



JULY 2021 -VOLUME 19 NUMBER 07

The Vedanta Kyokai Newsletter

NEWS, UPDATES AND MISCELLANY FROM THE VEDANTA SOCIETY OF JAPAN

AUGUST 2021
Calendar



Birthdays

Swami
Ramakrishnananda
Friday, 6 August

Swami
Niranjananda
Sunday, 22 August

Sri Krishna
Janmashtami
Monday, 30 August

Zushi Events

COVID restrictions have been partially lifted by the Japanese government as of 21 June 2021. However, most precautions remain in place. Our monthly programmes and classes will continue with advised precautions observed.

Details on page 02!



✧ Thus Spake ✧

"When the desire arises in the mind to know anything, then pray to Him alone in a lonely place with tears in your eyes. He will remove all dirt and sorrow from your mind and will make you understand everything."

- Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi

"I look after the accession to and maintenance of the welfare of such ever devout persons, who think of nothing else and worship Me through meditation."

- Sri Krishna

June Zushi Monthly Retreat / PM Session

Gautama Buddha

A Talk by Swami Divyanathananda

[In the June issue of The Vedanta Kyokai we presented a description of the Vedanta Society's Celebration programme for Gautama Buddha's Birth Anniversary. The following is a talk given on that occasion by Swami Divyanathananda during the Zushi Retreat's PM Session,]

(con't page 3)

In this Issue:

- Thus Spake ... page 01
- June Zushi Retreat Celebrates Buddha Birth Anniversary PM Session Talk '**Gautama Buddha**' by Swami Divyanathananda ... page 01
- August Programme Schedule ... page 02
- Public Celebration Keynote Speech Swami Vivekananda and Japan PART II of II - Dr. Taniguchi, Tomohiko ... page 08
- Public Celebration Swami Vivekananda and Japan The Story of the India-Japan Relationship - Remarks by the Author Swami Medhasanandaji ... page 12
- Thought of the Month ... page 14
- Public Celebration Guest Speaker PART II of III - Mr. Tanaka, Takeyuki Japan and Netaji, Indian Independence ... page 15
- Story to Remember ... page 24

Vedanta Society of Japan Events for August 2021

The Japanese government has eased some restrictions on travel and dining out for residents of the Tokyo and Osaka areas. The government continues to urge residents to take all possible precautions against the spread of COVID-19, including social distancing, mask wearing, and avoiding crowded areas.

As such, the Vedanta Society of Japan will continue to provide live-stream, video, and Zoom participation as noted in the schedule below. Attendance to programmes remains restricted, so contact us if you wish to attend any of the programmes.

Swami Medhasananda, President
Vedanta Society of Japan

AUGUST 2021 Calendar of Programmes

4th (Wed) August- Zoom
Weekly Upanishad Study Class
8:30 ~9:15 (in Japanese only)

7th (Sat) August
Bhagavad Gita Study Class at the Indian Embassy
* Video uploaded later
10:30 ~12:00 (In Japanese only)

11th (Wed) August- Zoom
Weekly Upanishad Study Class
8:30 ~9:15 (in Japanese only)

15th (Sun) August - Live-streaming (Bi-lingua)
Monthly Zushi Retreat
Sri Krishna Birthday Celebration
AM Session - 10:30 - Live-streaming
PM Session Talk - 14:00 - Live-streaming (Bi-lingual)

18th (Wed) August - Zoom
Weekly Upanishad Study Class
8:30 ~9:15 (in Japanese only)

29th (Sun) August - Live-streaming & Zoom
Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna Study Class
14:00 ~16:00 (in Japanese only)
* For Zoom contact: zoom.nvk@gmail.com

< **Live Streaming** >

[Click here](#) to go to YouTube.

< **Online Study Class on Zoom** >

[Click here](#) to go to the Japanese page 'Zoom'.

Gautama Buddha (from page 1)

The word 'Buddha' stands for 'The Awakened One' or 'The Enlightened One'. Gautama Buddha, one of the greatest prophets from the East, whose teachings have influenced the lives of so many people in the world, was born as Siddhartha to King Suddhodhana and Queen Mayadevi. Suddhodhana was King of Kapilavastu of the Sakya clan. The birth of a world teacher is not an ordinary phenomenon. As in the lives of other prophets as well, their parents have super-natural visions about the arrival of such a great one into their family. Before the birth of Buddha, too, Mayadevi had a vision of a white elephant entering her body. Soon after this vision, she conceived a child, and one day, on her way to her maternal home in a village called Lumbini, she gave birth to Gautama.

God's Plan

An astrologer had predicted that if young Gautama remained in the world he would grow to be a great king, but that if he left the comforts of the palace, he would become a great sage and a saviour of mankind. Within seven days of his birth, his mother, Mayadevi, passed away and her sister, Gotami, then brought him up. The prophecy of the astrologer worried his father, Suddhodhana. He tried to make his son's life in the kingdom as comfortable and pleasurable as possible, for his father was afraid that any experience of human suffering might cause him to renounce the world. To this end Suddhodhana also got him married to Yashodhara, a beautiful young girl.

However, God's plan was different. Gautama was contemplative by nature, and the death of his mother at an early age had already left a vacuum on his mind, and although he was surrounded by all sorts of comforts and enjoyments, he would often ponder, if all the happinesses of the world were not transitory. Would they give him everlasting bliss? One day accompanied by his charioteer, Chhandaka, they ventured outside the palace walls in his chariot. Gautama then saw an old man for the first time, struggling to walk with a stick. "Who is he, Chhandaka?" asked Prince Siddhartha.

"He is an old man. Every one of us will grow old one day," said Chhandaka.

After some time, the young prince saw another man reduced to his bones, lying prone, unhappy, all the strength drained from him. "Why is this man lying here, Chhandaka?"

"This man is sick. All of us are prone to disease," came the reply.

Then Gautama saw the body of a man, inert, without any sign of life, being lifted and carried away on the shoulders of some other men. Chhandaka explained, "This man, who is being carried on the shoulders of others, is dead. All human beings must die one day. His body is being taken for cremation."

Finally, Gautama saw a man in ochre robes with a serene face, gazing downwards, walking with a bowl. Chhandaka said, "This man is a recluse. He has renounced the comforts of life in order to go beyond birth and death."

The Prince Leaves Home

These three visions had a deep impact on his mind. The sight of the recluse, however, triggered the idea of renunciation in his mind. As he was returning to the palace, he heard the news that a son was born to him, and this acted as the turning point to his thought process and he reasoned that yet another fetter had been added to his life and he decided to secretly leave the palace.

Five followers, including Chandaka, are said to have gone with Gautama to become his disciples. At first Gautama went to several great teachers of his time and undertook spiritual

(con't page 4)

practices under their guidance, but their instruction couldn't quench his thirst. Finally, he decided to find the Truth all by himself and sat in meditation and practiced severe austerities. For six years he struggled, but could not reach his goal. His body had become extremely thin and emaciated and one day, Sujata, a maiden of the local village, offered him some rice pudding. After partaking of the food offered by Sujata, he regained energy and once again resolved to attain the highest spiritual knowledge. Finally, on a blessed day at the age of 35, He attained Enlightenment, and became The Buddha. For Him all human sufferings had ceased and He reached a state of mind where neither pleasure and pain nor happiness and sorrow could affect him anymore.

