Thursby were to make arrangements for the Swami's discourses. The programme was, however, upset by a haughty discussion between Swami Vivekananda and a Presbyterian at the house of Miss Thursby where both had been invited. Miss Thursby did not appreciate the Swami's tantrums and segregated herself from the work concerning the arrangements. But later she came to terms with him and attended his lectures frequently. Even Mrs Bull reprimanded the Swami, as he himself admitted, for entering into an "excited argument" with the presbyterian fellow. Such things, she said would create obstructions in his way. Miss Mary Hale, too, did not like the Swami's behaviour at the house of Miss Thursby. Swami Vivekananda did not take all this criticism lying down. In a lengthy communication to Miss Mary Hale on February 1, 1895 he justified his position in strong terms and stated that he would not make himself 'sweet and accommodating to every black falsehood' because 'every attempt at sweetness makes me a hypocrite'. "You are mistaken, utterly mistaken", he wrote, "if you think I have a work, as Mrs Bull thinks; I have no work under or beyond the sun. I have a message and I will give it after my own fashion". He said he would follow Bartrihris adage: "Go thou thy ways, Sannyasin!" and would not care what others said, The Complete Works, Vol. V, pp. 70-73.
The commencement of Vedanta classes in New York at 54, West 33rd Street, marked an important phase in the Swami's activities in the West. He was to eschew giving public lectures and concentrate more on training persons who were genuinely interested in the practice of Yoga. In the preceding year he had written to Alasinga that he was determined to "do something permanent here". His spirits had not waned even after he was dragged into an unpleasant controversy by the Ramabai Circles. "I want to have a solid ground under my feet before I depart", he said. The Swami's apartment having two unfurnished rooms lay in a poor locality of New York. Leon Landsberg, a Russian jew who had since become a naturalized American citizen, was to be his "living companion and sole assistant".

The study of his relations with the Swami is at once gripping and enigmatic. Leon Landsberg fascinated by the Swami's lecture at New York on May 2, 1894, played an important part in ordering his affairs at the new lodgings, and then left and rejoined him, went the same round once again, and finally left and even betrayed his "Master".

Swami Vivekananda held several classes a week and spoke mostly on Raja Yoga and Jnana Yoga. No fees was charged for these lectures. The rent of apartment was paid by voluntary subscriptions and when these were found insufficient, he would

116. Swami Vivekananda to Alasinga, not dated, 1894; Ibid. p. 62.
117. Swami Vivekananda to Alasinga, March 6th 1895; Ibid. p. 65.
118. Dharnp.705. For details see Burke, Swami Vivekananda; his second visit to the West, pp.127-33.
hire a hall to deliver public lectures and use the proceeds for the maintenance of these classes. In the beginning he had only three or four students but the number grew with astonishing rapidity. Sister Christine records that millionaires were glad "to sit on the floor, literally at his feet". The classes lasted until June. "But long before that time they had outgrown their small beginnings and had removed down stairs to occupy an entire parlour floor and extension". Swami Vivekananda enjoined upon his students to take "Sattvic" diet, observe chastity and free their mind from the thraldom of desire. He explained the science of self-control, which in Patanjali's words could be described as Chitta Vrtti Nirodhah i.e. restraining the fluctuations of consciousness. This state could be reached by concentration (dharana) and meditation (dhyana). Samadhi (trance) formed the climax of the sadhaka's quest who transcended the realms of consciousness and realised that the knower, the knowledge and the known were one. Almost everyday Swami Vivekananda meditated with some of his students.

