

# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जायत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

*Katha Upa. I. iii. 14.*

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## RAJA YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SIXTH LESSON

The Sushumna: It is very useful to meditate on the Sushumna. You may have a vision of it come to you and this is the best way. Then meditate on that for a long time. It is a very fine, very brilliant thread,—this living passage through the spinal chord, this way of salvation through which we have to make the Kundalini rise.

In the language of the Yogi, the Sushumna has its end in two lotuses,—the lower lotus surrounds the triangle of the Kundalini and the upper one is in the brain surrounding the pineal-gland. Between these two are four other lotuses, stages on the way:

- Sixth* : Pineal-gland.
- Fifth* : Between the eyes.
- Fourth* : Bottom of the throat.
- Third* : Level with the heart.
- Second* : Opposite the navel.
- First* : Base of the spine.\*

\* Swamiji here omits to mention the *Svādhisthâna Chakra*, supposed to be situated above the first chakra.—Ed.

We must awaken the Kundalini, then slowly raise it from one lotus to another till the brain is reached. Each stage corresponds to a new layer of the mind.†

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## THE PRAYER BOOK CRISIS

BY THE EDITOR

During the last few months *Reuter* has cabled various items of news to the Indian press concerning the revised Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England. It is possible that the majority of Indian readers have not thought much over their significance. The revision was rejected last December by the House of Commons and again in last June. What this portends to Christianity in England may not be without its interest to us in India.

The phrase Prayer Book should not be understood in a literal sense. For, besides what we generally call prayer, it contains also directions for services, doctrines, articles of faith, directions for observances, etc. The Prayer Book is really a *Smriti* for the guidance of the Church of England. Its origin was naturally due to the secession of England from the Roman Catholic Church. Before Protestantism came into being, all Christians except those who belonged to the Eastern Church, were under the rule of Rome, though it is true Roman Catholicism itself had and has its various schools. But when England defied the authority of the Pope, it felt the necessity of having its own special religious doctrines, observances and devotions. As a result the First Prayer Book was published in 1549 during the reign of Edward VI. It remained in use till 1552. In that year the Prayer Book was revised and reformed into what is spoken of as the Second Prayer Book of King Edward the VI. King Edward died in 1553 and Queen Mary came to the throne of England. She was of Roman Catholic persuasion, and she abolished the English Prayer Book and restored the Latin missal. Hers however was a short reign. She died in 1558 and another change of policy took place. The reformed Prayer Book came into use again, with various modifications, in 1559. During the reign of James I, the Prayer Book was again revised

† *Six Lessons on Raja Yoga* can be had of the Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta, whose courtesy enabled us to publish this in P. B.—Ed.



in 1604, and again after the restoration of Charles II in 1662. This last revision is in use to-day though there have been various slight changes in recent years. It must be admitted that a thorough revision is overdue. The various changes in the past and the necessity of another change in the present must appear quite natural to a Hindu. For Hindus are quite alive to the necessity of Smritis adjusting themselves to the changing needs and spirits of ages, and as we have pointed out, the English Prayer Book is nothing but the Englishmen's Smriti.

What however is the immediate reason of the present revision? It is the question of discipline in the Church. No doubt it will appear a bit queer to the Indian reader. So long as all believed in God and in Christ, the Hindu may ask, what is the necessity of insisting on the uniformity of faith and practice? A diversity in inessentials is rather more helpful than uniformity, knowing as we do the diversity of human nature. The Christian does not think so. The Church of England does not think so. It wants all its flock to follow the beaten track and not to stray away to other pastures however delectable the prospects might be. But human nature cannot be strait-jacketted in this fashion. Naturally therefore various customs, opinions and practices have crept into the Anglican Church, which are not confirmed by the 1662 Prayer Book. What is to be done with these doctrines and practices? Should the Church of England authorities turn a blind eye to them, or scrutinize and deal with them? Evidently the first alternative has no longer been possible. Hence the revision.

What are those alien practices? The trouble mainly lies with what is known as Anglo-Catholicism or as it used to be called, the High Church Party. The Anglo-Catholics have been steadily gaining ground within the Anglican Church. The word Anglo-Catholic should not be taken literally,—it does not mean an English Roman Catholic; it means one who believes in the Catholic traditions and yet belongs to the Anglican Church. The claim of the Anglo-Catholics is that the Church of England is not of independent origin and disconnected from the Catholic tradition. They repudiate any break with that tradition at the time of the Reformation. They hold that the Church of England never rejected the early doctrine of the real presence in the sacrament in communion and other Catholic doctrines. It is this communion service which has proved the storm centre in the present controversy. A few words in explanation of the doctrine of real presence in the sacrament in communion may be helpful to the Indian readers. Christians



believe, at least the Roman Catholics do, that as Christ washed away the sins of the world by being crucified, with the sacrifice of his body and blood, so if they take his blood and flesh, they will also be purified. Of course the original blood and flesh are not available. Now they can have only substitutes,—wine and bread. The communion service is the consecration of the bread and wine and partaking thereof by the faithful. The Catholics hold that when certain formulas, *mantrams*, are uttered on them, they become impregnated with the real presence of the Christ. A partaking of them, then, cleanses all sins and fills one with spiritual exaltation. This doctrine of the eucharist has proved very troublesome throughout the history of Christianity. The question has been raised again and again: How can ordinary pieces of bread and drops of wine become filled with the Holy Spirit and be converted into the actual body and blood of Christ by the simple process of an invocation? How can the material constituents of bread and wine become spiritual substances? Here is the tremendous difficulty. Of course the Christians cannot take recourse to the pantheistic doctrines; for that will create more troublesome intricacies in regard to other articles of faith. Anyhow the Roman Catholics have sought by means of hair-splitting philosophies to find proofs of this transubstantiation. Protestants have not yet found any rational justification for such a belief.

To a Hindu, the doctrine of the eucharist will not appear quite strange. He also believes in the spiritual efficacy of *prasada*, the food offered to God. How a food which does not seem to have undergone the slightest change as a result of being offered, can yet assume a supreme spiritual efficacy, was not quite clear until Sri Ramakrishna spoke of an experience of his. He found, while worshipping the Mother Kali at the Dakshineswar temple in the early days of his *sadhana*, that whenever he offered any food to the Mother, a luminous ray shot from her eyes and touched the food so as to take its essence. If this experience of Sri Ramakrishna is relied on,—and there is no reason why it should not be, for it has been confirmed by the experiences of other *sadhakas* also,—the peculiar spirituality of the sacramental food is at once explained. Of course the doctrine of the eucharist is not exactly our doctrine of the *prasada*. There is a difference. In the doctrine of *prasada*, there is, besides the idea of the purifying effect of the offered food on the partaker, the further idea of the close communion between God and man, implied in their both partaking of the same food;—of course this is more or



less subconscious. In the doctrine of the eucharist, the further element is the idea of the identity of man and Christ. When the Christian partakes of the body and blood of Christ, they as it were identify their own body and blood with Christ's ;—this physical identification naturally and automatically induces the mind to coincide itself with the mind of the Christ. This is a process of very efficacious meditation.\* This implied identity of man and Christ in the communion service cannot but be spiritually exalting. We do not know if this interpretation of ours is acceptable to the faithful. It is quite possible they do not consciously think in the indicated way. But psychologically and subconsciously, the communion is bound to have some such effect. And surely such an interpretation of the eucharist may not be quite useless in the present analytical age.

Anyhow, the Church of England does not believe in the theory of transubstantiation. But the Anglo-Catholics who believe in it, are growing in number ; and there are, we are told, 600 churches in England to-day, in which there is continuous reservation of the sacrament (i.e., retaining after a celebration a portion of the eucharistic elements, especially the bread, for devotion or for the communion of the absent and the sick) with adoration of the real presence. This reservation of the sacrament is being most hotly resented by the orthodox Anglicans. In many of those churches, there is full Catholic ritual, with confession, prayers to the Virgin Mary and celibacy of the clergy. All these have steadily developed since John Henry Newman, afterwards Cardinal Newman, started the Oxford movement in early Victorian days. Now they threaten to capture the Church of England or at least to create a serious split in it. So long the bishops of the Church of England have not interfered with these developments. In fact some of them have favoured them. The Bishop of London, we are told, along with many other bishops, is in deep sympathy with this

\* Cf. the following well-known song of Ramprasad :

“Now I will eat thee, Mother.

“I was born under the inauspicious junction of stars, called *ganda*, and one so born, they say, eat's one's own mother. Now either thou must eat me or I will eat thee,—it must be an action to the finish.

“I will eat thy handmaidens, making a curry of them ; and of thy garland of heads I will make a delectable acid preparation.

“I will smear my hands, face and entire body with *Kali* (meaning also *ink*) ; and I will throw it on the face of Death when he will come to mind me.

“But though I say I will eat thee, I shall not put thee in my stomach ;—I will instal thee on the lotus of my heart and offer thee mental worship. . . . ”



Catholic revival. But they can no longer have a smooth passage. The Evangelicals or the Low Church Party are in revolt against these Anglo-Catholics. They want disciplinary action.

Of course under the circumstances, the Church could not take stringent measures. It could only try for a compromise and see that there may not be further Catholic developments. The revised Prayer Book, in the words of the Bishop of Gloucester, is "not to give a basis of wide comprehensiveness between the Evangelical and Catholic tradition of the Church of England, but to define the limit of that comprehensiveness." We have mentioned that the main cause of difference between the two parties lies in the Anglo-Catholic reservation of the sacrament and affirmation of the real presence with all the ritual that it involves. The revised Prayer Book has sought to restrict both these. The old Book has been left intact ; but various new rubrics state clearly what may or may not be done. The reservation of the sacrament is allowed "only for the communion of the sick" and "to be used for no other purpose whatever." The practice of fasting before communion is pronounced as "an ancient and laudable custom," but this problem is left "to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

These limitations have displeased the Anglo-Catholics, and the revised Prayer Book has received little support from them. Nor has the revised Book satisfied the Evangelicals, because it countenances practices and doctrines which they think are against the Scripture and the spirit of the Reformed Church. Thus has it been rejected twice by the House of Commons and there is no likelihood that it will be presented to it a third time in an amended form. What will result from this? Probably anarchy. Some would use the Book of 1662, some the Book passed by the Church Assembly in 1927 or 1928, many would follow whatever doctrines and practices they like without obeying any authority, and quite probably, Anglo-Catholicism will grow apace. The Prayer Book controversy has revealed that Protestant orthodoxy is quite strong in England, and that religious liberalism is not quite so abundant there as is generally thought. Of course they are not breaking each other's head. But the mental narrowness remains ; resentment is growing, and we are almost reminded of the intellectual atmosphere of the Reformation days.

This fighting on inessentials may appear a bit ludicrous. But we must not forget that the present Church controversy is not wholly a religious one. There is also a political element.