The Four Noble Truths

Now out of compassion for the suffering of mankind, He was eager to preach the knowledge He had acquired for the benefit of all. He went back to the place where His five disciples, who had once abandoned him because He had accepted milk from a maiden, were staying. When they heard Him speak, they were convinced that He had attained a very high state, and they each accepted Him again as their teacher and became His disciples again. He preached His Dharma, the Four Noble Truths, to them. This was at Sarnath, near Varanasi.

In His Enlightened state, Buddha realised these 'Four Noble Truths':

- The first truth is human life is full of suffering. From birth to death, man undergoes suffering in various forms.
- The second truth is there is cause behind these sufferings. Trishna, thirst or desire for worldly enjoyments is the cause of sufferings.
- The third truth is it is possible to end our sufferings, and this can be done by giving up all desires.
- The fourth truth is that when desires are given up, one becomes enlightened, all sufferings cease for him. There is no need to undergo extreme penance, neither should one indulge too much in luxuries, rather one should follow the middle path which leads one to the end of desires.

Preach in Peace

Buddha went to the city of Rajgriha where he was accorded a warm welcome by King Bimbisara. From there he moved on to Kosala, where King Prasenajit became His disciple. He went on towards Kapilavastu, where his father Suddhodhana ruled, and the whole family, including his wife and son, became His followers.

For forty-five years Buddha moved with his disciples from one kingdom to another preaching His religion. Several kings, great scholars, and commoners alike became his followers. Additionally, both Angulimal, a tyrant dacoit, and Amrapali, a woman of ill repute, surrendered at his feet and accepted His teachings.

One distinguishing feature in the life and teachings of Lord Buddha is that He did not preach about God, any prophet or any saviour. In His teachings, he did not place much value on religious rights and rituals, but emphasised ethics instead. Also, Buddhism spread slowly without any forceful conversion and wherever it spread, it did so under a flag of peace.

There are several interesting anecdotes related to the life of Gautama Buddha. We shall

(con't page 5)



Gautama Buddha (from page 4)

narrate a few of them here, as they reflect great wisdom in His thoughts:

All Must Die

Once while Buddha was resting in a certain place surrounded by some disciples, a grief-stricken woman approached who wanted to meet him. She had lost her only child and had come to Buddha to seek his blessings. Her name was Kisa Gautami. By that time Buddha's fame had reached far and wide and somehow the woman was convinced that Buddha had the power to bring her lost child back to life. At first Buddha pacified her grief and then attempted to convince her that all who are born must die someday, sooner or later. Kisa Gautami, however, had convinced herself of Buddha's powers and could not absolve Him easily.

"All right," said Buddha, "bring a handful of mustard grains from any house." Gautami was delighted, for she thought that perhaps Buddha would sprinkle those mustard seeds on the body of her child and by His power the child would come back to life. "But," added Buddha, "you must only collect those mustard grains from a house where there has been no death till now."

Desperately Gautami went from house to house, looking for one where death had never entered, but her efforts proved futile. Slowly, she began to realise that her son would not come back to her and the hard truth of life dawned upon her. Buddha wanted to make her understand that anyone who is born, must also die.

Essentials and Non-Essentials

Often it happens that we mix up the essentials with the non-essentials and sometimes, the non-essentials seem to find more importance to us. In order to drive home the importance of focussing on these essentials, Buddha is said to have narrated anecdotes much like the following:

(con't page 6)

• Suppose a person is struck by a poisonous arrow. Now when such an incident takes place, will you start by determining whether the arrow was shot by a man or a woman? Who has shot the arrow? What the poison was made up of? Whether the bow, from which the arrow was shot, was made of bamboo or wood? If one started researching tangents like that, one's condition would only become worse. A wise man, instead of pursuing meaningless arguments, would first take out the arrow and try to get the medication needed to heal the wound.

Similarly, in our case, let us find out whether we have sufferings in our life? Let us try to find out the cause of these sufferings and the means to address them.

Buddha the Farmer

• One day, while Buddha had gone out with his begging bowl, He came upon Bharadwaja, a wealthy farmer, and asked for some alms. Bharadwaja was not very pleased to see a man begging and said, 'I am a farmer, I sow seeds in the fertile soil and yield a good harvest. You should follow me and likewise make your living by farming, and then you won't need to beg any more.'

Buddha replied, 'I am also a farmer. Faith is the seeds I sow; good works are the rain that fertilises; and wisdom and modesty are My plough; my mind are the guiding-reins; I lay hold of the handle of the law; earnestness is the catalyst I use, and exertion is my draught-ox. This is ploughed to destroy the weeds of illusion. The harvest it yields is the immortal fruits of Nirvana, and thus all sorrow ends.' Upon hearing those words full of wisdom, Bharadwaja poured rice-milk into a golden bowl and offered it to the Buddha.

Buddha Averts a War

• Once Buddha came to know that two neighbouring kingdoms were on the verge of a war over an embankment. They were ready to fight when Buddha arrived there and enquired, 'Tell me, does this embankment have any intrinsic value, other than some useful service to your men?'

'No, it has got no intrinsic value,' came the reply.

'Now is it not true, that should a war erupt, many people will lose their lives and you kings may also lose your life?'

'Yes, it is possible. In the event of a war, many of us may get killed.'

'Are the lives of human beings not more important than this embankment?'

'Yes, they are.'

'If that is so, then is it not better to give up this war?' asked Buddha.

Soon, both the parties realised their mistake and thus the war was averted.

Exercise Discrimination

• Once, a wealthy man, who was suffering from obesity and other ailments came to Buddha and said, Great One, pardon me for not showing you proper respects, but I am suffering from several physical ailments. I want to recover from my present condition, please tell me what should I do?

'The reasons for obesity are heavy dinners, love for sleep, and lack of occupation,' said Buddha. 'If you really want to recover, control your appetite, sleep less and start doing some physical labour.'

The wealthy man followed his advice and recovered from his obesity. When the man came back to meet Buddha he said, 'Great One, you have freed me from physical ailments, now please help me free my mind from worldliness.'

Buddha said, 'A worldly man nourishes his body, but a thoughtful man will nourish his

Gautama Buddha (from page 6)

mind. One who indulges in luxury works for his own destruction, therefore, exercise discrimination.

Honesty and Good Use

• Shyamavati, the queen-consort of King Udayana offered Ananda (the favourite disciple of Buddha) five hundred garments. Ananda received them with grateful satisfaction. However, Udayana suspected Ananda of dishonesty. So he went to Ananda and asked him, what he was going to do with all the old garments.

Ananda replied, 'Many of our brothers are in rags, so I am going to distribute them among the brothers'.

'What will you do with the old garments?'

'I shall make bed-covers out of them.'

'What will you do with the old bed-covers?'

'I shall make pillow-cases out of them.'

