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In this chapter, we propose to deal in detail with Vivekananda's conception of education as the manifestation of our inner perfection. We shall also discuss the related issues such as the sublimation of the mind through yoga, man-making education, education for strong feeling and willing, for the unity of humanity. Importance of the study of comparative religion as a part of education has also been explained.

I. EDUCATION AS THE MANIFESTATION OF INNER PERFECTION

According to Swami Vivekananda, education is a process of manifesting the perfection 'within'. It is the means of manifesting the divinity 'within'. It is to help the student to bring out inner perfection or divinity. It is to remove all obstructions from the way of the student. The guru has to confine himself to his own bounds. The rest would take care of itself. Spiritual education has to centre round the emergence of the soul. In this sense Vivekananda treats education and religion synonymously. He says, "Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man. Religion is the manifestation of divinity already in man. Therefore the only duty of the teacher in both cases is to remove all obstructions from the way. Hands off! As I always say and everything will be right. That
is, our duty is to clear the way. Perfection is the combination of knowledge (Jñāna) and love or faith. Mere knowledge is not enough, since it leads to dry intellectualism. Mere faith also is not enough, for it may end up in sentimentalism. Education is the harmony between knowledge and love. Swami Vivekananda says that Shri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is an embodiment of perfection. He stands for the harmony of the intellect and faith. Noble souls like Ramakrishna are rare and a few. Education should take him as an ideal. Individually, one may not attain to that ideal. But we have to collectively achieve the ideal "by counteracting, equipoising, adjusting, and fulfilling one another."

Vivekananda says that perfection is character. It is through character that God can also be known. And Ramakrishna is the greatest manifestation of character. Education or religion should centre around the character of Ramakrishna. Education should model the individual after Ramakrishna. At the same time education should allow the individual to regard himself or herself as an independent being. Everyone has the same rights like freedom of thought and action. One may be a theist, an atheist, a pantheist, a monist, a polytheist or an agnostic. But a true student is one who is determined to cultivate "a character that is at once the broadest and the most intense. Education should not retard the progress towards the formation of character or perfection. Education should contribute to formation of virtue which is the
harmony between knowledge and faith. Everyone is divine and perfect. But the divinity is covered over with the dust of ignorance. Education in its spiritual sense should be striving for the cleansing of the dust. It should dispel the clouds of ignorance. Only then each one will treat the other as his or her equal. Education is the realisation of the Soul which is the same in everyone. Soul has neither sex, nor caste. It is devoid of all imperfections. So it is the duty of everyone to think of the other as his or her own soul. Education should enable the student to behave in such a manner that he does not injure the other by any means. Vivekananda says, "We believe that this is the very essence of the Vedas. We believe that it is the duty of every soul to treat, to think of and behave to other souls as such i.e., as Gods and not to hate or despise, or vilify, or try to injure them by any manner or means. This is the duty not only of the Sannyasin, but of all men and women."4

Vivekananda says that the Vedic education is education par excellence. It is more profound than scientific education. Even the Americans and the Europeans have high regard for the grand thoughts of the holy Vedas. The Vedic theories of creation have resisted the onslaughts of modern science. The Vedic thesis that the Soul is eternal is respected by the West. The Westerns are showing more interest in the Vedic theories of the eternity of creation. They are imbibing the Vedic idea that God is the same as the eternal Soul. Everyone is a part of the all pervading spirit. The
western educated are becoming sceptical about the Biblical theories of creation out of nothing. They are getting disgusted with the belief that the soul is created. They also doubt the idea of God as the big tyrant sitting on a throne in heaven. Vivekananda says, “Within fifty years the educated of the world will come to believe in the eternity of both soul and creation, and in God as our highest and perfect nature as taught in our holy Vedas. Even now their learned priests are interpreting the Bible in that way. My conclusion is that they require more spiritual civilization and we more material”.

Writing to Justice Sri Subramanya Iyer from Chicago in 1895, Vivekananda emphasized the need for education which is a wonderful combination of feeling and knowledge. Education should be founded on the ability to bring noble ideas into practice. He suggested a plan of opening a Theosophical College in Madras. The college should give a thorough knowledge of Vedas, the Bhashyas and Darshanas. It should also give the knowledge of all religions to the students. It should also impart knowledge of English, besides vernacular. It is only through this system of education that the Indian society can be overhauled thoroughly. The holistic system of education can eradicate all miscomptions about caste, untouchability and injustice in India. He says, “Now, take the case of caste— in Sanskrit, Jāti, i.e. species. Now, this is the first idea of creation. Variation (Vichitrata), that is to say Jāti, means creation.
I am one, I become many. Unity is before creation, diversity is creation. Now if this diversity stops, creation will be destroyed. So long as any species is various and active, it must throw varieties. When it ceases or is stopped from breeding varieties, it dies. Now the original idea of Jāti was this freedom of the individual to express his nature, his prakriti, his Jāti, his caste; and so it remained for thousands of years. Not even in the latest books is inter-dining prohibited; nor in any of the older books is inter-dining forbidden.

Vivekananda holds that education should aim at bringing about a perfect human being by controlling the mind. It should work for perfection of the imperfect by teaching the ways and means of controlling the finer powers of the mind. Perfection is the essential nature of the human being. Human beings are essentially good. But as it is the case now, the human being has lost perfection and become evil. But yet, it is also a fact that we have been striving to be perfect. The human race is progressing towards the ideal of perfection. Left to itself the evolution of man towards complete perfection will take its own course. One can become perfect only when everybody will become perfect. But it is also possible that one can become perfect much in advance. One need not wait until the whole of human race has attained perfection. The one who is true to oneself does not wait for others to be perfect. He or she can quicken the process of becoming perfect. The aim of
education should be to hasten the process of perfection. True education means augmenting the growth of perfection by following the additional means. The additional means, according to Vivekananda, is Rāja-Yoga. We can hasten the process of the growth of plants by artificial means. In the same way, education can hasten the spiritual growth of the individual by means of the science of Rāja-Yoga. Rāja-Yoga is the best means of attaining perfection that is already there in us.

Vivekananda contends that education should accomplish the task of making man perfect today. The religious teachers with their influential personalities can bring about perfect people in the present life. There is no need to wait for millions of years to become perfect. We need not put a limit to the process of becoming perfect. There is no reason to think that a person can grow only to a certain extent and not more. Circumstances can do wonders in hastening the process of perfection. The great prophets are those who could become perfect in one life. The Yogis reached perfection in their own lives. India is a witness to many such great people who hastened to become perfect. There have been such people in the world history also. Vivekananda cites Shri Ramakrishna as being one such great person who could become perfect in his own life. Referring to Ramakrishna, Vivekananda says, "Quite recently, there was such a man who lived the life of the whole human race and reached the end— even in this life."
Vivekananda holds that the hastening process works under certain laws. There is a need to investigate into these laws, to understand their secrets, and apply them to the process of our growth. If we can hasten our growth and development, we become perfect even in this life. This should be the purpose of education that centres round the study of the mind. Education should teach the people the noble ideal of reaching perfection as early as possible. The purpose of spiritual education lies in bringing out the perfect man here and now. It should liberate the person from the physical laws. It should make the individual strong enough to work out his salvation. It should enable us to go beyond time and nature. There is no need for waiting for ages in order to become perfect. It is ignorance to leave one's fate to nature and drift like a log in the ocean. "This science wants you to be strong, to take work in your own hand, instead of leaving it in the hands of nature, and get beyond this little life. That is the great idea." 

