

Glimpses of Dayanand in the eyes of great personalities

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Dayanand was the first Indian who declared swaraj is our birth right. He held a very strong view that india should belong to Indians and she ought to be made free and independent.

Dayanand strongly believed “it is a religious duty to get rid of Europeans and all the evils that attend them. The better a man understands his religion, the more clear will be his perception that Europeans and European influence must be rooted out.”

Dayanand, the most important feature of Indian “Nationhood” is its orientation on the basis of Vedic values “Back to Veda” which constitute the central theme of all socio-religious thought in India. Without robbing himself of his inward bliss he extends the sphere of that bliss so as to share it with his fellow beings. The Samaj founded by Dayanand has in the short span of existence leavened the spirit of whole society which it has worked. Impact of Dayanand spiritual nationalism Indians started taking legitimate pride in the cultural and intellectual heritage of India.

Arya Samaj movement initiated by swami Dayanand greatly influenced political leaders like Bal Gangadhar, Aurobindo Ghosh, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bipan Chander Pal, V.D. Sarvarkar, Madam Came, Shyamji Krishna Verma, Lala Hardyal, Madan Lal Dhingra, Ram Prasad Bismil, Mahadev Gobind Ranade Shradha Nand, Mahatma Hans Raj, Kishan Singh , Bhagat Singh the iconic freedom fighter. Great national and international personalities expressed their profound reverence to Dayanand by their views and thoughts.

Mahatma Gandhi

While in Yervada centre prison Poona he paid tribute to Swami Dayanand in the following words. Honing the many rich legacy that Swami Dayanand has left to us his unequivocal pronouncement against untouchability is undoubtedly one.

K.M. Munshi

Dayanand Saraswati was the first great architect of modern India. His learning was stupendous and his character great. But above all his vision was clearer and broader than is generally given to nation makers. In the neo-Hinduism of today in Indian Nationalism in the vigour of the Hindu Mahasabha mentality in the methods of Mahatma Gandhi we can trace the influence of Swami ji's unerring vision and statesmanship. His memory undoubtedly will enrich the heritage of future India.

C Rajgopalachari

Swami Dayanand was a great harmoniser of Hinduism with modern knowledge. Ancient wisdom should not be treated as a thing apart from modern truth and wisdom. Ancient and modern are not like two different valleys divided by an impossible ridge but one continuous territory the one imperceptibly passing into others. There is no reason whatsoever why the religion of the Hindu forefathers could not provide for our time. They gave us more than forefathers of any other people ever gave to them. They left a tradition of wise conservation for ensuring continuity of culture and to provide against destruction but not to prevent adjustment or progress and help decay itself. It is our fault if we misinterpreted the conservatism into death trap for truth.

Truth is eternal but by reason of natural limitations of the human mind it is discovered only in parts. A continuous readjustment is necessary. So that the sum of truth in our possession may be combined into whole to integrate ancient truth and modern knowledge is the only way to life in the fullness to which we are entitled. Swami Dayanand's soul rebelled against the idea of Hinduism being relegated to a status of unsuitability to modern times.

He strove by a process of merciless chopping off to make the ancient forest habitable for modern life. Let us not convert his great labour into another obstinate sect but understanding the purpose and the meaning of his noble effort strive to fulfill it as he wanted it to make

Hinduism a habitable tenement for progressive modern life, a religion whose culture tradition and tenets make no compromise with evil but offer no impediment to human progress.

Truth is automatically self effacing. This is in its very nature. If any reforming school resists this self effacement and seeks to live apart from that which it is, it functions to reform thence forward it begins to rot and decay Swami Dayanand's teaching have permeated wide and a stage is being reached when they can no longer form a denominative apart but must live in the soul of Hinduism itself.

The coming of Hinduism is bound to be a period of great assimilation. The re-absorption with increasing pace and will necessarily mean the self effacement of their denominations. Swami Dayanand's aim can be fulfilled only by re-absorption of his reformists Hinduism as a whole.

Rahim Zadah Safari minister of justice Tehran Persia change is the law of life the universe as a whole has to renew itself constantly by this eternal principle. Every people has to adapt itself to the law of innovation and a nation that has not realized this fact would degenerate step by step and finally would be cut off from the colossal column of that universe caravan which is always marching forward with eternity.

As a matter of fact the real pioneers of the east are these whose lives were or are yet devoted to the creation of a social renaissance. Although today in view of the present situation of the east. We are glad to show a sufficient number of the innovators whose works and reform have restored to the oriental nations, the suffocated faculty of innovation yet we can never forget to call these few persons ages of the past, the first pioneers who were endowed with the necessary quality of reformers and who lived and died for the sublime purpose.