'What will you do with the old pillow-cases?'

'I shall make floor-coverings out of them.'

'What will you do with the old floor-coverings?'

'I shall make foot-towels out of them.'

'What will you do with the old foot-towels?'

'We will use them for floor mops.'

In this way, Ananda was able to prove that he was not at all dishonest.

Vivekananda's Remarks on Buddha

Swami Vivekananda was a great admirer of Lord Buddha. On 18 March 1900, Swami Vivekananda delivered a speech on Gautama Buddha in San Francisco, which was later published as '*Buddha's Message to the World*' in the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*.

• He said, "All my life I have been very fond of Buddha, but not of his doctrine. I have more veneration for that character than for any other—that boldness, that fearlessness, and that tremendous love! He was born for the good of men. Others may seek God, others may seek Truth for themselves; he did not even care to know Truth for himself. He sought Truth because people were in misery.

How to help them, that was his only concern. Throughout his life he never had a thought for himself. How can we ignorant, selfish, narrow – minded human beings ever understand the greatness of this man?"

Some Salient Features of Buddhism

Buddhism, the religion propounded by Gautama Buddha, is one of the major religions of the world. Although it originated in India, it has spread its wings across several continents. One of the reasons why it has thrived till now is because of its rational and practical approach and simplicity. It did not place importance on any particular personal God, but rather advised followers to attain to nirvana by removing one's sufferings through discrimination.

Buddhism does not stand on any blind faith whatsoever. While spreading from country to country, not a drop of blood was shed in the name of Lord Buddha. Aldous Huxley writes: "Alone of all the great world religions Buddhism made its way without persecution, censorship or inquisition."

(con't page 8)

In Buddhism, there is no place for caste restrictions. In his order, downtrodden and low-cast people found equal position and rights with kings and monarchs. Also, the condition of women was improved in His religion. He founded a women's monastic order with practical and proper rules and regulations to conduct their lives, because he did not consider one's gender an obstacle to spiritual development. These are but some of the salient features of Buddhism. •

Swami Vivekananda Public Birthday Celebration

Yokohama 6th June 2021

Talk by

Professor Taniguchi, Tomohiko

Professor, Keio University Graduate School of System Design and Management

Special Adviser to Former Prime Minister ABE, Shinzō's Cabinet

PART II - Conclusion

In the course of my research, I discovered that there are a number of purported recordings of this event [*See June Issue - 1893 speech of Swami Vivekananda at Parliament of Religions*] on YouTube. Some of them are mixed with noises to make it seem as if they were recorded at the time. But at that time, the technology to record a speech on the spot, which takes many minutes, was not yet available. And I found out that the Ramakrishna Mission itself had categorically denied that any of Swamiji's voices on the market could be authentic.

However.

In the literature written at that time, I came across an analysis of Swami Vivekananda from the point of view of phrenology. There, I found a section which definitively stated how tall Swamiji was and how much he weighed.

A paper published in August, 1895, states that Swami Vivekananda was 5 feet 8 1/2 inches tall. His weight was 170 pounds. It also says that his head circumference was 21.75 inches, which raises doubts about the authenticity of the measurement, as it could not have been taken with a measuring tape.

Let's just believe in height and weight for the moment. In metric measurements, he was 174 centimetres tall and weighed 77 kilos.

I once heard that FUKUZAWA, Yukichi was a big man, so I did some research. Fukuzawa's height, which is trustworthy, was 173cm.

We will look separately at the average height of Japanese men at the time, and calculate the proportion of 173cm. If we apply that proportion to the average height of modern Japanese men - which is about the same as my height - we can estimate how tall Fukuzawa Yukichi would

(con't page 9)

have been if he were alive today. If Fukuzawa were alive today, he would be about the same height as ŌTANI, Shōhei, who is playing the two-way game in U.S. Major League Baseball. In other words, he was a big man, about 193 centimetres tall.

Well then, Swamiji's height was 174 centimetres. One centimetre taller than Fukuzawa, Swamiji was a man of imposing stature. One can imagine that he would have been no shorter than most Americans of his day.

Let us say it again, "Sisters and brothers of America," in what must have been a deep, resonant voice. Let us now imagine it as such. Would you nod your head in agreement? I cannot but think how fortunate and happy India was to have Swami Vivekananda at the early stage of its modernisation.

India would later give birth to a businessman who was perhaps many times greater than SHIBUSAWA, Eiichi, Jamsetji Tata, the founder of today's Tata Group. I have now read the book written by Swami Medhasananda, which is an excellent work on the development of India-Japan relations through Swami Vivekananda and OKAKURA, Tenshin. Through the book, I came to know that it was a miraculous coincidence that Swamiji, who was on his way to the U.S. for the world's parliament, met Jamsetji Tata, 55 then, in Yokohama and they were on the same boat.

Such episodes notwithstanding, it was still a long way off from Tata becoming a household name and bringing Indian companies and the Indian economy to the attention of the world. Before the world knew of India's political leaders, before it knew of its businessmen and, of course, long before it knew of its military leaders, the world knew of Swami Vivekananda. Hastily it may be added that Rabindranath Tagore, also from Calcutta and two years older than Swamiji, followed suit in 1913 by becoming the first Asian to be awarded the Nobel Prize for literature. But this was 20 years after the Chicago World's Parliament of Religions.

In any case, in my view, while there are many powerful countries in the world, none other than India has ever produced two spiritual leaders at the same time, making a name for itself in the world with their power.

Some people may say that there was Lu Xun in China, but he authored his books thinking sometimes in Japanese, and it is doubtful whether he could fully be called a Chinese literary figure, and he did not have the power to shake the soul of everyone directly as much as Swamiji did.

Blessed are the people of India. India, alone of all the countries of the world, is known not for its soldiers, politicians or businessmen, but for its spiritual leaders, for the religious and spiritual leadership of Swami Vivekananda, which has won the world's reverence. When I think about it, I realize with a shudder how historically significant those first five words, "Sisters and brothers of America," are.

(con't page 10)



Professor Taniguchi (from page 9)

It was also unprecedented in the sense that in just five words it became a speech that would be remembered forever.

I also wonder, furthermore, whether India would have been able to lay sufficient spiritual foundations for independence had it not been for the influence exerted by Swamiji and Tagore.

Swamiji sadly passed away at the age of 39. Next year, 2022, will mark the 120th anniversary of his death. And yet your presence here today is an eloquent testimony that Swamiji's influence has been passed down unbroken from generation to generation.

We have already mentioned that the events of 9/11 served as a reminder to many of his teachings on interfaith tolerance. Now, anyone interested in yoga who is seeking a place of solace in the spiritual world cannot help but be reminded of the great footsteps of Swami Vivekananda. Again, let me say this. Blessed is the India that has him.

I will conclude my poor story by saying again about Chicago in September 1893.

There was a newspaper of the time entitled Religious Intelligence. In its October 5, 1893 edition, shortly after the Chicago conference, the paper carried an article entitled 'Final Impressions of the World's Parliament of Religions.' The article states: "No one was more popular with the people at large than Swami Vivekananda."

