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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

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## MEMOIRS OF SISTER CHRISTINE\*

### THE MOGULS

The Moguls seemed to have cast a spell over Swami Vivekananda. He depicted this period of Indian history with such dramatic intensity, that the idea often came to us that he was perhaps telling the story of his own past. We often wondered whether we saw before us the re-incarnation of the mighty Akbar. How else could he have known the thoughts, the hopes, the purposes of the greatest of the Moguls?

One of his beliefs was, that before one reached the life in which the enlightenment was to be achieved, one must have run the whole gamut of experiences : suffered every tragedy and the direst poverty, and enjoyed to the utmost all that the world has to offer : wealth, adulation, fame, power, ecstatic happiness, dominion. “Millions of times have

I been emperor,” he would say in his exuberant fashion. Another idea was, that after lives of effort in which complete success had not been reached, there came a final life of worldly attainment, in which the aspirant became a great emperor or empress. This precedes the last life in which the goal is reached. Akbar, it is believed in India, was a religious aspirant in the incarnation before he became emperor. He just failed to reach the highest and had to come back for one more life in which to fulfil his desires. There was only one more re-incarnation for him.

So vividly did Swami depict these historic figures for us : rulers, queens, prime ministers, generals, that they seemed to become for us, real men and women whom we had known. We saw Baber, the twelve year old King of Ferghana, (Central Asia) influenced by his

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Mongol grandmother, and living a hard rough life with his mother. We watched him later as King of Samarcand for one hundred days, still a boy and delighted with his new possession as though it were some super-toy; his chagrin and dismay when he lost the city of his dreams; his struggles, defeats and conquests. The time came when we saw him and his men booted and spurred, crossing the great mountain passes and descending on to the plains of India. Although an alien and an invader, as Emperor of India, he identified himself with the country, and began at once to make roads, plant trees, dig wells, build cities. But his heart was always amongst the highlands of the land from which he came and where he was buried. He was a loveable, romantic figure, founder of one of the greatest dynasties within the history of man.

After his death the kingdom fell into other hands and Baber's heir, Humayon, became a fugitive. In the deserts of Sind, with only a handful of followers, he fled from place to place, in danger of his life. Here he met the exquisite young Mohammedan girl Hamida, married her, and shared with her his most unhappy fate. We saw him giving up his own horse to her while he walked at her side. And in the deserts of Sind was born her only son, later to become the Emperor Akbar. So reduced in circumstances was Humayon at that time, that he had no gifts for his followers with which to celebrate the event, except a ped of musk. This he divided among them with the prayer: "May my son's glory spread to all parts of the earth, even as the odour of this musk goes forth."

Humayon regained the empire but he was not to enjoy it long, for in the forty-eighth year of his age he met with a fatal accident in his palace at Delhi and died, leaving his throne to his only son,

Akbar, then little more than thirteen year old. From that time until his death at the age of sixty-three Akbar was the undisputed master of India. There have been few figures in history with such a combination of qualities. His nobility and magnanimity put even his great general, Bairam, to shame. While still a boy, when his enemy was brought before them, and Bairam, putting a sword into his hand, told the young King to kill him, he said: "I do not kill a fallen foe." His courage was unquestioned and won the admiration of all. Few excelled him in sports: no one was a better shot, a better polo player or a better rider. But with it all he was severely ascetic in his habits. He did not take meat, saying: "Why should I make a graveyard of my stomach?" He slept only a few hours every night, spending much time in philosophic and religious discussions. Mohammedan though he was, he listened to teachers of all religions—listened and questioned. Whole nights he spent in learning the secrets of Hindu Yoga from the Brahmin who was pulled up to his *Kawa Khana* (*buzh*).

In later years he conceived the idea of establishing a new religion of which he was to be the head—the Divine Religion, to include Hindus, Christians, and Parsees as well as Mohammedans.

King of kings though he was, he had the faculty of making real friends. There were three who were worthy to be the friends of this Shadow of God: Abul Fazl, the Brahmin minstrel, his poet laureate; Birbul his Prime Minister; and his brother-in-law and Commander-in-chief, Man Singh. Two Hindus and two Mohammedans, for there were two brothers Fazl. His friends shared not only his lighter moments but stood by his side in the Hall of Audience and followed him into battle. We see them making a line of



swords for him when his life is in danger in a battle with the Rajputs. They, Mohammedan and Hindu alike, become adherents of the new religion and support him loyally in all his undertakings. Never was a man blessed with truer friends. This is rare enough in ordinary life, but almost unheard of regarding one in so exalted a position. His empire extended from Kabul to the extreme parts of Southern India. His genius as an administrator enabled him to pass on a united empire to his son Selim, later known as the Emperor Jehangir. Under this "Magnificent son of Akbar" the Mogul court reached a splendour before which all previous ideas of luxury paled.

Now appears the fascinating figure of Nur Jehan, the Light of the World, Empress of Jehangir and, for twenty years, the virtual ruler of India. The influence of this remarkable woman was unbounded. To her great gifts of wisdom and tact were due the stability, prosperity and power of the empire, in no small degree. Her husband had coins struck in her name, bearing the inscription: "Gold has assumed a new value since it bore the image of Nur Jehan." The Great Mogul's trust and faith in her were unbounded. To the protest of his relatives that he had delegated his power to her, he replied: "Why not? since she uses it to much better advantage than I could." When he was ill, he preferred her treatment to that of all his physicians. She was the only one who had power to check his habits, limiting him to three cups of wine a day.

It was during the supremacy of Nur Jehan that the new style of architecture was introduced, a feminine type of architecture in which the virile red sand-stone of Akbar's buildings was supplanted by white marble inlaid with precious and semi-precious stones.

Jewelled walls instead of rough stone ones. The delicacy and effeminacy of Persia replaced the vigour and strength of the Central Asian Highlands. Its gift to posterity was the Taj Mahal and the marble palaces of Agra, Delhi and Lahore. The exquisite building known as the tomb of Itmad-ud-daulah on the other side of the Jumna, was built by Nur Jehan in memory of her father, the Lord High Treasurer, and later Prime Minister to Jehangir. It was one of the first buildings in the new style of architecture. It is believed that the stones were inlaid by the slaves of Nur Jehan. It is interesting to compare this first imperfect attempt with the perfection attained in the Taj Mahal where 44 stones of different shades of red are used to reproduce the delicate shades of one rose petal, the progress in efficiency is striking.

Nur Jehan's own apartments in the Agra palace, the Saman Burg, were also decorated under her personal supervision. She was truly a great patroness of the arts, and her charity was boundless.

In a man like Vivekananda, with a genius for seeing only what was great in an individual or a race, such understanding of the Mussulman was nothing strange. To him India was not the land of the Hindu only, it included all. "My brother the Mohammedan" was a phrase he often used. For the culture, religious devotion and virility of these Mohammedan brothers, he had an understanding, an admiration, a feeling of oneness which few Moslems could excel. One who accompanied him on one of his voyages tells how passionately thrilled Vivekananda was, when their ship touched at Gibraltar, and the Mohammedan lascars threw themselves on the ground, crying: "The Din, the Din!"

For hours at a time his talk would

be of the young camel driver of Arabia, who, in the sixth century after Christ attempted to raise his country from the degradation into which it had fallen. He told of the nights spent in prayer, and of the vision that came to him after one of his long fasts in the mountains of the desert. By his passion for God, and the revelation granted to him, he became one of the Illumined Ones, destined to rank for all time with the very elect of God. There have been few of these Great Ones;—of each, one may say with truth: “Of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

We realized that, whether in Arabia, in Palestine, or in India, the children of God speak one language when they are born into the new life. He felt the loneliness of the Prophet who, to the average person seemed a madman. For years, a mere handful believed in him and his message. Little by little we understood the patience, the compassion, the burden of the mission laid upon this Prophet of Arabia.

“But he advocated polygamy!” protested one with a Puritanical turn of mind. Vivekananda explained that what Mohammed did was to limit a man to four wives: polygamy in a far worse form was already practised in Arabia.

“He taught that women have no souls,” said another with an edge to her voice. This called forth an explanation regarding the place of woman in Mohammedanism. The Americans who listened were somewhat chagrined to

find that the Moslem woman had certain rights not enjoyed by the so-called free American woman.

From this trivial questioning we were again lifted into an atmosphere of wider sweep and more distant horizons. However limited and ignorant his outlook may seem, it cannot be denied that Mohammed was a world figure, and that the force which he set free has shaken this world and has not yet expended itself.

Did he deliberately found a new religion? It is easier to believe that the movement evolved without conscious thought on his part; that in the beginning he was absorbed in his great experience and burning with the desire to share this precious attainment with others. Was the form which it took during his lifetime in accordance with his wishes? It is certain that the conflicts which soon ensued were no part of his plan. When a great force is let loose no man can harness it. The Moslem hordes swept over Asia and threatened to overrun Europe. After conquering Spain they established there great universities which attracted scholars from all parts of the then known world. Here was taught the wisdom of India and the lore of the East. They brought refinement, courtliness and beauty into the everyday life. They left behind them Saracenic buildings,—structures of surpassing beauty,—a tradition of learning, and no small part of the culture and wisdom of the East.



# WHAT THE MAHOMEDANS SHOULD DO

BY THE EDITOR

## I

For sometime past the problem of the Hindu-Moslem unity has been uppermost in the mind of all Indians who are even in the least particular about the welfare of the country. At times it seems as if the destiny of India is hanging mainly on the solution of that problem. Mahatma Gandhi to whom all people are looking as the most competent person to bring about any solution of that problem said the other day that it was simply a political and economic problem. "The causes of discord (between the Hindus and the Mahomedans) are economic and political and it is these that have to be removed,"—these were his words. Leaving this question for solution, therefore, at the hands of those who are experts in the field of politics and economics, we shall discuss the religious aspect of the relation between the Hindus and the Mahomedans. For religion is the greatest bond of unity, and when there is a real union of heart, many questions are automatically solved. Deeper behind the surface troubles between the two communities the real question is that the Hindus and the Mahomedans have not been able to look upon each other with so much intimate relationship that they can disarm all suspicions and distrust. In India all other communities—the Hindus, the Parsis, the Jains, the Buddhists, the Sikhs—and even the Christians look upon one another with better feelings than with what any of them look on the Mahomedans. The Mahomedans form as if a class by themselves which could not altogether fit in with other people. The Hindus and

the Mahomedans, as a result of long living together in the country, were just in the process of being welded together, but before the union could be deep and strong enough, many artificial causes arose which have tended to separate them again. Though the Hindus and the Mahomedans have been for many centuries putting up together they have not been able to understand each other completely. It is true that there were some saints in India who had been the recipients of love and respect both from the Hindus and the Mahomedans, but still the Hindus ought to have known Islam much better and the Mahomedans, the truths of Vedanta more closely. Had that been the case, any artificial factor would not have been able to break the fairly amicable relation, that had grown and was growing between them in different parts of the country.

## II

It is said that Islam is the most misunderstood of all religions in the world. Carlyle said as late as in the year 1840: "Our current hypothesis about Mahomed, that he was a scheming Impostor, a Falsehood incarnate, that his religion is a mere mass of quackery and fatuity, begins really to be now untenable to any one. The lies, which well-meaning zeal has heaped round this man, are disgraceful to ourselves only." Yet the modern great English historian Mr. H. G. Wells has painted the character of the great Prophet in a way which wounds the religious susceptibilities of even non-Muslims. It is very clear on the very face of it that

the famous writer was carried away too much by his historical sense and could not see the real religious background in the life of one who has been giving spiritual sustenance to one-sixth of humanity for these thirteen hundred years. It is true that "even by the standards of the desert he was uneducated," and there were many things in his conduct which are repugnant to the twentieth century men living in altogether different conditions and circumstances, but how did Mahomed get so much strength in his words that they turned the sands of the Arabian desert into explosive powder blazing heaven-high and from his teachings could arise innumerable saints who realized the Highest in religion and whose life has been a blessing unto humanity? It is true that many miracles have clustered round the life of the Prophet which offend against the historical sense of a modern man (and what saint has been untouched by this travesty of devotion of their followers?) but the greatest miracle in the life of Mahomed was that he could give to the world the holy book—the Koran. In the Koran there are many things which are not of any interest to all now, and which do not concern themselves with things properly religious,—but it contains many things which could not be uttered by one if he were not inspired, if he were not a messenger of God. Did he not say things lofty and sublime which coincide with the revelations in other religions also? We find in the Koran (Sura VI. 104), "No vision taketh in Him, but He taketh in all vision : and He is the Subtle, the All-informed." This is exactly the echo of the Upanishadic verse : "What none can see with eyes, but by which one sees the function of the eyes, know that alone as the Brahman and not this they worship here." We find Mahomed saying,

"Moreover, good and evil are not to be treated as the same thing. Turn away evil by what is better, and lo! he between whom and thyself was enmity, shall be as though he were a warm friend." This is so similar to the teachings of Lord Buddha : "Conquer wrath with love, a wicked man with your virtuous acts; conquer a miser by giving freely and a lying man with your truthfulness." The Prophet's words were, "Nothing hath been said to thee which hath not been said of old to apostles before thee." (Sura XLI. 48.) Have they not the ring of what Jesus said, "I have come to fulfil and not to destroy"?

Though in the opinion of Mr. Wells Mahomed was like "any other welder of peoples into a monarchy" and "there was singularly little spirituality in his kingship," yet did not the Prophet pay a sufficient price for the revelation that dawned upon him? All Prophets of the world, however exalted they loomed before the imagination of their worshippers in the generations that followed, had to pass through a hell of struggle to build their spiritual life. It may be that they had no necessity for any such spiritual practices for themselves—they were all done as examples to the world, but nevertheless it is a fact, almost every one of the religious Teachers of the world had, in some period of his life, been seized with a degree of spiritual longing which made the world bow down to him even for that, if not for anything else. In Mahomed's life also we find the same thing. There was a time when the spiritual problems oppressed his mind most relentlessly for solution. Night after night he would be plunged into the depths of his thoughts for any light on the subject, till one day Truth dawned on him and he whispered to Khadija that he was no longer in dark-



ness and doubt. Truth is revealed to the man who can enter into the depths of his soul led by deep spiritual hankering and when the Truth is known, his words become irresistible. The very fact that the words of a poor, unlettered and uneducated man could raise the people of the Arabian desert into a wonderful and mighty spiritual confederation and he could speak words of wisdom which ring into the ears of 300 millions of Moslem population even now, indicates what a great spiritual background Mahomed had. It is a pity that the life of the Prophet and his teachings have not received as much attention by the people outside the Moslem world as they should be. And therefore they have been subject to much misconception and misunderstanding.

### III

In some quarters it is believed that the Koran teaches religion to be preached on the point of sword. The Mahomedans who have got the direct knowledge of the Koran deny this fact. According to Dr. D. S. Margoliouth, D.Litt., an Oxford Professor of Arabic, "In the eighth year of the Flight the Prophet addressed a manifesto to the world, demanding the submission of all mankind to Islam. Islam from that time onwards was in the main disseminated by the sword." Yet there is a distinct passage in the Koran saying, "Let there be no compulsion in Religion," (Sura II. 257). According to a Mahomedan poet,

"To the One Light are all the praises directed,

And religions are but different forms and figures of the One Light.

In all religions lives but one Religion.

Who art thou?

Neither a Hindu nor a Mussalman;  
Thou art He, in whom is God's  
Abode."

Sir Abdur Rahim, the veteran Mahomedan leader of Bengal, years back said, "I need hardly point out at the present day that it is a wholly false notion that the religion and laws of Islam enjoin conversion by force. . . . the Islamic law permits the non-Moslem living in a Moslem State (Zimmis) to participate in all the rights of citizenship, nay to live in accordance with their own customs and usages and the ideals of their different religions and civilisations. In fact, it is a cardinal doctrine of Islam that mankind—and be it noted not merely Moslems or men of any particular creed, race and colour—are the highest of God's creation and that all are equally entitled to make the best use possible of the universe and whatever it contains by the exercise of those faculties, which God has given them." Yet the idea has gained ground amongst the non-Mahomedans that Islam was spread by its followers with the Koran in one hand and the sword in the other. Of the two most aggressively proselytizing religions of the world—we mean Christianity and Islam, the latter is believed to have taken more coercive methods. Dr. Margoliouth, whom we have quoted before, said, "Under some of the Moslem rulers the life of the non-Moslem was rendered so intolerable by ceaseless humiliations and vexations that the motive for conversion to Islam became overwhelming." Perhaps Islam is the religion which has most conspicuously fostered national spirit and which has supplied the nucleus for the formation of a mighty nation. Islam combines in itself both the national and religious aspects as no other religion in the world has done.

Islam has supplied the greatest bond of unity amongst its followers and they, when united, have turned that advantage mostly to the furtherance of the national end. As such, people outside the Moslem community have known Islam more as a nation than as a religion. This is one of the reasons why Islam as a religion has not been sufficiently known.

