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THE

# Indian Nation Builders

PART III

MADRAS

GANESH & Co., PUBLISHERS

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**TO  
OUR COMMON MOTHER**

## Publishers' Note

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In launching the third volume of the Indian Nation Builders before the public, the publishers desire to record their thanks for the appreciation and encouragement extended by the public to former volumes, which have made the present volume possible. The publishers desire further to reiterate what they said in the first and second volumes, *viz.*, that the inclusion or exclusion of any Indian in or from the present series conveys no suggestion as to his relative worth. The publishers desire further to emphasise the fact that the present series forms a sort of treasury of Indian eloquence. It is the hope and ambition of the publishers to make that treasury as well as the projected gallery of portraits complete in future volumes.



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**K. T. Telang.**

# KASHINATH TRIMBAK TELANG

## A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE AND CAREER

FIFTEEN years and more have rolled by since the late Mr. K. T. Telang died, and it may not be easy at this distance of time, to realize with sufficient vividness, the impression he made on his own generation. Undeniably the position he occupied in his day was one of unsurpassed pre-eminence in India. The educated classes looked up to and revered him as a hero; the rulers honored and trusted him as a safe guide and counsellor. When death cut him off, Anglo-Indians of all classes united with the people of the country in laying their votive wreaths on the grave of one whose career had been stricken down at the height of its promise. Many and varied were the elements that went to make up Mr. Telang's fame. He was of the race of humanity's intellectual aristocrats. He had an exceptionally clear and perspicacious intelligence. He had a witching tongue, and as his intellect was remarkable for its clearness, so was his eloquence remarkable for its delightful lucidity. A scholar deep in the literature of the age he presented the somewhat rare spectacle of a scholar who was also the hero of a hundred platforms. Among purely political leaders he was one of the few men of his time who could lay claim to the possession of *culture* using the word in its best sense. The prizes of the law profession were his, and amidst its

engrossing duties he found time to indulge his devouring love of books, and make substantial contribution to antiquarian research. It was his profound Sanskrit scholarship that gained for him a European reputation. In those fields which in India have come to be called 'social reform' and 'politics' he was one of the great pioneers. Greater even than what he did was what he was. At a time and in a day when the educated classes were running mad after Western luxury and complexity he preserved the simplicity of his ancestors. His life was mostly lived on the intellectual level. Chaste in thought, word and deed, gentle, sweet, serene, overflowing with the milk of human kindness, full of an abiding sense of life's deep purpose, Mr. Telang stood forth in his day as the exemplar of what might be expected from the fusion of the best of the East with the best of the West.

He came of a family of Gowd Saraswat Brahmins settled in Maharashtra and was born on the 30th day of August 1850. His family were in affluent circumstances, not too rich, but neither in 'chill penury.' His parents were good-natured, amiable, pious, orthodox people, of the old type. Nothing in Mr. Telang's later life was more beautiful than his devotion to his parents, while around him the maxim 'Leave your father and mother and cling to your wife' was ascendent amongst the educated classes. His paternal uncle (father's elder brother) being childless adopted Kashinath as his son. He was a great believer in discipline and took the greatest pains over the character of his adopted son. The Hindu

home, some good people say, fails of its function as a moulder of character and the school has consequently to take its place in this respect. Be that as it may, Mr. Telang's home at any rate did prove a school of character. The boy Kashinath was in due course put to school, and sent to a vernacular institution at Amarchand Wadi, then presided over by one Mahadev. This teacher seems to have been of exceptional calibre, and many of his pupils attained conspicuous distinction in after-life. Not improbably therefore, he too may have left some mark on the character of our hero. Under him Mr. Telang acquired a strong grounding in Marathi which stood him in good stead in later days. From this school the boy passed on to the Elphinstone High School at Bombay when he was nine years of age. No schoolmaster of his, but was struck with his talents, and predicted a bright future for the boy. Students were in those days not numerous, and every one received some personal attention from the teacher. In such fact, doubtless, lies one of the reasons, why English education is not now the success it once was. In the school Mr. Telang had reason to feel grateful to all his teachers, but he was specially indebted to the principal, Mr. Jefferson, who had taken a paternal interest in him.

After an unusually bright school career the boy passed on to the Elphinstone College in 1864. Here again he put in a brilliant record. Scholarships medals, prizes fell to his lot in abundance. Mr. Chatfield, one of the professors of the College, was particularly struck with his ability and it was at his



instance that Mr. Telang was subsequently nominated a Fellow of the College, as we shall tell in the sequel. Mr. Telang took his B.A. degree in 1867.

He was now at what is often called the threshold of life. He was now at that stage which is for so many at the present time one of painful trial. Year after year the outgoing graduates are exhorted at the university convocation that for them true education has only begun. For most of us such an exhortation is a counsel of perfection. Our energies are absorbed in the hard struggle for a living, and we have neither the time nor the inclination to build a superstructure on the foundations of university training. There are some exceptional men however, and Mr. Telang was one such. He felt strongly, that for him education could not end with the university, and that he had touched barely the fringe of the realm of knowledge. A burning passion for knowledge awoke in him. He re-read the subjects he had studied at College and began to put his mind through a regular course of discipline and self-culture. He is said to have read and reproduced such books as Plato's 'Dialogues' and Chellingworth's 'History of the Protestants,' and to have even devoted some time to the solution of mathematical problems. In the meanwhile he had for a few months acted as Sanskrit teacher in the Elphinstone High School. In 1867 Mr. Chatfield, his old professor, got him appointed as Fellow of the Elphinstone College in which Mr. Telang continued till the year 1872. This period of five years he spent most invaluablely reading every book that came to his hands and almost

exhausting the College library. John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer were his favourites at the time. He was also an unfailing attendant at the meetings of several debating societies. These debating societies were in his case the training-ground where he acquired his brilliant dialectical skill. These five years may not inaptly be described as the seed time of his life.

During the same period he also contrived to pass some examinations. In 1868 he went up for the M.A. and rendered the Gita into English verse for that examination. Shortly after, he passed the LL.B. examination and in 1872 the Advocate's examination, and got himself enrolled the same year.

His legal career was a rapid success, many factors contributing to it. He was a fascinating speaker, to whom it was a rare pleasure to listen. He was a conscientious worker and could not rest till he had done his best in anything he had taken up. He had already become celebrated as a Sanskrit scholar and he soon made for himself a name as an expert in Hindu Law. In the words of Sir Raymond West, "In all matters of Hindu Law Mr. Telang was by general acknowledgement *fascile princeps* of the Bombay Bar." His argument in Mankuvarbhai's case (a leading case in Hindu Law as law students know) was so able that Sir Michael Westropp, the Chief Justice, went into raptures over it and mentioned Mr. Telang's name to his friends as that of one who would in time adorn the Bench. From that day forward Sir Michael had an eye on him, and was never slow to pay him a compliment. Both on the Original and Appellate



sides Mr. Telang enjoyed a large practice. The post of Joint Judge was offered to him in 1880, but he declined it. Nine years later he was made a Judge of the High Court of Bombay, the youngest Indian to sit on the Bench. During his short tenure as Judge he impressed himself ineffaceably on the development, or rather the interpretation of Hindu Law. It would be outside the scope of the present sketch to recount all his services in this direction which may be gleaned from the pages of the Law Reports. But of the general spirit that animated him in his construction of Hindu Law, we may be permitted to quote the testimony of two competent witnesses. Sir Raymond West, who was his colleague on the bench and admired him so sincerely, wrote: "Mr. Telang felt very strongly that in Hindu Law, as elsewhere life implies growth and adaptation. He hailed with warm welcome the principle that custom may ameliorate, as well as fix, even the Hindu Law, and it was refreshing sometimes to hear him arguing for modernisation, while on the other side an English advocate to whom the whole Hindu system must have seemed more or less grotesque contended for the most rigorous construction of some antique rule." "Mr. Frazer, author of a Literary History of India, writes; "To a native alone can be known the true force of the various schools of Hindu Law among the varied classes of the Hindu Community, and in how far local circumstances, habits or customs have the binding force of law outside all the formulated codes, of the Brahminical legislators. The English judge naturally accepts these Brahminical Codes as of

universal authority, and as being generally known and accepted as such. That the Brahminical Codes were made by a special class, and for a special class of the community, is evident to all acquainted with the literary history of India. To the over-worked and practical administrator, or advocate, a law is accepted as a law, and applied without those restrictions, which only an intimate acquaintance with the past history or present life of the people would suggest. The peculiar province of a native advocate or judge, such as Telang, is to impress these facts on their English legislators and jurists."

It certainly testifies to Mr. Telang's extraordinary capacity for sustained work that over and above his engrossing duties as lawyer or judge, he was able to do such pioneer service in so many other fields. And among these the first place ought certainly to be assigned to his literary occupations. He himself is reported to have said on one occasion that if he were to indulge his personal inclinations he would abdicate all other activity and take to a purely literary life. This, no doubt, he was not able to do, but the keynote of his life was an insatiable thirst for knowledge. The natural bent of his mind was towards an intellectual life. His appetite for books was little less than omnivorous. He was able to acquire a competent knowledge of three literatures, Sanskrit, English and Marathi, and to the end of his life he remained a student. He had a great love for English literature, and his mastery of the English language was plain to read in the chaste and chiselled diction he wielded in speaking and

writing it, a diction, which, it is said, no other Indian of his time possessed. He had further acquired the scientific and critical spirit which is the chief glory of the present-day West, and applied it to the study and elucidation of Indian antiquities.

It was as a profound Sanskrit Scholar, Orientalist, and Antiquarian that his name was known outside India. He had joined the Bombay branch of the Royal Asiatic Society as soon as he was out of College. To the journal of that society as well as to the columns of the *Indian Antiquary* he was a frequent and valued contributor. Whatever the subject he was treating, his readers almost invariably felt that they were in the presence of a man who was actuated by no bias save a genuine passion for truth. We have no space here to advert to all that he wrote in this field. Some admirer may some day give his writings to the world in a collected form. Mention must however be made of one or two important things, Prof. Weber of Germany had promulgated the fatuous theory that the *Ramayana* of Valmiki had been borrowed from Homer, on the principle, probably, that everything good and great in India should be traced to somewhere outside. Mr. Telang took up arms against this startling theory, and in a most able reply once and for ever gave it the quietus. Prof. Max Muller invited him to translate the *Bhagavad Gita* for the "Sacred Books of the East," series, which he did with his usual ability. The introduction to the translation is in a sense the most important part of the book, dealing, as it does, with such vexed questions, as, the date of the *Gita*, its

authorship and relation to the Mahabharata, Buddhistic influence, etc. Those who are interested in the subject cannot do better than turn to Mr. Telang's luminous presentment.

In recognition of his services to the world of Sanskrit scholarship Mr. Telang was elected President of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in succession to Sir Raymond West. Sir Raymond in bidding farewell to the society over which he had so worthily presided paid the following eloquent tribute to his successor: "I am sure he will be able to do much for the society, and whenever he retires from the presidency he will leave behind material enough to make the society distinguished for generations to come. I congratulate the society most heartily on my being succeeded by Mr. Telang, and my own light will shine dimmer by contrast with his.....I have no feeling of envy howevermuch cause there may be for it, and I feel already in anticipation a glow of delight in feeling that the society will be so worthily presided over and stimulated to work by this gentleman." The cause of historical and antiquarian research in India is crying aloud for workers. The most vital of India's needs at present is a genuine, unvarnished history of her past. Before such a history can be written, infinite work will have to be done in the way of research. The harvest is, indeed, plenty, but the labourers are few. But all honour to the few who have dug and delved in the field, and among such a very high place must be given to the subject of the present sketch.

Nor did Mr. Telang neglect his vernacular. He was

passionate in his devotion to the language which enshrines the outpourings of Ramdas and Tukaram and in which Sivaji thought and felt. He translated into Marathi, Chalmers' 'Local Self-Government' and Lessing's 'Nathan the Wise.' He was studying the Maratha chronicles with a view to write a history of the Mahratta people, but unfortunately he didn't live to realise his ambition. But the materials which he had gathered were utilized by the late Mr. Ranade for his 'History of the Maharattas,' which again he didn't live to complete. Had Mr. Telang been spared for some years longer, he would no doubt have done something which would have ensured him an abiding niche in the literary temple.

We now pass on to refer to Mr. Telang's labours in the educational, political, and social reform spheres. His interest in educational matters was, to the end of his days, deep and ardent. He no doubt felt, as so many felt in his day, that the problem of India was one of throwing open the portals of western knowledge to all her people without stint or difference. He was nominated a Fellow of the Bombay University at the very early age of 27. Four years latter, in 1881, he was elected a member of the Syndic. He was also one of the members of the Educational Commission appointed by Lord Ripon. The Government, in recognition of his work thereon conferred on him, the title of C.I.E. His report is described by Sir Raymond West as in some respects the most valuable of a crushingly voluminous collection. In the year 1892 he was appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University. The truth that the



present system of education in India is lifeless and soul-killing has been learnt only at the present day and at the cost of bitter experience. There can be no doubt that if Mr. Telang were alive to-day he would hail the movement for a system of National Education with unmixed joy.

Social reform was much to the fore in Bombay in those days. Be it said to the credit of Mr. Telang that he did not lose his head over it. It is true he cast in his lot in theory with those who styled themselves the advanced wing of the Reform party. He perceived, that there were abuses in Hindu Society as there were abuses all over the world. But he held that the true spirit of removing them was not to attack them in a cavalier, vainglorious manner, and shout for the millennium, but to work gently and patiently without any over-eagerness for immediate results. Mr. Wacha describes Mr. Telang's attitude in matters of social reform in the following eloquent words. "The Himalaya had to be scaled. But the way was long, and beset with formidable difficulties at every stage. The reformers had had necessarily to look not only to their right and left, but above and below, to the front and rear. For on all sides there are obstacles of a most insurmountable character. Time and energy may show them by and by, to be less insurmountable than they seem to be. No doubt the law of the Universe is progress. But it is also true that progress is slow and by degrees—from precedent to precedent. Social progress is of the slowest everywhere. Like every other mode of motion, it has its appropriate

rhythm, its epoch of severe restraints, followed by epochs of rebellious licenses, as history has recorded. And, situated as Hindu Society is, with its deep-rooted conservatism of ages, its traditions and superstitions, the progress of social reform must be even slower than in other countries. The problem is full of complexities. It is not as if you could provide ready panaceas which quacks and empiricists offer and Mr. Telang did not belong to the order of the social quack, who recommends salves and washes with blister as remedies for social evils, hardened and encrusted by lapse of centuries. Hence he had no sympathy with the social quacks who were so eager to have certain questions settled all in a trice by legislation. It was to him, as I know, a source of constant bitterness and vexation, the vehemence with which the promoters of social reform in its early stage in different parts of India, and notably in this city went on carrying their crusade." Although Mr. Telang was no believer in state action in social matters, he somewhat changed his views on the occasion of the agitation concerning the Age of Consent bill to which he gave support. A storm raged round his devoted head when he had his daughter married at an early age.

In the field of politics, again, Mr. Telang had to do pioneer work. The present generation who are heirs to the political labours of two generations may talk of politics glibly. When Mr. Telang came out of his college the field of politics outside Bengal was almost virgin. It is true that there were some distinguished workers, but there was no organized political

life worth the name. If to-day there is throughout India a living political sense, Mr. Telang's labours have contributed to its evocation not a little. There was in Bombay a political body called the Bombay Association of which Mr. Telang was for sometime the Secretary. Subsequently the Presidency Association was founded by that noble triumvirate, Messrs. Telang, Mehta and Wacha. The New Association soon achieved a remarkable position for itself. Its representation carried great weight with the authorities. The Presidency Association became the centre of a political life that was at once firm, self-respecting and moderate. Sir Evelyn Baring (Now Lord Cromer) in an address delivered in Bombay said that he had learned to regard "the public opinion of Bombay as expressive, perhaps, of the best political thought in India." Needless to say, this tribute was virtually one paid to the political tact, sagacity, and wisdom of the distinguished triumvirate already mentioned, and not least to Mr. Telang. Mr. Telang's first public appearance was at a meeting held in 1872 in connection with the question of Municipal reform. From that time forward there was not a single important political meeting in which Mr. Telang did not take a most prominent part. It was in these meetings that Mr. Telang's surpassing gift of speech was revealed. Most memorable of his utterances was his speech on the Ilbert Bill delivered at a great meeting in Bombay. We cannot do better to describe his mode of oratory than quote Mr. Wacha once again. Describing the Ilbert Bill meeting he says :—

"The principal speakers at that historical meeting



were the then triumvirate of Bombay politicians Messrs. Badruddin Tyabji, Mehta and Telang. That was a memorable meeting for those who attended it, and still more memorable for the remarkably well argued out and sober speeches made thereat—speeches which might have been heard at a full dress first-class, debate in the Hall of St. Stephens. Its influence was such that even the rabid Anglo-Indians at the seat of Government had to look small for the example the trio set in the amenities of a raging public controversy. Mr. Telang's speech was one sustained stream of consummate reasoning to delight the hearts of all lovers of dialectics. It was then for the first time revealed what powers of popular oratory Mr. Telang possessed. The audience then discovered that sweet voice, that persuasive and earnest eloquence, and that uniform flow of sweet reason, to which Mr. Ranade has alluded in his address. A calmer and more solid piece of forensic ratiocination in the midst of the fiery whirlwind of passion and prejudice raging outside the presidency was never heard before. It was also a fine example of that intense self-restraint which the serene and far-sighted statesman who is not merely the politician puts upon himself during an eventful crisis. In fact, on that day Mr. Telang revealed to the world of India what a man of careful speech was he. There was none of the legal casuistry which members of the Bar attributed to him in his later days and which was alleged to be not absent in some of his utterances from the Bench after his elevation there. He had none of the rhetorical gestures of the trained orator, and none of

the declamatory spirit. His speech was like a stream meandering in its onward course at an even measure or rhythm, but never swelling to that roar and force which is inseparable from the waters of a great river in her rapid onward course towards the infinite Sea...  
.....In short, as far as Mr. Telang's public writings and speeches are concerned it will be found that they are wanting in the fire and enthusiasm of Mr. Mehta as much as in his biting sarcasm, his playful satire, and his love of ridicule. Mr. Telang had less of the rapier point and more of the butt-end of the marlin spike."

Sir Raymond West says that Mr. Telang's " language of a limpid purity would have done credit to an English-born orator." And again: " His style was formed on the classic writers and expressed his meaning with admirable force and clearness. It may indeed be doubted if any native orator has equalled him in lucidity and that restraint which is so much more effective than exaggeration and over-embellishment." Lord Reay, sometime Governor of Bombay, said some years ago, that if Mr. Telang had been elected to the House of Commons, he would have won his way to the very front in no time. Such was the impression that Mr. Telang's eloquence created on those who heard him,

In the year 1884 Mr. Telang was appointed a member of the Bombay Legislative Council and was twice re-elected during Lord Reay's time. He could have been member of the Viceregal Council, if he had wished, but professional duties forbade him

that distinction. Mr. Telang was one of the founders of the Indian National Congress, and though he was unable from illness to attend the second and third sessions, he was present at the fourth session at Allahabad in which he delivered a ringing speech on the expansion of the Legislative Councils. His subsequent elevation to the Bench was a bar to his taking any further part in public life, though his interest in all matters pertaining to his country continued unabated.

In the year 1893 Mr. Telang fell ill, and on the 19th September he passed away. But he lives in his work, in the memory of those who knew him, and in the noble example he has left behind him. He held his talents as a trust for others. An orator, scholar, jurist, patriot, he has left his mark on his age. The late Mr. G. M. Thripathi wrote of him, that his motto was that *man* had no *rights* but only *responsibilities*, and that this motto filled his life with the note of an infinite sweetness. Yes, Mr. Telang was a sweet spirit, a spirit that felt out towards more and more light. If an epitaph be needed for him, we cannot think of one better than the simple words in which Sir N. G. Chandravarkar once summed up his life, "He died learning."

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## THE ILBERT BILL

*(Speech delivered by K. T. Telang before a meeting held in the Town Hall, Bombay, to consider the Ilbert Bill then before the Viceregal Council).*

Mr. Kashinath Trimbak Telang, who was received with loud cheers, said :—

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—The resolution which has been entrusted to me runs as follows :—

“That the Committee of the Bombay Branch of the East Indian Association be also requested to take steps to have the memorial, with the necessary alterations, forwarded to the Honourable the House of Commons in England.”

In proposing this resolution, it would be wrong, on more than one ground, if I were to detain you with any lengthy speech of my own at this late hour, and especially after the able speeches which have been addressed to you. But the subject which we are met to consider to-night is one of such great importance that I trust the meeting will bear me while I make a few remarks on it. I do not propose to travel over the ground occupied so well by the speeches of Mr. Budroodin and Mr. Pherozeshah and the speakers who followed them. Nor, for obvious reasons, shall I say anything about the recent doings of our European friends in the Town Hall of Calcutta. These doings were of such a nature that, to borrow the language used on a celebrated occasion by a distinguished man, now no more, the best rebuke we

can administer to these gentlemen is to refrain from following so dangerous an example. (Cheers.) There was, however, one point, gentlemen made, I believe, at the Calcutta Town Hall, and certainly made in the public press since, to which I feel bound to refer. It has been asserted that the Bengalis entertain feelings of hatred and hostility to the British nation. Well, gentlemen, having had the honour, as you are aware, of being appointed to serve on the Education Commission, I had recently to spend a few months in Calcutta. And during the period of my stay there I came into close, intimate, and frequent contact with the leaders of thought and the leaders in public affairs of the Bengali nation. And, having frequently had frank conversations with many of them, having thus seen them in a sort of mental undress, so to speak, I venture to affirm, and to affirm very confidently, that this hatred and hostility is a mere figment of some alarmist brain, and has no existence in reality. (Loud cheers.) I think that, believing this, as I do believe it, to be the truth upon the subject, I am bound, if not by any other obligation, at least by gratitude for the kindness which I received from my Bengali brethren while I was among them, to make this statement to correct misapprehension. I need not, however, dwell any further on this point, and therefore I shall turn at once to the main subject to which I wish to address myself. As I have said, I do not intend now to go into any of the positive argument in favour of the Jurisdiction Bill. But I propose to examine the main points made by an eminent man, Sir Fitz-James



Stephen, in his letter on the subject. Sir Fitz-James Stephen has held high office in this country, and now occupies a distinguished position on the English Bench. He is not only a lawyer, but a writer on Jurisprudence and a political philosopher who has thought out the ultimate principles of the political creed which he holds. (Hear, hear.) And, therefore, I need not say that his authority on such a subject as ours is very high, and I should be the first in ordinary circumstances to defer to it, but in this case I must say that if I was an opponent of the Jurisdiction Bill, I should be afraid of Sir Fitz-James Stephen's championship. Many years ago he wrote a work entitled "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" which, I think, may, with substantial accuracy, be characterised as the gospel of force. (Cheers.) In that work he set himself in obtrusive antagonism to the doctrines of modern liberalism, by which I do not mean what is called by that name in the jargon of English party politics. But I mean liberalism in the broader and higher sense as signifying those political principles, which, for us here in India, are embodied in the great Proclamation of 1858. Well, as he holds those opinions, it is plain that even his support, if he supported any measure of Government which involved and of those principles, would be an occasion of embarrassment. But apart from these general considerations, let us see for an instant what Sir Fitz-James Stephen does say. His first proposition, not first in order in his letter, but first in importance is that the policy of Lord Ripon's Government is shifting the foundations

of British power in this country, or to use his own expression, is in consistent with the foundations on which British power rests. Now, I deny this entirely. I say that the principles of Lord Ripon's administration, as pointed out in our memorial, are in consonance with the long-established principles of the British Government as laid down by Parliament and the Crown. (Loud cheers.) And I say, further, that those principles are in accord with the lessons to be derived from the study of past history. I remember being struck many years ago, in reading the history of the Romans under the Empire, with a passage in which the author said that one great lesson to be deduced from the history of Rome was that all conquering nations, in order to render their Government in the conquered countries stable and permanent, must divest themselves of their peculiar privileges by sharing them with the conquered peoples. Now, gentlemen, we all know that it is the proud and just boast of Englishmen that they are the Romans of the modern world, and that the British Empire is in modern days what the Roman Empire was in ancient times. If so, are we wrong, are we unreasonable in asking that the lessons of Roman history, and, as Mr. Merivale points out, the lessons of the history of other ancient Governments also, should be adopted by our British rulers? (Cheers.) It is not quite proper and reasonable for us to ask that the countrymen of Clarkson and Wilberforce, of Gladstone and John Bright—(loud cheers)—should not only adopt those

lessons but improve upon them, and rise superior to the countrymen of Marius and Sylla, the Triumvirs and the Cæsars? I venture to say, gentlemen, that if Britons are now content to fail to carry out those lessons, and to fall short of the generosity of the Romans, it will be regarded as not creditable to them by the future historian. And as a loyal subject of the British Government I should be sorry for such a result. (Loud and prolonged cheers.) We next come to Sir Fitz-James Stephen's second point. He says—Oh! it is all very well to ask for the abolition of these special privileges to Europeans, but every other section of the Indian community has its own privileges which the law recognises. And he gives as an instance the fact that Hindoos, Mahomedans, &c., have their own special laws of inheritance administered to them. Now, I venture to say that no fair comparison can be made between laws of inheritance and laws of criminal procedure. The former does not affect any one save the special community to which it is administered. What does it matter to John Jones whether the property of Rama, or Ahmed, or Muncherjee goes on his death to his sons or his daughters, his father or mother or widow? But the law of criminal procedure, as has been already pointed out by other speakers, affects the other communities in a most important respect. It is plain, therefore, that the two cases which Sir Fitz-James Stephen treats as identical, are really distinguishable on essential points. Besides, it must be remembered that no other class privileges are recognised in the



criminal law of British India ; it is only in the civil law that they are so recognised. But, further, I am surprised at Sir Fitz-James Stephen not alluding in his letter to one point relevant to this branch of the subject to which reference is made, in his own volume already referred to. He has there pointed out that the British Government in India is, involuntarily it may be, but still actually, interfering with the personal laws of natives, even in matters connected with their religious beliefs, and is applying as Sir Fitz-James Stephen puts it, a constant and steady pressure to adapt them to modern civilization—so that the Government, as Sir Fitz-James Stephen himself puts it, is really heading revolution. If then the Government is actually interfering with the personal laws of us unenlightened and uncivilized natives, is there anything wrong in their interfering with those of the enlightened Britons, with whose views and opinions, feelings and wishes they are much more familiar, and in much greater sympathy ? Is there anything unfair if we ask that the same measure should be dealt out to both ? Sir Fitz-James Stephen next refers to the Special Tribunal for Europeans maintained in Turkey and other countries. But there the European is protected from foreign courts to be subjected to British courts. Here he is protected from one class of British courts to be subjected to another. The difference is quite manifest between the two cases. Further, Sir Fitz-James Stephen says it is only natural that everyone charged with a criminal offence should wish to be tried by one

of his own race and colour. But this leads to a difficulty, namely, that natives may have a similar wish. And how does Sir Fitz-James Stephen meet that? Why, he says that while no native understands English sufficiently to conduct a trial in that language properly *attempts* are made—mark the expression, attempts are made—to get European officers to study the vernaculars of the country. Now, gentlemen, I think it is not egotistical to say that the first part of the statement is the reverse of the truth. (Cheers.) For every one European that can be shown competent to conduct a criminal trial in a vernacular language, we can show at least one hundred natives even more competent to do so in English. (Loud cheers.) And as to the second part, we have not to rely only on our personal experiences. As we say at Law *habemus optimum testem confidentem reum*. Many years ago a book was published by a Bengal Civilian, called “Life in the Mofussil,” in which he very candidly admitted that though he passed the examination in Bengali, he knew little or nothing of the language. (Loud laughter.) Here we have a test of the success of the *attempt* to which Sir Fitz-James Stephen refers. I do not think, gentlemen, I need further detain you with Sir Fitz-James Stephen’s arguments. His principal points have, I venture to say, been satisfactorily answered. There is, however, one argument to which I should like to refer before sitting down. It is put forward in the *Times of India* by a gentleman who signs himself “Maratha,” but whose nationality, from internal evidence, seems to be European and not Maratha.

However, on the principle of measures, not men, we shall consider his argument as it deserve to be whether it emanates from a veritable Maratha or not. He says natives are not fit and competent judges of Europeans, because the native papers are writing about the cases of deaths of natives at the hands of Europeans as if they were all cases of deliberate murder and the explanation of a ruptured spleen always untrue. He argues that as this view of the native papers has not been disavowed by educated natives, it indicates the state of their feelings towards Europeans, and renders them unfit judges for trying Europeans. Now, I am not one of those who believe that this explanation of the ruptured spleen is always untrue. (Laughter and applause.) I have no doubt that in many cases it is true, and that the language of many of our native papers on the subjects is exaggerated and without justification. But having admitted that, I do not admit the correctness of "Maratha's" argument. I will not, however, analyse it now, but put another argument on the other side. We all know that many Europeans have spoken of the native communities in a way which means that they consider us all as, on the whole, a people given to perjury. This opinion, publicly expressed by some members of the European community, has not been disavowed by others. And, therefore, according to "Maratha's" logic, the true conclusion to be derived from this is that Europeans are not fit judges for natives. (Cheers.) This broad conclusion follows according to "Maratha's" principles. Certainly, in cases where natives are charged with perjury

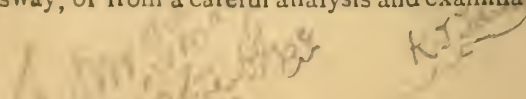
Europeans would be, on those principles, unfit judges. Because whereas, according to the presumption of English law, the accused would have to be treated as innocent until the contrary was proved, in the mind of the European judge the native prisoner would be guilty until he proved the contrary. Mark, I don't say this would be a correct result. But I say it follows, if "Maratha's" argument is sound, I use it only as an *argumentum ad hominem*. See then the deadlock. You cannot have European judges, and you cannot have native judges. How then is the administration of justice to be secured? (Laughter and cheers.) I do not think, gentlemen, that I ought to detain you any longer. We have a very good case; let us take it before the House of Commons. It has been taken there already, in fact, by the opponents of the Bill. Let us place our view before the House. (Cheers.) By past experience we know that in such matters we can trust to the justice and sense of fair play of the British House of Commons. (Loud cheers.) Let us leave this matter also to their judgment, in the full confidence that it will be there decided on considerations free from all local passion and local prepossession. (Loud cheers).

## LORD RIPON

*(Speech delivered by K. T. Telang in honor of Lord Ripon on his retirement from the Viceroyalty, at the Town Hall, Bombay.)*

THE HON. JUSTICE K. T. TELANG, C.I.E., who was received with cheers, in seconding the resolution (the adoption of an address to H. E. Lord Ripon) said :—

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—I have great pleasure, indeed, in seconding the resolution which has been proposed by Rao Saheb Mandlik. And when I say that I have very great pleasure in doing so I am not merely indulging in the conventional cant supposed to be suitable to such occasions. I really feel it to be not only a pleasure, but also an honour, to have the opportunity of taking part in such a proceeding as that we are engaged in, this afternoon. Gentlemen, it was only yesterday that I was asked by two of my friends whether I really and seriously intended to join in this movement, and why I was going to do so. I answered, gentlemen, that I had not only joined in the movement, but that I had joined in it with all my heart and soul, and that my answer to the question, why I had done so, would be given this afternoon. Gentlemen, there are two tests, I think, by which you can judge, whether anyone who has been entrusted with the government of men has or has not acquired a title to the gratitude of his subjects. We may form our judgment either from the views of those over whom he has borne sway, or from a careful analysis and examination





of the measures of his administration, and after striking a balance between their merits and defects. Gentlemen, I venture to say that tried by both tests, Lord Ripon's *regime* will come out triumphant. Whether we look to the popularity which his Lordship has won among the people over whom he has borne sway for the last four years, or whether we consider the various measures of his administration, the conclusion is forced upon all unbiassed minds that Lord Ripon's Government has been most successful. As to the first point, we have only got to consider the history of the past fortnight or three weeks which his lordship has spent in the journey from Simla to Calcutta and notice his popularity, which remains full of vitality and power in spite of the great strain put upon it only a few months ago. The accounts which we are receiving every day point to that with conclusive effect—an effect which cannot for one moment be impeached. Again, gentlemen, there have always been amongst us men who have been branded by our critics, as constituting what may be called a permanent Opposition to Her Majesty's Government in this country, however that Government may be at any time constituted. But strange as it may seem, even these men have now walked over into the ranks of the Ministerialists, so to speak, and are joining in the chorus of praise which is reverberating throughout the length and breadth of the land. Gentlemen, that is not a slight success for any ruler of men to have achieved. It is a very great triumph for an alien ruler. But then it may be said that popularity is but an unsatisfactory test to apply in these cases. I agree in that view to a certain

extent. But we must here remember two kinds of popularity, which have been distinguished from one another by that eminent judge, the late Sir John Coleridge. There is the popularity which is followed after, and there is the popularity which follows the performance of one's duty—the pursuit of an honest and straight forward course. The popularity which is followed after may not afford good evidence of the worth of a man. But, gentlemen, the popularity of Lord Ripon is of the latter class, and does, therefore, constitute a fair test of the success of his Lordship's rule. (Cheers.) But let us apply the second test to which I have alluded above. Let us examine and carefully scan, without any prejudices, some of the measures of Lord Ripon's administration, for it is impossible to go through the whole number even of the most prominent measures on such an occasion as the present. Taking only those connected more or less closely with fiscal administration, we have gentlemen, the beginnings made of a policy of real and powerful support to the manufactures of the country. That is a measure fraught with great possibilities. Take again the recent resolution regarding surveys and assessments of land. Gentlemen, after a great deal of complaint and outcry on that subject, we may now consider ourselves as being at least within measurable distance of the time when the ryot may be saved from one of his many vexations—the ryot who has hitherto been the object rather of passive than of moving active sympathy. Look again at reduction of the salt duty—a measure most satisfactory in the interests of the poorer classes of our

population. These measures show that Lord Ripon's policy has been one of affording genuine sympathy and tangible help to the classes of the population who are least able to help themselves, or to make the voice of complaint heard when they are oppressed. It is diametrically opposed to that policy of carrying taxation "along the line of the least resistance," which commended itself once to some great masters of statecraft. But, gentlemen, there is one point connected with Lord Ripon's fiscal policy, to which I must here refer, as it is the point on which the strongest attack on Lord Ripon's rule has been made, purely on grounds of reason. I refer to the repeal, of the import duties on Manchester goods. Gentlemen, I remember, when that repeal was announced, being told by a friend of mine that I was allowing myself to be blinded by English party prejudices, in making no effort to publicly protest against Lord Ripon's proceeding, as we had done on the occasion of the first partial repeal of the duties by Lord Lytton's Government. I denied then, gentlemen, as I deny now, that there was any party prejudice in the matter at all. For, see how different were the circumstances in the two cases. A little consideration will make it absolutely clear that they differed entirely from each other on most essential points. In the case of Lord Lytton's measure, it was voluntarily undertaken by his Lordship's Government, when a general election was impending in England, and at a time when, in substance, additional taxation had been imposed upon the people. How stood the facts when Lord Ripon's measure was



enacted? The repeal was enforced upon Lord Ripon's Government by the action of their predecessors—an action which, it was cynically confessed by those predecessors, was intended to enforce this further step. It was taken at a time when there were no immediate English interests to please, and when, so, far from there being any increase of taxation, there was actually a remission of taxation in the shape of the reduction of the salt duty, which Lord Ripon's predecessors had enhanced in some parts of the country on the plea of securing symmetry and uniformity throughout the empire. Therefore, waiving all other considerations it seems to me capable of conclusive proof that the measure sanctioned by Lord Ripon was not at all as objectionable as that which we did publicly protest against. I have thus, gentlemen, referred to a few specific measures of Lord Ripon's rule, but they have only been referred to as illustrations. Other measures, if examined, will yield similar results. But I don't propose to dwell on them. I will rather say a word on the general tone and spirit of liberalism, which has been a pervading characteristic of Lord Ripon's rule. Whether we look at the repeal of the Vernacular Press Act or the resolution for making public the aims and scope of Government measures, or the practice of inviting people's opinions on contemplated projects, or whether we look to the great scheme of local self-government, or the manner, for that is most important, in which the late Kristodas Pall—*clarum et venerabile nomen*—was appointed to the Supreme Legislative Council, we see clearly the liberal

policy of Lord Ripon's Government, Gentlemen, many of you will doubtless remember the noble lines in which the successor "of him that uttered nothing base" has embodied the anticipated sentiments of after-generations on the reign of Queen Victoria. "And statesmen," the Laureate sings—

"And statesmen at her Council met,  
Who knew the seasons when to take  
Occasion by the hand and make  
The bounds of freedom wider yet,  
By shaping some august decree  
That left her throne unshaken still  
Broad-based upon her people's will  
And compass'd by the inviolate sea."