Among those pioneers I should name Swami Dayanand Saraswati whose valuable services in the cause of Hindu religion and uplift of his nation in the moral and social domain are too great to be fully described in such small note. What he has achieved by denouncing the system of

hereditary castes. I would believe now would someday in the future be confirmed as a high road to unity and progress of India. The institution of the Arya Samaj of which he has laid the foundations on the ground of the Indian renaissance is would always be looked at as an argument to establish the self consciousness of India and its intrinsic inclination to national emancipation. His commentary on the Veda is a unique work by which he has illustrated once more the value of the great scriptures of ancient India from which the well known sages of India have been radiating their wisdom in all direction for the welfare and advancement of humanity. This I feel it a duty of every oriental like myself to appreciate what Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati has achieved as this great work in this cause of India's national unity.

Rev C.F. Andrews

For Dayanand's personality and character these may well be almost unqualified admiration. He was a puritan to the backbone and lived upto the creed. He was a fighter, strong, virile, independent if somewhat imperious in behavior. His courage in facing his own nothing less than heroic. He was a passionate lover of truth.

Colonel H.S. Olcott (President Theosophical Society)

A master spirit has passed away from India. Pandit Dayanand Saraswati is gone, the irrepressible, energetic reformer whose mighty voice and passionate eloquence for the last few years raised thousands of people in India from lethargic indifference and stupor into active patriotism is no more.

De mortuis nil nisi bonum. All our differences have been burnt with the body. We remember only the grand virtues and noble qualities of our former colleague and teacher and late antagonist. We bear in mind but his life long devotion to the cause of Aryan regeneration his ardent love for the grand philosophy of his forefather his relentless untiring zeal in the work of the projected social and religious reforms and it is with unfeigned sorrow that we now hasten to join the ranks of his many mourners. In him India has lost one of her noblest sons. A patriot in the

true sense of the word Swami Dayanand labored from his earliest years for the recovery of the lost treasures of Indian intellect.

His zeal for the reformation of his mother land was exceeded only by his unbounded learning. There can be but one opinion as to his knowledge of Sanskrit and the impetus to this study of both received at his hands. There are few towns and but one province we believe namely Madras that pandit Dayanand did not visit in furtherance of his missionary work and fewer still, where he has not left the impress of his remarkable mind behind him. He threw as it were a bomb shell in the midst of the stagnant masses of degenerated Hinduism and filled with love for the teachings of Rishis and Vedic learning the hearts of all who were drawn with in the influence of his eloquent oratory. Certainly there was no better or grander orator in Hindu and Sanskrit than Dayanand throughout the length and breadth of this land.

Describing Swami Dayanand contribution towards creating the national consciousness **Romain Rolland** writes. "How great and uplifter of the people he was – the most vigorous force of the immediate and present action in india at the movement of rebirth and the re-awakening of the national consciousness. His Arya Samaj prepared the way in 1905 for the revolt of Bengal. He was one of the most ardent prophets of reconstruction and of national organisation. I feel that it was he who kept the vigil."

In words of **Percival Griffiths** the impact of Western thought on Hinduism produced, "Two main currents of thoughts which were afterwards to be united as the stream of Indian Nationalism. The Brahmo Samaj attuned the minds of many leaders to the new idea of democracy and freedom while Arya Samaj initiated by Dayanand believed in the revival among orthodox Hindus led to militant Hinduism. which for the first time gave real unity to Hindu India and built up a combative nationalism."

Swami Dayanand Saraswati was totally identified with the complete revival of ancient India. He was founder of the Arya samaj a reform movement of the vedic dharma. He was the first to give the call for SWARAJ as India for Indian in 1876, a call later taken up by Lokmanya Tilak.

He led a vigorous crusade against rituals and superstitions and other social evils like child marriage, female infanticide, idolatory, dowry system, untouchability fundamentalism or bigotry fanaticism, prejudices, narrowly conceived perceptions. Dayanand sought to reintegrate the Hindus by taking away from the caste system the rigidity that it had acquired during dark ages. He was of firm opinion that panacea for eradication of all these evils is through awakening the minds of masses through education. He worked towards reviving vedic ideologies. He was greatly admired by great leaders.

Late President of India **Dr. S. Radhakrishnan** called him one of the makers of modern India.

Great men are the fire pillars in this dark pilgrimage of mankind they stand as heavenly signs ever living witnesses of what has been prophetic tokens of what still may be the revealed embodied possibilities of human nature. He was one of the greatest benefactors of humanity, true redeemer and deliverer true regenerator of mankind. Several great men have eulogized his contribution towards nation building.