The Anglo-Catholics, as we have remarked before, want the Church of England to fall in a line with the older Catholic tradition. They are even prepared to acknowledge the Pope as the Chief Bishop of the Catholic Church which, according to them, should include the Church of England and allow it internal liberty ; but of course they are not ready to recognise the Pope's claim to infallibility. Now this is a serious proposition to liberty-loving England. The Pope is not merely the spiritual instructor. He is the master of the salvation of all Roman Catholics. He can send one to heaven or hell at his sweet will ; and as history shows, he has not been always scrupulous in the exercise of his will. Besides, Roman Catholicism is full of rigidity and dogmatism. In fact Papacy and Roman Catholicism seems as a nightmare to a free and rational mind. We do admit there are many beautiful things in Roman Catholicism. It is more deeply spiritual than Protestantism. It believes in mystic realisation, in chastity, austerity, in sadhana, without which spiritual life is a mockery. Protestantism, in trying to be rational and liberal and allow greater freedom to its votaries, has deprived itself of some of the fundamentals of spiritual life. Spiritual realisation is not a matter of rationalism and liberalism only. There must be the emphasis on the qualifications for mystic realisation, which is unfortunately lacking in Protestantism. A combination of the two aspects is essentially necessary for religion to be effective and true. Now, the Anglo-Catholic movement is exciting in the English mind the fear of Papal and Roman Catholic tyranny. It is afraid that if Anglo-Catholicism is allowed to grow in influence, it may eventually re-establish the authority of the Pope over the Church of England and necessarily on the politics of England,—a prospect which no Englishman can view with equanimity ; and in this all reasonable persons will sympathise with him.

Nevertheless Anglo-Catholicism is making a profound appeal to a large section of the English people. We have mentioned that it has 600 churches all over England. Referring to them, the Bishop of Southwark acknowledges that "among them are to be found some of the most living churches in the land. . . . We should be careful that no act of ours drives these earnest Christians out of the Anglican communion." The success of these churches is generally acknowledged by all observers of English religious life. The condition of the Anglican churches, on the other hand, is manifestly deplorable. "Other churches," says a distinguished English writer, "in which there is less ritual and no mysticism are empty and dead." "Many Anglican



clergymen," he further observes, "liberal in view, undogmatic, Protestant only in protesting against intolerance and authority, try to keep their congregations together by whist drives, boys' clubs, social entertainments and vague idealism in human brotherhood."

What is this difference due to? What are the causes of this religious crisis in England? The enquiry leads us to the central weaknesses of Christianity. Christianity is in a dilemma and the Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals crudely represent two sides of it. It is a war between mysticism and science and the salvation of Christianity lies in reconciling them, and not in electing one in exclusion of the other.

Science has bred a new spirit and a new outlook in the Western men and women. Its methods are rational and experimental, and its basis correctly gathered data, experience. There is no place of faith or authority in it. How true and beneficial the scientific outlook is, is evidenced by the tremendous hold it has on the human mind to-day. None can gainsay its power and claim. Before the advancement of science, all dogmas are flying in alarm. The modern mind with its scientific training in all other branches of knowledge, cannot put up with dogmatism and unproved articles of faith in religion alone. Religion also must be scientific. Unfortunately Christian beliefs are scarcely in accord with the findings of science. Christianity lacks a scientific cosmology. It does not explain the mysteries of life. It does not visualise man in his true place in the scheme of the universe. It does not explain the mysteries of spiritual life in a scientific spirit. Its spiritual and cultural outlook is narrow. It does not recognise the universality of truth and its variegated expression. All these deficiencies naturally make it unfit for the enlightened men and women of the present age, with their rational outlook and scientific training. Let us take the case of creation. We know the Christian theory of creation has no similarity to the conclusions of science. Christians must believe either in their Bible or in the scientific theories. They cannot be faithful to both. As a matter of fact, in spite of Fundamentalism and all that, no rational individual can defy science. Yet the rejection of the Biblical theory of creation cuts at the very root of Christianity which has for one of its foundations the belief in the fall of man and the incarnation of Christ for his salvation. The rejection of this belief means a tremendous revolution in the Christian doctrines. Alas, the rapid progress of knowledge has made this revolution inevitable. For the past twenty years, specially since the war, the English



clergy have been gradually rationalising their teaching to bring it in a line with science and modern criticism. The clergy themselves have found it hard to subscribe to most of their official doctrines. The case of Bishop Barnes, F.R.S., the bold upholder of Darwinism in the English Church, is well-known. This gradual development has naturally led Christians to an attitude of agnosticism and indifference towards the religion of Christ. The Anglican churches have thus dug their own grave.

But we must not forget that though it is quite good and necessary to be scientific in one's outlook and attitude, science has unfortunately investigated as yet very little of the universe of reality, with the *whole* of which man is concerned. Science has touched just the fringe of the human mind. The infinite spiritual world remains yet uninvestigated. But man cannot wait for the tardy process of science. The heart yearns for the Divine. There is no peace in the external world merely. In spite of all the progress of science, how little man knows, how little he has! The hunger of the heart must be appeased. The visible and the rational are not enough for it. It cries for the unknown, and the unknown and the eternal it must have, be it through science or in spite of it. This is the position of a large section of Christians. To them the authoritative declarations of the Catholic Church, its mysticism and ritual naturally appeal. These promise to satisfy their hunger. Not that the Catholic beliefs are found scientific and rational. Their main charm is their mysticism and definiteness. Protestantism has no fixed authority, it is changing and uncertain. It is too clear and open and it falls too short of the heart's expectations. Besides, science itself is pointing towards a vast mysterious world behind the visible and explainable world. This has added to the apparent charm of Roman Catholic doctrines and practices. Scientific or unscientific, these are anyhow satisfying many discontent souls.

Unfortunately, Anglo-Catholicism, in our opinion, is partly a reactionary movement. There can be no peace for man in the present age, unless he rationalises his faith. No blind submission to and observance of any doctrine or practice, however mysterious or mystical, can be permanently successful. Doubts will assail, questions will raise themselves; and there will be insistent demand for systematising the whole of life and the universe of knowledge. The natural and the supernatural both must be looked upon as parts of a unitary scheme. That is to say, religion also must be made scientific if we are to escape



from eventual scepticism. Has Anglo-Catholicism been made so? Has it found scientific explanations for its faiths and practices? So far as we are aware, it has not. It must face facts boldly, without bias, without fear. Then only will its mysticism be well established and beyond doubt and question.

But when it has done so, certain changes are bound to come about. Whenever we estimate any fact or phenomenon scientifically, it loses its uniqueness. The only unique substance is God, all others are subject to systematisation. That means that there being other religions, Christianity must become only *one* of many creeds ; its beliefs would not appear as infallible ; and there would be no reason for fixity of forms and dogmas. It will come to know that the same spiritual results can be reached through diverse means, and it need not insist on a certain fixed set of rules. It will recognise the same principle as is being recognised in other departments of life, that each individual is differently constituted and has different needs, different ways of action and a different outlook ; and that therefore there need not be and cannot be a uniform religion for all. It will also find out the true place of a Christ in the scheme of man's spiritual life. That most ignorant doctrine that Christ is the only saviour will fall to the ground. It will discover that there are also other saviours who can be as helpful to some as Christ will be to others. It will not insist on what it calls 'revelation,' the true significance of which it at present little understands, and will not continue with the impossible struggle of reconciling the Bible with the discoveries of science ; for it will feel that the authority of a Book is not so urgent in religion as it considers now. These and other similar changes are bound to come on Christianity. Of course it may be asked if Christianity should then be called Christianity. That is a question which it is best to leave to time to answer.

But if Christianity should continue, in whatever altered form, it must face this crucial problem unflinchingly. On this its very existence depends. Protestantism is losing ground, because its rationalism and liberalism have stopped short of the full task. It must penetrate deeper and must rationalise the supernatural also. For man is essentially a spiritual being. A creed that is engrossed in empty talk is no good and will be cast aside by man. Mystical creeds also must equally rationalise their mysticism. For though no doubt practices so long as they are sincerely done will have some spiritual effect on the votaries, they must in the long run lose their attraction and influence



unless they are scientifically conceived. For it is also true that man is a mental being, and mind ever seeks unity of knowledge.

There is no doubt that what we have said above has occurred to the enlightened minds of the West. They are also no doubt seeking for the light, and God is everywhere and no sincere effort will ever go in vain. But we would warn in this connection a section of missionary enthusiasts who lay the flattering unction to their soul that one day the whole world will come to the feet of Christ. We find such Christian missionaries in abundance in India. Of late some of them have raised the hope that although *Christianity* has failed here, *Christ* may yet succeed. We hear of comparisons and contrasts and eventual triumph of the Man of Sorrows among the world's saints and prophets. Foolish dream! They forget that it is not the ideal that always triumphs in the spiritual life of man. Christ may be the greatest of Incarnations (of which of course there are great doubts). But even the greatest Incarnation can be of little help if the *power* that he heralded into the world in his life-time has worked itself out. This fact is scarcely considered by Christian missionaries. "The coins of the Mughal times are no longer current in the Company's rule," said Sri Ramakrishna in explaining that each Incarnation has his own age during which he is particularly potent. Hindus believe that one Incarnation cannot be enough for all ages. First of all, of course, there is the psychological difficulty. The ideas and outlooks represented by an Incarnation in a particular age do not hold good in a subsequent distant age. But there is the more essential fact that it is not merely the perfection of doctrines or personality that constitutes the substance of an Avatara, but his *power*, the power that he manifests into the world. That power acts for some centuries with vigour and then loses in spiritual potency. Then, however much we may iterate his message and hold up his personality before people, they will not be sufficiently effective. The Hindus therefore expect a new Avatara in each age, not so much for a new message or personality as for a new influx of Divine power into the world. Christ therefore has no such chance in the world as the missionaries fondly dream of. Hinduism is not losing its spiritual potency, because it is being blessed by Divine Incarnations from age to age, and is therefore knowing no want of Divine power. It must not be forgotten in this connection that the efficacy of a religion does not truly lie in curing physical ailments, imparting secular knowledge, or teaching sanitation or industry. These are excellent things in themselves. But we must not

confuse them with religion. The true purpose of religion is to make men *realise* themselves as pure spirit, Divine, beyond body and mind, *see* God face to face. And that potency of religion is possible only through the influx of Divine power through God-men. If Christianity is to triumph in the world, let it give birth to such God-men. One of the principal functions of Hinduism, we may note, is to produce these Divine personalities, that is to say, to prepare favourable conditions for their birth and growth.

We have so far spoken of *what* Christianity should do in its present crisis ; we have not said anything of *how* that is to be done. But need we do so at all? Is not the whole of Hinduism a luminous answer to this crying question?

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## A LETTER OF ROMAIN ROLLAND

[Translated from the original French]

[The following letter was written by M. Rolland to Swami Shivananda, President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission.—*Ed.*]

12th September, 1927.

DEAR AND RESPECTED SWAMI SHIVANANDA,

Allow a Frenchman who profoundly admires Sri Ramakrishna, to address himself to you who had the good fortune to be his personal disciple.

A year ago, my sister, Madeline Rolland, and myself read the *Life of Sri Ramakrishna* and other publications which have been dedicated to him by the Advaita Ashrama. I want to make known in the West that divine source of love and light. Nothing is more necessary to the humanity of our time than this revelation of the harmonious unity of all religious faiths, than this communion with God, manifold in form and yet Himself without form, who is the Being of all living beings.

But it is an extremely delicate task to translate (that is to say, to transpose) into a Western book a personality so fundamentally Indian as that of Sri Ramakrishna. For, some of his religious experiences would be incomprehensible to almost the entire European public, and will even run the risk of concealing the most essential qualities of his life and thought, which could be of powerful assistance to it. That is why I am proceeding



slowly ; I am waiting until there appears in myself a living and true harmony of the work which I wish to write.

It is very precious to me to be able to communicate directly with you who saw with your own eyes this extraordinary man. Our epoch, too intellectualistic as it is, has a tendency to doubt the human existence of all the superhuman personalities of history. Even when it pretends to respect the lofty ideals, of which they were the torches, it sees in them only symbols created by the spirit of a race and of an age ; one sees to-day those who deny that Jesus or Buddha had ever existed. It will not be slow in doing the same for Sri Ramakrishna, if his living witnesses do not leave in writing the proof of his life amongst them on the earth. I should like to make known to the European public your direct testimony.