(Cheers.) The ideas so beautifully expressed in the lines are literally true of the Government of Her Majesty as represented by the present Viceroy in this country. Yes, gentlemen, Lord Ripon has made the bounds of freedom wider, by shaping diverse august decrees, which have not only left Queen Victoria's throne unshaken in this land, but have made it even more broad-based upon the people's will. It is the perception of this tendency of Lord Ripon's policy to extend the bounds of freedom that is gall and wormwood to Sir F. Stephen. It is no longer necessary for us to consider whether his views can be properly accepted or not. The principles which he seems to advocate have been finally rejected by the British Parliament and the British Crown. But it is that tendency and the tangible embodiments of it

against which that eminent person, as well as some feebler and less intellectual spirits, are dashing themselves. It is that, however, on which, in my humble judgment, rests most firmly Lord Ripon's claim upon our gratitude. It is that, therefore, which explains our present movement. It is that which affords the basis of my answer to the question I alluded to at the outset of my observations. It is that which justifies the remark that, summing up the result of Lord Ripon's rule, you may say, again borrowing the language of the Laureate, that "he wrought his people lasting good." In the case of such a Viceroy, gentlemen, what we are doing this evening is not merely proper and called for, it is really inadequate. Gentlemen, I will not detain you any longer; I beg to second the motion which has been placed before you. (Loud and prolonged cheers.)

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**M. K. Gandhi.**

## MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

**T**HE story of the great woes, our countrymen have endured in South Africa, since Indian immigration began, ought to be too well-known to every son of India to need recapitulation. It is a story full of harrowing revelations, on the one hand, of the heart-rending sufferings the British Indian has had to undergo, and on the other, the depths to which white humanity can descend. It is a story of inhuman treatment and helpless suffering, of racial antipathy and commercial jealousy, of disabilities, wrongs and humiliations, of a flagrant defiance of the elementary laws of civilised life for which there is hardly a parallel in modern times. The tragedy of that story is all but unrelieved, unrelieved indeed but for two things. The one is the illumining presence in it of a personality like Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, and the other is the dauntless stand, our countrymen, high and low, Hindu, Mahomedan, Christian and Parsee, have made for their rights. The atrocities inflicted upon our countrymen may almost tempt us to think, that man was made not in the image of God but in that of His Ancient Enemy. When however we read the account of the splendid sacrifice and heroism displayed

by our countrymen in the battle for honour and self-respect, a sense of human nature redeemed steals over us. The history of the world, said Thomas Carlyle in memorable words, is the history of its great men. One may in like manner say, without violence to the truth, that the history of the vast transformations, we have witnessed in South Africa during the last three years and more in the attitude of the Indian Community, is the history of one man, Mr. Gandhi. For a fifteen years he has been the accredited friend, philosopher, and guide, of the Indian Community in South Africa. He has been the moulder, director and inspiring genius of the Passive Resistance movement in the Transvaal. Under his generalship the British Indians in South Africa, from being a mass of discordant and repelling units, have been welded into a close-knit body, pulsating with a sense of common life and common responsibility. During the last ten years Mr. Gandhi's name has been much before the public. Mr. J. J. Doke, a baptist minister of Johannesburg, with a generosity not always characteristic of the ministers of the Gospel, has made him the hero of a biography. And certainly few men in India to-day enjoy a larger meed of the affection and devotion of the rising generation. Truly a remarkable man! A nature strung to what is finest and best in life, a lofty ideal of duty strenuously pursued, an ever-present and haunting sense of claims larger than those of the personal self, such are some of the elements that have gone to make him, as the following sketch of his career will show.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on the 2nd



of October 1869, the youngest of three children, in a vaishya family, at Porbandar, a city of Kathiawar in Guzerat. Mr. Gandhi's immediate ancestors seem to have been quite remarkable. Mr. Gandhi's grandfather was Dewan of the Rana of Porbandar and an anecdote illustrates how fearless he was. Incurring the displeasure of the Queen who was acting as Regent for her son, he had to flee the court of Porbandar and take refuge with the Nawab of Junagadh, who received him with great kindness. But there was a rift in the lute. The courtiers remarked that the ex-prime minister of Porbandar gave his salute to the Nawab with his left hand. But the intrepid man replied, "In spite of all that I have suffered I keep my right hand for Porbandar still." Mr. Gandhi's father was no less remarkable. Succeeding his father as Dewan of Porbandar and losing like his father the favour of the Ruling Chief he repaired to Rajkot where he was entertained as Dewan. He was a severely religious man and could repeat the Baghavat Gita from beginning to end. The Thakore Sahib of Rajkot pressed him to accept a large grant of land, but he refused, and even when the entreaties and admonitions of friends and relatives prevailed at last, he accepted only a fraction of what was offered. Happening to hear one day the Assistant Political Agent hold abusive language regarding the Thakore Sahib, he indignantly repudiated it. His Omnipotence the Political Agent, demanded an apology which was refused. He thereupon ordered the offending Dewan to be arrested and detained under a tree for some hours. The apology was eventually waived

and a reconciliation effected. Such was the father. Mr. Gandhi's mother, however, was the most remarkable of all. Her influence on the character of her son has been deep and profound. Religion was to her the breath of life. Long and rigorous were her fasts; many and abounding were her charities; and never could she brook to see a starving soul in her neighbourhood. In these respects she was indeed a typical Hindu woman. Such were the parents of whom the subject of our present sketch was born.

Mr. Gandhi was duly put to school at Porbandar, but a change occurring in its fortunes, the whole family removed to Rajkot. At Rajkot the boy attended first a Vernacular School, and afterwards the Kathiawar High School, whence he passed the Matriculation Examination at the age of seventeen. Mr. Gandhi was married at the age of twelve while still at school.

An incident in his school life deserves more than ordinary attention. Born and bred in an atmosphere of uncompromising Vaishnavism, he had learned to perfection its ritual and worship, if not, also to some extent, its rationale and doctrine. Vaishnavism emphasises and exalts the virtue of non-killing (Ahimsa), and Vaishnavas are strict vegetarians. The teaching at school, however, demolished the young Gandhi's unlearned faith, and he became a sceptic. This wreck of faith brought one disastrous consequence in its train. The young Gandhi and some school companions of his sincerely came to believe that vegetarianism was a folly and superstition, and that, to be civilised, the eating of flesh was essential. Nor

were the boys slow to put their belief into action. Buying some flesh in secret every evening they went to a secluded spot on the bank of a stream and had a convivial meal. But the young Gandhi's conscience was all the while never at peace. At home he had to tell lies to excuse his lack of appetite, and one subterfuge led to another. The boy loved truth and hated falsehood, and to avoid telling lies he abjured flesh-eating for ever. Truly, the child is father of the man!

After he passed the Matriculation examination Mr. Gandhi was advised by a friend of the family to go to England to qualify himself for the Bar. Mr. Gandhi's mother, however, would not listen to any such thing. Many a gruesome tale had the good woman heard of the abandoned nature of English life, and she shrank from the prospect of exposing her young son to all its temptations, as from the thought of hell. But the son was firm and the mother had to yield. But not until she had taken her son before a Jain sannyasin and made him swear three solemn vows forswearing wine, flesh and woman did she give her consent.

Once in England, Mr. Gandhi set about to make of himself a thorough English "gentleman." An Indian friend of his in England who gloried in his anglicised ways took him in hand and gave lessons in fashion. Under his inspiration he began to school himself in dancing, English music and French, in fact in all the accomplishments needed for the mighty role of the English "gentleman." His heart was, however, not in the matter. The three vows he had taken haunted him like a spectre. One day he went to a party and, there,

was served with flesh soup. He had now to make his choice between his three vows and the character of the English "gentleman." He then and there rose up and left the party much to the chagrin and indignation of the friend before alluded to. He thereafter bade adieu to all his new-fangled ways ; his feet ceased to dance, his fingers ceased to tune the violin, and the possibilities of the English "gentleman" in him were lost for ever.

All this proved to be but the beginning of a keen spiritual struggle which stirred his being to its depths and out of which he emerged into a triumphant self-consciousness. The eternal problems of existence faced him and pressed for an answer. Friends were not wanting who tried to persuade him that in Christianity he would find the light for which he yearned. At the same time he began to make a close study of the Baghavat Gita. Step by step, as he went on he was overwhelmed with its transcendent sublimity ; the spirit of the Gita pierced into his very marrow. He felt himself transported into a new world over which peace unfathomable brooded in silence and serenity. All his searchings of spirit ceased. The little bark of his soul finding its haven was evermore at rest.

His life in England was otherwise uneventful. He passed the London Matriculation Examination, qualified himself for the Bar, and returned to India.

News of a most heart rending character awaited his arrival at Bombay. Unknown to himself a calamity, which to a Hindu at least is one of the great calamities of life, had befallen him. His mother who had loved

him as perhaps only a Hindu mother could, who had saved him from moral ruin and who had, no doubt, winged ceaseless thoughts of love and prayer for her far away son in England, that angel of a mother was no more. She had been dead sometime and the news had been purposely kept a secret from him. We shall not attempt to describe his feeling when the news at last was disclosed to him.

The next eighteen months Mr. Gandhi spent partly at Bombay and partly at Rajkot devoting himself to a deeper study of law and the Hindu scriptures. He also attached himself to the Bombay High Court. But there was other work to do for him in a different part of the world, and the fates thus fulfilled themselves. A firm at Porbandar with a branch at Pretoria had an important law suit in South Africa in which many Indians were concerned. The conduct of this law suit, expected to last for over a year, being offered to him, Mr. Gandhi accepted it and proceeded to South Africa.

From the very day he set foot at Natal he had to taste of that cup of humiliation which has been the Indian's portion all these years. At court he was rudely ordered to remove the Barristers' turban he had on, and he left the court at once burning with mortification. This experience however was soon eclipsed by a host of others still more ignominious. Journeying to the Transvaal in a Railway train the Guard unceremoniously ordered him to quit the first-class compartment, though he had paid for it, and betake himself to the van. Refusing, he was brutally dragged out with his luggage. And the train at once steamed off.



All this was on British soil ! In the Transvaal itself things were even worse. As he was sitting on the box of a coach on the way to Pretoria, the Guard asked him to dismount because he wanted to smoke there. A refusal brought two consecutive blows in quick succession. In Pretoria he was once kicked off a foot-path by a sentry. The catalogue may be still further extended, but it would be a weariness of the flesh.

The law suit which he had been engaged to conduct was at last over. A social gathering was given in his honour on the eve of his departure to India. That evening Mr. Gandhi chanced to see a local newspaper which announced that a bill was about to be introduced into the Colonial Parliament to disfranchise Indians, and that other bills of a similiar character were soon to follow. Mr. Gandhi was alarmed. He realised how grave the situation was and explained to the assembled guests that if the Indian Community in South Africa was to be saved from utter extinction, immediate and resolute steps should be taken. At his instance a message was at once sent to the Colonial Parliament requesting delay of proceedings, which was soon followed up by a largely signed petition against the new measure. But all was of no avail. The bill was passed in due course. Now another largely signed petition was sent to the Colonial Secretary in England, and in consequence the Royal Assent was withheld. But this again was of no avail, for the same goal was reached by a new bill through a slightly different route. Now it was, that Mr. Gandhi seriously mooted the question of a central organization in South Africa



to keep vigilant watch over the interests of the Indians. But it was represented to him that such an organization would be impossible unless he himself consented to remain in South Africa. The prominent Indians guaranteed him a practice if he should choose to stay. In response to their wishes Mr. Gandhi enrolled himself in the Supreme Court of Natal though not without some objection on the ground of his colour.

We may say that from this time on Mr. Gandhi began to see his life in its true perspective. He had to choose between prospect and preferment in India, and humiliation and struggle in South Africa. How much depended on his choice ! The South African Indian Community were like a flock of sheep without a shepherd, and he chose to be the shepherd. South Africa was the vineyard of the Lord in which he was called to dig and delve, and he chose to be the labourer. From the day he made the choice he has consecrated himself to his work as to a high and lofty mission, with results everybody knows of.

Having enrolled himself as a Barrister of the Supreme Court of Natal Mr. Gandhi strenuously devoted himself to make his practice a success, even while educating and organising the Indian Community. In 1896 he came to India to take his wife and children to South Africa. Before he left South Africa he had written and published an " open letter " detailing the wrongs and grievances of Indians in South Africa.

News of the splendid work which he had done in South Africa had travelled before him to India, and Indians of all classes joined in according him an

enthusiastic reception wherever he went. In these meetings Mr. Gandhi had of course to make some speeches. Our good friend, Reuter, sent highly-garbled versions of his addresses to South Africa. Mr. Gandhi was represented as telling his Indian audiences that Indians in South Africa were uniformly treated like wild beasts. The blood of the Colonials was up and the feeling against Mr. Gandhi reached white heat. Meeting after meeting was held in which he was denounced in the most scathing terms. Meanwhile Mr. Gandhi was urgently requested to return to Natal without a moment's delay, and he embarked accordingly.

The steamer carrying Mr. Gandhi reached Durban on the same day as another steamer, which had left Bombay with 600 Indian passengers on board two days after Mr. Gandhi's departure. The two ships was immediately quarantined indefinitely. Great things were transpiring at Durban meanwhile. The Colonials were determined not to land the Asiatics. Gigantic demonstrations were taking place, and the expediency of sending the Indians back was gravely discussed. It was plain that the Colonials would go any length to accomplish their purpose. The more boisterous spirits even proposed the sinking of the ship. Word was sent to Mr. Gandhi that if he and his compatriots should attempt to land they would do so at infinite peril ; but threats were of no avail. On the day on which the new Indian arrivals were expected to land a huge concourse had assembled at the docks. There was no end of hissing, shouting, roaring and

cursing. The Attorney-General of Natal addressed the crowd and promised them that the matter would receive the early attention of Parliament, commanding them at the same time in the name of the Queen to disperse. And the crowd dispersed. Mr. Gandhi came ashore some time after the landing of his fellow passengers, having previously sent his wife and children to the house of a friend. He was immediately recognised by some of the stragglers who at once began to hiss and shout. A rickshaw was engaged, but the way was blocked. Mr. Gandhi walked on foot with a European friend and when they reached one of the streets the crowd was so big that the two friends were separated. The crowd at once began to maul Mr. Gandhi till the Police came and took him to the house of a friend. The Police Superintendent expressed his apprehensions that the mob in their frenzy would even set fire to the house. Mr. Gandhi was obliged to dress himself as a Police Constable and take refuge in the Police Station. This ebullition of abnormal feeling subsided after some time and a momentous page in Mr. Gandhi's life was turned.

In October, 1899 war broke out between the English and the Boers in South Africa. Mr. Gandhi with the sagacity of a true leader at once perceived what a golden opportunity it was to the British Indians to vindicate their self-respect and readiness to suffer in the cause of the Empire. At his call hundreds of our countrymen in South Africa were glad to enlist themselves as Volunteers, but the offer was rejected with scorn by the powers that be. The offer was renewed.

a second time, only to meet with a similar fate. When however the British arms sustained some disasters, it was recognised that every man available should be put into the field and Mr. Gandhi's offer on behalf of his compatriots in South Africa was accepted. A thousand Indians came forward, and were constituted into an Ambulance Corps, to assist in carrying the wounded to the hospitals. Of the service that was rendered in this direction, it is not necessary to speak as it has been recognised even in South Africa. At another time the British Indians were employed to receive the wounded out of the line of fire and carry them to a place more than twenty miles off. When the battle was raging, Major Bapte came to Mr. Gandhi who of course was one of the Volunteers, and represented that if they worked from within the line of fires they should be rendering incalculable service. At once all the Indian Volunteers responded to the request and dauntlessly exposed themselves to shot and shell. Many an Indian life was lost that day. Such is an unvarnished account of the heroic services rendered by British Indians in South Africa during the Boer War.

The war was over and the Transvaal became a part of the British Empire. Mr. Gandhi was under the impression that, since the wrongs of the British Indian subjects of the Queen were one of declared causes of the war, under the new Government those wrongs would be a thing of the past. Under this impression he returned to India with no idea of going back, but he was reckoning without his host. The little finger of the new Government was thicker than the loins of the

Boers. The Boers had indeed stung the Indian subjects of the Queen with whips but the new Government stung them with scorpions. A new asiatic department was constituted to deal with Asiatics as a species apart. A most insidious policy of exclusion was maturing. The prospect was dark and appalling and Mr. Gandhi had to return to the scene of his labours. He interviewed the authorities but he was assured that he had no business to interfere in the matter while they themselves were there to look after everything. Mr. Joseph Chamberlain was then in South Africa and a deputation led by Mr. Gandhi waited upon him in Natal. In Pretoria however a similar deputation was disallowed unless Mr. Gandhi was excluded. Evidently Mr Gandhi's name was becoming gall and wormwood to the authorities. But he was not the man to be frightened. He determined to fight out the battle in the Law Courts and enrolled himself on the Supreme Court of Pretoria.

He now felt more than ever the imperative need of an organ which should at once educate the South African Indian Community on the one hand and be on the other the faithful mouthpiece of their views. In 1903 a press was bought and the paper "Indian Opinion" was ushered into existence. It was published in four languages, English, Tamil, Guzerati and Hindi. At first it didn't prove a success and entailed such heavy loss that during the first year Mr. Gandhi had to pay a sum of £2,000 out of his own pocket. Though in subsequent years the financial position of the paper has somewhat improved, it has never been a pecuniary



success. Notwithstanding, it has grown to be a great force in South Africa and rendered invaluable service during the recent struggle.

In the year 1904 a virulent attack of plague broke out among the Indian Community in Johannesburg. The Municipal authorities were either ignorant or apathetic. Mr. Gandhi, however, was at once on the scene and sent word to the authorities that if immediate action were not taken an epidemic was in prospect. But no answer came. One day the plague carried off as many as twenty-one victims. Mr. Gandhi with three or four noble comrades at once broke open one of the Indian Stores which was empty, and had the patients carried there and did what he could in the matter. The next morning the Municipal authorities bestirred themselves and took the necessary action. The plague lasted a month counting more than a hundred victims. We in India may shudder to think to what an appalling magnitude the outbreak may have grown but for the heroic endeavours of the subject of this sketch, and his devoted comrades.

About this time Mr. Gandhi had been reading Ruskin's "*Unto this Last*" and its influence sank deep into his mind. He was on fire with the idea of country settlements championed therein. Shortly after the plague had subsided he went to Natal and purchased a piece of land at Phoenix, a place situated "on the bill sides of a rich grassy country." Houses were built and a village sprang up on the mountain side. The inhabitants of the village of whatever rank, dig, plough and cultivate the adjoining land with their own hands.



Mr. Gandhi goes to the village whenever he is free and takes part in the work of cultivation like anybody else. But he has had to fulfil this sublime idealistic impulse of his at immense pecuniary sacrifice, for the scheme has, it seems, "absolutely impoverished him."

In 1905 the Zulus broke out in rebellion and a corps of twenty Indians with Mr. Gandhi as leader was formed to help to carry the wounded to the hospitals. The corps subsequently acted as nurses to the wounded. Surely, there is something infinitely elevating in the spectacle of a man of culture and position like our present hero ministering in person to a wounded Zulu.

The bolt at last fell from the blue. In the year 1906 the new Government of the Transvaal brought forward a new law affecting Asiatics, which was sinister, retrograde and obnoxious in the extreme. One morning all the children of Asia in the Transvaal awoke and found themselves called upon to register themselves anew by giving thumb impressions. Thus all Asiatics were placed on a level with convicts. The grimness of the situation dawned on the mind of the Indian community in its utter nakedness. Nor were they slow to take action. A deputation under the leadership of Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Ali was at once sent to England to agitate, if possible against her Royal Assent being given to the new legislation. The Royal Assent was withheld in consequence till a constitutional Government should be installed in the Transvaal. A committee in London with Lord Ampthill ex-Governor of Madras, as chairman, was also

formed to keep guard over Indian interests in South Africa. But all this was of no avail. A constitutional Government was soon formed in the Transvaal, the new measure was passed in hot haste, received the Royal Assent, and became law.

A gauntlet was thus thrown in the face of the Transvaal British Indians. The policy of Asiatic exclusion had reached its climax. The elementary rights of human beings had been trampled under foot. To register or not to register was now the question with the Indian Community. To register and sell their honor and self-respect for a mess of pottage, or not to register and "take up arms against a sea of troubles," was the question. All these years Mr. Gandhi had not laboured for nought. Like a true leader he appealed to the better instincts of his followers. He told them that submission to the new law would be tantamount to the immolation of their souls at the altar of their bodies. He told them that registration and perdition were under the circumstances synonymous and that if they had a spark of self-respect in them they should refuse to register and face any troubles in store for them. He preached to them the gospel of passive resistance. The words of the leader awoke a responsive thrill in thousands of intrepid hearts. Like one man they vowed against the registration. Like one man they resolved to face prosecution and persecution, dungeon and death itself. Like one man they resolved to make atonement for the heaped-up humiliations of many years, by a supreme and

triumphant act of self-vindication which should rivet the eyes of the whole world.

The great struggle in the Transvaal thus commenced. The glorious passive resistance movement was thus inaugurated. The law took its course, and a saturnalia of imprisonments ensued. The gaols became literally crammed with the Indians who suffered for conscience sake. High and low, rich and poor, went joyfully to the gaol as to the bridal. Husband was separated from wife, child from parent, and yet the fervour and pertinacity of the struggle abated not. Mr. Gandhi himself was sentenced to two months simple imprisonment. During the trial he took full responsibility for the course adopted by the Indian Community under his leadership and asked for the maximum punishment for himself. The Transvaal authorities were perturbed to see the worm turning, and naturally grew uncomfortable. General Smuts gave his word that if the Indians registered of their own accord the noxious law would be withdrawn. Mr. Gandhi not to embarrass the authorities acceded to the course, and to set an example, himself went to the office to register. The position of a leader is oftentimes irksome and dangerous, and so it was in this instance. A Pathan who had joined in the passive resistance movement imagined that Mr. Gandhi was playing the coward and betraying his trust of leadership. He dealt such severe blows to Mr. Gandhi on his way to the registration office that he at once fell down unconscious. His friends afterwards asked him to take action against the Pathan, but he replied that

the Pathan had done what he considered right! It is no wonder that he said so, for he has been deeply influenced, by the teaching of the late Count Leo Tolstoy. To resume our story, General Smuts broke faith, and the new law was not expunged from the statute book. The struggle recommenced. Again hundreds were cast into jail, and Mr. Gandhi among them for a term of two months with hard labour. We have no space to refer to the hardships he endured with his brother sufferers in jail, to his many acts of self-denial, and to the sublime manner in which he bore up, believing, as he did, that suffering is the heaven-ordained path to perfection.

After his release he was appointed to lead a deputation to England, in the year 1909. But nothing worth mentioning came of it. The sequel of the story, the deportations of hundreds of Indians, and the return of the deportees to the Transvaal, all this is well-known. The struggle is still going on, and the end is not yet.

Whatever the end and whenever it come, there is no doubt that the Transvaal struggle has served to reveal a man of exceptional capacity, lofty aims, and unblemished character. And that man, we need hardly say is Mr. Gandhi. It would not be easy to do justice to a character such as his. He is one of those rare men with whom the life of the soul is a living reality. His principles are no mere cloak to be donned and doffed at will, but are part and parcel of his being, which he never barter for any mess of pottage however tempting. He has often been known to withdraw from a suit, if convinced that it was not

true. His life is a ceaseless striving to "rise on the stepping-stones of our dead selves to higher things," and is a unity such as few lives are.

Well has it been said that the future Indian Nation is being built up in South Africa. By those who realise the full purport of this remark the claim of Mr. Gandhi to rank high among the great builders of the Indian Nation will hardly be disputed.\*

It is this Builder of Indian Nation on a foreign strand that the South African Government have again consigned him to the horrors of Jail for 15 months. Why? Not for cheating, or thieving or murdering or any breach of peace—but because he would not advise his suffering brethren to conform to iniquitous impositions which are a disgrace to civilization and to Christianity.

Our countrymen and countrywomen have to pay a £3 poll-tax for the sin of being Indians. Hindu and Mahomedan marriages—though between one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others—are stigmatised as no marriages at all. Such are the insults hurled in the face of Indians—both those in South Africa and those who stay at home—by this Boer British Government. It is to be hoped that through the firm representations of the Government of India, the Imperial Government will put a stop to these manifestations of the Boer spirit under the guise of British legislation.

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\* This sketch is based upon the book entitled "M. K. Gandhi; an Indian Patriot in South Africa," by J. J. Doke, Baptist Minister, Johannesburg.



After the great struggle he returned to India and toured round the whole of his motherland to study personally the situation and has settled at Ahmednagar where he has started an institution called Satyashramam. May he live long to serve his country.

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### GANDHI'S SENSE OF DUTY

Mr Gandhi's sense of public duty is said to be profound: Just before his first arrest, in 1907, he received the news that his youngest child was desperately ill, and he was asked to go to Phoenix at once if he wished to save him. He refused, saying that his greater duty lay in Johannesburg, where the community had need of him, and his child's life or death must be left in God's hands. Similarly, during his second imprisonment, he received telegraphic news of Mrs. Gandhi's serious illness, and was urged, even by the visiting Magistrate, to pay his fine and so become free to nurse her. Again he refused, declining to be bound by private ties, when such action would probably result in weakening the community of which he was the stay and the inspiration. And although after his release and his subsequent re-arrest, he could have secured indefinite postponement of the hearing of his case, so that he might nurse Mrs. Gandhi back to health after a serious operation, as soon as he heard that the Transvaal Government were anxious to see him back again in gaol, he hastened to the Transvaal from Natal, leaving Mrs. Gandhi, for aught he knew to the contrary,



on her deathbed. His eldest son has been in gaol as a passive resister for many months, and Mr. Gandhi recently took his second son, a lad of 17 years to the Transvaal, in order that he, too, may grow through the hard discipline of prison-life. Yet he is a devoted husband and father, and is intensely attached to children. The spirit of perseverance which Mr. Gandhi has instilled into his compatriots in South Africa is shown by the following exhortation addressed by him to the Tamil community :—

“Remember that we are descendants, of Prahlad and Sudhanva, both passive resisters of the purest type. They disregarded the dictates even of their parents, when they were asked to deny God. They suffered extreme torture rather than inflict suffering on their persecutors. We in the Transvaal are being called upon to deny God, in that we are required to deny our manhood, go back upon our oath, and accept an insult to our nation. Shall we, in the present crisis, do less than our fore-fathers?”

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## MR. GANDHI'S RECENT TRIAL

### HIS ADDRESS BEFORE THE COURT

Addressing the Court at Volksrust, Mr. Gandhi said that he had given the Minister of the Interior due notice of his intention to cross the border with the prohibited immigrants, and had informed the Immigration Officer at Volksrust of the date of crossing. He assured the Court that the present movement had nothing

whatever to do with the unlawful entry of a single Indian for the purpose of residence in the Transvaal. He might fairly claim that during his whole career in the Transvaal he had been actuated by a desire to assist the Government in preventing surreptitious entry and unlawful settlement, but he pleaded guilty to knowingly committing an offence against the Section under which he was charged. He was aware that his action was fraught with the greatest risks and intense personal suffering to his followers. He was convinced that nothing short of much suffering would move the conscience of the Governor, or of the inhabitants of the Union, of which, in spite of this breach of the laws, he claimed to be a sane and law-abiding citizen.

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### MR. GANDHI'S CONFESSION OF FAITH

The following is an extract from a letter recently addressed by Mr. Gandhi to a friend in India:—

(1) There is no impassable barrier between East and West.

(2) There is no such thing as Western or European civilization but there is a modern civilization, which is purely material.

(3) The people of Europe, before they were touched by modern civilization had much in common with the people of the East; anyhow the people of India, and even to-day Europeans who are not touched by Modern civilization are far better able to mix with Indians than the offspring of that civilization.

(4) It is not the British people who are ruling India, but it is modern civilisation, through its railways, telegraph, telephone, and almost every invention which has been claimed to be a triumph of civilization.

(5) Bombay, Calcutta, and the other chief cities of India are the real Plague spots.

(6) If British rule was replaced to-morrow by Indian rule based on modern methods, India would be no better, except that she would be able then to retain some of the money that is drained away to England ; but then India would only become a second or fifth edition of Europe or America.

(7) East and West can only and really meet when the West has thrown overboard modern civilization, almost in its entirety. They can also seemingly meet when East has also adopted modern civilization, but that meeting would be an armed truce, even as it is between, say, Germany and England, both of which nations are living in the Hall of Death in order to avoid being devoured the one by the other.

(8) It is simply impertinence for any man or any body of men to begin or contemplate reform of the whole world. To attempt to do so by means of highly artificial and speedy locomotion, is to attempt the impossible.

(9) Increase of material comforts, it may be generally laid down, does not in any way whatsoever conduce to moral growth.

(10) Medical Science is the concentrated essence of Black Magic. Quackery is infinitely preferable to what passes for high medical skill.

(11) Hospitals are the instruments that the Devil has been using for his own purpose, in order to keep his hold on his Kingdom. They perpetuate vice, misery, and degradation and real slavery. I was entirely off the track when I considered that I should receive a medical training. It would be sinful for me in any way whatsoever to take part in the abominations that go on in the hospitals. If there were no hospitals for venereal diseases, or even for consumptives, we should have less consumption, and less sexual vice amongst us.

(12) India's salvation consists in unlearning what she has learnt during the past fifty years. The railways, telegraphs, hospitals, lawyers, doctors, and such like have all to go, and the so-called upper classes have to learn to live consciously and religiously and deliberately the simple peasant life, knowing it to be a life-giving, true happiness.

(13) India should wear no machine-made clothing, whether it comes out of European mills or Indian mills.

(14) England can help India to do this, and then she will have justified her hold on India. There seem to be many in England to-day who think likewise.

(15) There was true wisdom in the sages of old having so regulated society as to limit the material condition of the people: the rude plough of perhaps five thousand years ago is the plough of the husbandman to-day. Therein lies salvation. People live long under such conditions, in comparative peace much greater than Europe has enjoyed after having taken up modern activity, and I feel that every enlightened

man, certainly every Englishman, may, if he chooses, learn this truth and act according to it.

It is the true spirit of passive resistance that has brought me to the above almost definite conclusions. As a passive resister, I am unconcerned whether such a gigantic, reformation, shall I call it, can be brought about among people who find their satisfaction from the present mad rush. If I realize the truth of it, I should rejoice in following it, and therefore I could not wait until the whole body of people had commenced. All of us who think likewise have to take the necessary step, and the rest, if we are in the right, must follow. The theory is there : our practice will have to approach it as much as possible. Living in the midst of the rush, we may not be able to shake ourselves free from all taint. Every time I get into a railway car or use a motor-bus, I know that I am doing violence to my sense of what is right. I do not fear the logical result on that basis. The visiting of England is bad, and any communication between South Africa and India by means of ocean-grey-hounds is also bad and so on. You and I can, and may outgrow these things in our present bodies, but the chief thing is to put our theory right. You will be seeing there all sorts and conditions of men. I therefore feel that should no longer withhold from you what I call the progressive step I have taken mentally. If you agree with me, then it will be your duty to tell the revolutionaries and everybody else that the freedom they want, or they think they want, is not to be obtained by



killing people or doing violence, but by setting themselves right, and by becoming and remaining truly Indian. Then the British rulers will be servants and not masters. They will be trustees, and not tyrants, and they will live in perfect peace with the whole of the inhabitants of India. The future, therefore, lies not with the British race, but with the Indians themselves, and if they have sufficient self-abnegation and abstemiousness, they can make themselves free this very moment, and when we have arrived in India at the simplicity which is still ours largely and which was ours entirely until a few years ago, it will still be possible for the best Indians and the best Europeans to see one another throughout the length and breadth of India, and act as the leaven. When there was no rapid locomotion, teachers and preachers went on foot, from the end of the country to the other, braving all dangers, not for pleasure, not for recruiting their health, (though all that followed from their tramps) but for the sake of humanity. Then were Benares and other places of pilgrimage holy cities, whereas to-day they are an abomination.

You will recollect you used to hate me for talking to my children in Guzerati. I now feel more and more convinced that I was absolutely right in refusing to talk to them in English. Fancy a Guzerati writing to another Guzerati in English! Which, as you would properly say, he mispronounces, and writes ungrammatically. I should certainly never commit the ludicrous blunders in writing in Guzerati that I do in writing or speaking in English. I think that when I speak in English to



an Indian or a foreigner I in a measure un-learn the language. If I want to learn it well, and if I want to attune my ear to it, I can only do so by talking to an Englishman and by listening to an Englishman speaking.

