

Classic Poetry Series

Swami Vivekananda
- poems -

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Swami Vivekananda(12 January 1863 - 4 July 1902)

Swami Vivekananda (Hindi: विवेकानन्द), born Narendranath Dutta is the chief disciple of the 19th century mystic Ramakrishna and the founder of Ramakrishna Mission. He is considered a key figure in the introduction of Vedanta and Yoga in Europe and America and is also credited with raising interfaith awareness, bringing Hinduism to the status of a world religion during the end of the 19th Century. Vivekananda is considered to be a major force in the revival of Hinduism in modern India. He is best known for his inspiring speech beginning with 'sisters and brothers of America', through which he introduced Hinduism at the Parliament of the World's Religions at Chicago in 1893.

 Short Biography

Swami Vivekananda was born in an aristocratic family of Calcutta. His parents influenced the Swami's thinking—the father by his rational mind and the mother by her religious temperament. From his childhood, he showed inclination towards spirituality and God realization. While searching for a man who could directly demonstrate the reality of God, he came to Ramakrishna and became his disciple. As a guru Ramakrishna taught him Advaita Vedanta and that all religions are true, and service to man was the most effective worship of God. After the death of his Guru, he became a wandering monk touring the Indian subcontinent and getting a first hand account of India's condition. He later sailed to Chicago and represented India as a delegate in the 1893 Parliament of World religions. An eloquent speaker, Vivekananda was invited to several forums in United States and spoke at universities and clubs. He conducted several public and private lectures, disseminating Vedanta, Yoga and Hinduism in America, England and few other countries in Europe. He also established Vedanta societies in America and England.

He later sailed back to India and in 1897 he founded the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, a philanthropic and spiritual organization. The Swami is regarded as one of India's foremost nation-builders. His teachings influenced the thinking of other national leaders and philosophers, like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Chandra Bose, Aurobindo Ghosh, Radhakrishnan.

 Inspiration

Swami Vivekananda's inspiring personality was well known both in India and in America during the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth. The unknown monk of India suddenly leapt into fame at the

Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893, at which he represented Hinduism. His vast knowledge of Eastern and Western culture as well as his deep spiritual insight, fervid eloquence, brilliant conversation, broad human sympathy, colourful personality, and handsome figure made an irresistible appeal to the many types of Americans who came in contact with him. People who saw or heard Vivekananda even once still cherish his memory after a lapse of more than half a century.

 Mission

In America Vivekananda's mission was the interpretation of India's spiritual culture, especially in its Vedantic setting. He also tried to enrich the religious consciousness of the Americans through the rational and humanistic teachings of the Vedanta philosophy. In America he became India's spiritual ambassador and pleaded eloquently for better understanding between India and the New World in order to create a healthy synthesis of East and West, of religion and science.

In his own motherland Vivekananda is regarded as the patriot saint of modern India and an inspirer of her dormant national consciousness, To the Hindus he preached the ideal of a strength-giving and man-making religion. Service to man as the visible manifestation of the Godhead was the special form of worship he advocated for the Indians, devoted as they were to the rituals and myths of their ancient faith. Many political leaders of India have publicly acknowledged their indebtedness to Swami Vivekananda.

The Swami's mission was both national and international. A lover of mankind, he strove to promote peace and human brotherhood on the spiritual foundation of the Vedantic Oneness of existence. A mystic of the highest order, Vivekananda had a direct and intuitive experience of Reality. He derived his ideas from that unfailing source of wisdom and often presented them in the soulstirring language of poetry.

The natural tendency of Vivekananda's mind, like that of his Master, Ramakrishna, was to soar above the world and forget itself in contemplation of the Absolute. But another part of his personality bled at the sight of human suffering in East and West alike. It might appear that his mind seldom found a point of rest in its oscillation between contemplation of God and service to man. Be that as it may, he chose, in obedience to a higher call, service to man as his mission on earth; and this choice has endeared him to people in the West, Americans in particular.