Miss S.E. Waldo of Brooklyn who was later given the ascetic name of Sister Haridas wrote in her memoirs: "And those first classes! How intensely interesting they were! Who that was privileged to attend them can ever forget them? The Swami so

119. Miss S.E. Waldo's reminiscences, in His Eastern and Western Admirers, pp.124-25.
122. Miss Ellen Waldo, who was a distant relative of Ralph W. Emerson was given the name of Sister Haridas by Swami Vivekananda because "she was truly a servant of the Lord—her service was continuous and untiring. She cooked, edited, cleaned, and took dictation, taught and managed, read proof and saw visitors". See Sister Devmata's reminiscences, Ibid., p.136.
dignified yet so simple, so gravely earnest, so eloquent and
the close ranks of students forgetting all inconveniences,
hanging breathless on his every word. It was a fit beginning
for a movement that has since grown to such grand proportions".
Besides Miss Waldo, the Macleod Sisters, Miss Hamlin, Miss
Thursby, and Miss Laura Glenn became seriously interested in
the Swami's teachings. The last among them became his earnest
disciple and acquired the ascetic title of Sister Devamata.
Recalling the day she first heard her Master she wrote: "He
began to speak; and memory, time, place, people all melted
away. Nothing was left but a voice ringing through the void.
It was as if a gate had swung open and I had passed out on
a road leading to limitless attainment. The end of it was not
visible; but the promise of what it would be shone through the
thought and flashed through the personality of the one who gave
124
it. He stood there—prophet of infinitude". Miss Glenn attended
the Swami's classes regularly and acquired knowledge about
philosophy, metaphysics, astrology and different types of
Yoga. "We were almost sorry" she wrote, "that there were only
four Yogas. We would have liked to have six or eight, that
the number of classes might be multiplied".

A study of Swami Vivekananda's epistles sheds more light
on his activities before June 1895. From about the middle of
February to the middle of March he held Sunday classes at the
house of one Miss Corbin but discontinued them perhaps because

123. Miss Waldo's reminiscences, Ibid.p.125.
125. Ibid.
he abhorred her snobbery. "Was it ever in the history of the world" he asked, "that any great work was done by the rich? It is the heart and the brain that do it ever and ever and not the purse". In February and March he gave two lectures at the New York House of a Mrs A.L. Barber which are since known as the "Barbar House Lectures". He also addressed the Dixon Society of the city. On April 11, he held a class at Miss Andrew's House. In May he gave two public lectures on "The Science of Religion" and "The Rationale of Yoga" at the Mott's Memorial Building of New York. Miss Laura Glenn records in her memoirs that through the late winter and spring of 1895 the work gained tremendous momentum and fervour. "It was wholly focussed on the message the Swami had to give. That had become the foundation of our living, the stimulus that urged us onward". His last lecture entitled "My Master" was delivered at the Madison Square Concert Hall. He began it with "a long preamble but once in his subject it swept him". To quote her: "It overflowed in a swift running stream of eloquence and feeling. The large audience listened in awed stillness... As for myself, I was transfixed. The transcendent picture drawn overwhelmed me. The call had come and I answered".

128. Ibid.
131. His Eastern and Western Admirers, pp.135-36.
Swami Vivekananda had his critics too. Some of the rationalists, atheists, materialists, agnostics and theosophists opposed his ideas. At times he was faced with hecklers who would ask him impertinent questions, or try to have a jibe at him. But they seldom succeeded. Many instances could be quoted to show that the Swami usually won and the "doubting Thomases" were overcome. Some of his biographers believe that his book on Raja Yoga which caught the attention of the Harvard philosopher, William James, and was later to the enthusiasm of Leo Tolstoy, was written in the month of June 1893. This is however incorrect. Swami Vivekananda's letter to E.T. Sturdy dated January 16, 1896 shows that he had not finished his work as yet. Later the work, most of which had been dictated by the Swami to Miss Waldo, was published from London. It was followed by an American edition with a few alterations and additions.

To refresh himself after strenuous work Swami Vivekananda would often visit his friends especially the Queenseys. In the second week of April 1895 he went to enjoy the invigorating air at Mr. Legget's country home. At the invitation of Francis H. Legget he went to Percy on June 7, 1895 and relaxed in the tranquility of pine woods. In a gay mood he wrote to Mrs. Ole

132. See especially Cornelia Conger's reminiscences in His Eastern and Western Admirers, p. 146.
133. Nikhilananda, Swami, p. 152; His Eastern and Western Disciples, p. 248.
135. Sister Devamata's reminiscences in His Eastern and Western Admirers, p. 159.
136. For example see Swami Vivekananda's letter to Miss Josephine Macleod in June (date not given) 1895; The Complete Works, Vol. VIII, p. 338.
Bull: "Imagine a lake surrounded with hills covered with a huge forest, with nobody but ourselves. So lovely, so quiet, so restful! And you may imagine how glad I am to be here after the bustle of cities". He read his Gita in the taciturnity of forest where he would go alone, and meditated serenely. Swami Vivekananda stayed at Percy for about ten days and then went to the Thousand Island Park at the invitation of one of his students, Miss Elizabeth Dutcher, who owned a cottage there.