I wish also to ask you some enlightenment on an important question : the problem of suffering with Ramakrishna. I have read lately an excellent article in *Prabuddha Bharata* on the question of "service" with Vivekananda and Ramakrishna, in which it was maintained that the great disciple had only drawn out the consequences of his Master's teachings,—of his "adoration of the Divine in men," and that there was no disagreement between them. But it appears to me that the more essential feature of the personality of Vivekananda was the mournful and heroic obsession of universal suffering and of evil to fight against or to console. Is it not the same central idea, quite different from the universal Divine Vision, which filled Ramakrishna with ecstasy of joy and with great faith in the Eternal? What was his attitude with regard to the cruel injustices of Nature and of society, of unfortunate people, and of those who are oppressed or persecuted? Was he content simply to love them? Did he not seek to help them? And has he not precisely destined his great disciple Vivekananda to that work?

Believe me, dear Swami Shivananda,

Yours affectionately,  
ROMAIN ROLLAND.

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## BUDDHISM

BY PROF. S. RADHAKRISHNAN, M.A.

*George V Professor of Philosophy, Calcutta University*

Buddha, the founder of the religion, is one of the noblest figures in the history of the world. A mass of legends has

naturally grown round his person and there are some who even maintain that his whole life from birth to death was a legend. But it may be accepted that Buddha was a prince born to luxury who in the prime of life withdrew into solitude and sought truth through meditation.

It was an age of intellectual ferment. A congeries of conflicting theories and guesses accepted by some and denied by others, changing with men, reflecting the individual whims and wishes filled the air (see *Brahmajala sutta*). Struck by the clashing enthusiasm, and the discordant systems, Buddha inferred the futility of metaphysical speculation. In the world of morals, ceremonial observances displaced moral obligations. In the sphere of religion, primitive superstitions lifted up their heads and were being exploited by the interested. Buddha declared that each man could gain salvation for himself without the mediation of priests or reference to gods. Salvation did not depend on the acceptance of doubtful dogmas or doing deeds of darkness to appease angry deities, but on the perfection of character and devotion to the good. An aversion to metaphysical speculation, an absence of theological tendency and an ethical earnestness mark Buddha's teaching.

**METAPHYSICS :** The four truths which Buddha announced are that there is suffering, that it has a cause, that it can be suppressed and that there is a way to accomplish. There is suffering because all things are transient. All being is in a state of perpetual becoming. Life is a series of becomings and extinctions. Whatever be the duration of any state of being, as brief as a flash of lightning or as long as a millennium, yet all is becoming. While Buddha distinguishes the momentary (*ksanika*) character of mental processes from the impermanent (*anitya*) character of non-mental reality, later Buddhists regard all existence as momentary. Each single phenomenon is but a link in the chain, a transitory phase of evolution and the several chains constitute the one whole (*dharmadhatu*). Substances and souls are reduced to sequences and processes.

If we think of things rather than processes, we are dealing with unrealities. We build a seemingly stable universe through logical relations of substance and attribute, whole and part, cause and effect. These relations are true of our logical world and not of the real. We are naturally led to imagine a permanent core for things though it is an abstraction of thinking. We say it rains while there is no 'it' at all. There is nothing but movement, no doer but deed. We mistake continuity of



becoming for identity of agents. A child, a boy, a youth, a man and an old man are one. The seed and the tree are one. Continuous succession gives the appearance of an unbroken identity, even as a glowing stick whirled round gives the appearance of a complete circle. A useful convention makes us give names to the individual series. The identity of name persuades us to the thought of the identity of the inner reality.

The continuity of the world in the absence of a permanent substratum is explained by means of the principle of universal causation. A thing is only a dharma, a cause or a condition. "That being present, this becomes ; from the arising of that this arises ; that being absent this does not become ; from the cessation of that this ceases" (Majjhima N. II. 32). It is the doctrine of *pratityasamutpada* or dependent origination. There is no being which changes ; there is only a self-changing. The world series is not a series of extinctions and fresh creations. One state transmits its *paccayasatti* (causal energy) to the next. There is a cohesion of the past with the present which is broken up into a succession of before and after in an external treatment of nature.

The world of life and motion obeys a certain order (*niyama*). It is the presence of law in the world process which offers hope to man in distress. Regarding the nature of the world process, different views prevail. The chief tendency, however, is to look upon it as impermanent though not non-existent. There are suggestions of a purely subjectivist nature. "By the undoing of consciousness wholly remainderless all is melted away." The world is a product of ignorance and does not exist for the enlightened soul. Individual forms of the world are sometimes said to be the manifestations of certain unconditioned reals. Composite substances disappear when true knowledge arises leaving behind the primary elements. Buddha was not interested so much in analysing the nature of the world of becoming as in helping us to get out of it. "It is not the time to discuss about fire for those who are actually in burning fire, but it is the time to escape from it."

The individual self is a compound where the component parts, mental (name) and material (*rupa*), are ever changing. Feeling (*vedana*), perception (*samjna*), disposition (*samskara*), and intelligence (*vijnana*) are the mental factors. Feeling refers to the affectional side, perception and intelligence to the cognitive and disposition to the volitional aspects of mental life. Intelligence sometimes functions as the self. We have no evidence of a permanent self. "When one says 'I' what he

does is that he refers either to all the factors combined or any one of them and deludes himself that that was 'I' " (Samyutta N. III. 130). While Buddha contents himself with a statement about the constituents of the empirical self without explicitly rejecting the existence of a permanent self, Nagasena dismisses the permanent self as an illegitimate abstraction and reduces the self of man to a unified complex exhibiting an unbroken historical continuity. As body is a name for a system of qualities, so soul is a name for the sum total of our mental states.

The conception of the soul retains enough meaning to make rebirth significant. The individual is not a haphazard succession of unconnected phenomena but is a living continuity. The reborn man is not the dead man ; but he is not different from him. There is neither absolute identity nor absolute difference. There is persistent continuity as well as unceasing change. Each experience as it rises and passes leads up to, becomes or ends in another experience, moment or phase of life which sums up the whole past.

ETHICS AND RELIGION: Salvation which consists in the unmaking of ourselves is the goal of life. All forms of conduct which lead to it are regarded as good. The eightfold path—right belief, right aspirations, right speech, right conduct, right mode of livelihood, right effort, right-mindedness and right rapture—represents the morality of Buddhism. It is the middle way between the extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification. It is intended to transform the whole way of man—intellectual, emotional and volitional.

The institution of caste was in a confused state in the time of Buddha. He undermined the caste spirit by basing brahminhood on conduct rather than on birth. He was not however a social reformer. His main interest was religion. Though professedly open to all, his religion was practically limited to the higher castes. He did not interfere with the domestic ritual which continued to be performed according to the Vedic rites. Buddha's mission was not so much to unveil the secrets of blessedness as to win men to its realisation. Nirvana literally means 'blowing out' or 'cooling'. It is the dying out of hot passion, the destruction of the fires of lust, hatred and ignorance. It is not to be confused with the night of nothingness. It is timeless existence full of "confidence, peace, calm, bliss, happiness, delicacy, purity, freshness" (Milinda, 11.2.9). Yamaka's view of nirvana as annihilation



is repudiated as a heresy (Samyutta N. III. 109 ff). Since its nature is beyond the horizon of human thought, negative terms are used to describe.

We need not regard Buddhism as an entirely fresh start with no roots in the past. It is a later phase of the general movement of thought of which the Upanisads are the earlier. The questions about ultimate reality, the nature of freedom and the permanent character of the self are not answered by Buddha. They are reserved issues on which he does not allow any speculation. He declines to answer Malunkya's questions on the ground that they do not help us in practical life (See also Dialogue of Vaccha). His silence on metaphysical issues is variously interpreted. Some of his early followers and modern interpreters take it negatively. They argue that Buddha did not believe in any permanent reality either cosmic or physical. Nirvana on this view is nothingness. Buddha did not expound the negative view for fear that he might startle his followers. This view makes Buddha's philosophy incoherent and his character suspicious. There are positive statements made by Buddha which are inconsistent with this negative rationalism. Such a barren creed could not have appealed to theistically minded people of Buddha's time. Others hold that his silence was a cloak for his ignorance. He did not know the truth of things. This theory is implausible in view of Buddha's feeling that he was in possession of the truth and could lead men on to it. It is difficult to believe that Buddha himself was ignorant and wished his disciples to remain in ignorance. No thinking man could live without some sort of belief about ultimate values. It seems to be more reasonable to hold that Buddha accepted a positive idealism akin to the thought of the Upanisads, though he did not declare it as his opinion since he insisted on each one's realisation of the truth for oneself. He ignored metaphysical questions, as metaphysical wrangling distracts men from the main business of moral life. It has little to do with the attainment of sanctity which is more spiritual and inward than logical and theoretical. If we do not admit this view it will be difficult to account for the positive descriptions of the state of nirvana and Buddha's consistent refusal to deny the reality of an absolute beyond phenomena. The Benares sermon suggests strongly the reality of an absolute. In view of the obvious limits of the human understanding accepted by the Upanisads and Buddha, the latter refused to give positive accounts of it. But within the limits allowed by logic he describes the ultimate principle as

dharma or righteousness. In the Upanisads, dharma (righteousness) and satya (truth) are identified. Since Buddha's main interest was ethical he emphasised the ethical nature of the absolute. Dharma takes the place of Brahman. (D. N. III. 232. On this question see *Mind*, 1926, pp. 158-174.)

## THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[Personal Reminiscences]

BY HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

CLASSES AND LECTURES AT SAN FRANCISCO

As stated, there were two classes for members in the San Francisco Society every week, a Gita class Monday evening and an Upanishad class Thursday evening. Knowing the value of a knowledge of Sanscrit to the student of Vedanta as a means of reading the Hindu Scriptures in their original tongue and thereby creating an opportunity to immensely advance their spiritual culture, Swami introduced the study of Sanscrit at the close of the Monday evening class.

The method was made as simple as possible, the grammar and construction being taught by means of simple sentences, the sentences gradually increasing in length and complexity, until the subjects covered a wide field. The study was reinforced by a Sanscrit grammar and a standard Sanscrit dictionary, for which Swami had sent on to India. The central theme of study was the Gita, also in Sanscrit, a copy of which was purchased by every student. The class proved to be a great success from the beginning. Swami took advantage of the opportunity to make it a medium of special spiritual instruction and discipline—a diamond mine of spiritual treasure to all whose Karma drew them to that happy hour.

It was at this time that Swami Prakashananda conceived the idea that the day might come when no Swamis would be available, and as a result the work in America might languish, so he suggested to Swami Trigunatita that some of the members of the Society be trained to lecture. Swami approved and a number of students of both sexes were selected according to their qualifications and given the necessary instructions. As soon as they were ready, the Sunday afternoon lecture was given over to them for a beginning.



Swami gave the following instructions to the students for the preparation of a lecture :

HOW TO PREPARE ONE'S OWN LESSON OR LECTURE FOR THE HINDU TEMPLE, ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF APPLICATION OF VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY IN PRACTICAL LIFE. THAT IS, HOW TO MAKE EVEN AN EVIL GOOD BY APPLICATION OF VEDANTA IN DAILY LIFE.

1. The lesson or the lecture is to be taken sincerely and faithfully as a spiritual service and religious practice for one's own spiritual advancement.