In the course of a short life of thirty-nine years (1863-1902), of which only ten

were devoted to public activities-and those, too, in the midst of acute physical suffering-he left for posterity his four classics: Jnana-Yoga, Bhakti-Yoga, Karma-Yoga, and Raja-Yoga, all of which are outstanding treatises on Hindu philosophy. In addition, he delivered innumerable lectures, wrote inspired letters in his own hand to his many friends and disciples, composed numerous poems, and acted as spiritual guide to the many seekers, who came to him for instruction. He also organized the Ramakrishna Order of monks, which is the most outstanding religious organization of modern India. It is devoted to the propagation of the Hindu spiritual culture not only in the Swami's native land, but also in America and in other parts of the world.

Swami Vivekananda once spoke of himself as a "condensed India." His life and teachings are of inestimable value to the West for an understanding of the mind of Asia. William James, the Harvard philosopher, called the Swami the "paragon of Vedantists." Max Muller and Paul Deussen, the famous Orientalists of the nineteenth century, held him in genuine respect and affection. "His words," writes Romain Rolland, "are great music, phrases in the style of Beethoven, stirring rhythms like the march of Handel choruses. I cannot touch these sayings of his, scattered as they are through the pages of books, at thirty years' distance, without receiving a thrill through my body like an electric shock. And what shocks, what transports, must have been produced when in burning words they issued from the lips of the hero!"

A Benediction

The mother's heart, the hero's will,
The sweetness of the southern breeze,
The sacred charm and strength that dwell
On Aryan altars, flaming, free;
All these be yours, and many more
No ancient soul could dream before -
Be thou to India's future son
The mistress, servant, friend in one.

Swami Vivekananda

A Blessing

The Mother's heart, the hero's will,
The softest flowers' sweetest feel;

The charm and force that ever sway
The altar-fire's flaming play;

The strength that leads, in love obeys;
Far-reaching dreams, and patient ways,

Eternal faith in Self, in all,
The light Divine in great, in small;

All these and more than I could see,
Today may 'Mother' grant to thee!

Swami Vivekananda

Angels Unawares

(Written on 1 September, 1898.)

I

One bending low with load of life —
That meant no joy, but suffering harsh and hard —
And wending on his way through dark and dismal paths
Without a flash of light from brain or heart
To give a moment's cheer, till the line
That marks out pain from pleasure, death from life,
And good from what is evil was well-nigh wiped from sight,
Saw, one blessed night, a faint but beautiful ray of light
Descend to him. He knew not what or wherefrom,
But called it God and worshipped.
Hope, an utter stranger, came to him and spread
Through all his parts, and life to him meant more
Than he could ever dream and covered all he knew,
Nay, peeped beyond his world. The Sages
Winked, and smiled, and called it 'superstition'.
But he did feel its power and peace
And gently answered back —

'O Blessed Superstition!'

II

One drunk with wine of wealth and power
And health to enjoy them both, whirled on
His maddening course, till the earth, he thought,
Was made for him, his pleasure-garden, and man,
The crawling worm, was made to find him sport,
Till the thousand lights of joy, with pleasure fed,
That flickered day and night before his eyes,
With constant change of colours, began to blur
His sight, and cloy his senses; till selfishness,
Like a horny growth, had spread all o'er his heart;
And pleasure meant to him no more than pain,
Bereft of feeling; and life in the sense,
So joyful, precious once, a rotting corpse between his arms,

Which he forsooth would shun, but more he tried, the more
It clung to him; and wished, with frenzied brain,
A thousand forms of death, but quailed before the charm,
Then sorrow came — and Wealth and Power went —
And made him kinship find with all the human race
In groans and tears, and though his friends would laugh,
His lips would speak in grateful accents —

'O Blessed Misery! '