(con't page 11)

However, the same article tells us that it was Japan from all the non-Christian countries that sent the largest number of delegates to the conference. Five Buddhist sects sent representatives to Chicago. Shintoism was also represented by a priest, who sat on the platform, dressed in his distinctive white garb and a tall hat.

Once again, the year was 1893. It was four years since the promulgation of the Constitution of the Empire of Japan and three years since the opening of the first Imperial Diet. Japan was just about to defeat the Qing dynasty in the Sino-Japanese War that would erupt in the subsequent year.

At that time, the Buddhist world in Japan was finally recovering from the shock of the abolition of Buddhism and the spread of Christianity, and was eager to assert itself to the world. I was brought up in a Jōdo Shinshū family, and this sect was the most active in the international arena.

According to the same article, China was conspicuous in its lack of presence, and the difference between Japan, which was on the upswing, and the Qing Dynasty, which was in decline, was also clear.

In Kamakura there is a temple of the Rinzai sect called Engakuji. The head of the temple was Shaku Souen. In 1893, when he was only 33 years old, he went to Chicago, and for the first time he explained to the world what Zen was. It is said that this was the moment when Zen, pronounced as such, gained international recognition.

At this time, Shaku Souen made two speeches. The person who made the English translation was none other than SUZUKI, Daisetsu, or D.T. Suzuki, who was 23 years old. Eventually, at the invitation of an acquaintance whom Shaku Souen made in Chicago, D.T. Suzuki went to the United States. After his arrival in the United States, D.T. Suzuki was forced to make a career of translating Buddhist scriptures into English. Anyhow, the world is small and history is full of eye-opening coincidences.

If this had not been the case, D.T. Suzuki might not have emerged as the great evangelist who preached Zen and what Buddhism is to the world. Fast forward to the 1960s. At the same time as the Beatles were being seduced by the spiritual world of India, the Beat generation in the USA was turning to Zen.

The Chicago of 1893 had a profound influence not only on India but also on Japan. In this way, we feel closer to Swami Vivekananda, as if he were a contemporary of ours.

What else did Swamiji have to do with Japan? If you want to know more, please read the book, *The Story of India-Japan Relationship: Swami Vivekananda & OKAKURA, Tenshin, The Modern Era Pioneers*, by Swami Medhasananda. Before leaving for the Americas, Swamiji spent two weeks in Japan. Until this book came out, no one had told us what that stay was like. Now,

(con't page 12)

Professor Taniguchi's Address with Translation



Professor Taniguchi (from page 11)

for the first time, Swami Medhasananda has attempted to do so, and has done so with great clarity. The English text is very plain with every page a turner, full of unknown episodes.

I would like to end my talk here.
Thank you very much.

Public Celebration in Yokohama 6th June 2021

Remarks regarding the release of the new book:
The Story of the India-Japan Relationship
Swami Vivekananda & Okakura Tenshin,
The Modern Era Pioneers
by Swami Medhasananda

Dear Friends, my thanks to His Excellency, Mr. Verma, for the formal release of the book on the India-Japan Relationship. Thanks also to Prof. Taniguchi for his kind comments on the book in his excellent speech on Swamiji. Though as the author I would love to share very many things with you regarding this book, to save time I will restrict myself to offering only a few bits of information and some brief observations.

(con't page 13)



Story of the India-Japan Relationship (from page 12)

As an Indian monk living in Japan and also as a follower of Swami Vivekananda and admirer of Okakura Tenshin, both of whom knew each other closely and became the pioneers of the India Japan relationship, I felt a sort of commitment to study their visits to each other's country and their mutual relationship more deeply. After about a decade of study and research the manuscript was prepared, and by the grace of the Lord, a book was published towards the end of last year by the Advaita Ashrama, one of the major publication centres of the Ramakrishna Mission in India.

I recall with utmost gratitude some of our devotees in Japan and friends in India who offered their labour of love in producing this book. I am especially grateful to Mr. Lonnie Hirsch, our long-time devotee and editor of our English newsletter and to Professor Father Cyril Veliath, Professor Emeritus of Sophia University, in editing this book in a professional way.

Various source materials, both published and unpublished, were consulted in Bengali, English and Japanese. Consequently, details of Swamiji's visit to Japan and Okakura's visits to India, that were hitherto little known or completely unknown, have been furnished in this book.

As a longtime resident of Japan, I have great regard and appreciation for this wonderful country and for the many sterling qualities of its people. Nevertheless, I would like to share with you some of the things observed during the study and research on the theme of this book, which need to be addressed by all concerned.

First of all, if we want to promote a people-to-people relationship between India and Japan effectively, which is not only desirable, but also an exigency, the school children of this country

(con't page14)

Story of the India-Japan Relationship (from page 13)

should be provided with greater information about Indian civilisation and culture. At present the textbooks of Ethics prescribed for high school students introducing them to various civilisations and religions of the world, provide exhaustive accounts of western civilisation and Christianity, and Islamic civilisation and Islam. However, Indian Civilisation and Hinduism, have been poorly represented and dealt with merely as an introduction to Buddhism. Moreover, though many prominent Indians are known globally, in most textbooks only Gandhiji's name is mentioned. Even Poet Rabindranath Tagore's name is conspicuously absent. This is a serious lacuna which should be redressed.

Secondly, Okakura Tenshin had gone to India in January 1902, basically to invite Swami Vivekananda to a religious conference being planned in Kyoto. It was during this visit that Okakura developed a close relationship with Swamiji and his disciples with far reaching results. But unfortunately, with few exceptions, this fact is either not known, or has not been given much importance, even by those with knowledge of the history of the India-Japan relationship and Okakura's visits to India. Hopefully, the present publication will help to bring an awareness of this fact.

Thirdly, most of the authors on Okakura Tenshin give great emphasis to Okakura's sojourn to the USA and devote a considerable number of pages to describe details of various aspects of his time there, but Okakura's deep connections with India have received scant attention from these authors. Nevertheless, our study has revealed that Okakura's sojourn to India for nine continuous months (from January to September of 1902) is no less significant. Okakura completely identified with Indians and their way of life, quite unlike his experience in the USA. One fascinating account of that identification and his eventful time in India has been described in as many as one hundred and fifty pages of the present book. Okakura's second visit to India in 1912, though much shorter, was no less significant.

Incidentally, so far as the India-Japan relationship is concerned Okakura was truly an exceptional Japanese in the sense that none of his countrymen of the same stature like him ever visited India, stayed there for a considerable period, identified with Indians, interacted with eminent Indians like Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore and Abanindranath Tagore and in many such ways led a significant life there.

Fourthly, while Indians can learn from the many good qualities of the Japanese for example, cleanliness, discipline, orderliness, and commitment to one's duties, Japanese can also learn of spiritual values, universality, and openness from Indians. In spite of the fact that Vivekananda was essentially a man of spirituality, he was a versatile genius having many original ideas. This drew much appreciation from great minds of both the East and the West, like Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Leo Tolstoy and Romain Rolland. Any lack of interest in Vivekananda or his ideas just because he was a spiritual personality would be the height of folly. This book suggests what the Japanese can learn from Vivekananda and thereby get benefitted.