2. This service consists of the following points :

(a) Sit in a sincere and prayerful mood.  
 (b) Make the mind blank. Drive off all the desires and thoughts of the secular side of the work, *i.e.*—success or failure, praise or criticism, etc. Try hard to analyze your mind and search if there be any such desire hidden in any corner of your mind.

It is natural that there will be some desire, without doubt. Being sincere, one must be very faithful on this point of analyzing one's mind and detecting the thieves.

(c) Meditate on God.  
 (d) Meditate on the subject of the lesson or the lecture.  
 (e) Then meditate on God and the subject for a few times—a minute or two for each. Then intensely think or meditate on the lesson or the subject of the lecture for a few minutes.

(f) Then offer the lesson or lecture as a sacred sacrifice to God very sincerely, with a view to having it sanctified by the grace of God, and ask God to save and cleanse from all self-seeking.

(g) Meditate that the grace of God is being conferred on the subject of the lesson or lecture.

(h) See that it is being sanctified by His Divine touch. Smear the subject with His grace so that it is fully His—then take it from Him as an object of His grace.

(i) Bow down in the spirit of thankfulness to God for a few minutes and ask for His blessing.

3. This is the service part of the internal ceremony. Then comes the next step—how to prepare the lesson.

4. In the beginning never allow any such thought to enter your mind as consulting a dictionary or books of reference.

5. NOW—for a full half hour meditate on the subject, then again fully offer the subject to God and try to unite it with God. Then, whatever you will get through the inspiration derived from that meditation put down on a piece of paper. This is the beginning of the practice of self-culture in the methods of this kind of platform work.

6. Whenever you do not get any satisfactory point in the preparation of the lesson or lecture, please do not neglect to right away sit and meditate on God instead of resorting to books of reference which are quite secular, after which you will follow the rules of preparation already given.

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7. Finally—when you come on the platform to speak, remember that you are talking to God, God is the only audience.

A number of the students developed into good speakers, and some of these same students with others carried on the lectures during the nine months that Swami Prakashananda visited India in 1923-24.

Swami Trigunatita firmly believed that America was destined to be a great spiritual land, second only to India and this suggestion for the perpetuation of the work was in thorough accord with his broad ideas for the spiritual development of America. Swami also firmly believed in the doctrine laid down by Swami Vivekananda and his great Master, that the mission of the East was to spiritualize the West—that spiritual light had always come from the East in the past and would continue to do so in the future. This belief influenced many of his plans for the work. He felt that if the two races, the Hindu and the American, could be brought together, it would result in a better understanding. To this end he advocated intermarriage between the better classes as a step upward, knowing that the civilization of the West could, on its side, offer much that India needed. This was one of the reasons the Temple was called the Hindu Temple.

Swami saw that the religion of the West was largely social in its character, that the desire for material gain and the appeal of sense enjoyments permeated to its very foundations. It was with this thought in mind, that he inaugurated the Hindu custom of the separation of the sexes in public worship—women on one side of the auditorium and men on the other. This innovation fell like a bombshell on those who were accustomed and attached to the Western practice of the sexes sitting



together, but, as in everything else, time proved the great adjuster and the innovation became an accepted custom.

Swami never despaired of fulfilment, for he left everything to the Mother's will. Full of inexhaustible patience he could wait forever. He said: "When you crave blessings, or whatever you ask from the Divine Mother, or whatever you need in life, be prepared and willing to wait, for years if necessary. Learn how to wait. Let Her will be done, even if you wait forever. Rest assured that Mother knows what is best for Her children." "Never expect anything, not even from me, and you will never be disappointed." He was full of helpfulness and encouragement to the sincere student who found meditation difficult. "Keep on having patience—never be impatient with the mind. When it wanders bring it back patiently, again and again if need be, but always patiently."

While his constant teaching to all was to begin where they were, he never lowered the ideal or minimized the effort necessary to reach the goal. To the saying, "Begin where you are" he added "That mind which is attached to more than one thing can never reach the goal." And "Learn to see God in everything about you. Smear God over everything and your mind will think of Him alone."

#### NON-SECTARIANISM

As a spiritual son of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Trigunatita's utter catholicity of spirit would not tolerate the least suggestion of sectarianism. Like his great Master he believed that every path led to the Absolute, his only stipulation was sincerity. His generous heart could not brook the thought that any obstacle should be placed in the way of anyone seeking the truth, no matter what might be their intellectual capacity or their station in life.

To this end he preached no creed but proclaimed the truth alone, according to Vedanta, holding out hope to every sincere heart irrespective of its faith or creed. He quoted freely from the different scriptures of the world but never presented the claims of one Incarnation of God over another. In fact, speaking in a Christian country, the name of Jesus Christ was perhaps heard the most frequently but never in contradistinction to any other.

It was consequently a natural sequence that the name of Hindu Temple came to signify in the West the very essence of

religious liberty of thought and its audiences were gathered from many sects and creeds.

#### HIS MESSAGE

As a writer and speaker Swami went directly to the heart of his subject, and, though disregarding the studied art of literary expression, his style was vigorous and thoroughly personal.

He gave his first public lecture on February 1st, 1903, at Union Square Hall, San Francisco, beginning his discourse with the memorable words—"Children of the land of liberty. You are lovers of liberty, ardent lovers of true liberty ; but you must understand first what real liberty means. The exact, true liberty lies in the highest thoughts."

Again, in April, 1909, in the introduction to the first number of the "Voice of Freedom" magazine, he wrote: "Let the innermost chord of our heart be touched. Let it vibrate in such harmony that we all, in one voice, can sing that song—that universal song of Freedom. Let us talk through the Voice of Freedom ; let us think through the Light of Freedom ; let us act through the Might of Freedom."

He taught that Self-realization is the highest mission of life. "Within our Maya, within our own nature," he said, "is hidden the Divine Spirit. If we analyze and reason, if we think very regularly and deeply for a while, then we will notice something within us in the way of real truth, and, by and by, we will come to realize our proper state, our Godhood."

Swami always insisted on unremitting effort in the development of character and on the need of having a definite ideal and goal. In his own words: "The purpose of life, therefore, is to manifest ourselves, to express ourselves more and more. First, our life was something before consciousness ; then by effort we have grown so far as to be conscious ; and afterwards, we shall come to the superconscious state. And that is the purpose of our life—to progress from one state to another. In order to attain to that immortal life, we must be spiritual, we must be religious, and we must be thoughtful."

#### ILLNESSES

The second year after Swami's arrival in San Francisco his health suffered from an attack of rheumatism and other physical troubles. The different climate, the new confining life due to his intense devotion to the work, all told upon a constitution weakened by the merciless rigors of early asceticisms on the



path to realization. To one to whom the body had ceased to be the means to an end and was now only kept for the purpose of service to humanity, it was irksome to take proper precautions for its protection, and various ailments secured a foothold, resulting later in serious illnesses.

On a number of such occasions he was nursed back to health by Dhirananda (Mrs. C. F. Petersen). Her devotion was unbounded—no sacrifice could be too great for a son of Ramakrishna. Later because of her spiritual attainments and devotion to the cause she came to be Swami's leading disciple. Swami Turiyananda had given her the name of Dhira meaning "Steadiness" and later, in view of her faithfulness to the truth, Swami Trigunatita added Ananda, meaning "Bliss" making her name Dhirananda.

She received special instruction from Swami and this teaching and instruction is embodied in a series of lessons to follow the close of this narrative of Swami's life. She was a lineal descendant of the great Hungarian patriot Kossuth and possessed all the characteristics of her noble-hearted ancestor. Her natural love for freedom found its truest expression in her unswerving devotion to the truth as taught in Vedanta. Her nature was simple and open and she could not endure untruth of any kind.

She was a capable manager but, while thrifty by nature, she was yet generous to any worthy cause. Her husband, C. F. Petersen, was equally worthy of such a noble wife and was president of the Society under Swami for seven years. They had one son. While she was a devoted mother and loving wife, her love for the cause was still greater and grew with the years. Recognizing the Society as the channel through which the blessings of Sri Ramakrishna were to flow to the people of the West, she gave herself fully and labored unceasingly for its benefit until her sudden end by heart failure on Christmas morning, December 24, 1916, two years after Swami Trigunatita had passed away.

As the years drew on, Swami's ailments increased in number but he never allowed them to interfere with his work. For the last five years of his life he suffered constantly, day and night, from chronic rheumatism and Bright's disease. During cold weather he was compelled to wear two suits of heavy woolen underwear, wool stockings and, over all these, heavy woolen pants and sweater. He set himself on a strict diet, but his suffering was still constant. So complicated were his physical troubles that he used to say: "This body is kept together only

by the force of will, whenever I let go it will just fall to pieces of its own accord.”

Notwithstanding this great handicap of ill-health he arose regularly at 4 A.M. daily and while meeting the demands of all his other duties he never failed to conduct the two Sunday lectures and classes for members. If anything, his activities increased. During all these physical troubles, Swami maintained his principle of sleeping on the floor of his office. The only concession he would make to the entreaties of disciples was to use a light mattress instead of a blanket and sufficient bedding to keep reasonably warm.

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## ISLAM IN INDIA

BY PROF. JADUNATH SARKAR, M.A., C.I.E.

*Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University*

The Muslim conquest of India differed fundamentally from all preceding invasions in one respect. The Muslims came to India as a new element which the older inhabitants could not absorb. The Greek, Scythian, Mongolian and Parthian invaders had, a few generations after their settlement in this land, been completely Hinduized in name, speech, manners, religion, dress and ideas.

In the second century before Christ, a Greek named Heliodoros, the son of Dion, when travelling in India on an embassy, could adore Vishnu and erect a column in honour of that Hindu god. Men considered it quite natural that he should do so and take to himself the title of a Bhagavat or Vaishnav. [Besnagar pillar inscription.]

But Islam is a fiercely monotheistic religion. It cannot allow any compromise with polytheism or admit a plurality of deities. The God of Islam and of Christianity—like the God of Judaism, which was the parent of both these creeds,—is “a living and a jealous God.” He cannot tolerate any companion or sharer in the hearts of His adorers. Hence, the absorption of the Indo-Muslims into the fold of Hinduism by recognising Alla as another of the numberless incarnations of Vishnu and Munammad as an inspired Sadhu, was impossible. Therefore, Hindus and Muhammadans,—as, later on, Hindus and Christians,—had to live in the same land without being able to mix together. Nothing has enabled them to bridge this gulf. The Indian Muslims have, throughout the succeeding centuries,



retained the extra-Indian direction of their hearts. Their faces are still turned, in daily prayer, to a spot in Mecca ; their minds, their law-code, their administrative system, their favourite reading sought models from outside India,—from Arabia and Syria, Persia and Egypt. All Muhammadans have the same sacred language, era, literature, teachers, saints and shrines, throughout the world, instead of these being restricted to India, as is the case with the Hindus.

The Hindus were willing to absorb the Muslims ; they wrote the *Allopanishad* and went perilously near to making an avatar of the Emperor Akbar. But the Muhammadans would not yield on the cardinal points of their faith, nor accept the few conventions necessary for entering Hindu society. They clung to the Quranic precepts : “The polytheists are unclean ; let nothing unclean enter the Kaba.”

This was the cardinal difference between the Muslim settlement in India and all the other foreign immigrations that had gone before it. Another equally important characteristic of the Muslim element in India was that from 1200 to 1600 their State and society retained its original military and nomadic character,—the ruling race living merely like an armed camp in the land. It was Akbar who, at the end of the sixteenth century, began the policy of giving to the people of the country an interest in the State, and making the Government undertake some socialistic functions in addition to the mere police work it had hitherto contented itself with doing. Up to Akbar’s time the Muslim settlers in India had been in the land but not of it.