III

One born with healthy frame — but not of will
That can resist emotions deep and strong,
Nor impulse throw, surcharged with potent strength —
And just the sort that pass as good and kind,
Beheld that he was safe, whilst others long
And vain did struggle 'gainst the surging waves.
Till, morbid grown, his mind could see, like flies
That seek the putrid part, but what was bad.
Then Fortune smiled on him, and his foot slipped.
That ope'd his eyes for e'er, and made him find
That stones and trees ne'er break the law,
But stones and trees remain; that man alone
Is blest with power to fight and conquer Fate,
Transcending bounds and laws.
From him his passive nature fell, and life appeared
As broad and new, and broader, newer grew,
Till light ahead began to break, and glimpse of That
Where Peace Eternal dwells — yet one can only reach
By wading through the sea of struggles — courage-giving, came.
Then looking back on all that made him kin
To stocks and stones, and on to what the world
Had shunned him for, his fall, he blessed the fall,
And with a joyful heart, declared it —

'Blessed Sin! '

Swami Vivekananda

Hold Yet A While (To My Own Soul)

Hold yet a while, Strong Heart,
Not part a lifelong yoke

Though blighted looks the present, future gloom.
And age it seems since you and I began our
March up hill or down. Sailing smooth o'er
Seas that are so rare-

Thou nearer unto me, than oft-times I myself-
Proclaiming mental moves before they were!
Reflector true-Thy pulse so timed to mine,
Thou perfect note of thoughts, however fine-
Shall we now part, Recorder, say?

In thee is friendship, faith,
For thou didst warn when evil thoughts were brewing-
And though, alas, thy warning thrown away,
Went on the same as ever-good and true.

Swami Vivekananda

Kali The Mother

The stars are blotted out,
The clouds are covering clouds,
It is darkness vibrant, sonant.

In the roaring, whirling wind
Are the souls of a million lunatics
Just loose from the prison-house,
Wrenching trees by the roots,
Sweeping all from the path.

The sea has joined the fray,
And swirls up mountain-waves,
To reach the pitchy sky.
The flash of lurid light

Reveals on every side
A thousand, thousand shades
Of Death begrimed and black —
Scattering plagues and sorrows,

Dancing mad with joy,
Come, Mother, come!
For Terror is Thy name,
Death is in Thy breath,

And every shaking step
Destroys a world for e'er.
Thou 'Time', the All-Destroyer!
Come, O Mother, come!

Who dares misery love,
And hug the form of Death,
Dance in Destruction's dance,
To him the Mother comes.

Swami Vivekananda

Light

I look behind and after
And find that all is right,
In my deepest sorrows
There is a soul of light.

Swami Vivekananda

My Play Is Done

Ever rising, ever falling with the waves of time, still rolling on I go
From fleeting scene to scene ephemeral, with life's currents' ebb and flow.

Oh! I am sick of this unending force; these shows they please no more,
This ever running, never reaching, nor e'en a distant glimpse of shore!

From life to life I'm waiting at the gates, alas, they open not.
Dim are my eyes with vain attempt to catch one ray long sought.

On little life's high, narrow bridge I stand and see below
The struggling, crying, laughing throng. For what? No one can know.

In front yon gates stand frowning dark, and say: `No farther away,
This is the limit; tempt not Fate, bear it as best you may;

Go, mix with them and drink this cup and be as mad as they.
Who dares to know but comes to grief; stop then, and with them stay.'

Alas for me, I cannot rest. This floating bubble, earth-
Its hollow form, its hollow name, its hollow death and birth-

For me is nothing. How i long to get beyond the crust
Of name and form! Ah, open the gates; to me they open must.

Open the gates of light, O Mother, to me Thy tired son.
I long, oh, long to return home! Mother, my play is done.

You sent me out in the dark to play and wore a frightful mask;
Then hope departed, terror came, and play became a task.

Tossed to and fro, from wave to wave in this seething, surging sea
Of passions strong and sorrows deep, grief is, and joy to be.

Where life is living death, alas! and death- who knows but `tis
Another start, another round of this old wheel of grief and bliss?

Where children dream bright, golden dreams, too soon to find them dust,
And aye look back to hope long lost and life a mass of rust!

