

---

# RADIANCE

(A Textbook for B.A Third Semester Basic English)

*Chief Editor*

**Dr. P. KANNAN**

Professor and Chairman

Department of PG Studies and Research in English, AWU, Vijayapura

*Executive Editor*

**Mr. C. L. PATIL**

Associate Professor & Coordinator for P.G. Studies in English  
Secab A.R.S. Inamdar Arts, Science and Commerce College for Women,  
Vijayapura.

*Editors*

**Mr. M. T. Kotnis**

Associate Professor of English  
Secab A. R. S. Inamdar Arts, Science  
Commerce college for Women  
Vijayapura.

**Smt. Shanta Patilkulkarni**

Associate Professor of English  
Smt. K. S. Jigalur Arts &  
Dr.(Smt) S. M. Sheshgiri Commerce  
College for Women, Dharwad.



**PRASARANGA**

**AKKAMAHADEVI WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY,**

Vijayapura-586105

---

Lesson No. 1

# Letter to Kidi

**Swami Vivekananda**

\*\*\*\*\*

541 Dearborn Avenue,  
Chicago,  
3rd March, 1894

Dear KIDI,

I agree with you so far that faith is a wonderful insight and that it alone can save; but there is the danger in it of breeding fanaticism barring further progress. Jnana is all right but there is the danger of its becoming dry intellectualism. Love is great and noble, but it may die away in meaningless sentimentalism. A harmony of all these is the thing required. Ramakrishna was such a harmony. Such beings are few and far between; but keeping him and his teachings as the ideal we can move on. And if amongst us, each one may not individually attain to that perfection, still we may get it collectively by counteracting, equipoising, adjusting, and fulfilling one another. This would be harmony by a number of persons, and a decided

advance on all other forms and creeds.

For a religion to be effective, enthusiasm is necessary. At the same time we must try to avoid the danger of multiplying creeds. We avoid that by being a non—sectarian sect, having all the advantages of a sect and the broadness of a universal religion.

God, though everywhere, can be known to us in and through human character. No character was ever as perfect as Ramakrishna, and that should be the centre round which we ought to rally; at the same time allowing everybody to regard him in his own light, either as God, Saviour, teacher, model, or a great man, just as he pleases.

We preach neither social equality nor inequality, but that every being has the same rights, and insist upon freedom of thought and action in every way.

We reject none, neither theist nor pantheist, monist, polytheist, agnostic, atheist, the only condition of being a disciple is modelling a character at once the broadest and the most intense.

Nor do we insist upon particular codes of morality as to conduct, or character, or eating and drinking, except so far as it injures others.

What ever retards the onward progress or helps the downward fall is vice; whatever helps in coming up and becoming harmonized is virtue.

We leave everybody free to know, select, and follow whatever suits and helps him. Thus, for example, eating meat may help one, eating fruit another. Each is welcome to his own peculiarity; but he has no right to criticize the conduct of others, because that would, if followed by him, much less to insist that others should follow his way. A wife may help some people in this progress, to others she, may be a positive injury. But the unmarried man has no right to say that the married disciple is wrong, much less to force his own ideal of morality upon his brother.

We believe that every being is divine, is God. Every soul is a sun covered over with clouds of ignorance, the difference between soul and soul is due to the difference in density of these layers of clouds. We believe that this is the conscious or unconscious basis of all religions, and that this is the explanation of the whole history of human progress either in the material, intellectual, or spiritual plane- the same spirit is manifesting through different planes.

We believe that this is the very essence of the Vedas.

We believe that it is the duty of every soul to treat, think of, and behave to other souls as such, i.e. as Gods, and not hate or despise, or vilify, or try to injure them by any manner or means. This is the duty not only of the Sannyasin but of all men and women.

The soul has neither sex, nor caste, nor imperfection.

We believe that nowhere throughout Vedas, Darshanas, or Purans, or Tantras, it is ever said that the soul has any sex, creed, or caste. Therefore we agree that those who say, "What has religion to do with social reforms?" But they must also agree with us when we tell them that religion has no business to formulate social laws and insist on the difference between beings because its aim and end is to obliterate all such fictions and monstrosities.

If it be pleaded that through this difference we would reach the final equality and unity, we answer that the same religion has said over and over again, that mud cannot be washed with mud.

As if a man can be moral by being immoral!

Social laws were created by economic conditions under the sanction of religion. The terrible mistake of religion was to interfere in social matters. But how hypocritically it says and thereby contradicts itself- "Social reform is not the business of the religion!" True, what we want is that religion should not be a social reformer, but we insist at the same time that religion has no right to become a social law-giver. Hands off! Keep yourself to your own bounds and

everything would come right.

1. Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man.
2. Religion is the manifestation of the Divinity already in man.

Therefore the only duty of the teacher in both cases is to remove all obstructions from the way. Hands off! as I always say, and everything will be right. That is, our duty is to clear the way. The Lord does the rest.