#### MUSLIM CONTRIBUTION TO INDIA

What were the gifts of the Muslim age to India? They were ten :

(i) Restoration of touch with the outer world, which included the revival of an Indian navy and sea-borne trade, both of which had been lost since the decline of the Cholas.

(ii) Internal peace over a large part of India, especially north of the Vindhya.

(iii) Uniformity secured by the imposition of the same type of administration.

(iv) Uniformity of social manners and dress among the upper classes irrespective of creed.

(v) Indo-Saracen art, in which the mediaeval Hindu and Chinese schools were blended together. Also, a new style of architecture, and the promotion of industries of a refined kind (e.g., shawl, inlaying, kinkhab, muslim carpet, etc.).

(vi) A common *lingua franca*, called Hindustani or Rekhta, and an official prose style (mostly the creation of Hindu munshis writing Persian, and even borrowed by the Maratha *chitnises* for their own vernacular).

(vii) Rise of our vernacular literatures, as the fruits of peace and economic prosperity under the empire of Delhi.

(viii) Monotheistic religious revival and Sufism.

(ix) Historical literature.

(x) Improvements in the art of war and civilisation in general.

The intimate contact between India and the outer Asiatic world which had been established in the early Buddhistic age, was lost when the new Hindu society was reorganised and set in rigidity like a concrete structure about the eighth century A. D., with the result that India again became self-centred and isolated from the moving world beyond her natural barriers.

This touch with the rest of Asia and the nearest parts of Africa was restored by the Muslim conquest at the end of the 12th century, but with a difference. The Hindus no longer went outside, as they had done in the Buddhistic age; only many thousands of foreigners poured into India and some Indian Muslims went abroad every year.

“Through the passes of the Afghan frontier the stream of population and trade flowed peacefully into India from Bukhara and Samarqand, Balkh and Khurasan, Khwarizm and Persia, because Afghanistan belonged to the ruler of Delhi, till near the end of the Mughal empire (1739). Through the Bolan Pass, leading from India to Quandahar and Persia, as many as 14,000 camel-loads of merchandise passed every year in the reign of Jahangir, early in the 17th century. The ports on our western coast were so many doors between India and the outer world that could be reached by sea. From the eastern port of Masulipatam, belonging to the Sultans of Golkonda up to 1687 and thereafter to the Mughals,—ships used to sail for Ceylon, Sumatra, Java, Siam and even China.”\*

“The two hundred years of Mughal rule gave to the whole of northern India and to much of the Deccan also, oneness of official language, administrative system and coinage, and also a popular *lingua franca* for all classes except the Hindu priests and the stationary village-folk. Even outside the territory directly administered by the Mughal emperors, their administra-

\* Mughal Administration, 241.



tive system; official titles, court etiquette and monetary type were borrowed, more or less, by the neighbouring Hindu rajas.

“All the twenty Indian subahs of the Mughal empire were governed by means of exactly the same administrative machinery, with exactly the same procedure and official titles. Persian was the one language used in all official records, etc. . . . Officials and soldiers were frequently transferred from one province to another. Thus, the native of one province felt himself almost at home in another province ; traders and travellers passed most easily from city to city, *subah* to *subah*, and all realised the imperial oneness of this vast country.”†

#### MUSLIM INFLUENCE ON FINE ARTS

In the domain of the fine arts, the richest contributions of the Mahomedans are a new style of architecture (especially palaces and tombs), the Indo-Saracen school of painting, and artificial gardening.

“In the earliest Muslim paintings to reach India, namely those from Khurasan and Bukhara, we see complete Chinese influence, especially in representing the faces, rocks, sheets of water, fire and dragons. . . . In the court of our truly national King Akbar, this Chinese or extra-Indian Muslim art mingled with pure Hindu art—whose traditions had been handed down unchanged since the days of the Ajanta frescoes and the Bharhut and Ellora reliefs. Thus Muslim art in India underwent its first transformation. The rigidity of the Chinese outline was softened. The conventionality of Chinese art was discarded. We note a new method of representing rocks, water and fire, which is no doubt suggestive of the Chinese school, but it is clearly the Chinese school in a process of dissolution and making a nearer approach to Nature. The scenery and features are distinctly Indian. . . . This process of the Indianisation of Saracen art continued after Akbar’s time, till at last in the reign of Shah Jahan, the Chinese influence entirely disappeared, the Indian style became predominant, and the highest development was reached in delicacy of features and colouring, minuteness of detail, wealth and variety of ornamentation, and approximation to Nature—but without attaining either to true perspective or to light and shade. This Indo-Saracen art was entirely developed in the courts of the Mughal Emperors.”—“Studies in Mughal India,” 289, 291.

Thus, in painting there was a true revival and the highest genius was displayed by Indian artists in the Mughal age. This

† Mughal Administration, 238-239.



style lingers on in our times under the name of "Indian art" or "Mughal painting."

In European history we find that the social revolutions caused by the Barbarian overthrow of the Roman Empire continued through the Dark Ages till the 13th century, when the former provinces of the Roman Empire reappeared as independent national kingdoms, and in each of them a vernacular literature sprang up, which took the place of the old common cultural language Latin. Chaucer (c. 1360), Dante (c. 1300) and the Troubadours are the morning stars of song in the respective languages of England, Italy and France. In India, too, the old Sanskrit literature ceased to be a living growth after 1200 A.D. Though Sanskrit works continued to be written long after that date and have been written even in our own times, these were entirely artificial works,—mere commentaries, or commentaries on commentaries, conventional treatises or *tours de force*, and not original productions deserving the name of literature. They fail to appeal to our hearts or to add to our stock of knowledge, so that, it may be truly said that what is popularly called the Pathan period, i.e., from 1200 to 1550, was the Dark Age of North Indian history and the Hindu intellect was barren during these three centuries and a half. But, by the time that Akbar had conquered his enemies and established a broad empire covering all North India, peace and good administration began to produce their natural fruits. With the feeling of security, wealth grew, and wealth brought leisure and a passion for the things of the mind. There was a sudden growth of vernacular literature in all our provinces. In Bengal a new impulse was given to the creative instinct by the followers of Chaitanya (1485-1533), who wrote the first great works—as distinct from folk-songs—in modern Bengali. Such were the saint's biographies, the "Chaitanya Bhagavat" (1535) the "Chaitanya-charit-amrita" (completed 1582) and many others.

In the Hindi-speaking world the greatest master was Tulsi-das, who began his immortal and perennially inspiring "Rama-charit-manasa" in 1574. He had been preceded by a Muslim poet, Malik Mahomed Jaisi, whose allegorical romance, the "Padumavat," had been completed in 1540 and "Murigavat" in 1502. There was quite a crop of Hindi poems produced in this age such as the *Akharavat*, *Sapanavat*, *Kandaravat*, *Madhu Malati*, *Usman's Chitravati* (1613):\*

\* I do not refer to eighteenth century or very late 17th century vernacular poetical romances like the Bengali works of Al Awal of Chittagong, or Nur Mahomed's Hindi poem "Indravati" (1742).



I do not here refer to the Hindi religious poems of an earlier age, like those of Kabir (d. 1518) Dadu and Nanak (1469-1538) because they were not literature proper, but more in the nature of aphorisms intended to be committed to the memory and transmitted orally.

Nor do I refer to the Persian literature (other than history) produced in India under the patronage of Akbar and his successors, because it was an exotic. Many of the Persian poets of the Delhi Court down to the middle of the 17th century were emigrants from Persia. Such were Mahomed Jan Qudsi, Taliba Amuli and others. Their productions have no life, no value as literature.

Urdu came into being in the 16th century, but only as a vulgar spoken tongue, despised by authors and cultured society. It became a literary language in the north only in the late 18th century, Wali of Aurangabad (c. 1710) having been its first recognised poet of note. But the southern Urdu or *Rekhta* had produced good poetry more than a century earlier.

The literary impulse given by the peace and prosperity of Akbar's long and successful reign and the patronage of that emperor and his vassal princes, led to a wonderful flowering of the Indian intellect at the close of the 16th and the first half of the 17th centuries. To this period belongs the curious corrupt Sanskrit history of Bengal entitled "Shaikh-Subhodaya," the Persian writings of Chandra-bhan Brahman, a courtier and a diplomat of Shah Jahan, and the Hindi works noted in the "Mishra-Bandhu-Vinod," I.

#### INFLUENCE OF ISLAM ON HINDUS

Let us now consider the result of the impact of Islam—both creed and society—on the Hindus and the reaction of Islam to its Hindu environment during the many centuries that these two faiths have lived together in the same land. Cunningham, the historian of the Sikhs, as early as the middle of the nineteenth century thus described the moral effect of the Muslim conquest :

"The influence of a new people, who equalled or surpassed Kshatriyas in valour, who despised the sanctity of Brahmans, and who authoritatively proclaimed the unity of God and His abhorrence of images—began gradually to operate on the minds of the multitude of India. . . . New superstition emulated old credulity. Pirs and shahids, saints and martyrs, equalled Krishna and Bhairav in the number of their miracles, and the

Mahomedans almost forgot the unity of God in the multitude of intercessors whose aid they implored.”\*

That was one effect, the growth of popular superstition ; but something higher soon followed. I quote Cunningham again :

“The first result of the conflict [between Hinduism and Islam] was the institution, about the end of the 14th century, of a comprehensive sect by Ramanand of Benares. . . . He seized upon the idea of man’s equality before God. He instituted no nice distinctive observances, he admitted all classes of people as his disciples. About 1450, the mysterious (i.e., mystic) weaver Kabir assailed at once the worship of idols, the authority of the Quran and Shastras, and the exclusive use of a learned language.”

But it is historically incorrect to hold as Hunter and some other European writers have done, that the monotheistic and anti-caste movements among the Hindus in the Middle Ages originated in Islam. We know that all the higher thinkers, all the religious reformers, all the sincere devotees among the Hindus from the earliest times, have proclaimed one and only one supreme God behind the countless deities of popular worship, and have declared the equality of all true adorers and placed a simple sincere faith above elaborate religious ceremonies ; they have all tried to simplify religion and bring it to the doors of the commonest people. Hence, what really happened after the Muslim conquest was that these dissenting or reforming movements among the Hindus received a great impetus from the presence of the Mahomedans in their immediate neighbourhood. The example of Islamic society acted as a solvent on Hindu prejudice

Many sects arose which tried to harmonise Islam and Hinduism and to afford a common meeting-ground to the devout men of both creeds, in which their differences of ritual, dogma and external marks of faith were ignored. This was the avowed aim of Kabir and Dadu, Nanak and Chaitanya. They made converts freely from Hindus and Muslims and rejected the rigid orthodoxy of the Brahman and the Mulla alike.

So, too the Sufi movement afforded a common platform to the more learned and devout minds among the Hindus and Mahomedans. Unlike the above-mentioned popular religions of mediaeval India, Sufism never extended to the illiterate people. It was essentially a faith,—or rather an intellectual-emotional enjoyment—reserved for the philosophers, authors, and mystics

\* History of the Sikhs, 2nd ed., 30-31.



free from bigotry. The eastern variety of Sufism is mainly an off-shoot of the Vedanta of the Hindus, and it rapidly spread and developed in India from the time of Akbar, under whose fostering care Hindu and Muslim thought formed a close union, with help from many Persian emigrants of liberal views. Akbar's mantle as an eclectic and peace-maker in religion fell on his great-grandson Dara Shukoh, who openly declared that he had found the fullest pantheism (*tauhid*) in the Vedanta only and prepared a Persian translation of fifty of the Upanishads and another work bearing the significant title of *Majmua-ul-baharain* or "The Mingling of the Two Oceans," which explains for Persian readers the technical terms of Hindu pantheism, with their parallels in Sufi phraseology, in order to facilitate the study of the subject by members of both creeds.