Too late, the knowledge age doth gain; scare from the wheel we're gone.
When fresh, young lives put their strength to the wheel, which thus goes on

From day to day and year to year. 'Tis but delusion's toy,
False hope its motor; desire, nave; its spokes are grief and joy.

I go adrift and know not whither. Save from this fire!
Rescue me, merciful Mother, from floating with desire!

Turn not to me Thy awful face, 'tis more than I can bear,
Be merciful and kind to me, to chide my faults forbear.

Take me, O Mother, to those shores where strifes for ever cease;
Beyond all sorrows, beyond tears, beyond e'en earthly bliss;

Whose glory neither sun, nor moon, nor stars that twinkle bright,
Nor flash of lightning can express. They but reflect its light.

Let never more delusive dreams veil off Thy face from me.
My play is done; O Mother, break my chains and make me free!

Swami Vivekananda

On The Sea's Bosom

In blue sky floats a multitude of clouds -
White, black, of many shades and thicknesses;
An orange sun, about to say farewell,
Touches the massed cloud-shapes with streaks of red.

The wind blows as it lists, a hurricane
Now carving shapes, now breaking them apart:
Fancies, colours, forms, inert creations -
A myriad scenes, though real, yet fantastic.

There light clouds spread, heaping up spun cotton;
See next a huge snake, then a strong lion;
Again, behold a couple locked in love.
All vanish, at last, in the vapoury sky.

Below, the sea sings a varied music,
But not grand, O India, nor ennobling:
Thy waters, widely praised, murmur serene
In soothing cadence, without a harsh roar.

Swami Vivekananda

Peace

Behold, it comes in might,
The power that is not power,
The light that is in darkness,
The shade in dazzling light.

It is joy that never spoke,
And grief unfelt, profound,
Immortal life unlived,
Eternal death unmourned.

It is not joy nor sorrow,
But that which is between,
It is not noight nor morrow,
But that which joins them in.

It is sweet rest in music;
And pause in sacred art;
The silence between speaking;
Between two fits of passion -
It is the calm of heart.

It is beauty never seen,
And love that stands alone,
It is song that lives un-sung,
And knowledge never known.

It is death between two lives,
And lull between two storms,
The void whence rose creation,
And that where it returns.

To it the tear-dropp goes,
To spread the smiling form
It is the Goal of Life,
And Peace - its only home!

Swami Vivekananda

Quest For God

O'ver hill and dale and mountain range,
In temple, church, and mosque,
In Vedas, Bible, Al Koran
I had searched for Thee in vain.

Like a child in the wildest forest lost
I have cried and cried alone,
'Where art Thou gone, my God, my love?
The echo answered, 'gone.'

And days and nights and years then passed
A fire was in the brain,
I knew not when day changed in night
The heart seemed rent in twain.
I laid me down on Ganges's shore,
Exposed to sun and rain;
With burning tears I laid the dust
And wailed with waters' roar.

I called on all the holy names
Of every clime and creed.
'Show me the way, in mercy, ye
Great ones who have reached the goal.'

Years then passed in bitter cry,
Each moment seemed an age,
Till one day midst my cries and groans
Some one seemed calling me.

A gentle soft and soothing voice
That said 'my son' 'my son',
That seemed to thrill in unison
With all the chords of my soul.

I stood on my feet and tried to find
The place the voice came from;
I searched and searched and turned to see
Round me, before, behind,

Again, again it seemed to speak
The voice divine to me.
In rapture all my soul was hushed,
Entranced, enthralled in bliss.

A flash illumined all my soul;
The heart of my heart opened wide.
O joy, O bliss, what do I find!
My love, my love you are here
And you are here, my love, my all!

And I was searching thee -
From all eternity you were there
Enthroned in majesty!
From that day forth, wherever I roam,
I feel Him standing by
O'er hill and dale, high mount and vale,
Far far away and high.

The moon's soft light, the stars so bright,
The glorious orb of day,
He shines in them; His beauty - might -
Reflected lights are they.
The majestic morn, the melting eve,
The boundless billowing sea,
In nature's beauty, songs of birds,
I see through them - it is He.