By the month of June 1895 Swami Vivekananda had placed his work on a solid foundation. Towards the middle of May he had

140. Miss Josephine MacLeod records in her reminiscences that while at camp Percy Swami Vivekananda would go out under the beautiful birch trees and meditate for hours, "Without telling us anything about it he made two beautiful birch bark books, written in Sanskrit and English which he gave to my sister and me". His Eastern and Western Admirers, p.235. On June 17, 1895 Swami wrote a letter to Miss Mary Hale not on paper but on birch bark: "This is the bark in which all holy writings are written in India". The Complete Works, Vol.VIII, p.340. In a letter to Miss Alberta Sturges, on July 8, 1895 the Swami wrote that he had presented books on birch bark to her mother and aunt. According to his activities he wrote that he learnt a good deal of rowing at Percy. In a lighter vein he observed that Aunt Joe (Josephine Macleod) had to pay for her sweetness, as the flies and mosquitoes did not leave her for a moment. "They rather gave me a wide berth, I think, because they were very orthodox sabbatarians flies and would not touch a heathen. Again I think I used to sing a good deal at Percy and that must have frightened them away". The Complete Works, Vol.VI, pp.313-14. It was at Percy that Francis H. Leggett got engaged to Josephine Macleod's sister, William Sturges, who was a widow. Mr. Leggett invited the Swami to accompany him to Europe and be the witness at the wedding. Josephine Macleod's reminiscences, His Eastern and Western Admirers, p.235. The Swami remembered his days at Percy even after he left for the Thousand Island Park. "I will always look back upon the delightful time I had at Percy, and always thank Mr Leggett for that treat... The world is always bettered by the love of the likes of him", wrote Swami Vivekananda to Mrs Betty Sturges sometime in July 1895. The Complete Works, Vol.V, p.89.
141. His Eastern and Western Disciples, p.351.
written to Alasinga that he ought to be able to leave a permanent effect behind him. He was hopeful that he would succeed with the blessings of the Almighty. His work bore some fruit by the end of May. The number of his admirers and disciples was increasing. His message of Vedanta was being well-received by inquisitors from all sections of society. He intended to create "a new order of humanity" in America who would be sincere believers in God and cared nothing for the world. "I have planted a seed" he wrote, and it is going to become a tree and it must. Only I am afraid it will hurt its growth if I give it up too soon." Ironically, his classes were filled to capacity but he could not muster sufficient amount of money even to cover the rent of his lodgings. Perhaps because of increasing financial burden he changed his headquarters, sometime in May, from 54 West, 33rd Street to Miss Phillip's residence at 19 West, 38th Street, New York. Before leaving for Thousand Island Park Swami Vivekananda declined the invitation of Miss Sarah Farmer to attend the Greenacre Conferences. The reason was that he wanted to train 'a few Yogis out of the materials of his classes at the Thousand Island Park, and as he candidly remarked "a busy fair like Greenacre is the last place for that".