Vivekananda is optimistic that humanity as a whole is growing in knowledge, power and happiness. We are continuously growing as a race. And it is also true that individuals too are growing towards a higher stage of life. So it is possible to obtain perfection by hastening the process. There is no end to the power that an individual can achieve. Indian mind is so potential that it can easily get absorbed into that which interests it. The mind is so intelligent that it can also discard that which does not interest it.
It can also concentrate on that which is interesting to it. This is the peculiarity of the Indian mind. That is the reason why India could produce great mathematicians. The arithmetic and algebra have their origins in India. Even the laws of gravitation were known to ancient Indians well before Newton discovered them. The contribution of Indians to the science of mind is immense. The subject of mind interested them very much. The Indians were persuaded by the idea that "the mind could do anything and everything according to law".  

The powers of the mind became the object of study for Indians long ago. They found that the phenomena like magic, telepathy and charms are nothing extraordinary. They made the science of the mind as ordinary as physical sciences. They showed more interest in the former than in the latter. So the physical sciences suffered a set-back in India. They almost died out gradually. The Indian Yogis made experiments in the science of the mind and body. They made experiments on the light, sound, smell, colour and taste. They examined their effects on the mind-body complex. In the process, they really showed most marvellous powers. They obtained extraordinary powers like floating in air or water. They also achieved the powers like reading other's minds and of seeing what is there in another. They can also perform the magic of making other sit or sleep in thin air, without any support at the bottom. Vivekananda attributes all these powers to the
spirit. The power of the hand or the sword is derived from the power of the mind or spirit. "The power is all in the spirit"¹¹, says Vivekananda.

Since it is possible to hasten the process of perfection, the mind has to make an effort to become perfect at the earliest. The mind has to exert itself to the maximum. Vivekananda at the same time says that it is not an easy task. It is as difficult as an achievement in other sciences. It is as time consuming as making a fortune. It may take more time than, say, learning science or engineering. The material sciences deal with things that are tangible and fixed. We can easily analyse and investigate into them. But the science of Rāja-Yoga deals with the mind which is ever moving. The nature of the mind is such that "the moment you want to study it, it slips"¹². The moods of the mind are constantly changing. The mind modifies itself into several activities. Thoughts of the mind are so fleeting that it is difficult to study their nature. The mind has to be understood and controlled in the midst of this change. Therefore Vivekananda says that the science of Yoga is much more difficult than the natural sciences. It requires rigorous training and dedication. It is difficult to give practical training in the science of Yoga. Vivekananda in this connection humbly submits that he himself knows little of this science. Although he practised for long hours in the science of the Yoga, he could achieve only a little. "Sometimes I worked at it twenty hours during the twenty four hours; sometimes I slept only one hour in the
night; sometimes I had to live in caves. Think of that. And yet I know little or nothing: I have barely touched the hem of the garment of this science. But I can understand that it is true and vast and wonderful"13, admits Vivekananda.

Swami says that one who has an inclination for the study of the science of the mind, should have a great determination. The determination should be more than what we show in business. It requires an enormous amount of commitment. It demands abandonment of our family, kith and kin. It calls for more devotion than to any other profession. It needs more application than any other occupation demands. Very few people succeed in the science of the mind. Here much depends upon the constitution of the practitioner also. Although difficult, everyone who practises it can get at least the glimpses of the secrets of the mind. Our ability to progress at least a little is the proof that we can also fully realise the powers of the mind. History of Indian spirituality stands an evidence to the fact that "there have been men who realised it fully"14. Vivekananda at the same time warns that there is a lot of scope for gullibility in the science of spirituality. There have been charlatans and cheats in this profession. Some people take it for a profitable business. Some have brought it down to the level of magic. Moreover, mere theory does not work here. It is no good to confine it to intellectual gymnastics and satisfaction. One should have a determination for practical experience of the powers of the mind.
II. THE MAN-MAKING EDUCATION

Swami Vivekananda proclaims that the ideal of education is man-making. The goal of all training should be to radically transform the human being. There is no use to polish up the outside when the malady is inside. The aim of education is to make man grow. It has to create the man who influences, who throws his magic, as it were, upon his fellow-beings. It has to bring about the man who can do anything and everything he likes. Education should create great personalities who can be the leaders of humanity. It is the personality that counts. Men or women with personality means the great authors or the great thinkers who have thought great thoughts. They are the leaders of the human kind. There have been only a handful of such personalities. Their thoughts are real, new and genuine. The great books they have written and left for us are a proof of their greatness. The greatness of their thoughts is enshrined in their books. Vivekananda maintains that their thoughts are great because they were great personalities. They were great giants because of their personality. Their personality is more than what they produced. The thoughts they thought, the books they wrote were the result of their personality. The speeches they made and the spell they had on people is due to their personality. Vivekananda says that the personality of a giant counts more than his words. The personality is two-thirds and the intellect—his thoughts and words—is one
third only. Although the great person is no more, his personality sustains in those who have read his thoughts and words. "It is the real man, the personality of the man, that runs through us. Our actions are but effects. Actions must come when the man is there; the effect is bound to follow the cause"\textsuperscript{16}, declares Vivekananda.

He holds that only the people with great personality can influence others and can do anything successfully. Everything they touch gets sanctified. They can make anything and everything work through the magic of their personality. Vivekananda says that our families are successful only when the heads are of good personality. It is owing to the presence of one's personality that a family grows. Failures are due to the absence of great personalities. The heads of the families are solely responsible for the success or failure of their families. It is not correct to blame others for the deterioration of our families. It is not fate or bad luck that is the cause of the failure. The failure of the heads of the families is the cause of their fall. Only people with good character can manage their families well. He says "When heads of families fail, they should ask, themselves, why it is that some persons manage a family so well and others do not. Then you will find that the difference is owing to the man: his presence, his personality"\textsuperscript{17}.

Vivekananda is of the view that ancient India was known for people with great psychical powers. The number of such people dwindled as the population grew. Personalities with mental powers
become less in numbers when a country is thickly populated. The Hindu tradition has made a science of the powers of the mind. The ancient Indian thinkers have analysed the phenomena of the psyche. They have thoroughly investigated into it and made a science of it. They have proved the extraordinary powers of the mind as being natural and common. There is nothing 'super natural' or fictitious about it. The psychical powers follow certain laws just as the physical phenomena. They can be proved to be as practical as the natural phenomena. People can acquire these powers by practice. It is not by accident that a person is born of mental powers. It is not also a freak of nature that one possesses such powers. The Indians have called the science of mental powers a Yoga par excellence. They have designated it as Raja-Yoga which means the king of the science of psychical powers. Vivekananda says, "These facts, the Hindus, being analytically minded, took up and investigated, and they came to certain remarkable conclusions; that is, they made a science of it. They found out that all these, though extraordinary are also natural; there is nothing supernatural. They are under laws just the same as any other physical phenomenon. It is not a freak of nature that a man is born with such powers. They can be systematically studied, practised and acquired. This science they call the science of Raja-Yoga".