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### MR. GANDHI'S PLEA FOR THE SOUL

The following is an extract from a letter of the London correspondent of the *Amrita Bazaar Patrika*, summarising an address delivered by Mr. Gandhi before the members of the Emerson Club and of the Hampstead Branch of the Peace and Arbitration Society whilst in London :—

Mr. Gandhi turned to India, and spoke with enthusiasm of Rama, the victim of the machinations of a woman choosing fourteen years' exile rather than surrender; other Orientals were mentioned, and then, through the Doukhobors of to-day, he brought the thoughts of the audience to the soul resistance of Indians *versus* brute force in South Africa. He insisted that it was completely a mistake to believe that Indians were incapable of lengthened resistance for a principle; in their fearlessness of suffering they were second to none in the world. Passive resistance had been called a weapon of the weak, but Mr. Gandhi maintained that it required courage higher than that of a soldier on the battle-field, which was often the impulse of the moment, for passive resistance, was continuous and sustained; it meant physical suffering.

Some people were inclined to think it too difficult to be carried out to-day, but those who held that idea were not moved by true courage. Again referring to Oriental teaching, Mr. Gandhi said that the teaching of the "Lord's Song" was from the beginning, the necessity of fearlessness. He touched on the question of physical force while insisting that it was not thought of by Indians in the Transvaal. He does not want to share in liberty for India that is gained by violence and bloodshed, and insists that no country is so capable as India of wielding soul force. Mr. Gandhi did not approve of the militant tactics of the suffragettes for the reason that they were meeting body force with body force, and not using the higher power of soul force; violence beget violence. He maintained, too, that the association of Britain and India must be a mutual benefit if India—eschewing violence—did not depart from her proud position of being the giver and the teacher of religion. "If the world believes in the existence of the soul," he said in conclusion, "it must be recognised that soul force is better than body force: it is the sacred principle of love which moves mountains. To us is the responsibility of living out this sacred law; we are not concerned with results."

Mr. Gandhi protested against the mad rush of to-day and, instead of blessing the means by which modern science has made this mad rush possible, that is, railways, motors, telegraph, telephone, and even the coming flying machines, he declared that they were diverting man's thoughts from the main purpose of life; bodily comfort stood before soul growth; man had no

time to-day even to know himself; he preferred a newspaper or sport or other things rather than to be left alone with himself for thought. He claimed Ruskin as on his side in this expression of protest against the drive and hurry of modern civilisation. He did not describe this development of material science as exclusively British, but he considered that its effect in India had been baleful in many ways. He instanced the desecration of India's holy places, which he said were no longer holy for the "fatal facility" of locomotion had brought to those places people whose only aim was to defraud the unsophisticated; such people in the olden days when pilgrimages meant long and wearisome walking through jungles, crossing rivers, and encountering many dangers, had not the stamina to reach the goal. Pilgrimages in those days could only be undertaken by the cream of society, but they came to know each other; the aim of the holy places was to make India holy. Plague and famine, which existed in pre-British days were local then; to-day, locomotion had caused them to spread. To avoid the calamity which intense materialism must bring, Mr. Gandhi urged that India should go back to her former holiness, which is not yet lost. The contact with the West has awakened her from the lethargy into which she had sunk; the new spirit, if properly directed, would bring blessings to both nations and to the world. If India adopted Western modern civilisation as Japan had done, there must be perpetual conflict and grasping between Briton and Indian. If, on the other hand, India's ancient civilisation can

withstand this latest assault, as it has withstood so many before, and be, as of old, the religious teacher, the spiritual guide, then there would be no impassable barrier between East and West. Some circumstances exist, said Mr. Gandhi, which we cannot understand; but the main purpose of life is to live rightly, think rightly, act rightly; but the soul must languish when we give all our thought to the body.

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### MR. GANDHI ON THE DUTIES OF BRITISH CITIZENSHIP

I consider myself a lover of the British Empire, a citizen (though voteless) of the Transvaal, prepared to take my full share in promoting the general well-being of the country. And I claim it to be perfectly honourable and consistent with the above profession to advise my countrymen not to submit to the Asiatic Act, as being derogatory to their manhood and offensive to their religion. And I claim, too, that the method of passive resistance adopted to combat the mischief is the clearest and safest, because, if the cause is not true, it is the resisters, and they alone who suffer. I am perfectly aware of the danger to good government, in a country inhabited by many races unequally developed, in an honest citizen advising resistance to a law of the land. But I refuse to believe in the infallibility of legislators, I do believe that they

are not always guided by generous or even just sentiments in their dealings with unrepresented classes. I venture to say that, if passive resistance is generally accepted, it will once and for ever avoid the contingency of a terrible death-struggle and bloodshed in the event (not impossible) of the natives being exasperated by a stupid mistake of our legislators.

It has been said that those who do not like the law may leave the country. This is all very well-spoken from a cushioned chair, but it is neither possible nor becoming for men to leave their homes because they do not subscribe to certain laws enacted against them. The inlanders of the Boer regime complained of harsh laws; they, too, were told that if they did not like them they could retire from the country. Are Indians, who are fighting for their self-respect, to slink away from the country for fear of suffering imprisonment or worse? If I could help it, nothing would remove Indians from the country save brute force. It is no part of a citizen's duty to pay blind obedience to the laws imposed on him. And if my countrymen believe in God and the existence of the soul, then, while they may admit that their bodies belong to the state to be imprisoned and deported, their minds, their wills, and their souls must ever remain free like the birds of the air, and are beyond the reach of the swiftest arrow.

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**Pandit Ayodhya Nath.**

## PANDIT AJUDHIANATH

### A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE AND CAREER

“**S**TANDING on this platform and speaking in this city, one feels almost an overpowering sense of despair when one finds that the familiar figure and the beloved face of Pandit Ajudhianath is no more. We mourned for him when he died, we have mourned for him since ; and those of us who had the privilege of knowing him intimately, of perceiving his kindly heart, his great energy, his great devotion to the Congress cause, and the sacrifices he made for that cause, will mourn for him to the last.”

When the late Mr. W. C. Bonerjee spoke these words at the Eighth National Congress held at Allahabad, he was, we may be sure, paying no mere conventional tribute to the memory of a valued personal friend and political comrade. He was thereby giving sincere and heartfelt expression to the feeling, then universal in India, that in the untimely death of the Pandit a national calamity had overtaken the land. During the few years that the late Pandit was associated with the work of the Congress he had displayed such whole-hearted devotion and indomitable energy that his name was on everybody's lips as that of one of the most strenuous and outspoken apostles of the national movement.

The late Pandit was a man of exceptional and brilliant parts and would in any age have writ his name large in the annals of his country. Great parts however without a corresponding heart are bound to be barren. But in the Pandit brilliance of parts was ennobled and redeemed by a truly large and liberal heart. He was a patriot and philanthropist of a rare order. He cherished bright visions of glory for the future of his motherland, and strove ceaselessly to realise them. With him patriotism was no cloak for rank self-advertisement. It was a pity for India that his career of beneficence was cut off in its prime but the land he loved and the people he served cannot forget him, and his memory will long remain lively and fragrant at least, in the minds of those who are acquainted with the history of the Indian National Congress. We need therefore offer no apology for incorporating him among the Indian Nation Builders.

Pandit Ajudhianath was born at Agra on the 8th of April, 1840 in a notable family at Kashmiri Brahmins. His father Pandit Kedharnath had distinguished himself in more than one walk of life. He had been for some time Dewan to the Nawab of Jaffhar, and had afterwards taken to trade in which he proved eminently successful. The father paid the keenest attention to the education of his son. Ajudhianath even as a boy showed signs of rare promise. He zealously applied himself to the study of Arabic and Persian, then Court languages. The love of Arabic and Persian, thus enkindled ripened into a passion in after days, the Pandit devoting all his spare hours to the study. During his

collegiate career the Pandit seems to have attracted the notice of the educational authorities. The Government report on popular education for the year 1860-61 referred to young Ajudhianath as "an intelligent and promising student," and further referred to his answer papers in History and Philosophy as marked by "uncommon acuteness and thought." Ajudhianath studied for Law and in the year 1862 enrolled himself on the High Court then situated at Agra.

He had no period of weary waiting in his profession. Success came to him from the beginning, and his practice grew steadily. In the year 1869 a Law Professorship fell vacant in the Agra College, to which the Pandit was appointed unsolicited though there were a heap of applications for the post. The Judges of the Allahabad High Court held him in very high esteem, and were amongst his personal friends. Of the impression he made on them the reference the Chief Justice made to him on his death is sufficient evidence. "It was always a pleasure to us" said the Chief Justice "to listen to, and we frequently derived instruction from the legal Arguments of Pandit Ajudhianath. I confess that I have not unfrequently been captivated by the display on sudden and difficult emergencies, in his case of his knowledge of law, the subtlety of his mind and his persuasive powers." There can be no doubt that, if his life had been spared a few years longer, his legal career would have culminated in his elevation to the Bench. But alas! that was not to be.

The profession of law is notoriously a jealous mistress, but the Pandit's attentions were never exclusively

paid to her. Thoughts of country and motherland occupied no mean portion of his time. He took great interest in educational matters, and yearned to extend to all his countrymen the blessings of the education to which he himself owed so much. His first public activity was therefore in connection with the founding of the Victoria College. He subsequently tried his hand at journalism. He started an English daily (a daily, be it noted) styled the "Indian Herald" in 1879, and though he spent over a lac of rupees in the undertaking out of his own pocket, it eventually proved a failure. Not disheartened he started another organ the "Indian Union" in the year 1890, of which the Honourable Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (Mr. Madan Mohan as he then was) was placed in charge. It was under such distinguished auspices that the Honorable Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya served his apprenticeship in public life, and the worthy Pandit still cherishes the memory of his old master with profound reverence. Pandit Ajudhianath was a member of the Senates of both the Allahabad and Calcutta Universities. The Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University has paid him the following glowing compliment: "He took a very keen interest in education, was a constant attendant at our meetings, and brought to bear upon our work intellectual powers which only few possess. He was a man of whom any country and any race might well be proud. His character was of the highest, his ability was undoubted, and his acquirements were of the most varied description."

The Pandit was the first Indian member to sit on the

Legislative Council of the North-west Provinces, where he did much useful work. We now come to the most important part of his public life, that, which has entitled him to the grateful remembrance of his countrymen, we allude to his labours in connection with the Indian National Congress. He was not one of that small and brilliant band of patriots who ushered the National Assembly into existence at Bombay during the closing week of the year 1885. His connection with it began somewhat later. We shall however relate the story of the Pandit's conversion to the Congress cause in the words of Mr. W. C. Bonerjee. "I was here (Allahabad)" he says "in April 1887 and met Pandit Ajudhianath who had not then expressed his view one way or the other about Congress matters. I discussed the matter with him. He listened to me with his usual courtesy and urbanity, and he pointed out to me certain defects which he thought existed in our system; and at last after a sympathetic hearing of over an hour and a half, he told me he would think of all I had said to him, and that he would consider the matter carefully and thoroughly, and then let me know his views. I never heard anything from him from that time until on the eve of my departure for Madras to attend the Congress of 1887. I then received a letter from him in which he said I had made a convert of him to the Congress cause, that he had thoroughly made up his mind to join us, that he was anxious to go to Madras himself, but that illness prevented him from doing so, and he sent a message that if it pleased the Congress to hold its next sessions at Allahabad in 1888, he would do all



he could to make the Congress a success. And you know—certainly those of you who attended know—what success he did make of it. Our venerable President of the Reception Committee of this Congress had told us of the difficulties which had to be encountered to make that Congress a success; and I do not belittle his services or those of any other worthy Congressman who worked with him at that Congress, when I say that it was owing to Pandit Ajudhianath's exertions that that Congress was the success it was." The closing sentences of the foregoing quotation have been included in it in anticipation of what is to follow. The Pandit was nothing if not thoroughgoing. Having once joined the Congress ranks he was soon in the very thick of the fight. Having once stepped into the Congress boat he was soon at the very helm. His devotion to the cause he had espoused knew no bounds. From the day the Pandit declared his allegiance to the Congress cause till his death, it knew of no more doughty and enthusiastic champion. To use the words of Mr. W. C. Bonerjee once again, "Pandit Ajudhianath as you know, from the time he joined the Congress, worked early, worked late, worked with the bold, worked with the young, never spared any personal sacrifices, so that he might do good to his Country and to the Congress."

In order, however, to appraise the character of the Pandit's services, the circumstances that attended the holding of the Allahabad Congress of 1888 ought to be borne in mind. When the Congress was first organised the powers that be, didn't see in it anything very objec-

tionable, and some of them even showed a spirit of active sympathy. After the first two or three sessions were over it became very obnoxious in their eyes. In the dovecots of officialdom there was a fluttering of wings. The Anglo-Indian porcupine fast bristled up, and there was no end to the ridicule, contempt and venom of invective that were poured upon it. The stigma of sedition was affixed to its fair brow. The Congress was denounced as a nest of mischief-makers and malcontents who were aiming at the overthrow of British Rule in India. The opposition thus manifested soon told. A few Indian nobleman who had at first joined the movement now seceded to the camp of its foes. The Mahomedan Community practically stood aloof, and its leaders were actively hostile. Sir Auckland Colvin, the Lt.-Governor of the North-West Provinces at that time made no secret of his hatred of the Congress, and he had a powerful ally in that famous Mahomedan leader, the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. And even among the professed friends of the Congress there were many searching of spirit.

It was a situation to daunt the bravest heart. It was feared on all hands that Allahabad would prove the grave of the National Movement. But there was one man who didn't quail before the storm, and that was Pandit Ajudhianath. He proved a host in himself. He proved more than equal to the situation, he put heart into wavering spirits. He collected men and money; and much to the dismay of its foes the Congress was held at Allahabad in that year, and proved a glorious success. It was an achievement of which

any man might be proud. The Pandit was the Chairman of the Reception Committee and delivered the usual address of welcome. He recounted the obstacles he had to face, vindicated the Congress, and exhorted his compatriots to go on in their noble mission. The Allahabad Congress of 1888 will ever constitute a memorable chapter in the history of the National Movement in India, and the name Ajudhianath will be emblazoned in it. It was well said at the time, "None but the intrepid and unselfish Pandit could have floated the Congress argosy over the boisterous confluence of the Colvin, Dufferin, and Syed Ahmed rapids at the time." The Pandit didn't take to politics as to a pastime and his enthusiasm was no mere three days affair. After the Congress was over he toured in Northern India to plead the Congress cause. His earnestness and sincerity were so transparent that, when Mr. A. O Hume left for England, the Pandit was by common consent elected Joint Secretary of the Congress in his stead. It had been almost resolved to offer the honor of the Chair of the Seventh Congress to the Pandit; but it was felt that Bombay and Calcutta having till then supplied Presidents, Madras should have a chance before the North-Western Provinces came in. The late Rai Bahadur P. Ananda Charlu who presided over that sessions alluded to the circumstance in the following passage in his address. The Honorable Pandit Ajudhianath is unfortunately for both you and me not a Madrasedee. Were it not that he generously abdicated the dignity in favour of Madras, I should gladly have avoided the danger of accepting a situation that would

draw me into comparison with that unselfish, whole-hearted, intrepid, and outspoken apostle of this great National movement." How little did those who cheered these words to the echo know that the subject of this eulogium was soon to depart the land of the living.

On returning home from the Nagpur Congress the Pandit caught cold, and complications setting in he passed away on the 11th January 1892. The news of his death plunged the whole country into gloom. It was everywhere felt that a gap had been caused in the ranks of selfless public workers which might take long to fill. It is our duty not to let the memory of such a man die, and coming generations will, it is hoped, consecrate a niche in their hearts to a kindly thought of this great soldier of the National cause who once served it so bravely and so faithfully,

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## CONGRESS RECEPTION ADDRESS

*[Speech delivered by the Hon'ble Pandit Ajudhianath in welcoming the delegates of the Fourth Indian National Congress].*

GENTLEMEN,—On behalf of the Reception Committee, I offer you a most hearty welcome. I rejoice to see so many friends and countrymen, many of whom have come long distances and at great personal inconvenience, assembled to try and secure, by all loyal and constitutional means, the amelioration of the political condition of India. (*Cheers*). It is a matter for great rejoicing that all the leaders of native opinion from all

the various provinces, and the representatives of all the different communities of the Empire, have assembled here this day to labour for that *summum bonum*, the greatest good of the greatest number. (*Cheers.*) If Allahabad has not been fortunate enough to be the first to secure the patronage of this great national institution, it may well be proud of being the first place where its organization has arrived at a fair state of perfection. (*Cheers.*) But while our organization has so much improved, I regret to say that our arrangements for your reception have not been, by any means, as satisfactory as they were at either Calcutta or Madras. ('*No, no.*') But, gentlemen, in consideration of the difficulties thrown in our way by the civil and military authorities, we have some claim to your indulgence. We were first of all led to believe—I may say distinctly informed—that we should be permitted to occupy the Khusro Bagh for our encampment. But a little later, to our great disappointment, we were told that the requisite permission could not be accorded ("*cries of shame!*") and no satisfactory reason was assigned for this change of front. In April, after much negotiation, permission was granted to us to pitch our camp on a large plot of waste ground lying between the fort railway station and the fort, on payment of rent. This rent we paid in advance, and we were assured that there would be no further difficulty in the way of our occupying that piece of land. But, gentlemen, in the month of August—four months later—we were informed that on sanitary grounds we could not be allowed to occupy that place, and the rent money, which we had paid in advance, was returned to us.



Then we managed to secure a group of houses belonging to members of the Reception Committee, and other friends, not very far away from the office of the *Pioneer*. This was too much for our opponents, and as some of the houses are unfortunately situated within the Cantonment limits, the Military authorities arbitrarily prohibited our utilizing those houses for Congress purposes. ("Shame.") No inquiry was made as to the sanitary arrangements we were going to make. It was apparently taken for granted that the Congress Camp—and you have seen what a beautiful and perfectly managed camp ours is—would be the filthiest and most insanitary of all gatherings. ("Shame.") It is not too much to say that no other gathering for any other purpose would have been thus barred. Hundreds of thousands of men poor, ill-clothed, ill-fed, and I fear not a few of them far from clean, are allowed to occupy land no further from the fort at the yearly fair—hundreds of thousands who every twelfth year swell to millions—but no authorities, civil or military, interfere with them. But our gathering of less than 1,500 gentlemen, all well fed and well clothed, could not be permitted on sanitary grounds. Then, as a last resource, we were obliged to rent these premises where we are now assembled. You can, therefore, easily imagine the difficulties with which we have had to contend. We obtained possession of this house and ground on the 1st November, and had barely six weeks in which to make all the necessary arrangements for housing and feeding over 1,200 delegates. (*Cheers.*) Those friends of ours who have come from Madras will, I.



hope, remember that the task of providing for the delegates in Allahabad had not been so easy as at Madras, where His Excellency the Governor himself lent them tents, assisted them in many ways, and sympathized with their work. (*Cheers.*) But here I had to dance attendance for an hour at least in the Fort of Allahabad, waiting the pleasure of the officers to grant me an audience—officers who not only gave us no assistance, but quite the contrary. (*Laughter, and cries of "shame."*) All this will convince you that we have some claim to your indulgence.

I shall now ask you to elect your own President. But before you proceed with his election, you may perhaps expect me to say a few words about the opposition of other kinds that we have had to encounter. You are now very familiar with the nature of that opposition. You know the strength of that opposition and you also know that it is fast losing its power for evil, and dying out, as all unrighteous things sooner or later die. (*Cheers.*) But I feel it my duty to refer to it in consequence of the hostility of Sir Auckland Colvin to our most esteemed, but much abused friend, Mr. Hume. (*Loud cheers.*) Mr. Hume has not only now, but for years past, been working with infinite and unselfish zeal to promote the welfare of India, and we may leave it to time to vindicate his action from the strictures of the Lieutenant-Governor. (*Cheers.*) Again, I am sorry to say that that portion of the Anglo-Indian press which delights in ridiculing and condemning the aspirations of the native community left no stone unturned to bring discredit on Mr. Hume. (*Cheers and cries of*

"*shame.*" But we are not children. We know the game they are playing ; and we mean to stick to Mr. Hume to the last. (*Loud and Prolonged cheers.*) His advice to us has always been loyalty and moderation, and yet he has been stigmatized as the most seditious man in India. The next reason which induces me to refer to this opposition is the Speech of Lord Dufferin, who speaks of the seditious nature of some of our writings and speeches. Some few thoughtless non-official opponents had already, it is true, adopted similar means to discredit us. But I am surprised, I am astonished, to find any sensible man, let alone a gentleman occupying the position of a Viceroy, bringing a charge of disloyalty against us. (*Cheers.*) It is impossible—and I say it with great confidence—to find on the face of this earth a people more loyal than my countrymen. (*Loud cheers.*) We claim the more perfect union of India and England, and yet we are called disloyal! Are we disloyal? (*Loud cries of "no, no."*) Some people have gone the length of talking such nonsense as to say that we want the Russians to come into the country. (*Laughter.*) Now, gentlemen, I ask you, is it not absurd to suppose that the educated natives of India, who have such an admiration for the free and representative institutions of England, could ever wish to be under Russian rule or become Russian serfs? (*Laughter and cheers.*) History we have read, English education we have received, with Englishmen we have mixed and mixed freely, but we are not credited, it would seem, with even sense enough to realize that the English Government is far better than the Russian or than that of any

other European Power. The existence of the Congress, the very meetings which we hold annually, are the best proofs of the excellence of the British Government. (*Cheers.*) Where will you find any Government which would allow a foreign country, which it has pleased Providence to place under its charge, to have the same constitutional freedom of speech as the British Government has been pleased to grant to us? (*Cheers.*) I will only mention to you one instance as a signal proof of our royalty. When a couple of years ago there was some talk of a Russian invasion, not only our men, but mark please, also our women, expressed in an unmistakable manner their wish that the Russians should be kept out of the country by all possible means (*cheers*); and were ready, in some cases, it is said, to sacrifice those jewels, so dear to all females, to provide the necessary funds. (*Loud cheers.*) If occasion arises we will prove to our opponents that it is we who are loyal and not they; it is we who will support the Government and not they; it is we who will be ready with our purses and not they. (*Cheers*) We fully acknowledge the inestimable blessings conferred upon us by Government; we most gratefully admit the numberless benefits derived by India from British rule, and all that we now say is this, *viz.*, that there is yet room for improvement; that England can confer still further blessings upon us; and that, therefore, we may properly approach our Most Gracious Empress—approach her most respectfully and loyally—with the prayer that she will cause all those gracious pledges given on her behalf to be now more fully redeemed. (*Cheers.*) England

has been the first to introduce free institutions into this country, and we ask Her Majesty now to extend them so far as the circumstances will permit, so that to the end of time the English Government may be held up to all the civilized Governments under the sun, as the very model of perfection. (*Cheers.*) That our prayers will be granted sooner or later I have not the slightest doubt. (*Loud Cheers.*)

Two years ago I gave the subject of the Congress my best consideration, and after mature deliberation I arrived at the conclusion that so far from being dangerous to Government, it embodies the essential germ of the permanency of the British Government. (*Cheers.*) I have since then, in consequence of Sir Auckland Colvin's letter and Lord Dufferin's speech, as a loyal subject of Her Majesty, re-considered the matter, and believe me, gentlemen, that I have been unable to discover in any of our speeches, publications, or proceedings, anything which is at all seditious, or which in any way approaches to sedition. You know the multifarious duties of a Viceroy, and you know the heavy work of a Lieutenant-Governor, and I believe that these exalted officials have not had the time to study carefully our pamphlets, but have received their information as to their general purport and bearing at second hand, and you know what the value of that kind of second hand information is. (*Laughter.*) But this being so, it is the duty of every loyal subject of the Queen to prove, by his firmness in the cause, and by his moderation, that the charges brought against us by our kind opponents have no foundation in fact.

These criticisms and this opposition have given rise to certain misapprehensions, the most prominent among these being the idea that the Government means to do injury to those who join the Congress. Nothing could be more absurd than such a rumour. The great nation on whose possessions the sun never sets—the most advanced of nations, the first to introduce free institutions into this country, and teach us that rulers were created for the good of subjects, not subjects for the pleasure of ruler—the noble nation that has united justice with freedom, will never allow its officers to resort to such unjustifiable and unconstitutional measures. (*Cheers.*) Englishmen as a nation are not capable of suppressing any loyal constitutional organization by any arbitrary or unfair means. (*Cheers.*) Having said this much I am obliged to say something more which is not quite so pleasant. News comes to us from district after district that people have been told by their official superiors that they would “come to grief” if they joined, subscribed to, or in any way aided the National Congress. Reports of this nature have reached me from Cawnpore, Etawah, Agra, Aligarh, and other places too numerous to mention. I have letters in my office to the effect that in one of the towns in the Aligarh district people held meetings, and were ready not only to elect delegates but to prove unmistakably the interest they take in the Congress by putting their hands deep into their pockets. (*Cheers.*) But down came the news “The district officer will be displeased with you.” (“*Shame!*”) In Gorakhpore anti-Congress meetings were held, and



Government officers took part in them. (*"Shame !"*) Important people forbidden to take part in Congress meetings. Well, Sir, a great many rumours are circulated which are not true, and we will hope that some of these at least may be more or less untrue. (*Laughter.*)

Then there is an idea that the Congress party is only a microscopic minority. (*Laughter.*) But it is not only natives who have received an English education, and even these may now be numbered by hundreds of thousands, who take part in this movement. I see before me, even in this Congress, numbers of gentlemen who, though very highly educated and cultured, have not received any so-called English education. I have been to several places in these provinces in connection with the Congress, and wherever I went I found great enthusiasm prevailing amongst all classes of people, and what you will be still more pleased to hear is that we have received contributions from all classes, even from those who profess to be against the Congress. (*Laughter and cheers.*) Nay, from some of those whose names figure high on the list of so-called anti-Congress Association, (*Cheers and cries of "Name ! name !"*) I cannot, of course, disclose their names, for they accompanied their donations with special requests that their name should never be disclosed. I have also received large subscriptions from native noblemen on condition that their names should not be disclosed because they are afraid of the officials. (*Laughter.*)



A question was recently put in the House of Commons by a member, in which it was stated that the Native Princes and the Mahomedans as a body were against the Congress. ("No, no.") You have here seated on the platform Sirdar Dayal Singh, the premier Sikh nobleman of the Punjab. Our illustrious friend the Maharajah of Durbhunga, a Brahmin of the Brahmins, the premier nobleman of Bengal, had made arrangements to come here to-day; but circumstances over which he had no control—a sudden attack of illness—prevented him from being present. Here, too, you have Mahomedans, noblemen of the highest birth, scions of the ex-Royal houses of Delhi and Oudh, and others. Well, who are the Princes that are against us? The Maharajah of Benares, and he alone; and if I understand Rajah Shiva Persad, who is attending this Congress this year and declares himself to be a delegate, even the Maharajah of Benares is not against the Congress, indeed approves it, but only desires to protest against certain speeches and writings of some Congressmen which he disapproves. (*Laughter.*) But can the Maharajah of Benares represent the Princes of India, or ourselves? (*Cries of "No."*) Has he anything in common with us? ("No, no.") Then, besides the Maharajah of Benares, there are some gentlemen who have the reputation of being the authors of certain anti-Congress pamphlets and letters to the press. I have the honour of knowing some of them personally, and can tell you that, so far from writing those pamphlets, they are unable to understand them. (*Laughter.*) Since this question was put in the

House of Commons, I have tried in vain to ascertain what Native Princes were against us.

Again, I ask you to turn your eyes round this hall and see if it is true that Mahomedans do not sympathize with us. In the last Congress the number of Mussalman delegates was 83; now it is more than double this. (*Cries of "Treble! treble!"*) The Mahomedans of Oudh have returned at one meeting 57 delegates, including members of the Royal house of Oudh. (*Cheers.*) Some 27 Mahomedan delegates have been returned by the district of Allahabad, and no less than 11 were returned from a place where you might not have believed that even a single one would be elected. (*A voice, "Aligarh."*) Yes, how rightly you have guessed the name. (*Laughter and cheers.*) And now you can appreciate the importance of the so-called opposition which sounds very nicely, but in which there is no reality, as all can see, when our opponents are obliged to have recourse to the desperate expedient of putting forward these few titled inanities to show that the Princes of India are against us; they stand self-condemned and need no further refutation from us; nor is it my duty now, I am happy to say, to have any fault to find with the Mahomedans, generally, for not joining us, much less for opposing us; and if any Hindu can claim the honour of enjoying an intimate intercourse with the Mahomedans of this country, I certainly can, and I can assure you that as a body, they are not against us. But, gentlemen, I am afraid I have detained you too long. (*Cries of "No, no," and "Go on."*) It is enough for me now to say that, so far

as I have been able to thresh out this question, persistent efforts in the cause of the Congress are the best and almost the only proofs that you can now-a-days give of true and heartfelt loyalty to our beloved Queen-Empress. (*Loud cheers.*) Our strength has been tried, our firmness has been tested, and our loyalty is unquestionable. Then, gentlemen, what else is required for our success? One thing, and one thing only, is required. We require—and I say it—to reach the ears and attract the eyes of the people in England; we require only to create a deep interest in Indian affairs in the House of Parliament and in the hearts of the British nation. (*Cheers.*) I do not think that, hereafter, you will find the benches of the House of Commons quite so bare as in times past they ever became as soon as an Indian question was brought before the House. I sincerely hope that the members of the two Houses and the people of Great Britain will henceforth commence to take a more lively interest in Indian affairs; and I hope most sincerely they will never for a moment be misled by the cuckoo cries of our local opponents, who, incapable of refuting our arguments or justifying their frantic and unconstitutional opposition, charge us, and as they well know, falsely, with disloyalty. (*Cheers.*)

This is a charge that we will not submit to. Let them call us by any other opprobrious designation they please, and we will treat them with the silent contempt they merit. But if they charge us with disloyalty, we fling back the charge in their teeth, and say truly, that it is they and not we who are the real traitors to their

country and their Queen. (*Loud cheers.*) And now gentlemen, I have already detained you too long, (*No, no*), and must now ask you to proceed at once to the election of a President.

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**Babu Aswini Kumar Dutt.**



## BABU ASWINI KUMAR DUTT

**I**N the recent history of Bengal, no name is more revered, perhaps, than that of Babu Aswini Kumar Dutt, for quiet, unostentatious, practical, good work done for the people through the people. Aswini Kumar was born on the 25th of January, 1856, at Patuakhali, in the Backerganj District, in Bengal. His father Babu Brojo Mohan Dutt, after whom the college, with which Aswini Kumar has been so closely connected, is named, was a well-known judge of the Small Causes Court. He brought up his son on lines at once independent and practical. Aswini Kumar, perhaps owes even more to his mother, from whom apparently he has inherited his powers of endurance, coolness of head in the moment of trial, tenacity of purpose, and devotion to the cause he believes to be true. Young Aswini Kumar passed his Entrance Examination in 1869 in the 1st division, and F. A. in 1872. He graduated B.A. in 1878, passing M.A. Examination in English in the following year, and B.L. in 1880. The unusual interval between his F.A. and B.A. has an interesting story behind it. Aswini Kumar was only 13 when he passed his Entrance. But the University rules prescribed 16 as the minimum age-limit. The figures were manipulated by some one without his knowledge. When Aswini Kumar came to know of it only after he has passed the F.A. Examination, he made up his mind that he would take

no advantage which had been secured by unfair means and voluntarily desisted from appearing at the B.A. Examination in the regular course. The result was that, not being a regular student, his name, according to the University rules of the time, was not put on the list of the Honors in Artsmen at the M.A. This uprightness of conduct and rigidity for truth are the grand key notes of his life. Again it was during this interval in 1875 that he founded the *Sadharan Dharma Sabha* (now defunct) at the age of 18 at Jessore, where he lived with his father who was a high-placed Government servant. At that time this religious association drew attention by its startlingly novel character. A European Christian Missionary preached his religion side by side with the Orthodox Hindu *Pandit* and the Mahomedan Moulvi and it was the idea of a boy of 18.

His predilection for the School Master's art showed itself in the choice he made for his profession. He joined in 1879, before taking his M.A. degree the *Chatra* school of Serampur, and the whole institution underwent a new change under him. His strong personality, united with the highest moral principles, impressed itself on the whole of the student population under his charge. And nothing could have been more eloquent as a testimony, or touching as a sight than the parting farewells he received from his old boys and colleagues. But then Aswini Babu had passed the Law Examination, and got himself enrolled, in 1880, as a pleader at Barisal. The Bar at the place was admittedly a tainted one, and the short time that he remained attached to it sufficed to purge it of the

evil influences that continually dragged it down. As a lawyer, Aswini Babu was both keen-witted and earnest in the discharge of his duties towards his growing *clientele*. So good a judge of men and things as the Hon'ble Mr. Bhupendra Nath Bose—himself a most successful Attorney—publicly declared at the last Madras Congress that if Aswini Kumar had continued at the Bar he might have occupied the same position as the Hon'ble Dr. Rash Behari Ghose occupies to-day. That is high praise, indeed, to his talents, advocacy, and moral strength; and there is no reason to believe that it is ill-deserved. But something was drawing him away from the profession; there was something that was not congenial to him in it. He felt that his vocation was not in it; he returned to his first love—Pedagogy. He worked as a Professor of English Literature in the Brojo Mohan College at Barisal for about 17 years without any remuneration whatsoever.

What was undoubtedly a loss to the Bar was a distinct gain to the Teaching profession. The Brojo Mohan Institution at Barisal had been founded by his father in 1884, as a higher class English School, at the request of the District Education Committee which had been instructed by the Director of Public Instruction in Bengal to secure the establishment of a private school, as the sanctioned number of students in the local Zillah School had been exceeded. Babu Brojo Mohan had expressed a wish to raise the institution to the status of a College, but he died before he could realise his wish. His son now turned his attention to this institution and before long made it so successful that it was affiliated to

the F. A. Standard in 1899 and to the B.A. and B.L. in 1898. Mr. Aswini Kumar has spent over Rs. 35,000 on buildings and equipment. The College was a few years ago made over by Aswini Kumar to a board of trustees and a governing body with the District Magistrate as its president. The governing body is a representative and elective one and the College is liberally aided by Government. Aswini Kumar had made a great effort to dispense with the necessity of accepting Government aid, but he found it to be an impossible task for him under the exacting demands of the new University Regulations. He has however categorically stipulated in the Trust Deed that the special features of the College such as the Little Brothers of the poor should be carefully maintained. The College is conducted by a dozen graduates in Arts and Law and its disciplinary jurisdiction over its student has been one of its marked features. It is as a 'School-master' that he is best known; and indeed his fame rests on the secure foundation of a teacher of youth. Unique among educational institutions, the Brojo Mohan has added to it as an adjunct, "The Little Brothers of the poor,"—the like of which has in recent years been started in Madras and Bombay—a Voluntary Association of Students of the College and School Departments organised for the purpose of helping the needy poor and nursing the helpless sick. Its work has been highly spoken of, silent and unostentatious though it has been. The Students, wrote a correspondent over thirteen years ago, "feel such a delight in being able to assuage the sufferings of the distressed that the attitude of many

of these young men is just like that of a courageous Soldier in the face of an imminent warfare." The band has elicited great official admiration from the high-placed Lieutenant-Governor to the humble Inspector of Schools. "I do not consent," wrote Sir Andrew Fraser in 1904, "in any way to the perpetuation of inferior institutions. But I do not wish to discourage, far less to abolish an institution of this kind." Mr. G. Gooke, late Commissioner of the Dacca Division, was even more emphatic in his admiration. "Babu Aswini Kumar Dutt," he wrote in 1892, has done a great service to the town and district by his spirited undertaking and all who admire practical patriotism must welcome and applaud such conduct." He termed the success of the institution as "remarkable" and attributed it to "the public spirit and emulation of such men as the patron of this institution." He ended by adding that he would, if occasion should require, gladly, "bear testimony officially to the great and useful work that he controls." That is no mere praise; it is the expression of sincere admiration of good work actually seen and felt. In view of the fact that such an institution as this came into evil odour with the authorities in later years, we would add here one more testimony. And that is the Inspector's, for he sees things as an official critic and as a Departmental man—with no partiality, with no pre-possession and with no intent to palliate. "The School is unrivalled" said he deliberately, "in point of discipline and efficiency. It is an institution which ought to serve as a model to all other Schools, Government or Private."