144. Swami Vivekananda to Alasinga, May 6, 1895; The Complete Works, Vol.V, p.82.
147. Sister Christina's reminiscences, His Eastern and Western Admirers, p.174.
Swami Vivekananda remained at Thousand Island Park from June 18 to August 6, 1895. Before leaving New York he advised his students to follow him only if they were really keen to practice spiritual discipline. The place which was a stronghold of methodists belonged to a group of about fifteen hundred islands in South Canada and the North United States, in the St. Lawrence river at the outlet of Lake Ontario. It was famous for its scenic splendour, its puritan character, its religious orthodoxy and its prohibition policy. The Park was without any betting shop, a pool room, a casino, a discotheque hall or a tavern. It attracted only sober and abstemious tourists in the summer. Miss Dutcher's lodge was situated atop a hill and appeared like "a veritable sanctuary". Surrounded by thick woods and huge boulders it presented a grand spectacle of the St. Lawrence river, of many remote islands, of the Canadian strands and the city of Clayton. After inviting the Swami, Miss Dutcher constructed a three-storeyed wing in her cottage to accommodate him and his disciples. It stood on "the steep slope of the rocks like a great lantern tower". In this fanciful place Swami Vivekananda spent about seven weeks with his devout students and revealed "brilliant flashes of illumination, lofty flights of eloquence and outpourings of the most profound wisdom". The whole experience was reminiscent of the Dakshineswar days when the Swami, as the young Narendra,

149. His Eastern and Western Disciples, p.256.
had been initiated into the mysteries of the spiritual life at the feet of his Master Sri Ramakrishna. "None of us can ever forget the sense of uplift, the intense spiritual life of those hallowed hours", wrote Miss S.E. Waldo. The Swami worked wholeheartedly and "he taught like one inspired". In all, twelve students had followed him to Thousand Island Park but not more than ten were ever present in his classes. To start with the number of students was only four—Miss Dutcher, the hostess, Miss Waldo, Miss Ruth Ellis and Dr. Wright of Cambridge. They were later joined by Miss Greenstidel (Sister Christine), Mrs Mary C. Funke, Marie Louise and Leon Landsberg, among others. They were to live as a community, each doing his or her share of the house-work.

Swami Vivekananda started his classes on June 19 with an exposition of the Gospel according to St. John which begins with the words: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God". The Word, he said, had two manifestations—the general one of nature and the special one of the great Incarnations of God. Christ the distinctive manifestation of the Absolute was "known and knowable". The Absolute could not be known. The mercy of God pervaded every being but it was not affected by their wickedness. "The sun is not affected by any disease of our eyes which may make us see it distorted", he said. Swami Vivekananda described the first  

151. His Eastern and Western Disciples, p.357.  
152. His Eastern and Western Admirers, p.126.  
153. The Holy Bible, St. John I.
five verses of the Gospel of St. John as the quintessence of Christian metaphysics. As the classes progressed, he read out excerpts from the Bhagvad Gītā, the Upanishadas, the Vedanta Sutras of Vyasa, the Bhakti Sutras of Narada and other scriptures explaining the essence of Hindu philosophy. His exegesis of Vedanta revolved around its three main pillars—the absolute duatism of Madhava known as Advaita, the qualified monism of Ramanuja, known as Vishishta dvaita and the non-dualism of Shankaracharya famous as Advaita. The last among them which teaches that the Ultimate Principle alone had real existence and that all phenomena was a false show of "Maya"—made a tough reading for his students who were more inclined towards the gospel of Ramanuja. The famous Tamil Brahman philosopher (circa 1017 -1137) taught that one could attain salvation by faith and love of God, and not through knowledge. Some historians think that Ramanuja's notions were conceived under Nestorian Christian influence. Could this be the reason why the Swami's students easily grasped his doctrine?

Nonetheless, Swami Vivekananda's passion for the Advaita philosophy did not wane. He wanted his disciples to see oneness in the whole universe. "Look at the "Ocean" and not at "the wave", he exhorted, see no difference between ant and angel. Every worm is the brother of the Nasarene". "The sum total of all the cells in an organism is one person; so each

soul is like one cell and the sum of them is God". The Swami argued that it was impossible to find God "outside of our-selves". "Bow down to nothing but your own higher self. Until you know that you are that very God of gods there will never be any freedom for you.... Books are useless to us until our own book opens.... We are the living books and books are but the words we have spoken. Everything is the living God, the living Christ; see it as such. Read man, he is the living poem. We are the light that illumines all the Bibles and Christs and Buddhas that ever were. Without that these would be dead of us, not living. Stand on your own self".