The ideal of education should be the cultivation of Raja-Yoga which is the science of the extraordinary powers of the mind. The
human mind is a part of the universal mind. The minds of the human beings are not separate but interconnected since they all are parts of the one mind. Each mind is in actual communication with the whole world. That is why Indian sages could attain the phenomenon called thought transference. Thought transference is the capacity of sending one's thought to another mind at a distance. The transference of thought is not by accident but by deliberation and preparation. The person who sends his or her thought and the one who receives it know that they are doing it. In this act of transference distance does not matter at all. Thought travels any distance and reaches the other person. The other person knows that the thought is coming and also understands the meaning of it. This is possible because the mind is one and universal in nature. Our minds are not isolated but related to each other. That is why my thought is able to reach the other person. Vivekananda says that normally one's thought does not directly reach the other's mind. One's thought gets dissolved into ethereal vibrations which go into our brain. The vibrations have to be resolved again into our own thoughts. That is in ordinary cases, thought involves the process of dissolution and resolution. But in thought transference one's thought directly reaches other's mind. It does not follow the roundabout process of dissolution and resolution. The ancient people have called the phenomena of thought transference telepathy. Telepathy is the proof that mind is
continuous and universal. Yoga also subscribes to the truth that our minds are not different from the universal mind. "Your mind, my mind, all these little minds, are fragments of that universal mind, little waves in the ocean; and on account of this continuity, we can convey our thoughts directly to one another" says Vivekananda.

He maintains that the whole world is one of influence. That is, we use our energy in influencing others. Only a little part of our energy is used for preserving of our own body. Mostly, our bodies, our intellect and our spirituality are spent for influencing others. Conversely, we are also being influenced by others' energy. That is, each is influencing the other. Mutual influencing of people is constantly going on around us. But people with the powers of mind influence others very easily and quickly. They impress others even without any outward embellishments. A person with magnetism can immensely impress others. Such a person may speak a few words. What he speaks may be ungrammatical and incoherent. Yet he influences others because of his inner qualities. Mere words cannot produce any impression. Even thoughts alone can not influence others. It is the person who matters most. The person contributes immensely in making an impression upon others. Words and thoughts contribute only a little in making an impression. "What you call the personal magnetism of the man—that is what goes out and impresses you".
And it is the duty of the educators to produce the great personalities who can influence others by their very presence. Education should not confine itself to produce the people of mere words and thoughts. Education should surpass the realm of thought and intellect and concentrate on spirituality. Spirituality involves the cultivation of the powers of the mind, like concentration, thought transference and influencing others. This is what Vivekananda means by man-making education. Education should not limit itself to change the outer person. It should concentrate on bringing about people who can cast a spell on others. A really educated person is one whose mind is like a dynamo which is full of power and light. It is only a person who has grown inwardly can influence others and change the society.

Vivekananda says that education should produce great teachers of religion. It is only the teachers of religion who can influence the inner man. The religious thinkers are the real people. Although mysterious personalities, they live, move and work among us. They influence and ignite their fellow-beings. Their intellectual acts and the books are only the traces left behind by them. Unlike the great philosophers, the religious teachers influenced even the nations in their life-time. They moved generations of people all over the world. Their personalities were tremendous, whereas the personalities of the philosophers are only faint. They cannot influence the people 'within'. The religious teachers were prophets.
They touch our lives as a whole. The philosophers however great they are, can only touch our intellect. The influence of the philosophers is like that of chemical process which may or may not produce a flash of light. But in the case of the prophets, the influence on others, "is like a torch that goes round quickly, lighting others."21.

Education should aim at imparting the science of Rāja-Yoga which is investigation into the laws of the personality. Education should pay proper attention to the discovery of the laws and methods of strengthening one's personality. It has to work for the growth of the inner person. Devoid of the growth of personality, mere teaching of arithmetics and language skills is of no use. Devoid of this noble aim of the transformation of man 'within', education becomes impractical. Only the education that creates great personalities is practical. Only the religious prophets can bring about a good society. Having realized the spiritual reality, they can practically influence all the realms of our life and world. They can positively touch upon our family, business and profession. Having realized the Spirit or Soul, the subtle reality, they can influence the gross reality. Being rooted in the microcosmic reality they can influence the macrocosmic world. Having understood the fine laws governing the universe, they can influence the society. These laws are behind the physical laws which we all know. Man-making education is that which takes the
person to the level of comprehending the subtle laws. As a matter of fact, there is no distinction between the spiritual and physical. There is only one world or one universe. There is no division between body and mind. The so-called physical is only the grosser form of the spiritual. The finest is the spirit whereas the grossest is the body. Education should not be centred around the gross, the physical part. It should concentrate on the subtle, the spiritual part of the human being. It should aim at the growth of our personality which is our inner being. Vivekananda says, “The science of Yoga claims that it has discovered the laws which develop this personality, and by proper attention to those laws and methods, each one can grow and strengthen his personality. This is one of the great practical things, and this is the secret of all education. This has a universal application. In the life of the house-holder, in the life of the poor, the rich, the man of business, the spiritual man, in every one’s life, it is a great thing, the strengthening of this personality. There are laws, very fine, which are behind the physical laws, as we know. That is to say, there are no such realities as a physical world, a mental world a spiritual world. Whatever is, is one”.

Vivekananda says that education should concentrate on harnessing the powers of the mind. He says that the greatest powers are contained in the finer elements of our personality. It is not in the gross physical part that the powers are lodged. They are
inherent in the psychic realm. Just as the physical strength is contained in the nerves and thoughts, so also the mental powers are hidden in the spirit. The soul is the seat of power which enables the gross to move. The muscles derive their strength from nerves which supply blood to them. The nerves in turn derive their strength from the thoughts of the person. The exertion of power comes from the spirit in the final analysis. The function of the spirit is unseen whereas that of body is seen. "When a gross thing moves, we catch it, and thus we naturally identify movement with things which are gross. But all power is really in the fine. We do not see any movement in the fine, perhaps, because the movement is so intense that we cannot perceive it. But if by any science, any investigation, we are helped to get hold of these finer forces which are the cause of the expression, the expression itself will be under control".

Education should aim at controlling of our thoughts and actions. They can be controlled only by getting control of the subtle movements which are at the root of our thoughts and actions. Firstly, we should learn to get control of thought at its root. That is, we have to get hold of thought before it manifests as thought and action. There is a method by which we can investigate and understand the finer powers that cause our thought and action. The method is Raja-Yoga, the concentration on the subtle powers of our being. One can have control over oneself only when one has
control over one's thoughts and actions. Such a person can also have control over the minds of others. Vivekananda contends that only the person who has control over his mind and the mind of every other person can be called a religious person. Being pure and moral, the religious person has control over the one Mind which manifests as the mind of different people. Therefore, he who knows and controls his or her own mind knows the secret of every mind. Such a person has not only power over every other mind but can eradicate physical evil. By having control over the subtle elements and movements one can overcome worries and failures. "The present system of education is all wrong. The mind is crammed with facts before it knows to think. Control of the mind should be taught first. If I had my education to get over again and had voice in the matter, I would learn to master my mind first and then gather facts if I wanted them." 24.

III. EDUCATION AS THE MASTERY OF THE MIND THROUGH YOGA

As it has already been mentioned, education, according to Swami Vivekananda, is not filling the mind with a lot of facts but changing the man by perfecting the mind. Perfecting and getting complete mastery of one's own mind is the ideal of education. It is not possible to change the mind by force. Nor is it possible to change it by one's own sweet will. One can change one's mind only by gaining complete mastery over one's own thoughts. The
thoughts and the senses should be my servants not my masters. Then only it is possible to dispel evil. Education is a process of making man divine by the mastery over one’s thoughts and senses. This is possible through the power of concentration. Concentration, according to Vivekananda, is the power of attachment of the mind to certain things. Concentration includes the power of detachment also. The perfect mind is that which has both the power of attachment and detachment. It has the capacity to take itself off certain things. Education should enable the student to develop the power of attachment as well as the power of detachment. "If the man is equally powerful in both— that man has attained manhood" ꞌ28, says Vivekananda.