Finally, the purpose of this publication will be amply fulfilled if it helps those people interested in India Japan relationship to know more about the history of this mutual relationship, and inspire them to make the bonds closer by undertaking various initiatives, which would contribute to raising both countries to greater heights and in enriching human civilisation.

Thank you for listening so patiently.
Namaskar ! Arigato gozaimashita!

• Thought of the Month •

"For prayer is nothing else than being on terms of friendship with God."

- Saint Teresa of Avila

Swami Vivekananda Public Birthday Celebration
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**Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and the Japanese Patriots
Who Upheld the Indian Independence Movement**

by
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Part II of III

Regardless of the fact that the expulsion order of the Japanese government had been retracted, the British government continued its pursuit of Bose until 1918 (Taisho 7). Hence, to evade chances of being assassinated, Bose led the life of a fugitive in Japan, moving from one place to another of 17 locations all over the nation.

In the meantime, Bose married Toshiko, the eldest daughter of the Soma family. He was blessed with a son and a daughter, namely Masahide and Tetsuko, and became a naturalised Japanese citizen. However, due to her husband's fugitive situation Toshiko was burdened with the task of moving from one hideout to another, and so in 1925 (Taisho 14), she fell ill and died of pneumonia.

Bose, who was now a naturalised Japanese citizen, became a member of Nakamura. Moved by a desire to spread the taste of pure Indian curry in Japan, he coached them concerning the flavours of his own country, and consequently, Japan's first Indian-style curry touched the lips of the Japanese people. This is the "Nakamura Curry" we eat today at Nakamura's restaurants, and also through retort pouches and canned foods. Nakamura's restaurant menu describes this curry as "*the flavour of love and revolution.*"

Rash Behari Bose later came to be known as "Nakamura's Bose," a sign of the intimacy he had acquired. Thus, due to the Indian Freedom Fighters, backing for India and a dislike of Britain spread among the Japanese patriots in the opposition.

It was a Frenchman by the name Paul Richard who spread information among Japanese patriots concerning the Indian revolutionaries. In 1914 (Taisho 3), Richard, who was drawn to Asian culture and religion, sailed for India along with Mrs. Mira. He was a spiritual leader of the Indian independence movement and disciple of Aurobindo Ghose, a thinker who sought traditional Indian religion. Richard studied and practiced yoga under the guidance of Aurobindo Ghose.

Richard, who had to return to France in order to fulfil his duty of military service, did indeed return to his country. However, for reasons of health he was soon released, and so leaving France he headed once again for Asia. In 1916 (Taisho 5), on their way to India, Mr. and Mrs. Richard stopped by in Japan. They initially intended staying in Japan a few months, but ultimately they continued staying for about four years.

In October of the same year, they met for the first time Okawa Shumei, who was eulogised for his oriental scholarship. Okawa, who via Mr. and Mrs. Richard, had acquired a deep knowledge about the true value of Aurobindo, wrote in his book entitled, "*Some Issues in Re-emerging Asia,*" that "*He (Aurobindo) just liberated India from British political fetters, or, his final goal was not to overcome the economic*

(con't page 16)



Netaji (from page 15)

monopoly. His cheerful and transparent reason, his will, which resembled an autumn frost day, which always fights like a serious enemy, was in truth the British spirit itself, the British culture itself. Thus, it is an entirely non-Indian spirit.”

In May 1919 (Taisho 8), Richard delivered a lecture at Waseda University entitled, “*Aurobindo Ghose the True Man of Asia.*” In the lecture he stated as follows:

“In this unification lies a future promise to Asia. It is a promise of a higher and more perfect civilization. It is a promise of a life and civilization that each nation of Asia should realize with the best that it possesses. All the great ideas of Asia will be included within Japan.”

Along with the spirit of Aurobindo, Richard warned of an impasse in Western civilisation, and hoped that Japan, a nation of justice, would make efforts to liberate Asia. Richard reinforced his amity with Okawa Shumei, Kita Ikki, Toyama Mitsuru, and Uchida Ryohei, and exerted an ideological influence on them. The English language bulletin of the Black Dragon Society, was entitled, ‘*The Asia Review.*’ Uchida arranged for Paul Richard to be involved in its editing.

The Revolutionary, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Even after having become a naturalised Japanese, Bose of Nakamura was still actively involved in the Indian independence movement. In cooperation with Indian Freedom Fighters such as A. M. Nair and Rama Murti who lived in Japan, he strove to activate the Indian independence movement.

(con’t page 17)

In the early Showa period in particular, Bose of Nakamura, who had formed a cooperative relationship with the Japanese government and the army, which had been intensifying its conflict with Britain, became one of the leading figures of the independence movement outside India.

On December 8, 1941, Japan declared war on the United States and Britain, and the Greater East Asia War erupted. Bose of Nakamura saw this Greater East Asia War as an excellent occasion for India's independence, and so at the Sanno Hotel in Akasaka, Tokyo, he put up a sign that read: Indian Independence League.

When the Greater East Asia War began, there were vast numbers of Indians who sought to rise and participate in the anti-British independence war. Apart from the group of Indians living in Japan who were centred around Bose of Nakamura, there were also others in various parts of Southeast Asia.

At the time of the fall of Singapore, a force had already been structured into tens of thousands of independent troops. This independent army was a group mobilised around the 'F-Organization', which was unified by Major Fujiwara Iwaichi, who was chief of a special agency of the Japanese Army. The letter 'F' of the 'F-Organization' signified the 'F' from the word "Freedom," 'F' from the word "Friendly," and 'F' of the name "Fujiwara."

Another Independence Army that was formed around former British Indian Army POWs (prisoners of war), was called the "Indian National Army." Under the leadership of Captain Mohan Singh, their consciousness of independence was strong, and while they desired cooperation with Japan, they publicly launched severe criticisms of Japan's policies toward Manchuria and China.

Also, in order that Japan might genuinely consider the war to liberate Asia a holy war, they demanded that the Japanese army confirm the independence and equality of the Indians. They were also critical of Bose of Nakamura, who had become the official representative of the Indian Independence League and the Indian National Army, for being too familiar with the Japanese and too compromising with Japan.

Those who opposed Bose of Nakamura eagerly awaited the visit of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, who at the time was living in exile in Berlin, Germany. Some Japanese, however, supported Bose of Nakamura to the very hilt, since they had been familiar with him for a long time, and those who desired to consolidate his leadership, were influential people.

However, Bose of Nakamura was a rarely seen oriental gentleman. He was open to the idea of an up-and-coming 'Netaji', younger than himself, coming to Japan, and insisted that he would be satisfied if he could just fight for India under Netaji.

Subhas Chandra Bose, who is esteemed as 'Netaji' or 'revered leader,' was a great revolutionary of Indian independence who was born in India. In actual fact, Bose of Nakamura had been praising Netaji since the 1920s, and this is what he had to say:

"Subhas Chandra Bose is an outstanding leader of the Indian independence movement and he is highly respected by young Indians."