When dire calamity seizes me,
The heart seems weak and faint,
All nature seems to crush me down,
With laws that never bend.
Meseems I hear Thee whispering sweet
My love, 'I am near', 'I am near'.
My heart gets strong. With thee, my love,
A thousand deaths no fear.
Thou speakest in the mother's lay
Thou shuts the babies eye,
When innocent children laugh and play,
I see Thee standing by.

When holy friendship shakes the hand,

He stands between them too;
He pours the nectar in mother's kiss
And the baby's sweet 'mama'.
Thou wert my God with prophets old,
All creeds do come from Thee,
The Vedas, Bible, and Koran bold
Sing Thee in Harmony.

'Thou art, ' Thou art' the Soul of souls
In the rushing stream of life.
'Om tat sat om.' Thou art my God,
My love, I am thine, I am thine.

Swami Vivekananda

Requiescat In Pace

(Written in memoriam to J. J. Goodwin, August, 1898.)

Speed forth, O Soul! upon thy star-strewn path;
Speed, blissful one! where thought is ever free,
Where time and space no longer mist the view,
Eternal peace and blessings be with thee!

Thy service true, complete thy sacrifice,
Thy home the heart of love transcendent find;
Remembrance sweet, that kills all space and time,
Like altar roses fill thy place behind!

Thy bonds are broke, thy quest in bliss is found,
And one with That which comes as Death and Life;
Thou helpful one! unselfish e'er on earth,
Ahead! still help with love this world of strife!

Swami Vivekananda

Song Of The Sanyasin

Wake up the note! the song that had its birth
Far off, where worldly taint could never reach,
In mountain caves and glades of forest deep,
Whose calm no sigh for lust or wealth or fame
Could ever dare to break; where rolled the stream
Of knowledge, truth, and bliss that follows both.
Sing high that note, Sannyasin bold! Say—
'Om Tat Sat, Om! '

Strike off thy fetters! Bonds that bind thee down,
Of shining gold, or darker, baser ore;
Love, hate—good, bad—and all the dual throng,
Know, slave is slave, caressed or whipped, not free;
For fetters, though of gold, are not less strong to bind;
Then off with them, Sannyasin bold! Say—
'Om Tat Sat, Om! '

Let darkness go; the will-o'-the-wisp that leads
With blinking light to pile more gloom on gloom.
This thirst for life, for ever quench; it drags
From birth to death, and death to birth, the soul.
He conquers all who conquers self. Know this
And never yield, Sannyasin bold! Say—
'Om Tat Sat, Om! '

'Who sows must reap, ' they say, 'and cause must bring
The sure effect; good, good; bad, bad; and none
Escape the law. But whoso wears a form
Must wear the chain.' Too true; but far beyond
Both name and form is Atman, ever free.
Know thou art That, Sannyasin bold! Say—
'Om Tat Sat, Om! '

They know not truth who dream such vacant dreams
As father, mother, children, wife, and friend.
The sexless Self! whose father He? whose child?
Whose friend, whose foe is He who is but One?
The Self is all in all, none else exists;
And thou art That, Sannyasin bold! Say—

'Om Tat Sat, Om! '

There is but One—The Free—The Knower—Self!
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! '

Where seekest thou? That freedom, friend, this world
Nor that can give. In books and temples vain
Thy search. Thine only is the hand that holds
The rope that drags thee on. Then cease lament,
Let go thy hold, Sannyasin bold! Say—
'Om Tat Sat, Om! '

Say, 'Peace to all: From me no danger be
To aught that lives. In those that dwell on high.
In those that lowly creep, I am the Self in all!
All life both here and there, do I renounce,
All heavens and earths and hells, all hopes and fears.'
Thus cut thy bonds, Sannyasin bold! Say—
'Om Tat Sat, Om! '

Heed then no more how body lives or goes,
Its task is done. Let Karma float it down;
Let one put garlands on, another kick
This frame; say naught. No praise or blame can be
Where praiser praised, and blamer blamed are one.
Thus be thou calm, Sannyasin bold! Say—
'Om Tat Sat, Om! '