Jadunath Sarkar

Swami Dayanand is a true statesman who can legislate for the future who can set a force at work which will go on influencing the lives and thoughts of unborn generations. When the history of India's growth comes to be written that high rank will be adjudged to the naked fakir. He rescued the heart of Hinduism from atrophy he linked it with the spirit of eternal progression ruling the outer world, he proved that whatever is best and truest in the legacy of the ancient sages of Aryavarta is a possession open to the entire human race and not confined to any "twice born" caste or sacred soil.

The true test of every religion is its influence upon conduct for "the faith that is without work is dead". That test the church of Dayanand has passed most triumphantly. It's performance is writ large over the face of the Punjab and much of the classic land of Madhyadesa and is not unknown elsewhere in India.

Dayanyand had proved by word and deed alike that a career of activity, of progress of aggression is not incompatible with the spirit of Hinduism when rightly understood. He has established the absolute equality of the brethren. Hence, wherever the Arya samaj is a reality there has been a marvellous elevation of the masses. The energy of the new faith has over flown into the broad fields of education relief of distress, reclamation of backward classes and training in handiwork no less than in scriptural scholarship and propaganda writing.

Today Arya samaj has vindicated itself by its service to our country and people . Today Hinduism calls upon it as its best ally. Today Hinduism has paid the Arya samaj, the highest tribute that of imitation by stealing its programme.

In his book "New India" Sir Henry Colton characterizes the history of Arya Samaj initiated by Dayanand as " One of the most important and interesting chapters of Modern Hindu Thought"

In the words of **A.A. Aiyanger** the former speaker of Indian Parliament "Gandhi has been universally acknowledged as Father of the nation but Dayanand be described as " Grand father of the Nation."

Quoting from the **B.B. Majumdar** in his book "History of Indian social and political ideas- "with unerring instinct Swami Dayanand hits upon the psychological factors which are bound to bring about the fall of ruler power. He was shrewd enough to hint merely at the eventuality of the loss of power by the British without directly mentioning them by names."

It is pertinent to mention that even unsympathetic critic **Valentine Chirol** hints that long before the rise of the Indian National Congress Swami Dayanand included in the curriculum compulsory military training and the use of firearms. He further writes "the whole drift of Dayanand's teaching is far less to reform Hinduism than to range it into active resistance to the alien influence which threatened in his opinion to denationalize it"

In the words of **Mrs. Annie Besant** "Swami Dayanand was the first to rise against British dominion as she writes that Dayanand was the first to proclaim India for Indians.

“The real foundation of modern independent India was laid by Dayanand”. The words of **D. Vable** are but recurrences of recorded facts. Swami Dayanand was the arch-prophet of freedom in India indeed the ground marker of powerful movement of Indian politico-economic liberation.”

Reincout rightly observes that “There is a little doubt today that the great revolt in Bengal in 1905 was the largely the indirect result of the Arya Samaj’s religious nationalism and that Dayanand’s organization was the first and real concrete nucleus of political nationalism. Arya Samaj was responsible for bringing a new awakening among the Hindus by making them shed their self-imposed isolation lethary, unhealthy superstitions and baneful social and religious prejudices.

The great role played by Dayanand has been aptly described by **Aurobindo** in the following words “Among the great company of remarkable figure that will appear to the eye of posterity at the head of Indian Renaissance one stands out by himself with the peculiar and solitary distinctness one unique in his type, as he is unique in his work. It is as if one were to walk for a longtime amid a range of hills rising to a greater or lesser altitude but all with sweeping contours, green - clad, flattering the eye even in their most bold and striking elevation. But amidst them all one hill stands apart piled up in sheer strength, a mass of bare and paissant granite, with verdure on its summit a solitary pine jutting out into blue a great Cascade of pure vigorous and fertilising water gushing out from its strength as a very fountain of life and health to the valley. such is the impression created on my mind by Dayanand.”

T.L. Vasvani beautifully sums up his views in the following words “Long after the political controversies of our days are forgotten modern India will be remembered by the names of few sages and heroes of action. One of them, I believe was Rishi Dayanand, Meditating on him, I have recalled the words in Narada Bhakti, Sutras: Worship good at all times with all your heart and with all your mind.

Rishi Dayanand's greatness, to my mind, was this he worshipped God with all his mind and all his heart. He had a spiritual mind and so could interpret the genius of his race. In the Vedic Renaissance which he initiated, he gave a high place to knowledge. But he was careful to urge that true knowledge must become an energy, a Shakti for the Service of the rare. Rishi Dayanand was for an Aryan type of culture. The Vedic prayer with which he concluded his Satyarth Parkash expresses, I believe his dominant aspiration.

Mayest thou O God - Friend of all, Holy spirit

World guide - mayest Thou be merciful unite us !

Mayest Thou, World - Spirit and world support, grant us knowledge and power.

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