(con't page 18)

Netaji, on the contrary, severely criticized Mahatma Gandhi, who had adopted a conciliatory attitude towards Britain, referring to him as a “true British admirer.” He appealed for the “total independence of India” from Britain. He insisted that India’s independence would be achieved under an “uncompromising commander,” who insisted on complete independence.

Netaji was born on January 23, 1897 in Cuttack in the state of Bengal (now in the state Orissa). His father was Janakinath Bose, and his mother Prabhavati Bose. Rash Behari Bose and Rabindranath Tagore were also from Bengal. Netaji’s father was a member of the Bengali parliament. He was active in the legal profession as a lawyer and prosecutor, and often defended the human rights of Indians who were treated harshly by the British.

Netaji later declared that he had been greatly influenced by his father. His mother was a talented individual who was enthusiastic about education, and who had a profound interest in religion. When Netaji was a child, she made him recite the two great Indian epics, the Ramayana and Mahabharata, and also taught him Indian spirituality and traditional Indian values.

Under the influence of his mother, Netaji had an appeal for the quest for spiritual things since his childhood. He was fascinated by sadhus and pilgrims who visited the sacred city of Puri, where the magnificent temple of Jagannath is located, and he also felt drawn towards yoga and mysticism. At the age of 15, Netaji encountered a book by Swami Vivekananda. Concerning this he later said, “*Swami Vivekananda entered my life when I was just fifteen. After that, I started a revolution within myself and turned everything upside down.*”

His attitude towards life was formed by the philosophical concepts of Swami Vivekananda and Ramakrishna, too. Swami Vivekananda and Ramakrishna governed Netaji’s moral outlook on life, as well as his behaviour and code of conduct with reference to problems and crises.

Netaji, who passed the University of Calcutta entrance examinations in second place majored in philosophy, and around this time he was awakened to patriotism. After his graduation he traveled to England at the request of his father in order to prepare for the British Indian Civil Service Examinations, and enrolled at the University of Cambridge. At that time, in order to get an idea of the elements that enabled Britain to become such a powerful nation, he mingled with his British friends and managed to get an idea of British organisation, diligence, punctuality, self-confidence, and so on.

On graduating from Cambridge University, Netaji returned to India and passed the extremely difficult British Civil Service Examination, in the fourth place. However, he declined becoming a civil servant in British India, because he believed India ought to be liberated from the shackles of being a colony of Britain, and a willpower had built up within him to bravely volunteer his services to the freedom movement. Since that time he devoted himself to the anti-British, non-cooperation movement, under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi.

However Netaji himself declared:

“Unless nations around the world accept unarmed policies from the bottom of their hearts, Gandhi’s unarmed anti-British disobedience movement will remain an exalted philosophy. It does not work on the stage of actual international politics. As long as Britain controls India by force, India’s independence can only be achieved by force.”

(con’t page 19)

With this conviction in mind, he strongly opposed the non-violence policy of Gandhi. In 1924 (Taisho 13), Netaji was elected to the Calcutta City Executive Office, but he was arrested, imprisoned and sent to Mandalay in Burma.

In 1930 (Showa 5), after his release, Netaji was elected Mayor of Calcutta. However he was dismissed by the British-Indian colonial government, because they had doubts about his views on independence, and the influence his views exerted. Even after that however, Netaji continued playing an active role as a leftist and radical of the Indian National Congress. He sought for and worked towards “*immediate independence for India,*” and his power began to expand.

In 1938, Gandhi, concerned that a split may occur in the organisation, recommended Netaji as chairman of the Congress. Netaji advocated a unique form of Indian socialism known as “*Samyavad,*” which attracted the support of the youth, the farmers, and the poor. Gaining self-confidence from this, the next year Netaji ran for Congressional Chairman. It had become customary for the chair to be Gandhi’s nominee, yet here Netaji ran for the party’s chairmanship for the 1st time and in the election, Netaji triumphed by a large margin over Bhogaraju Pattabhi Sitaramayya, who was recommended by Gandhi.

This incident caused Netaji to lose the support of Gandhi, which in turn led to him to losing the support of the majority of Gandhi’s supporters in the Congress. Since certain party executives viewed the activities of Netaji as unsafe, they came to mistrust him and he was compelled to resign as chairman. Besides this, as a penalty, he was not able to hold an official position for three years.

Upon retiring as chairman, Netaji formed the All India Forward Bloc, which then commenced its own activities. Netaji also wanted an independent India that was unified. He was worried that Pakistan would separate and become an independent nation, since the conflict with Muslims within the independence faction had intensified. On account of this unified viewpoint, Netaji was considered a dangerous person, and when the Second World War broke out, he was placed under house arrest at his Calcutta home.

The beginning of the Second World War, which broke out in September 1939, was the commencement of the war between Britain and Germany. Netaji said, “*The long-awaited British crisis has finally arrived. This is a great opportunity for India’s independence,*” and he initiated measures for an armed struggle for India’s freedom. Netaji believed that attaining independence was the first priority for exploited peoples. In his view, “*we cannot afford the luxury*” of arguing about the idealism of anti-British countries.

In June 1940 (Showa 15), Netaji learned that the surrender of France and the landing in Britain of the German army were imminent. He therefore visited Gandhi, and asked for a campaign of widespread resistance and an uprising. Gandhi however was not ready for the struggle, and so he denied Netaji’s request saying that a current uprising would result in too many victims.

In July of the same year, Netaji was arrested by the British authorities on suspicion of inciting mass demonstrations and disturbing public security, and he was imprisoned until the end of the war. Hence, with the support of anti-British nations, Netaji planned on forming an Indian unit abroad. This was to gain India’s independence by invading India, and instigating an uprising of the people.

Netaji, who awaited an opportunity for a jailbreak in order to realize his plan, undertook a hunger strike while in prison, and accordingly he was released on parole due to weakness. In December of the same

(con’t page 20)

year he finally escaped from India, and travelling by land via Afghanistan he tried to obtain asylum in the Soviet Union.

At that time, Netaji believed the Soviet Union was the only nation that could liberate India. He also had a feeling of intimacy towards the Soviet Union, owing to his links with socialist ideas. Netaji sought to negotiate with the Soviet Ambassador in Kabul and obtain clearance to go to Moscow, but the Ambassador refused him permission to enter the country. Thereupon Netaji, with the assistance of the Italian Ambassador Alberto Caroni decided to disguise himself as an Italian diplomat and head for Germany, and on April 2, 1941, he was finally able to arrive in Berlin.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and Japan

“If I can just fight for India’s freedom under Netaji, it would be enough.” According to Bose of Nakamura who uttered these self-effacing words, the army of Japan started operations for Netaji to come over to Japan from Berlin. At that time, the German government provided Netaji with a vast mansion in central Berlin, and also a vehicle and living expenses, but they were very reluctant to cooperate directly with the Indian independence movement.

Despite that however, Netaji did not surrender, but rather parleyed with the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In response to this a special Indian team was set up within the Information Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and it became possible for him to work with specialists on Indian issues. In November, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched the “Free India Center,” and it was approved as a foreign diplomatic mission.