In short the popular religious sects founded by the saints and the Sufi philosophy tended to bring the ruling race and the subject people closer together.

#### HISTORICAL LITERATURE

Another gift of the Muslims to India is historical literature. The chronological sense was very imperfectly developed among the Hindus, who are apt to despise this world and its ephemeral occurrences. Before the Islamic conquest, they produced no true history at all.

On the other hand, the Arab intellect is dry, methodical and matter of fact. All their records contain a chronological framework. The historical literature of the Mahomedans in all countries has been vast and varied and well furnished with dates. We therein get a solid basis for historical study. The Persian chronicles which were written under every Muslim dynasty in India and in every reign under the Mughals not only serve as materials of study in themselves but furnished an example which Hindu writers and Hindu rulers were not slow to imitate. Thus a new, very useful element was introduced into Indian literature, and in the 17th and 18th centuries it formed a magnificent body—if we take all the histories, biographies and letters into account.

The cultural influence of the centuries of Muslim rule was necessarily wide-spread. Hunting, hawking and many games became Mahomedanised in method and terminology. In other departments also, Persian, Arabic and Turkish words have entered largely into the Hindi, Bengali, and even Marathi languages. The art of war was very highly developed by the Muslims, partly by borrowing from Europe through Turkey and



to a lesser extent through Persia. The imperial Mughal army served as a model which Hindu Rajahs eagerly imitated. The system of fortification was greatly improved by the Mahomedans in India, as a natural consequence of the general advance of civilisation and the introduction of artillery.

The Muslim influence was naturally most felt on the system of administration, the Court ceremonials and dress, the military organisations and arms, the lives of the upper classes, the articles of luxury, fine arts, architecture (other than religious) and gardening. In Court life and even the titles and office procedure of State officials, the Mughal Empire set the fashion which the Hindu Rajahs often slavishly copied. In some Rajput and Malwa Hindu States, the official language even to-day is Urdu and the Persian script is used instead of Deva Nagari.

The basis of the revenue system was indigenous and a continuation of the village organisation that had come down from before recorded history, but the official arrangements, titles and method of record-keeping were due to the Perso-Saracen model imported by the Muslim invaders, and these were borrowed by the Hindu States. [Mughal Administration, 2nd ed., ch. 5 and 11.]

In warfare, gunpowder was introduced and cavalry rose to great prominence eclipsing the elephants of the old Hindu days. The animals now ceased to be an arm and continued as a mere transport agency.

The Muslims, leading generally a more luxurious life than the Hindus and being a predominantly city population (except in East Bengal), encouraged several manufactures and fine arts. They were more tasteful and elegant than the Hindus in their daily life and even in their vices—which the richer Hindus and particularly the official class copied whenever they had the means. By the agency of the Mahomedans, new articles of food and new styles of cookery were introduced. In aesthetics, perfumery and—though not so completely, in music and dancing also, the Muslim royal family guided the taste of the entire society.

Paper was introduced by the Muhammadans, as the Arabic word "Kaghaz" proves. Thus, books could be multiplied in a more attractive and durable form than by scratching on palm leaves. The illumination of manuscripts is an art which we owe to the Mughal Empire, and from Akbar's time onwards Hindi and Sanskrit works were finely copied and illustrated for the sake of Hindu Rajahs, while the Persian book illumination



and calligraphy then done in India enjoyed deserved fame in Europe. . . .

The best medical men of the age were the *yunani hakims* or Muslim physicians practising the Graeco-Arab system of medicine. This was due partly on account of the patronage of the Court and of the nobility, but mainly because the progress of Hindu medicine had been arrested long ago, while Muslim medical science was daily progressing by keeping touch with the west.

The Muhammadans were the only foreign traders of India (if we leave out the European sojourners in the land). This naturally resulted in a greater expansion of their minds in comparison with those of the stay-at-home Hindus. In the Persian language, a travelled man, *mard-i-jiham-dida*, rightly considered as a model of wisdom and culture.\*

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## INDIA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

[The following is the report of a lecture delivered by the Swami at Detroit on Thursday, February 15, 1894, with the editorial comments of *The Detroit Free Press*.—Ed.]

An audience that filled the Unitarian Church heard the renowned Monk, Swami Vivekananda, deliver a lecture last night on the manners and customs of his country. His eloquent and graceful manner pleased his listeners, who followed him from beginning to end with the closest attention, showing approval from time to time by outbursts of applause. While his lecture was more popular in character than the celebrated Address before the religious congress in Chicago, it was highly entertaining, especially where the speaker diverted from the instructive portions and was led to an eloquent narration of certain spiritual conditions of his own people. It is upon matters religious and philosophic (and necessarily spiritual) that the eastern brother is most impressive, and, while outlining the duties that follow the conscientious consideration of the great moral law of nature, his softly modulated tones, a peculiarity of his people, and his thrilling manner are almost prophetic. He speaks with marked deliberation, except when placing before his listeners some moral truth, and then his eloquence is of the highest kind.

\* The fourth in a series of six lectures on "India through the Ages," delivered under the auspices of the Madras University.

It seemed somewhat singular that the eastern monk who is so out-spoken in his disapproval of missionary labour on the part of the Christian church in India, (where, he affirms, the morality is the highest in the world) should have been introduced by Bishop Ninde, who in June will depart for China in the interest of foreign Christian missions. The Bishop expects to remain away until December, but if he should stay longer he will go to India. The Bishop referred to the wonders of India, and the intelligence of the educated classes there, introducing Vivekananda in a happy manner. When that dusky gentleman arose, dressed in his turban and bright gown, with handsome face and bright, intelligent eyes, he presented an impressive figure. He returned thanks to the Bishop for his words and proceeded to explain race divisions in his own country, the manners of the people and the different languages. Principally there are four northern tongues and four southern, but there is one common religion. Four-fifths of the population of 300,000,000 people are Hindoos and the Hindoo is a peculiar person. He does everything in a religious manner. He eats religiously ; he sleeps religiously ; he rises in the morning religiously ; he does good things religiously and he also does bad things religiously. At this point the lecturer struck the great moral keynote of his discourse, stating that with his people it was the belief that all non-self is good and all self is bad. This point was emphasized throughout the evening and might be termed the text of the address. To build a home is selfish, argues the Hindoo ; so he builds it for the worship of God and for the entertainment of guests. To cook food is selfish, so he cooks it for the poor ; he will serve himself last if any hungry stranger applies, and this feeling extends throughout the length and breadth of the land. Any man can ask for food and shelter and any house will be opened to him.

The caste system has nothing to do with religion. A man's occupation is hereditary, a carpenter is born a carpenter ; a goldsmith, a goldsmith ; a workman, a workman ; and a priest, a priest ; but this is a comparatively modern social evil, since it has existed only about 1,000 years. This period of time does not seem so great in India as in this and other countries. Two gifts are especially appreciated—the gift of learning and the gift of life. But the gift of learning takes precedence. One may save a man's life ; and that is excellent ; one may impart to another knowledge, and that is better. To instruct for money is an evil, and to do this would bring opprobrium on the head of the man who barter learning for gold, as though it were



an article of trade. The Government makes gifts from time to time to the instructors, and the moral effect is better than it would be if the conditions were the same as exist in certain alleged civilized countries. The speaker had asked through the length and breadth of the land what was the definition of civilization, and he had asked the question in many countries. Sometimes the reply had been given: "What we are, that is civilization." He begged to differ in the definition of the word. A nation may control the elements, develop the utilitarian problems of life seemingly to the limit and yet not realize that in the individual the highest type of civilization is found, in him who has learned to conquer self. This condition is found in India more than in any country on earth, for there the material conditions are subservient to the spiritual, and the individual looks for the soul manifestations in everything that has life, studying nature to this end. Hence that gentle disposition to endure with indomitable patience the flings of what appears unkind fortune, the while there is a full consciousness of a spiritual strength and knowledge greater than possessed by any other people; hence the existence of a country and a people from which flows an unending stream that attracts the attention of thinkers far and near to approach and throw from their shoulders an oppressive earthly burden. The early kings, who in 260 B. C., commanded that there should be no more bloodshed, no more wars, and who sent forth instead of soldiers an army of instructors, acted wisely, although in material things the land has suffered. But though in bondage to brutal nations who conquer by force, the Indian spiritually endures forever, and nothing can take it away from him. There is something Christlike in the humility of the people to endure the stings and arrows of outraged fortune, the while the soul is advancing towards the brighter goal. Such a country has no need of Christian missionaries to "preach ideas," for theirs is a religion that makes men gentle, sweet, considerate and affectionate towards all God's creatures, whether man or beast. Morally, said the speaker, India is head and shoulders above the United States or any other country on the globe. Missionaries would do well to come there and drink of the pure waters, and see what a beautiful influence upon a great community have the lives of the multitude of holy men.

Then marriage condition was described; and the privileges extended to women in ancient times, when the system of co-education flourished. In the records of the saints in India there is the unique figure of the prophetess. In the Christian creed

they are all prophets, while in India the holy women occupy a conspicuous place in the holy books. The householder has five objects for worship. One of them is learning and teaching. Another is worship of dumb creatures. It is hard for Americans to understand the last worship and it is difficult for Europeans to appreciate the sentiment. Other nations kill animals by wholesale and kill one another ; they exist in a sea of blood. A European said that the reason in India animals were not killed was because it was supposed that they contained the spirits of ancestors. This reason was worthy of a savage nation, who are not many steps from the brute, the fact being that the transmigration of souls theory was evolved by a set of atheists in India and was never a religious doctrine, it was an idea of a materialistic creed. The worship of dumb animals was pictured in a vivid manner. The hospitable spirit—the Indian golden rule was illustrated by a story. A Brahmin, his wife, his son and his son's wife had not tasted food for some time on account of a famine. The head of the house went out and after a search found a small quantity of barley. He brought this home and divided it into four portions, and the small family was about to eat, when a knock was heard at the door. It was a guest. The different portions were set before him and he departed with his hunger satisfied, while the quartette who had entertained him perished. This story is told in India to illustrate what is expected in the sacred name of hospitality.

The speaker concluded in an eloquent manner. Throughout his speech was simple, but whenever he indulged in imagery, it was delightfully poetic, showing that the eastern brother has been a close and attentive observer of the beauties of nature. His excessive spirituality is a quality which makes itself felt with his auditors, for it manifests itself in the love for animate and inanimate things, and in the keen insight into the mysterious workings of the divine law of harmony and kindly intentions.

Tonight, Vivekananda will speak at the Unitarian Church on "Hindoo Philosophy." In this lecture his scholarly attainments will undoubtedly find even broader scope and the opportunity will be given for a more liberal presentation of his religious views.

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# DUTY TO MOTHERLAND

BY SISTER NIVEDITA

The motherland is nothing in the world but a vast university, and every child born within her sphere is one of its students. The ideas and ideals that constitute India have never suffered any rude wholesale interruption. They have grown steadily, always ready to adopt a new light on the old truth, the most extraordinary example in the world of absorption mingled with conservation, acceptance and resistance in one breath.