Specially therefore you must bear in mind that religion has to do only with the soul and has no business to interfere in social matters- you must also bear in mind that this applies completely to the mischief which has already been done. It is as if a man after forcibly taking possession of another's property cries through the nose when that man tries to regain it- and preaches the doctrine of the sanctity of human right!

You speak of the meat-eating Kshatriya; meat or no meat, it is they who are the fathers of all that is noble and beautiful in Hinduism. Who wrote the Upanishads? Who was Rama? Who was Krishna? Who was Buddha? Who were the Tirthankaras of the Jains? Whenever the Kshatriya's have preached religion, they have given it to everybody; and whenever the Brahamins wrote anything, they would deny all right to others. Read the Gita and the Sutras of vyasa, or get someone to read them to you. In the Gita the way is laid open to all men and women, to all caste and colour, but vyasa tries to put meanings upon the Vedas to cheat the poor Shudras. Is God a nervous fool like you that the flow of His river of mercy would be dammed up by a piece of meat? If such be He, His value is not a pie!

Hope nothing from me, but I am convinced, as I wrote to you, and had spoken to you, that India is to be saved by the Indians themselves. So you, young men of the mother-land, can dozens of you become almost fanatics over this new idea! Take thought, get materials, write a sketch of the life of Ramakrishna, studiously avoiding all miracles. The life should be written as an illustration of the doctrines he preached. Only his- do not bring me or any living

persons into that. The main aim should be to give to the world what he taught, and the life as illustrating that, I, unworthy though I am, had one commission- to being out the casket of jewels that was placed in my charge, and make it over to you. Why to you? Because the hypocrites, the jealous, the slavish, and the cowardly, those who believe in matter only, can never do anything. Jealousy is the bane of our national character, natural to slaves. Even the Lord with all his power can do nothing on account of the jealousy....Think of me as one who has done all his duty and is now dead and gone. Think that the whole work is upon your shoulders... Think that you, young men of our motherland were destined to do this. Put yourself to the task. Lord bless you. Leave me; throw me quite out of sight. Preach the new ideal, the new doctrine, the new life. Preach against nobody, against no custom. Preach neither for nor against caste or any other social evil; preach to let “hands off”, and everything will come right. With my blessings on you all, my brave steadfast and loving souls,

Yours,

VIVEKANANDA

**Sources :**

Letters of Swami Vivekananda  
Advaita Ashrama(Publication Department)  
5 Dehi Entally Road, Calcutta 700 014

**Glossary:**

- KIDI** : is the nick name of Singaravelu Mudaliyar—a Tamilian a follower and the devotee of Swami Vivekananda...KIDI in Tamil means ‘a parrot’.
- Fanaticism** : Indifference or disapproval for extreme religious and political beliefs
- Sentimentalism** : Emotionality
- Harmony** : Congruence
- Counteracting** : Act against something in order to reduce its force or neutralize it

<b>Equipoising</b>	: Imbalance
<b>Saviour</b>	: Redeemer, up lifter
<b>Theist</b>	: One who believes in the existence of God
<b>Pantheist</b>	: One who believes in the religious idea that God and the universe are one thing and that God is present in all natural things.
<b>Polytheist</b>	: One who believes in the existence of more than one God
<b>Agnostic</b>	: One who believes that people cannot know whether God exists or not.
<b>Atheist</b>	: One who doesn't believe in God
<b>Manifest</b>	: Clear or obvious to the eye/mind
<b>Vilify</b>	: scold, blame, condemn
<b>Obliterate</b>	: Erase, Efface
<b>Monstrosities</b>	: state of being monstrous
<b>Sanctity</b>	: holy, sacred

## **Comprehension:**

### **I. Answer the following in a sentence or two:**

1. How love may die?
2. Is human character perfect?
3. Who is a theist?
4. What is virtue?
5. Does the soul has gender?

### **II. Answer the following in two or three sentences:**

1. What is harmony and with whom it is found?
2. What is the duty of men and women?
3. What the Puranas and Vedas say about the soul?

### **III. Answer the following in a paragraph:**

1. What is Vivekananda's opinion about the social laws?
2. "Social reform is not the business of the religion"-Explain it with reference to social reforms.

3. Who has to save the Indians and how?
4. What is the bane of our national character and how to overcome it?

#### **IV. Answer the following (Essay Type):**

1. What personality of Vivekananda you can identify from the lesson?
2. What concept of life is presented to KIDI?

#### **V. Grammar and composition**

#### **LETTER WRITING**

The letters we write can either be ‘personal’- the informal, relaxed or even chatty letters we write to close relatives or intimate friends or ‘business’-the formal, matter of fact letters written to or by offices, business firms etc. All letters, whether formal or informal, follow certain conventions. It is important for letter writers to know and observe these conventions.

Following are the two letters written by the same person for different purposes. See whether they have the same tone, format and content.

#### **Letter 1**

Apt # 505  
Himalaya Apts,  
Sector-9, Dwarka  
N. Delhi – 75.