Aside from conducting propaganda work on India, the Center was recruiting applicants from among the Indian soldiers who were captured in the North African Campaign, to form a free Indian army consisting of three battalions of troops and about 2,000 people. This later became the 950th Regiment. Netaji himself actively joined in the broadcasting of anti-British propaganda, however the German government rejected all official expressions of support for the independence of India.

On December 8, 1941, the Greater East Asia War commenced. Netaji, on coming to know of the Japanese attack on British Malaya, that is, the victory of the Japanese army in the “Malayan Campaign” and the Battle of Hong-Kong, as well as the defeat of the British, said to himself:

“Now Japan has opened a place for me to fight in Asia. I feel totally reluctant to stay in Europe during this once-in-a-lifetime period.”

Owing to his intense desire to go to Japan, he contacted the Japanese Embassy in Germany. Netaji, who was very pleased with the fall of Malaya and Singapore to Japan, expressed his joy to the Ambassador of Japan in Germany, Lieutenant General Oshima Hiroshi, and also to Colonel Yamamoto Toshi, a military attaché in Berlin.

Netaji was reading a book by Okakura Tenshin, and what moved his feelings towards Japan were the words, “Asia is one.” These words appear at the beginning of Okakura Tenshin’s book entitled, “The Ideals of the East.”

The Japanese army was soon to enter Burma and rush towards the border of India. Netaji believed that India was just ahead of the invading Japanese forces, that India was just on the verge of receiving the

(con’t page 21)

invasion of the Japanese army. So he experienced a desire to go promptly to Japan, and fight alongside the Japanese for the liberation of India.

However, with reference to his desire to go to Japan, the only response given by the Japanese government was that it was “under consideration.” The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Japanese Army General Staff had a flawed analysis of the situation in India, and little awareness of the value of Netaji.

After the Malayan Campaign, Japan began a full-scale invasion of India, and in April 1942 (Showa 17), Japan defeated the Allied Navy in the Battle of Ceylon, and forced the Royal Navy to make a significant retreat from the Indian Ocean. In the North African campaign, the Axis forces too approached the Suez Canal, and the German side too was urging Japan to fortify its operations toward India.

Precisely at that time, on June 15th of the same year, the Indian Independence League was established under the leadership of Bose of Nakamura. It was based in Singapore, which was then occupied by Japan.

The Indian National Army, which was constituted mainly of Indian soldiers of the British Indian Army who were captured and taken prisoner in British Malaya, Singapore, Hong-Kong, etc., fell under the command of the Federation.

Nevertheless, conflicts developed between Captain Mohan Singh, the Commander of the Indian National Army, who insisted on the early realisation of the independence of India, the Japanese army who thought it was premature, and Bose of Nakamura who perceived the intentions of the Japanese army. On November 20, since Captain Mohan Singh was discharged and Bose of Nakamura was in poor physical health, the Japanese army began to seek a successor who could guide the Indian National Army.

Accordingly, Netaji, an independence activist who was known both at home and abroad, was viewed as a perfect successor. That was also the time when Netaji himself strongly exhorted Ambassador Oshima Hiroshi, regarding his desire to go to Japan. In addition, A. M. Nair, a leading member of the Indian Independence League who worked with Bose of Nakamura, also recommended that Netaji be invited as a successor.

However, owing to the war situation, moving Netaji from Berlin to Tokyo by land, sea, or air was problematic, and hence the governments of Japan and Germany discussed methods for his transfer. As an outcome of these discussions, it was concluded that it would be safer to travel by submarine rather than air. Hence, on February 8, 1943, the German Navy’s U-Boat submarine U180, was boarded by Netaji and his aide Abid Hasan. It was one of the two fastest U-boats owned by the German Navy, and it could produce 21 knots.

On leaving the port of Kiel in Germany, the identity of Netaji and Abid Hasan was kept secret from the submarine crew. Hence, the crew members whispered among themselves saying, “Who are they?” And rumors spread throughout the ship that they were, “perhaps submarine experts,” since dark-skinned non-Germans with dark tortoiseshell glasses and wearing dark clothes and hats, were “unknown.”

Captain Musenberg said to the crew, “They are just engineers building the submarine Bunker, and they will land in Norway.” Despite this explanation however, the two of them did not disembark in Norway. When the captain departed from Norway, he for the first time informed others that they were the Indian Independence Revolutionaries, Netaji and Hasan. He then explained his mission to take them safely to the waters of Madagascar where they would meet the Japanese submarine I-29, and to transfer them to it.

(con’t page 22)

The inside of the U180 was filled with torpedoes, food, and boxes of supplies to be exchanged at Japan, and so the living space was extremely cramped. Since they were submerged in water most of the time, in order not to be seen by the enemy, they were not able to worship the sun. Netaji and Hasan survived the harsh milieu, consisting of a congested life with a large number of people, deafening engine noise, rough waves and fog due to bad weather, and so on.

When the U180 sailed across waters around England, a German broadcaster aired a discussion between Netaji and Hitler. The production of this live airing was a camouflage, meant to give the impression that Netaji was still in Germany. On April 26, off the southeastern coast of Madagascar in Africa, the U180 and the Japanese Navy's I-29 submarine met, and on the following day the Japanese and German submarines moved to about 100 meters of each other and stopped. Then the I-29 fired a gun launching a rope to the U180. Thereupon, Netaji and Hasan and others crossed over to the other vessel by means of the rope, and safely boarded the Japanese submarine.

On entering the I-29, Netaji and Hasan were drenched, yet a warm welcome awaited them from Colonel Teraoka, the Captain Lieutenant Colonel Izu, and others who ranked below them. In the I-29, the lower section of the officers bedroom was provided for Netaji and others. They used the commander's room for washing and changing clothes, and as for their meals, in addition to those of the crew members, meals were cooked with pre-prepared luxury items.

While eating and on other occasions, Netaji casually chatted with the officers under Captain Izu. His magnanimous sense of judgement impressed everyone. People naturally came to view him with feelings of esteem, and acquired an intimacy towards him. Netaji himself was deeply touched by the camaraderie of the Japanese in I-29, and on leaving the ship he declared:

“Sailing on this submarine was a great pleasure. I cannot express my gratitude sufficiently to the Japanese Imperial Government. From the beginning of the voyage the commander made us feel at home, in an ambience of love and warmth. I express my sincere thankfulness to all the crew members, and principally to the commander, for the goodwill shown to us.

This voyage will never be forgotten. It will remain as a cherished and revered memory, and I am positive it will lead to conclusive proof that this is the first step on the path to victory and peace.”

Later Captain Izu died in the war, and after the war, Surgeon Kano, who spoke with Hasan in German, was sentenced to death as a war criminal.