An individual who has the power of attachment and detachment alone is the master of himself or herself. Nothing can make such a person unhappy. He does not become miserable even if the whole world crumbles. He cannot be disturbed even when the entire universe tumbles about his ears. He exists like the Buddha whose silence is so deep that even a thousand carts passing by him cannot disturb. Vivekananda holds that no book can teach us the powers of the mind. No amount of reading can help us in attaining the power of concentration, attachment and detachment. Crowding the mind of the child is of no avail in gaining concentration. Teaching of all philosophies or theories is of no use. It is only through the science of Yoga, Rāja-Yoga in particular, that
one can achieve the power of the concentration of the mind. Vivekananda maintains that Rāja-Yoga is the greatest science of the mind. It is the psychology which alone embodies the facts and secrets about the mind. Rāja-Yoga is the science of the mind that ancient India has offered to the world. Patanjali is its founder. He codified the Yoga Sūtras by collecting the materials from the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. Vivekananda has written a brilliant commentary on Patanjali's Yoga Sūtra. The title of Vivekananda's commentary is Rāja-Yoga.

Vivekananda regards Raja-Yoga as the science of mind par excellence. He hails it as the true education that every individual should obtain. The education in Raja-Yoga, otherwise known as, the science of the power of concentration, begins with the control of the breath (prāṇayāma). Prāṇayāma is preceded by five abstentions (Yamas) and five prescriptions (Niyamas). The five abstentions are avoidance of harming others (ahīṃsa), false hood (satya), theft (aparigraha), continence (brahmacharya), and greed (aparigraha). And the five prescriptions are purity (saucha), contentment (santosha), mortification (tapah), study (svadhyāya) and devotion to God (Īśvarapāṇidāna).

Breathing exercise (prāṇayāma) is very beneficial to every student. It slowly and gradually takes us into the chambers of the mind. It ultimately enables us to get control of the mind. Of course one has to go through a long and hard struggle of
breathing. One cannot practice breathing as something curious. It has to be exercised according to a plan. Practicing breathing systematically even for a few days will definitely give us benefits. "Practice a few days, and if you do not find any benefit, then come and curse me", say Vivekananda.

According Vivekananda sublimation of the mind is an important aim of education. Sublimation means directing our impulses, desires and emotions towards higher states of mind. It is raising our activities from lower to sublime levels of integration and harmony. Education should involve the process of transforming the undesirable traits of the child into desirable qualities. It is a process of elevating the mind by substituting the bad thought with the good ones. It is converting the destructive attitudes of the child into constructive ones. For instance, the emotions like anger and jealousy towards others may be channelled towards self-improvement. The students can be trained to respect the law and order through the sports activities. Besides these instances of sublimation, there may be sublimation through spiritual conversion which "is manifested through a sudden change of heart and emotional regeneration affecting vitally the outlook, inner adjustment and habits of life of an individual."

Vivekananda holds that the mind can be sublimated through work (karma), knowledge (jñāna), meditation (dhyāna), and love (bhakti). In all these ways of sublimation education plays a vital
role. Education must enable the individual to sublimate his or her mind through work. Work is an essential part of our life. We are active by nature. Everyone must be doing something or other always. Action is inalienable aspect of life. No action is absolutely good or absolutely bad. Every action involves both good and bad. "There is no action which does not bear good and evil fruits at the same time." For instance, in the act of delivering a lecture one may be killing thousands of microbes. But it does not mean that we must abstain from work. Vivekananda maintains that we have to work and do good to others. But we have to work without a motive for results. We have to work disinterestedly. Disinterested action is the best means of sublimating one's mind. It is the best means of reaching perfection. Work without attachment to the fruits thereof is the way to sublimation and perfection. Education should enable the person to work not like a slave but like a master. Working like a slave results in selfishness and attachment. Working as the master of our mind gives rise to the bliss of non-attachment. This is the secret of work that education has to reveal. This is what Vivekananda calls Karma-Yoga. Karma-Yoga is working without a motive. It is work without selfishness and expectation. Karma-Yoga means doing good because it is good to do good. He who does good work even in order to get to heaven binds himself down. Work that is done even with the least selfish motive forges a chain on our feet. Vivekananda says "He works
best who works without any motive, neither for money, nor for fame, nor for anything else; and when a man can do that, he will be a Buddha, and out of him will come the power to work in such a manner as will transform the world. This man represents the very highest ideal of *Karma-Yoga*\(^{20}\).

Another means by which education has to sublimate the mind is through knowledge (*Jñāna-Yoga*). *Jñāna-Yoga* means realization of *that* by knowing which everything else is known. The Self or the Soul is that by knowing which all else is known. The Self is non-dual Brahman which appears to be manifold by the interpolation of name and form. It is one without the second, eternal, pure and unchangeable. The various changes in the universe are only the appearances of the Self. It is due to ignorance or Maya that we see the one as the many. Time, space and causality are at the root of our seeing the manifoldness of the universe. But the one who is knowledgeable and wise sees the one only. Such a person is called a liberated one and he alone is truly educated. "The man who has in this life attained to this state, for whom, for a minute at least, the ordinary vision of the world has changed and the reality has been apparent, he is called the 'Living Free' (*Jeevanmukta*). This is the goal of the Vedantin, to attain freedom while living\(^{20}\). True education is the Vedanta which sublimes the mind through reasoning aimed at the knowledge of
the Self. The one who attains the knowledge of the Self is called a Jnāna-Yogi.

Meditation is another means of sublimating the mind. In meditation the mind is sublimated by controlling it. This process of sublimating the mind by controlling is called Rāja-Yoga as advocated Patanjali. Rāja-Yoga is the science of attaining the powers and the immortal bliss. It consists of eight steps, namely, yama, niyama, āsna, prāṇayāma, pratyāhāra, dhrāraṇa, dhyāna and Samādhi. Of the eight steps, the latter four steps are very important for sublimating the mind. Pratyāhāra means withdrawing the mind from the senses and their objects. Dhāraṇa means focusing the mind on any one of the objects without fluctuation. It is detaching the mind from the world and attaching it on any of object of our choice. The object of concentration may be an external one to begin with. It may also be a gross one. But gradually the mind should be directed towards the objects that are internal and subtle in nature. The concentration should be focused on an internal organ, called the Buddhi. Deep concentration of the mind on the Buddhi is called Dhyāna. It is called meditation in which the concentration is like the flow of oil from one vessel into another. At this stage, the Yogi attains the supernatural powers (Siddhis) which he has to abjure. It is only by relinquishing the powers that the Yogi reaches the final stage of Samādhi. Samādhi is the state of super consciousness which is free from the clutches
of Nature (Prakṛti). It is the stage in which the mind (citta) is pure and devoid of all fluctuations. This is the state in which there is an end to all mental modifications. It is the state of meditation in which the Yogi attains the seedless state of Samādhi and experiences Sachidānanda. "Then the glory of the soul, undisturbed by the distractions of the mind or motions of the body, will shine forth in its full effulgence; and the Yogi will find himself as he is, as he always was, the essence of knowledge, the Immortality and the all pervading."31.