The institution is unique in another respect ; in the provision it has made for the teaching of morality and religion, with due regard to the religious susceptibilities of boys. The " Students' Friendly Union," started a long while ago in connection with it, imparts moral and religious training to all boys. In this association no distinction of race or creed is observed the Maulvi teaches by the side of the Pandit, the result being the formation of a healthy *esprit de corps* among the boys. Mr. Martin, the late Director of Public Instruction, was much struck with the work of this Association and has left on record the high opinion he formed of the efforts of Aswini Kumar in inculcating moral discipline amongst the youths under his care. A man like that cannot but be looked upon by Students as their friend and benefactor. He has been, as a recent English writer put it, " the friend and confidant of all classes and the idol of the students." He was, besides, the friend of the local Government Officers, and his co-operation, willingly offered, was always much prized. In Hon'ble Mr. Beatson Bell's name (an official name honourably connected with Barisal) there is a scholarship yet maintained in the institution. There was hardly any exaggeration when Mr. Ratcliffe said in the *Daily News* that " upon his co-operation generations of Government officers have been glad to depend." Mr. Dutt was for many years Chairman of the Barisal Municipality, and an influential member of the Local and District Boards as well. He also served on almost every Committee formed under official auspices. His work in the Temperance cause has been long recognised



to be both real and zealous. The late Mr. W. S. Caine ranked him amongst his best friends, and in publishing a portrait of his in the *Abkari* (the organ of the Anglo-Indian Temperance Association) in 1893, said: "Here is the portrait of an Indian gentleman who was the very first to associate himself with our movement, and whose communications have often interested our readers from No. 1 down to date. Mr. Dutt is a pleader in the Barisal Courts and enjoys great esteem and respect all through the Bengal Presidency."

His work in his capacity of Secretary to the Barisal People's Association in connection with the relieving of famine stricken people in 1906 at Barisal has been highly commended. Pen pictures by Sister Nivedita of the work he organized and carried out that year appeared at the time in the *Modern Review* and have left an indelible impression on all those who have read them. Though suffering from diabetes during the eight years preceding it, he worked as an able bodied sailor would to save his ship from threatened destruction. He opened as many as 155 relief centres, and through them distributed every week nearly Rs. 6,000 and this commenced in June 1906 and ended about the close of the year. He not only found and sent out men, but also called for and checked their reports, and himself went round and had a kind word to say to cheer up the old woman lurking in the corner and the child crying for solace. Sister Nivedita's sketches bear ample testimony to this aspect of his work and the many letters that rustics from quiet corners sent to the Calcutta papers show how they

appreciated his work. We have here only space for one quotation from Sister Nivedita's writings about Mr. Dutt's Famine Agency. "Among voluntary organization," she wrote, "unrecognised by State or Government and taking place spontaneously.....for rapidity of formation, loyalty to its leaders, cohesion and efficiency, it might well, I think, claim to be unprecedented in any country." She calls the organization "the greatest thing ever done in Bengal." "It was," she adds, "a Schoolmaster and his students who organized the relief of Backerganj, for Aswini Kumar Dutt is nothing after all but the Barisal Schoolmaster." After all, as she truly observes, "the end of all politics is the feeding of the people, and the soundness, sincerity and appropriateness of this political movement has been attested to the full." That is the testimony of an eye-witness, trained to observe, and incapable of even colouring first-hand views. No wonder, then, that in Barisal Aswini Babu is called the "father of the people."

Such a man cannot but be accounted less a politician than an educational or social worker. Indeed, a man believing in solid practical work like Mr. Dutt cannot be believed to turn an "agitator." It is true that he has been a Congressman, and has attended several of the sittings of the National Assembly of India. His interest in it has been great, but he has always feared that it can be more practical than it has always showed itself to be. He issued a circular letter to the Leaders of the Congress in 1898 suggesting certain practical reforms one of which formed the subject matter of a resolution at the Madras Congress of that year which

Babu Aswini Kumar had the honor of supporting. He is a "moderate" in the accepted sense of the term and no perversion of facts can make him any other. He believes in the Mission of his country. "The day is not distant when India, under the ægis of the British Crown, will occupy a conspicuous position in the Federation of Nations." That was what he said in his speech as the President of the Reception Committee at the Bengal Provincial Conference of 1906, and it is needless to say that he has not given up that cherished feeling, despite the arbitrary manner in which Government subsequently dealt with him. That is one of the inexplicable things that have happened; but what did not the Partition of Bengal produce? Enmity between Hindus and Moslems, recourse to obsolete laws, forging new laws of admittedly un-British character and the coming into being of a system of legalised espionage that has at once been the curse of the country and the tarnishing of the fair British name. It is to this last that Mr. Dutt fell a prey. The story is a long one but there is no need to go into it in detail here. The case for him was stated with force, precision, and frankness by *Indicus* in a pamphlet, entitled *Aswini Kumar Dutt*—i, and the interested reader should turn to it, if he cares to know first hand how grievously the Government had injured itself by deporting Mr. Dutt on December 13, 1909. Briefly put, his objection to the Partition of Bengal, his zeal for the Swadeshi Cause, his successful action against Mr. Jack for defaming him by describing a pamphlet of his as seditious and inflamma-

tory, and resentment at the discourteous treatment he received at Sir Bampfylde Fuller's hands—all these silently did their work. And the rest was done by—well, Police informers. His very virtues now turned against him. His organising powers were suspected as being directed against Government; his influence with Barisal boys and people was set down as being utilised for purposes hostile to Government; his Swadeshi work was termed as his hatred for English things and goods; his School, a place for teaching sedition; and his association which had put down intemperance and checked litigation, an illegal combine deserving of suppression. It is to be feared that there was absolutely no ground for drawing any of these conclusions. And those who possess their faculties in full can see for themselves from *Indicus'* writings that Government had been totally misled; and that it never saw with its own eyes or heard with its own ears. The rulers (or their representatives) were not in touch with the people or their leaders, and ignorance and misunderstanding prevailed. Mr. Dutt's association was suppressed, his School brought into trouble and himself deported (with a batch of eight others) under the obsolete Regulation III of 1818. That is the best condemnation of Government's act—the recourse to this Regulation. It has been steadfastly believed both here and in England that Government had no charge to formulate against him; and that the act was a gross violation of the right of a free British subject. Even Mr. Chirol gave out publicly in the columns of the *Times* that at least against one or two of the deportees there

was the belief that there was absolutely no ground for deporting them under Regulation III of 1818. After that the Government had no option but to release—and the release, be it said, to the credit of H. E. Lord Minto, came too soon in Mr. Dutt's case.

Babu Aswini Kumar has travelled all over India. One who knows him intimately says that it has been a hobby with him to observe different nationalities and study their manners and customs. In religion he is an advanced Hindu, though in his younger day he showed leaning towards Brahmoism. He is the author of a highly popular religious work entitled *Bhaktiyog*. (*The Path to Devotion*), which has passed through many editions. It has been translated into English by Babu Gurnada Charansen, M.A., B.L., and highly appreciated by many masterminds of the West including Stopford Brooke, Dowden, Warren of the Boston University and others who have recorded their appreciation in glowing terms: "Since I have read," says Stopford Brooke, "I have been in another world than this noisy world of the West. The life of that great country (India) is made clearer and nearer to me." Prof. Dowden writes "I have read it with deep interest and the happy feeling that true souls in the West and in the East seek for the same spiritual blessing and often by the same means." Sir Narayan Chandravarkar of Bombay, classes this work with Martineau's *Endeavour after a Christian Life*, Jermy Taylor's *Holy Living* and other great devotional classics of the World. "It is a beautiful addition," says he "to the books that for we live and give life. The work has also been translated into Marathi and



Tamil and the Tamil translation has been prescribed as a text book in certain schools of Southern India. He is also the compiler of two other pamphlets, one on *Prem* (Love) and another on *Durghotshod Tatwa* (The Real Meaning of Durga Worship). He has, besides, a good knowledge of Sanskrit and Persian literatures. He had studied also several Vernaculars of India—Marathi, Panjabi, and Hindi, and has a passion for reading the sacred books of the different sects of India in their originals such as the *Gnanth Shaheb*, the *Ramayana* of Tulsidas, etc. By nature, Mr. Dutt is shy and reserved; but as one comes to know him, he will find that there is no more lovable man in all India. He is now nearly 61 years of age, and as Sir Bampfylde said—that is evidently all he *personally* knew of him—he “is not one of those who render to their country lip-service only.” Even in the evening of his life Mr. Dutt has been a strenuous worker in his Country’s cause. A few years ago he founded at Barisal a *Society for the Promotion of Education and Sanitation* of which he is the Life-President. The society has employed agents for the propagation among the rural population of district, ideas of sanitation by means of lectures and pamphlets and the establishment of free primary schools. Aswini Kumar has set apart a portion of his landed property with an income of Rs. 300 per annum for the purposes of the society which has been doing excellent work. Mr. Dutt’s idea, it is hoped, will be taken up by the leaders of other districts in Bengal who have evinced a keen interest in this new experiment. He has set



rolling another novel idea fraught with great possibilities—sending out *Jatra* parties into the nooks and corners of the province, to give popular dramatic representations dealing with social evils. One such *Jatra* party patronised by Babu Aswini Kumar gave a series of performances in Calcutta in August, 1916, and drew enormous audiences. Sir Ashutosh Mukerji, Mr. Justice A. Chowdhery and many other distinguished citizens of Calcutta publicly expressed their high appreciation of the performances, which the idea of Babu Aswini Kumar materialised. Babu Aswini Kumar was elected President of the Bengal Provincial Conference held at Dacca in 1913 and his Presidential Address contained many highly suggestive points. The reader will observe that the ideas and opinions expressed in his Presidential Address Babu Aswini Kumar has consistently endeavoured to carry into practice. To further adopt the Ex-Governor's words, to the cause of education, he has "devoted practical and successful effort, remembering that philanthropy is shown by deeds."

We live in deeds not years ; in thoughts, not breaths ;  
In feelings, not in figures on a dial  
We should count time by heart —throbs. He most lives  
Who thinks most, feels noblest, acts the best.

These famous lines of Bayley better describe his life's work than pages of written biography can.

## THE BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE, DACCA—1913

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### PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Fellow-delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.—It would be impossible for me to express in words my feeling of gratitude to you for the very great honour you have done me by electing me to the office of the President of this representative assembly in this historic City which is replete with inspiring memories of the past and promises to regain her former position in the near future;—an office of which, conscious of my own shortcomings, I feel I am altogether unworthy. I see many around me who would really adorn the Chair, but since your choice fell upon me, a very very humble man who has done nothing to merit this honour, and your call came as a command, I had no option but to obey, in spite of the present state of my health. Now that I have been placed in this position, I crave your indulgence and sympathy in the discharge of the duties attached to it, and I am sure, you will be as generous in giving me your help as you have been in calling me to preside over your deliberations.

At the very outset, gentlemen, it is my melancholy duty to offer our homage of love, respect and admiration to the sacred memory of one, whose name will be handed down from generation to generation all over India as that of an apostle of Love and a messenger of Hope to the down trodden and despondent millions of

this Country, who felt the same love for India as he did for his Motherland, who rallied the scattered forces of Indian patriotism and breathed into them new life and power for the political regeneration of this Peninsula, the great sage, the venerable *Rishi*, at whose feet educated India sat to learn the lessons of nation-building. Fellow-delegates, need I tell you whom I mean? —Allan Octavian Hume, who passed away on thirty-first of July last. May his soul enter into bliss and rejoice for ever and ever !

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have the painful duty of expressing our abhorrence and detestation at the wicked and dastardly attempt that was made on the life of our Viceroy when he was in the very climax of the day's rejoicings at Delhi on the 23rd of December last,—our Viceroy, who by a magic wave of his hand transformed a scene of seething discontent, misery and confusion into one of contentment, peace and happiness: to whom Bengal particularly owes a debt of endless gratitude for the reversal of the odious Partition of 1905 who, even when showers of blood were raining from the wounds and he was writhing with excruciating pain, never lost, for a moment, the benignity of his disposition and his confidence in his people; who, even in that hour of severe trial had the extraordinary magnanimity to say that, in spite of what the miscreant had done to him, his beneficent policy to India would never be changed. Gentlemen, it must have been some consolation of his Excellency to see how all India from one end to the other sympathised with him and expressed her admiration at the fortitude

and forbearance which he and Her Excellency Lady Hardinge exhibited on the occasion. May God speedily restore him to his former health and strength !

Lord Hardinge will ever be remembered by the hundreds of millions of this Country as the great pacifier ; and, notwithstanding his errors,—one of which, if I may be pardoned to say so, is, perhaps, the transfer of the capital to Delhi at a fabulous cost,—notwithstanding such errors, and of human beings who does not err ?—his name will be cherished with love and gratitude by the numerous race of his land.

We regret very much that the villain who perpetrated the atrocious crime, just referred to, has not yet been found out ; and who does not feel pain at the thought that the vestiges of anarchism have not yet been clean swept away ? It is really distressing that, while the whole Country is rejoicing over the reversal of the Partition of Bengal and the many benevolent projects launched for the spread of education, improvement of sanitation and other means of domestic advancement, these misguided beings find opportunities to hatch their infernal plans in some gloomy recess unobserved by men put them into execution and go about undetected. They and the dacoits, who have, of late, grown to be such a terror to the country have been a pest which both the Government and the people should do all they can to get rid of.

Government, I fear, have not yet been able to do as much as is needed in that direction. It reveals the incapacity of the Police. Most of the dacoits are still at large and prowling about for the commission of

further ravages. Very few have yet been detected. In one case, a dacoit was wounded by the villagers, yet the man could not be traced. In trying to find out anarchists and dacoits, our police officers have, in certain cases, succeeded in subjecting to the indignity, worry and harassment of a house-search quite a large number of quiet and law-abiding people and creating in their minds anew a feeling of intense disquietude and alarm. Fifty houses were searched recently in Backergunge and most of the searches have furnished no clue. Presumably, there was no justification for them. These searches serve only to irritate people and slacken the hold of Government on their minds.

It is our earnest prayer to our popular Governor that he should put a stop to such indiscriminate house-searches and follow the principle enunciated by Sir John Hewett, the late Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, that no house should be searched on mere suspicion, unless there was *justifiable ground* for such suspicion. I would humbly suggest that house-searches should not be allowed on the mere report of a police officer, that some senior Deputy Magistrate, who has known the people of the district for sometime should be consulted as to whether there is any justifiable ground or not, and then only on his advice the search might be undertaken.

It is absolutely necessary that the cadre of the police department should have more capable men than it can, at present, boast of. Higher salaries and better prospects would attract better men. There is a feeling based on good grounds in favour of the



introduction of a Competitive Examination for the selection of these officers. The system of nomination is always apt to degenerate into nepotism. Men who have passed the competitive test, if they are properly trained for some time, would surely improve the personal of the Police service.

Every Indian who has the welfare of his country at heart should do his level best to bring these offenders to justice. Public opinion should be educated, it should be driven home into the minds of our countrymen what *Bishma* said to *Yudhishthira* :—

“Virtue hit by the arrow of vice comes to society for redress. If society withholds its assistance, half the vice attaches to its leader, one-fourth goes to those that do not decry it and a fourth only sticks to the sinner. Not till the sinner is punished does the sin descend from the shoulders of the community to those of the sinner.”

There are two things, I am afraid, which impede the hearty co-operation of our villagers. The first is, that they have very little confidence in the Police officers and are afraid lest they, in giving any information, be themselves entangled; and the second is, that they are in mortal dread of those malefactors, lest they wreak their vengeance on them, while they have no means to defend themselves. It is, by all means, advisable that, under proper safeguard, these villagers should be given fire-arms and trained to use them for defence. It is heart-rending to think that in this poor country, the few, who have inherited or saved out of their own earnings a little, should see themselves molested and



stripped of even that little without the power of raising a finger to protect it.

Now, let us think of the causes which lead to these dacoities. I refer only to those that are supposed to be committed by young men who belong to the *Bhadrolog* class and not those of the 'professional' dacoits. These half-educated young men, I am sure, had never the benefit of religious and moral training; most of them, I believe, have no means of subsistence and others, having such means, do not know how to spend their time and to employ themselves usefully; and all these having no fear of resistance on account of the practical disarmament of the country have been emboldened to do their devilish work. I am glad Government have, at last, realised to themselves the effects of a God-less training in our schools and colleges and are now trying to mature a plan of religious and moral instructions. It is also imperatively necessary that both Government and we should endeavour to open new paths for living. The other day His Excellency Lord Carmichael took the students to task for seeking Government appointments and not trying to have a second string to their bow; but where could they get this string from? Unless Government and our people make sufficient arrangements for agricultural, technical, industrial and commercial education and extend the spheres of Medical education and education in Engineering, where is the opening for thousands and thousands of our young men to scrape up a livelihood? And as to Government employment why should not Government itself trench upon the

almost unbroken monopoly of European officers in many departments of the Public Services to provide subsistence to the children of the soil ?

In this connection, I must deplore the decadence of the Swadeshi spirit which provided food for so many thousands of our countrymen and sustained the patriotic zeal of hundreds of thousands. What is it that has overtaken us ? Imports of foreign wares, notably cotton goods, have increased considerably, and many, even of our educated men, have taken to them without any compunction. Everybody knows that the boycott of foreign goods that was declared was only a temporary measure to draw the attention of the British public to our grievances caused by the Partition of Bengal. The Partition is gone and the boycott is gone too, but *Swadeshi* is not gone. We must look to the economic condition of our country, we must see how she has been reduced to the verge of ruin, how she has come to such straits that while the income of an Englishman is more than Rs. 600 a year, that of an Indian is according to the most liberal calculation, not more than Rs. 27 ; and is only about Rs. 2 a month, sufficient to provide a man with food, clothes and the other necessities of life ? Shall we stand by unmoved and suffer our own brothers and sisters to die like flies for want of food, to succumb to the scourge of Malaria and other diseases because they have not sufficient nourishment to withstand their attack ? If we are men, we shall not allow it. Alas ! in exultation over the withdrawal of the Partition of Bengal we have forgotten Bengal herself. That she is suffering from

sheer exhaustion and is dying of inanition, we have clean forgotten it. If we have any soul left to us we must try to revive her. We must call back the Swadeshi spirit,—its enthusiasm and vigour. We must promote Swadeshi industries and purchase Swadeshi articles even if the prices be far higher; we must do this for your own protection, for our own safety, else we are lost and there is no hope for us. There are some traitors among ourselves who give us foreign goods and palm them off as Swadeshi! We must have no dealings with them, nothing should be done which might encourage them in these fraudulent practices. Many of the Joint-Stock Companies we started are pining away because of the want of business capacity in most of our men and of honesty in some and the pressure of unequal competition with foreigners. Until we make ourselves alive to our own interests and duties involved therein, until we take steps to see that the education of our young men tend to make them business-like, there is hardly any prospect of improvement. And is it too much to hope that Government should, as suggested by Lord Minto and Sir Edward Baker, take measures to protect our infant industries? In order that we may rise economically, socially, and morally, it is imperative that our Government and we should work shoulder to shoulder, in love and confidence.

In this connection, I cannot help expressing my warm appreciation of the good and useful work that our Government has inaugurated for ameliorating the condition of the poor people of this country, who are

head and ears in debt, by establishing co-operative credit societies in all parts of India. I have been reading the reports of some of these societies kindly sent to me by their indefatigable Registrar, Mr. J. M. Mitra, to whom we are so much indebted for his labours. I have been very forcibly struck with the manner in which some societies of Midnapur have begun their work. These societies have been relieving the poor by loans at a small interest, looking after the manner in which they spend the money lent them, deciding petty disputes by arbitration, and, out of their profits, maintaining elementary schools, constructing means of communication in villages, excavating tanks, giving medical relief to those who are in need of it and, above all, fostering a corporate life by bringing the villagers together, making them resolved to be frugal and prudent and helpful for the good of the whole village community. A very good beginning has been made : and I would recommend the establishment of such societies all over the Presidency. I hope you will agree with me in thinking that such societies would quicken our villagers into action and improve their condition and tend to revive the spirit of the village communities of old. Now, having taken a cursory glance of what is uppermost in our minds, at present, let us formulate a plan of work for ourselves and of what we expect the Government to do, for the growth and advancement of our Country.

And in this work Hindus, Mussulmans and Christians should all take part as we are all of the same race. Mussulmans who have been living here for centuries

now, undoubtedly, are Bengalees in every sense of the word; and so are the resident Christians. We all have to join hands in the service of our common Mother. We all "are citizens of one country, subordinate to one power, subject to one legislature, taxed by one authority, influenced for weal and woe by one system of administration, urged by like impulses to secure like rights and to be relieved of like burdens." Whatever may be the differences in our religious and social customs, our political interests are identical; and as to differences in our religions, it may safely be asserted that stripped of the outer forms, they are essentially one. If a Hindu reads Quran or the sublime writings of Maulana Rumi or the ecstatic *Gazals* of Hafez, he will wonder at the agreement he will find in the cardinal principles of his religion and of Islam, and in the courses of what is termed *Ishq* by the Mussulmans and *Prema* or *Bhakti* by the Hindus. The effect would be similar if a Mussulman would care to read the Upanishads, the cream of the Vedas, or the Bhagavat or Bhagavat Geeta; and so with the perusal of Christian Scriptures and the writings of Christian devotees. It is simply because of the ignorance of the *Shastras* of each other that we feel we differ so much. I have already said our political interests are the same; and having lived for centuries together, have not Hindus and Mussulmans felt as if they were related to one another? In fact the endearing terms *Dada*, *Chacha*, *Kaka*, *Mama*, have, for generations, been interchanged between Hindus and Mahomedans and men of one sect invited their friend



of the other to all domestic ceremonies, even religious festivals. I am sorry to have to say that there has been same estrangement now. I hope my Mussulman brothers will pardon me if I say, that some of them led away by the 'favourite wife' theory, have thought it fit to mark out separate lines for themselves apart from the Hindus. I am glad that there are far-seeing men among them who know very well that this theory cannot last long; and when our brothers will have advanced as far as the Hindus have, the illusion will disappear. Every Indian Government is bound to say with Sir John Meston:—"Disunion and friction will only mean weakness to both parties and so long as public questions are decided on racial grounds rather than on their merits, the progress of India will be hampered." How much I admire the statement made by my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Hazal Haque before the Public Service Commission, that he considered "it repugnant to their sense of self-respect that the follower of Mahomed should consent to remain for all time, a dead weight on other advancing communities constantly hampering them in their progress."

We are verily linked together; and together we rise, together we fall. It is because of the affection and regard that have grown between Indian Hindus and Mussulmans for such a long time, that the Hindus have sympathised so feelingly with the sufferers in Turkey and have wished the victory of the Turks in the war.

Fellow-delegates, we have met here to discuss measures and devise and adopt means by which we could remove the evils that exist in our society and



promote our well-being; and is it not our ambition that we should be recognised as a unit among the nationalities of the world? Well, Gentlemen, in order to be so recognised it is necessary that we should shake off our diffidence and dependance on others, gird up our loins and put forth the energies we have, to consolidate ourselves into a nation. More than a quarter of a century ago, came to our ears the trumpet-call of that noble soul at whose beck the whole of India hurried to form the Indian National Congress, whose departure from this earth we mourned just now :—

“ Sons of Ind, why sit ye idle,  
Wait ye for some Deva's aid ?  
Buckle to be up and doing,  
Nations by themselves are made.”

Have we responded to it like men? No, I must confess, we have not. Twenty-eight long years have rolled away, yet we are not very far from where we were at the time. The sky is still overcast, but Gentlemen, have we not marked a silver lining to the clouds? The upheaval of the last few years, the restless agitation against the Partition of Bengal and the tremendous force of the Swadeshi movement—have they not proved that we still have *that* left in us which would stand us in good stead if we wanted to occupy a place in the scale of nations? Did not the life, the vigour, the power that was in them lead even distant nations to change the opinion that they hitherto entertained about the Bengali race? Yes, Ladies and Gentlemen, we have found out the strength that is

in us. We now know that we can, if we will, shape our destiny. We have not to wait for some Deva's aid. We have got to take our destiny in the hollow of our hands and shape it as we will. We have to awaken the divinity that is in us and it will be as we want it to be. It is our will that will bend all the forces at work according as we want them to. The pride of intellect is ours, that the race of Sri Chaitanya, of Rama Prasad, of Vidyasagar is an emotional race nobody can doubt,—sometimes our emotions in excess mark our failings and it cannot be gainsaid that a nascent love for the Motherland is visible in the sphere of our emotion; but the will is torpid, dormant. We have to rouse the Will by all means, the fire that blazed in the hearts of our ancestors of old. It is smouldering in us, we blew it into a flame, ashes again are collecting over it, we have to blow on it again, kindle it and keep it up, so that its warmth may reach the farthest corners of the land. We must see it consume all the evils that have accumulated here for ages. No, "*no possumus*," no. Let us brace ourselves up for another continuous round of work. There are some who say that public spirit is on the wane and we have been tired of the activity we exhibited recently. I do not believe it. There is a spell of apparent inaction because we have not embarked on a systematic plan of work. Let that be defined and taken up, and you will see how satisfactorily it will speed on.

Our work is two fold: (1) in reference to Government; (2) in reference to the people.

In reference to Government our duty is (i) to

co-operate with them so as to make the administration smooth and easy; (ii) to criticise measures of Government and point out those which we consider fraught with evil to ourselves and therefore to our rulers; and to press on them our claims and aspirations for those political rights and privileges which, we consider, ought to be ours.

We have repeated, again and again, that our aim is to be a Self-Governing Country on the lines of the Self-Governing Colonies of the British Empire; and I do not know of any power that is capable of dislodging us from that position. Our ambition is based on the bed-rock of what is called the Magna Charta of British India, the principle of which has been asseverated again and again and emphasised and accentuated by successive sovereigns who loved and love their Indian subjects; and to-day or to-morrow it is bound to be fulfilled. There has been enough of throwing of cold water on this idea; there has been enough of clever interpretations of memorable documents which support it from quarters whence we least expected them and there has been misconstruction of the very principle itself; but we are not going to budge an inch. In urging the much-needed reforms which tend towards that goal we must leave no stone unturned in the line of constitutional agitation, we must show that we are in earnest about them—dead earnest. We must not rest until our claims are realised.

*To secure such reforms we have to take up the second division of our work:—*

- (i) We have to educate public opinion, so that

Government may clearly see that the cry comes not only from the classes but also from the masses; and (ii) we have to raise our people to such a standard, socially and morally that our Government may have no option but to grant them the reforms demanded and the whole world may proclaim them richly worthy of them. These two sub-divisions of work would, as a matter of course, advance by inter-action.

To educate public opinion on a particular question or some particular questions is the easier of the two, but even that also has been wholly neglected by us except on the Partition of Bengal. Again and again, resolutions have been moved and passed for carrying the questions discussed by the congress and by this conference from door to door and leaving the main body of the people with their ideas; but nothing worth any prominent mention has yet been done. It is not that we cannot do it, it is not very difficult to send round agents under proper guidance for this sort of work, but the motor force has been wanting. We are profoundly grateful to our leaders for what has been achieved and we have to remember that *Rome was not built in a day*, but, we must confess that there has been no agitation among us except the one just referred to, which can properly be called an agitation, none worth naming besides the agitations in England.

There are some who say that the masses would never care to understand these things and have not the capacity to do so. Gentlemen, the manner in which the masses responded to the call for agitation against the Partition clearly shows that they are not as obtuse

and indifferent as some of us would assume them to be. I do sincerely think that as to the capacity of comprehension of subjects that interest them, our masses do not yield the palm to the masses of any country in the world. It is well-known that many a Bakergunge or Mymensingh ryot exhibits a striking cleverness in conducting even intricate law-suits. What is needed is to inform our people with ideas on subjects that ought to interest them. I have often addressed them on important subjects and have found them intelligent enough to grasp my thoughts. I will tell you of one instance. It was about the end of 1885 or the beginning of 1886, I was explaining to them, in some meetings, the necessity of praying to Government for the introduction of the elective principle into the constitution of the legislative councils. Some of you may remember that a little over a year after that, a quarter of a century ago, a petition embodying that prayer signed by forty-thousand literate men of my district was submitted to the Honourable the House of Commons. I had the pleasure of exhibiting that petition at the Madras Congress of 1887. Well, Gentlemen, one day some peasants came and asked me about the movement, they wanted me to explain what it was I was about. Before I could answer, a thoroughly illiterate man stepped forward and promptly said :—" I will explain it. Just as we appoint arbitrators according to our choice and abide by their decisions, the Babu wants that we should ask *Sircar* to give us the power of choosing our own Law-makers and abiding by the laws passed in



consultation with them. Such persons which listen to our suggestions more readily and look after our interest more keenly than those who do not depend for their appointments upon our will." I was charmed with the manner in which the subject was made clear to his fellows. I am not prepared, gentlemen, to allow any remark to go without contradiction which says that our masses have not the power of comprehending and appreciating our work. It is imperative that they should join our ranks if we want to impress Government with the urgency of our claims. Think of the prodigious efforts that are needed even in England to bring about necessary reforms where both the rulers and the ruled belong to the same nation. Imagine then the difficulty of our situation—what we have to do for the purpose of impressing what we want upon the minds of our rulers who are foreign to us by half a world's distance, foreign to our languages, habits, customs, ways of life and the very modes of thinking.

The second sub-division of our duties in reference to the people,—that of raising their social and moral standard—, will be, probably, more difficult, but none the less attractive. I will, in a few minutes, present to you a list of some of these duties. In their performance, the zest and excitement of an agitation will surely be wanting; but the achievements of steady solid, genuine work and the refreshing consciousness of doing one's duty will give tone to our national character, be a resistless incentive to more strenuous work and spell Progress. In such work although the



impetus will come from within, we will certainly count upon the sympathy and co-operation of Government.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are happy in having as our Viceroy His Excellency Baron Hardinge, the author of United Bengal, and as our Governor His Excellency Baron Carmichael, who has in such a short time won the hearts of the people entrusted to his care. We are proud of our Governor and we ought to so comfort ourselves that he may be proud of his people. Nothing, I believe, would please him so much as to see us develop ourselves into a self-reliant and self-governing community worth of the best privileges of the British Empire.

To bring about such a consummation, mutual good-feeling and co-operation of the Government and the people are necessary.

I will not tire your patience by speaking on most of those of our pressing claims which we want Government to fulfil and the schemes and measures of Government which are being discussed at present. I will leave them to abler hands to be dealt with during the course of our deliberations. Subjects such as the question of the Simultaneous Examinations, the Separation of the Judicial and Executive Functions and other questions before the Public Services Commission, the rules for the election of members to the Legislative Councils, the Conspiracy Bill, and other important subjects, will come up as we proceed. I will say a few words on the recent declaration of the Educational Policy by the Government of India, the Dacca University Scheme, Local Self-Government,

Sanitation, Drainage and Water-supply and Religious Ministration in Jails.

Before I speak on these subjects I must say I am deeply pained and I am sure you all are, at the rejection of the petitions of the residents of Sylhet, Goalpra, Manbhum, a part of Singbhum and of Purnea, seeking re-union with Bengal. They are our kith and kin, have generally the same habits and customs as we have and speak the same language as we. They were encouraged to submit them by certain words in the memorable Despatch of the 25th August, 1911, but their hopes have been blasted. They should try again and we should all join with them to bring about the desired end.

In taking up the subject of Education the noble words of His Gracious Majesty, the King-Emperor, which have been made the exordium of the recent Resolution of the Government of India on their Educational Policy, again and again, come to my mind and fill it with hope. In fact, that royal heart pulsating with deep love for India preluded those words by saying expressly: "To-day in India I give to India the watchword of hope." Since the utterance of these words the heart of all India has been swelling with hope and now has come the declaration of his august representative in India and his councillors. It is instinct with a sincere desire to elevate the hundreds of millions of this country from the humblest to the highest, for which we are all exceedingly grateful.

The declaration says:—"In the forefront of their policy the Government of India desire to place the formation of the character of the scholars and the

under-graduates under tuition," and in making this announcement Government have emphasised the value of religious and moral training in Schools and Colleges. We hail this pronouncement with delight. There is no subject of more vital importance to my country than this and I agree with those who "lament the tendency of the existing systems of education to develop the intellectual at the expense of the moral and religious faculties." I do not see why Government should still hesitate to introduce a system of religious instruction. The principle of neutrality would, in my humble opinion, be no bar to its introduction, if, according to the suggestion of Dr. Martin, the late Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, (1) Societies be formed for religious instruction "on the line of universal truths with the cardinal idea of a Supreme Being controlling and regulating our actions," and discourses on the lives of saints of all countries without any distinction of colour or creed; and (2) different Associations of students of different sects be started under the presidency of teachers of different persuasions for the purpose of training them according to their respective Scriptures, traditions and modes of thought, barring what would be offensive to other sects.

The residential system has my hearty approval but I respectfully demur when Government say: "Already in some first-class institutions in the country admirable arrangements have been made on European lines to secure the full benefits of the residential system." I am afraid, arrangements on

European lines might tend to denationalize our youth. With all the advantages that have accrued to us from Western culture, and they have been many, I am not prepared to allow the youth of my country to forsake the simple habits of our forefathers. I do not surely advocate squalid and insanitary living but the complex machinery of Western life is introduced, the better for our welfare. The very climatic conditions of this country are against the adoption of European habits and ways of life. There is some truth in

“ East is East,

West is West,

And the twain shall never meet.”