Truth never comes where lust and fame and greed
Of gain reside. No man who thinks of woman
As his wife can ever perfect be;
Nor he who owns the least of things, nor he
Whom anger chains, can ever pass thro' Maya's gates.
So, give these up, 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! '

Few only know the truth. The rest will hate
And laugh at thee, great one; but pay no heed.
Go thou, the free, from place to place, and help
Them out of darkness, Maya's veil. Without
The fear of pain or search for pleasure, go
Beyond them both, Sannyasin bold! Say—
'Om Tat Sat, Om! '

Thus, day by day, till Karma's powers spent
Release the soul for ever. No more is birth,
Nor I, nor thou, nor God, nor man. The 'I'
Has All become, the All is 'I' and Bliss.
Know thou art That, Sannyasin bold! Say—
'Om Tat Sat, Om! '

Swami Vivekananda

The Living God

He who is in you and outside you,
Who works through all hands,
Who walks on all feet,
Whose body are all ye,
Him worship, and break all other idols!

He who is at once the high and low,
The sinner and the saint,
Both God and worm,
Him worship — visible, knowable, real, omnipresent,
Break all other idols!

In whom is neither past life
Nor future birth nor death,
In whom we always have been
And always shall be one,
Him worship. Break all other idols!

Ye fools! who neglect the living God,
And His infinite reflections with which the world is full.

While ye run after imaginary shadows,
That lead alone to fights and quarrels,
Him worship, the only visible!
Break all other idols!

Swami Vivekananda

The Song Of The Free

The wounded snake its hood unfurls,
The flame stirred up doth blaze,
The desert air resounds the calls
Of heart-struck lion's rage.

The cloud puts forth its deluge strength
When lightning cleaves its breast,
When the soul is stirred to its inmost depth
Great ones unfold their best.

Let eyes grow dim and heart grow faint,
And friendship fail and love betray,
Let Fate its hundred horrors send,
And clotted darkness block the way.

All nature wear one angry frown,
To crush you out - still know, my soul,
You are Divine. March on and on,
Nor right nor left but to the goal.

Nor angel I, nor man, nor brute,
Nor body, mind, nor he nor she,
The books do stop in wonder mute
To tell my nature; I am He.

Before the sun, the moon, the earth,
Before the stars or comets free,
Before e'en time has had its birth,
I was, I am, and I will be.

The beauteous earth, the glorious sun,
The calm sweet moon, the spangled sky,
Causation's law do make them run;
They live in bonds, in bonds they die.

And mind its mantle dreamy net
Cast o'er them all and holds them fast.
In warp and woof of thought are set,
Earth, hells, and heavens, or worst or best.

Know these are but the outer crust -
All space and time, all effect, cause.
I am beyond all sense, all thoughts,
The witness of the universe.

Not two nor many, 'tis but one,
And thus in me all me's I have;
I cannot hate, I cannot shun
Myself from me, I can but love.

From dreams awake, from bonds be free,
Be not afraid. This mystery,
My shadow, cannot frighten me,
Know once for all that I am He.

Swami Vivekananda

Thou Blessed Dream

If things go ill or well —
If joy rebounding spreads the face,
Or sea of sorrow swells —
A play — we each have part,
Each one to weep or laugh as may;
Each one his dress to don —
Its scenes, alternative shine and rain.

Thou dream, O blessed dream!
Spread far and near thy veil of haze,
Tone down the lines so sharp,
Make smooth what roughness seems.

No magic but in thee!
Thy touch make desert bloom to life.
Harsh thunder, sweetest song,
Fell death, the sweet release.

Swami Vivekananda

To An Early Violet

What though thy bed be frozen earth,
Thy cloak the chilling blast;
What though no mate to clear thy path,
Thy sky with gloom o'ercast -
What though of love itself doth fail,
Thy fragrance strewed in vain;
What though if bad o'er good prevail,
And vice o'er virtue reign -
Change not thy nature, gentle bloom,
Thou violet, sweet and pure,
But ever pour thy sweet perfume
Unasked, unstinted, sure !