Swami Vivekananda often narrated stories from the Hindu religious lore to stress a moral point or to illustrate the subtleties of metaphysical thought. He stressed that the pleasures of the senses were evanescent. "Conquer yourself and the whole universe is yours", he said. "Enjoyment is the million-headed serpent that we must tread under foot". The subject of continence and chastity stirred him deeply. He argued that one could not be spiritual without being chaste. When the sexual energy got transmuted into spiritual energy the Kundalini (serpent power) was awakened. Besides, he stressed a truthful, non-violent and austere life.

157. Ibid. p.27.
158. Ibid. p.59.
159. Ibid. p.78.
160. Ibid. p.89.
161. Ibid. p.89.
162. Ibid. p.11.
163. Ibid. p.15.
164. Sister Christine's reminiscences in His Eastern and Western Admirers, pp.182-83.
The idea of getting freedom from the clutches of Maya was almost a passion with him. Sister Christine recorded that the Swami would cry "Azad, Azad", pacing up and down 'like a caged lion'. "Let me not be caught this time", would be his refrain another day. "So many times Maya has caught us, so many times have we exchanged our freedom for sugar dolls which melted when the water touched them. Let us not be caught this time". This was how, she wrote "the great desire for freedom" was planted in us. The song of the Sannyasin that he composed at this time depicted the Summum bonum of his renunciatory attitude towards life:

"Strike off thy fetters! Bonds that bind thee down Of shining gold, or darker, baser ore.... Know, slave is slave, caressed or whipped, not free; For fetters though of gold, are not less strong to bind; Thus off with them, Sannyasin bold! say-

"Om Tat Sat, Om!"

...There is but One- The Free- The Knowerself! Without a name, without a form or stain. In Him is Maya dreaming all this dream. The witness, He appears as nature, soul. Know thou art That, Sannyasin bold! say-

"Om Tat Sat, Om!"

....Have thou no home. What home can hold thee, friend? The sky thy roof, the grass thy bed; and food What chance may bring, well cooked or ill, judge not. No food or drink can taint that noble Self Which knows itself. Like rolling river free Thou ever be, Sannyasin bold! say-

"Om Tat Sat, Om!"

Swami Vivekananda taught his disciples "to see God in everything from the blade of grass to man- even in the diabolical

165. Ibid., p. 185.
166. The Complete Works, Vol. IV, p. 393-95
man". Mary C. Punke wrote that when he went out for an afternoon walk with us he would find "books in the running brooks, sermons in stones and God in everything". On the last day of his stay at Thousand Island Park he strolled about half a mile up the hill along with Sister Christine and Mrs. Funke and ultimately sat under a low-branched tree. "Now we will meditate", he said, "We shall be like Buddha under the Bo-tree". The Swami was so much lost in meditation that he did not even notice when a thunderstorm came up and it started pouring.

Before leaving the Park Swami Vivekananda had initiated Marie Louise and Leon Landsberg into Sannyasa and renamed them as Swami Abhayananda and Swami Kripananda, respectively. He also initiated five of his disciples as Brahmacharins. Miss Waldo who took notes of some of the Swami's class lectures, later published them as *Inspired Talks*. Swami Vivekananda was extremely happy with the outcome of his visit. In the beginning of July he had written to Alasinga that he had already got a respectable following. His classes in New York had not stopped even after he left for Miss Dutcher's lodgings.

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169. Marie Louise, a French woman but naturalized and twenty-five years a resident of New York left Thousand Island Park before the classes had ended and soon afterwards formed a Vedanta centre in California, and later in Washington.
170. Waldo's reminiscences, His Eastern and Western Admirers, p. 127.
His desire to make "several Sannyasins" who would carry on his work in the West, had been partly fulfilled. His spirits were very high at this time. About the middle of August he sailed for Europe from where he returned on December 6, 1895 to resume his work.

Swami Vivekananda made his headquarters at 228, West, 39th Street, New York where Swami Kripananda had rented two large parlour rooms in the second storey of the building. The place was quite spacious and could accommodate about one hundred and fifty persons. There was a marked change in the Swami's attitude after returning from Europe. He was not all agog for delivering public lectures as before nor was he keen to amass money. In England he had at times refused even the voluntary collections. "The best thing for me to do is", he wrote two days after his return from the continental tour, "to step entirely out of the money question—either in public lectures or private classes. In the long run it does harm and sets a bad example". He expressed to Mrs Ole Bull that he did not intend to entangle himself in any organisation but planned to form "autonomic, independent groups in different places".