#### IV

Khwaza Nizâmu-Din Hasan discusses in an issue of the *Islamic Review* that both in the East and the West Islam as a religion has not been properly understood and tries "to trace how far the Muslims themselves are responsible for the adverse attitude of non-Muslims towards Islam." With respect to prejudices against Islam in India, the writer says, "Islam found in India a very congenial place for settling down but not for extending, partly because of some of the Muslim invaders who carried fire and sword into the country and did not really care to convert the unbelievers to the Eternal Religion. The destruction and havoc they wrought, and the *aposteriori* justification they twisted out of Islam for what they have done, was more serious in consequence to themselves rather than to their vanquished." Then he quotes Professor Mohammed Habib from the latter's life of Mahmud of Ghazni: "A religion is naturally judged by the character of those who believe in it; their faults and their virtues are supposed to be the effect of their creed. It was inevitable that the Hindus should consider Islam a deviation from truth when its followers deviated so deplorably from the path of rectitude and justice. A people is not conciliated by being robbed of all it holds most dear, nor will it love a faith that comes to it in the guise of

plundering armies and leaves devastated fields and ruined cities as monuments of its victorious method for reforming the morals of a prosperous but erratic world. 'They came, burnt, killed, plundered, captured—and went away,' was a Persian's description of the Mongol invasion of his country; it would not be an inappropriate summary of Mahmud's achievement on Hinduism. It was not thus that the Prophet had preached Islam in Arabia; and no one need be surprised that the career of the conquering Ghaznvide created a burning hatred for the new faith in the Hindu mind and blocked its progress more effectually than armies and forts."

Then he opines, "Thus, although the Asiatics in general are not justifiable in the anti-Islamic propaganda, yet it must be said in fairness to them that they are not to be blamed in so far as they have not received any true explanation of the tenets of Islam through the actions of its followers . . . it was quite natural for the people to remain ignorant of and indifferent towards a religion of which they knew nothing from true sources, and of which they had formed a distorted idea by the silly teachings of the scandal-mongers of whom there is no minority in every religion."

#### V

The function of religion is to soothe a lacerated heart, to console the weary spirit, and to bring comfort to the distracted by showing the light of the Beyond. A truly religious man, to whatever denomination he may belong, sheds an atmosphere of peace around him and his blessings can be reaped by all irrespective of any distinction of caste or creed. But the outside people have not been able to penetrate into the inner sanctuary of Islam to enjoy, appreciate and profit by the gems of



truths lying hidden therein. Even at the present day in India people feel more the heat of the zeal of the followers of Islam for safeguarding and protecting their faith and its interests than the benign effects of the messages of one who came as a messenger of God to bless humanity. It will be an ignominious folly to say that there are no ideal men in Islam; but they cannot be reached by outsiders because of the din and bustle that are raised by impatient people for the protection of Islam. The Mahomedans should see, if Islam is to fulfil any spiritual demands of humanity, that the benign influence of their faith can spread far and wide. Truth is its own protection; it will have its own way, like a corrosive substance, if only we do not artificially interfere with its action by too much eagerness to work *for it*. The Mahomedans should see that the *spiritual influence* of their society spreads to a greater extent than the aggressive turn their attitude and belief in Islam may take.

This was exactly the sentiment expressed by the editor of the *Islamic Review* in his comment upon the failure of the Pan-Islamic movement. He said, "But we have been led to believe, after a calm study of the situation that has appeared since, that from the point of view of Islam as a religion it is good that the Muslim nations could not so unite. If the political upheaval of the Muslims had taken place, as dreamed, through a political confederation, the issue of Islam's influence as a religious force would, perhaps, never have been clear. Circumstances at the time caused Islam to be established simultaneously as a spiritual as well as a political cult. This had its own advantages, but later certain disadvantages arose out of this very circumstance. In after times, to sceptic minds, Islam appeared rather a political than a spiritual cult. . . .

"If . . . the cult of Islam has not only to co-operate, as in the beginning, with political power, but even to depend upon it for its *revival* this time—the future of Islam as a religious force is doomed, and with it is doomed religion itself. . . . And it was all for the best that there was no vestige of political power in the movement (The Muslim Mission in England) that aspired to Islamize Europe. Now the power of Islam as a purely moral and spiritual force is to be proved or disproved according as this movement succeeds or fails."

It is doubtful whether all Mahomedans in India are anxious to increase the power of Islam "as a purely moral and spiritual force." For in some of the recent communal riots there had been instances where some Mahomedans have shown themselves as worst specimens of human beings in their acts of violence and atrocities (Here we do not like to say that the Hindus have behaved like angels, nor do we like to institute a comparison as to which party has behaved worse). But that has not, it seems, caused sufficient anxiety in the Mahomedan community. There are instances when we do not know whom to pity more—those who can perform acts of brutality or those who suffer therefrom: for whereas the latter suffer physically, the fate of the former as human beings is doomed. The society in which the number of these people preponderate will have little to feel proud of. The Moslem community ought to see that it has got within itself sufficient moral force to reclaim such types of people. Otherwise though some may rejoice at the show of physical strength of the community and even though the Mahomedans may become the paramount power in the country, the society will carry with itself seeds of its own destruction

and dig its own ruin. Do we not find how the Mahomedan history of India—however splendid looks the period from material standpoint—has been blackened by the inhuman acts of patricides, fratricides, etc.? Any change of throne meant some acts of bloodshed in which the aspirants after the royal power had to steel themselves against all feelings of human relationship as a brother, a son and so on. What does it matter if the world is gained and the soul is killed?

## VI

Another thing to be noted here is that in the past the cultural force of Islam has not been of small value. When Europe was enwrapped in darkness for hundreds of years in the Middle Ages, Islam was the torch-bearer of knowledge. It was Islam to a great extent that brought about the Renaissance in Europe. Islam's contribution to human thought has been immense. In some fields of learning and thought Mahomedans have been pioneers—in some they have shown new ways. The contribution of Islam to the thought of the world has been such as every Mahomedan has reason to feel proud of. But all concerned with the welfare of Mahomedan community should see that Islam can regain its strength as a cultural force. It is not by only gaining a few seats in the Council or the Legislatures that the real well-being of a community can be achieved. Education must spread. Culture must be revived. Some will say that with the gaining of political power, everything will come automatically. But the desire and anxiety must be there. Though in the past, the Mahomedans would show great eagerness to found Madrasas, Maktabas, etc., at present we cannot say that they are doing their best to serve the cause of education. In the last

Bengal Council, when the question was raised that in the administration of the Calcutta University the Mahomedans had not a sufficient voice, one member answered that neither had the Moslem community shown any anxiety for the educational welfare of themselves by any financial contribution. It cannot be all due to poverty. Except the Aligarh University, we do not know if the Mahomedans have done much for the spread of education.

Even in acts of offering genuine help to each other in times of distress, the Mahomedans, at present, do not seem to be doing much. It is the experience of philanthropic bodies that in their appeal for funds in times of famine, flood, etc., they do not find much response from the Mahomedan community. We have seen that when relief is done even in an area where the Mahomedan population overwhelmingly preponderates, little help is got from or rendered by the *Mahomedans* themselves. Economic distress amongst the Mahomedans cannot be offered as an excuse for that; for the Moslime community cannot be considered as the worst sufferer in this respect, and relief funds remain open to receive *contributions however small*. It cannot also be said to be due to a scanty attention that the Mahomedans are likely to receive from the philanthropic bodies composed of non-Mahomedans. For, in India there are at least some organizations which absolutely make no distinction of caste, creed or faith in matters of offering relief. We know of people who had to struggle hard to raise money for rendering help in the areas where communal tension had been great, because they would recognise no distinction of communities. Does this indifference of the Mahomedans to their own people in times of distress and calamity indicate that they are not genuinely keen about the *real* needs of their



community? This is a problem which we commend to the serious attention of all Mahomedans interested in the welfare of their community.

The question may be very pertinently asked, why is it that we offer gratuitous advice to Mahomedans, though there are thousand and one defects in the Hindu society itself which should receive our attention? We do that for the simple reason that we sincerely

believe that the future India will not belong only to the Hindus or to the Mahomedans—but that they both along with other communities will have to live peacefully deriving benefit and help from each other, if India is to form a united nation. In the past, as we have shown, the Hindus and the Mahomedans have not *sufficiently* profited by each other. Let this not be so even in the future.

## BURNING OF DARKNESS

BY NICHOLAS ROERICH

We shall not tire to repeat that at the base of Existence lies the creative thought. We shall vitally realize the significance of rhythm as the underlying dynamo of our work. We shall remember the covenant of Light, that first of all the most important for us are spirit and creation, second comes health and third—wealth. If however the creeping in darkness shall whisper to us in a sweet voice first wealth, then health and at last creation, then you shall say, "We know thee, disguised homunculus! Thou hast again crept in. Thou has taken advantage of the unlocked door while the care-taker has left for a bite. Thou countest again upon human weakness, inconstancy and again thou hopest to revive the seedlings of treason. No matter what thy disguise may be we shall recognize thee. With thy materialistic revaluation of values thou hast disclosed thyself and thy decaying influence. The next evolution is not built according to thy foundations, homunculus! Verily, thy fancy disguise shall not help thee. We firmly know that the values

of spirit and creation lie at the base of Existence and can be the only salvation of humanity!"

Vigilantly, penetrating into the laws which lead humanity, we see everywhere saving sparks. Pay attention that the homunculuses as the prototypes of the treacherous Mime, who dreamt of annihilating the hero Siegfried, pronounce always in one or another form their hidden intentions. You remember how Mime the dwarf\* sweetly calms the vigilance of Siegfried, whispering to him how he had nursed and nurtured him. He even spoke to Siegfried about heroic achievement certainly with the aim to appropriate the results of this gigantic task, whereas Siegfried will be killed through his treason. But by some miraculous way Mime begins to tell not what he would like to say but what he thinks. Verily, watching closely you can discern the true formulae of homunculus, which sooner or later he will pronounce in your presence. Sharpen but your attention and for this in very simple ways

\*From Wagner's opera *Siegfried*.

learn to tensify your concentration and be always alert so that in the needed moment you shall not be shadowed by your own foggy, petty thoughts. It is said that a criminal is always attracted to the place of his crime and thus discloses himself. Likewise will homunculus betray himself, for everything which strives finally to decomposition will be exposed. Homunculus dreads the future just like many become atheists only to reject all thoughts about the future.

The idea of Guruship, the idea of "high Leadership" passes through all ages, for in this is contained the counter-balance to the dark homunculus. Beginning with an address to the disclosed homunculus we shall remember some covenants of Light which unwaveringly and eternally are guiding the struggling manhood.

This is what the Eastern Wisdom ordains :

"At the construction of affirmed beginnings one must remember that the construction proceeds always upward. While constructing in the name of the Lord—there is but one path—that which leads to the Creative Source. The path of mighty Hierarchy. The path of the mighty leadership of Great Service, hence the contact with the creative principle impels the spirit to the affirmed law of Hierarchy. Each construction demands the striving upward. Therefore only the law of obedience to the Hierarchy can give the lawful tension. Therefore what is given for the foundation has to be guarded, for without the stones of foundation the structure cannot stand."

"How then to affirm oneself in the Teaching? How to come close to the Highest Law of Hierarchy? Only through the refining of thought and expansion of consciousness. How can the Command from Above be contained if the affirmation of conformity lacks?

One must be able to accept the vastness of the Teaching. Conformity alone can permit the vessel to be filled. Hence, the manifestation of broadness is worthy of a broad consciousness. On the way to Us one can attain only through Hierarchy. Thus only through the power of Hierarchy can We send the given, therefore all armours must remain pure. How can new possibilities and new ones be attracted if not to go in the Name of Hierarchy?"

"With Us certainly one can achieve through the saturation of the heart. He who attained thus, has the privilege, for the source of the heart will not wear away. The Image of the Lord centered in the heart will not be blurred and at any hour is ready for help. This way of the heart is the most ancient, but is in need of a considerable expansion of consciousness. One cannot speak about the heart from the very first talk, because it can be overburdened without result. Likewise it is useless to speak of love, if the heart does not as yet contain the Image of the Lord. But the hour strikes when it is necessary to point out the power of the heart. I advise to recur to the heart not only because of the Image of the Lord being near, but on account of cosmic reasons; it is easier to cross abysses if the bond with the Lord is strong. Thus it is not easy to go without the Lord. Not only with the lips repeat the Name of the Lord, but rotate It in your heart and He shall not leave it like a stone carved into a cleft by the mountain streams. We say Cor Reale when the King of the Heart enters the predestined abode. One must protect oneself with the Image of the Lord."

"The omnipresent fire imbues each vital manifestation. The omnipresent fire strains every action. The omnipresent fire impels each striving, each beginning, therefore how not to imbue



oneself with the omnipresent fire! The cosmic might which is subsistent in each impulse of man and in creative power is directed towards conscious creativeness. With what great care these corresponding energies ought to be gathered for the creation of a better future! Only the conscious striving to the possession of the power of co-measurement can manifest creativeness worthy of a better step. Hence every one on the way to Us must strive to creativeness consciously directing one's discrimination."

"When the consciousness will prompt to you the necessity to have a constant Image of the Lord, retire into a quiet place and direct your eye upon the chosen Image. But remember that you have to decide irrevocably, for the constant Image shall be a constant reproach in case of treason. After a fixed contemplation of the Image close the eyes and transfer It into the third eye. Exercising thus you will receive a vivid Image and you will feel an intensive tremor especially in the heart. Soon the Image of the Lord will abide with you inseparably. You can test yourself against the sun and you will see likewise the Lord before you, sometimes colorless, but then vividly and even in motion. Your prayer will loose its words and only the tremor of the heart will fill your understanding. Thus one can achieve in life the very useful but the consciousness must correspond."

"How important it is to preserve the fire of impulse; without this mover one cannot saturate the beginning with best possibilities. The forces applied for the beginning, multiply through the fire of impulse. Therefore it is so necessary to strive to the multiplying of the given Forces of the Primary Source. In all constructions it is necessary to observe harmony and comeasurement, hence for the saturation of Our begin-

nings it is necessary to co-measure the given with the applied measures. Fire and impulse sustain the life in each beginning. Without this the beginnings lose their vitality. Thus let us strive to the affirmed Fire, given by the Lord. Thus one can attain the fiery saturation."

"Embarking a ship a traveller was robbed of his purse with gold; everyone became indignant but the loser smiled and reiterated: 'Who knows?' A storm arose, and the ship perished. Only our traveller was thrown ashore. When the islanders considered his being saved as a miracle, he again smiled, saying: 'I simply paid dearer than the others for my passage.' We never know when the good seeds sprout and whether it takes long for the harvest of poisonous thoughts to ripen. They also need time to ripen. Therefore beware of poisonous thoughts, not one of them will get lost without leaving traces."

"But where is that country, where is that hour when an ear of poison will ripen? even though small but stinging and there will be no piece of bread, which would not tear one's throat."

"Is it possible not to have the harvest from one's sowing? Let the seed be a good one, otherwise poison will generate but poison. Much can be avoided but the treasury of thought is the finest. Thought being a highest energy is indissoluble, and can be deposited in sediments. The manifestation of an experiment upon plants can prove the power of thought. Likewise can a scientist take from the shelf the needed book, if the thought is strained."

"Therefore one must grow the wondrous impulse of fire, which gives life to everything. Thus the saturated fire can attract all corresponding energies. In the culture of thought first of all must be nurtured the fiery impulse. As

the creative impulse gathers co-resoundings, likewise thought attracts correspondences. Thus guard the impulse of fire."

"The main mistake of people is their considering themselves outside the existing. From it results the absence of co-operation. It is impossible to explain to the one who stands outside that he is responsible for what happens inside without him! The manifested father of selfishness has sown doubt and self-deceit in order to sever the link with the treasury of Light."

"One can inroot oneself into the world thought and thus grow for oneself wings in heaven and in the foundation upon earth."

When we recollect the great covenants of Eastern Wisdom, a luminous example from our contemporary life stands before us. Giants of Enlightenment are outstanding—the Blessed Ramakrishna and fiery Vivekananda. What an unforgettable example of the blessed Hierarchy—of Guruship! What a covenant for the youth! How touchingly Ramakrishna prayed about the spirit of Vivekananda and how wisely an uplifted Vivekananda carried the principles of his Guru in life. Verily we see the brilliant results of this realized Hierarchy. At the memorial day of Ramakrishna millions of people united in spirit gather in his name enlightened by a selfless prayer. Likewise grows mightily the name of Vivekananda and there is no such literate country where these great names together with Abhedananda, Premananda, Brahma-nanda, Saradananda and other glorious disciples of Ramakrishna are not cherished.

High was the principle of their Teachings and wise was their application in life. Through each touch they burn some of the darkness. And there was nothing destructive in their Teach-

ing. Radiantly sound the calls of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda: "Do not destroy!"—for the Blessed Hierarchy knows but the positive creation.

After the glorious spiritual leadership of ancient times, it is a real treasure to realize that in our days of commotion we also had before us these luminous examples.

Study without prejudice the history of humanity and you shall see that, in whatever garment, homunculus despises Light and most of all hates the Hierarchy of Bliss and Knowledge. With this light-bearing Hierarchy, homunculus begins in his own commotion to reiterate aloud his own concealed formulae. But all which is already pronounced is no more dangerous. The thin cobweb of the net of darkness will be instantaneously destroyed by the fire of space.

In the service of great Culture one should not limit oneself with one uniform programme. Every standard leads to tyranny. The fundamental flame of Culture shall be one, but its sparks in life shall be extremely and precious individually manifold. And as a caring gardener, the true Culture-bearer will not forcefully crush those flowers which entered life not from the main road, if they belong to the same precious kinds which he safeguards. The manifestations of Culture are just as manifold as are the manifestations of the endless varieties of life itself. They ennoble Be-ness. They are the true branches of the one sacred Tree, whose roots sustain the Universe.