Swami Vivekananda

To The Awakened India

(Written to Prabuddha Bharata or Awakened India, in August 1898, when the journal was transferred from Madras to Almora Himalayas, into the hands of the Brotherhood founded by Swami Vivekananda.)

Once more awake!
For sleep it was, not death, to bring thee life
Anew, and rest to lotus-eyes for visions
Daring yet. The world in need awaits, O Truth!
No death for thee!

Resume thy march,
With gentle feet that would not break the
Peaceful rest even of the roadside dust
That lies so low. Yet strong and steady,
Blissful, bold, and free. Awakener, ever
Forward! Speak thy stirring words.

Thy home is gone,
Where loving hearts had brought thee up and
Watched with joy thy growth. But Fate is strong —
This is the law — all things come back to the source
They sprung, their strength to renew.

Then start afresh
From the land of thy birth, where vast cloud-belted
Snows do bless and put their strength in thee,
For working wonders new. The heavenly
River tune thy voice to her own immortal song;
Deodar shades give thee eternal peace.

And all above,
Himala's daughter Umâ, gentle, pure,
The Mother that resides in all as Power
And Life, who works all works and
Makes of One the world, whose mercy
Opens the gate to Truth and shows
The One in All, give thee untiring
Strength, which is Infinite Love.

They bless thee all,
The seers great, whom age nor clime
Can claim their own, the fathers of the
Race, who felt the heart of Truth the same,
And bravely taught to man ill-voiced or
Well. Their servant, thou hast got
The secret — 'tis but One.

Then speak, O Love!
Before thy gentle voice serene, behold how
Visions melt and fold on fold of dreams
Departs to void, till Truth and Truth alone
In all its glory shines —

And tell the world —
Awake, arise, and dream no more!
This is the land of dreams, where Karma
Weaves unthreaded garlands with our thoughts
Of flowers sweet or noxious, and none
Has root or stem, being born in naught, which
The softest breath of Truth drives back to
Primal nothingness. Be bold, and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease,
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.

Swami Vivekananda

To The Fourth Of July

Behold, the dark clouds melt away,
That gathered thick at night, and hung
So like a gloomy pall above the earth!

Before thy magic touch, the world
Awakes. The birds in chorus sing.
The flowers raise their star-like crowns-
Dew-set, and wave thee welcome fair.

The lakes are opening wide in love
Their hundred thousand lotus-eyes
To welcome thee, with all their depth.

All hail to thee, thou Lord of Light!
A welcome new to thee, today,
O sun! today thou sheddest LIBERTY!
Bethink thee how the world did wait,
And search for thee, through time and clime.

Some gave up home and love of friends,
And went in quest of thee, self banished,
Through dreary oceans, through primeval forests,
Each step a struggle for their life or death;

Then came the day when work bore fruit,
And worship, love, and sacrifice,
Fulfilled, accepted, and complete.
Then thou, propitious, rose to shed
The light of FREEDOM on mankind.

Move on, O Lord, on thy resistless path!
Till thy high noon o'erspreads the world.
Till every land reflects thy light,
Till men and women, with uplifted head,
Behold their shackles broken, and
Know, in springing joy, their life renewed!

Swami Vivekananda

Who Knows How Mother Plays

Perchance a prophet thou-
Who knows? Who dares touch
The depths where Mother hides
Her silent failless bolts!
Perchance the child had glimpse
Of shades, behind the scenes,
With eager eyes and strained,
Quivering forms-ready
To jump in front and be
Events, resistless, strong.
Who knows but Mother, how,
And where, and when, they come?
Perchance the shining sage
Saw more than he could tell;
Who knows, what soul, and when,
The Mother makes Her throne?
What law would freedom bind?
What merit guide Her will,
Whose freak is greatest order,
Whose will resistless law?
To child may glories ope
Which father never dreamt;
May thousandfold in daughter
Her powers Mother store.

Swami Vivekananda