India is a vast university, and every child born within her owes to her the service of a student. Every life, however simple, helps to build up the inheritance for the future. Infinite as is our debt to the famous names of the past, it is still greater to the shadowy crowds of the Unknown Dead, with whom we ourselves may look to be one day joined. We must remember that in all universities, not only in the Indian university, behind all intellectual cultures, not only behind that of the *dharma*, the driving force is *character*, and the mind of humanity—which for each man is the heart of his own people—is the treasure-house, in which the fruit of our lives should rest.

It is our duty to the nation to make the most of our opportunities of learning. In order to make the most of them we must first cultivate fine character. Fine character is always known by the nobility of its tastes. Its leisure is always well spent, on ends both lofty and refined. Tell me your hobbies, and I will tell you what sort of citizens you will make. Why must a man be poor in order to be admirable? The modern type of university specially sets itself to create activities to which even rich men must devote all their resources if they are to succeed. Great libraries, archæological collections, fine instruments, the culture of to-day offers careers of a thousand kinds in all these directions. But in all these things a man must toil for himself. He cannot employ a servant to do his learning for him. Scholarship was never done by proxy.

The man who has fine tastes can never be vulgar. He is true to his own refinement in every moment of his life. The respect which he has for himself he accords to other people. He seeks noble company, and his manners tell of his own freedom of heart and his reverence for the freedom of others.

We should carry with us into all companies the memory of having been with noble persons. Without this, we are not fit for great associations, for we are ourselves without dignity. And without a constant upspringing of love and reverence to those who are about us, we cannot realise this memory. Only by respect for ourselves, respect for women as women, and respect for old age, can we build up true dignity. Accustomed to our language with its fine gradations of terms, those who speak English are apt to imagine that there are in modern languages no means of expressing delicate degrees of honour. But let the *feeling* of honour be in the mind, and you will find that any language will express it for you. The word *you* becomes fifty different words for the man who is really conscious of what is due to others. Yet in fine manners there is no slavishness. There must be grandeur and freedom of bearing. The man's homage must be to the *ideal* that he recognises, not merely to the *person* who for the moment embodies it. There must be no laziness. The quiet of outward conduct must be expressive of intense activity of mind and heart. Laziness, like cowardice, is an affront to those who call us theirs. For their sake, if not for our own, we must bear ourselves as those entrusted with great parts. But our activity must not be fussiness. Are these distinctions not of the very essence of fine manners?

Above all, our great duty as Hindus is to hold the world always as a net-work of ideals. Behind the new fact we must strive to find the ideal that it illustrates. In our reverence for those about us we must pay our homage to the ideals of our own past. We must remember that the problems of to-day are all the problems of the ideal world. If we can step from ideal to ideal, from the realisation of the known to the struggle for the unknown, then we shall do our whole duty.

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## INDIAN MORALITY

By C. F. ANDREWS

[We extract the following from the writer's reply to Miss Mayo's *Mother India*, now being serially published in Mahatma Gandhi's *Young India*. This witness of one who was foreign-born and a Christian missionary, but has gained a true insight into Indian realities and ideals, should be acceptable as valuable to all fair-minded persons. Mr. Andrews himself observes: "In reply to all such sweeping statements about sexual evils in India, my personal testimony is this. Compared with



other countries, the youth of India is singularly clean and temperate. This testimony, which I give after careful deliberation and exact choice of each word I have put down, must necessarily carry weight, because both in my constant daily work of College education, and also among villagers and industrial labourers as a social worker, I have had abundant opportunities of knowing the main facts at first hand. Later on, I shall quite openly and frankly tell all that is to be told about the adverse conditions of other sides of life in modern India, where things have gone grievously wrong. Some of these are doing great injury to the country. But as a truthful man, who have sought all my life to put Truth above everything else, I unhesitatingly affirm that compared with other countries, the youth of India is clean and in sex matters singularly restrained."—*Ed.*]

A constructive picture is needed in order to show what Indian domestic life really is. . . . People in the West desire to know what actual life in the East is.

The vast bulk of the people of India, numbering ninety per cent of the whole, live in villages and small hamlets, not in great cities. Large towns are singularly rare, and most of them are of modern growth. These villagers, for the most part, are remote from town life. Where no railway is near at hand, this remoteness at times amounts to isolation.

This village society makes up, on every side, the one all-pervading background of India, ancient and modern. To a peculiar degree, it represents "Mother India," not the large towns like Calcutta and Bombay. It has a character and vitality of its own, which needs to be studied with very sensitive and delicate care, if its inner secret is to be discovered. . . .

. . . . since India . . . . is essentially a land of villages, it follows that the moral conditions of India are in the long run practically equivalent to the moral conditions which prevail in the country rather than in the towns. If the village life is rotten, then India must be rotten. But if this village life is still healthy, then the moral life of India must be healthy. My own conviction is, that though there may be many evils to be overcome, and bad customs to be abolished, especially in dealing with the modern towns and the industrial centres, village life of India, as a whole, is a clean life and normally free from the grosser forms of sexual passion.

Where there are, in all, more than seven hundred thousand villages, each with a character of its own, only a lifelong residence in India, on the part of a foreigner, can give him experience sufficient to say with confidence that the main facts are known to him at last. Indian life is so complex, that most of



those who stay longest in the country grow less confident, as time goes on, about the things they believed to be true.

Certain characteristics, however, stand out with some distinction. In no country in the world, for instance, are acts of criminal violence less frequent than in India ; yet passion is widely recognised as a potent cause of violent deeds. . . . Crime itself is singularly rare. Drunkenness hardly exists, except in the toddy-drinking areas of the South. Opium,—the curse of China—is hardly a vice in India outside a few black spots, chiefly in the towns. Animal life is not sacrificed for food over the greater part of the country. A variety of coarse kinds of grain, chiefly rice, forms the staple diet. The poverty is extreme. Only the barest necessities are purchased with money. The whole life is incredibly simple. This is all very far removed from indulgence in vicious practices.

The industry of these patient villagers is proverbial. They have a religious culture of their own, which reaches mystical heights of spiritual vision. There is often also a profundity of thought expressed in simplest language. The poets of India usually come from these village homes.

Great saints, with strikingly impressive personality, both men and women, live in them ascetic lives. Their memory abides. The genius of India, in Art, Music, Literature, Architecture has continually had its origin in these villages. Even among the poorest and the most depressed classes, great men have been born, who have won the allegiance of posterity by their wisdom, piety and devotion. Such men and women are still to be found to-day. In every part of India I have met them, and have felt the truth of the words of Christ : “I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the worldly-wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight.”

For though these simple villagers may be babes in worldly wisdom, they are by no means lacking in shrewd mother-wit. As a whole, they are exceptionally intelligent in their own way ; and from their rugged stock, all that is best in India has proceeded from one generation to another, to the great enrichment of mankind. Their life is spent almost entirely in the air, exposed to heat and cold, sun and rain with only the barest covering of the body. A strict ethical code of domestic relationships has been worked out in a manner consonant with the village life itself. The community is like a larger family. Behind all



there is a religious observance which has placed the greatest emphasis on self-control.

Hindu religious custom is a conservative force, of immense potency, acting on the inner life and going back countless centuries in its origin and conception. It has become a part of the whole system, exacting a restraint scrupulously observed. Owing to its inhibitions with regard to eating, drinking and marriage relations, the villagers are ordered and the sex life has been disciplined. While in some way, such as by early marriages, sex has been given scope, in other ways it has been remarkably subdued.

After making wide generalisations like these, the real difficulty begins. For the differences in Indian village life, as I have witnessed it, are almost as marked as the underlying similarity of its texture.

In some parts, like Orissa, the whole countryside is stricken by constant malaria, flood and famine leaving a population sunk in want. On the other hand, in the Punjab and Gujarat, there is a peasantry, strong, virile, independent, retaining a simple hardihood of living untouched as yet by luxury or slothful ease. In the South of India, in spite of tropical climate and meagre diet, there is an almost inexhaustible store of spiritual energy, often alas, running to waste. In Bengal, the artistic and literary genius, still to be found in the villages, is a marked feature. This has resulted in a wide literary renaissance in modern times. Sindh is a desert land, where mystical religious poetry has flourished age after age, uniting Hindu and Mussalman saints in a common devotion. Everywhere, in the villages, the love of music, the delight in song, and the recital of epics, amounts almost to a passion.

There is one phrase in English literature, which describes a major part of this village life,—Wordsworth's "plain living and high thinking." It may be that the type of thought is very often unscientific. Illiteracy abounds. Nevertheless, my own experience has been, that in every part of India the deeper things of the spirit of man,—the problems of existence,—the final mystery of God,—the inner discipline of the soul,—have a larger place in the thoughts of living men and women to-day than anywhere else in the world. There is also a greater readiness to abandon everything that man holds dear in search of the inner truth, when the voice within the soul commands.

Such things as these, that I have tried to describe, imply a deep restraining influence both of will and custom. The "plain living" that goes with this "high thinking" is so severe,



that very few Europeans have been able to adapt themselves to its extreme simplicity. I have often been put to shame, owing to the small requirements which I have still found necessary, and also on account of the trouble I have given to the villagers merely to satisfy a few small personal needs.

Beyond what I have described, it is necessary always to remember that there are millions of villagers—called the depressed classes, or “untouchables”—who are living on an even lower scale of hard physical discomfort. Indeed, if it were not for the abundant sunshine of India, giving warmth and nourishment from the air directly through the skin, unimpeded except by a loin-cloth round the waist, it is almost doubtful whether it would be possible for a large portion of these depressed and indebted classes, who subsist on the lowest diet, to continue to live at all. Those who know India best will agree that on the physical side, my description has been no exaggeration of the stark naked facts. They will also agree that on the mental and spiritual side, I have by no means overdrawn the picture. Yet facts like these seem to be convincingly to prove that the “sex” theory of Indian poverty is wrong.

The effect in Indian villages of this hard discipline may be observed in the faces of the men and women. There is pain and endurance written across them, in large characters; but they are very rarely sensual.

I have wandered about all over India, very often entirely alone, from village to village, sharing the life of the people as few Englishmen have done, and welcomed everywhere by the villagers as their friend. One thing more than any other has impressed me, wherever I have gone, namely the temperate habits of the people.

This habitual self-restraint may still further be observed from its slight reactions. For it seems to give way suddenly each year, for a day or two, as for instance at the time of the Holi Festival in spring, when license often breaks through restraint. But it is noticeable, that immediately afterwards, the even tenor of daily life begins over again. The one individual extravagance is a marriage festival. Then restraint in expenditure gives way; and this event in a family will lead to years of after-indebtedness. Yet psychologically, with such a constant repression, this sudden outburst finds in a measure its own justification.

After the outline I have given, it will easily be seen, how untrue to facts Miss Mayo's general picture of gross sexual



extravagance in Indian life must be. The assertion, for instance, that seven or eight out of every ten young men between the ages of twenty-five and thirty become impotent owing to sexual excess, is so palpably absurd, when one reviews this village population, that it hardly needs contradiction.

It is true, that her declaration is modified by the words "provided he has means to command his pleasure." But that proviso, in my opinion, only makes the slander worse. For I have lived in houses in all parts of India, where ample means have existed for leading a sensual life of pleasure ; but instead of this, the vigour of self-restraint was so all-pervading as to be a perpetual wonder to me. A reference is made in her book to the more healthy life of the country as obviating a part of the sexual excess imagined everywhere to prevail. But as I have tried to show, this healthy life of the country must to a supreme degree represent the true normal state of India ; for it comprises ninety per cent of the population.