The former four stages of Raja-Yoga are preparatory. They are external in character. They constitute the physical and moral aspects of Yoga. Yama and Niyama give the moral training to the Yogi. As it has already been mentioned, they involve certain abstinences and obligations that the Yoga should observe. He should abstain from speaking untruth, causing injury, taking others' things and so on. He should observe the norms like being happy and pure in thought, word and deed. He should also have faith in God and acquire the knowledge of the scripture. Āsana is the next step which is required for sitting in meditation for long hours. So the Yogi should sit in such a posture which is firm and comfortable. Next is prānayāma which means controlling of the breath. It involves three stages, namely, inhaling, retention and exhaling of the breath. Prolonged exercise of the three processes leads to the controlling of breath. Controlling of the breath (Prāṇa)
leads to the concentration of the mind. Breath-control leads to
Pratyāhāra which means checking the outgoing powers of the
mind, freeing it from the thralldom of the senses and their objects.
"When we do this, we shall really have character. Then we shall
have taken a long step towards freedom: before that we were more
machines". Pratyāhāra leads to the remaining three stages of
yoga, namely, Dhāraṇa, Dhyāna and Samādhi which have been
explained above.

The fourth means of sublimating the mind is love.
Vivekananda regards it as the greatest force of controlling the
mind. He calls it Bhakti Yoga. Bhakti Yoga means devotion to God
with utmost love. It is the science of spiritual love which gives the
highest and glorious results. It is sublimating various passions like
anger, envy and hatred to the level of pure love. The several
emotions of the human heart are not wrong in themselves. They
only have "to be carefully controlled, sublimated and directed until
they acquire excellence". Vivekananda says that Bhakti or love
for the Lord is the best means of sublimating the mind. It is loving
the highest by relinquishing the pleasures of the lower kind.
"Bhakti-Yoga is the science of higher love. It shows us how to
direct it; it shows us how to control it, how to manage it, how to
use it, how to give it a new aim, as it were, and from it obtain the
highest and the most glorious results, how to make it lead to
spiritual blessedness".
Vivekananda distinguishes between two kinds of Bhakti, namely, Para and Apara: Apara Bhakti means devotion to the God of the form. It involves the worship of the idols, symbols or images of the formless God. Gradually the Bhakta evolves to the level of the devotion to the God who is formless. Loving the formless Almighty is Para-Bhakti. The Yogi goes beyond the limiting adjuncts of the Supreme God. He realizes the state of freedom wherein all the bondages will fall off from him naturally. Divine grace dawns on the Bhakta when he directs his emotions toward the formless without suppressing them. Here, the love of the pleasures of senses and of the intellect are thrown aside and cast into the shade by the supreme love for God Himself. Swami says, "The love of God grows and assumes a form which is called Para-Bhakti or supreme devotion. Forms vanish, rituals fly away, books are superseded; images, temples, churches, religions and sects, countries and nationalities—all these little limitations and bondages fall off by their own nature from him who knows this love of God."

Thus Education means sublimating the mind through love for God. It means the realization of the Supreme Reality through Bhakti Yoga, besides Rāja-Yoga, Jñāna Yoga and Karma Yoga. Of all the four, sublimation through love for the Almighty is the shortest, direct and the most effective. It can be followed by all irrespective of whether one is learned or not. One moment of deep
and mad love for God is enough to attain the knowledge of the Supreme, maintains Vivekananda.

IV. EDUCATION FOR STRONG FEELING AND WILLING

Swami Vivekananda holds that education should inculcate in the student the ideals of feeling, willing and steadfastness. He says that feeling is stronger than reason. Intellect goes to a certain extent only. It goes a few steps and stops there. It cannot grasp anything completely. But feeling comprehends things by heart. It gives inspiration to the student. It generates love which opens the mind to the secrets of the universe. Vivekananda maintains that it is not enough merely to know facts, one has to feel the facts. It is superficial to know that the millions of our brethren are poor. One has to feel their plight of being almost like beasts. Education should inspire the student to feel the fact that our own kith and kin have been starving for ages. They have been leading miserable lives of ignorance and degradation. The feeling should be such that it should make us speechless, restless and mad. It should make us forget everything except the idea of the misery of our brethren. This is the first step in becoming patriotic also. He asks, "Has it gone into your blood, coursing through your veins, becoming consonant with your heartbeats. Has it made you almost mad? Are you seized with that one idea of the misery of ruin, and have you forgotten all about your name, your fame, your wives, your children, your property, even your own bodies? Have
you done that? That is the first step to become a patriot, the very first step.¹²⁶

The second step is to create in the pupil the will power. The power of will is such that it can surmount any obstruction in the path of our goals. The man of will power can stand against the whole world. He will be determined to do what he thinks is right. He sticks on to his ideals and goals even if his people are against him, his properties are gone. He pursues them even if his name and fame are at scathe. Such is the nature of the power of will. And the third step towards becoming a true patriot is the steadfastness in truth. Being rooted in truth at any cost is necessary for a patriot. One should not move even an inch from the way of truth. One may be praised or blamed by the Gods. One may lose whatever one likes. Yet one should not escape from truth. One should be a votary of truth even at the cost of death. These are the three ideals that education should foster in people in order to make them the worthy patriots. He says, "If you have these three things, each one of you will work miracles. You need not write in newspapers, you need not go about lecturing; your very face will shine. If you live in a cave, your thoughts will permeate even through the rock walls, will go vibrating all over the world for hundreds of years, may be, until they will fasten on to some brain and work out there. Such is the power of thought, sincerity, and of purity of purpose."³⁷
Swami Vivekananda holds that in educating the child, the teacher should not force the child to learn whatever the teacher likes. The child should have freedom to choose the subjects of his or her choice. The student should be allowed to choose the kind of course he or she like. The teacher or the parents should not force the child to pursue a particular course. Forcing the child to study the subject which he or she does not like arrests the growth. It kills strong feeling for the subject of choice. It dampens the strong will to pursue it. It hampers the passion of the student for education. The elders have no business to put their ideas into the child's head. Nobody knows how the child develops. So either the teacher or the parent has no right to force his idea into the child's brain. We cannot make a plant grow in soil which is not suitable to it. Vivekananda says that the child should be given freedom since it teaches itself. Elders can only "help the child to go forward in its own way".

The teacher can help the child in the negative way by removing the obstacles in the path of child's growth. The teacher has no right to help the child in the positive way. The teacher and the parents are ignorant of the child's instinctive aptitude. Knowledge comes out of its own nature when the obstacles are removed. Vivekananda equates the work of a teacher with that of a gardner. The gardner can loosen the soil a little for the plant to grow. He can put a fence around and protect it from danger.
Similarly the teacher can provide all external help to the child. Then knowledge manifests itself of its own accord. The teacher works stops with that. He need not do anything more. "You cannot do anything else. The rest is a manifestation from within its own nature. So with the education of a child; a child educates itself. You come to hear me, and when you go home, compare what you have learnt, and you will find you have thought out the same thing. I have only given it expression. I can never teach you anything. You will have to teach yourself, but I can help you perhaps in giving expression to that thought."