Shall you be asked of what kind of country and of what future constitution you dream, you can answer in full dignity: "We visualize the country of Great Culture." The country of great Culture shall be your noble motto. You shall know that in that country will be



peace where Knowledge and Beauty will be revered. Let all Ministers of war not be offended if they will have to concede their priority to the Ministers of Public Education. In spite of all homunculi who spy from their holes, you shall fulfil your duties of great Culture

and you shall be fortified by the realization that only homunculi will remain as your enemies. Nothing can be nobler as to have as your enemy the homunculi. Nothing can be purer and more elevating than the striving to the future country of great Culture.

## GURU GOVIND SINGH

BY PROF. TEJA SINGH, M.A.

(*Devolution of Full Responsibility*)

The purity of Judgment was further intensified and made perfect by Guru Govind Singh (1666-1708). The Sikhs in the course of continuous discipline had found themselves, and had learned to find their leaders. Their admiration for their leader was so great that they would stick at no sacrifice, if they could only please him. Once a new musket was brought to the Guru as a present. He wanted to try it, as he humorously said, at somebody's forehead. Several people were forthcoming, thinking it a great fortune to meet death at his hands. The danger of such a personal devotion is that it may warp the judgment of the admirers. Their vision, which is clear enough for finding fault with themselves and others, is dazzled when it meets the brilliance of glory with which the loved person is invested. As long as that was the case, the government of self was not complete, and the granting of full responsibility would have been dangerous. The tenth Guru's task, therefore, was to so train the judgment of his followers that they might never be deceived by appearances, and might find out evil, even if it be lurking in the most sanctified of places.

He began by raising their self-

respect: for it is there that the true and independent judgment begins. The Sikhs were freed from the demeaning influence of the *Masands*.<sup>1</sup> It was made clear that the Guru also was human, and to pay divine honours to him was the greatest blasphemy. The Guru says in the autobiographical piece, called the *Vachitra Natak*:

“Whoever says I am the Supreme Lord,  
Shall fall into the pit of Hell.  
Recognize me as God's servant only.  
Have no doubt whatever about this.  
I am a servant of the Supreme:  
A beholder of the wonders of His creation.”

The ceremony of initiation was modified to suit the changed circumstances. The water used in baptism, instead of being stirred with the Guru's toe, was now to be stirred with a dagger, and the Sikhs thus initiated were to be called *Singhs* or lions. The mode of salutation

<sup>1</sup> Originally, religious men who were appointed to preach religion and collect the offerings of the Sikhs for the Guru. By the time of the tenth Guru, they had become very corrupt and tyrannical, and the Guru was constrained to abolish the order, after making an example of them.

was also changed. Instead of touching one another's feet, as was the custom before, the Sikhs were to fold their hands and hail each other as "the Purified Ones of the wonderful Lord, who is ever victorious."

The Khalsa was inspired by a sense of divine mission to right the wrongs of the world; and, in the discharge of his duties, no fear of earthly power was to stand in the way. Such was his confidence in the strength of the righteous cause that each Sikh called himself a unit of one lakh and a quarter. Even now one might occasionally meet a Sikh who would announce his arrival as the advent of a host of one-and-a-quarter lakh of the Khalsa.

The Guru himself recognized the worth and dignity of his nation, and would always refer to the assembly of Sikhs with great respect and admiration. It was in these terms he once spoke of his followers: "It is through them that I gained my experience; with their help have I subdued my enemies. Through their favour am I exalted, otherwise there are millions of ordinary men like myself, whose lives are of no account." Though a leader, he yet considered himself as the servant of his people: "To serve them pleases my heart; no other service is so dear to my soul." "All the substance in my house, and my soul and body are at their disposal." The readers of history know how literally this declaration was fulfilled by him. He sacrificed all his sons, his parents, and, lastly himself on the altar of his country's service.

This raising of the Indian spirit from the lowness and servility, which had dominated it for centuries, brought about a great change in the tone of the national character. Even those people who had been considered as the dregs of humanity, were changed, as if by magic, into something rich and strange, the

like of which India had never seen before. The sweepers, barbarians and confectioners,<sup>2</sup> who had never so much as touched the sword, and whose whole generations had lived as grovelling slaves of the so-called higher classes, became, under the stimulating leadership of Guru Govind Singh, doughty warriors, who never shrank from fear, and who were ever ready to shed their own blood where the safety of a single creature of God was in danger. Even their outward appearance underwent a marvellous change. They came to be regarded as models of physical beauty and stateliness of manner<sup>3</sup> as much as they were respected for the truth and honesty of character.

There is another feature of their character which the Sikhs acquired at that time and which we often forget to notice. In the face of desperate circumstances, they often put on a fine brag, that Hannibal or Sir Walter Raleigh might have envied—and literally shouted over a difficulty. Once a small straggling detachment of Sikhs was hemmed in by a numerous force of the enemy. Their friends were far off, and there was no hope of their coming in time to save them. Yet they did not lose heart. They took off their broad white *Chaddars* (sheets) and spread them over the neighbouring bushes to make them look like tents from the distance. All the while they kept up shouting every fifteen minutes the famous national cry of *Sat Sri Akal*.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Macauliffe, V. 42.

<sup>3</sup> Cunningham's *History of the Sikhs*, 84. Also, Elphinstone's *History of India*, ii. 564.

<sup>4</sup> This cry on occasions has done more wonders than any national anthem in the world. Jassa Singh, a Sikh captain, fell away from his party on account of some quarrel, and went over to the Nawab of Lahore. The latter sent him with a body of soldiers to attack the fort of Amritsar. When he came before the fort, he heard the cry of *Sat Sri Akal* coming from inside. As



The enemy thought that the Sikhs were receiving so many instalments of help, and did not dare to come forward.

As a result of this brave spirit, there was growing up among the Sikhs a peculiar slang, which was called the Vocabulary of Heroes. In it the things connected with the difficulties of life were expressed in terms of such cheerfulness and bravado, as if, for the Sikhs, pain and suffering had lost all meaning. Death was familiarly called an expedition of the Khalsa into the next world. A man with an empty stomach would call himself mad with prosperity. Grams were almonds, and onions were silver pieces, while rupees were nothing but empty crusts. A blind man was called a wide-awake hero, and a half-blind man an argus-eyed lion. A deaf man was said to be a man in the upper storey. A baptised Sikh was called a brother of the Golden Cup, which, by the way, was only an iron vessel. To be fined by the community for some fault was called getting one's salary. The big stick was called a lawyer or the store of wisdom; and to speak was to roar.

soon as he heard the familiar shout, his blood tingled in his veins, he rushed to the gate of the fort, and begged his brethren to pardon him and let him enter as one of them. For another instance, see Macauliffe, V. 168.

This full-throated shout, which is called 'the cry of victory,' is a great emblem of Sikh power and dignity. There is nothing else like it. The cheering of a joyous English crowd is grand; and the Mohammedan call to prayer, heard in the stillness of the night, is most beautiful and awe-inspiring. But those who have attended the religious and educational meeting of the Sikhs, will bear witness that the *Sat Sri Akal* stands by itself. In fact, few people on earth can shout their national cry with so much emotional effect as Sikhs, who so rally one another's blood and soul by shouting, that the rush of their collective voice sounds like the ring of their whole history, with all its standards waving at once, from Guru Har Govind's downwards.

There is a superb humour in all this, which breathes a full and healthy spirit. It shows that our ancestors knew—how much better than we do at present—that religion is not incompatible with brightness and vigour. Nay, explain it how we will, true humour always goes with ripeness of wisdom, and long-faced seriousness, as much as frivolity, is a sign of immaturity. Without the sense of humour, virtue itself becomes self-forgetful and loses its balance. It is humour alone that can keep our sympathies well-regulated and in good trim. It is a fine corrective force in character, and works like an instinct against all excess. Without it, a man's character is always underdone or done on one side only.

It was with this sense of humour that one quiet morning, at Hardwar, Guru Nanak had begun to throw water towards his fields in Kartarpur. His purpose was to disillusion the Hindus, who believed that the water thrown to the east would reach their dead ancestors in the world beyond. It was the same humour he displayed at Mecca, when he said, "You may turn my feet in any direction where God is not." He often announced his coming in a very strange manner. While coming back to India from Mecca, he halted at Baghdad. It was yet early dawn, and the people had not begun stirring for the morning prayers. Guru Nanak wanted to have a congregation of his own. He took himself to a high place, and in a loud stentorian voice began to imitate the famous Mohammedan call to prayer. Hearing this new kind of *Azan*, the people flocked round him and listened to his preaching with more than usual eagerness. On another occasion, during his wanderings, he came upon a knot of happy children playing in the street. He at once put off his gravity and began to leap and bound and shout just as the

little urchins did. It must have been a sight for angels to see the grey-haired prophet jumping and singing in the company of children!<sup>5</sup>

Guru Govind Singh also realised the value of humour and made full use of it in his religious propaganda. Once he dressed up a donkey like a lion and set it roaming about the fields. The Sikhs began to laugh when they heard it braying, in spite of the lion's coat, and asked their leader what it meant. The Guru told them that they, too, would look as foolish as the donkey, if, with the Singh's (lion's) name and uniform, they still remained as ignorant and cowardly as before. The same love of the dramatic is exhibited by the way he exposed the futility of the belief in Durga, the goddess of power. When all the ghee and incense had been burnt, and Pandit Kesho had tired himself out by mumbling mantras by the million without being able to produce the goddess, the Guru came forward with a naked sword and, flashing it before the assembly, declared: "This is the goddess of power." The same grim humour was shown by him, when one spring morning, in the midst of hymns and recitations, he appeared before his Sikhs and demanded a man who would sacrifice himself just then for his faith. He wanted to see whether the people dared to do anything beyond mere singing of hymns and reading of texts.

Along with the development of the sense of dignity and self-respect, the Sikhs imbibed the soul-stirring precepts of the tenth Guru. Imagine the Guru, a young man of thirty-three, seated before his Sikhs and speaking loudly:

"False religion is without fruit; by the worship of stones you have wasted millions of ages.

How can perfection be gained by

touching stones? Nay, strength and prosperity thus decrease, and the nine sources of wealth are not obtained.

To-day and to-day and to-day; time is thus passing away: You shall not accomplish your object; are you not ashamed?

O fool, you have not served the Lord, so your life has been passed in vain."<sup>6</sup>

"Why call Shiva God, and why speak of Brahma as God?

God is not Ram Chandar, Krishan, or Vishnu, whom ye suppose to be the lords of the world.

Sukhdev, Parasar and Vyas erred in abandoning the one God to worship many gods.

All have set up false religions. I, in every way, believe that there is but one God."<sup>7</sup>

"Since I have embraced Thy feet, I have paid homage to none besides.

Ram and Rahim, the Purans and the Quran express various opinions, but I accept none of them.

The Smritis, the Shastras and the Vedas, all expound many different doctrines, but I accept none of them."<sup>8</sup>

"I do not propitiate Ganesh;

I never meditate on Krishan or Vishnu;

I have heard of them, but I know them not;

It is only God's feet I love."<sup>9</sup>

"I am the son of a brave man, not of a Brahmin, how can I perform austerities?

How can I turn my attention to Thee, O Lord, and forsake domestic affairs?"<sup>10</sup>

"Hear ye all, I declare this truth;

<sup>6</sup> Thirty-three *Swyyas*, XXI.

<sup>7</sup> Thirty-three *Swyyas*, XV.

<sup>8</sup> *Ram Avatar*.

<sup>9</sup> *Krishan Avatar*.

<sup>10</sup> *Krishan Avatar*.

<sup>5</sup> Macauliffe, I. 174.



Only those who practise love obtain the Lord."<sup>11</sup>

"They who undergo bodily suffering  
And cease not to love their God  
Shall all get to heaven."<sup>12</sup>

"He is not concerned with celestial appearances or omens;

This fact is known to the whole world.

He is not appeased by incantations,  
written or spoken, or by charms."<sup>13</sup>

"On seeing any person in trouble,  
take compassion on him, and remove  
his sufferings to the best of your  
ability. Then the Primal Being will be  
merciful unto you."<sup>14</sup>

"The Temple and the Mosque are the  
same; the Hindu and the Muslim forms  
of worship are the same; all men are  
the same, although they appear differ-  
ent under different influences.

The bright and the dark, the ugly  
and the beautiful, the Hindus and the  
Muslims have developed themselves  
according to the fashions of different  
countries.

All have the same eyes, the same  
ears, the same body and the same  
build,—a compound of the same four  
elements."<sup>15</sup>

"He who keeps alight the unquench-  
able torch of truth, and never swerves  
from the thought of one God;

Who has full love and confidence in  
God; and does not put his faith, even  
by mistake, in fasting or the graves of  
Mohammedan saints, Hindu cremato-  
riums, or Yogis' places of sepulchre;

Who only recognizes the one God  
and no pilgrimages, alms, non-destruc-  
tion of life, penances, or austerities;

And in whose heart the light of the

Perfect One shines,—he is to be recog-  
nized as a pure member of the  
Khalsa."<sup>16</sup>

In this way, the Guru tried to so  
discipline the judgment of his people  
that it might not 'be thawed from the  
true quality by sweet words, low crook-  
ed courtesies and base spaniel-fawning.'  
That the Sikhs fully profited by the  
training, is evident from the following  
episode: Once the Guru, followed by  
his disciples, was passing by the tomb of  
saint Dadu. In order to test the truth  
of their judgment, he lowered his arrow  
before the tomb and waited to see what  
the Sikhs would think of it. It is re-  
corded<sup>17</sup> that the Sikhs at once  
surrounded their leader and asked him  
to come down from his horse and ex-  
plain himself. They said he had broken  
one of the principal tenets of his faith  
and must be tried by regular Commis-  
sion of Five. He was obliged to con-  
fess and exculpate himself by paying a  
fine of 125 rupees. Verily, the light of  
the Perfect One had come to shine in  
them, when they could detect a flaw  
even in the most honoured of personali-  
ties in the world.

That their hold on truth was strong,

<sup>16</sup> *Swyyas*, 2.

<sup>17</sup> Macauliffe, V. 228. In later days, too,  
the Sikhs showed this courage of conviction  
in many critical movements of their history.  
Bhai Mani Singh was a most revered Sikh  
of his time, for learning as well as for  
character. He was the high priest of the  
Golden Temple. But when he tried to re-  
arrange the text of the Holy Granth, an  
act of unprecedented effrontery to the spirit  
of the Gurus, he was publicly censured and  
had to ask pardon.

Banda had been appointed leader of the  
Sikhs after the tenth Guru, who had asked  
him to remain humble and considerate to-  
wards the Sikhs. But he soon began to  
deviate from the path chalked out for him  
and set himself up as a Guru. The true  
Sikhs at once raised a voice of dissent and  
finding him obstinate in his career of rapine  
and conquest, they renounced their allegiance  
to him. These dissenters were called the  
Tat Khalsa and the rest the Bandai Khalsa.

<sup>11</sup> *Swyyas*.

<sup>12</sup> *Vachitra Natak*, 6.

<sup>13</sup> From the Guru's introduction to the  
translation of the Puranic tales.

<sup>14</sup> Macauliffe, V. 160.

<sup>15</sup> *Akal Ustat*, 86.

and their sympathies unwarped even by the passion of war, is shown by the following. In a fight with Mohammedans, a Sikh named Kanaiya, was found distributing water to the friends and foes alike. When asked why he did so, he said he did not see any difference between Sikh and Mohammedan. "We fight against the evil in men, not against their suffering." Another episode shows that women, too, had developed in them the spirit of duty, and would keep to the side of truth even when their husbands and brothers had shunned it. For this reason, the sixth Guru has called woman 'the conscience of man.' When the priests of Amritsar had disowned Guru Teg Bahadur and would not allow him to enter the Golden Temple, it was the women of Amritsar who came forward and, got their pardon. In the time of Guru Govind Singh, however, they had to perform a harder task. While the Guru was hard pressed in Anandpur, a certain number of Manjha Sikhs had the hardihood to write a disclaimer and forsake his service. When these deserters came to their homes, their women would not let them enter. They refused to open their doors to those who

Even in the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Ranjit Singh's imperialism had destroyed the democratic spirit, there were some signs of the old discernment still visible. When Maharaja Ranjit Singh, in spite of remonstrances from his community, still continued indulging in certain evils, he found his corrector in one of his own devoted captains. As he was pacing in the precincts of the Golden Temple, he was held up by Baba Phula Singh, who severely rebuked him in the presence of all, and said that he was unfit to be the leader of the Khalsa until he had mended his ways. He at once confessed his guilt and submitted that he was ready to pay any fine that a Commission of Five might impose upon him. Phula Singh said that fine was no punishment for him; he should be flogged in public. The Maharaja at once bared his back and offered himself for being flogged.

had shown their backs to the national leader. Shamed to desperation, the men consented to be led by a woman named Mai Bhago, who came with them a-colonelling to the field of Muktsar and fought bravely until all her companions were dead. These forty martyrs are conspicuously remembered in the daily prayer of the Sikhs.

The course of discipline was complete, and it was time that the Sikhs were given the full responsibility of their position.