The town life, which has been hurriedly and precipitately pushed forward in Bombay and Calcutta, and in a few other places, is in no sense the typical life of India, in the same way that industrialised England represents the English people. The proportions are all reversed. In England, the urban population far exceeds the rural ; but in India, the village people everywhere predominate. The towns are a growth of modern times, artificial and exotic. The villages have nestled amid their trees for centuries.

The bulk of Hindu India, representing the great majority of the Indian people (for three out of four are Hindus), maintains up to the present time, in these numberless villages, its own ultra-conservative customs. These are in need of reconstruction in certain important respects, which will be dealt with later. Let me only mention here, that the greatest of all economic requirements is the revival of those village industries of spinning and weaving, which were almost entirely destroyed owing to the influx of foreign machine-made materials from the West.

The point, which I desire to stress still further, is this. The whole of this vast, intricate and closely-woven domestic system, stretching from one end of India to the other, is remarkably free from those evil obsessions about which such unprintable things have been written in this book. It is a hard thing to say, but it is true, that much that is stated both about immoral religious symbols in the temples and immoral perversions in the home, must have had its origin in the minds of these who have wished to believe such things to be true and

have told them to Miss Mayo. To take one instance, I doubt if a single Hindu, who was not an antiquarian, would ever have heard the theory, here put forward positively as the truth, that the religious Vaishnava mark on the forehead is obscene. Certainly I never heard it before. Gandhiji has written to the same effect. Whatever may have been the original meaning, they certainly do not actively excite evil passions in the Hindu villagers to-day. I have watched Hindu women, whose faces were like that of the Madonna, making their offerings at the way-side shrines, or near the bathing ghats. It would be impossible to associate obscenity with such faces as these.

It is true, on the other hand, that there was an age of coarseness in the past, coinciding with the massive temple-building. Few countries, with a long historic background, have been able to escape this; for the pendulum of human nature swings from one side always to the other. We find the same thing in Greece and Rome. In India, the devadasis, or temple prostitutes, are a relic of that evil past; and their retention to-day, in connection with some notorious temples, shows that the same passions still exist and are still shamefully encouraged.

These devadasis have come to me as their brother and friend to help them. They have implored me to deliver their little daughters from their own inexpressibly miserable fate. I have sat with them, hour after hour, while they have mentioned, with bowed heads, their wretchedness. All this I have told openly in the public press, making no reservation; and my words, written from a tortured heart, have never received a single word of condemnation from any Hindu, but only strong approval. As a Christian, I have been again and again asked to preside when this subject was being discussed in open conference; and my earnest fellowship has been sought in helping to bring this evil to an end. . . . .

Personally I have confidence that this admittedly evil custom of by-gone days, along with many others, has now nearly worked itself out. There is not any longer the social will behind it to keep it alive. If certain economic factors could be surmounted, it would die a natural death.

Let me return from these acknowledgments concerning things that have troubled and disturbed me, to the bed-rock facts about Indian village life which are unshaken and unshakable. The facts are these, that whatever accretions and excrescences have intervened to sap its vitality, whatever evil customs and traditions have spread like creepers over it, the tree



of Indian life is sound at the root. It is not rotten and decayed. By nature and instinct I am very sensitive in these matters ; and the repulsion would be immediate, if there were a sensual background, festering within those villages, where I have lived and moved.

But it is literally true about my personal experience that any such sensitive repulsion in the presence of what is base has very rarely indeed happened to me, while living this simple village life in India among the village people. There has been extraordinarily little, either in thought or word, or open deed, that could be called gross or indecent. This has appeared to me to be due not to the repression of "sex," but rather to its general lack of prominence as an all-engrossing theme. There have been exceptional occasions when I have been repulsed. But these have been so rare as not to count as normal.

Of one thing I would bear special witness ; and the emphasis that I would lay upon it is paramount in this connection. The natural modesty, simplicity and purity of the Indian women have impressed me more and more deeply every year that I have lived in India. It is the one thing that I come back to after journeys abroad, with renewed happiness, as one of the most beautiful things in human life. It needs to be stated, that as a man of religion, trusted and respected, I have met those who are usually confined to parda, as well as those who are not bound by strict seclusion. This parda distinction refers rather to the towns than the villages ; for in the villages the life is usually open ; but I have mentioned it in order to avoid any possible doubt as to the scope of my experience.

The ordinary word, by which every Indian woman is addressed is either 'sister' or 'mother', according to the age of the person. The habit of using these words is not confined to those who are near relations in one family, or even to close neighbours. They are applied to people who are met as visitors or strangers. Servants use them towards those who are set over them in the household. They are not empty or formal symbols but contain a world of meaning. The gentle quality of Indian womanhood corresponds to them. For it is the sisterly and motherly element that always predominates in domestic duties and in friendly greetings.

Instead, therefore, of the sex passion being "the one subject of conversation," and instead of songs dealing with it being eternally on the lips of Indian women, as this book sug-

gests, the motherly and sisterly relations are those that come to the front.

No student would ever speak to me of his own mother or his own sister with such pure reverence and devotion, if his own nearest relations in his own household had ruined his young life by filthy vices.

Thus the domestic picture, which is offered in Miss Mayo's book to Western readers as undoubted truth, is to me who have shared Indian home life more intimately perhaps than any other European, fundamentally untrue and distorted. It is so wrong, that it is difficult to understand from what quarter this legend has been picked up. If such ideas as these are actually being circulated in the clubs and hotels, where Europeans meet and talk, it bodes ill for the future intercourse between the two peoples.

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## REVIEW

*MY SOJOURN IN ENGLAND* by Major B. D. Basu, I.M.S. (Retd.). Published by R. Chatterjee, 91, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta. 184 pp. Price Rs. 2/-.

The book is a record of the author's impressions of England when he resided there as a student in the late eighties of the last century. He dwells on such topics as English marriage system, the fair sex of England, English morality, religion of England, etc. The book is interesting reading, though naturally many of the author's observations will not apply to the present conditions of England.

*GLIMPSES* by T. L. Vaswani. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. 86 pp. Price As. 12.

The booklet is a collection of notes arranged under such headings as Shanti or Peace-Chant, the Flute, Spheres of Silence, Atmadarshan, The Note Universal, The Law of Humility, The Hindu Vision, etc. The notes are pregnant with meaning and thought-provoking.

*A SYNTHESIS OF THE BHAGAVAD-GITA* by the Editors of the "Shrine of Wisdom". Published by the Shrine of Wisdom, Lincoln House, Acacia Road, Acton, London, W. 3. 71 pp. Price 3/- net.

The authors of this synthesis believe that the Gita teaches five ways to the realisation of God,—Dharma Marga, (The Path of Duty), Karma Marga (The Path of Action), Bhakti Marga (The Path of Devotion), Jnana Marga (The Path of Knowledge), and Raja Marga (The Path of Perfective Union). They have therefore arranged the greater part of the text of the Gita according to this fivefold classification and translated it for the benefit of English readers, with suitable notes wherever necessary. The attempt is certainly laudable. But we do



not think the Gita makes any distinction between Karma Marga and Dharma Marga. Nor is it correct to say, "the three faculties of will, heart, and mind are then brought into play, and as their exercise becomes more and more perfect by progress in Karma, Bhakti, and Jnâna Mârga all activities gradually become blended in Râja Mârga." The authors would have done better to have conceived the meaning of the Gita from the orthodox Hindu standpoint.

*DEUS HOMO* by George Chainey. Published by the Christopher Publishing House, Boston, U. S. A. 317 pp. 28 illustrations. Price \$2.50 net

The sub-title of the book is "The perfect life of man in God and of God in man." "The purpose of these studies is to teach the nature of Divine and human perfection and the sweet sublime simplicity of their mutual correlations." The author has his individual views on how to attain the mutual relations of God and man and he interprets the stories of the New Testament in the terms of spiritual development. In spite of the author's bold claim of fellowship with The Living God, we regret we cannot thoroughly appreciate his often mystifying teachings. The highest truths are always the simplest.

*THE MISREAD RECORD OR THE DELUGE AND ITS CAUSE* by Isaac Newton Vail. Published by the Simplex Publishing Co., Box 595, Seattle, Wash., U. S. A. Pp. 88. Price 75c.

The writer maintains that "a vast cloud-canopy of primitive earth-vapors, such as now envelop the planets Jupiter and Saturn, lingered as a revolving deluge-source, in the skies of antediluvian man,—a source of primeval rains, snows and hail, competent to produce all the floods, and all the Glacial Epochs the earth ever saw, and that this last fall of those primordial waters deepened the oceans many fathoms." This is the author's explanation of the Deluge. Japanese, Vedic, Greek, Roman, Scandinavian, Biblical, all mythologies and lores have been made to yield circumstantial evidence in support of this unique theory.

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## NEWS AND REPORTS

**R. K. Ashrama, Ranchi, B. & O.**

The Ashrama is situated at the foot of the Morabadi Hill in a small Bungalow in the midst of the beautiful scenery of the suburbs of Ranchi.

The task of establishing this centre was entrusted to Swami Visuddhananda who took up his residence here in November 1927 last. Besides the distribution of Homeopathic medicine to the poor villagers, he at once began holding regular Gita classes in the Doranda Puja Mandap. These classes have done immense good to the public and are gradually growing in interest and attendance. The Swami had also to deliver several lectures in the Brahmacharya Vidyalaya, Town

Club and Hindoo Durga Mandir, his subjects being "Education", "The Gita" and "The Upanishads" respectively. The anniversary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda in the Hindoo Friends' Union Club, of Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Chaitanya in the Doranda Puja Mandap and of Lord Buddha in the Ranchi Brahmacharya Vidyalaya were also attended by the Swami, on invitation either as president or speaker.

A fresh period of activity will soon demand his exertions when he will begin another regular Scripture-class in the Ranchi Durga Mandir, as the educated public of the town have already invited him to do.

#### **R. K. Mission Students' Home, Calcutta**

The R. K. Mission Students' Home, Calcutta, has been steadily growing since its inception in 1919. The report of the year 1927 records 23 students on the roll of which 17 were maintained free and 4 were concession-holders and 2 paying. The Home is run on the lines of a Brahmacharya Ashrama, co-ordinating the ancient ideals of education with the modern, under the care and guidance of Hindu Sannyasins. The Home requires considerable expansion of its scope. It should accommodate at least 100 students who may get there, in addition to their University education, a training in Agriculture, Dairy-farming and some other useful home-industries. For this, at least 25 *bighas* of land are required in the neighbourhood of Calcutta.

The purchase of the land alone will require at least Rs. 20,000. The Home earnestly appeals for funds. Contributions may be sent to the *Secretary, R. K. Mission Students' Home, 7, Haldar Lane, Calcutta.*

#### **Bankura Famine Relief—An Appeal**

During the first three weeks of July, our workers in the famine-stricken area of Bankura have distributed 183 mds. 30 seers of rice among 1176 recipients covering an area of 107 villages. The condition of people does not show any sign of improvement. The middle class gentry are now constrained to avail themselves of our relief measures. The condition of the poor classes is comparatively better as they are now getting manual work in the field. But their misery will appear over again as soon as the sowing season is over. Any how our relief work must go on for some months more till the next harvest places the country on a better economic footing.

The gravity of the situation demands a continued support from the generous public in a larger measure. Our appeal goes to all, poor and rich alike to help us in alleviating the distress of our countrymen. All help in cash or kind (specially cloth) may be kindly sent to any of the following addresses which will be duly acknowledged by the Treasurer of the Ramakrishna Mission.

The President, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math (Howrah);  
 Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar or Manager,  
 Advaita Ashrama, 182A, Muktaram Babu Street, Calcutta.