On May 6, the submarine reached Sabang Port on Sabang Island (Ue Island) under the command of the Navy's Special Ground Corps, who were located at the northern end of Sumatra. Colonel Yamamoto Toshi arrived at the place to welcome Netaji, and when I-29 reached the landing pier, Netaji rushed forward and hugged Colonel Yamamoto saying, *“I thank God, heaven, and earth for this happiness.”*

After taking a little rest at the place, Netaji and others boarded a Japanese aircraft, and finally arrived in Tokyo on 16th May. In Tokyo Netaji stayed at the Imperial Hotel, and awaited a meeting with Prime Minister Tojo Hideki. However, since meeting the Prime Minister was not easy, he spent many vexing days waiting. In the meantime however he passed the time visiting schools, hospitals, factories, military camps, military ports, and so on.

(con't page 23)

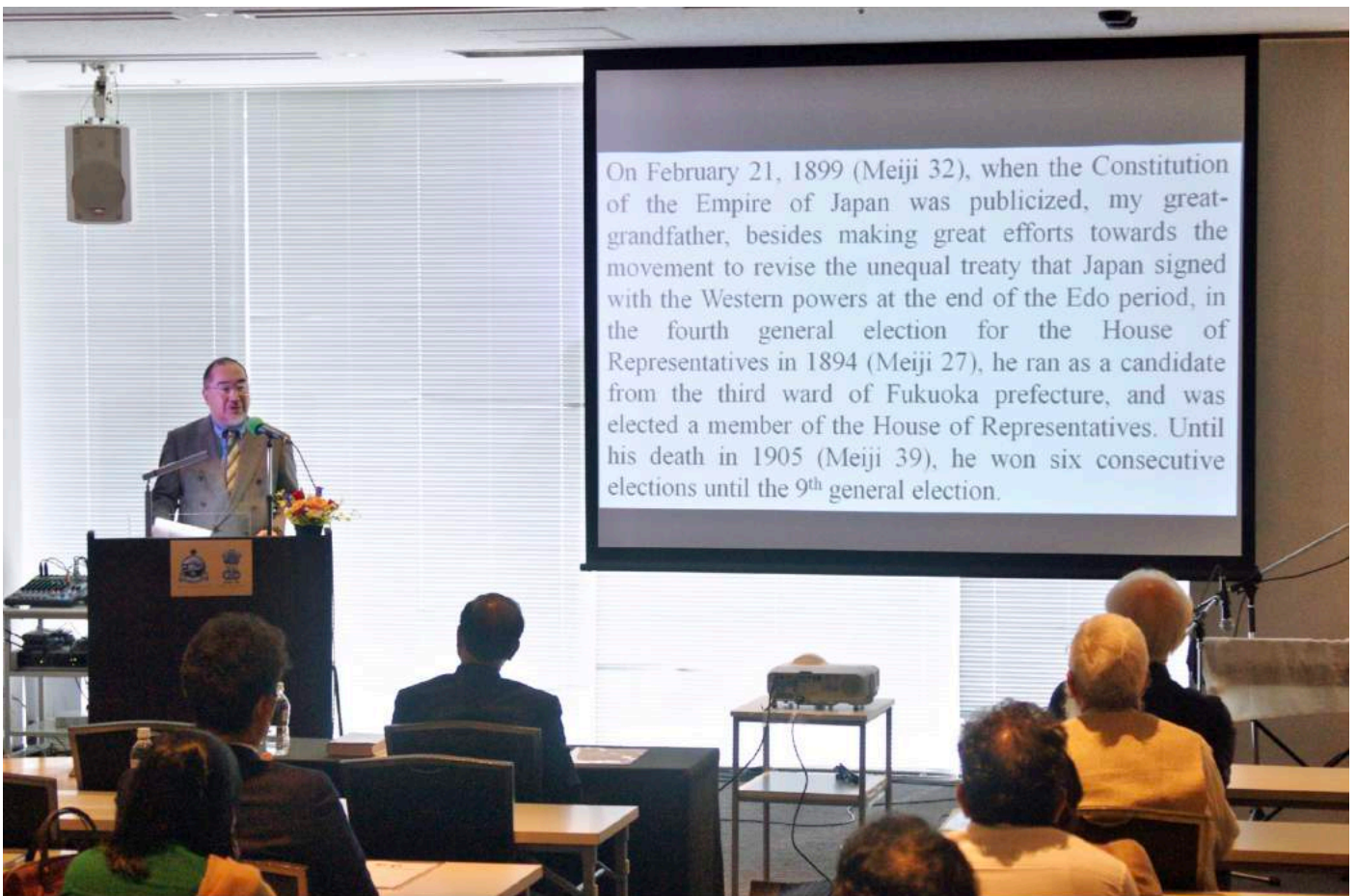
Netaji (from page 22)

It is reported that initially Prime Minister Tojo did not like Netaji, which was the reason why he postponed the date for having direct talks. Prior to meeting Prime Minister Tojo, Netaji met Sugiyama Hajime the former Chief of Staff of the Army, and began to speak to him saying, *“It is as though it has been decided that the victory in the war will be Japan’s victory.”*

“Will Japan send troops to India or not? We cannot attain independence unless we go to India, fight, step on it and set it afire.” This is the gist of what they spoke about, but he was not fully satisfied with the answer of the Chief of Staff Sugiyama, which was based on the fact that Japan was striving. However, Japan at that time was under heavy military pressure in the area around Guadalcanal, hence it was not in a situation wherein it could win the war.

The meeting between Netaji and Prime Minister Tojo was realized on 10th June. Netaji’s bearing, behaviour, and spotless personality were overwhelming. He possessed strong motivation, and was full of ardor for zealous reasoning. His logic was so upfront and sincere, that Prime Minister Tojo was deeply moved and totally intrigued, and all his earlier misgivings disappeared. Through Netaji, Prime Minister Tojo’s pre-conceived notions about India and Indians were brilliantly corrected, and he promised to see him soon in a couple of days. In addition, Netaji was impressed by the honest attitude of Prime Minister Tojo, who was in charge of the Greater East Asia War.

End Part II - Part III and the completion will be presented in the August Issue of The Vedanta Kyokai.



Mr. Takeyuki Tanaka’s Address with Translation

• **Story to Remember** •

Give Them the Flowers Now

by Leigh M. Hodges

Closed eyes can't see the white roses,
Cold hands can't hold them, you know;
Breath that is stilled cannot gather
The odors that sweet from them blow.
Death, with a peace beyond dreaming,
Its children of earth doth endow;
Life is the time we can help them,
So give them the flowers now!

Here are the struggles and striving,
Here are the cares and the tears;
Now is the time to be smoothing
The frowns and the furrows and fears.
What to closed eyes are kind sayings?
What to hushed heart is deep vow?
Naught can avail after parting,
So give them the flowers now!

Just a kind word or a greeting;
Just a warm grasp or a smile—
These are the flowers that will lighten
The burdens for many a mile.
After the journey is over
What is the use of them; how
Can they carry them who must be carried?
Oh, give them the flowers now!

Blooms from the happy heart's garden,
Plucked in the spirit of love;
Blooms that are earthly reflections
Of flowers that blossom above.
Words cannot tell what a measure
Of blessing such gifts will allow
To dwell in the lives of many,
So give them the flowers now!

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