Much of this responsibility had already been vouchsafed to them. When baptising them at Anandpur, Guru Govind Singh had shown them what their position was to be in future. After administering the ceremony of baptism to his five tried Sikhs, the Guru stood up before them and, with folded hands, begged them to administer baptism to himself in precisely the same manner as he had administered it to them. A poet who was present exclaimed: "Wonderful Govind Singh! who is Guru and disciple both." It was wonderful, indeed, to behold the Master clasping his hands in supplication before his own Sikhs and requesting them to initiate him as one equal with them in the ranks of the Khalsa. It meant that the Khalsa was the Guru elect, that after Guru Govind Singh his Sikhs would occupy his position.

He invested them with this responsibility even before their character was completed, as he knew that the most effective way of teaching a nation how to wield authority is to allow it to wield authority. Without actually doing a task, a man can never learn the practice of it. The Guru wanted to see personally how the Sikhs would conduct themselves in the newly acquired position. So he still maintained himself as their admired chief, until they had



acquired sufficient character to be left alone and guide themselves.

When in the end he saw, as shown above, that the light of the Perfect One had come to shine in them clearly and without intermission, he decided to give up even what was left. At his death-bed, he announced that the Khalsa with the Holy Granth was to be the Guru in future. It was to guide itself by the teaching of the ten Gurus as incorporated in the Sikh Scriptures and also by the collective sense of the community. Wherever there were five Sikhs elected as the best of all present, there was the spirit of the Guru among them.

The Guru had led the Sikhs from generation to generation in the practice of virtues that make a conscientious nation; and now that the task was over, the Master merged his personality in the ranks of his disciples. All Sikh history had been moving towards this divine event. The cows had become lions, and there was no need left to protect them from outside. There was to be no personal Guru in future. Wherever there were Sikhs, they were to organize themselves into *sangats* or congregations, and whenever there was an important question, affecting the whole community or any part of it, to be decided, the *sangat* was to elect from among its members five *Pyaras* or Loved Ones, and submit to them the execution of all the work in hand. When a Sikh committed some fault, it was expected that he should present himself before the nearest *sangat* and, standing with folded hands in the lowest place where shoes are kept, he should make an open confession of his fault. The congregation would refer the question to a duly elected Commission of Five, who would consider the case among themselves and report their decision to the assembly. The assemb-

ly would then confirm the decision by a hearty shout of *Sat Sri Akal*. The punishment meted out was willingly received, and was euphemistically called getting a reward or salary. There was no rancour left in the heart of the man punished, for the punishment came from the whole *sangat* represented by the five Loved Ones. The resolutions passed in such assemblies were called *gurmattas*. When a *gurmatta* was duly carried, it was supposed to have received the sanction of the Guru, and any attempt made afterwards to subvert it, was taken as a sacrilegious act.

This constitution worked smoothly as long as there was no disturbing factor of greed for personal power. The Khalsa was forged as an instrument of good for the world. Wherever there was a Sikh, there was a garrison of defence for the weak and the lowly. Though, owing to the exigencies of the time, Sikhs were always prepared for war, yet all of them were not fighters. It is very unfortunate that Clio's ears are more sensitive to the rattling of the sword than to the music of peace, and therefore the military actions of the Sikhs of that time fill all the space in Sikh history. Otherwise, the Sikhs did not always fight. When not under the ban of the Moham-  
medan Government, they were usually engaged in agriculture, trade and other peaceful professions; and, in the midst of these occupations, they lived the life of pure philanthropy. We read of Sikhs going to Kabul, Balkh and Bukhara in guise of faqirs to find out and bring back their brethren, who were taken there as slaves by Moham-  
medan invaders. Sujan Rai of Batala writes about them in his *Khulasatul-tawarikh*: "In their eyes, their own people and others are all alike. They serve their friends and do not ill-treat those who are their enemies. They

consider it very meritorious to do social service. If a wayfarer arrives at mid-night and takes the name of Guru Nanak, he is treated as a friend and brother, no matter he be known or unknown, provided he is not an evil-doer, a thief, or a robber."

There was no pride of position or servility born of poverty. All were brethren of the same family. Even in these days of his downfall, the Khalsa still shows some glimmering signs of old glory. One may still find at big Sikh gatherings millionaires taking simple food on bare ground with the poorest of men; reises and Sirdars serving bare-footed in the common kitchen. Not many years ago, His late Highness, Maharaja Sir Hira Singh of Nabha was seen fanning the Sikh assembly at the Khalsa College, Amritsar. These and other beauties still left remind us of what the Sikh character

must have been as the Gurus made it.

But there is no denying the fact that many of these characteristics vanished within a hundred and fifty years; the reason being that the leaders trained in the school of Guru Govind Singh were soon put away or martyred, and the Sikhs, with the establishment of *misals*, began to fight for dominion and power for themselves. Moreover, the Sikhs being driven out of their homes, their temples, which had been organized as the main sources of Sikh teaching, fell into the hands of non-Sikhs and became the means of spreading un-Sikh principles. It is thus that the stream, which had started from ten main-heads to cleanse and fertilize the earth, has remained sunk beneath its surface for such a long time. But it has not lost itself for ever. It will rise again, and give its old song, its old dance, and will again be a beautiful sight to see.

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## THE RELEASE OF PHILOSOPHY

BY PRAMATHANATH MUKHOPADHYAYA

### PROMISE OF A RICH HARVEST

Towards the close of the nineteenth century certain signs began to appear in some fields of human enquiry, which indicated, beyond the possibility of doubt, that as a result of man's scientific effort certain seeds had been sown which were destined to yield a new and startling harvest of crops in the near future. And the present century was startled not merely by the novelty of the results but also by the change in outlook and orientation, in methods and hopes which revealed themselves as soon as a new day broke in clearness

settled. We shall not refer to the new discoveries in science, and make particular mention of any of them, though many of them are of an epoch-making nature; we are here concerned with the general tendency of these new facts or rather new appreciations of old facts.

And we are concerned with the new tendencies in so far as they bear upon and affect what has been of supreme interest to man in all times—an interest that has overshadowed every other—the meaning and reality of man's freedom and happiness. The question that has stirred his inmost depths and the problem that has attracted and perplex-



ed him more than any other relate to this. The universe has been made to yield its secrets; but do we know all its secret that is essential, or at least, such part of the secret as seems relevant to the solution of the most engaging problem of man? Is science in a position to insure the satisfaction of the deepest yearnings of man, in the scheme of the world-order that she has been able to draw up? Does the constitution of the universe not merely safeguard but also afford an unstinted scope for the evolution of the possibilities of man?

#### SCIENCE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

So long as science was confined to her hard shell of nineteenth-century dogmatism, and philosophy was groaning under her yoke of narrow sensationalism, a reassuring answer was not given, and was not thought possible. A nineteenth century man of science was apt to regard his chart of the universe a self-complacently neat and rounded whole—a scheme which left its windows open indeed for the admission of new facts, but its doors barred against the challenge of any revolutionary principles. A constitution of the universe had been drawn up for all time, and all facts old or new were expected to submit to its governance. That a challenge might come from new facts or that a revolt might arise from a demand for a more adequate explanation of those already known, was not deemed possible. We had been permitted to look into Nature's own order-sheet for the rule of natural phenomena, and it was a comfortable assurance of the man of science not only that unruly events do not occur, which even now might be thought a permissible hypothesis, but that the order-sheet in so far as shewn to him was sacrosanct and

inviolable, and admitted of no question and revision, which is, in any case, a dogmatic position. There are always more things and more truths—relating to facts as well as to principles—than are dreamt of in Philosophy.

Science might have to plead guilty to a milder impeachment if she had been content to play the part of Providence in her own house—the so-called physical universe; but not unoften she was also caught poaching upon provinces which are not her own preserves—the realms of life and consciousness. Physics was allowed to overshadow, if not dominate, the study of both Life and Mind. She favoured, if not actually required, a mechanistic or deterministic outlook upon these things. Astronomers now tell us of island universes beyond our galactic system; but no one perhaps will seriously contend that these island universes enjoy a domestic monopoly of a new set of mechanical laws and principles. It is not thought that the laws of motion, for example, will not hold good in those outlying regions of space, or that spectroscopy will fail to be an index to the chemical constitution of the stuff of those worlds. Similar perhaps was the attitude of the man of science with regard to the island universes of vital and mental phenomena. They were simply tolerated as an outlying region of phenomena which were suffered to exist, but their right to exist as independent phenomena or facts *sui generis* was viewed with suspicion, if not flatly denied. Under the official review certain aspects of these phenomena passed muster, and in the Comity of Sciences the sciences of Biology and Psychology were admitted more as a matter of grace than as a matter of right, and they were shewn to back seats. The front row was to be occupied by the strictly mathematical and experimental sciences. Biology and Psychology were

given domicile, but outside the courtesy and formality of "law," they scarcely got admitted to the orthodox clubs, and were politely nodded away as aliens, as soon as they ventured to trespass into the sanctuary of the exclusive clubs. A correct costume and correct manners were insisted upon in the case of an occasional visitor, but inflexibly stringent were the rules of admission to membership. Biology and Psychology long waited in the ante-chambers hat in hand, but their credentials have, perhaps, not yet come up to the requirements.

The nineteenth century colossus of scientific achievement, was not however without its feet of clay. Its forte was also its foible. It had plunged its piers not into the rock of truth, but into the sand of unwarranted assumption. Its first principles were not axioms but postulates, and its postulates were "convenient fictions." Its absolute space and time and mass, its conservation of matter and force, its universal causation and uniformity of Nature were convenient fictions, and were so recognized by some of their first-rank professors. Outside these fundamentals, Science was frankly expected to do her job only by what is called "limitation of the data." A real, concrete, live thing is never its subject of study. It presents a problem of unmanageable complexity. The mutual attraction of three bodies instead of two was a problem for mathematical geniuses to grapple with. But what is this problem by the side of the infinitely complex problem of universal attraction? Science has always to simplify her case by scraping the irrelevant details. But it is well to remember that what are irrelevant in a given frame of reference, may not be so in a different frame of reference.

The universe of Science is therefore a universe of convention. Its Space and

Time, its Ether and Force, its Mass and Motion are all conceptual models or moulds into which live real facts cannot be pressed whole and entire, and out of which they issue as mangled approximations and dead abstractions. By reason of Science possessing this character, she has been the foster-mother of sensationalism in Philosophy. Things are nothing but clusters of sensations, actual and possible—it was said. Space, Time, Mass and Motion are the causal factors: the universe of perception is an ideal growth out of these causal roots. But are not the roots themselves conceptual? So Science has been believed to lead inevitably to the grave of realism. Its logical outcome in Philosophy has been supposed to be either agnosticism or sensationalism.

It is true that fresh attempts are being made to save realism by shewing that our knowledge of the external world both implies and requires a substratum of reals that are not altogether falsely presented in experience, and are being, with increasing fulness and correctness, represented by the facts and principles of science. For my part, this vindication of lay experience and science has always appeared to be of real value. It is a reassuring gesture that allays our natural misgivings as to the world in which we live, move and have our being, not revolving upon any real and substantial hinges. A world of cobweb has ever failed to bring its appeal home to us. It has lacked points of appeal. It has interested us as a mirage from which escape is sought, and not as an abode and habitation where the satisfaction of our vital needs may be attained, and the hopes and yearnings of our advance and betterment are insured.

So long as experience is a phantasm, and science was supposed to lend a weird and unknown background to this infinitely diversified illusive projection,



only a philosophy of transcendence pointing to a way of escape out of the far-flung spell of this film-house was the sort of philosophy that mattered.

#### A PHILOSOPHY OF DESPAIR

But such escape has not always been thought possible. A frankly sceptic attitude has often been taken. The question—Is Metaphysics possible?—has sometimes been answered in the negative. A religion of Nature or a religion of Hero-worship together with an utilitarian ethics and social scheme, have been supposed to have met the spiritual requirements of many. But it is idle to pretend that a philosophy or a negation of philosophy which denied the more fundamental values of human existence—man's essential freedom, bliss and survival after death—can meet the central needs and requirements of the Human Spirit. A sceptical philosophy, whatever redeeming features it may sometimes have presented in its altruistic social sanctions, is a philosophy of despair. It is born out of a disappointment that our logic has failed to justify our deepest and most essential beliefs.

A philosophy which merely plays to the gallery is not helpful, and may in fact be worse than useless. It is not the proper function of philosophy to frame conventions of thought and behaviour, but to find, or try to find, the ultimate sanctions for all conventions, to examine the foundations of all essential beliefs. Even science may offer us a house of convention to live in; and Ethics and Politics may keep our private or public house according to an economy of common sense and common prudence only. The ulterior question whether that house is or is not a rightful or permanent lodging, and whether that economy is or is not one of assured worth, remains

unsolved. Whether the bricks of that house are facts or fictions, whether the mortar used is objective, nexuses or only subjective norms and conventions, is a point which science itself has perpetually raised and presented, but never has met. An enquiry has always been thought necessary as to the nature and limits of our knowledge of the external world and also of our minds. And the interest has been not merely theoretical. All the vital issues of life hang on this enquiry. Is the constitution of the universe such as to give us a fair field for an exercise of what is best in us, and for the satisfaction of what is deepest in us? Is it a field indifferent in relation to the moral, aesthetic and religious values, or is it hostile or helpful? Does our experience of the Self again possess a background of assurance that it is essentially imperishable, free and blissful? A verdict of *ignoramus* has not proved less unsatisfying than a verdict of flat denial or negation. Philosophy has not been happy or even easy by debarring the possibility of knowledge. A Critique of Pure Reason has never laid the matters of vital moment to rest. A Critique of Practical Reason and a Critique of Judgment have been required to meet an insistent demand that cannot be stifled.

#### IMPRISONMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy had been in shackles not of her own making. She had abdicated her rightful authority to the sciences, and shut herself in a prison the key of which she had delivered to her gaoler. She had to take her orders from others. She must abide by the findings and decisions of the special sciences. She must not trust intuition and *a priori* ideas, but must depend upon the observations and experiments and inductions of the special sciences. Of these objective find-

ings were deemed more trustworthy than the subjective. Science is measurement, and whatever phenomena readily lend themselves to measurement are taken as more dependable than those which do not appear to be so pliable. Economics became a science to the extent that the methods of Calculus could be applied to it. So also in the cases of Biology and Psychology. There is no doubt an aspect of our universe of experience which is amenable to measurement, and this embraces not only the so-called objective half, but also the subjective half of that universe. But there is also another which is beyond or above measurement, and of which science as such is not competent to take cognisance. This immeasurable and alogical always eludes the grip of the calculator, and always exceeds the span of the foot-rule and the compass. Philosophy has her justification in the making of an endeavour to satisfy herself that such an ultra-scientific realm actually exists; and if it does, to locate it and survey it, if and so far that is possible. She is also to correlate it to the realm of science proper. The task of settling the "scientific" frontiers of science is hers, and the burden she can neither lay aside nor shift it to other shoulders. That would be like shifting the judge's office to the plaintiff or his witnesses.

But the key has now turned in her prison door, and her gaoler will presently be in her cell and present her own release order to be signed by herself. If the new discoveries in the scientific realm, not only as regards facts but also as regards methods and principles, bear any deeper implication, it is this that science is without any rightful warrant to erect any prison house for philosophy to be shut up in, to lay down any limits to the possibility of knowledge and will to be and become. The new conceptions of Space and Time, of Energy and Atomic

Constitution, and also many new advances in the knowledge of physical, chemical, biological and psychological facts and laws, have all conspired and plotted to blow up any such prison house. The present tendency is decidedly against any dogmatic assertion of the supremacy of matter and force, the absolutism of mechanistic determinism, the universal uniformity of natural occurrence and governance, the impossibility of the transcendental and improbability of the so-called mysterious and miraculous. The tiny modern atom has proved powerful enough to upset many of the "invulnerable" positions of nineteenth-century scientific dogmatism. The atom has shewn that the seemingly smallest thing is only seemingly so—that it is great in its energy and great in the appointments of that energy, and yet that all this greatness has not made it something ultimate and indestructible, but only a bubble, with a longer lease of life than perhaps the suns and the stars, blown up into being, we know not how, and blown out of being, we know not also how, on the bosom of a Being which may be Ether, or Space-Time Continuum, or any other imperfectly understood thing, but certainly is not matter in the ordinary physical acceptance of the word. The Quantum Theory of Energy, again, has profoundly affected the older ideas of the continuity of the dynamic entity, and also, as we shall presently see, of the causal operation. Our new Space-Time concept has proved a powerful solvent so far as the absolute character of the ordinary relations of space and time are concerned. Physics has been emerging out of the mouldering heaps of old physical conceptions, and building itself on the gravestone of swaggering nineteenth-century materialism, empiricism and mechanistic determinism.