An All-Wise Providence has brought them together that they may meet in the Essentials, not in the Externals. European teachers coming in contact with Indian pupils should always keep this in view.

Nothing could be more welcome to us than the prospect of the spread of Elementary Education ; but if the average cost of maintenance of a primary school be what Government have estimated it to be—Rs. 375 per annum it will take an unconscionably long period to achieve even so much as has been sketched out at present. Speaking of Bengal, I believe, Rs. 250 would do for a small primary school. Although the salaries of the teachers may be small, they have a recognized position in the village, are generally provided with food by the village people and given perquisites on many occasions. For the purpose of raising the standard of schools we hear that nearly 700 schools were abolished in Eastern Bengal in 1909-10.

Could anything be more disastrous than this to the cause of Education? These schools, although not coming up to the prescribed standard, were, at any rate, doing some good. Steps could be taken gradually to improve the quality of teaching. As for buildings, they need not cost about Rs. 700, as is calculated at present and benches and chairs may be dispensed with. I should prefer reverting to our old simpler ideals.

The proposal for the withdrawal of the recognition of secondary schools from the Universities and placing it in the hands of Local Government has become a source of uneasiness and alarm to persons interested in Education. Government shall have to depend upon Inspectors. Would it be right to leave such an important matter of vital interest to the people to the decision of one individual instead of a body of learned men who constitute the Syndicates of the Universities? True, they very often depend on the reports of Inspectors, but aggrieved parties may now appeal to the Syndicates for justice and the Syndicates may be approached more easily than high Government officials. There are Inspectors. There are some who do not understand the difficulties of people starting schools, some who care more for their fads than education, some who are not often guided by purely educational considerations and some who in going to improve schools sometimes improve them off the face of the earth.

Government have fully realized our sentiments when they say "no branch of education at present evoke greater public interest than technical and industrial



instruction." We may add to it Agricultural Education.

I do not think we can support the idea of converting into a University with power to confer degrees, every College which has shewn the capacity of attracting students from a distance and have attained a certain standard of efficiency. Think of our old *tols*, how they lost their dignity by the improper use of such powers. Prejudices and prepossessions do not occupy a very insignificant place in human mind. Besides, these local Universities will be dependent upon the opinions of local officials and influenced by them.

The proposal for the foundation of one institution for "scholars working in different branches of the kindred subjects which comprise Orientalia is admirable." If Pundits and Moulvis would work side by side, exchange between them the thoughts of the ancient Masters and discuss their adaptability to modern circumstances, it would go a great way to promote love and good-will between Hindus and Mahomedans.

Gentlemen, I will now run through the Dacca University Scheme and here, with your permission, I will quote, where necessary from what I had occasion to say lately on the subject. Our acknowledgments are due to Government for the earnestness with which they have taken up the idea of founding a teaching and residential University in this city, and also to the members of the University Committee who have thought and worked so hard to elaborate the scheme.

I would by all means have an Agricultural College



in such a fertile tract of the country, where the people are mainly agricultural.

I would not have a separate department of Islamic Studies. I fully recognise the value of such studies. There should be arrangements for Sanskritic Studies also, and I would put both the courses among the optional subject in the Arts Course—Forming isolated classes in separate departments, the students of such studies would not have the same general culture suited to the times as other graduates and would further be deprived of the benefits of the corporate life of the whole University. The status proposed for B. I. and M. I. degrees would create general dissatisfaction and discontent. These degrees would never in public estimation carry the same weight as B.A. and M.A.

My opinion is as strong against the foundation of a separate Muhammadan College. Such separation would go against the unification of ideals, promotion of healthy intercourse and general improvement of the two largest sections of our Society and create a cleavage pernicious alike to the true interests of the rulers and the ruled.

I rejoice over the very strong and influential protest that has been made by Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh, and such eminent associations of Zemindars as 'the British Indian Association' and 'the Bengal Land-holders' Association, against the establishment of a College for the well-to-do Classes. The Country is already too much caste-ridden. Nothing should be done which would strengthen the barriers between class and class

which have contributed so much to the downfall of India. If the Prince of Wales does not feel it derogatory to prosecute his studies in the Magdalene College, Oxford, I cannot imagine why the sons of well-to-do classes should hesitate to join our Colleges. No premium should be given to vanity, of all, in Educational institutions.

I pray that no steps be taken to mar the dignity of my mother-tongue. I quite approve of the idea of adding to the stock of Bengali Literature from Persian or Arabic sources, but nothing should be introduced which would collide with the genius of that language which is essentially Sanskritic.

As to the staff, the spirit of racial distinction would be a great damper to the men of what is called the Provincial Service and a stumbling-block to the success of the University.

On the question of residence and discipline, I fear, arrangements are proposed for too rigid control and too close supervision. Locks and bars are foreign to our Country. In ancient times, the youth of India resided with their teachers, they lived in hostels which were true to the real meaning of the word—they had nothing to pay. No locks and bars were used. Discipline with locks and bars comes very near to prison discipline and too much restraint and patriarchal kindness are apt to work the other way. Love and affection with a due allowance for freedom will achieve the end aimed at and not fear and repression. The advice given by that eminent Professor of America

Dr. Stanley Hall seems to be very opposite in consideration of what human nature is like. He says:—

“Freedom is the vital breath of student life. The sense of personal liberty is absolutely indispensable for moral maturity, and just as truth cannot be found without the possibility of error, so the *posse non peccare* precedes the *non posse peccare*, and professors must make a broad application of the rule *abusus non tollit usum*.”

As regards the administration of the University I was at first inclined to think that officials would necessarily predominate in the Convocation, but now, considering that there is a very large number of educated men who take a lively interest in educational matters, I do not see why non-officials should not form the majority. The members of the Council should all be elected by the Convocation. The members of the Syndicate of the Calcutta University who are all elected have worked to the satisfaction of both Government and the people. There is no reason why the Council of the Dacca University, if the members are all elected, should not be as efficient. The necessity for special representation of Mahommedans has not been proved. If we consider their phenomenal advance during these few years, I do not find any reason why they should press for such representation.

It was more than a quarter of a century ago that the principle of Local Self-Government was introduced into the Municipalities of mofussil towns and the District Boards. It has had a fair trial in the Municipalities, but in the District Boards it has not

had more than a faint recognition. There is not a majority of elected members in these Boards. Out of 500 members, only 210 are elected. Government have been satisfied with the administration of most of our Municipalities and have been decorating some of their Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen. Is it not time that the District Boards should now be given a fair chance to show if with elected Chairmen they can also acquit themselves as creditably as the municipalities? It is not time that the majority should be formed by elected members as was suggested by the Decentralization Commission? As at present constituted, they are wanting in life and vigour. What that sainted soul, the Marquis of Ripon, said, more than thirty years ago, holds good even to-day in reference to these bodies. He said:—"So long as the Chief Executive officers are, as a matter of course, Chairmen of the Municipalities and District Committees, there is little chance of these Committees affording any effective training to their members in the management of local affairs or of the non-official members taking any real interest in the local business." And he added:—"the non-official members must be made to feel that real power is placed in their hands." Even after such a lapse of time, the non-official members do not feel that real power is in their hands. Is it not time that steps should be taken to free them from the tutelage of the Collector? But there is the objection of the Decentralization Commission which does not approve of the removal of the Collector from the Chairmanship of the District Board as that would "dissociate him

from the general interests of the district." Let him have the same control as he has on the municipalities. That would surely put him in touch with them and the nominated members would also be a connecting link between him and the Board.

The Local Boards should also be made comparatively independent. They are now altogether under the thumb of the District Boards. Their budgets and even the proceeding of all their meeting have to be submitted to the District Boards for sanction. Evidently the recommendations of the Decentralization Commission on their behalf have not yet been adopted. It is because they are no bodies that electors do not feel interest in exercising their right of election.

I am of opinion that the village organizations should also be placed on an autonomous basis. I know that the wishes of the people are consulted by officials in forming *punchayets* but that is not sufficient. Those appointed do not feel that they owe their position to the suffrage of the people and the villagers do not feel that they have the rights of electors and the claims of constituents on their representatives. It is urged by some, that the principle of election is an exotic and is against our grain and it would take a long time before it could be assimilated. But the history of the village communities clearly shows that the underlying principle was at work from time immemorial. We also in our boyhood used to the election of the principal men of the village to decide disputes, to superintend local works and to administer the affair of the village generally, although the election took



place by tacit consent without the intervention of any official.

It seems the system of voting was not altogether unknown to the people of our country. I find a clear-cut definite system of voting by ballot enjoined by the great Buddha about two thousand and five hundred years ago. Addressing the *Bhikkhus* he says :—

“ I direct you, O *Bhikkhus*, to decide such cases by *yebhuyasika*—the vote of the majority. You will appoint as the distributor of *salaka* (a slip of wood used as a voting ticket) a *Bhikkhu* who possesses these five qualities : (1) that he is not capricious; (2) that he is not led astray by ill-feeling; (3) or by affection; (4) or fear and (5) is discriminating about votes properly given and not given.”

The *salakagahapaka* was the ticket-issuer and the *Bhikkhus* voted by *salaka*, a sort of ballot.

I do not pretend to say that such a system was popular, but is not unlikely that the Buddhist Kings adopted it in certain departments of their administration.

I must say that the District Boards have suffered much from inadequacy of funds in discharging their legitimate duties. It is cheering to observe that the Finance Member has been pleased to propose an assignment of 25 lakhs to the Local Government so that they may forego the amounts, which, at present, is appropriated for Provincial use from the Public Works cess.

I take this opportunity of stating that Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, whose term of office is about to end, has been tried and found to be a sincere friend of



India. He has invariably tried to foster education, sanitation, Local Self-Government and other means of public welfare. "It is he," as the *Indian World* says, "who has not only saved the ship of the state from absolute wreck on financial rocks, but has also exercised all his influence in moderating Anglo-Indian extremism which finds its echo in the cabinet of the Viceroy." This is high praise and is well-founded and, I believe, I give expression to the feeling of everybody present here when I say that it is our fervent prayer to His Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor that he should be retained in his position for another term for the good of his Indian subjects.

Now, a word about Sanitation, Drainage and Water-supply. How much I rejoice that these subjects have attracted the attention of our Governor and his Councillors and how much we are on that account, indebted to them? These questions are more important than even the question of Education. Life first, Education next. I presume, I may say that almost the whole of Bengal is seething with malaria and is painfully feeling the want of drinking water. The villages wear an aspect which indicates, to use one of our own significant expressions, that *Lakshmi* has departed from them for good. Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson has very kindly proposed giving 1½ crores from the surplus for urban sanitation, it will do good to only 7 per cent of the population, who can, to a certain extent, take care of themselves. We wish a still larger amount had been allotted for rural sanitation. I congratulate Lord Carmichael on his efforts to reclaim

the rural areas and on the excellent suggestion "that the resources of the District Boards might be more usefully applied in improving the existing sources of water-supply than in the construction of a few scattered wells and tanks," and I hope I may be permitted to submit that improvement in the economic condition of the people is even more important in fighting with malarial fever and other diseases to which they fall victims so easily. I would invite His Excellency's attention and yours to the following opinion of such an authoritative body as the Italian Malaria Commission. I am quoting it from the *Anrita Bazar Patrika* to which we are very sincerely thankful for all that it has been doing in the cause of sanitation. The Commission say:—"Side by side with the hygeinic treatment of the soil and of the human being, measures must be taken to increase the resistance of the healthy organism to the disease. Economic misery and physical wretchedness which is its child, open the way to infection.....In general, good feeding, a healthy dwelling, sufficient sleep, physical well-being, are the most favourable conditions for the preservation of man from malaria as well as other diseases."

I now come to a subject on which I have been feeling very strongly for some years—the necessity of religious ministration to convicts. As far as I know, there are such arrangements in almost all countries of the world. There can be no doubt that, generally, punishments are meant as a deterrent as well as a means for reformation. The promiscuous association of all sorts of criminals without a single word about God and the

blessings of a good life in this world and the next uttered to them can surely never improve their character. The old hardened criminals very often make use of their opportunities to boast of, what they think, their own marvellous feats of evil-doing and teach the younger offenders the art of emulating them. I heartily appreciate the appointment of a committee for the consideration of measures for the protection of juvenile offenders. I hope along with the establishment of industrial schools and other measures provision would be made for religious and moral training also. But it is not only juvenile prisoners, also other prisoners claim the attention of Government for instituting means which would help them to amend their character. It will not to do say that most of them are beyond reclamation. On my suggestion, one of our most popular magistrates requested a noted preacher of Islam to deliver a religious address to the Mussulman convicts of a certain jail. The effect was wonderful. Even the most confirmed and inveterate criminals, who seemed impervious to any good instruction, were moved to tears. But the magistrate was taken to task for such an indiscreet act not provided for in the Jail Code. Government make arrangements for religious ministrations to European Christian convicts. I do not understand why it should not be done for other convicts as well. It might be urged that the differences of sects are an insuperable bar, but they could be addressed on the line of universal truths, or ministers of different persuasions might be employed for men of their respective creeds. Discourses on the lives of saints of

all creeds, especially of those who had lapses in the beginning of their careers but ended like angels would be immensely beneficial.

Ladies and Gentlemen, now, let us think of our own responsibilities and duties. Here are our brothers and sisters—who are sometimes called the submerged or the depressed classes—names that are neither creditable to them nor to us—nevertheless, our brothers and sisters—steeped in ignorance and superstition, selfish narrowness and dense bigotry—not a single ray to illumine their souls, blind alike to the glories of the earth and the blessings of Heaven, and here are others who have a smattering of knowledge, but no sense of self-respect, not ashamed to resort to questionable practices for self and always grumbling and discontented with themselves; here are men thousands and thousands who have not wherewith to procure two meals a day, yet are besotted with drink, or stupefied with opium or crazed with the fumes of *ganja*, *chandu* and *charus* or bestialised by all these taken together; and many, many immersed in impurity, wallowing in filth with none to rescue them from the grip of sensuality; here are men and women who succumb to Cholera, Small-pox and other diseases with no doctor to treat them, no benevolent neighbour to cheer them; here are again hundreds of thousands of sallow shrivelled figures stricken with Malaria, dying by inches, with no power of resistance in their bodies, who are denied even the luxury of drinking pure water and to whom death by cholera would be a relief; here are others,—thousands of what you call the *bhadralog* class sinking

beneath the burden of their want and woe, very nearly starving and pining away, who will not whisper even to the winds of the state they are in, yet will not take to manual work or agricultural labour out of a false sense of honour; and there are men who have land or other means of subsistence but do not know how to utilise them or preserve and improve them—quite an invertibrate body of people ignorant and inane and who, when they can turn a penny do not know how to save it; and there are those whose occupation is gone, whose craft has gone to foreign hands and who are now on the verge of starvation. Add to these the orphans who have no parents to take care of them who are like floating spars of a wreck in the mid-ocean—sport of the winds and the waves of mere chance with none to feed them and clothe them, none to steer them aright; and the thousands of helpless widows; and here are men who have not even the bare means of subsistence but who will spend their last farthing in ruinous litigation, who are mad after law suits and who would borrow desperately as long as loans are procurable to teach their neighbours, as they call it, a lesson, until they run through their fortunes and are reduced almost to the miserable position of the beggars in the street; and is it not our remissness in not making arrangements for arbitration in the villages, that is, to a great extent, responsible for this mania of litigation?

Lastly, consider the dire poverty of the country with its exhaustion and the insanitary condition of our villages. I will not mention the various social evils



which are peculiar to different communities, to different sections of our society. When I think of the numerous evils that are sucking the very hearts' blood of my own motherland, and of the poverty of teeming millions in this land of plenty, I hang my head in shame and feel in my hearts of hearts that I have lived my life in vain

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, will you not open your purse-strings, devote your energies, consecrate your very lives to ameliorate these evils—to rescue our own brothers and sisters from the depths of poverty and ignorance and the clutches of vice and folly? If you will, there are hundreds to follow you. We are not lost beyond hope of recovery as some would have us to think.

I have already said that life is not extinct. The spark is still there. We have not altogether forgotten to be great and good. In literary and scientific fields, on the cricket and the foot-ball ground, at the Bar, on the Bench, in practical work of administration—have we not men who have acquitted themselves with credit to themselves and the race they belong to? Although Messrs. Macpherson & Co. are crying themselves hoarse over our lack of energy and organising capabilities and guiding power, have we not seen Bengalees at the helm of first-class Native States steering the ship of the State gloriously? Have they not when opportunities were given them proved to be excellent District Officers? During times of stress and strain, the manner in which recently thousands of our young men organised themselves into bands for quiet,

good work which took the fancy of even our adversaries—is not that something on which we may congratulate ourselves? The manner in which our young men offered help to hundreds of thousands of pilgrims during the Ardhodaya Yoga, the Churamoni Yoga, and during Brahmaputra Snan, which extorted the unstinted praise even from those Anglo-Indian papers who are very chary in offering us our due, gave unmistakable proofs of their energy and organising capacity. The heart was there and the powers were there. There are still organisations of young men who take upon themselves to make time to tend the sick to house the houseless and to do the last ceremony to the friendless dead. One cannot but admire the brio, the cheerfulness and the steadiness with which these young Samaritans do their noble work. I shall never forget how magnificently my friends of about two hundred societies in my district discharged their duties during the distress of 1906 and during the very active days of our Swadeshi work. They worked as smoothly as a machine and I might almost say that there was not a screw loose anywhere. Many of them excavated tanks with their own hands for collecting money to relieve the poor, many of them volunteered themselves to serve as *Chowkidars* and kept up shouting at night to scare away thieves and *budmashes* who multiply during seasons of such scarcity. Some of them really caught some thieves and handed them over to the police. I shall never forget how some of them out of regard for the tender susceptibilities of respectable families who were feeling the pinch dreadfully

and yet would not, for their lives, divulge it to their neighbours—I shall never forget how my friends arranged to slip unto them their doles in the dead of the night. I know of two villages, where the residents, most of them Brahmins, flung to the winds their false sense of dignity and came down to construct roads with their own hands—one about a mile long and the other about a mile and a half. I shall never forget how the elixir of a new life percolated to the lowest strata of our society—how both Hindus and Mussulmans of even the humblest cultivating class were inspired to compose in their own dialect songs on the awakening, which they went about singing from village to village moving the hearts of even the most apathetic to feel and worship our common Mother, how the boatmen caught the 'spirit and lustily sang those songs to refresh themselves after the toil of the day. Such singing-parties if properly guided would, I believe, be prodigiously effective in helping on our work of reform. I could cite a thousand and one instance to show the intelligence and capacity of our people for organised action.

I have heard with very great delight that there was similar work done in this district and some other districts also.

Verily, life is not extinct. The Indian heart, Hindu as well as Mussulman, has always throbbed quick in the name of Religion. Think of the numerous lavish endowments for the erection of temples and mosques, feeding the *shadus* and *fakirs*, creation of seats of ancient learning, construction of *Dharmasalas*

and institution of *sadavrata*s, *chhatras* and *cheragis*. Think of the enthusiasm with which our countrymen make their pilgrimages, how sometimes the rich forget their riches, deny themselves all worldly enjoyments, live like the poorest of the poor and wearily trudge on to inaccessible shrines. Think of the multitude of men and women who visit Puri, Benares or Vrindabon or Mecca and Medina, or assemble during bathing *Yogas* and are inundated with joy on the completion of their pilgrimages. Only a portion of this enthusiasm has to be directed to the necessities of the day. I have already cited some instances which betoken the diversion. The princely gifts of our wealthy noblemen and gentlemen to the cause of modern education and organised relief of suffering humanity, the ready response I had to my call for help to men of my district during distress, for which I and they are overwhelmed with gratitude—O, the warmth with which my appeal was received! a coolie sent me rupees four, a maid-servant her whole month's pay;—the self sacrificing labours of men like my friends of the National College and of the Daulatpur Academy—following in the footsteps of the members of the Fergusson College; and high-souled endeavours of the gentlemen of the Bramhacharyasram of Bolpur; and of those, who are devotedly working here at Dacca, in Calcutta and elsewhere for helpless widows and orphans and the hitherto neglected classes of society—what do these show? Outside Bengal the admirable educational and social work of the Arya Samaj—the philanthropic services of the Servants of

India Society—and those of the Ramkrishna Mission throughout India—what do these show? The spirit of sacrifice and devotion has not left the land, it is adopting itself to our present-day requirements, and the power of working out your beneficent plans is with us. Now, Gentlemen, it is for you, as leaders of the people, to come forward and help us. You have to provide food for those who cannot work, to give work to those who can, to open out vocations to those who do not know what to do with themselves, to help on agricultural and indigenous industrial enterprise, to utilise the resources of the country, to promote the Swadeshi spirit, to devise means for good water-supply and drainage, to give medical relief to the sick, to spread ideas of sanitation all round, to establish schools of different grades for general education of our men and women and for agricultural and industrial education, to give our youth physical, moral and religious training, to work in the cause of temperance, to make arrangements for arbitration in almost every village, if possible, to improve the morals of our society, to raise in the social scale those who have been so long neglected, and to check effectively the growing tendency to be irreligious and unscrupulous. The list is not complete, yet we have no reason to despair. Evils are closely strung together and when one is shoved others are very often shoved along with it. If we will only bestir ourselves, we shall be surprised to see what we can achieve.

Money is needed, but we should have enough of it if we could but adopt our time-honoured principle of



Plain Living and High Thinking. Bring to your mind the simplicity of habits of Indians of olden times and the loftiness of their thoughts. I am afraid, we are fast drifting into "High Living and Plain Thinking" and forgetting the sage saying :—

"Man wants but little here below,  
Nor wants that little long."

Even our students, I am sorry to say, are being affected by morbid notions roused by the glamour of wealth and fashion. It is the duty of our teachers to drive these out and put, instead, sane and healthy ideas into their heads. The materialistic tendency must be checked with a high hand. It is so insidious into working. You will yourself be surprised at the wants you have created in seeking what you call your comfort. I have heard of a gentleman who lives on only about a hundred rupees a month and spends the rest of his monthly income—six or seven hundred rupees, on doing good to others. What a noble example to us!

There is also in us a craze of being extravagant in *Sradhas* and other ceremonies whether it is for show or conformance to old customs it should, by all means, be deprecated. We have to adapt ourselves to altered circumstances. All honour to the gentleman, who had estimated the cost of the *Sradh* of his brother's wife for Rs. 160, performed the ceremony with 60—and sent me the hundred for feeding starving people in her name with prayers for her well-being in the other world. Would that such examples should multiply. If in performing *Sraddhs* the cost of the ceremony itself were minimised and permanent funds, however small,

created for public good and perpetuation of the names of the parents, what a vast amount of good could be done to the Country ! If other occasions also were seized for the creation of such funds, our Country would be overspread with a net-work of benevolent organizations. I would not care at all for the amount given by a particular individual. A rupee a year to be given away for some beneficent purpose in the name of the father or the mother, would be exceedingly welcome. Let the multimillionaire create his fund with his millions and let the poor man's mite go to create his. Many a little makes a mickle. The Paisa Fund of the Maharashtra has worked wonders. The glass works of Talegaon have been started and maintained by this fund and the now defunct National College of that place also came out of it. Wherever you go in the part of the Deccan, you will find a small box presented to you into which you are requested to throw anything you like, even only a pice, if you please. I do not see why Bengal should not have her Paisa Fund too.

In order that such funds may be created and properly managed, I would establish a Society in each district, have it registered according to law, so that people might have no hesitation in making the Governing bodies of such societies trustees of their funds. These societies might gradually take up all the sorts of work I have referred to in the first instance dealing only with several ; there might be two or three societies which would divide many of the duties between them ; or a central society may be established with branches

in every district, but that would, I fear, induce a dull uniformity and impose restraint and loss of freedom. I would prefer independent societies which might work according to the needs of each District and submit their reports at the end of every year to this Conference. This would stimulate our energies and give us the advantage of comparing notes. For obvious reasons, these societies must be kept distinct from those which would take up criticism of measures of Government and Political agitation.

When such societies are formed, I am sure many rich men will come forward with endowments for beneficent purpose ; there are childless wealthy men who, instead of adopting sons, would prefer making the country their heirs. Such men would gladly execute deeds of gift in favour of such societies. I know that there is enough of desultory charity in the land. I expect it would be organised and given an effective shape conducive to the welfare of the whole community. Loose rambling charity can never stimulate and kindle the imagination or be as effective as organised charity. Our Mussalman brothers have an excellent principle enjoined by their *Shastras*. Every man should pay to the poor one-fortieth of what he earns. This gift is called *Zakat*. It is not thought of as a mere gift, it is recognised by them as a satisfaction of the claim the poor have upon them. An admirable idea ! We may with advantage adopt this system and drop in our *Zakat* into the funds of these societies. I am sanguine, money will not be wanting. A good cause has always the blessings of the Most High on it.

But there is something more than money that is needed—the heart for such work. I have already said that we have our youngmen who have the heart for it and that there are such has been proved to the hilt. Only they need guidance and training and you have to give them work.

There is no doubt that poverty and family responsibilities stand in the way many, but you could, I am confident, find a large number, a very large number, who would work for bare subsistence—allowance and rough it out for the sake of the country. There is a feeling growing every day against dilettante patriotism and if we will only set about in earnest, hands will not be wanting to carry out our schemes of self-reliant activity for the amelioration of the condition we are in and if, all at once, we shall not have competent men for all the purposes chalked out before us, they will be coming in a short time. Education, sanitation, medical relief, arbitration, temperance, improvement of agriculture, swadeshi enterprise,—every department will have its men willing and painstaking.

Let us then, Fellow-delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, set the ball rolling—even to-day—a glorious and an auspicious day. But yesterday was celebrated the sanctified memory of a death which exhibited to the world the strength and the power that is in Love which embraces all mankind and presses to its bosom even publicans and sinners; and to day is sacred in the name of Sree-Krishna, the Expounder of the Bhagavatgita which places before you the sublimest

ideal of loving work for all created beings; and it is a day particularly hallowed in the annals of Bengal, a day that flung wide open the flood-gates of love and Faith and Hope, a red-letter day in the history of the world, the birthday and Shri Chaitanya who is acknowledged to be an incarnation of Love, who knew no difference between Hindus and Mahomedans, between Brahmans and Chandalas, who rose above all sects and creeds, whose love like the rays of the sun, shone alike on princes' palaces and poor men's cottages. In the name of Jesus Christ, of Sri Krishna, of Sri Chaitanya, with the halos of their brows illumining the very depths of our souls and dispelling all the gloom and darkness of narrowness and selfishness that have accumulated therein, let us begin our work of light and love even to-day and Heaven's light be our guide.

May the blessing of the ancient *Rishi* in the last *Rik* of the *Rigveda* be with you :—

May your purposes be one,

May your hearts be one,

May your minds be one,

So that you may be agreeably associated with each other (in your sacred mission).

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**Sir K. Seshadri Aiyer.**

## SIR K. SESHADRI IYER, K.C.I.E.

### A SKETCH

INDIA has in recent times produced a brilliant galaxy of distinguished statesmen and administrators who do not suffer by comparison with those of any other country. The present-day educated Indian justly points with pride, to men like Sir T. Madhawa Rao, Sir Salar Jung, Sir Dinkar Rao, Sir A. Seshiah Sastri, Sir K. Seshadri Iyer and others, in answer to those who are in the habit of saying that there is in India no fund of administrative capacity such as would enable her to stand upon her own legs. These men have proved that the capacity to rule need not be the monopoly of any particular people. They have not merely distinguished themselves as excellent administrators, they have even scaled the heights of statesmanship. And in the mind of all dispassionate critics they have warranted the inference, that, given the opportunity, they would have been equal to any task and responsibility. And among them all, none towers higher than Sir K. Seshadri Iyer who for nearly twenty years as Dewan directed the destinies of the Mysore State with memorable success. Some idea of his dimensions as the statesman may be gathered from the fact that even Lord Curzon who gave the impression of being such a superior person, and who openly preached the Heaven-ordained right

and mission of the Anglo-Saxon race to rule ; even he felt himself compelled to render a tribute of admiration to his " marvellous genius." Yes ! these were the very words of Lord Curzon, " marvellous genius !" Was Lord Curzon given to marvelling at any person but himself we may ask in amazement ! Did it occur to Lord Curzon, we may wonder, that this " marvellous genius " would not have been unequal to the august office which he himself then occupied ? Be it as it may, here is a Hindu, the despised scion of a subject race, whose abilities extorted this panegyric from this prophet and apostle of white superiority. During the years he was at the helm of affairs in Mysore, the whole province felt the grip of a master-mind. The condition of Mysore when he was summoned to the onerous office of Dewan, and its condition when he laid down the reins of administration, were poles asunder. Surely, none has in recent times done so much for the advancement of Mysore's five millions as Sir Seshadri. His name will go down to posterity as one of the most illustrious Indian Statesmen of modern times. We propose to give here a short account of his career and achievements. Let our readers judge for themselves.

Born in the year 1845 in a Brahmin family of Malabar, he had a distinguished School and College Career, standing first in the B.A. Degree Examination in 1866. Immediately after taking his B.A. Degree he entered Government service and held various minor appointments, till the year 1868, when he was called away by the late Ranga Charlu, to undertake the duties of Judicial Secretary in the office of the Superintendent

of the Ashtagram Division (Districts of Mysore and Hassan). He was afterwards employed in various capacities and in diverse situations. He was successively, Head Sheristadar of the Court of the Judicial Commissioner; Assistant Commissioner, Mysore; Deputy Commissioner and District Magistrate, Tumkur; District and Sessions Judge, Ashtagram Division. In the meantime he had taken the B.L. Degree of the Madras University in 1874. Between the years 1881 and 1883 he was employed on special duty in Bangalore. He had been entrusted during such period with the task of compiling and preparing various codes, manuals, rules and regulations. This work he did with conspicuous success. He had been employed by this time in many departments, and had acquired considerable experience. Wherever he went he won golden opinions, and was looked upon as an energetic, capable and conscientious officer. To those who had eyes to see it was evident that the young and brilliant official was destined to rise to the highest rung in the official ladder of the State. But that prize came to him somewhat sooner than he would have got it in the usual course of things. After the Rendition of the State, Ranga Charlu had been chosen for the onerous post of Dewan. Ranga Charlu had not been two years as Dewan before he made a great name for himself as a brilliant statesman. A new spirit was infused into the administration, and everywhere it was felt that a master-spirit was at the helm of affairs. Great hopes were entertained of the progress of the province under his guidance and control. But in January 1883 Ranga Charlu passed



away when his plans and schemes had been but barely mapped out. Sir Seshadri Iyer (Mr. Sashadri Iyer, as he then was) was chosen successor. He was barely 38 years of age, and people were not wanting who expressed grave misgivings as to the success of the appointment. Such misgivings were quite natural at the time, but events proved the wisdom of the choice. Though Ranga Charlu was a statesman of the first magnitude, he was snatched away before his schemes could reach fruition. It was reserved for Sir Sashadri Iyer to follow in his wake, and accomplish all that he had intended to do, and a great deal more. Before however we can appraise this work, it is necessary to take bird's eye-view of the position and circumstances of Mysore, at the time when he was summoned to the august office of Dewan.

After the fall of Tippu in 1799, the British restored the ancient Hindu Dynasty to the throne, and administered the province during the minority of the Hindu Prince. When the Prince came of age the province was restored to him, but shortly after, for reasons of mis-government and misrule (it seems that the mis-government and misrule were due to circumstances over which the Prince had no control) he was deposed in 1882 and the British took up the direct administration of Mysore. The deposed Prince in the meanwhile left no stone unturned to get back the province. There were people—and not a few Anglo-Indians among them—who protested that the Hindu did not know the elementary principles of Government and that the restoration of Mysore would be synonymous with

handing the province over to the forces of mis-government and barbarism. At last after much controversy, heart-burning and waste of words, the cause of justice triumphed, and the right of the deposed Prince to adopt a son who should succeed to the throne was recognised by the British Government. The adopted son was no less a person than the late Maharaja Chama Rajendra Udayar Bahadur, the noble father of the present Maharajah. What a model and beneficent rule the Late Maharajah was is a matter of history, and when he passed away in the year 1894, there was sorrow throughout India. During the minority of the late Maharajah the British continued to administer the province, and it was in March 1881, that the late Maharajah was installed on the gadi. The restoration of the State was looked upon by most people as an experiment in native rule, whose failure was a foregone conclusion. It was eagerly anticipated that the bankruptcy of native rule would soon be triumphantly demonstrated. Under such circumstances even minor peccadilloes on the part of the new Government were liable to be exaggerated into grave derelictions. Errors and mistakes which would pass unnoticed in a Viceroy of India or a Lieutenant-Governor were liable to provoke extraordinary and unfavourable attention. To aggravate matters the finances and internal conditions of the country were far from satisfactory at the time of the Rendition. We shall describe the then condition of Mysore in Sir Seshadri Iyer's own words :—

“ On the 25th March, 1881, His Highness was

invested with the administration of the State and he entered upon the duties of that exalted position under specially onerous conditions. During the long period of 50 years the State had been administered by the British Government; but unfortunately it had to encounter during the closing years of that administration the most disastrous famine of which we have any record. A fifth of its population was swept away; the accumulated surplus of nearly a crore of rupees had disappeared, and in its place there had come into existence a debt of 80 lakhs to the British Government; the cash balance had become reduced to a figure insufficient for the ordinary requirements of the administration; every source of revenue was at its lowest; and the severe retrenchments which followed had left every department of the State in an enfeebled condition."

And further:—"It (the late Maharajah's reign) began with liabilities excluding the assets by 30 $\frac{3}{4}$  lakhs and with an annual income less than the annual expenditure by 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  lakhs."

Such, indeed, was the discouraging state of affairs. It was the great good fortune of Mysore that it possessed at such a juncture a ruler of the type of the late Maharajah, and two statesmen of the towering stature of Ranga Charlu and Sir Seshadri Iyer. It would be but the barest justice to say that, great though Ranga Charlu undoubtedly was, the lion's share of the credit of having improved and bettered Mysore belongs to Sir Seshadri Iyer.

Sir Seshadri Iyer entered upon his duties as Dewan with a solemn and oppressive sense of responsibility.

For nearly eighteen years he directed the task of administration. The marvellous success which between his efforts may be gauged from a comparison between the condition of Mysore at the time of the Rendition and its condition in the year 1894. And this comparison we shall institute in Sir Seshadri Iyer's own words.

"His Highness's reign was attended with a remarkable measure of financial success. It began with liabilities exceeding the assets by  $30\frac{3}{4}$  lakhs and with an annual income less than the annual expenditure by  $1\frac{1}{4}$  lakhs. During the first three years the revenues from all sources were generally stationary, and in the fourth year there was a considerable decline, due to the drought of that year, but during the next ten years, the improvement year after year was large and continuous. Comparing 1880-81 with 1894-95 the Annual Revenue rose from 103 to  $180\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs or by 75·24 per cent. and after spending on a large and liberal scale on all works and purposes of public utility, the Net Assets amounted to over 176 lakhs, in lieu of the Net Liability of  $30\frac{3}{4}$  lakhs with which His Highness's reign began.