173. Swami Vivekananda to the Maharaja of Khetri, July 9, 1895; Ibid., p.91. Contrary to the notion of some of his followers the Swami did not intend to start an organisation at the Thousand Island Park. In a letter to Alasinga (not dated 1895) he wrote: "We have no organisation, nor want to build any. Each one is quite independent to teach, quite free to preach whatever he or she likes....Individuality is my motto, I have no ambition beyond training individuals up...." The Complete Works, Vol.VII, p.489.

to spread his message. Even in religion, he wrote, there was no use overstocking the market. The supply must follow the demand. "If people want me they will get up lectures. I need not bother myself about these things."

For about two and a half weeks after his return Swami Vivekananda delineated the philosophy of Karama Yoga in his classes. The said lectures were published in February 1896 and hailed as "his masterpiece". The Eastern and Western disciples of the Swami record that he worked incessantly, giving as many as seventeen class lectures a week, besides carrying on a voluminous correspondence and granting numerous private audiences. His most important discourses at this time were "The claims of Religion: its truth and utility", "The ideal of a universal religion: how it must embrace different types of minds and methods", "The Cosmos: the order of creation and dissolution" etc. The Swami's classes became very popular and attracted the elite of New York. A reporter of The New York Herald who attended one of them remarked: "I found present a well-dressed audience of intellectual appearance. Doctors and lawyers professional men and society ladies were among those in the room....Sufficient success has attended the efforts of Swami Vivekananda....His manner is undoubtedly attractive and he is possessed of a large amount of personal

175. Ibid.
176. His Eastern and Western Disciples, p.381. In a letter to Alasinga on December 20, 1895 the swami himself wrote: "You must always remember how much work I have to do, sometimes I have to deliver two or three lectures a day- and thus I make my way against all odds- hard work; any weaker man would die". The Complete Works, Vol.V, p.99.
177. Ibid.
Swami Vivekananda delivered a series of free public lectures at Hardeman Hall, on the fifth, twelfth, nineteenth and twenty-sixth of January, 1896. The titles or contents of these talks are not known but it appears that he discussed the fundamentals of religion, the universality of all creeds and the various systems of Yoga which would suit men of varying temperaments. He also spoke before the Ethical cultural society of Brooklyn on February 2. During the same month he gave three public lectures at Madison Square Garden - a spacious hall which could accommodate more than 1500 persons. Though none of the biographers of the Swami has mentioned the dates of these lectures one could surmise on the basis of his epistle to Mrs Ole Bull dated January 25, 1896 that these were delivered on the 9th, 16th and 23rd of February - all these days being Sundays. The subjects he discussed were "Bhakti Yoga" "The Real and the Apparent Man" and "My Master Shri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa". Swami Vivekananda also spoke on "Soul and God" at the Metaphysical society of Hartford sometime in February. A local daily commented that "he was picturesque to the eye as well as fascinating to the ear". His views were more in consonance with those of Christ than those of many so-called Christians.

179. Swami Vivekananda to Mrs Ole Bull, January 25, 1896; The Complete Works, Vol. VI, p. 358. The Eastern and Western Disciples of the Swami add that his lectures before the Metaphysical Society in Brooklyn and the people's church in New York drew crowds of listeners and were highly appreciated. The Life of Swami Vivekananda, pp. 382-83. Also see Swami Vivekananda to Mrs Ole Bull, December 10, 1895. Ibid. p. 352.
180. Ibid. p. 350.
181. Ibid. p. 352.
182. Hartford's Daily Times, facsimile in The Indian Mirror, April 19, 1895.
"If I could get two or three like me, I could have left the World convulsed. As it is I have to proceed gently", so wrote the Swami to Sarada sometime in January 1896. The expression was hyperbolic but it projected his confidence and revealed that he had tasted the fruit of success. His was 'a name to conjure with in certain circles of New York Society'.