And yet there has never been a compelling reason for philosophy having consented to sell her birthright for a mess of scientific pottage. It is true science had persuaded herself, upon insufficient data as it subsequently appeared, that any condition of the universe as a whole is determined by the given antecedent assemblage of conditions which, as many orthodox physicists thought, are reducible to a given configuration of matter and a given distribution of motion; and that the realms of life and matter are either included in the universe of matter and motion as constituent and dependent parts—a more likely hypothesis—or island universes having commerce with the main continent but enjoying the status of a sovereign state—an unlikely hypothesis. On a recent occasion, a scientist who has the authority to speak in the name of science thus contrasted the spirit of new science with that of the old: “When we oldsters were boys, science meant knowledge. Science means no such thing now, because there is no such thing as knowledge: there is only a partial emergence from ignorance. Formerly, science was bold and dogmatic and announced eternal truth. Now,

science is timid and apologetic and propounds momentary hypothesis. . . . Formerly, science purported to observe facts and to explain them. The facts were positive and the explanations were final. To-day, we have neither facts nor explanations, but only appearances and theories. Thus, we no longer speak (scientifically) of matter and its properties as the sole reality; nor should we be grossly unscientific if we ventured to speak of matter as the sole illusion. This may seem to carry us back towards the ancient Hindu idea of ‘Maya’ (or mirage); but what then? . . . And as with matter, so with the properties of matter. The substantiality of a substance, the solidity of a solid, the fluidity of a fluid, the ponderability of a weight, the motility of a moving body, all these are now seen to be mere mental pictures that may loosen thought, not finalities to enchain thought.” He further adds that whilst old science rated only its latest results as true and all previous results which did not tally with these as false, new science has now a more generous outlook inasmuch as it considers all results, earlier or later, as being only relatively true.

*(To be concluded)*

## BRIDGE UNIVERSITY

BY E. F. MALCOLM-SMITH, M.A., PH.D. (CANTAB)

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Any account of one of the two great English Universities is bound to suffer from two inherent difficulties—that of choosing what to say from the mass of available material, and that of explaining a system of education unique in university history. It is no easy task

to show an outsider what that system is. A visitor to Cambridge sees a number of Colleges, and a number of buildings, most of them modern, which are pointed out to him as University buildings, such as laboratories and lecture rooms, the Senate House and the

University Library. Hence he is led to ask the inevitable questions, "What part of the University is a College, and do the sum total of the Colleges constitute the University?" The answer to the second is that the University could exist without the Colleges, and yet each member of the University is by Statute bound to be a member of a College. The difference, moreover, is not merely a matter of buildings; a student pays college fees and university fees; there are college lectures and university lectures often given by one and the same people; there is college discipline and university discipline, and yet it is impossible to imagine the one without the other, so interdependent has their existence become.

How has this state of things come to pass? The answer is that like all really typical English institutions, Oxford and Cambridge have not been formed according to plan, but, like the immortal Topsy of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, they have "just growed." Otherwise neither University would occupy the locality it does, for both have unpleasant climates, even for England. Cambridge owed its existence to the neighbourhood of three great monastic houses, Ely, Crowland, and Bury St. Edmonds, and to the famous Stourbridge Fair, lasting from August 24 to September 14 each year, and it in turn was due to the existence of the river near the town. The monastic houses were responsible for the growth of famous Grammar Schools in the town to which the Fair brought such a vast concourse of people year by year, and hence it became a centre where scholars congregated. The first University Charter of which we have cognisance is dated 1231 in the reign of Henry III, but it is probable that earlier ones existed, but have been lost.

The collegiate system was the work

of two men, Walter de Merton, Chancellor of England and afterwards Bishop of Rochester, and Hugh de Balsham, Bishop of Ely. Peterhouse was founded by the latter in 1284. From that date until 1,600 Colleges were founded and endowed by a long train of the greatest in the land, Kings and Queens, noble Lords and Ladies, Bishops and other Churchmen. The names of some of them betray their origin. King's was founded by Henry VI, and Queen's by his wife, Margaret of Anjou. Religion is responsible for the names of Jesus, Christ's, Emmanuel, Corpus Christi, Trinity, Magdalene and St. John's. A College in its inception was an endowed foundation providing for the residence and maintenance of teachers and masters or graduates, and for the free education of poor scholars, to whose number were added, according to the capacity of the building, other students who could afford to live at their own charges. Each College is independent and autonomous, and each forms part and parcel of the University in virtue of its union with the incorporated society of Chancellor, Masters and Scholars, which formed at first and still forms "the University." The earliest Colleges consisted of a hostel or scholars' lodging house, and a common meeting and dining room or hall. To this was added from very early times a Chapel. The Colleges now contain one or more quadrangles of rooms and College buildings, called Courts, a Chapel, a hall, a combination room and a library. The Courts vary in size from the Great Court of Trinity covering more than two acres to the small Courts of Queen's and Magdalene round their diminutive grass plots. The two great ages of College building were the reign of Edward III (1327-1377) and the reign of the Tudors (1485-1608). During this latter period the revenues of the



religious houses and guilds suppressed by Henry VIII and Edward VI were used in the service of the New Learning associated with the wider term—the Renaissance. The two great ages find their noblest expression in Trinity, the largest of the Cambridge Colleges. It was Henry VIII who expanded the College built by Edward III and known as King's Hall into the present College, and his daughters, Mary and Elizabeth continued his benefactions. It was designed as the home of the new learning and largely endowed with abbey lands. In Henry VIII's own words it was intended "for the development and perpetuation of religion, for the cultivation of wholesome study in all departments of learning, knowledge of languages, the education of youth in piety, virtue, self-restraint and knowledge, charity towards the poor, and the relief of the afflicted and distressed," surely a worthy epitome of all that a University education should stand for. And the edifice is worthy of it. "Of all the scholastic buildings in the world," so writes one of the historians of Cambridge, "the great Court of Trinity is that which best suggests the majesty and spaciousness of learning. Here one receives the impression of adequacy, balance, clearness, spaciousness, elevation, serenity, a certain high power of the imagination—the mathematical qualities, the qualities of the seeker after truth; an impression of the simple force of what is simply clear, the simple grandeur of that which can dispense with the mysterious; of the dignity which accompanies those who have looked upon things as they are in themselves, and have nothing adventitious to offer, yet what they offer holds a curious power of satisfying."

It is in fact the union of classical scholarship to the exact sciences that

distinguishes Cambridge learning from that of Oxford. Within the memory of men still living Honours could only be obtained by an examination including the two—Classics and Mathematics, and even now those who head the lists in those two Triposes (Honours Examinations) have the distinguishing titles of Senior Classic and Senior Wrangler respectively. From the study of Mathematics has sprung the scientific school typified in the great modern laboratories, some of the finest in the world, and carrying in its ranks a succession of distinguished names from Bacon and Newton to Darwin. Even Mechanical Science, the most modern of all, is included and has a Tripos of its own. Certain Colleges through the circumstances of their foundation are connected with certain branches of learning—thus, Gonville and Caius with Medicine and Trinity Hall with Law.

Degrees are divided into two kinds, Ordinary and Honours Degrees, both giving the same title of Bachelor of Arts. The two Examinations are distinct and each has a syllabus of its own, that of the Ordinary Examination being definitely of a lower standard than the Honours. The name, Bachelor of Arts, is in some ways a misleading one, since it can be obtained in any one of the following subjects, Mathematics, Classics, Modern Languages, Oriental Languages, Law, History, Economics, Geography, Natural Science, Moral Science and Mechanical Science. The degree of Master of Arts is not given as the result of examination, but obtained by payment of fees to the University Chest a stated number of terms after the degree of Bachelor of Arts has been obtained, and carries with it a vote in the Senate, in other words a share in the government of the University. Degrees are conferred by the Vice-Chancellor in person in the



Senate House on certain days set aside for the purpose. The man who has qualified for a degree appears in evening dress wearing the appropriate cap, gown and hood of the degree to which he is entitled, kneels in front of the Vice-Chancellor, places his hands in his, and the degree is bestowed by a Latin formula. There are other degrees, all of them except the Mus. Bac. (Bachelor of Music) being taken in addition to the Arts degree. Two are given for research, the M. Litt., and the Ph.D., the former entailing two years' residence in Cambridge, the latter three, and the Thesis presented may be in any subject. These degrees are open to graduates of other Universities. There are also degrees for Medicine and Law, both being taken after the student has qualified for practice in those professions. Some of the Colleges require their students to read for a Tripos and do not allow them to take the easier Ordinary Degree. This has been the case with the two women's colleges, Girton and Newnham, since their foundation. King's was the first of the men's colleges to insist on an Honours Degree, and its ruling has been recently adopted by several others.

The University has grown until barely a third of the undergraduates can live in College. The rest live in licensed lodgings, where the discipline with regard to hours is as strict as in College, since the keeper of the lodgings loses his license, and with it his chief means of livelihood, if he allows irregularities. But every man spends one or two of his three years in College, the practice varying with the accommodation available in the different Colleges, some having their students in residence in their first year, some in their last. Scholars live in College for the whole of their terms. All undergraduates are bound to dine in hall every night, and

attendance in the College Chapel is compulsory for members of the Church of England. Each College is responsible for the discipline of its own men, though most of the rules are framed by University Statute.

It was fitting that a University which has owed so much in the past to the benefactions of women, the Countesses of Clare and Pembroke, Sir Philip Sidney's sister, the Countess of Sussex, and three queens, Margaret of Anjou, Mary and Elizabeth, should have been the first to open its doors to women. Their number is limited to 500 owing to lack of space in University laboratories and lecture rooms, but they form the two most famous English Colleges for women, Newnham and Girton. Their students are not full members of the University as at Oxford, being excluded from voting in the Senate, and from some of the University Societies and Clubs, such as the Union. Otherwise they enjoy the same privileges as the men, and are recognized by Statute as forming an integral part of the University, so that their tenure is secure.

It must, however, be emphasized that a "Cambridge education" means something much wider than mere learning. Of University activities there is no end, and the freshman is apt to be overwhelmed by the multiplicity of College and University Societies. It is possible to have so many interests, each legitimate in itself, that study is crowded out altogether. On the other hand it is a mistake "to allow your studies to interfere with your education," as one of the Undergraduate weaklies put it. The zealous student, who spends all his or her time in lecture rooms and libraries misses the best that University life can give, the companionship of his fellows, and the wide range of interests that go to make up culture.



Even in her Examinations Cambridge is concerned that they should echo "the majesty and the spaciousness of learning." It is impossible to cram for them. Nothing but a wide course of reading will avail anything when the candidate is faced with the questions he is expected to answer, and on which his future often depends.

Cambridge offers gifts to each man and woman according to their several capacity, and so each will give a different answer to the question as to what good there is in a university education. What I gained from three years before the War and five after it is therefore a purely personal matter and will differ from the experience of others. Yet we have all shared in a common life, and residence at Cambridge makes one a member of a vast free-masonry based on the memories of three years spent in a place where there was leisure for thought and discussion in an atmosphere typified in the mellowed dignity of old grey buildings, infused with the thought and achievement of past generations, and kept alive by the constant stream of youth passing through it.

My storehouse of memories seems to contain much that is trivial, and yet what a gracious and fragrant room it is. In it are packed away the experiences of three care-free years before the shadows fell across Europe, and five after the War. There are very few of the companions of those earlier years left, and when I went back to Cambridge four years after the Armistice it was in truth a place of ghosts. They could not live long in the constantly renewed life of the University and yet their presence is a real one, for they have become part and parcel of a great tradition and the beauty of Cambridge has become a more cherished possession since they saved it from the fate of

Louvain or Ypres. As the impressions of the past rise in my mind they form a strange kaleidoscope. There is the memory of a room in the gateway of King's where every week eight of us used to foregather for tea during the winter terms. Our average age was nineteen or twenty, and we firmly believed that we could remould this sorry scheme of things entire. With the enthusiasm of youth we discussed every subject under the sun and put forward solutions for all the ills that flesh is heir to, while the outlines of the room grew blurred with the gathering twilight and the blue haze of tobacco smoke, and in the pauses of conversation the cllop of horses' hooves came in through the open window, for the day of the motor car had hardly dawned. Then there are memories of the river, of lazy days in punt or canoe, reading or talking or just watching the reflection of the bridges and College buildings on the Backs, or the trailing weeds of the Upper River,—days when Pallida iris and pink tulips nodded from the bank in Clare Fellows' Garden, and when Grantchester meadows were golden with buttercups and the hedges white with May and a cuckoo called from the top of a poplar in Paradise : lunches or teas under the apple blossom in the Orchard at Grantchester; the excitement of learning to use a punt pole and the apparent hopelessness of ever controlling the long unwieldy craft with such an implement and inducing it to go straight instead of round in circles. Then King's Chapel occupies as prominent a place in my mind as it does in the town of Cambridge in real life. It is the building that is supposed to have inspired Milton's famous lines :

"There let the pealing organ blow  
To the full-voiced choir below,  
In service high and anthems clear."  
How often have I slipped into the back

of the Antechapel to listen to the anthem at Evensong and sat in the vast building whose roof was so high above me that I could scarcely see the fan vaulting in the light from the candles in the choir. Boys' voices unaccompanied would soar into the vast height and echo down the arches, or the organ would thunder until the air shook and even the grey walls themselves were vibrant and alive with the waves of sound dashing against them. Then I remember a service when the organ played the Dead March while a packed congregation stood to reverent attention for the passing of a great King in 1910, and a more recent occasion when a true music lover had died in the prime of life—he was assistant organist of the Chapel—and at his Funeral Service the chorus and orchestra he had helped to train sang those parts of the Brahms' Requiem that tell of Death and Resurrection. My own particular tastes led me to the musical and dramatic activities of the University and College. There were the concerts given by professional musicians, where one heard how instruments should be played, and there was the enormous amount that one helped to make oneself. It was faulty in execution, no doubt, but since it was concerned with the greatest of its kind in the world it was a never-failing source of amusement. We could collect singers and players of the piano, of stringed instruments and of the flute with ease, and spent most of our Sundays making music. I assisted at the performance of two old English operas in the Hall of Trinity, and of

a Handel Opera at the theatre—memories impregnated with the smell of paint, since part of my share was the painting of many of the costumes—at the production of big Chorus and Orchestral works, such as Bach's B Minor Mass, at the Guildhall, in King's Chapel, and in Ely Cathedral, and I attended plays innumerable given by the amateur dramatic societies of the University, where all the women's parts are played by men: Greek plays in Greek or English, Elizabethan and Restoration drama, and an occasional modern or original production, such as the Footlights' May Week Revue. In addition there was the vast field of sport, so beloved of the Englishman—memories of the tow path at the Lent Races in a biting East wind, or Ditton Paddock at the May Races, when it should have been warm and sunny, but too often was neither—of summer mornings watching cricket at Fenner's and winter afternoons at Rugby matches, when the toes slowly froze—and the excitement of hockey and tennis matches when one was playing oneself. And as a background to all the outward frivolity was the pursuit of "sound learning" in a subject that was a matter of individual choice, and running like a thread of gold through all the memories of University life was the companionship of men and women of like mind. Without friends life would be a poor thing indeed, and so perhaps the greatest gift Cambridge bestows is that of friendship which outlasts by a lifetime the sad day when a man goes down for the last time.

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# WILL CHRISTIANITY DISPLACE HINDUISM?

BY SATYAPRIYA SHARMA

(Concluded from the last issue)

## THE PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA

Just as the Western nations have been inordinately fond of fighting, so their religion—militant Christianity, too, has progressed through warfare and bloodshed. Imbued with the spirit of imperialism in religion it has allied itself with the powers dominated by political and economic imperialism in India and elsewhere. In the words of Dr. Sudhindra Bose, Christianity in India “has two different faces : one is the face of the lowly Nazarene; the other is the face of the conqueror.” The Christian missionary, therefore, has been in many instances a full-fledged imperialist.

Dr. Parmalee—an American professor of repute—remarks in his book, *Oriental and Occidental Culture*, “Missionary work has been both the forerunner and the follower of occidental Imperialism.” In many cases as graphically expressed by a Negro chief, “First the missionary, then the trader, then the gunboat,—and then—O Lord!”—the one has been followed by the other as a matter of course. In other cases, to quote the American professor again, “The establishment of political power has resulted in a large influx of missionaries. This cycle is well illustrated in India. The acquisition of power by Catholic countries brought numerous Catholic missionaries. The establishment of British rule brought many Protestant missionaries.”

And with a few honourable exceptions these Christian missionaries as a whole have come to India with the mentality

of “conquerors.” And they have made the Christian hospitals, the Christian educational institutions, the Young Mens’ Christian Associations, the Christian publication centres their main bases for carrying on a steady and effective campaign against the Indian religions,—and particularly Hinduism. Many of these institutions have rendered admirable service in the form of medical relief, spread of Western learning and culture. But started “with the idea of evangelisation most prominent,” they have done incalculable harm by undermining the national culture of those coming under their influence in some form or other.

A large number of the Christian hospitals, schools and colleges are substantially helped by the British Government in India pledged to religious neutrality, and they are utilized not merely for unsettling the faith of the Indians in the culture of their fathers but also for converting them to an alien religion in the bargain! Over and above these and other missionary institutions, there is also the Church of England in India, now re-named the Indian Church that gets incredibly huge grants out of the revenue paid by the people of India more than 98 per cent of whom are non-Christians!

Besides the activities of these permanent Christian institutions and organizations, one of the important task of which is to increase the number of the “faithful,” “the ‘bread and butter’ motive,” also—to quote from *Christian Mission and Oriental Civilization*,—“has been . . . a very strong one behind

certain mass movements towards Christianity—and they are of significant proportions. The threat or torture of *famine* has been a very real force in turning non-Christians towards the propagandists. . . . The need of food compels non-Christians to make an initial approaching response to missionaries.”