Vivekananda laments that millions of children all over the world have become perverted because of the wrong ways of teaching. Children's natural inclination has been nipped in the bud. Many beautiful things would have become wonderful spiritual truths if the children were allowed to grow freely. Referring to religion, Vivekananda says that the parents and teachers have injected superstition into the child's head in the name of religion. A great amount of evil has been done by the horrible idea of a family, religion, a social religion, or national religion. The child has been conditioned by the idea of mass religion also. The idea of mass religion smothers the potential power of the child. There are innumerable ideals. Nobody has a right to rub them on others. Nobody knows what shall be the other man's idea. So one cannot force any ideal on the other. Vivekananda maintains that one has
to keep one's ideal as secret and sacred because it need not be so for others. One should not also create disturbance by wanting to tell others what one's idea is. By going about talking one's ideals to others one only receives opposition. It is a matter of *Iṣṭha* that one likes the ideal which others may not like. "My duty should be to lay before you all the ideals I know of and enable you to see by your own constitution what you like best and which is most fitted to you. Take up that one which suits you best and persevere in it. This is your *Iṣṭha*, your special ideal."60.

Vivekananda asserts that the spiritual ideals manifest only when the secular ideas are not imposed on the student. Individual grows spiritually only when the secular education is not forced upon him. Shri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa grew into a spiritual giant because he did not have education in its ordinary sense. He did not study the books, nor did he go to any university. So his mind was kept natural for the great ideals and ideas to grow in it. He had purer thoughts undiluted by others' thoughts. He had freedom to think for himself. He was clean and original because he was not brought up within the precincts of a university. He could see the divine because he had gone beyond the intellect. He had crossed the realm of logic and could see the light of divinity. He had also overcome the bonds of the body. He conquered all the temptations for the lower truth. His conquest was nobler than that of the lower man of animal passions. He broke the cycle of eating
and drinking and dying gain and again. Vivekananda says that the creative moments are rare. But we can attain them if we are steadfast in our attempt at realizing them. He says, "Perhaps some of us here will remember that there are moments in our lives when, tired of all these ratiocinations of dull and dead logic, tired of plodding through books, which often teach us nothing, but a sort of intellectual opium eating, we must have it at stated times or we die-tired with all this, the heart of our hearts sends out a wail: Is there no one in this universe who can show me the light? If thou art show the light unto me? Why dost thou not speak? Why dost Thou make Thyself so scarce; why send so many Messengers and not Thyself come to me? In this world of fights and factions whom am I to follow and believe? If thou art the God of every man and women alike, why thou not to speak to thy child and see if he is not ready. Well, to us all come such thoughts in moments of great depression; but such are the temptations surrounding us that the next moment we forget. For the moment it seemed that the doors of the heavens were going to be opened, for the moment it seemed as if we were going to plunge into the light effulgent; but the animal man again shakes off all these angelic visions."

V. EDUCATION FOR THE UNITY OF HUMANITY

Swami Vivekananda holds that education should inculcate in the student the ethics based on the principle of unity. The science of ethics is based on love which transcends the principle of
variation. The only aim of it is the sameness and not differentiation. Ethics should be founded on the Vedantic metaphysics of unity. The Vedantic mind discovered the principle of unity after a thorough analysis of the reality. It founded everything on the idea of unity. The whole universe is a play of unity in variety, differentiation in oneness, and finite in the infinite. "We cannot take one without granting the other. But we can take them both as facts of the same perception, as facts of the same experience, and in this way it will always go on."

The highest ethical codes that the humankind has discovered so far know no differentiation. They are founded on the religion where all variation has died down. They arise out of the state of uniformity. The religion of Vedanta says that unity is the only thing that exists. All variety is only phenomenal, ephemeral and apparent. It says, "Look not variety, go back to unity." The unity is that which already exists. There is no need to construct the unity. Variety is perceived on the background of the already existent unity. Without the unity, it is not possible to conceive of the diversity. Vivekananda equates the metaphysical unity with God. God is not to be made. He already exists. He is independent and infinite. He is the basis of all that is finite. The perception of the finite implies the perception of the infinite. One entails the other. But some have emphasized the finite while others the infinite. But both are inseparable. "Some laid stress on the finite
side, and declared that they perceived the finite only others laid stress on the infinite side, and declared they perceived the infinite only. But we know that it is a logical necessity that we cannot perceive the one without the other.*44

Vivekananda equates the unity not only with God but also with perfection which is potentially there in every person. That is why, he also calls it the sameness. The sameness is already existent in every being. One has to recognize and understand it. But it is there even if we fail to know it. We may not be able to express it in clear language. We may not see it through sense perception. Yet it exists on its own, unconditionally and absolutely. It is because of the existence of the unity or the sameness that there is the finite, the differentiation. Diversity logically implies the existence of unity. The very fact that you and I are different implies that we are not different. The fact that we are conscious of being separate implies that we are not so. All knowledge apparently arises out of variations, separateness or differentiation. But in reality knowledge is based on the truth of unity or the sameness. Vivekananda says, "Knowledge would be impossible without that unity. Without the idea of sameness there would be neither perception nor knowledge. So both run side by side"*48.

Vivekananda says that universal ethics cannot aim at the absolute sameness of situation for all. We cannot aim at the condition where all men are the same. People are born different.
Some have more power than others. Some have inborn capacities but others may not have them. Some are born with physical and mental handicaps. Others are born with good bodies and minds. These differences cannot be avoided. But ethics can aim at the treatment of all people in the same way, because the same God resides in all of them. Irrespective of their mental, emotional or physical differences, everyone should be given equal opportunities. Moreover, the people who are less fortunate should be given better opportunities to grow. They should also be given a special treatment. Morality consists not only in seeing spirit in all but also in treating the handicapped with empathy. Treating everybody as the same despite the differences in external forms should be sole aim of ethics. One has to rise to the level of a saint to see the sameness in everybody. This enables the person to be sensitive and not to hurt others. "Thus, seeing the same God equally present in all, the sage does not injure Self by the Self and thus reaches the highest goal. Even in this life they have conquered relative existence, whose minds are firmly fixed on this sameness; for God is pure and God is the same to all. Therefore such are said to be living in God. We cannot deny that this is the real idea, yet at the same time comes the difficulty that the sameness as regards external forms and position can never be attained".

Vivekananda maintains that education should eliminate the sense of privilege from the minds of the student. Removal of
privileges to a few should be the aim of ethics in education. This is the task that is confronting the world. Having natural advantages like being born rich, intelligent or handsome does not mean that one should enjoy privileges. People with certain advantages have no right to take away "even the physical enjoyments from those who do not possess that advantage". It is quite common that a certain group of people are born physically or mentally stronger than others. They may even defeat or seduce those who are weak. But they cannot usurp all happiness unto themselves. It is self-evident that people are not equal in certain respects. It may also be a natural law. Some people may be able to acquire more wealth. They may attain higher positions than others can. But it is unjust to argue that these people have power over the poor, the downtrodden. It is not wrong to think that they have a right to "tyrannize and ride roughshod over those who cannot acquire so much wealth. Education should try to check the sense of privilege in the student. It should fight against the attitude of dominance of the rich and the intelligent over the poor and the dull. Education that is spiritually oriented should be built on the morality that seeks to destroy the attitude of enjoyment of advantage. It has to put an end to the privilege that has been practiced throughout the ages. It should thus work "towards sameness, towards unity, without destroying variety".
Vivekananda admits that variety is the very essence of life. The variations we see remain for ever. All of us are living in the midst of differences. One may be poor and the other may be rich. One may be strong and the other may be weak. One may be clever and the other may be foolish. One may be intelligent and the other may be ignorant. One may be spiritual and the other may not be so. But the former cannot have a privilege over the latter. The differences among people may remain. But the differences cannot be a reason for treating the one as greater than the other. The sameness has to be recognized in spite of the outward conditions. No doubt, it is not possible to eradicate the differences among people. No theory of ethics can justify the removal of variations. It cannot also establish sameness in the external world. Trying to bring about sameness by destroying variety in the external world leads to annihilation. It amounts to the death of everything. Therefore education which is truly moral alone can enable the student recognize the unity, the God or the infinitude. It alone can foster the idea that essential purity of the soul is the property of everyone of us. Education should enable the student to go beyond the appearance and recognize the real. It should not condition the student to the apparent side of our life. It should disclose the truth behind the phenomenon. It should not confine the pupil to the partial and the limited. Confining to the periphery leads to division and conflict in humanity. It causes conflict and sorrow in
the life world. Vivekananda says, "Taking one side alone, one half only of the position, is dangerous and liable to lead to quarrels. We must take the whole thing as it is, and act on it as our basis and work out in every part of our lives, as individuals and as unit members of society." 49.