Date: 23rd February 20xx

Dear Jatin,

How are you? I hope you are fine. Guess what happened the other day?! I met the film actress Priyanka at a birthday party of a mutual friend. I was so excited to meet her, more so because it was unexpected. The food was good and the music great, but all the guests

were taken up with Priyanka. She looked pretty and as attractive as she does on the screen. All the boys (including me of course) were crowding around her and trying to shake her hand or talk to her. I was very impressed by the fact that she was friendly and did not mind people jostling around asking for her attention. After signing countless autographs, she danced to the songs from her films which were played repeatedly as a sort of tribute to her.

How are your parents and others at home? Are you still working for Satyam? When are you coming to Delhi? Do make it soon so that we can meet. Convey my regards to your parents.

With love  
Samar

## **Letter 2**

To  
The Marketing Manager  
*The Entertainers*  
Jhandewalan  
Delhi

Date: 22nd February 20xx

Sir,

I had recently bought an HD LCD TV from your showroom. However, after using it for less than even a month, I find that the high definition picture quality is simply not there. At times there is a distortion of the picture too. I find it extremely disturbing that our new and expensive TV is malfunctioning. As the set is within a two-year warranty period, I request you to send someone immediately to repair/replace the TV.

Yours Sincerely  
Samar Singh  
(Apt # 505, Himalaya Apts,  
Sector-9, Dwarka, N. Delhi – 75)

Both letters are examples of external correspondence but the second letter is formal in tone and the content is in the nature of a complaint in a business context. The first letter is informal, casual and non-business in content and context.

### Differences between Formal and Informal Letters

Formal letter	Informal letter
It is written to make a specific point to a person/organization known or unknown to us.	It can address different topics and is written to people you know.
Its primary aim is to convey information	Generally, it deals with private thoughts, feelings and topics of interest to the person to whom the letter is addressed.
It contains certain linguistic features which are formal in nature.	It contains expressions which characterize conversation – exclamatory expressions (Guess what happened the other day?!), questions (How are your parents and others at home?), contracted forms (It'll take some time), etc.
It is generally brief, clear, precise and complete. It is well-organized and points are arranged in a logical sequence.	It may talk about different subjects and even ramble a bit. Its organization and logical continuity are more loosely structured.

**V. Homophones :** is a combination of two words 'homo' means 'same' and 'phone' means 'sound.'

\* Words having similar sound but having different spelling and meaning are called homophones

\* It is desirable for the learners to be familiar with such words and this will enrich their vocabulary

\* Let us see how the homophones can be used for different meaning and context

- 1) Altar-Alter
  1. They made Altar for the religious ceremony (heightened place)
  2. Alter- To charge  
We altered the plan
- 2) Bale-Bail
  - They were released on bail (money paid as security)
  - The farmer made bales of cotton (Bundle)
- 3) Berth-Birth
  - We reserved a berth in a train (Sleeping place)
  - Buddha took birth at Lumbini (Being born)
- 4) Bough-Bow
  - The bird sat on the bough (Branch of a tree)
  - We should bow our heads before elders (Bend)
- 5) Break-Brake
  - 1) The party was broken into two groups (Make into pieces)
  - 2) The driver applied brakes (Appliance for reducing speed)
- 6) Canvas-Canvass
  - He made a painting on a canvas (A cloth)
  - The coordinator is canvassing (Asking for vote)
- 7) Cast-Caste
  - 1) We should uplift backward castes (A social class)
  - 2) The fishermen cast their nets into the sea (Throw)
- 8) Cell- Sell
  - 1) The boy was kept in a cell (Small room)
  - 2) They want to sell their house (Give something for money)
- 9) Check- Cheque
  - We should check the over growth of population (To stop)

- I received a cheque of five thousand rupees (A slip for payment)
- 10) Complement-Compliment  
 1) Love is a complement to life (Support)  
 2) He made a compliment on her beauty (A word of praise)
- 11) Course-Coarse  
 She completed a post graduate course (Progress of study)  
 The towel is very coarse (Rough)
- 12) Dear-Deer  
 The girl is dear to her parents (Beloved)  
 We saw deers in a zoo (Kind of stag)
- 13) Fare-Fair  
 The lady has a fair face (Beautiful /white complexes)  
 We paid bus fare (Travelling expense)
- 14) Hair -Heir-Hare  
 1) She has curly hair  
 2) The boy is the only heir to his ancestor property  
 3) We saw a hare in the grass (Rabbit)
- 15) Heel-Heal  
 1) His wounds are healing (Recover)  
 2) She has pain in heels (Part of the foot)
- 16) Lose-Loose  
 1) We should not lose patience (To be deprived)  
 2) She prefers loose dress (Not tight)
- 17) Pray-Prey  
 1) She prayed to God (Beg or repent)  
 2) The deer become prey to tiger (Victim)
- 18) Soar-Sore  
 The bird soars in the sky (Fly high)  
 She's throat suffered from sore (Painful)
- 19) Steal-Steel  
 He steals money from his father  
 The utensils are made of steel (Iron)
- 20) Vain-Vein  
 All his efforts went in vain (Useless)  
 Blood flows through veins (Blood vessels)