*Revenue.*—The measure of financial prosperity above described was secured not by resort to new taxation in any form or shape. It was mainly the result of a natural growth, under the stimulus afforded by the opening out of the country by means of new Roads and Railways, the execution of important Irrigation works and the general expansion of industries. It was in some measure due also to improved management of particular sources of income. The Land Revenue demand rose from 69 to 96 lakhs or by 39 per cent. and

the occupied area from 6,154½ to 9,863 square miles, or by 60 per cent. The Excise Revenue quite quadrupled itself during the 14 years owing to the elimination of middlemen, to a system of cheaper manufacture and higher duties, to the more vigorous suppression or illicit manufacture, and to the increased consumption accompanying the growth of industries, the expansion of Public Works and Railways, and the great rise in wages. The Revenue from Forests more than doubled itself, while under Stamps and Registration the increase was 65 and 124 per cent. respectively.

*Gold Mining.*—The important industry of Gold Mining took firm root in the State during His Highness's rule. In 1886 a professional examination of the auriferous tracts in Mysore was made, and the results duly published. For the first time, in 1886-87, Royalty on gold formed an item of our State revenue, and it reached the substantial figure of Rs. 7,33,000 last year on a production of gold valued at £8,44,000. A Geological survey for the complete examination and record of the mineral resources of the country was established in 1894 and is now in full working.

*Land Tenure and Agriculture.*—The Revenue Survey and Settlement made satisfactory progress during His Highness's reign and 3 Taluks alone out of 66 now remain to be settled.

In 1881-82 His Highness abolished the *Halat* on coffee of 4 annas per maund and established a new coffee tenure combining the advantages of a permanent settlement with low rates of assessment. The coffee area increased by 28 square miles. European



Planters own 56,000 acres and Native Planters 1,02,000 acres.

The *Khistbandi*—or instalments for payment of Revenue—was postponed by two months so as to enable the Raiyat to dispose of his produce on advantageous terms.

The *Revenue Laws* were codified, vexatious restrictions on the enjoyment and transfer of land were swept away, and the freer relinquishment of unprofitable small parcels of land was allowed. As a means of remedying agricultural indebtedness, a scheme of Agricultural Banks on strictly co-operative principles was introduced last year.

*Forests.*—The area of Reserved Forests increased from 643 to 1,704 square miles, and 35 square miles of new plantations were formed.

*Education.*—The number of Government and aided schools rose from 866 to 1,797 and the expenditure on them from Rs. 3,15,000 to Rs. 8,19,810. The increase in the number of boys was from 39,413 to 83,398 and, in that of girls from 3,000 to 12,000. Eight hundred Primary Vernacular Schools, fifty English Middle Schools, five Industrial Schools, two Normal Schools, thirty Sanskrit Schools, one first Grade English College and three Oriental Colleges were newly established during His Highness's reign.

*Irrigation.*—One hundred lakhs were spent on original irrigation works during His Highness's reign, making an addition of 355 square miles to the area under wet cultivation, and bringing an additional Revenue of 81¼ lakhs. With this addition the area



protected by irrigation at the close of 1894-95 was 1,558 square miles. The expenditure on irrigation in 1880-81 was Rs. 3,19,000; in the first 4 years of His Highness's reign it averaged  $4\frac{1}{4}$  lakhs; in the next 4 years  $8\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs; and in the last 6 years  $13\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs.

Special encouragement was afforded to the construction of a large number of new irrigation wells, individually small, but in the aggregate a most important work of Famine protection. Rs. 4,18,500 were sanctioned as loans for these wells, of which 1,078 had been completed, benefitting 7,000 acres of land. No additional tax is levied on the dry land converted into garden and wet by the aid of these wells.

*Communications.*—In addition to the expenditure from Local Funds  $67\frac{3}{4}$  lakhs from the State Revenue were devoted during His Highness's reign to new roads and to the maintenance and special improvement of existing ones. The mileage of roads rose from 3,930 to 5,107. The Malnad roads received particular attention, and the special expenditure upon them was Rs. 11,44,000 in the coffee tracts and Rs. 6,36,000 in the remaining Malnad.

*Railways.*—At the Rendition the length of the State Railways open to traffic was 58 miles. The addition made to it during His Highness's reign was 315 miles at a cost of  $164\frac{1}{4}$  lakhs.

*Municipal and Local Funds.*—The number of Municipalities rose from 83 to 107, annual Municipal receipts from Rs. 2,76,500 to Rs. 5,63,000, and the annual expenditure on conservancy and Public Works from  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs to Rs. 4,89,000. The Local Funds Revenue like-

wise increased from Rs. 5,75,000 to Rs. 8,75,000 per annum and the annual expenditure on communications and Conservancy from Rs. 3,72,000 to Rs. 6,97,000.

During His Highness's reign Municipalities were benefitted to the extent of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lakh a year by assignments from the State Revenues, and the District Funds were also benefitted to the extent of  $3\frac{3}{4}$  lakh a year by the transfer of 657 miles of Roads from the District Fund to the D. P. W. Budget.

*Sanitation.*—Special attention to sanitation was an important feature of His Highness's reign. In addition to ordinary sanitary works carried out by the various District Fund Boards and Municipalities, His Highness devoted the large sum of Rs. 27,15,221 from State Revenues for the improved sanitation of the Capital Cities of Mysore and Bangalore and of the larger Moffusil towns throughout the State. Among the more important work which were completed, or are approaching completion, may be mentioned (1) the Water-supply and partial drainage of Mysore, (2) the filling in of the insanitary ditch round that City, (3) the extension of the Mysore and Bangalore Cities, (4) the scheme of Water-supply to the latter, (5) Water-supply drainage and extension schemes for the Moffusil towns, besides numerous drinking water wells throughout the State.

*Medical Relief.*—The number of Hospitals and Dispensaries rose from 19 to 114 and the number of patients treated from 1,30,723 to 7,06,915. His Highness fully appreciating the importance of Lady Dufferin's philanthropic movement directed the training and employment of midwives all over the country and the opening

of Special Dispensaries for women and children. All but 3 Taluks out of 66 have been provided with midwives, and 5 Dispensaries for women and children have been opened in District Head-quarter towns.

*Population.*—In the ten years from 1881 to 1891 the population increased by 18·34 per cent. a higher ratio than in the surrounding Provinces, and there is reason to believe that during the last four years the ratio of increase was even higher. During His Highness's reign the rate of mortality is estimated to have declined 6·7 per mile and the average duration of life to have risen from 24·93 to 25·30.

Marvellous success, surely ! All this was achieved during a space of little more than ten years ! In the above statement we desire to emphasise to point that all the improvement was not due to new taxation in any form or shape, but to a normal development and expansion of the resources of the State, initiated and inspired by the splendid genius of the new Dewan. In estimating the above statement regard must further be had to the fact that Mysore had also during these years to pay the annual subsidy of 25 lakhs to the British Government besides providing the aggregate amount of 180 lakhs out of the current revenues for the Maharajah's Civil list.

Such phenomenal success cannot be achieved without far-reaching reform in the constitution of the administrative machinery. And it is interesting to note that Sir Seshadri Iyer appointed separate heads for the principal departments of service—which were pre-

viously under the direct control of the Dewan—and organised some new departments also.

Nor did the Dewan hesitate to take legislative action in social matters. He passed a regulation prohibiting marriage below and above certain age limits, though he had to encounter bitter opposition in certain quarters.

The outstanding feature of Sir Seshadri Iyer's administration was his development of public works and the tapping of irrigational resources to their utmost extent. Though the Dewan brought to bear upon every department of the State a knowledge and resourcefulness which astounded the expert, it was particularly so in the department of Engineering. Many schemes pronounced impracticable by committees of experts were shown to be feasible by the Dewan. On many an occasion he set aside the opinion of such specialists much to their chagrin and loss of self-importance, but much to the good of the State. A certain European Engineer, a mighty expert, is said to have exclaimed once, partly in jest and partly in seriousness, that Mysore had no need of a Chief Engineer so long as Sir Seshadri Iyer was Dewan.

But undoubtedly the achievement which has immortalized Sir Seshadri Iyer's name is the Cauvery Project. The Cauvery falls at Sivasamudram have for centuries been affording delight to the spectator and love of nature. No one had dreamt that the fall could be harnessed to the car of material advancement. Ruskin might be indignant at the loveliest scenes of nature being desecrated by the unholy intrusion of modern machinery. But the modern world is not to any

considerable extent governed by considerations of sentiment. In western countries water-falls have been utilized to generate electric power and to bring gold into the pockets of capitalist. But the Cauvery Project of Sir Seshadri Iyer was the first of its kind, we believe, in the East. The idea originated with a European, but it was scouted by influential people as utopian. Not so, Sir Seshadri Iyer. He was drunk with the idea, and thought that nothing could be more practical. But at first he was unable to have his way.

All sorts of spokes were put in the wheel. The cost of the scheme was so large, and its success so problematical. But the Dewan would not yield. He carried the matter to the Government of India, and finally procured the necessary sanction. What a magnificent success the project has proved needs no saying. The net revenue derived by the State from this source was more than 17½ lakhs of rupees in the year 1906-1907. Year after year fresh installations are being made, and the yield ought to go on increasing annually.

The death of the late Maharajah in 1894 prejudicially affected Sir Seshadri Iyer's career. Sir William Lee Warner, author of the *Citizen of India*, was the Resident, and naturally he had long chafed under the masterful spirit of Sir Seshadri Iyer who was a living refutation of the pet theories and cherished prejudices of Anglo-Indians. He wanted to cripple the Dewan's influence, and proposed that during the minority of the heir-apparent, the Dewan should not be allowed to have sole and undivided authority. The suggestion was accepted, and a council of four mem-



bers was appointed to act with the Dewan. This led directly to an impairment of administrative efficiency. Favouritism, jealousy, and intrigue lifted up their heads, and the Dewan was thwarted at every step. It was a misfortune for the cause of good administration, and acted as a deadweight against the Dewan's soaring wings.

No account of Sir Seshadri Iyer's career would be complete without a reference to his relations with the Mysore Representative Assembly. The genius of Ranga Charlu had brought into existence this institution in which the representatives of the people (at first nominated) were brought into contact with the ruling power. Sir Seshadri Iyer as a worthy disciple of his great predecessor at first tended the young plant with great care. The scope and functions of the Assembly widened, and it was placed on a representative and electoral basis. But latterly the relations between the Dewan and the Assembly became considerably strained, the members not often placing that faith in the Dewan which his supreme abilities deserved. The irritated Dewan came to show scant respect for the Assembly, and largely curtailed its powers. From the point of view of popular Government this was a highly retrograde step, and forms the greatest blot on the Dewan's administration. We must not also forget that at certain stages of a country's progress, especially in the case of a State like Mysore, a firm and benevolent despotism may be the best form of Government.

Sir Seshadri Iyer retired in the year 1901, and went

on an extensive pilgrimage to various holy places in South India. But he was not destined to enjoy his well-earned rest. He passed away in October 1901.

Sir Seshadri Iyer was a type of the efficient statesman. An intimate and unrivalled knowledge of every department of the administration, an untiring activity, a colossal resourcefulness, a masterfulness that awed and subdued a passionate desire to rise to the highest of which he was capable—these were the secrets of his success. He may have had his faults. His intimate knowledge of every department, and untiring activity may have led to occasional meddlesomeness. His masterfulness (which enabled him to give lessons to the Residents) may have sometimes degenerated into an autocratic, imperious temper disposed to give no quarter to lesser men. But his achievements are writ large in the annals of Mysore. We need not doubt that he would have been unequal to more exalted situation calling for breadth of mind and largeness of outlook. He was a man of whom the educated classes should be proud. After honestly contemplating his career, who will dare to say that there is in India any dearth of indigenous administrative and statesman-like capacity.

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Bankim Chandra Chatterjee.

# BANKIM CHANDRA CHATTERJEA

## A STUDY

**I**NDIA has now entered upon an era of Nation-Building. The most paramount of problems for her, for a long time to come, will be, how to initiate her many races and creeds into the cult of the motherland, into the consciousness that they are first and foremost the children of a common land with clearly defined rights and responsibilities springing out of that tie. There are undoubtedly other serious problems confronting her. For one thing she has to recover and vindicate her economic integrity. But, all other problems are part and parcel of the one heroic problem of Nation-Building. In the solution of that problem will be found the master-key to unravel all others.

It is therefore pertinent to ask, who is the true Nation-Builder? Can politicians and economists alone build up a nation? Will political harangues hush the voice of strife, and send a new current of life coursing through the atrophied veins? It would be futile to nourish any such hope. The true nation-builder is he who is on fire with the idea of the nation to be, who sees nothing but the goal, and who is so possessed with his vision that he vitalises and in a measure intoxicates lesser souls. The nation is first born in

the world of imagination and ideal before it is born into the world of fact. A race of singers, poets, artists, dreamers must precede the advent of a nation. The whole country must be flooded with the music of such spirits, in order that the many may catch the glow of their inspiration. Then only will the people at large be strong to hope, strong to sacrifice and strong to achieve.

Of such a type of Nation-BUILDER we have had unfortunately too few examples in modern India. But there was one at least to whom the description would apply with great justification. We refer to Bankim Chandra Chatterjea of Bengal—not that he sang directly of nationalism but that he has been a great nationalising force. He was as we all know, the author of that simple cry, which seems to have impressed the imagination of the rulers even more than that of the ruled, “Bande Mataram.” The energy of the opposition manifested in Bengal against the partition came as a revelation not merely to the Government, but even to the country itself. What was the secret of the strength? Where lie the springs of the unique life which Bengal has undoubtedly shown? To an extraordinary degree, the secret, the life lay in the vernacular literature of Bengal. Bengalee literature has, in modern times grown and developed in a manner of which those, who have not come under its influence, can have no adequate conception. And unless the rest of India follow in the wake of Bengal and develop the vernaculars, the hope of a new life for India is doomed to failure. Many of the vernaculars have already a magnificent classical



literature. What is now needed, is, that they should now be made to sound the note of a new life, of the glad tidings of the future to be. What is needed is that we should feel them as our very own, as our God-given instrument of expression, as the language beloved of our progenitors for countless generations as the language in which our dear children lisp. To the Bengalee belongs, in modern times the credit of this realisation. But a heroic spirit was needed to work out such realisation and propel the national mind into a new pathway. That spirit was Bankim. To him belongs the unique glory of being the maker of a literature. It is a well-known fact that the first effects of English Education in Bengal, even more than in other parts of India, were violently denationalising. The first generation of English educated Bengalees were more English in manners, thoughts, habits of life, ideals, than Englishmen themselves. It was their highest ambition to approximate to western civilisation in all departments of life. Even the finest spirits succumbed to this vicious tendency of the times. One of the most fatal manifestations of this spirit was the contempt and disdain with which the Bengalee language was regarded. To talk English, to write English, to think in English came to be regarded as genteel, and the people's own language was looked upon as vulgar. Michael Madhu Sudan Dutt himself, perhaps the greatest of modern Bengalee poets, exclaimed that it was his supreme ambition in life to be able "to dream in English." He afterwards found out his mistake, and returned to his own vernacular as the natural and

divinely-appointed instrument of self-expression. Now Bankim was by no means a stranger to this spirit. He too tried to create in English ; his first literary efforts were in the English language. But he found his genius shackled in that medium. He found out that if he was to achieve the best of which he was capable, he should turn his attention to the despised vernacular. It required rare courage to revolt against the reigning fashion and set new example. But Bankim did more. He further revolted against the tendency that had dominated the Bengalee classical masters, which made the Bengalee literature the cherished possession of the learned few, and not the heritage of the million. He represented in Bengal the spirit of what is known as the Romantic Movement in English Literature, that movement which dethroned the standards of Pope, and gave to the English people their greatest modern poets. There is something undoubtedly heroic in doing pioneer work, and the pioneers in every field have not seldom in history been rewarded with an admiration out of all proportion to their intrinsic worth. But Bankim was more than a mere pioneer. He was a creative genius of the first magnitude, and his creations, are destined to live as long as the Bengalee language is alive. Thus Bankim created modern Bengalee, made it the people's language, and bequeathed priceless productions to posterity. Bankim is to-day the idol of the Bengalee, and not without reason. For if to-day the Bengalee is proud of his country, proud of his language and literature, if the cry of "Bande Mataram" stirs in him a response which the rest of India cannot comprehend,

no small part of this splendid achievement is due to the hero of the present sketch.

The truest biography of a creative genius like Bankim is to be found in his works. They are the faithful mirror of his soul. In them one can trace the evolution of his mind stage after stage, and here the echoes of that spiritual battle which great spirits wage with life. But this sketch is mainly intended to present the dry, conventional details of his life, which whether they form an essential part of biography or not, have their own interest and value.

Bankim was born on the 27th day of June 1883, in a noted Brahmin family of Kantalpara, a village in the 24 Pergannahs. After a short stay in the village pathasala, he passed on to the Midnapur High School. Here, he was distinguished for his close application to study, and looked upon as a most promising student. He then joined the Hoogly College, and thence proceeded to the Presidency College, Calcutta, with a scholarship in the year 1856. Here his exceptional talents attracted the attention of his professors who cherished bright hopes of his future. He graduated with honours, being one of the first two graduates of the Calcutta University.

He was at once started in Government service as a Deputy Magistrate. Step by step he rose to be Assistant Secretary to the Government of Bengal. But he was not a supple-kneed man, and the authorities found him inconvenient, because independent. He therefore reverted to the executive service, in which he was promoted to the first grade. After a long spell of Government service he retired in 1891.

The atmosphere of Government Service in India is not particularly conducive to the growth of genius. But Bankim, the giant that he was, escaped its freezing influences. Dreams of literary ventures and triumphs must have been constantly floating before his mind's eye, even in the midst of his laborious official activities. Like so many of his contemporaries he had the ambition of becoming a great writer in English. There was in those days an English magazine called the *Indian Field*, conducted by a Bengalee gentleman, and it was in its pages that Bankim made his literary debut. He began a novel entitled "Rajmohan's Wife," when he was Sub-Divisional Officer at Khurda. And now came the turning-point in his career. Perhaps he did not find the amount of appreciation he expected. Perhaps his soaring wings were heavily weighed down by the foreign medium. Anyhow he made the discovery that in attempting to write in English he was simply ploughing the sands, and that he must return to his mother-tongue, though it had at that time "lost caste." He once and for ever turned his back on his former ambitions, and set himself with all the seriousness of self-dedication to improve and perfect his mother-tongue.

His first Bengalee novel published in 1864, *Durgeshenandini*, came upon the public "like the dawning of a new sun in the skies." A series of novels followed, and for a quarter of a century the Bengalee-speaking people were feasted and fed with the creations of his pen. '*Durgeshenandini*' was a historical novel after the manner of Sir Walter Scott, and

was noticed in high terms of praise by Professor Cowel in MacMillan's Magazine in 1872. "*Kapalakundala*," and "*Mrinalini*" appeared subsequently. In 1872 Bankim started the Bengalee magazine "*Banga Darsan*." It was to its pages that his best novels were contributed. Here is a list of his novels besides those already mentioned: *Bishabriksha*, *Krishna Kanta's Will*, *Rajani*, *Chandrasheker*, *Rajasinha*, *Debi Chowdhurani*, *Ananda Math*, *Sitaram*.

Besides his novels Bankim also wrote two religious works. "*Dharmatattwa*" and "*Krishna Charitra*." The former is an exposition of Hinduism as the author conceived it. The latter is a presentation of the life of Sri Krishna, as ideal man, purged of the many doubtful accretions that have gathered round it. The last work, he was engaged in, was an edition of the Bhagavad Gita with text, translation, and the author's own notes, but he did not live to complete it. He passed away on the 8th April, 1894.

Mr. Frazer gives the following account of Bankim in his *Literary History of India* :—

"Nowhere better than in the novels of Bankim Chandra Chatterjea can the full force of the strife between the old and new be traced. The novels themselves owe their form to western influences, but the subject-matter and spirit are essentially native. Bankim Chandra Chatterjea himself was the first B.A. of the Calcutta University. Born in 1838 his earliest novel, "*Durgeshenandini*" appeared in 1864 professedly inspired as a historical novel, under the influence of the works of Sir Walter Scott. This work was followed



by "*Kapalakundala*" a tale of life in Bengal some two hundred and fifty years ago, and was succeeded by the "*Mrinalini*." In 1872 the novelist commenced in his newly-started magazine, the *Banga Darsan* the monthly publication of his novel of social life, the "*Bisha Brikha*," translated into English as the "Poison Tree" in 1884. The "*Debi Chadhurani*," "*Ananda Math*," "*Krishna Kanta's Will*" followed, the last being translated into English in 1895. The "*Krishna Charitra*" published in 1886 is, however, the work through which the name of Bankim Chandra Chatterjea will probably remain famed in the memory of his own country-people.

It is the crowning work of all his labours. It inculcates, with all the purity of style of which the novelist was so perfect a master, a pure and devout revival of Hinduism founded on monotheistic principles. The object was to show that the character of Krishna was in the ancient writings an ideal perfect man, and that the commonly-received legends of his immorality and amours were the accretions of late and more depraved times. Bankim Chandra Chatterjea was the first great creative genius modern India has produced. For the western reader his novels are a revelation of the inward spirit of Indian life and thought.

As a creative artist he soars to heights unattained by Tulsi Das, the first true dramatic genius India saw. To claim him solely as a product of western influence would be to neglect the heritage he held ready to his hand from the poetry of his own country. He is nevertheless, the first clear type of what a fusion

between East and West may yet produce, and the type is one reproduced in his successor.

“In the novels of the greatest novelist India has seen, there is much of eastern form, much of poetic fancy and spiritual mysticism alien to a western craving for objective realism. Bankim Chandra Chatterjea with all the insight of eastern poetic genius, with all the artistic delicacy of touch so easily attained by the subtle deftness of a high caste native of India or a Pierre Loti, weaves a fine-spun drama of life, fashioning their characters and painting their surroundings with the same gentle touch, as though his fingers worked amid the frail petals of some flower, or moves along the lines of fine silk, to frame therewith a texture as unsubstantial as the dreamy fancies with which all life is worn as warp and woof. So the “*Kapalakundala*” opens with a band of pilgrims travelling by boat to the sacred place of pilgrimage, when the holy river Ganges pours its sin-destroying waters into the boundless ocean. The frail boat with its weight of sin is being swept by the rushing flood out toward the sea. The boatmen are powerless, they cry for help to the Muhammadan saints, the pilgrims wail to Durga the dreaded wife of Siva, the Destroyer. One woman alone weeps not. She has cast her child into the flowing stream, for such was her vow of pilgrimage. In its unguided course the boat by chance touches land, and the hero, Nobo Kumar, volunteers to wander along the sandy shore in search of firewood. The tide rises, the boat is swept away and Nobo Kumar is left to gaze after it in despair.

The sandy waste is the abode of an ascetic worshipper of Kali, who is waited on by the heroine "*Kapalakundala*" intended as a sacrifice to the fierce goddess. The ascetic sage is clothed in tiger-skins; he is seated on a corpse and wears a necklace of rudra seeds and human bones, his hair is matted and unshorn. The wild scene is depicted with all the dreamy, poetic repose which saturates the whole life of the East. The ocean is spread in front; across it speeds an English trading ship with its sail spread out like the wings of some large bird; the blue waters gleam like gold beneath the setting sun; for out in the endless expanse the waves break in foam; along the sands there runs a white streak of surf like to a garland of white flowers. The two scenes—one the lonely pilgrim and the near seated, hideous, human sacrificing ascetic, the other of the vastness and the stillness of the sea—seem to picture forth the emptiness of man's imaginings and efforts amid the impassive immensity of the universe. Over all, the murmuring roll of the ocean, echoed as it is in the poets' words, seems as though it bore to the senses the wailing moan of a soul lost in time and space. In the midst of the mystic scene a woman, the heroine, appears. She is a maiden, with hair as black as jet trailing to her ankles in snake-like curls. Her face, encircled by her black hair, shines like the rays of the moon through the riven clouds. As Nobo Kumar gazes on her form, she tells him to fly from the ascetic yogi, who has already prepared the sacrificial fire and awaits a human victim. Spell-bound, Nobo

Kumar has no power to fly from the devotee to Kali; he follows to the place of sacrifice, and is there bound. Kapala Kundala, in the absence of the priest, appears, severs the bonds, and releases Nobo Kumar. The priest returns, seeks the sacrificial sword, then notes how his victim has been released. In his rage he rushes to and fro along the sandy dunes, from the summit of one of which he stumbles in the darkness, falls, 'like a buffalo, hurled from some Mountain-peak' and breaks his arms. The hero and heroine, before they fly from the waste of sands, are married. Kapala Kundala, however, longs to know the will of the Goddess. A leaf placed at the foot of the dread deity falls to the ground, a fatal omen that the goddess is displeased.

So the fate of man is, for the poet's purpose, as uncertain as the face of a trembling rain-drop on a lotus leaf. The new-made wife departs weeping from the shrine. The novelist has now to follow her destiny to its relentless course. The shadow of her future soon throws its dark gloom across the soul of Kapala Kundala.

Amidst the intrigues of the Mughal Court of the time of Jehangir the course is prepared for the tragedy to close round Kapala Kundala, whose husband grows to doubt her love, and then to witness what has been cunningly devised to seem her faithlessness. The ascetic sage, with broken arms, now appears before Nobo Kumar and declares that the angered goddess still claims a sacrifice. In his rage, Nobo Kumar, offers to sacrifice his wife, and so at once to appease Kali and his own blind jealousy. Kapala Kundala has herself

resolved to fulfil her fate. The relentless decrees, that hold the destiny of man at their beck and nod, have now almost worked out their purposes. The voice of the priest wails with pity as he calls on the victim, her husband seizes the sword, but his passion bursts forth in moaning cries to his beloved to assure him, at the last moment, that she has not been faithless. He hears the truth that all his suspicions were roused by cunning design. Fate, typified by the will of the goddess, must be worked out. Nobo Kumar extends his arms to clasp his love, but Kapala Kundala steps back, and the waters of the Ganges rise to sweep her away in its sin-destroying flood, where Nobo Kumar also finds his death.

The novel throughout moves steadily to its purpose. There is no over-elaboration no undue working after effect, everywhere there are signs of the work of an artist whose hand falters not as he chisels out his lines with classic grace. The force that moves the whole with emotion and gives to it its subtle spell, is the mystic form of eastern thought that clearly shows the new forms that lie ready for inspiring a new school of fiction with fresh life. Outside the "Mariage de Loti" there is nothing comparable to the "Kapala Kundala" in the history of Western fiction, although the novelist and himself and many of his native admirers, see grounds for comparing the works of Bankim Babu with those of Sir Walter Scott, probably because they are outwardly historical.

A novel far surpassing "*Kapalakundala*" in realistic interest in the same novelist's "Poison Tree." This



novel has its own artistic merit, but its chief value, for English readers, lies in the life-like pictures it presents of modern Indian life and thought. With subdued satire the interested efforts of would be-social reformers are shown to be founded often on motives of self-interest, dishonesty, or immorality. The evil results which too often follow the breaking away from strict seclusion and restraints of Hindu family life under the influence of Western Education are indicated plainly. These modern movements are depicted as often leading the native more towards agnosticism and impatience of control than towards the implanting of a vigorous individuality, founded on a heightening of religious feelings, and wider views of the necessity of self-control and altruistic motives of action. It is a danger which grows graver daily, it is a movement which must be expected in the history of a nation's advance from bondage to freedom, and one to be resolutely met with a firm faith in the eternal elements underlying all enlightenment and social progress, and not with a hopelessness of a pessimistic despair. The moral itself is very simple. It deals with the same few human elements which always form the leading motive for any great creative work of universal and abiding interest. The hero, Nagendra Nath, is a wealthy landlord, aged thirty, a model amongst men, wealthy and handsome, surrounded by friends, retainers, and relations, all of whom live an ideal life of happiness through his bounty. He rejoices in the possession of a beloved and loving wife, Surja Mukhi, aged twenty-six, who moves amid the household with a

calm dignity and graceful gentleness, an ideal picture of a faithful Hindu spouse and well-educated, sensible woman. Nagendra, during a journey to Calcutta, befriends an orphan girl, Kunda, aged but thirteen—an age described as that in which all the charm of simplicity is combined with radiance of the moonbeams and scent of sweet flowers. Nagendra brings the girl to his married sister at Calcutta, but, as he seems in no hurry to depart, his wife writes playfully upbraiding him, and suggesting in jest that he should bring his new-found treasure home and marry her himself or give her to the Village School Master, who has not yet found a willing bride. The child is accordingly brought to the village and married to the School Master. This School Master, snub-nosed, conceited, and copper-coloured, is represented as an up-to-date product of an undigested surfeit of Western emancipation.

He has received an English education at a free Mission School, and planted himself amid the village community as a very mine of learned love; it was whispered abroad that he had read the "Citizen of the World" and passed in three books "Euclid." He extracted essays against idolatry, against the seclusion of women and child-marriage from the *Tattvabodhini*, and published them under his own name. He joined the local Brahma Samaj, established by the spendthrift of the neighbourhood, who had imbibed all the Western vices and abandoned all the native virtues, who drank wine from decanters with cut-glass stoppers, carried a handy flask, and ate roast mutton

and cutlets, and who, when not drunk occupied his time in encouraging the marriage of low-caste widows, so that he might pose as a local reformer. The satire is perfect, the characters satirised true to life. The new product of Western influences encouraged the infatuated schoolmaster to read papers and deliver eloquent addresses on the subject of the emancipation of women, and the moralising influence of bringing women, out into public life, but finds that although the schoolmaster can be jeered into allowing him to visit Kunda, the outraged pride of the timid beauty bursts forth in a flood of indignant tears.

Luckily for Kunda, the schoolmaster dies. The widow returns to the home of her former protector, the all-loving Nagendra. The gentle beauty of Kunda sinks deep into the heart of Nagendra whose want of self-control sows the seeds of the poison tree, whose baneful fruit must be eaten. Nagendra's wife looks on in sorrow until her husband, unable to stifle his thoughts or bear her silent reproaches, seeks to drown his feelings in drink. At length he can bear the restraint no longer. Iswara Chandra Vidyasagar has proved, from the ancient law books, that widow-marriage is allowable, although no Hindu custom. His wife hides her wounded feelings, wondering if Iswara Chandra Vidyasagar be a pandit, who then is wanting in wisdom? She sacrifices all her feeling to her great love for her husband and prepares the marriage ceremonies, but once the marriage takes place, she steals away from the happy home where she was once sole mistress. She had made her resolve to

wander as a mendicant from place to place, unable to remain at home and bear the pain of seeking Kunda claim her husband.

The suffering of Suroj Mukhi, the despair of Nagendra when he finds his once loved wife has left, and that, as a consequence his overwhelming passion for Kunda has turned so indifferent, almost to loathing, are set forth with a fulness of sympathy and emotional feeling which a native can so deeply feel and express. To its bitterest depths the novelist traces the stern course of the unrelenting destiny which decrees that the seeds of sin once sown must grow, and the fruit be reaped.

A welcome relief comes when the story breaks into somewhat laboured honour. The eager servants of Nagendra go forth with coaches and palanquins in search of their mistress, whose face they have never seen. Every good-looking and high caste woman along the road, by the bathing tanks, or river-side, is forcibly seized and brought, with cries of joy, to the unfortunate husband, to see if he can recognise among them his lost wife, so that, finally, no woman dare venture from home for fear of being brought to Nagendra. Suraj Mukhi returns not. Her husband leaves his new wife, Kunda, to mourn alone over her destiny in the now deserted home, once so full of joy and happiness.

Nagendra returns after weary wanderings to end his life in pious deeds and holy living. Kunda he is resolved never more to speak to nor to see. For her, therefore, there is only death ; the poisoned fruit must

be eaten that grew from the seed of sin. Before she dies the long-lost wife reappears, and Kunda, in her dying moments, is received as a younger sister, and sinks to rest, her hands clasping her rival's feet, supported by her husband, whose love she had once won, and whom she now knows cannot abide by her.

In Nagendra's love for Kunda the novelist declares that he wished to depict the fleeting love of passion, as sung by Kalidasa, Byron and Jaya Deva, and in his love for Suroj Mukhi, the deep love of another, as sung by Shakespeare, Valmiki and Madame de Stael.

The Bengalee novelist could not so readily shake himself free from his Eastern form of thought, and view all things from an objective point of view. The love for Kunda is still the fettering of the soul by the objects of sense; the love of the husband for his first wife is still the mystic love of the soul for God.

The wealth of the material which lies to the hand of the future great novelist of India has been virtually untouched. Bankim Chandra Chatterjea, has but led the way and indicated the material which awaits the next great artist.

He leaves us in doubt whether he is depicting life as if throbbed around him, or whether he was hemmed in his characters with a surrounding of Eastern mysticism and romantic reserve born of Western conventionality.

If Bankim Chandra Chatterjea has struck a chord which vibrates through the hearts of the many women of the zenanas in India, whose eyes must have wept bitter tears over the agony of Suroj Mukhi, deplorable



indeed and worthy of all his deep feeling as an artist, it must be the condition of a vast multitude of suffering women in the East, who have been nurtured to see their life blasted by a rival love placed by their side to rejoice their lord's heart, or that a son may be born to save their husband's soul. We are, however, left in doubt as to whether Nagendra sinned in having a second wife—he defends polygamy in the course of the story—or whether his fault lay in marrying a widow against social custom. The motive of fatality of act should have been as clear and unmistakable as it was in the "Mud Cort," where the jealousies of the two rival wives who became reconciled do not influence the action.

The same idea is further worked out in "Krishna Kanta's Will." Here the true workings of the novelist's mind are apparent; a deeper view is touched. The love of the erring husband for his wife, and the rival love by which he is infatuated typifies a struggle between a Divine love and the ever-recurring phantasmal attraction of the soul to the objects of sense, from which freedom can only be reached by centering the mind on ideal perfections.

The praise of Krishna, as a perfected man, is sung by the poet in his greatest work, the "Krishna Charitra," published in 1862, as a contribution to a Hindu revival in the ancient national religion, which Romesh Chandra Dutt describes as "the nourishing and life giving faith of the 'Upanishads,' and the 'Vedantha' and the 'Bagavat Gita,' which has been, and ever will be, the true faith of the Hindus."

Another critic gives the following comparative estimate of Bankim as an artist and novelist.