VI. EDUCATION AND COMPARATIVE RELIGION

Swami Vivekananda's concept of education centres round his concept of religion. To him, true religion means the realization of the infinite spirit which is universal and all pervading. It is the principle of oneness that unites people all over the world. Vivekananda contends that the universal soul is the basis of all religions. The religious scriptures prescribe the different ways of reaching the same goal, namely, the universal truth. True religion, according to Vivekananda, is universal in character. The particular religions like Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and so on are the different manifestations of one and the same reality, which is the infinite. They are the different expressions of the infinite truth which is one. The one truth has manifested at different places and at different times. Vivekananda holds that since all religions are founded on the same truth, there is a need to study them in depth. They should be included in the curriculum for their study in comparison. Education should concentrate on the ideal of religious unity. Education should bring about unity of all religions by expounding the one truth underlying them. It should spread the
message of one united religion by eliminating antagonism among the religions. Comparative religion should form an important part of education. It should teach the students that true religion lies beyond all the meaningless ceremonials and the bundle of creeds. Education should save the religion of oneness from being lost in the wilderness of rites and rituals. The intellectuals have to adopt a new approach to religion. They have to protect the religious unity by going beyond the superficial differences between the religions. They have to save the religions from despair and hopelessness by investigating into the true nature of religion. Comparative religion holds a promise for the universal religion. It can come to the rescue of the religion of the oneness of God and humanity. Swami says, "By the study of different religions we find that in essence they are one...... fortunately for me I studied the Christian religion, the Mohammedan, the Buddhistic, and others, and it was my surprise to find that the same foundation principles taught by my religion were also taught by all religions......The proof one religion depends on the proof of all the rest......If one religion is true, all others must be true."80.

Vivekananda regards comparative religion as an important instrument of religious education. He had an idea of starting a college in the then Madras to teach the subject of comparative religion. He says that his idea of comparative religion has its own aim. It has its roots in Ramakrishna's idea of the essence of
religion. Comparative study of religions are meant for exploring the kernel of all forms of religion. It aims at emphasizing the real basis of all religions by eliminating all that is non-essential in them. The important aspect of comparative religion is to show the positive side of all religions without assuming a negative attitude to them. It is also devoid of any critical approach to any religion. Education should take care of bringing harmony among all the religions of the world. It should try to resolve the strife among them. Comparative religion should show all religions in the light of their eternal truths. Education through comparative religion should inculcate in the student the spirit of tolerance for all religions. It should curtail religious conflict by forging harmony. Swami equated comparative religion with philosophy of religion also, for it aims at discovering the essence of all religions. It is philosophy in the sense that it is concerned with oneness of all religion. It discovers and preaches the truth underlying all religions. Vivekananda is of the view that every religion has an essential and non-essential aspects. The essential nature of all religions is the same. Religions differ in their non-essential part only. Comparative religion aims at going beyond the superficial part of the religions. It shows unity as the real foundation of all religions. "Vivekananda conceived comparative religion as a study of this real basis of all religions, a search for the unity behind the variety of the forms of religions"51.
According to Vivekananda, comparative religion is scientific in character. It is scientific in the sense that it is universalistic and monistic in its approach. The conclusions of comparative religion are acceptable by all. They are also applicable to all people irrespective of their affiliation to any particular religion. They embody the oneness of the religions of our birth or choice. In this sense Vedantic monism and universalism forms the true foundation of comparative religion. Vedanta alone can accommodate the idea that religions of the world are comparable. Being above all religions, Vedanta alone can be alive to the fact that one religion is as good as and equal to any other. The term "comparative" means to bring together as equals. Derived from the Latin term "comparo", the term also means to connect, to pair, or to match. It also means to join or to liken or show similarities. Therefore the study of comparative religion is an attempt to bring together all religions as equals because they are the same in essence.  

A serious study of comparative religion can shake our faith in the superiority of any one religion. Great Christian thinkers like Max Muller felt that Christianity is the greatest of all religions. A true Christian cannot compare Christianity with any other religion. Although, Max Muller appreciated Ramakrishna's idea of the essential unity of all religious, he could not overcome the idea that the Christian religion is superior and unique. But the European
thinkers outside the academic circles accepted the possibility of comparative religion. People outside the established religions also felt the need for comparative study of the religions of the world. Romain Rolland, Arnold Toynbee, and Christopher Isherwood recognized the significance of Shri Ramakrishna's idea that "all religions are but so many ways to God". And Swami Vivekananda made the spread of this idea as the mission of his life. He presented this ideal in the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893. He also made it as the central theme of his lecturers at other places in Europe and India. To him comparative religion means the exploration into essence of all religions. As an academic discipline, comparative religion should aim at the propagation of the essence of all religions. Vivekananda felt that comparative religion would revitalize man's religious temper. It would also promote religious unity in the world. As R.K. Das Gupta puts it "For Vivekananda comparative religion was a step towards the ideal of universal religion. And he was so serious about it that he contemplated a college for studies in the subject and suggested that it should conduct a journal as its organ".

Vivekananda deplored that after the parliament of religions at Chicago, nothing has been done for the promotion of comparative religion. So he felt the need of a Mission which can work for the spread of the universality of religion. He regretted that the academic world has done little for the dissemination of the
ideal of the unity of all religions. The colleges and universities have to introduce the subject of comparative religion. They should encourage the younger generation to study comparative religion. They should promote research and publication in comparative religion. Vivekananda opines that a subject like comparative religion will sustain the ideal of secularism. It brings in true secularism by promoting religious tolerance. It establishes the truth that all religions are the same in essence. The religions are comparable to one another. No religion is exclusive of others. Comparative religion can form a firm foundation for secularism in a country like India. It can contribute greatly to the Indian secularism of treating all religions with equal respect and regard.