The famous litterateur Mrs Ella Wheeler Wilcox became a devotee of the Swami. The French actress Sarah Bernhardt was anxious to seek an interview with him which took place in February 1896. The celebrated singer Madame M. Morrel became interested in his teachings. The famous scientist Nicola Tesla was impressed by the Swami's delineation of Vedantic cosmology and admitted that the conclusions of Vedanta were in perfect consonance with modern science. Swami Vivekananda's admirers were gradually becoming his disciples. On February 13, 1896 Dr Street was initiated into Sannyasa and given the ascetic name of Swami Yogananda. He was the third American to be admitted to the monastic order, the other two being Leon Landsberg and Marie Louise. Most of the Swami's Sunday discourses appeared in pamphlets and were in great demand. His class talks on different types of Yoga were about to be published by the end of February. His short trips to Detroit and Boston

185. *His Eastern and Western Disciples*, pp. 386-87.
around this time were a tremendous success. Vedanta was drawing the attention of the highest classes in American society.

Swami Vivekananda was quite right when he said that he had succeeded in rousing the very heart of American civilisation.

The invitation from the Department of philosophy of Harvard University to address its graduate students on March 25 marked the climax of Swami Vivekananda's success in America. His discourse on the philosophy of Vedanta created such a profound impression that he was offered a chair of Eastern philosophy in the University which he declined bringing a Sannyasin. The lecture was followed by a lively discussion which was

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189. Swami Vivekananda stayed in Detroit for about two weeks and held Vedanta classes which attracted a considerable section of people. He also gave a few public lectures, the most important being at the Temple Beth El where he spoke on "India's message to the West" and "The Ideal of Universal Religion". The date on which the Swami left New York for Detroit is not known. However one could argue on the basis of his letter to Miss Mary Hale dated February 10, 1896, that he visited Detroit in late February or early March. The epistle read: "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". The Complete Works, Vol.V, p.99. From Detroit Swami Vivekananda went to Boston where he delivered four lectures before the Procopedia club at the Allen Gymnasium 'with constant audiences of between four and five hundred people', as a local daily commented. The subjects he touched upon were the Ideals of a Universal religion, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga and the Love of God. In March again he visited the house of Mrs Ole Bull at Cambridge and delivered two lectures. See Boston Evening Transcript, facsimile in The Indian Mirror, June 4, 1896.


192. The Swami had been contacted by one Mr Fox immediately after his return from Europe. He seemed reluctant, at first, but did not intend to miss this opportunity of speaking before a highly intellectual gathering. But he wanted to finish up his writing project before going there. See Swami Vivekananda's letter to Mrs Ole Bull, December 10, 1895; The Complete Works, Vol.VI, p.353.

later on published as a pamphlet by the Rev. Q. C. Everett, of the University along with the Swami's address in which he had expounded the principles of Vedanta in the light of new researches. The Swami was asked various questions ranging from the impact of Hinduism on the stoic philosophy of the Greeks to the cosmology of Vedanta, from the concept of Maya to that of Personal God, from Yoga, hypnotism and Samadhi to individuality and ethics. He conclusively proved that there was no antagonism between Vedanta and modern science. For instance, the theory of the Sankhya as to perception was very little different from modern physiology. The same could be said about the Vedantic theory of evolution and its exposition of matter and force. As regards the science of mind he said: "We have a psychology which the West is just beginning to know, but not yet adequately, I am sorry to say". Swami Vivekananda's answers were permeated with philosophical depth and clarity—often accompanied by an ingenuous smile or a repartee. "We occasionally busy ourselves with the manifold," wrote the Rev. Everett, "we can, however, have no understanding of the manifold, if we have no sense of the One in which the manifold exists. The reality of the One is the truth which the East may well teach us; and we owe a debt of gratitude to Vivekananda that he has taught this lesson so effectively".