“Bankim,” says the eminent critic, “is the creator of a literature.” Or rather, is the high priest of that splendid shrine of which Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar was the glorious founder. Bankim’s school sounds as a deliberate departure from the older schools of Vidyasagar. But the feature is limited only to the surface. It does not reach the central life. The only difference which the later school maintains to the last is an air of unquestionable freedom from the devitalizing trammels of the mortmain traditions of the old Sanskrit literature. This has largely been gained through a wider acquaintance with Western ideals and a slow and steady percolation of Western thoughts. There still remains, however, that predominance of the Sanskrit element. There is the same decided predominance; and if we find anywhere some insignificant departures they are to be explained in the light of adaptations and not revolutions. But the permanency of the school of Iswar Chandra is in a large measure due to this very adaptation and the unquestionable genius of the man who effected it. This singular honour has fallen to the lot of few. No Scott nor George Elliot could claim it and even in the case of Goethe himself this was but partially true. Again, where is there in Scott that sweet psychology of Bankim? Every page of Bankim’s works glitters with truths, splendid and fascinating. It is his power of expressing the highest truths in his own quiet, hearthside way which has added immensely to the wealth and fascination of the literature of our country.

Scott has never approached the deep soul study of Bankim. I find a parallel only in a *Romola* of George Eliot. And George Eliot alone had a vision of that stern, inexorable Deity, Nemesis, which can at all be compared to the Deity of Bankim. But the heart of the latter is built more of the stuff of frail humanity, yields more of the milk of human kindness than that of George Eliot. George Eliot's conscience is like the inexorable finger of Nemesis herself : it spares none : no weakness intervenes. It weighs out the dues of men with iron scrutiny. Bankim's is no milder Deity. It deals out justice as stern and masculine. But it makes concessions : it yields to the tears of the guilty. The milk of human kindness often softens it.

But in Bankim too as in Goethe and George Eliot we have glimpses of that faint, distant glow which lights up the dark mysteries of existence. Scott gives us nothing but the surface-life of his highland compeer dressed in the antic garb of an ancient heraldry. He is at the threshold of history. He knows not the mysteries of the life at its centre. Those mysteries Bankim penetrates with a seer's eye. The inspiration of a Goethe and a George Eliot is the inspiration of Bankim too.

We can broadly divide his works into domestic and historic-domestic. His 'Bishbriksha,' 'Kristnakanta's Will,' 'Rajani,' are some of those that are purely domestic. His 'Durgeshnandini,' 'Debi Chowdhurani,' 'Chandreshkhar,' 'Rajshinha,' are some of those that fall under the latter division 'Bishbriksha' perhaps the best of all his works is the eternal seed-plot of lofty

truths. It is a work of true inspiration. His 'Krishna-kanta's Will' follows close on its heels. These are the two enduring monuments of his unique genius. The characters are living personalities and they retain life even in their memory. It is almost superfluous to point out to those who have read those works with the smallest care, the truth of the remark that they are full of truths of enduring value and contain some of the most splendid soul-analysis. In 'Rajani' we find evident traces of senile fatigue, the fatigue of a spent-up genius. The strokes of the master's pen are still as strong but the strokes themselves are few. There is one character in it, however, which serves in a great measure to counterbalance the pervasive weariness of this work. Amarnath is beyond doubt one of the best creations of Bankim's genius.

'Durgeshnandini' his earliest work, is a monument of literary genius. Considered as a piece of literature it has few equals. It has been profusely adorned with some of the most splendid pieces of landscape-painting and some of the brightest effusions of an artist's imagination. The work, taken as a whole, is a vision of beauty. It was a delightful open-sesame to the dreams of splendour of a youthful genius. The characterisation is immature. The hand of genius is sparingly visible. The romantic element has assumed predominance. There is one character, however, Ayesha, tender, sweet, and lovable which, with its unrequired sweetness, has ever attracted the hearts of its readers. In a gaudy garden-plot smiling in the garish light of day, she is like a retired, half-grown bud, which in its sweet,

twilight sadness, pines and droops in its own lone beauty.

Bankim's is a heaven-gifted genius. In his own field, he has no equal even in English literature, save that gifted woman, George Eliot. But George Eliot has not that charm of style, that fascination of the pen that our own Bankim has. She has, in fact, no style of her own. She is no master of literary finish. To Bankim belongs the unique honour of being the founder of a high style and the high-priest of a literature. Scott stands far below. He is richer than Bankim in that wonderful collection of antic heraldry. But in interpreting the language of the heart, in revealing the mysteries of dark eternity, Bankim stands supremely high. There is not in him, however, the volcanic inspiration of Victor Hugo, the frenzied eye of that inspired seer. There is not in him the quiet, far-reaching survey of Goethe, the prophetic pointing to the sore spots of humanity. Let us take him for what he really is. His was a genius of stupendous orbit. He belonged to the race of those radiant serahs who come to reveal to us visions of eternal splendour.

We do not propose to quote other appreciations. To those who do not know Bengalee, Bankim will remain but a sounding name. But it may not be extravagant to hope that some at least of the readers of this sketch will be tempted to cultivate that language, and make the acquaintance of the great creative genius of modern India.



## THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

### I

“ My motherland, I sing,  
Her splendid streams, her glorious trees,  
The zephyr from the far-off Vindyan heights,  
Her fields of waving corn,  
The rapturous radiance of her moonlit night,  
The trees in flower that flame afar,  
The smiling days that sweetly vocal are,  
The happy, blessed Motherland.  
He will by seventy million throats extolled,  
Her power twice seventy million arms uphold;  
Her strength let no man scorn.  
Thou art my head, thou art my heart,  
My life and soul art thou,  
My song, my worship, and my art,  
Before thy feet I bow,  
As Durga, scourge of all the foes,  
As Lakshmi, bowered in the flower,  
That in the water grows,  
As Bani, wisdom, power ;  
The source of all our might,  
Our every temple doth thy form unfold—  
Unequalled, tender, happy, pure,  
Of splendid streams, of glorious trees,  
My Motherland I sing,  
The stainless charm that shall endure,  
And vedant banks and wholesome breeze,  
That with her praises ring.”

*Translation by W. H. Lee,  
Late of the Indian Civil Service.*

## II

Mother, I bow to thee !  
Rich with thy hurrying streams,  
Bright with thy orchard gleams,  
Cool with thy winds of delight,  
Dark fields waving, Mother of might,  
Mother free.  
Glory of moonlight dreams,  
Over thy beaches and lordly streams ;  
Clad in thy blossoming trees,  
Mother, giver of ease,  
Laughing low and sweet !  
Mother, I kiss thy feet,  
Speaker sweet and low !  
Mother, to thee I bow.  
Who hath said thou art weak in thy lands,  
When the swords flash out in seventy million hands  
And seventy million voices roar  
Thy dreadful name from shore to shore ?  
With many strengths who art mighty and stored,  
To thee I can, Mother and Lord !  
Thou who savest, arise and save !  
To her I cry who ever her foemen drave  
Back from plain and sea  
And shook herself free.  
Thou art wisdom, thou art law,  
Thou our heart, our soul, our breath,  
Thou the love divine, the awe  
In our hearts that conquers death.  
Thine the strength that nerves the arm,  
Thine the beauty, thine the charm.

Every image made divine,  
In our temples is but thine.  
Thou art Durga, Lady and Queen,  
With her hands that strike and her sword of sheen,  
Thou art Lakshmi Lotus-throned,  
And the muse a hundred-toned.

Pure and perfect without peer,  
Mother, lend thine ear.  
Rich with thy hurrying streams,  
Bright with thy orchard gleams,  
Dark of hue, O candid-fair,  
In thy soul, with jewelled hair  
And thy glorious smile divine,  
Loveliest of all earthly lands,  
Showering wealth from well-stored hands !  
Mother, mother mine !  
Mother sweet, I bow to thee  
Mother great and Free !  
bow to thee mother  
richly-watered, richly fruited,  
cool with the winds of the south,  
dark with the crops of the harvests,  
the mother !  
her strands rejoicing in the glory of the moonlight,  
her lands clothed beautifully with her trees in  
flowering bloom,  
sweet of laughter, sweet of speech,  
the Mother, giver of boons, giver of bliss !  
Terrible with the clamorous shout of seventy  
million throats,

and the sharpness of swords raised in twice seventy  
million hands,

Who sayeth to thee, Mother, that thou art weak?  
Holder of multitudinous strength,

I bow to her who saves,  
to her who drives from her the armies of her  
foemen, the Mother.

Thou art knowledge, thou art conduct,  
thou our heart, thou our soul,  
for thou art the life in our body.

In the arm thou art might O Mother,  
in the heart, O Mother thou art love and faith.

It is thy image we raise in every temple.

For thou art Durga holding her ten weapons of war  
Kamala at play in the lotuses,  
and speech, the goddess, giver of all love,  
To thee I bow!

I bow to thee, goddess of wealth, pure and  
peerless,

Richly-watered, and richly-fruited the mother!

I bow to thee Mother dark-hued, candid,  
sweetly smiling, jewelled and adorned,  
the holder of wealth, the lady of plenty,  
the Mother.

*Translation by Babu Aurobindo Ghose.*

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(Translator's Note.—It is difficult to translate the National Anthem of Bengal into verse in another language owing to its unique union of sweetness, simple directness and high poetic force. All attempts in this direction have been failures. In order, therefore, to bring the reader unacquainted with Bengalee nearer to the exact force of original, I give the translation in prose line by line.)

(Reproduced from the Karma Yogin.)



H. H. The Late Nizam of Hyderabad.



## HIS HIGHNESS THE LATE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD

**H**IS Highness the late Nizam Sir Asaf Jah Mazaffar-ul-Mamalik Nizam-ul-Mulk Nizam-ud-Daula Nawab Mir Mahbub Ali Khan Bahadur Fateh Jung until recently the premier ruling Chief of India, was a direct descendant of the famous Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah, who between 1713 and 1743 made himself independent of the Moghul Emperors. Hyderabad State, of which he was the ruler has a revenue of 135 lakhs of rupees, and an area of some 80,000 square miles, exclusive of Berar which has been leased in perpetuity to the British Government. His Highness was born on August 18, 1866. His father His late Highness Sir Afzal-ud-Daula G.C.S.I., who died in 1861, was well-known both in India and England as a wise and far-seeing ruler. During his reign, the Sepoy Mutiny occurred and it was at once feared that His Highness would be won over by the wicked counsel given by some of his reckless advisers ; but the events showed that he was not only too shrewd for them, but also too far-seeing to cast in " his lot with men who did not understand what they heedlessly proposed. Sir Salar Jang was his trusted Prime-minister, and his unshaken loyalty was recognised by the British Government in the modification of the treaty of 1853 which was effected in 1860. By it, Osmanabad

(Naldrug) and the Raichur Doab yielding a revenue of 21 lakhs, were restored, and a debt of 50 lakhs was cancelled, while certain tracts on the left bank of the Godaveri were ceded and the Assigned Districts of Berar, yielding a revenue of 32 lakhs, were taken in trust by the British for the purposes specified in the treaty of 1853. Presents to the value of £10,000 were bestowed upon His Highness, while his minister and other noblemen were also well rewarded. His son, His late Highness Mir Mahbub Ali had inherited to no small extent, his qualities of head and heart. Being only three years old at the time of his death, a Regency was created with Sir Salar Jang as Regent and Nawab Shams-ul-Umara as co-Regent, the Resident being consulted on all important matters concerning the welfare of the State. On the death of the co-Regent in 1877, his half-brother Nawab Vikar-ul-Umara was appointed co-Administrator; but he also died in 1881 Sir Salar Jang remaining sole Administrator and Regent till his death in 1883. Of the work of Sir Salar Jang, this is not the place to dilate upon. But it may be observed that he modernised the administration, taking a personal interest in its every day work. He controlled the most important State Departments, carried out a Revenue Survey and Settlement, established Civil and Criminal Courts, placed the Postal Department on a sound basis, and improved the finances of the State, which had been greatly involved for some years past. Both his work and the spirit underlying it, not only enhanced his personal reputation as a statesman, but added to the great name of the State itself. And when he died, loudly lamented

both in England and India, he left no greater heritage than his work for, and in the State. His Highness's education had been so carefully watched by him, that he knew His Highness would wield the power to which he was heir, wisely and well.

His Highness attained his majority in 1884, and was installed by Lord Ripon, then Viceroy and Governor-General of India on February 5, 1884. Sir Salar Jang II, son of Sir Salar Jang I, was appointed Prime minister. He was proud, domineering and tactless and soon lost the confidence of his master. He was followed in 1888 by Sir Asman Jah, who the previous year had represented His Highness at Her late Majesty's Jubilee in London, and had been made K.C.I.E. He was doubtless an efficient administrator; but tried to regain "the realities of power which his predecessor had lost." In 1892, a Code known *Kanun-cha-i-Mabarik* (the Auspicious Code) was issued for his guidance, and this was followed by the establishment of a council composed of all the Ministers of the State. In 1893, Sir Vikar-ul-Umara became Minister and several changes were introduced by His Highness in the various department of the State. He was, in 1901, followed in the exalted office, by Maharajah Kishen Prasad Bahadur, a descendant of the well-known Raja Chandu Lal who was Minister to His Highnesses grandfather Nazir-ul-Daula, in 1901, since when the administration of the State has run on smooth lines, and has been more and more modernised. Perhaps the greatest event in the recent history of the State, and His Highness's reign, happened in November 1902, when the Assigned

Districts of Berar were leased in perpetuity to the British Government at an annual rental of 25 lakhs. Views diametrically opposite to each other have been held on this practical cession of the Berars. The official view has been propounded by more than one authority. "It had gradually become apparent," writes one of these, "since 1860 that the maintenance of the Hyderabad Contingent on its old footing as a separate force was inexpedient and unnecessary, and also that the administration of so small a province as Berar as a separate unit was very costly. In 1902, therefore, a fresh agreement was entered into with the Nizam. This agreement re-affirmed His Highness's rights over Berar which instead of being indefinitely 'assigned' to the Government of India, was leased in perpetuity at an annual rental of 25 lakhs; and authorized the Government of India to administer the province in such manner as it might deem desirable as well as to redistribute, reduce, re-organize and control the Hyderabad Contingent, due provision being made, as stipulated in the treaty of 1853, for the protection of His Highness's dominion. In pursuance of this agreement the Contingent ceased in March 1903, to be a separate unit and was re-organised and re-distributed as an integral part of the Indian Army." Another official authority writes to the same effect. "This agreement," he says, "which put an end to a long and at one time embittered controversy, was equally beneficial to both parties, for it provided an assured instead of a precarious source of revenue to the Nizam, while it enabled the Government of India to carry out a number

of important military and administrative reforms. It was in recognition of the conclusion of this agreement that His Highness was subsequently invested with the grand cross of the order of the Bath by the Duke of Cannaught while at Delhi." Accordingly in October 1903, Berar was transferred to the administration of the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces.

His late Highness more than once offered to the Government of India the services of his troops, and in 1887 offered a present of 60 lakhs for frontier defence. He was made G.C.S.I. in 1884, and, as already noted, G.C.B. in 1903. His Highness was much beloved by his subjects, who on more than one occasion went direct to him for the personal redress of their grievances. His Highness was a keen admirer of the fine spirit that breathes through the Queen's Proclamation, and what is more, put into practice what he had often known to have admired, as may be seen by the friendly manner in which his subjects, Hindu and Mahomedan, have lived in his territories. His Highness had travelled widely through India, and was known to have been a keen observer of men and things. A not over-friendly English critic thus spoke of him: "He is understood to be a capable man, with much natural ability and considerable force of character. He takes a great interest in educational matters and is a munificent supporter of Mahommedan teaching institutions, not merely in his own dominions but in other parts of India. He appears to be honestly desirous to do his best for his twelve millions of subjects, of whom the most part



are peasants painfully striving to squeeze a subsistence out of a hard and unfruitful soil."

During the past ten years, or roughly since the year that Colonel (now Sir David) Barr became Resident at his Court, His Highness stamped his personality on the administration of the State. "To the picturesque vagaries," as the English critic already quoted from puts it, "of self-seeking and unscrupulous scribes have succeeded measures of prosaic utility. The finances of the State flourish, famine has grown rarer, communication has been facilitated, justice has ceased to be a figure of speech or a source of bakshish, the police protects at last to some extent the people whom it once only fleeced, and while I pen these lines my ears ring with the roar of an Industrial Exhibition." His Majesty the King-Emperor visited the State, as Prince of Wales in 1906, and despite the death of his favourite daughter, which had occurred only a few days prior to the arrival, His late Highness accorded him a truly royal welcome, and assured him that his visit was "one more link, and a very strong link in the long chain of most cordial associations which binds me and my house to the British Empire." His Highness as a ruler was a personality outside his State.

His Highness materially helped the Government of India in the organization, on its present basis of the Imperial Services Corps. He also co-operated with it in the suppression of anarchical crime, and the letter he wrote in connection with it will long be remembered in this country. "If your Excellency will allow me to

speak," he said at the Minto banquet, "from my experience of 23 years as Ruler of the State, I would say that the form of any Government is far less important than the spirit in which the Government is administered. The essential thing is sympathy, on which His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales with the truly Royal instinct of his race laid so much stress. It is not sufficient merely that the Ruler should be actuated by sympathy for the subjects but it is also necessary that the people should feel convinced of the sympathy of their Rulers." These words marked him out as a statesman of the first order, and the deep impression that they produced at the time on Europeans and Indians alike showed that they recognised that in His Highness they possessed one of the shrewdest rulers in India.

His Highness died in August 1911, and in him India lost one of her best Rulers. His personal qualities endeared him to his subjects whose sorrow at his sad and sudden demise literally knew no bounds. His hospitality, his love of horses and dogs, his dignity, his forbearance, generosity and consideration for his subjects were widely known in India. He was highly learned in Persian and Urdu, in both of which he has left verses of no mean merit. He was rich in good works and feared not to say or do that which he was convinced was just and meet. But

His heart was one of those which most enamour us,  
Wax to receive, and marble to retain.

India is truly much the poorer by the death of one so great and good as His Highness the late Nizam of Hyderabad.

## PRESENT UNREST IN INDIA \*

Throughout my dominions you will not find a single man among my subjects whose disposition towards the British Government is otherwise than satisfactory; nor is there, I venture to believe, any sane man in India who is at heart disaffected towards His Most Gracious Majesty or his Government as such. Every Indian endowed with the least sense knows thoroughly well that the peace and prosperity which his country has enjoyed under the benign protection of His Majesty and His august ancestors, of whom none was more solicitous of the welfare of her Indian people than her late Majesty Queen Victoria, would disappear the moment that protection were withdrawn or weakened.

I am, therefore, of the same opinion as Your Excellency's illustrious predecessor, that the so-called unrest in certain parts of India is but skin deep, and that such unrest as does exist had been brought into being mainly by public and acrimonious discussions as to the form of Government best suited to the requirements of modern India. If Your Excellency will allow me to speak from my experience of 23 years as ruler of this State, I would say that the form of any Government is far less important than the spirit in which that Government is administered. The essential thing is the

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\* Speech delivered at the State Banquet held in the famous Chow Mahalla Palace in the City on the 9th November, by H. H. the late Nizam.

sympathy, on which H. R. H. the Prince of Wales, with the truly royal instinct of his race, recently laid so much stress. It is not sufficient merely that the rulers should be actuated by sympathy for their subjects, but it is also necessary that the people should feel convinced of the sympathy of their rulers.

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## REPLY TO THE MINTO CIRCULAR

The following is the reply of the late Highness to the Minto circular.

The Hon'ble Mr. M. F. O'Dwyer presented to me personally on the 26th August, 1909, your Excellency's esteemed Kharita of the 6th idem regarding the endeavours made by seditious people to spread their nefarious doctrines in several of the Native States of India.

2. I quite agree with Your Excellency in thinking that these doctrines are subversive of internal peace and good Government, and that the matter is one in which the interests of the Government of India and of the Indian Princes are identical. I am deeply sensible of the kind consideration with which you have taken me into your confidence and asked me to exchange opinions with Your Excellency with a view to mutual co-operation against a common danger. Once the forces of lawlessness and disorder are let loose there is no knowing where they will stop. It is true that compared with the enormous population of India the disaffected people are a very insignificant minority,

but given the time and opportunity there exists the danger of this small minority spreading its tentacles all over the country, and inoculating with its poisonous doctrines the classes and the masses hitherto untouched by this seditious movement.

3. I thank Your Excellency for telling me that in my dominions there is no serious cause for anxiety at present, and that the result is mainly due to my action in dealing with seditious manifestations. I trust I may not be considered an optimist in indulging in the hope that, under God's blessing, there will probably be no cause for anxiety in the future also. My people as a rule are contented, peaceful and law abiding, and I can say, with pardonable pride, that they are bound to me by ties of affection and loyalty. And as Your Excellency has been pleased to address me by my inherited title as the old and valued ally of the British Government, my people's loyalty to me means loyalty to the British Government also. I need hardly say that it has always been my endeavour to uphold and maintain the traditions of my house. From the very outset, my policy has been to trust my people and to show them that I trust them. I have abstained from causing them alarm by issuing manifestoes warning them against sedition. But at the same time I have not been unmindful of the existing danger; and a very strict watch has been kept over local officials, more especially over those who are close to, and might be in sympathy with, the neighbouring seditious places in British India. Orders have been issued to the Police and District Magistrates not to allow any meetings to



be held in which there was any likelihood of inflammatory speeches being made. Petty officials and other persons having a tendency to sympathise with the movement have from time to time been warned, and some of the former have been transferred, in order to break up any attempt to form a clique or combination for undesirable purposes. The head of the Educational Department has been specially directed to exercise strict supervision over teachers and students and to prevent their participation in any political demonstration whatever.

4. So far, any disaffected people coming from outside have not been able to gain a footing in my dominions. Judicious but summary action is taken under my orders in all such cases. Instances have occurred of disaffected individuals from British India arriving here, but my police have ever kept a careful watch on them and they have been promptly but quietly sent away from my territory. In matters of this kind, so far as my own dominions are concerned, I implicitly believe in working quietly but with promptitude and firmness. Believing as I do, in a policy of deportation of undesirable individuals from my dominions I need hardly say that I am in full sympathy with the Regulation of 1818 which I consider most efficacious in dealing with persons known to be given to sedition.

5. I am at one with Your Excellency in believing that no general rule or general course of action could be laid down as regards the Native States of India. The circumstances of different States are so diversified that one general policy for them all would not certainly be

desirable. I am also in thorough agreement with your views that each State should work out its own policy with reference to local conditions. But it is necessary that there should be perfect co-operation in such matters as circulating information and surveillance of individuals suspected of propagating sedition. For this purpose I would ask Your Excellency to allow your Criminal Investigation Department to correspond directly and freely on all such subjects with my Inspector-General of the District Police who may be trusted to exercise discretion and judgment in such matters. It is obvious that unless this procedure is adopted, delays are likely to occur in obtaining information as regards the arrival or departure of suspected individuals. In the same manner I will issue orders to my Police to correspond freely in such matters with the Police in British India.

6. Your Excellency has been so kind as to ask my advice in regard to measures which may prove effectual in keeping out of Native States the insidious evil of sedition, and the manner in which Your Excellency should assist towards this end. My knowledge of the conditions obtaining in different Native States in India is very limited, but if I may venture to express an opinion it would be that Your Excellency should as often as possible write to some principal Ruling Princes and consult with them as regards all important matters touching the welfare of not only the Native States but also the Indian Empire as a whole. I look upon the Native States in India as the pillars of the Empire, and I feel sure that the Ruling Princes will prove worthy of

the confidence and trust that may be reposed in them. Indeed it cannot be otherwise, because as Your Excellency rightly observes in your Kharita, the interests of the Government of India and of the Ruling Princes in India are in this respect quite identical.

7. There are, however, two or three suggestions that I would make for Your Excellency's consideration :—

(1) The Government of India as well as the Provincial Governments and Indian Durbars should as often as possible issue Press Communiques for the purpose of officially contradicting or correcting false allegations or exaggerated reports, and call upon the newspapers that publish such things to print formal contradictions or corrections as directed. It is no longer safe or desirable to treat with silent contempt any perverse statement which is publicly made because the spread of education, on the one hand, has created a general interest in the news of the country, and a section of the Press, on the other hand, deliberately disseminates news calculated to promote enmity between Europeans and Indians, or to excite hatred of Government and its officers in the ignorant and credulous minds. Official warnings to editors, publishers, proprietors and printers of the offending papers would also have a salutary effect and would probably often save the necessity of public prosecutions which may possibly do more harm than good.

(2) The Native States should prohibit all clubs, libraries and other institutions from subscribing to any papers or journals believed to be instrumental in spreading

sedition, and officials subscribing to or taking in such literature should be told that they would be looked upon with disfavour. I have myself taken the initiative in this matter and have issued orders to that effect.

(3) I am also inclined to think that itinerant agitators (often disguised as Sanyasis) are not watched as thoroughly as they should be. Such persons should be followed from province to province and regularly handed over for surveillance.

8. The experience that I have acquired within the last 25 years in ruling my State, encourages me to venture upon a few observations which I trust will be accepted in the spirit in which they are offered. I have already said that my subjects are as a rule contented, peaceful and law-abiding. For this blessing I have to thank my ancestors. They were singularly free from all religious and racial prejudices. Their wisdom and foresight induced them to employ Hindus and Muhammadans, Europeans and Parsis alike in carrying on the administration, and they reposed entire confidence in their officers, whatever religion, race, sect or creed they belonged to. Hence it followed that in the early part of the last century Raja Chundoo Lal was Minister of Hyderabad for over a quarter of a century. The two Daftardars (Record-keepers of the State) were Hindus whose descendants still enjoy the jagire, offices and honours conferred by my predecessors. Inheriting as I did the policy of my forefathers, endeavoured to follow in their footsteps. My present Minister, the highest official in the State, is, as Your Excellency is aware, a Hindu. One of my

four Moin-ul-Mahams is Mr. Casson Walker whose services have been lent to me by the Government of India. The Secretary to my Government in the Revenue Department is Mr. Dunlop who has retired from the British service, and Mr. Hankin, who is a Government of India official, is the Inspector-General of my District Police. Although I am a strict Sunni myself, some of my Muhammadan noblemen and high officers of the State are Shias, Arabs and other Muhammadan races number among my States officials, Hindus of all sects, creeds, and denominations serve in my State and many hold high positions. The Revenue administration of one half of my State is at present entrusted to two Parsis who are Subadars (Commissioners of Divisions). It is in a great measure to this policy that I attribute the contentment and well-being of my dominions. Your Excellency will, therefore, quite understand how gratified I was to learn of the wise, generous and liberal policy pursued by Your Excellency and the Secretary of State for India in giving effect to the principles, announced in the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 and solemnly reaffirmed in the King Emperor's gracious message to the Princes and Peoples of India in 1908, by appointing an Indian as a member of your Executive Council and two Indians as members of the Council of the Secretary of State. The liberal policy as also the enlargement of the Legislative Councils will, I earnestly trust, serve to allay the present unrest and to remove altogether the seditious movement which is happily confined to a very small minority.



I am a great believer in conciliation and repression going hand in hand to cope with the present condition of India which is but transitory. While sedition should be localised and rooted out sternly and even mercilessly deep sympathy and unreserved reliance should manifest themselves in all dealings with loyal subjects without distinction of creed, caste or colour. I am exceedingly glad that this view has commended itself to your Excellency and I feel sure that the Indian Empire has now entered on a new and brighter era of peace and prosperity under the benign reign of His Majesty the King Emperor.

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Sir Syed Ahmed Khan.

## SIR SYED AHMED KHAN

**P**ERHAPS there is no greater Moslem name known to modern India than that of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, religionist, reformer and rebuilder of Islam in India. Syed Ahmed was born on April 17, 1817, at Delhi, during the decadent days of Moghul rule. He claimed direct descent from the Prophet Muhammad and his grandfather, Syed Hadi, was a noble at the Court of Alamgir II. His father, Mir Taqui is believed to have refused the post of Minister to Akbar II, but he died while his son was yet young. Ahmed, therefore, owed all that was best in him to his mother, an uncommon, talented lady. Under her careful training, he became proficient in Arabic and Persian and the marked first hand knowledge, he, in later times, showed in his controversial writings, with Mullahs and professed Orientalists, may be traced to the grounding he obtained at his period of his life. In 1839 when he was about 22, he joined as Naib Munshi to Sir Robert N. C. Hamilton, then Commissioner of Agra, and afterwards well-known as Resident at Indore, and by his services during the Mutiny. Two years later in 1841, he was appointed Munsiff of Mainpuri, in the present United Provinces, from where he was transferred to Delhi (then not yet transferred to Punjab) in 1846 as Sadr Amin. During the nine years he stayed here, he patiently studied the

historical remains of the great Imperial City and wrote a descriptive account of it. It was translated into English in part by Mr. Roberts, then Collector of Delhi, and into French by M. Garcinde Tassy, the well-known Orientalist in 1861, and has largely been drawn upon by subsequent writers on the archæology of the great Empire City. The Royal Asiatic Society recognised its worth and conferred on its author its Membership in 1864. He was in 1855, transferred to Bijnour, where during the Mutiny year, he saved many English lives. What he had seen and what he had heard during that calamitous period enabled him in 1858 to write an Urdu pamphlet on the *Causes of the Indian Revolt*, subsequently translated by Sir Auckland Colvin and Lieutenant-Colonel Graham, the latter of whom subsequently became his biographer. This booklet is a manly protest against the mischievous attacks that were levelled against Indian character by persons who little understood what the Mutiny of 1858 meant. Syed Ahmed essayed, successfully we think, to prove that it was the result of ignorance on the part of the Government of the discontents of the people and soldiery, and of the people of the intentions and acts of the Government. His analysis was piercing, his language telling and his reasoning convincing. But it is difficult to say how far it influenced public opinion. It was first published in 1863, when the principal evil it complained of—non-admission of an Indian into the Legislative Councils of India—had been rectified by the Act of 1863. However, the pamphlet is not without its own interest. It shows the first yearnings

in the Indian breast, under British rule, for representative institutions. "It is from the voice of the people only," says he in one place, "that Government can learn whether its projects are likely to be well-received. The voice of the people can alone check errors in the bud, and warn us of the dangers before they burst upon and destroy us." "I do not wish to enter," he says at another place, "into the question as to how the ignorant and uneducated natives of Hindustan could be allowed to share in the deliberations of the Legislative Council or as to how they should be selected to form an assembly like the English Parliament. All I wish to prove is that such a step is not only advisable, but absolutely necessary, and that the disturbances are due to the neglect of such a measure." And it seems an irony of fate that it should have fallen to such an one as this to oppose the introduction of the representative element as proposed by the Indian National Congress, and the Congress itself which did work, which, perhaps, under other circumstances, he would have acknowledged to be a necessary institution for India. Therein he showed a weakness that has militated not a little against the harmonious evolving of a nation in India, for the creation of which he confessedly worked hard.

If Syed Ahmed failed there, he did much to purge Muhammadan social and religious life of many self-inflicted ills from which it was suffering. His transfer to Ghazipur about 1862, marks an eventful period in his life's history. While there he founded the Scientific Society in 1863, under whose auspices a number of



English works were translated into Urdu. In 1869, he accompanied his son to England, and while there first conceived the idea of establishing an institution after the Oxford and Cambridge University Colleges. On his return to India in 1871, he began the *Social Reformer*, in which he advocated the religious and social reformation of his community. He hit hard at many old and cherished institutions, and the opposition offered may better be imagined than described. The Mullahs combined against him and treated him as a heretic; and indeed, they even went so far (it is said) as to declare that his assassination would be a praiseworthy act. They passed the edict of ex-communication against him,—that last refuge of defeated orthodoxy—and even sent special men to secure authenticated *futwahs* of *Kufor* (infidelity) against him. It is not known how far this attitude of orthodoxy was due to his social views but the following may be taken as representing intelligent Muhammadan opinion on the subject. "Change of customs," said Mr. Yusuf Ali, I.C.S. at a London meeting, "was a contributory cause of the bitterness with which Sir Syed Ahmed was assailed, but the main reason was on account of his theological views. It was because Sir Syed adopted opinions which were in the eyes of many Muhammadans absolutely heretical, if not anti-Moslem, that their great hatred of him arose. When he was last in Lucknow, he said to a Moulvie connected with the most pronounced anti-Aligarh organisation, 'why is it you and your party so strongly object to English education or to education?' He replied, 'we

don't object to English education or to your wearing European clothes ; what we do object to is that you learn natural theology ; that you try to interpret the Koran in a way that we cannot follow ; that you throw aside the authority of the commentators, and take your stand upon the text as interpreted by your own intelligence.' That expression explained the line of cleavage between the Aligarh School and the Old School.' Though he preached what has been quaintly termed "Broad Church Muhammadanism," he was by no means a revolutionary in social or religious matters. He was, in some respects, even a rigid conservative. He was against educating Muhammadan girls in public schools ; he was against change of dress and demeanour amongst Muhammadan women ; and he was, as may be inferred after that, against intermarriages between Muhammadans and Europeans. His religious views appear to have given even more offence to his orthodox co-religionists than his social habits of keeping an open table and dining with European gentlemen. His "Muhammadan commentary on the Bible," in particular, was singled out by some of them for vituperative abuse. It is possible his rationalism gave them offence ; for one discourse at least (the seventh) has been considered worth while reprinting by the S. P. C. K. for its own purposes. Syed Ahmed, on the other hand, had to contend against Christian prejudices and misunderstanding of the religion he so dearly loved. His *Essays on the Life of Mahomed*, based on original research conducted in the archives of the British Museum, and published in 1870, is a closely reasoned answer to Si

William Muir's well-known life of the prophet of Arabia. He also wrote a spirited reply to Sir W. W. Hunter's not less known work, *the Indian Mussalmans are they bound in conscience to rebel against the Queen ?*

In 1876, he retired from Government service, as Sub-ordinate Judge. He now centered all his thoughts on the establishment of a Central Muhammadan Institution at Aligarh, which he chose for its location. Aligarh is now known chiefly through it ; and it owes its origin, development, and unique character to the inspiring genius of one man—Syed Ahmed Khan. The origin of the Institution is to be sought in his desire to render fit his co-religionists for taking their place in the Indian political sphere. “ The admissions of Indians,” he said in one of his discourses, “ to the Supreme Legislative Council is a beginning of the advancement of India. You remember my premonition that the day is not far off when I trust that the Council will be composed of representatives from every Division or District and that the laws will be enacted by you and abided by you also. So ponder well how necessary it is for the people to advance in education and experience . . . . The object (of this discourse) is to inculcate on your minds the great fact that Her Majesty wishes all her subjects to be treated alike irrespective of their religion, race, or colour and has opened the doors for all ; the only way to avail ourselves of the great opportunity is to advance ourselves in arts and sciences.” Mark the last sentence ; that is the keystone of the educational arch of Syed Ahmed Khan Bahadur. Indeed, this

has been openly avowed and admitted. "The Anglo-Oriental College," one authority says "differs from most other colleges in being the expansion of a political rather than a purely educational impulse. To this feeling, the feeling that national interests depend upon the principle it asserts, is due to the support it has received and the extreme interest with which it is watched, not only by the advanced school of Muhammadanism but by the British Government." Two cardinal principles, according to the same authority, "differentiate this college from other public educational establishments in India, religious instruction in the Moslem faith being part of the curriculum; the system modelled on that of Oxford or Cambridge, the students living together and enjoying a healthy college life." These were the purposes and these the principles upon which the college was established in 1875. In 1876, Syed Ahmed settled down at Aligarh and in 1877, Lord Lytton laid the foundation stone of the present buildings. The college has since then flourished under the care of principals like Beck and Morrison. Its boarding homes accommodate about 1,000 students, and its football and cricket teams have won deserved renown in India. In working out the details of the scheme for the College, it seems necessary to add here, he was ably aided by his son, the distinguished Justice Mahmood. The building is modelled on an Oxford or Cambridge college, and as far as possible it is run on the methods and system of an English public school. According to Mr. Theodore Morrison, it is a Moslem Eaton," though this designation is admitted by some to be too

grandiose to describe the Aligarh Institute, "yet," according to him, it "emphasises the right point." Its real merit is that of a residential school; but as he observes, "the endowment is small, the Moslem community is poor, Aligarh sadly wanting in the opulent appointments of Eaton." Since this opinion was expressed by him, there has been set on foot a movement to convert the College into a University. His Highness the Aga Khan expressed the Moslem wish when he declared at Delhi in 1903 these words: "We want Aligarh to be such a home of learning as to command the same respect as schools at Berlin or Oxford, Leipsic or Paris. Above all, we want to create for our people an intellectual and moral capital, a City which shall be the home of educated ideas and pure ideals, and which shall hold up to the world a noble standard of the justice and virtue and purity of our beloved faith." No greater memorial than that could be raised to the genius that originally conceived the worth of such an Institution.