And the evangelists avail themselves of all opportunities for extending their “Christian charity” with a view to reap a new “harvest.” Nay, many of them have even heralded famines and similar catastrophes as “marvellous ways of the Lord” for increasing the Christian fold! “One might almost say,” wrote a Catholic Bishop of Lahore appealing for funds, “that the Divine intention has been to make the parents disappear in order that their children might be led to the mission and there find the Christian salvation. The last two periods of famine have brought to the Catholic mission thousands of orphans, who are all to-day pious Christians. If we obtain further donations we shall be able to receive, and with what joy, some more hundreds of children who have survived their parents, dead of the plague.”

#### SLANDERING INDIA FOR RAISING FUNDS FOR THE MISSIONS

As in other countries, so in India there are numerous evils which the Indians themselves are trying to eradicate. There are horrors and perversities in Western countries which may have no parallel in India. But still eager to note the mote in their neighbour’s eye but not the beam in their own, the self-seeking propagandists have exaggerated the evils in India and declared them to be universal. In the words of Dr. Coomaraswamy, “There is no part of the Christian code of ethics more consistently ignored in missionary circles than the

commandment ‘Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.’ ”

Misusing India’s proverbial hospitality and taking advantage of her spirit of toleration and helpless condition the most unscrupulous of the missionaries and crypto-missionaries have slandered the Indian people and their religions and culture in a most abominable way. And in this respect they have wronged more the “mild” Hindu than the “militant” Mussalman whom they do not dare to tease too much. Speaking of these reckless calumniators observes Sister Nivedita in righteous anger, “It seems as if to them nothing has been sacred. In all lands, doctors and clergymen see the misfortunes of the home, and professional honour keeps their lips sealed. But here all has been put upon the market. Medical records (always unpleasant reading) have been detailed in public, from platform and pulpit. And the professional consideration that ought to have prevented such dishonour only intervene, if at all, to forbid the use of the speakers’ names in connection with statements made by them in full publicity to large audiences.” And all this is done with a view to justify the existence of the Christian Missions in India, and find funds for their maintenance!

With deep feeling did Swami Vivekananda write from America, “It is not true that I am against any religion. It is equally untrue that I am hostile to the Christian missionaries in India. But I protest against certain of their methods of raising money in America. What is meant by those pictures in the school-books for children where the Hindu mother is painted as throwing her children to the crocodiles in the Ganges? . . . . What is meant by those pictures which paint a man burning his wife at a stake with his own hands, so that she may become a ghost,



and torment the husband's enemy? . . . . I have heard one of these gentlemen (missionaries) preach . . . . that in every village of India, there is a pond full of bones of little babies. . . . Part of the Sunday School education for children here consists in teaching them to hate everybody who is not a Christian, and the Hindus especially, so that from their very childhood, they may subscribe to the Missions."

Scrupulously suppressing the startling realities in the life of the Christian people in the West, the missionaries have been magnifying the evils of Hindu society, and proclaiming to the world with an air of self-satisfaction that they are veritable "angels" while the Hindus are "devils" incarnate on earth. This propaganda of vilification has brought the patience of the Hindus to the breaking point. And some of those, who are coming to know of the actual pictures of the Western countries "before which all the imaginary Missionary pictures of the Hindu society will fade away into light," are beginning to hit back. And the propagandists who have been judging others with impunity are being judged in return. It is no doubt unjust to judge a people by the evils and failures of their civilization,—a fact always forgotten by the fault-finding critics. However, as the result of Christian missionary propaganda not only foreigners but also Indian Christians, who are mostly out of touch with their non-Christian countrymen, have come to entertain pitifully mistaken notions about them and their religions. This is to no small extent working against the realization of the Indian national solidarity, cultural as well as political.

#### EVILS OF PROSELYTIZATION

In India the conversion of the cultured and the educated to Christianity has

become a thing of the past. But that of the "depressed" classes, especially in the form of the "mass movements," is proceeding on a fairly large scale. Originally the term conversion meant an inner process, a spiritual transformation. But the thoughtless attempts of professional missionary zealots, who themselves remaining unconverted, are anxious to convert others in order to swell their folds, have robbed the word of all its spiritual content. Conversion has thus degenerated into a mere formal affair—an act of proselytization implying not a change of heart, but a change of "label" made with the muttering of words and the sprinkling of water. Even this could be justified if the so-called conversion would really benefit those who come to the new religion either singly or *en masse*. But what are in fact the results of this kind of change? A close study of the subject reveals the deplorable fact that the proselytizing Missions, even if they do some good to some individuals in certain respects, are bringing about among the converts as a whole a most deplorable social and cultural chaos as well as a spirit of denationalization and disruption. The proselytes who are, as already told, recruited mostly from the lowest classes are rarely benefited morally and spiritually by the change of creed. Nay, they often degenerate in their moral and religious life.

This is borne out by the experiences of many an unbiased writer. Says a reliable contributor to *The Open Court*: "We have learnt that it is far better to eschew the Christianised native and stick to the heathen in our domestic establishments. Before we had been enlightened by personal experience we were the victims of wholesale robberies, deceits and lies. Our properties were stolen; our pantry and 'cellarette' depleted of foods and liquids by

Christian servants; and on the whole, we found them a whining, contemptible and avaricious lot. . . . Now we are happily surrounded by a small army of faithful and efficient servants: Sikhs, Mohammedans, and Hindus. Heathens all!" The new religion usually does incalculable harm to the simple faith of the convert. For, very aptly observes the writer quoted above, "Where once he called on Vishnu or Shiva, he now turns a bewildered face up to the empty skies, shorn of the garments of his dreams. . . . All things that were natural and free to him, are wrong; all that he thought good is bad; . . . his imaginative and satisfying theology is ridiculed; he is a sinner, a savage, and a creature of scornful pity. He receives a vague, elusive, cold and unfamiliar maze of words in exchange for all the intimate and beloved manifestation of his old belief."

Besides, the converts learn to look down upon their own "unconverted" countrymen, and despise their time-honoured institutions and cultures. The foreign evangelist usually takes the utmost care to segregate his "sheep," and actuates them with an intolerance from which they were free before. By "protecting" the so-called *Jnanis* or wise ones or Christians from the evil influences of the so-called *Ajnanis* or the ignorant ones or "pagans," by introducing foreign scripts among some of the Christian aboriginal tribes to the neglect of the script of the province, by imbuing people with outlandish conceptions of life and conduct, by constantly dinning into the ears of the converts that "Christianity (or rather one particular branch of it) means salvation, while all other religions mean damnation,"—by these and other means the alien missionaries have impaired the ideal of the Indian national solidarity to no small extent,

and have created baffling problems before the New India that is being born.

#### DISINTEGRATING NATIONAL LIFE

Deliberately misrepresenting India's culture and her greatest men and their teachings, the foreigners have instilled into the minds of the converts a terrible hatred against the indigenous civilization, which is sometimes more bitter than that entertained by the missionaries themselves. Speaking of "Missions and the Life of Africa," Prof. Julian Huxley observes in the *Harper's Monthly Magazine* that there was considerable trouble in Uganda "owing to the fanaticism of a native Christian who was going about inveighing against, and sometimes deliberately destroying, the little shrines outside the native huts," meant for conducting "a simple and admirable ritual of ancestor worship." With penetrating insight the writer also points out the source of this fanaticism when he says, "But as certain of the local missions have given them the name of devil houses it is not surprising that zealous converts set out to extirpate these abominations."

Another illustration may be given from Burma. The Christian propagandists have preached all along that Christianity alone is the true religion which gives salvation and that all other religions are false and as such lead their followers to eternal hell-fire. The "liberal and sympathetic" among the Christian missionaries are said to be changing this view. But, says a Christian missionary in *The Young Men of India*, "Such an attitude is still prevalent among some of our Burmese Christians, who feel that anything that has a flavour of Buddhism must be strenuously excluded from Christian belief and practice." The converts are sometimes more sternly opposed to the



old religion than their missionary teachers! Observes the same missionary writer, "I have heard a Catechist preach that if you want to go to Nirvana you must be a Christian, otherwise you will most certainly end up in hell. Baptism, he said, was the ticket which entitled you to travel on the 'Nirvana Express'!"

Such opinions are also held more or less by the vast majority of "native" Christians all over India. A further illustration on the point may be found in the sweeping remark made by a Bengali Christian in his *A Modern Hindu View of Life* (which is a criticism of Prof. Radhakrishnan's *The Hindu View of Life*), published under the blessings of the most Reverend the Metropolitan of India by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. In the concluding paragraph of his booklet the critic observes about the "root principle" from which social impurity arises in Hinduism. "That root principle is a perverse love of evil which Hinduism as a whole, unblushingly indulges in, and from which Christianity, whatever else might be alleged against it, is most conspicuously free." How amazing is the ignorance of most Indian Christians about the religion of their non-Christian countrymen may be gauged from the writing of this and other propagandists.

In his *Search After Reality* Sadhu Sundar Singh criticizes Hinduism, Buddhism and Mohammedanism with a view to prove the glory of Christianity. He speaks with an air of omniscience on topics of which he understands little! In his blessed ignorance he rushes to declare that Advaita Vedanta ends in "annihilation instead of salvation" and "puts all real knowledge to an end;" that the Yogi, "frequently falls into a state of trance in which, instead of being able to find the truth, he is in danger of being

deceived;" that "it is useless to look to Krishna for salvation for he has declared that he comes to destroy sinners rather than to save them;" and finally that it is possible that the increasing failure of Hinduism to meet the religious needs of India "will cause it to pass away even as Buddhism has already done." The writer repeats the hackneyed criticisms of the average Christian missionaries who seem to have exploited him to no small extent. But it did not strike him that Christianity may share the same fate as Buddhism, that it may be like Buddhism absorbed by Hinduism as is feared by a section of Christians in India and abroad!

Whatever may be the future, there is no doubt that the spirit of bigotry and narrowness is very common amongst those illuminated by the light of "Christian literature" and "Christian Knowledge." And this is creating new barriers and divisions among the Indian people. It is but natural, therefore, that realizing the incalculable harm done in the name of religion, a section of patriotic Indian Christians even are coming to protest vehemently against the methods of the alien "religious imperialists." With a great feeling observes Mr. Manilal C. Parekh in *The Indian Social Reformer*, "All the forces and especially foreign ones which make for disintegration in the national life and culture, cannot be allowed to work in their old way, and if they persist in such attempts they must be muzzled as has been done in Turkey and China."

#### THE HINDU'S ESTIMATE OF CHRISTIANITY

Constant attacks on Hinduism by the missionaries have produced reactions in the mind of the Hindu and he too has become "critical" in his attitude towards the much-vaunted Christian

religion and culture. In spite of the intensive propaganda of the apologists in favour of Christianity, the Hindu pagan has come to learn how modern "higher" criticism and the study of comparative religion have undermined the claim of Christ to be "the Way, the Truth and the Life," and that of the Christian religion to be the only true religion which believes as regards its founder that "there is no other name given among men whereby we may be saved." He therefore naturally holds that there is nothing in Christianity that is not found in other religions in some form or other.

As to the "uniqueness" of the life of Christ he entertains serious doubts. The lives of many Hindu prophets and saints he finds to be fuller and grander than the life of Christ much of which is "manufactured," as scholars of unquestionable honesty have clearly proved. Christ therefore can by no means be regarded as the "exclusive Saviour." He is at the most a prophet among prophets, a saviour among saviours. Further, the "unique" morality of the Bible so cleverly "manufactured" and interpreted by the propagandists, is considerably contaminated by thoughts of fear and bartering, vengeance and damnation. Christian ethics inseparably connected with the concepts of rewards and punishments may be useful to those who "are on a lower level or have been trained to remain so," but it can never appeal to those hankering after a higher ethical code and a fuller spiritual life. Similar views are held also by many a non-Hindu student of Comparative Religion. Observes a Mussalman writer, "Rama and Krishna have made greater sacrifices for truth than Jesus, because they belonged to a Royal House, while Jesus was a poor man and was not in a position to make any

sacrifice, so far as worldly possessions go. The teachings and the precepts of these Indian Gods are, also, loftier and sublimer than the Sermon on the mount."

Besides, the doctrines of creation out of nothing, of the soul and the world, original sin, the only begotten son of God, wholesale vicarious atonement that makes man irresponsible even for his misdeeds, eternal hell and eternal heaven, and also the denial of soul to non-human beings, opposition to the cosmic law of evolution as embodied in Karma and Re-incarnation, undue stress on personality, idolizing anthropomorphism and anthropopathism, antagonism towards scientific and philosophic thought—these and other points make Christianity appear crude, irrational and unscientific. And these great weak points can no longer be evaded or hidden from view by the missionary tactics of drawing away the attention of people to the "uniqueness" of the life of the "Son of Man" and of his Sermon on the Mount which the Christians preach for the benefit of the "heathens" but do not care to practise in their own lives. This "uniqueness" has been called in question. Many Hindu writers including the authors of *The Cross in the Crucible* and *In Search of Jesus Christ*, have already shown effectively the hollowness of the superior claims of Christianity as a moral and spiritual force. It is, therefore, useless for the propagandists to prove to the Hindu "the uniqueness and finality" of the Christian religion.

#### HINDUISM AND CHRISTIANITY COMPARED

The Christian religion, considers the Hindu, holds on a single note, while Hinduism plays different melodies. Christianity is one-sided while the Hindu



religion is all-comprehensive. With the variety and richness of its spiritual paths and experiences, it is a veritable commonwealth as compared to the former which is at the most a kingdom in this respect.

Christianity, observes Dr. Otto in his new book, *India's Religion of Grace and Christianity*, has got as its axis "the Idea of the Holy." Although Hinduism lays great stress on Moksha, its path of Bhakti and all other systems including Advaita Vedanta speak of the "absolute" holiness, as opposed to the "relative" holiness in the Christian religion, not only of the Paramatman but also of the Atman whose nature according to Christianity is contaminated by "original sin," which is said to have descended on him from his so-called "first ancestor." Hinduism is further universal in its outlook as it believes in the potential divinity, in the essential holiness not only of man but of all living beings which are marching in the course of their evolution towards the great ideal of Self-realization.

Again, the Christian ideal of service is contaminated by the desire for fruits as is clearly manifest in the missionary attitude and practice. Hinduism, on the other hand, recognizes that work without motive performed for the fulfilment of the Cosmic Purpose is one of the highest forms of Divine service and worship. Besides this path of service, the Hindu religion places before its votaries also the paths of devotion, knowledge and psychic control,—which either *separately* or *jointly* lead them to the highest goal. And without holding before its followers the ideal of a single personality, the Hindu religion presents to them the Divine Principle and along with it different types of Divine personalities, each one representing the Principle of principles in some aspect or other and able to help the

devotee to realize in course of time the *summum bonum* of life.

The Christian missionaries have been preaching in India not the higher Christianity of the mystics, of which they are utterly ignorant, but a crude, standardized, credal religion which alone they know but which has mostly lost its value in Western lands. There may be some common points between the higher mysticism of Christianity and that of Hinduism but still the true Hindu religion taken as a whole is undoubtedly fuller and deeper in its spiritual contents and values, its rationalism and philosophic thought than Christianity which can never be a substitute for the former. And rightly does the Hindu think that if the Christian missionaries draw him into any battle of faiths as they so often suggest, there is nothing for him to be terrified. A religion that possesses an inexhaustible vitality and has stood the test of time for millenniums can survive all other religions without much difficulty.

Lord Meston, a former Governor of an Indian province, who believes that the salvation of India lies in Christianity alone, is constrained to acknowledge this wonderful enduring power of the Hindu religion when he says, "It has always been a puzzle to me, how Hinduism has endured the fiery tests and trials to which it has been subjected these thousands of years, how it has succeeded in absorbing the great reforming faiths of Buddhism and Jainism and held its own against the proselytising power of Islam. It is impossible to conceive of a religion in the History of the World which has stood these 3000 years and still commands the hearts of 300 millions of people."

#### THE FUTURE OF HINDUISM

What is going to be the future of Hinduism? Has Christianity any

chance of displacing it as the Christian missionary piously hopes? To this the only sane answer is that as in the past so also in future the infinite vitality of Hinduism is a sure guarantee of its unbroken and sustained existence. Sweeping away all the obstructions that stand in its way, the perennial stream of the Hindu religion is going to flow on as ever, fertilizing the life and thought of mankind both in India and abroad. In modern times Hinduism is re-asserting itself. And its present revival is the direct expression of its life and potentiality and should not be attributed solely to the influence of outside agencies.

The new awakening of Hinduism is certainly due to no small extent to the impact of Western civilization. But the part played by Christian thought is of comparatively minor importance in spite of the preposterous claims made by the missionaries. Besides these, the reaction brought about by the contact of Hinduism with Islam should also be taken into account. Whatever may be the worth of these external influences, there is no doubt that the new reform movements in Hinduism are the expressions of its own soul actuated by Divine inspiration, by a Cosmic urge manifesting itself in forms at once glorious and startling. In the pre-Christianity days and later on during the middle and later ages, the Hindu religion successfully stemmed the tides of conquest, and also conquered its conquerors fully or partly by the mighty power of its culture. And what it did in the past it is going to repeat at present and in future.