As it has already been mentioned, Vivekananda has derived the idea of comparative religion from his Guru Shri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. Ramakrishna clearly understood the unity and equality of all religions. He declared that "each form of worship was to him a living and most enthusiastic principle of personal religion." He felt that it was possible to unify all the religions of the world by seeing only the best in every one of them. He thought that there is a great symphony emanating from the diversity of the religious elements. The different aspects of different religions constitute themselves into a royal harmony. Ramakrishna maintained that in the Vedantic view, each religion has given a true vision of life. All of them are indispensable to humankind. Each
religion is a representation of the glimpse of the same truth. Each one of them leads the seeker to the same truth through a different route. Ramakrishna's understanding of religion is very comprehensive. It is so broad that no genius in the past had conceived it. To him, the religions are diverse courses of worshipping the same God. They are the varied springs of spiritual fulfillment. The religions are the manifold revelation of the joy of reaching the infinite. They have found the unity in the meditative mind of Sri Ramakrishna. His life is like a shrine of the unity of all religions. Ramakrishna's ideal of religious unity works as a sure remedy for religious fanaticism and sectarianism. It saves religious institutions from becoming the centres of strife and conflict. It can effectively check the communal divide and conflict all over the world. It has already influenced the religious thought of the world by bringing about religious harmony. We can see its impact during the fifty years after his passing away. Thinkers like Herbert G. Wood and Max Muller have subscribed to the possibility of comparative study of religions. Sir Brajendranath Seal, the President of the Parliament of Religions called Sri Ramakrishna "a cosmic Humanist in religion". And Benoy Kumar Sarkar has extolled Ramakrishna's doctrine of religion as being pluralistic. It embodies the principle of many faiths and many paths. There are as many paths as there are religions.
Vivekananda's address to the Parliament of Religions is founded on the idea of the harmony of religions. The central theme of his address was the equality of all religions. He considered the different religions as different streams having their source in different places. Just as the different rivers mingle in the same sea, so also the different paths lead to the one and the same Almighty. He said "As the different streams having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee." He also mentioned Bhagavad Gita's famous saying that whosoever comes to God, through whatsoever form, will reach Him. People are struggling through different paths which in the end lead to God. Vivekananda denounces sectarianism, fanaticism and bigotry which have long been the bane of humanity. In the place of religion, these evils have been causing conflict and violence. They have filled this beautiful earth with the ugly scence of bloodshed. They have destroyed humanity in people and drenched our lives in despair. These are the demons which have hampered the civilization. Vivekananda hoped that these evils have to be destroyed. He regarded the Parliament of Religions as their death-knell. It is the end of fanaticism and persecution and the uncharitable feelings among the people in the name of religion. In his address on 15th September 1893, Vivekananda clarified that
the variance and disagreement among religions is due to the short sightedness of people belonging to religion. We are like the frog in the well who thinks that nothing would be bigger than the well. The frog can not imagine that the there is the sea which is far bigger than the well in which he is living. Similarly, a Hindu, a Muslim, or a Christian thinks that his religion is the only religion that is worth following and all other religions are a myth. And Vivekananda reminded people that the Parliament of Religions is an opportunity given to the world by America for a comparative understanding of all religions leading to their unity. He said, "I am a Hindu. I am sitting in my own little well and thinking that the whole world is my little well. The Christian sits in his little well and thinks the whole world is his well. The Mohammedan sits in his little well and thinks that is the whole world. I have to thank you of America for the great attempt you are making to break down the barriers of this little world of ours and hope that, in the future, the Lord will help you to accomplish your purpose."  

Vivekananda felt that a comparative study of religions would bring about enlightenment which would enrich the spiritual heritage of humanity. An indepth understanding of the great religions of the world brings about religious tolerance. It would enlarge the human soul through creative response to other religions. There is a need to accept all the religions and worship them and the Gods they believe in. A Hindu should go the Mosque
or the Church and worship their Gods. One should visit the Buddhist temple and take refuse in the Buddha and his Law. Having a very broad view of religions, Vivekananda himself expressed the feeling of worshipping at the sacred places of any religion. This speaks of his deep faith in the spirit of the oneness of religions. In this he goes beyond the attitude of tolerance. Through the comparative study of religions, he wanted "to enrich the spiritual life and give it a new dimension and a new depth by entering into the spirit of the great religions in the world".

To Vivekananda, the sacred books of all religions are the manuscripts of their Gods. They are the revelations having eternal relevance. They are the perennial rivers which remain for ever and yet to be explored. Their revelations are taking place in the souls of each and every person who is steadfast in his or her faith. The scriptures of the religions are the accumulated spiritual wisdom of the humanity. Therefore, there is a need to study them in the process of education. Colleges and universities should encourage the diligent study of the scriptures for unifying them. They should promote the comparative study of religions to find their complementary. Education should aim at the eradication of the conflicting points between religions. It should enable the student to ignore the superficial aspects of religions which contribute to religious strife among the people of the world. Vivekananda's fifth address to the Parliament of Religions on 26th September 1893 can
be taken as the basis of the appreciation of one religion by the other. The theme of his talk was 'Buddhism, the fulfillment of Hinduism'. It speaks of Vivekananda's wisdom of regarding Buddhism as an extension of Hinduism. It is generally believed that Buddhism arose as a revolt against Hinduism. Buddhism is regarded as the antithesis of Hinduism. But Vivekananda showed deep conviction and courage in declaring Buddhism and Hinduism to be complimentary and not contradictory to each other. They have the identity which enriches each other. He said that one cannot live without the other. The wonderful intellect of the Brahmins and the noble soul of the Buddha have to be conjoined in our study of them. The researches into religions have to explore the spiritual consanguinity between the two religions. It is only the superficial studies that find differences between them. Profound studies find reconciliation between them. Such a study is possible between other religions also. The sum and substance of all the six addresses of Vivekananda at the Parliament of religions is the belief in the universal toleration and acceptance that all religions are true.

To Vivekananda, faith in the unity and the idea of universal religion is not a mere notion learnt from books. To him, it was a direct experience like any other experience. It was a realization transmitted to him by his Master. Shri Ramakrishna transmitted to him the truth of all the religions. The Master tread the path of
all religions and experienced their oneness. His message is that the humanity has to go beyond the doctrines, dogmas, sects and temples. They count nothing when compared with the essence of religions which is the spiritual existence of each and every individual. Having explicated this, Vivekananda made an earnest plea to the gathering for the studies in comparative religion. He suggested the foundation for a college and the launching of a journal for the purpose. Education should aim at the realization of the creative intuition which reveals the universality of all religions. Comparative religion should generate knowledge and wisdom for the unification of humanity through religion. It should bring about an understanding of the similarities of all religion. It should work as a doorway to the spiritual life of humanity. It should investigate the spiritual paths and find out their core as being unity and oneness of humanity. This shows that Vivekananda valued comparative (study of) religion “as a step towards an understanding of the essential unity amongst the different religions of the world”.

It would not be out of place here to mention Radhakrishnan’s views on comparative religion. Radhakrishnan also subscribed to Vivekananda’s views on comparative religion. He says that comparative religion can create the idea of unity in diversity. It can sustain the spirituality, the essence of all religions, by discarding their non-essentials. Radhakrishnan says that the spirit of
Ramakrishna and Vivekananda is one of universal religion which is beyond dogma and sectarianism. It is the religion that gives us the first principles of a sacred life. Radhakrishnan also upholds the idea of comparative religion for the promotion of an understanding of the nature of a truly spiritual life. Comparative religion gives an insight into the supreme values of the different faiths. It enables the student to transcend the differing symbols and penetrate the depth of spiritual consciousness. He endorsed the authenticity of Ramakrishnan’s and Vivekananda’s deep conviction in the unity of all religions. He also subscribed to their noble idea of comparative religion for the understanding and articulation of the oneness of the great religions of the world. He declared that Ramakrishna and Vivekananda actually experimented with different faiths and tested them in their own person to find out what is of enduring worth in them.

Thus, we have given a detailed exposition of Vivekananda’s philosophy of education as the manifestation of inner perfection. We have also discussed the man-making and the character-building aspects of education. Education for the sublimation of the mind, unity of humanity, and the importance of the study of comparative religion at the college and university level have also been elaborated.
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