195. Ibid., p.298.
196. Ibid.
197. Ibid., p.304.
198. The Prabuddha Bharata, August 1896.
From the Boston Evening Transcript we learn that after his lecture at the Harvard University Swami Vivekananda was invited by the Twentieth Century Club of Boston to speak on the "Practical side of the Vedanta". He was asked numerous questions such as the influence of Vedanta on Islam, the peculiarity of the Vedas, the Vedantic view of caste, the divinity of human soul, the decline of Buddhism etc. From Boston he left for Chicago where he held several classes during the first week of April at the instance of one Miss Adams. From Chicago he proceeded to New York sometime in the second week of April from where he sailed to Europe and thence to India. Before leaving he renovated the Vedanta Society of New York and spread his teachings through spoken as well as printed word.

Thus ended Swami Vivekananda's sojourns in "The New World". Some saw in him "a colossal figure", "a man of fire and flame"—"who truly walked with God", "a marvellous combination of sweetness and irresistible force, verily a child and prophet in one", and "a man as kings delight to humour". Others were

202. The Swami left New York for England on April 15, 1896 and left England for India on December 16, 1896. See chapter VI for his work and achievements in European countries.
203. *Mrs. Funke's reminiscences in His Eastern and Western Admirers*, p. 263.
205. His Eastern and Western Disciples, p. 401.
206. Helen Huntington to *The Brahmavadin*, April 11, 1896.
fascinated by his majestic silhouette which was in complete contrast to the fragile and emaciated structure of ascetics, his ringing voice which could make one saunter in its "divine music" and his thoughtful ideas described as jewels which would fit together like "a wonderfully beautiful mosaic". Some saw in him a "Michael angel at work with chisel and hammer bringing into form the concept of power, strength and majesty which was to grow into his "Moses". Others took him as a species from another universe who brought with him 'the power, the radiance of the far distant region from which he came'. "The power that emanated from this mysterious being", wrote Sister Christine, "was so great that one all but shrank from it. It was overwhelming". Mrs Mary C. Funke and Miss Christine Greenstidel who had heard Swami Vivekananda's discourses at Detroit travelled seven hundred miles to the Thousand Island Park to be in his close company. "We have come to you", they told him, "just as we would go to Jesus if He were still on the earth and ask him to teach us".

Swami Vivekananda established his work on durable foundations in America. Vedanta was no more regarded as "a curiosity" or a "speculative vagary", but a prelude to philosophic thought.

207. Mrs Funke's reminiscences in His Eastern and Western Admirers, pp.259-60.
209. Ibid.p.160.
210. Cited in His Eastern and Western Disciples, p.360.
211. The Rev.C.C.Everett. of the Harvard University remarked in the introduction to an address on Vedanta philosophy by the Swami: "Hegel said that Spinosism is the necessary beginning of all philosophising. This can be said even more emphatically of the Vedanta system". The Prabuddha Bharata, August 1896.
The demand of Vedantic literature immensely increased. Sanskrit terms such as Atman, Purusha, Prakriti, Moksha etc. acquired "full citizenship" and the names of Shankaracharya and Ramanuja became as familiar to many as those of Huxley and Spencer. Helen Huntington felt that Swami Vivekananda had presented to the West "a religion of universal, unfailing charity, self-renunciation and the purest sentiments conceivable by the human intellect". It was a religion that knew no bonds of creed and dogmas; it was "uplifting, purifying, infinitely comforting, and altogether without blemish—based on the love of God and man, and on absolute chastity". The famous Americal literateur, Mrs Ella Wheeler Wilcox described the Swami's gospel as a soothing balm for the wearied humanity. "He gave the message that strengthened the man of business, that caused the frivolous society woman to pause and think; that gave the artist new aspirations; that imbued the wife and mother, the husband and father, with a larger and holier comprehension of duty".

212. "Just imagine", wrote Swami Kripananda from America on February 19, 1896, "the nervous, restless, American looking at the tip of his nose with as much interest as if it were a ten dollar gold piece, and trying to meditate on the rise and fall not of the stock market but of the Kundalini, and his disappointment when, after his gigantic effort to keep still for a few minutes, no Deva had made his appearance to present him with a bag of dollars!" The Brahmavadin, March 28, 1896.

213. Ibid. April, 11, 1896.

214. Cited in His Eastern and Western Disciples, p.387.