As the signs of the times clearly indicate, a rejuvenated Hinduism is emerging in all its glory, freeing itself from all the evils and iniquities that have gathered round it during the long course of its eventful history. Those who recklessly criticize the Hindu reli-

gion and fondly believe that it is going to be displaced by the "only true religion of Christ," and that India can be converted into an out and out Christian land will do well to remember the memorable words of Swami Vivekananda—"Why did not this Hindu race die out in the face of so many troubles and tumults of a thousand years? If our customs and manners are so very bad, how is it that we have not been effaced from the face of the earth by this time? Have the various foreign conquerors spared any pains to crush us out? Why then were not the Hindus blotted out of existence, as happened with many other countries which are uncivilised? Understand that India is still living because she has her own quota to give to the general store of the world's civilisation. . . . The Hindu's calm brain must pour out its own quota to the sum total of human progress. India's gift to the world is the light spiritual." And Hinduism that has truly been the soul of India will live forever to fulfil her spiritualizing mission.

Still in their fanatical zeal the Christian missionaries are dreaming of the success of their "Christian adventure." And knowing the task to be stupendous, they are fully preparing themselves for a "decisive conflict." "Missionary success in the West—in West Africa and the West Indies—was swift and exciting, but it is a far cry from there to India. . . . The great decisive conflict between Hinduism and Christianity has still to take place. . . . In that conflict . . . the hardest and longest and most critical fight will be one of fundamental ideas. . . . Hinduism is really a great system . . . . Not at Rome, nor yet at Ephesus, nor even in Athens, did the Apostle Paul ever encounter such a system as meets us in India. . . . The Christian Church will



then seek, as never before . . . . the fullest equipment not only of missionary zeal but of sympathetic knowledge."

The Christian missionaries have thrown the challenge. It is meant not only for the Hindus—their foremost enemies, but for the followers of all non-Christian religions—the common enemies of "the true religion of Christ." The Christian attempt to displace Hinduism and other Indian religions is ultimately doomed to fail, but not before it has done great harm to them in various ways. Will not the Hindus and the votaries of the other non-Christian religions beware and take steps, however belated they may be, for protecting themselves and their great faiths against the impending danger?

Each religion has got some especial message to give to the world. For this reason, not only Hinduism and other non-Christian faiths of India, but all the religions of the world, including Christianity, are to be protected and preserved in their pure forms. They all must be helped to realize the grand ideal of the Fellowship of faiths, the great dream of the Commonwealth of religions which are but different expressions of the Religion Eternal that knows no creed or dogma, race or country. On this bed-rock of universalism are to be established human brotherhood and world-unity. It is thus that peace and harmony may yet be brought to our discordant and distracted races and communities.

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## THE MEDIAEVAL TEMPLE IN SOUTH INDIA

BY N. KASTURI, M.A., B.L.

The temples of South India, as evidenced by the overwhelming number of inscriptions being published from year to year, were not merely sources of religious inspiration to the worshippers but contributed much to the spread and development of culture. They were used, like the Mediaeval Churches, as centres of learning, and endowments were accepted for training young men in ritualism or theology and even the more abstruse and abstract department of learning like grammar, astronomy and logic. The Chidambaram Temple gateway depicts the one hundred and eight poses mentioned in the *Natya Shastra* of Bharata while the Tiruvarur Gopura contains an elaborate legal treatise, discussing the theories of Narada and Yajnavalkya on the origin,

duties and privileges of certain *anulôma* castes! Besides, the temples gave freely of their wealth to poets and scholars and honoured them by awarding special titles, such as "Vedachakravarti" or special seats on festive occasions. The Madura Temple was the scene of the activities of the Ancient Tamil Academy called the Tamil Sangam, which encouraged and certified literary productions of high merit.

The South Indian Temple was managed by the Temple Committees of the Village Assembly. In the case of the richer and the more celebrated shrines, the king exercised more direct control and several sub-committees, such as that of the inner shrine, of the Pujaris or of the dancing girls, bore the burden of the departments of temple

activity. The exercise of these functions must have been an invaluable training ground for civic responsibilities. Grants of gold, cattle, land, and even families of slaves or maidservants were accepted by the Assembly for a variety of purposes, such as the maintenance of items of ritual, worship and festivals, the feeding of Brahmins, the recitation of sacred texts, the supply of flowers, coco-nuts, oil, ornaments, the repair of the temple, and services for the diseased, the pilgrims and the priests. These gifts in kind had to be weighed, measured, tested and converted; lands, wet or dry, or gardens had to be leased out or improved or sold, the temple precincts had to be laid out into streets and settled under conditions, and a thousand other incidental matters, legal, judicial, and administrative, had to be constantly attended to. Misappropriation, defalcation, non-delivery of goods or services, misuse of temple properties, abuse of privileges, had all to be ferreted out and rigorously punished, and the temple dues had to be sympathetically and punctually collected. The responsibility was felt to be even greater than in civil transactions since the wrath of the Gods pursued man from one birth to another and the imprecatory verses with which the grants concluded cursed the evil-doer or the negligent to his seventh generation. Indeed, Martanda Varma, a Raja of Travancore, was able to suppress the powerful baronial families of his land by dedicating the entire kingdom to Sri Padmanabha and receiving it back as a fief. No longer could the barons dare damage the property of the Lord or Devaswam.

Temple accounts had to be audited and published. The accounts of a temple in Chittoor District had been, according to the inscriptions, audited by the officers of Rajendrachola. It was found that the grain and gold

granted to the temple from *devadana* lands were not properly allocated for six or seven years. This improper budgeting was corrected by royal command and a copy of the revised estimates was engraved on the walls, for all to read! So too, according to a Coorg inscription, provision was made by the State for the reading out, in public, once a year of the treasury accounts of the temple and the Committee was directed to see that each item mentioned therein was properly conducted as announced. There is thus plenty of evidence to show that the complexity of the problem was never allowed to bring down the high standard of the management of public funds.

The temples were used as the mote halls of the surrounding villages and, gathered under the shadow of their God, deliberation speedily ended in satisfactory decisions. These resolutions were then solemnly engraved on the sacred walls as a guarantee of sincerity. The Virinchipuram Temple has on its walls the decision of a huge gathering of Tamil, Telugu and Kannadiga Brahmins who renounced the dowry and purchase-money for brides and outcasted any one who gave or accepted the nefarious price. Another inscription fixes the standard length of the *pâda* and the *angula*, while a third gives a map of the village, with the length of the streets. Some decide upon a uniform weight or measure or declare the acceptance of a new one, or announce some revision of tenancy rights or proclaim a certain street as 'a place of refuge,' or impose new obligations or grant new privileges. Sometimes, we find the trustees of various temples of a certain district meeting to recognize the superior right of a dominating shrine. In 1313 A.D. the "managing committees of all temples between the Vellam and the Kolladam rivers agreed



that certain dues on lands in the villages belonging to the Chidambaram Shrine should be remitted and the amount rateably enhanced in the other villages." Sri Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagar pacified the two great communities—Jains and Srivaishnavas who had fallen out at Melkote and Tirupathi and, the terms of mutual tolerance which he enforced are inscribed at Sravana belgola, as well as other Jain and Srivaishnava shrines.

The Temple Committees were brought into contact with guilds of goldsmiths, carpenters, sculptors, barbers, pipers, and merchants and agreements were formed with them for grants of goods and services. We hear of gifts by guilds of weavers, by travelling acrobats and musicians and magicians, of the guilds taking up the duties of performing certain festivities and of special honours, such as announcement of arrival, the blowing of the double conch, etc., awarded to their leaders. There were also imposition of new taxes or tolls as well as their remission or reduction in the interests of the trade and industries of the village.

The temple was thus a common possession. It was built and maintained by the loving service of the entire community, aided by the powerful arm of the King. It was administered under public supervision. For the children, it afforded playgrounds and healthy, elevating recreations. For the young, it provided education in religion, the sacred texts and in art. For the middle-aged, it granted opportunities for training in the trusteeship of public funds. For the old, it gave the consolation of their declining years. The Temple also developed and transmuted local patriotism. The Sthalapuranas in which every shrine is extolled and compared with others, the curious legends that explain every Tirtha or Pitha strive to preserve the pride of the people in their native soil. The temple draws out the service and sacrifice of the people.

Thus the South Indian Temple was not 'a magnificent antiquarian doll house' or 'a house of wealth and filth, of dust and diamonds.' It was a college, a Parliament and a citadel, a living poem, an *alma mater*, and an arena for all the higher virtues and capacities of man.

## ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

BY SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

अकर्तृत्वमभोक्तृत्वं स्वात्मनो मन्यते यदा ।

तदा क्षीणा भवन्त्येव समस्ताश्चित्तवृत्तयः ॥ ५१ ॥

यदा When ( कश्चित् one ) स्वात्मनः of one's own self अकर्तृत्वं absence of the feeling that one is a doer अभोक्तृत्वं absence of the feeling that one is an enjoyer मन्यते perceives तदा then समस्ताः all चित्तवृत्तयः the modifications of the mind क्षीणाः attenuated भवन्ति become.

51. All the modifications of the mind become attenuated when<sup>1</sup> a man realises that he himself is neither the doer nor the enjoyer.

[<sup>1</sup> *When etc.*—Because it is such feelings as ‘I shall do this,’ ‘I shall enjoy that,’ that give rise to the modifications of the mind.]

उच्छृङ्खलाप्यकृतिका स्थितिर्धीरस्य राजते ।

न तु सस्पृहचित्तस्य शान्तिर्मूढस्य कृत्रिमा ॥ ५२ ॥

धीरस्य Of the wise one स्थितिः life उच्छृङ्खला unrestrained अकृतिका inartificial अपि though राजते shines सस्पृहचित्तस्य whose mind is attached मूढस्य of the fool कृत्रिमा feigned शान्तिः calmness तु but न not ( राजते shines ).

52. The conduct of the wise one though unrestrained and inartificial shines, but not the affected calmness of the fool whose mind is attached.

विलसन्ति महाभोगैर्विशन्ति गिरिगह्वरान् ।

निरस्तकल्पना धीरा अबद्धा मुक्तबुद्धयः ॥ ५३ ॥

निरस्तकल्पनाः Who are free from imaginings अबद्धाः not bound मुक्तबुद्धयः of unfettered intellect धीराः the wise ( कदाचित् sometimes ) महाभोगैः with great enjoyments विलसन्ति sport ( कदाचित् sometimes ) गिरिगह्वरान् caves of mountains विशन्ति enter.

53. The wise who are free from imaginings, unbound and of unfettered<sup>1</sup> intellect, (sometimes) sport in the midst of great enjoyments and (sometimes) retire into the mountain caves.

[<sup>1</sup> *Unfettered*—by egoism.

The wise one remains the same and unaffected in whatever condition he may be.]

श्रोत्रियं देवतां तीर्थमङ्गनां भूपतिं प्रियम् ।

दृष्ट्वा सम्पूज्य धीरस्य न कापि हृदि वासना ॥ ५४ ॥

श्रोत्रियं One versed in the Vedas देवतां god तीर्थं holy place अङ्गनां woman भूपतिं king प्रियं beloved one दृष्ट्वा seeing सम्पूज्य honouring धीरस्य of the wise one हृदि in the heart का अपि any वासना desire न not ( जायते springs ).

54. No<sup>1</sup> desire whatsoever springs in the heart of the wise one on seeing and honouring a man versed in sacred learning, a god, a holy place, a woman, a king or a beloved one.

[<sup>1</sup> *No etc.*—Because he sees the Divine essence in everything, and is perfectly equanimous.]

भृत्यैः पुत्रैः कलत्रैश्च दौहित्रैश्चापि गोत्रजैः ।

विहस्य धिक्कृतो योगी न याति विकृतिं मनाक् ॥ ५५ ॥

भृत्यैः By servants पुत्रैः by sons कलत्रैः by wives च ( expletive ) दौहित्रैः by daughter's sons गोत्रजैः by relatives च and अपि also विहस्य ridiculing धिक्कृतः despised योगी the Yogi मनाक् in the least विकृतिं perturbation न not याति undergoes.

55. The Yogi<sup>1</sup> is not at all perturbed even when ridiculed and despised by his servants, sons, wives, daughter's sons and relations.

[<sup>1</sup> *Yogi etc.*—Because he is completely free from aversion that perturbs the mind.]



## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

A great man can unerringly recognize greatness wherever it may exist. This is the reason of Swami Vivekananda's so much love for the Moguls as revealed in the opening article . . . Professor Nicholas Roerich is one of the leading figures of the world in contemporary cultural life. His paintings have for the last ten years been assembled into a most magnificent collection housed in the Roerich Museum—a skyscraper in New York dedicated to the masterpieces of this greatest living artist. So great has been his appeal to the noblest striving of humanity that within a short period over forty Roerich Societies have come into life in twenty countries of the world. At present, having returned to the Himalayas from New York, Prof. Roerich is in the Urusvati Himalayan Research Institute of Roerich Museum, in Kulu Valley, of which he is the President Founder. The present article will form a chapter in his forthcoming book, 'Realm of Light.' We hope to present to our readers in the next month another article of this great writer . . . With *Guru Govind Singh* we conclude the study of the Sikh Gurus. What a great transformation from the state in which Nanak found his countrymen to the condition in which the last Guru left them! In India appeal in the name of religion has always found a sure response. . . . A great scholar and original thinker, versed in the Western and Eastern philosophy, Professor Pramathanath Mukhopadhyaya has been connected with many educational activities of Bengal in various capacities. He delivered the Sri Gopal Basu

Mallik Lecture of the Calcutta University on Vedanta in the year 1927. He has also written several books—some independently, others in collaboration with Sir John Woodroffe . . . It was Miss Malcolm-Smith who translated almost all the writings of Mon. Romain Rolland that were published in the pages of the *Prabuddha Bharata*. All lovers of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda have reason to be grateful to her for having brought within their reach the thoughts of the great French savant about two Indian saints. . . . Mr. Kasturi, M.A., B.L., is a lecturer in the Mysore University. His name may be familiar to many, as he is a frequent contributor to several magazines. His present article throws interesting sidelights on the history of *The Mediaeval Temple in South India*.

### CHITTAGONG : ANOTHER EYE-OPENER

The news of arson and looting that happened at Chittagong and of the fact that within a few hours many rich men were made paupers and the little town suffered a loss of about a crore of rupees staggered the whole country. The sufferers were mainly Hindus. This unhappy incident has given rise to many problems which strongly press themselves for solution. The most important of them is, we should think, why does the Hindu community lack the power of resistance? why has the Hindu society become so hopelessly weak that it falls an easy prey to the rioters often and often? Within recent times in close succession there had been deplorable happenings at Dacca, Kishoregunj and other places in and outside Bengal which have clearly laid

bare the weakness of the Hindu society. When a society has become weak, disorganized and incapable of offering any united resistance, naturally it becomes the victim of frequent atrocities. Not only that—it becomes also guilty of bringing degradation to others by offering easy opportunities for the free play of their baser instincts. A society must have some power of its own for self-defence. That the Hindus miserably lack this, has been repeatedly shown. In the Hindu society, burdened with innumerable customs and social rules that tend to divide the people, the higher caste living in sublime indifference to the needs and interests, woes and sufferings of the so-called low caste, people find it difficult to unite even when there is a great demand for it. The Hindus are often accused of cowardice. This may not be all true. Individually many Hindus have often shown rare and admirable examples of courage. But of united action the Hindus are hopelessly incapable. And this weakness of the Hindu society is often and often exploited. If the Hindus could offer united resistance, many sad incidents would have been easily averted. A strong man necessarily does not always require to show proofs of his strength. Because of the very fact that he is strong, rare occasion arises for him to exercise his strength. This is a fact which the Hindus ought to ponder over very carefully. And they should find out measures how to grow strong. Even under present state of things, where there had been indication of strength, the sure and inevitable effect followed. In Chittagong, the report goes, a lady single-handed ward-off a number of attacking hooligans. A similar incident happened at Dacca, where in a house two young girls offered successful resistance to the rioters. It will be sadly inconsistent with the spirit

of Hinduism, if the Hindus cherish any feeling of hatred, contempt or revenge against any people not belonging to their faith. But the future of the Hindu society is doomed, if it cannot grow strong—at least to the requirements of self-defence. This is what we would like to emphasise upon all well-wishers of the Hindu society, as our heart is bruised and lacerated at the news of the unimaginable sufferings of Chittagong.

### MAIN CAUSES

Modern civilization is in danger of destruction due to the prevailing spirit of conflict. Many nations seem to have recognized this fact and are trying their utmost to bring about a New World Order which would establish peace eschewing War. But the spirit of conflict can be removed only if we root out all racial, religious, economic and political conflict. It is not enough again if only a better understanding is established on these points among the nations of the West, but it is of fundamental importance that such an understanding be established between the Orient and the Occident also. The New World Order is to include the whole of humanity if it is to really establish peace. But signs in this direction do not seem to be so promising. While discussing this in an article in the *World Unity* Dr. Taraknath Das says: "One of the major factors of the present-day world discord or chaos is the constant and chronic state of conflict between the Occident and the Orient, or in other words conflict among the peoples of the Occident, desirous of securing control over the Orient. Unless this spirit of active or dormant conflict can be stamped out there cannot be any real peace, nor can there be any genuine incentive for a new world order, . . .

