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The turn of the century was a remarkable period in the history of India. Great men walked the soil of India, and the period nurtured some of the great men of the present. That was an epoch of forerunners who heralded a new age in the history of India. Looking back we appreciate their greatness, and when we think of the present, the images of the departed leaders whose flaming message made the present possible, always stand before our eyes. Six years of meditative life in the Himalayas and long wanderings throughout India, gave Vivekananda a unique insight into the life and aspiration of his people. Svami Vivekananda thus became the torch-bearer of Indian thought and culture, and perhaps more than any one else contributed to the spread of Indian thought in the Western World, in Europe and across the Atlantic. A powerful philosophic mind which masterfully interpreted ancient Indian thought to the modern world, a great humanitarian, a national leader and a great revolutionary, though he kept away from politics, a man of fearless vision, and a fighter for the cause of the Indian Cultural Renaissance. // Such was Vivekananda as he appeared to his native land and the outside world. The quality of fearlessness was especially manifest in him. He knew how to interpret the old in terms of the new, and taught people to adopt a fearless attitude towards the many social problems of the modern age which he foresaw. He knew that the World was changing, but looked upon this change without dismay, conscious of the strength of his country and people, and foreseeing the future part to be played by India in the context

of coming events. His message was dynamic " motion is the sign of life ", and in saying so, he thundered against superstition and stagnation, and called people towards a new mental attitude ever searching towards new summits of achievement.

In his mind he saw the vision of new India rising out of strife. For him this future had a reality, he foresaw the future trend of events and the shift of power in this world. But above all, he insisted that people should foster this quality of fearlessness, and he was at one with Gautama Buddha in stressing the importance of it. " If there is a sin in the world it is weakness; avoid all weakness, weakness is sin, weakness is death. " Let these words of the Master inspire and fortify us at the beginning of this new and perhaps significant year.

A. Roerich

IN MEMORY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

On the occasion of his 94th Birth Anniversary at
Kalingang, West Bengal on the 3rd February 1957.

By

DR. GEORGE ROBRICH.

Who presided at the celebrations.

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It is difficult in a few words to evoke the image of a great and many-sided personality who appeared in India as a revivifying tonic. Swami Vivekananda's message was addressed both to his mother country and to the world at large. To India, his native land, he preached the message of ahimsa and of national resurrection, and to the outside world he demonstrated the sublime summits of Indian thought. Throughout the XIX century the impact of Indian thought and culture on the Western World was gaining in momentum, and in some respects this process can be compared with the spread of Indian culture under the banner of Buddhism throughout the first millennium of our era. Great names in the field of philosophy and literature became increasingly attracted to Indian thought and culture. An examination of the personal archive of Kant would reveal his deep interest in Eastern thought and his careful study of all available material on the subject. Hegel's study of Buddhism influenced his dialectical approach. Schopenhauer's admiration for the Upanishads and Buddhism is well known, and Hartmann owed his inspiration to Buddhism. In the field of literature

Goethe and in recent years Romain Rolland, to mention only a few, paid magnificent tributes to the literary genius of India.

When Swami Vivekananda delivered his message to the Western world in 1893, the ground was already prepared to receive it. Whereas in the first half of the XIX century the message of Indian thought and culture was appreciated at the intellectual summits of Europe, Swami Vivekananda's writings and lectures brought Indian thought nearer to the masses of the Western world. Before the First World War there was a great upsurge of interest towards Indian thought and culture in the West, and Swami Vivekananda's books were eagerly read and translated. I remember in my own native country Russia, how eagerly people studied his books and how attracted they felt to his dynamic personality, and I vividly recall an unexpected philosophic discourse on Indian thought and Vivekananda at a postal relay-station in a remote valley of the Altai mountains in Southern Siberia where I was changing horses. A recent visitor to India, the eminent Soviet writer Ilya Ehrenburg stressed the profound humanism of Vivekananda which had powerfully attracted Romain Rolland.

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SG/- G. Roorich.