"If there is to be genuine co-operation between the East and the West, the



dominant West will have to follow such courses as will remove the existing causes of racial, religious, economic and political conflicts. The West will have to give up its unfounded conception of 'superiority of the white man.' "

Various agencies are at work which rather widen the gulf between the East and the West than bridge it over. In the words of the same writer "Unfortunately many of the modern western historians are responsible for spreading the notion of racial superiority of the western people. . . . It will not be out of place to mention some of the nonsense which is being taught in the West as historical truth. Western historians speak of 'Oriental despotism,' as if it is something peculiarly Oriental, whereas it is a historical fact that despotism has prevailed in the West for centuries even under the sanction of 'divine rights of Kings,' 'the right of legitimacy,' etc.; and it is being practised by the Western rulers upon their subjects in the Orient. It is generally taught that the Western people are peace-loving and champions of law and order; whereas the people of the Orient are treacherous, blood-thirsty and prefer to live in chaos. . . ."

"It is often argued that unless the people of the West were superior to those of the East, the latter could not have been conquered by the former." This argument would show that the Romans were superior to the Greeks or the Gauls to the Romans. But the case is otherwise. A more civilized nation is conquered by a less civilized and cultured nation. With civilization the nations turn their attention to the culture of the mind and this makes them physically weaker and therefore such nations are conquered by the less civilized who living more an animal life are physically better off.

Another cause of misunderstanding

between the East and the West is the superiority the West claims in the field of religion. "For many centuries, religious fanatics as well as religious leaders of the West have spread the notion that Christianity is the only religion which gives hope for salvation of man; . . . Orientals who do not profess Christianity are heathens and therefore looked upon with contempt or pity . . . . As long as this feeling dominates, there is not much hope for the spread of real fellow-feeling between the people of the East and the West. . . . This obstacle can be removed through the spread of such knowledge as will lead to genuine appreciation of truth in all religions. . . . In fact the spirit of education in the West must be revised. . . ."

The fundamental cause however which makes the co-operation between the East and the West impossible is the economic exploitation of the former by the latter. The West has mercilessly exploited the East refusing to accord equal opportunity to the millions of the East. Unless this policy is abandoned, there can never arise any genuine spirit of co-ordination between the East and the West. "Double standard of international morality on the part of the enlightened West is a serious obstacle on the road to better understanding between the peoples of the East and the West. . . ."

"Many statesmen of the West, in their official utterances and statements, talk about the need of world peace and express abhorrence of War. . . . However, these apostles of peace approve with their silence, massacres of innocent people, to suppress discontent against the lawless laws of a land kept under subjection. They send their powerful fleet to demand unqualified submission of subject people, who are trying to assert their national independence. They bomb from aeroplanes un-

armed and oppressed people . . . These things they do to protect their imperial and national interests. These acts of violence are calmly tolerated by the people of the West. . . League of Nations whose prime object is to further the cause of world peace does not even dare to discuss these happenings. Unless the Western Powers ruling over the peoples of the Orient, are willing to give up their colonies and dependencies and acknowledge freedom of the op-

pressed peoples there is no possibility of lasting peace with justice and liberty and better understanding between the East and the West."

These are some of the main causes of discontent and disharmony between the East and the West and unless these are removed there will be no peace in the World, for every attempt in that direction which ignores the East is bound to end in a failure.

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## REVIEW

**YOGA PERSONAL HYGIENE.** By Yogendra. With a Preface by John W. Fox, A.B., M.D., *Scientific Yoga Series*. Post Box 481, Bombay. 261 pp. With a Glossary and Index. Price Rs. 10.

Just at present there seems to be an unusual interest taken by people all over the world in the methods of prolonging life and in the study of conditions which bring on old age and senility. Doctors are keen on their experiments about these and one of the results of such experiments is the monkey-gland operation. It is not quite successful as yet and has also dangers connected with it. Why do people get old and die? It is for the simple reason that they do not possess the knowledge necessary to rebuild and regenerate the organism.

Yoga makes a claim that life can be prolonged. The object of personal hygiene as taught by Yoga is to set forth plainly the best means of developing and maintaining physical, mental, moral and spiritual health. "The Yoga methods do not stop at the avoidance of invalidism but aim at exuberant and exultant health both of the mind and the body." The main objects of Yoga hygiene, says the author, is fivefold, viz., maintenance of physical efficiency, purification of the body, removal of diseases, longevity and lastly spiritual and moral elevation. The first four it attains through elimination of poisons from the body *through natural means*, poisons which are the cause of all our physical ailments. It

is the elimination of poisons that keeps a Yogi ever youthful and gets back youth to aged people when they begin Yogic practices.

The author treats the whole of the Yogic process under separate headings; as care of the teeth, mouth, tongue, ear and sinuses, care of the nose, of the eye, of the digestive organs, of the respiratory apparatus, of the brain and the nervous system, of the skin and its appendages, and so forth. Under each of these headings the author prescribes certain Yogic exercises which prevent decay of these respective organs and would revive and get back to normal conditions the organs which are already diseased. Of course the author deals with elementary exercises which a novice can practise at home without much guidance. But advanced exercises and exercises for the treatment of special ailments, however, require special guidance from experts, and for this reason they are not treated in this book. But the cures of people, to judge from their testimonials, who have suffered from serious ailments and who had been given up by expert doctors both in the East as well as in the West, seem something miraculous. We wish such of those who have become despondent about their health would give a trial to Yogendra and this ancient system of Yogic practices before giving up their case as hopeless. Even to those who are in health, especially to young men, we would recommend this book, as it



gives much information about our body and the simplest means of keeping it tolerably fit, even if they be not in a mood to practise any of the various exercises treated therein.

**HINDU MYSTICISM AND MODERN THOUGHT.** (*A Discussion of the Problem of Knowledge.*) By S. Periathamby, B.A. Printed at the Express Printing Works, Dehiwala, Colombo. Pp. 44, Price not mentioned.

The present work is a paper read by the author at a meeting of the Hindu Society in Colombo (June, 1931), many members of which are the upholders of scientific view of the world, God, etc. This booklet is the first issue of the series of "Religion and Life." The author is expected to deal with the important problems that he has touched in this number, in detail in the future issues of the series.

It is divided into four chapters, viz; 'Introduction,' 'Science and Reality,' 'Hindu Mysticism' and 'Concluding Remarks.'

The book is a highly interesting reading and reveals the author's sincerity of conviction which is not altogether blind. His ontological, cosmological and teleological proofs of the existence of God is quite argumentative and rational so far as the existence of the world, the unity and continuity in all natural processes, the trace of design in nature, etc., are concerned. But if there is no such world existing at all in the real sense, then what about its designers and makers?—then what about this world that we perceive? Vedanta answers that it is an illusory appearance. There is sufficient reason also to doubt about the real existence of this world. Of all the impressions and beliefs that make us take this world as a real existent entity, sense-perception heads the list. That sense-perception cannot be relied on, is very often proved in our ordinary experience, which our author also maintains. "... Sense-perception cannot be trusted to give us correct knowledge of external reality" (p. 15). So the world is not there and necessarily it has no maker. Perhaps science is in favour of such a philosophy and not a bar against it. The Relativity of Einstein and the further analysis of Dalton's Atomic theory into that of Electrons or Ions go in favour of philosophy and not against it. Where

science stops, philosophy begins. Through science the West is approaching unconsciously to the Vedantic conclusion that the world is nothing but an appearance. It is science which has now revolted against the common-sense view of the world as it is and has established and revealed to us that the orange we perceive is not the thing-in-itself. Further, this does not collide with religious consciousness. For, what is the end of religion? The transcendental eternal Bliss is the outcome of religion, which means to get rid of the transitory character of the world which is the cause of our misery. Our author has also pointed out that "the sole ambition of the Yogi is Self-realisation;" so the Self is not something outside of us. Truth is one and that must be the Self; whether we call this Self as God or not, matters little. But Reality or Truth is the Self and beyond Self nothing is. So, perhaps, we need not, like the theologians, seek God elsewhere as a highly personal moral Being. This is the truth of Vedanta, which is the highest form of Religion and Philosophy.

Reality is in fact an alogical principle, it is beyond thought—in this every philosophy will agree with our author. Ultimately there is no other way for its realization than to dive oneself into the unknown mystic ocean. But does not the fact that Truth cannot be realized by any other means than this, await rationality? Mysticism presupposes rationality and this is why Vedanta has put an exclusive stress upon *Manana* which means understanding the Scriptural texts that declare the non-duality of the Truth, with sufficient reason (*vichar*). The position of intellect is further justified in the concluding paragraph of the book which says, "In Hinduism, religious instruction in the higher realms of practice is not given except to the Adhikari, i.e., the person who is physically, *intellectually* and morally qualified to receive instruction in the higher disciplines of spiritual life" (p. 44).

Perhaps "A Discussion of the Problem of Knowledge" is not quite a happy expression to be put with the heading of the book, since the contents of it are more metaphysical and religious than epistemological.

J. C. B.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### FLOOD AND FAMINE IN BENGAL

#### RAMAKRISHNA MISSION'S RELIEF WORK

Swami Suddhananda, Secy., Ramakrishna Mission, sent us the following on the 26th October, 1931:

The public is aware that after finishing the famine relief work in the Nadia District we undertook flood relief work in the Pabna, Mymensing and Dacca Districts. Thirteen centres were opened, viz., Sthal, Salap, Mulkandi, Gopalpur, Jamirta in the District of Pabna; Gayhata in the District of Mymensing; and Simulia, Kalikair, Dhaljora, Khalsi, Kalma, Baliati and Sonargaon in the District of Dacca. All of these centres except Baliati are still working. From the 13th September to the 26th October 2,769 mds. 4 srs. of rice were distributed. A brief account of the receipts and disbursements of the famine and flood relief work from the 20th May to the 10th October is given here: We have received Rs. 20,127 in cash, 170 mds. of rice and 2,200 pieces of new cloth and 16 bundles of old cloth; and we have spent Rs. 3,256 in the Rangpur District, Rs. 1,011 in the Nadia District, Rs. 7,772 in the Pabna District, Rs. 2,115 in the Mymensing District, Rs. 4,068 in the Dacca District and Rs. 5,485 in the headquarters for the purchase of rice and cloth. The total expenditure has come up to Rs. 28,707. The deficit of Rs. 3,536 has been met from the Provident Relief Fund, which has a balance of Rs. 2,264 only.

We have to continue the work up to the middle of November. But we have just enough funds to last for one week. The remainder, to the extent of Rs. 4,000, must be secured somehow. Otherwise the work has to stop after one week. Apart from the need for rice our workers feel great necessity of at least 2,000 pairs of new cloth. Owing to the want of funds the hut-building work has not yet been touched. From our Dacca centre an attempt is being made to take it up on a very small scale. We appeal to the generous public to help us to continue the work for three weeks more. All contributions will be thankfully received

and acknowledged at the following addresses: (1) *The President, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, Bengal.* (2) *The Manager, Prabuddha Bharata, 4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta.*

#### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, SARGACHI, MURSHIDABAD

The Ashrama has been continuing its humanitarian works in various forms for more than thirty years. To it is attached a valuable Charitable Dispensary which was first formed so far back as in 1897. Since that time, its usefulness could hardly be over-estimated. It has really been a boon to the locality, and hundreds of patients from all places within a radius of thirty miles receive medical help. The Dispensary provides for the treatment of animals as well.

The report for 1930 shows that the number of patients was 21,535 in the year. Of the patients, nearly 58% were Mahomedans and the rest were Hindus with only a few Indian Christians. The Ashrama conducts many useful institutions, e.g., Free Day and Night Schools, Library, Agricultural and Industrial Training, Orphanage, Cattle-protection, Nursing the sick and helping the poor, not to speak of its keeping up a healthy, non-sectarian religious atmosphere all around it.

The Dispensary is at present located in a Kancha house with insufficient accommodation. To remove this want, a Pucca building with a tube-well should be constructed as early as possible. Moreover, the limited stock of medicines in the Dispensary has also to be increased to meet the ever-growing demands. Any contribution for growth and upkeep of this institution will be thankfully received and duly acknowledged by Swami Akhandananda, Sargachi, Mahula P.O., Murshidabad Dt.

#### SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASRAMA, MALDA

The Ramakrishna Asrama, Malda, has stepped into the seventh year of its existence. The Asrama has spread the ideals of service in many places of the district. The



following branches have been started under its auspices;

(1) Nawabganj Sri Ramakrishna Seva Samiti.

(2) Sovanagar Sri Ramakrishna Samiti.

(3) Naogharia Vivekananda Samiti.

(4) Ekabarna Sri Ramakrishna Samiti.

In these branches, youngmen of the locality undertake to help the distressed and relieve the diseased. Side by side, they have started libraries and night schools for the education of the ignorant masses.

The Asrama itself has three Night Schools and a Library of its own. Besides these, the workers of the Asrama extend their help in times of epidemics, fire and cremation of the dead. Occasional lectures, discourses, reading of scriptures and *bhajans* also form the integral part of the Asrama activities.

#### SRI GIRISHWAR TEMPLE, SIGRA (BENARES)

The temple of Sri Girishwar is one of the most ancient and sacred places in the holy city of Benares. It would not be an exaggeration to state that a pilgrimage to Kasi would remain incomplete without a visit to this place. The ancientness of this temple of Sri Girishwar and the sacred traditions associated with it, are described at length in the holy book of *Kasikhand*. The temple stands on the top of an elevated earthen mound of about 60 ft. high in the western suburbs of the city of Benares, called Sigra, at a distance of about one mile from Godhulia.

But this holy mound has been lying in a very dilapidated condition for many years.

As a matter of fact some portion of the base of this mound should be filled up with earth, and the work of renovating the protecting wall that has given way in many places should soon be undertaken so as to save it from an immediate collapse. We beg further to add that there being only one room on the top of this mound, the visitors have to suffer immensely in both the sultry and rainy seasons for want of proper shelter from the inclemencies of weather. This sacred temple has moreover been one of the most secluded resorts for the Sannyasins to

carry on their spiritual practices since its very foundation. Additional rooms are necessary to accommodate more Sadhus so as to open unto them greater scope and facility for peacefully carrying on their spiritual culture in the calm atmosphere of his holy temple of Sri Girishwar. A large sum of money amounting to about Rs. 12,000 twelve thousand would be required to bring the aforesaid work to a completion. We therefore appeal to the generous and religiously-minded people to undertake this noble and sacred work without delay.

Any contribution, however small, would be thankfully received and acknowledged by Swami Sarveshananda, *Secretary, The Sri Girishwar Temple Committee, R. K. Mission Home of Service, Laksha, Benares City, U. P.*

#### THE RAMAKRISHNA SEVASRAMA, MIDNAPORE

The report for 1930 shows the number of patients in the Indoor Hospital as 78, of whom 58 were cured, 5 left, 4 remained till the end of the year, and 11 died. In the Out-door Hospital, there were 15,827 patients of whom 6,258 were new cases. Besides this, the Sevasrama undertook nursing and treating the sick outside the town. It also cremated the dead and treated the animals as well. A Free Primary School was conducted by the Sevasrama at Sri Ramapur. The number of students rose up to 50. The public made use of a library attached to the Sevasrama. Occasional helps were rendered by it to the needy and several indigent families.

The Sevasrama requires funds for its further development.

#### MAYAVATI CHARITABLE DISPENSARY

The President of the Advaita Ashrama writes: We regret very much that in the report of this Dispensary for 1930 which appeared in the September issue of *Prabuddha Bharata*, due to oversight we failed to convey our special thanks to Messrs. M. Kanabhiram and P. K. Nair for their donations of Rs. 100 and Rs. 194 respectively.

## EDUCATE YOUR MASSES

The Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission has sent us the following appeal for publication :

It is almost a truism to say that nine-tenths of the evils to which our dumb millions are constantly exposed can be removed through the spread of education of the right type. Although the civilised nations of the world have long since realised the importance of education and taken steps to ensure its acquisition by the masses, our country seems to have been singularly lacking in appreciating its value as an essential factor in civic growth. As a result of this callousness on our part, our masses, who can compare favourably with those of any other country in the world, have been allowed to be deprived of the advantages of education to an appalling extent. While the foremost nations of the earth have educated over ninety per cent of their people, India has educated only nine per cent! It is no wonder that our masses have for the last thousand years been the victims of exploitation by every class of selfish men that has chosen to do so. It goes without saying that if we are to restore our country to her ancient glories, we must see to it that education is broadcast throughout the length and breadth of the land. It was the cherished dream of Swami Vivekananda to make education accessible to the lowest of the low, irrespective of age or sex. There is no greater eye-opener for the masses than education. It is the one thing that can set them on their feet, and help them to get back their lost individuality.

This is not the work of one or two individuals. The whole country should take up the cause of mass education and make sacrifices so that those who are still grovelling in darkness may be brought to light without destroying their national assets. The Ramakrishna Mission has been attending in its humble way to this crying need of the hour, but is badly handicapped for want of funds. The Mass Education Fund at the Mission headquarters, which was started in 1928 with the help of American friends, has not only been exhausted, but is showing a deficit of a few hundred rupees. Yet every thoughtful person will understand that the work must be kept going, for it would be a pity at this juncture to nip the attempt at mass education in the bud. Rather it should be strengthened, so that there may be more schools to teach our children. There is no dearth of patriotic men and women in our country. To them, as indeed to all lovers of humanity, our earnest appeal goes for funds in aid of mass education. Is it too much to expect that the small sum of a thousand rupees which is immediately needed to run the five schools managed by the headquarters for about a year, will be promptly subscribed by the generous public? We leave it to their sense of honour. Contributions, however small, will be welcomed by (i) the President, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, Bengal, or by (ii) the Manager, Prabuddha Bharata, 4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta.

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