A man like that could not but favourably impress Government. While in England, he had been presented to Her Majesty the late Queen, and had been invested with the C.S.I. by the Duke of Argyll and chosen an Honorary Member of the London Athenæum. He was nominated a member of the N.W.P. (now U.P.) Legislative Council about the time he founded the college, and in 1878, he was made, by Lord Lytton, a member of the Imperial Legislative Council. In 1881, Lord Ripon re-nominated him, and he took opportunity to get the Vaccination and the Kazi Acts



passed. He also supported the Ilbert Bill, but opposed the Self-Government Bill, which for the first time, estranged Hindu sentiment from him.

"But, though unusually liberal-minded," says an English critic in regard to this aspect of character, "with regard to those of his own faith, Syed Ahmed was decidedly intolerant when it was a question of giving Hindus, and especially Bengalis, some share in Municipal Government, and when he was a member of Lord Ripon's Council he did his utmost to prevent the adoption of the system of popular elections to Municipal Councils." He was nominated by Lord Ripon a member of the famous Education Commission of 1882, a position he had to resign subsequently. His place, however, was taken by his son, the late Mr. Justice Mahmood, who, next to Syed Ahmed, had taken the most conspicuous, though largely silent, part in founding the Aligarh College and laying down the principles on which it should be worked. In 1886, he founded the Muhammadan Educational Conference, which has now become a regular annual gathering of all Muhammadans for propagating Aligarh ideas. In 1887, he was nominated a Member of the Public Service Commission by Lord Dufferin, in which capacity he pleaded for the now discarded Statutory Civil Service.

Despite the fact that he had strenuously opposed the introduction of the principle of representation into Indian political institutions, Syed Ahmed retained at this time the good will and friendship of Hindus. These joined his co-religionists in welcoming him in the Punjab, when he visited that Province in 1884 on a

tour for collecting funds for the Aligarh College. His replies are worth reading even at this moment for the statesmanlike spirit they breathe. "We (Hindus and Moslems) should try to become one in heart and soul and act in unison; if united we can support each other. If not, the effect of one against the other would tend to the destruction and downfall of both. In old historical books and traditions you will have read and heard, and we see it even now, that all the people inhabiting one country are designated by the term "nation." The different tribes of Afghanistan are termed one nation, and so are the miscellaneous hordes peopling Iran.....Hindus and Muhammadans, brethren, do you people any other country than Hindustan? Do you not inhabit the same land? Are you not burned and buried on the same soil? Do you tread the same ground and live upon the same soil? Remember that the words Hindu and Mahomedan are only meant for religious distinction—otherwise all persons, whether Hindu or Mahomedan, even the Christians who reside in this country are all in this particular respect belonging to one and the same nation. Then all these different sects can only be described as one nation; they must each and all unite for the good of the country which is common to all." That is an opinion that appears again and again in his speeches. But he gave a rude set back to it when he opposed the Indian National Congress in 1887, which has since its birth, now nearly thirty years ago, pleaded for and in the interests of a common Indian Nationality. When the disillusionment came, its work was complete. It shook Hindu faith to the core in

Syed Ahmed, from whom not a few Indians in the North had learnt their first political lessons. Since that day the "Aligarh party" has been a disturbing element in Indian politics, and the welding of the Indian peoples into a Nation—which Syed Ahmed had so much at heart—has been rendered more and more difficult. Since his time too, the cult of Hindu and Moslem has been utilised for purposes which Syed Ahmed, if he had lived, would have been the first to deplore and declaim against. The comely Indian Maiden of two eyes has given place to the jealous second wife and the results have been truly disastrous. It would be unphilosophical to hold Syed Ahmed responsible for all these consequences. But how far a false move, a wrong step, especially in politics, may lead to is best illustrated by them. What led Syed Ahmed to change his front in 1888? That is an interesting question, but too difficult to answer. Contemporary literature (mostly controversial, and highly controversial too) is too dangerous a guide to adopt wholesale. But this much seems fairly deducible from it: that Syed Ahmed lacked, as a politician, judgment. He cherished better than he acted; he spoke better than he did; and designed better than he built. His failing has become the failing of his co-religionists and the more the pity. Contemporary Hindu politicians who had so far followed his lead, set down his conversion to Anglo-Indian influence. It is difficult to say what truth there may be in this. A cautious critic may admit that action and inter-action had done its work, about this time, with Syed Ahmed. He had by his free social habits imperceptibly imbibed

the Anglo-Indian spirit in politics, and as an English writer has candidly put it, "this attitude of opposition to the Hindu recommended him all the more to Anglo-Indian sympathies." Of course, Syed Ahmed was hardly conscious of the change that had come over him, but he was none the less strong in his conviction when he declared himself against the Congress. We have here the key to the idolising of Syed Ahmed by Anglo-Indians. Government gazetted him K.C.S.I. in 1889. He richly deserved the honour, despite his opposition to the Congress. Personally he was a man of extreme courtesy combined with dignity of bearing. He spoke well, wrote vigorously, argued closely, and worked with heart and soul for the work he loved. Some of his phrases will live long in the vocabulary of "the Nation" he loved so well and spoke so sensible about.

He was a man, take him for all in all,  
I shall not look upon his like again.

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Extracts from the speeches and writings of the  
late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan

I

THE SEPOY MUTINY

As regards the rebellion of 1857, the fact is, that for a long period, many grievances had been rankling in the hearts of the people. In course of time a vast store of explosive material had been collected. It wanted but the application of a match to light it, and that match was applied by the Mutinous Army.

The original cause of the outbreak was the non-admission of a native as a member into the Legislative Council.

I believe that this Rebellion owes its origin to one great cause to which all others are but secondary branches so to speak of the parent stem. I do not found my belief on any speculative grounds or any favourite theory of my own. For centuries many able and thoughtful men have concurred in the views I am about to express.

Most men, I believe, agree in thinking that it is highly conducive to the welfare and prosperity of Government; indeed it is essential to its stability that the people should have a voice in its Councils. It is from the voice of the people only that Government can learn whether its projects are likely to be well-received. The voice of the people can alone check errors in the bud, and warn us of the dangers before they burst upon, and destroy us. . . . .



To form a Parliament from the natives of India is of course out of the question. It is not only impossible but useless. There is no reason however why the natives of the country should be excluded from the Legislative Councils, and here it is that you come upon the one great root of all this evil. Here is the origin of all the troubles that have befallen Hindustan. . . .

The evils which resulted to India from the non-admission of natives into the Legislative Council of India were various. Government could never know the inadvisability of the laws and regulations which it passed. It could never hear as it ought to have heard the voice of the people on such a subject. The people had no means of protesting against what they might feel to be a foolish measure or of giving public expression to their own wishes. But the greatest mischief lay in this that the people misunderstood the views and intentions of Government. They misapprehended every act and whatever law was passed was misconstrued by men who had no share in the framing of it, and hence no means of judging of its spirit. At length the Hindustanees fell into the habit of thinking that all the laws were passed with a view to degrade and ruin them, and to deprive them and their fellows of their religion . . . . . I do not wish to enter here into the question as to how the ignorant and uneducated natives of Hindustan could be allowed to share in the deliberations of the Legislative Council; or as to how they should be selected to form an assembly like the English Parliament. They are knotty points. All I wish to prove here is that such a step is not only advisable, but

absolutely necessary, and that the disturbances are due to the neglect of such a measure.

The outbreak of the rebellion proceeded from the following five causes :—

1. Ignorance on the part of the people by which I mean misapprehension of the intentions of Government

2. The passing of such laws and regulations and forms of procedure as jarred with the established customs and practice of Hindustan and the introduction of such as were in themselves objectionable.

3. Ignorance on the part of the Government of the condition of the people; of their modes of thought and life; and of the grievances through which their hearts were becoming estranged.

4. The neglect on the part of our Rulers of such points as were essential to the good Government of Hindustan.

5. The bad management, and disaffection of the Army.

I would here say that I do not wish it to be understood that the views of the Government were in reality such as have been imputed to them. I only wish to say that they were misconstrued by the people, and that this misconception hurried on the rebellion. Had there been a native of Hindustan in the Legislative Council, the people would never have fallen into such errors.

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## II

## HINDU-MAHOMEDAN PROBLEM

We, Hindus and Mahomedans, should try to become one heart and soul and act in unison, if united, we can support each other. If not, the effect of one against the other would tend to the destruction and downfall of both. (Cheers.) In old historical books and traditions you will have read and heard, and we see it even now, that all the people inhabiting one country are designated by the term one *nation*. The different tribes of Afghanistan are termed one nation and so are the miscellaneous hordes peopling Iran, distinguished by the term Europeans, though, abounding in variety of thoughts and religions, are still known as members of one nation, though people of other countries also do come and settled with them, but being mixed together they are called members of one and the same nation. So that from the oldest times the word nation is applied to the inhabitants of one country, though they differ in some peculiarities which are characteristic of their own. Hindu and Mahomedan brethren, do you people any country other than Hindustan? Do you not inhabit the same land? Are you not burned and buried on the same soil? Do you not tread the same ground and live upon the same soil? Remember that the words Hindu and Mahomedan are only meant for religious distinction—otherwise all persons, whether Hindu or Mahomedan, even the Christians who reside in this country, all in this particular respect belonging to one and the same nation. (Cheers.) Then all these

different.sects can only be described as one nation; they must each and all unite for the good of the country which is common to all.

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### III

#### THE BENGALLEES

Even granting that the majority of those composing this Association are Hindus, still I say that this light has been diffused by the same whom I call by the epithet of Bengalees. I assure you that Bengalees are the only people in our country whom we can properly be proud of, and it is only due to them that knowledge, liberty and patriotism have progressed in our country. I can truly lay that really they are the head and crown of all the different communities of Hindustan. \* \*

I myself was fully cognizant of all those difficulties which obstructed my way, but notwithstanding these I heartily wished to serve my country and my nation faithfully. In the word Nation I include both Hindus and Mahomedans because that is the only meaning which I can attach to it. \* \*

With me it is not so much worth considering what is their religious faith, because we do not see anything of it. What we do see is that we inhabit the same land, are subject to the rule of the same Governors, the fountains of benefits for all are the same, and the pangs of famine also we suffer equally. These are the different grounds upon which, I call both those races which inhabit India by one word, *i.e.*, *Hindu*, meaning

to say that they are the inhabitants of Hindustan. While in the Legislative Council I was always anxious for the prosperity of this nation.

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#### IV

### REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTIONS FOR INDIA

The system of representation by elections means the representations of the views and interests of the majority of the population, and, in countries where the population is composed of one race and one creed it is no doubt the best system that can be adopted. But, my Lord, in a country like India, where caste distinctions still flourish, where there is no fusion of the various races, where religious distinctions are still violent, where education in its modern sense has not made an equal or proportionate progress among all the sections of the population, I am convinced that the introduction of the principle of election, pure and simple, for representation of various interests on the Local Boards and District Councils, would be attended with evils of greater significance than purely economic considerations. So long as differences of race and creed, and the distinctions of caste form an important element in the socio political life of India, and influence her inhabitants in matters connected with the administration and welfare of the country at large, the system of election, pure and simple, cannot be safely adopted. The larger community would totally override the



interests of the smaller community, and the ignorant public would hold Government responsible for introducing measures which might make the differences of race and creed more violent than ever.

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## V

## ANGLO-INDIAN OFFICIALS OLD AND NEW

Contempt is an ineradicable wrong. Being treated contemptuously sinks deep into a man's heart, and although uninjured by the same as to his worldly goods, he still becomes an enemy. The wound rankles deep and cannot be healed. That given by a sword can be healed but that inflicted by a contemptuous word can *not*.....

Now in the first years of the British Rule in India, the people were heartily in favour of it. This good feeling the Government has now forfeited and the natives very generally say that they are treated with contempt. A native gentleman is in the eyes of any petty Official, as much lower than that Official as that official esteems himself lower than a Duke. The opinion of many of these Officials is that no native can be a gentleman.

However good the intentions of Government with regard to its subjects may be, unless these same Officials give practical proof thereof by kind treatment of the natives, the people will not believe in them. Theory and practice are not one and the same. In these days, or rather within the last few years the feeling of

Officials towards natives is not nearly so favourable as was formerly the case. In olden days natives were treated with honour and in a friendly manner by these Officials, and consequently to use a native expression, "They carried their (natives') hearts in their hands."



Sir Gurudas Banerjee.

## SIR GOOROODAS BANERJEE

THERE are few living Bengalee worthies more highly or more universally esteemed in or outside Bengal than Sir Gooroodas Banerjee. Learned though he is, it is his *character* which really compels respect. He is a man with a conscience. It is said that he almost always carries a copy of the *Gita* in his pocket, and true it is that there are few men in India at present whose lives have been more consciously moulded by its principles. When he was practising at the Bar it was his glory that he never sold his soul for lucre. His private life is pure to spotlessness. His life is remarkable not merely for its purity but also for its high standard of public duty. Though in the evening of life his interest in all matters of public weal is unceasing, and since his retirement from the Bench there has not been a single important public meeting at Calcutta to which his presence has not lent weight and dignity. Of his services to the cause of 'national education' we shall speak in the sequel. His public services and everything else pale before the one element in his character which outshines all the rest, its *sweetness*. Sir Gooroodas is one of those simple, guileless, and child-like men of whom we cannot think that they have any enemies. And yet the child-likeness is in his case combined with firmness. It once happened that Sir Gooroodas had to speak at a meeting after Lord Curzon who was the principal speaker of the

evening. Lord Curzon with his usual eloquence dwelt on the blessings of British rule in India and spoke as if amongst other things England had saved India from savagery in the medical art. The remarks of Lord Curzon so grated upon the ears of Sir Gooroodas that he emphatically repudiated them when the time came for him to speak and assured his audience that medical science had been developed to a very high degree in Ancient India. Again, Sir Gooroodas not finding himself in agreement with his colleagues on the Universities Commission appointed by Lord Curzon, did not take things "lying down" but wrote an emphatic minute of dissent. We have mentioned these two instances to show that the inoffensiveness of Sir Gooroodas is not by any means weakness. What is perhaps even more remarkable in him than all this is that he has not discarded the habits and customs of his community. He has the reputation of being the most orthodox educated Hindu in Bengal. But there need be no fear that his orthodoxy is reactionary or in any wise opposed to the forces of progress. He thus expressed himself at a recent meeting in Calcutta:—

"Thus, though Hinduism has certain eternal and unchanging features, there is no fear of its being opposed to progress. What then are these permanent features and unchanging ideals of Hindu life and thought? They are not mere matters of ritual and dogma, important as these may be for disciplinary purposes, but they rise above ritual and dogma, and concern the spirit in man. They are on the theoretical



side, a firm living faith that life is not a scramble for the transitory good things of the earth but is a struggle for the attainment of spiritual good, and on the practical side, the leading of a life of cheerful self-abnegation and devotion to the performance of duty regardless of reward for the service of humanity. These being the ideals which a Hindu university will inculcate, there need be no apprehension in the mind of even the most radical reformer that such a university will be antagonistic to progress. While aiding spiritual advancement a Hindu university will give all due attention to technical and industrial education for serving humanity in attaining material progress. For no one feels more keenly than the Hindu that exclusive devotion of attention to things spiritual to the utter neglect of the physical side of creation has brought about the lamentably backward material condition in which we are."

He thus believes that India has in the past pursued spiritual interests to the serious detriment of material, and that the balance between the two ought to be much more harmonious than it has hitherto been. Towards the realisation of such a future for India Sir Gooroodas labours to the best of his lights. The life of such a man, learned, simple, pious, God-fearing, unselfish, ought to be a lesson and a reminder, an example and an inspiration to Indian youth.

He was born on the 26th January 1844, at Nari-keldanga in the suburbs of Calcutta, in a Brahman family of no great worldly means. His father was as poor as he was pious and learned in Sanskrit. Indeed

both his parents were great in the true wealth of the Brahman, piety and purity. It is said that the father used to take the child on his lap and recite verses from the Gita. But the father did not live to see his son's career of distinction. He died when his son was still a child, leaving his family in very straitened circumstances indeed. But the mother on whom the task of bringing up the child now devolved was a woman of great sweetness and force of character, and the gentle but firm touch of her hand has been in no mean degree responsible for the character of her distinguished son. We have the son's testimony itself to the care with which she brought him up. Speaking at a recent meeting at Calcutta, Sir Gooroodas said: "What boy is there who takes to his books without compulsion? .....I myself required all a mother's anxious compulsion and rebuke to take to my lessons." How many of us can guess what a passion of tender feeling towards his mother speaks in these simple words! It has been well remarked that the love of their mothers has been a passion with the great men of India as much as with humble folk. And Sir Gooroodas cherishes his mother's memory with passionate devotion. She lived to see her son a Judge of the Calcutta High Court, and when she died in 1889, so severe was the shock to our hero that for some time he was actually prostrated.

¶ The boy was sent for his first schooling to a Pathasala of the old type. Very recently Sir Gooroodas had occasion to indulge in some interesting reminiscences of his Pathasala days. In answer to some amiable critics

of the Elementary Education Bill who protested that Brahman boys would refuse to sit with non-Brahman pupils in free primary schools, he said:

“ Well, I happen to belong to the Brahmin caste (Hear, hear), though I am a very unworthy member of that class (Cries of No ! no !), I can recall to mind what happened more than half a century ago when I was a boy—a Brahmin by attending a Pathasala (primary school in the suburbs of Calcutta). In that Pathasala I set side by side with an oilman’s son ; and again I remember he was more advanced than I in Pathasala reading and I did not feel the slightest hesitation in taking lessons from him (Loud applause). If more than half a century ago that was tolerated, can there be any shadow of objection to a measure like this on such grounds at the present day ? This reminds me, and I ask you to remember, that though Mr. Gokhale’s Bill appears to be original, it will be really nothing more than a revival of a state of things which existed in indigenous India more than half a century ago.”

After a bright career at school and in college Mr. Gooroodas Banerjee took his M.A. Degree in Mathematics in the year 1865, and was soon after appointed Lecturer in Mathematics in the Presidency College, Calcutta. In the following year he took the B.L. Degree heading the list of successful candidates, and got himself enrolled on the Bar of the Calcutta High Court. Sometime after he went to the Berhampore College as Law Lecturer and joined the Bar of the District. He returned to the Calcutta High Court in 1872, and in 1876 passed the Honours Examination

in Law. In the year following he obtained the degree of Doctor of Laws. Being appointed Tagore Law Lecturer in 1878, he took for his subject the "Hindu Law of Marriage and Sridhan," and his lectures thereon still form a standard work. Equipped with such legal learning, he soon made his mark at the Bar. But be it said to his credit, that he never bowed the knee to Bar but studiously preserved an incorruptible standard of professional honour and integrity. He never forgot that there were higher things than money. He at any rate convincingly demonstrated that purity and the legal profession need not be mutually incompatible. Such a man was bound to win widespread recognition, and it was no wonder that when Justice Cunningham retired from the Bench of the Calcutta High Court, Sir Gooroodas (Mr. Gooroodas as he then was) was appointed to the vacancy.

Of his career on the bench it need only be said that it was marked by that passion for justice and truth which forms the key-note of his character. The junior members of the Bar found an ideal Judge in one who was ever so inoffensive. When duty required it, he was not slow to differ from his colleagues and write dissentient judgments. On his retirement he was knighted.

Sir Gooroodas has all his life taken a deep interest in educational matters. In fact he has made the subject of education his special study, and his reputation as an educationist is to-day second to none in India. He has published a book entitled "Thoughts on Educa-

tion." He was appointed a Fellow of the Calcutta University in 1879, and has been twice Vice-Chancellor. The Calcutta University has owed many a reform to his initiative and persistence. When Lord Curzon appointed the Universities Commission the presence of Sir Gooroodas on it was one of its redeeming features. But what can one man do against so many? What one man could do he did, he wrote an emphatic Minute of Dissent.

But it is in connection with the cause of National Education that Sir Gooroodas has done the best part of his life's work. He has been the life and soul of the National Council of Education, organised and constituted at Calcutta in 1906. He it was who delivered the inaugural speech of the National Council at a great meeting held in the Town Hall of Calcutta. In it he justified the necessity of the new educational movement and outlined the lines along which it would be conducted. He pointed out that foreign culture was imperatively necessary to India, but that its place should not be at the beginning but at the end of the educational career. The critics of the National Education Movement will do well to peruse it.

A word as to the views that Sir Gooroodas holds in political and social matters. In his younger days before he had been trammelled by office, Sir Gooroodas was a striking figure on the Congress platform. He is no sham and we may take it that his heart is with the National Movement, however abhorrent to his tender nature some of its aberrations may be. In matters social Sir Gooroodas is a conservative. He does not



seem to believe in inter dining, razing of cast, and all the rest of the panaceas, and yet his heart is tender as a flower.

Sir Gooroodas was for sometime a member of the Bengal Legislative Council. Since the death of Bankim Chander Chatterjee he has been the president of the Literary Section of the Calcutta University Institute.

He is still in the best of health and takes a good long walk every day. The icy hand of old age has not laid its touch on his physical or mental powers. He is a force making for righteousness and purity of life. May he live long!

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## NATIONAL EDUCATION

### STATEMENT OF OBJECTS

The objects of the Bengal National Council of Education, as stated in its Memorandum of Association, are, amongst other things,

(1) To impart Education, Literary and Scientific as well as Technical and Professional, on national lines and exclusively, under national control, not in opposition to, but standing apart from, the existing system of Primary, Secondary and Collegiate Education attaching special importance to a knowledge of the country, its literature, history and philosophy, and designed to incorporate with the best oriental ideals of life and thought the best assimilable ideals of West;

(2) to promote the study chiefly of such branches of the arts and sciences as are best calculated to develop the material resources of the country and satisfy its pressing wants;

(3) to provide for denominational religious education subject to certain conditions;

(4) to create and maintain a high standard of proficiency and to enforce strict discipline in accordance with the best traditions of the country;

(5) to impart and facilitate the imparting of education ordinarily through the medium of the vernaculars, and for that purpose to prepare and encourage the preparation of suitable text books in the vernaculars in arts and sciences;

(6) to create and maintain a high standard of qualification, intellectual as well as moral, in teachers, and found and maintain professorships and fellowships and

(7) to provide and arrange for meetings and conferences to promote and advance the cause of education.

It may not be out of place here to say a few words to explain why these objects are deemed necessary or desirable, and how they are intended to be attained.

### *1. Education on National Lines*

In relation to the first mentioned object, there may be misconceptions which should be removed at the very outset. It may be said that though love of one's own country and one's own nation is laudable, yet education should not be limited by consideration of nationality, but should proceed upon a cosmopolitan basis. This

may be true to a certain extent, and so far as it is true, the National Council accepts it by expressly providing for the incorporation of the best assimilable ideals of Western life and thought with our own. But though the assimilation of foreign ideals is desirable in the later stages of mental growth in the earlier stages, such assimilation is not possible, and any attempt to force it on, will retard instead of accelerating the healthy development of the mind. Every student, when commencing his school education, brings with him in addition to his outfit of language the importance of which should be separately considered, his stock of thoughts and sentiments, the gift of his nation, which the teacher, instead of ignoring and hastily displacing, should try to utilize and gradually improve. Want of due regard for his elementary principle is, I think, one of the main reasons why the existing system of English education in this country has failed to produce satisfactory results. Profiting by past experience, and proceeding on *a priori* grounds, the National Council has accordingly deemed it not only desirable but necessary to resolve upon imparting education on national lines, and attaching special importance to a knowledge of the country, its literature, its history, and its philosophy. But while feeling convinced that there are defects in the existing system of education and seeking to avoid them, we do not ignore the benefits received from it; and the education to be imparted by the National Council of education is intended to stand apart from but not in opposition to the existing system.

Defective as that system may be, it has helped the

spread of education, and it is because it has been tried that we are placed in a position to find out its defects and devise means of reform. The time for change of methods has certainly arrived. One party thinks that by raising the standard of education and increasing the severity of examination tests so as more largely and more effectively to exclude the less fit from the field of work, and by making the controlling body less influenced by the popular element which is supposed to be averse to the enforcement of any stringent measures, all that is needful will be secured. There is another party, including many, if not all, of the members of the National Council of Education, who believe that the defects in the existing system of education, lie deeper and require more radical but less stringent measures of reform; and who while equally anxious to raise the height of our educational fabric, are for broadening its base at the same time, so that those seeking education may have what they are fitted for, and none but the absolutely unfit may be excluded from the benefits of education.

I view the matter in its purely educational aspect, and I deem it undesirable as it is unnecessary to discuss the question of Government policy, or to dwell upon the causes that have led to the establishment of the National Council of Education. I would only remark that none need be under any apprehension that the National Council of Education is antagonistic to any one or opposed to the interests of other educational institutions. We shall certainly teach our pupils to love their country and their nation, but we shall never

tolerate in them, much less, teach them, want of love for others; for we devoutly believe in the principle, often lost sight of by many in the elation of prosperity or under the exasperation of adversity, that true self-love is incompatible with want of love for any fellow-man, and that true self-interest can never be secured by injury to the legitimate interests of others.

There is ample field for educational work, and ample scope for trial of new systems. Only a very small section of the population of the country is receiving education now, and that education is given under one uniform system all throughout. An educational institution proceeding on new lines may at least claim a fair trial. Moreover unhealthy competition must be most unlikely in this case. Our college and school have the rare good fortune of being supported by endowments, and they will not have to depend upon fees from students.

While thus disavowing all intention of antagonism and rivalry, we confidently hope that this institution will prove a rival of other educational institutions in this sense that its intrinsic merits may, Heaven willing, enable it to show satisfactory results. But then where is the harm? We claim no monopoly of methods. If our methods are found efficacious, they may be adopted by others and then all rivalry will disappear.

The question might be incidentally asked why, if there is no rivalry, the Council does not utilise any of the existing colleges and schools by granting them pecuniary aid. The answer is simple. They all follow



the system sanctioned by the Universities and are not prepared to adopt our scheme.

## 2. *Scientific and Technical Education*

Our second object, namely the promotion of scientific and technical education, will, I am sure, be approved by all. Technical education is absolutely necessary as affording the only possible solution of the bread problem. Many of our friends would go so far as to say that we ought in the first place to devote all our resources and energy to technical education, leaving liberal education to be provided for by the existing system. While I yield to none in my appreciation of the necessity of technical education, and while I hail with joy the opening of the Bengal Technical Institute through the enlightened liberality of my esteemed friend and fellow-countryman, Mr. Palit, I am not prepared to neglect liberal education in any way. If technical education is necessary for our material prosperity, liberal culture is at least as necessary for our true happiness. Exclusive devotion to material pursuits without any counterbalancing influence of liberal spiritual culture tends to immerse us in materialism with its many attendant evils such as the unnecessary multiplication of our physical wants, the interminable conflict between capital and labour and the abject poverty of certain sections of the people. To quote the words of the learned principal of the Bengal Technical Institute—"One of the most important effects of the innumerable inventions for gratifying our senses has been to multiply our wants and raise the standard of

living and thus to intensify the struggle for existence. The animal necessities of life render a certain amount of struggle almost inevitable. But the object of true progress is to minimise, not to increase it. The more our energies are absorbed by it the less room there is for their employment in the higher struggle of the soul for the attainment of a better condition." And these are the words, not of a visionary or enthusiast, but of a sound practical man of science.

In regard to technical education the Council does not entertain any ambitious project. It does not propose any comprehensive scheme for the sake of logical completeness. It will be content to promote the study of such branches of the arts and sciences as are best calculated to develop the material resources of the country and to satisfy its pressing wants. Its resources are extremely small compared with the requirements of any scheme of technical education however incomplete; and the Council appeals to the public for funds, and hope that through the exertions of certain gentlemen who are leading members of both the institutions some satisfactory scheme of co-operation with the Bengal Technical Institute may be devised.

### 3. *Religious Education*

About the third object of the Council namely, religious education, there has been some difference of opinion. Being deeply convinced of the necessity of religious education, the Council have resolved upon providing for denominational religious education subject to certain conditions which I need not here consider in detail.

An hour will be set apart for religious instruction when students professing different creeds will go to their respective teachers for instruction, which will not include any ritual observances. One chief purpose of such instruction is, if I may be permitted to add, to evoke and foster the religious sentiment and to make our young men realize the presence of God and the nearness of a future state, so that they may go right amidst all the difficulties of life, under the encouraging assurance that there is a beneficent almighty Power always watching over them, and the land of promise where the wrongs of this world will be set right is not far off.

#### 4. *Proficiency and Discipline*

The object of the Council next specified above, is to exact a high standard of proficiency and to enforce strict discipline. The public in general and the student community in particular should take note of this express announcement of the Council, and remember that it will never tolerate any low standard of proficiency or laxity of discipline. Of the two main objects of education, namely, the storing of the mind with knowledge, and the training of its faculties, intellectual and moral, we consider the latter to be of much greater importance. And the Council will always take special care to make its methods of teaching helpful towards the development of the powers of intelligent observation, independent thinking, and self-reliant exertion, and the formation of habits of reverence for superiors, obedience to authority, and readiness to respond to the call of duty,

rather than to the mechanical acquisition of knowledge and the memorising of moral maxims.

### 5. *Vernaculars to be the medium of Instruction*

Another express object of the Council is to impart education ordinarily through the medium of the vernaculars, English being studied as a second language and to prepare, and encourage the preparation of text-book in the vernaculars in arts and science ; and if this object is attained, it will have far-reaching consequences.

Except in the lowest forms, the different subjects of study have at present, all to be learnt in our schools and colleges in English, and this throws no small burden on our students. English is a very difficult language for a foreigner, especially a Bengali to learn because English and Bengali differ so widely, not only in their vocabularies but also in their grammatical structures and idioms. And this difficulty, is really so great that it not only overtakes the energy of our students, but also cramps their thought. Our scheme of imparting knowledge so far as practicable through the medium of the vernaculars will lighten the labour of the student and make the acquisition of knowledge more speedy and more direct. There is no doubt a practical difficulty arising from there being so many different vernaculars. We shall have to select not more than two; and I think they should be Bengali and Urdu.

The impetus which our scheme will give to the preparation of text-books in the different subjects in Bengali and Urdu will enrich those languages and

their literature, and thereby indirectly help the diffusion of knowledge and culture among the people generally.

We keenly feel our dependence on foreign countries for the supply of manufactured articles some of which are among the necessities of life. How much more keenly should we feel our dependence on a foreign language for the supply of words for the interchange of thought not only in serious discourse on scientific subjects such as Mathematics, Psychology, Economics and Physics, but even in ordinary conversation on many matters of everyday concern. And the Council in that branch of its work which seeks to supply our language with necessary words for the interchange of thought is entitled to encouragement and help from every true supporter of the *Swadeshi* movement. Mark the lesson which history teaches. The ignorance of the Middle ages was not dispelled and the Revival of Learning was not complete until knowledge began to be disseminated through the modern languages. Nor can we expect any revival of learning here until it is imparted not merely in its primary stage, but in the higher stages as well, through the medium of the vernaculars.

#### 6. *Encouragement of Research and Training of Teachers*

The next aim of the Council as specified above is to encourage research by the grant of fellowships to advanced students, and to train teachers who should make teaching the great object of their life.

Great discoveries it is the rare privilege of genius to



make or the occasional good luck of lesser intellects to hit upon. And no genius can be called into existence by the offer of fellowships, nor can a lucky chance be created by effort. But leaving great discoveries apart, there is much useful original research which bright intelligence properly trained and equipped with necessary appliances can accomplish, and thereby add to our stock of knowledge or means of physical comfort; and the Council so far as funds permit will encourage workers in this direction.

One great drawback in the progress of education is the want of competent trained teachers. It is not every one who knows a subject that can teach it properly. Knowledge of the subject to be taught is no doubt a necessary qualification in a teacher, but it is not a sufficient qualification. A teacher must possess many other qualifications of a high order, intellectual as well as moral. And the training of a body of competent teachers must be a necessary preliminary to the work of education. Teaching is an art and a difficult art, and the art is based upon recondite principles of the science of mind. Every teacher must learn his art and know at least as much of mental science as concerns his art. And if the trained School-master is abroad the spear of education will receive a powerful impetus.

### *7. Organisation of Educational meetings*

The last of the objects of the Council to which I wanted to call your attention, is the organisation of meetings and conferences for advancing the cause of

education. Besides occasional meetings and conferences, it is proposed to have regular meetings at which persons interested in education may meet and interchange their views on various subjects and educate, each other, youth profiting by the experience of age and age being rejuvenated in knowledge by contact with youth.

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## II. Plan of Work

The above are some of the many excellent objects which the National Council of Education has in view, and the next question is how does the Council propose to attain them.

### *Scheme of Studies and Examinations*

The council has prescribed course of study under three heads, namely, (1) Primary, including a three years' course to be commenced by a boy in his 6th year, (2) Secondary, including a seven years' course to be commenced by a boy in his 9th year and finished when his age is 15 years, the courses for the 5th year and the 7th year being respectively nearly equivalent to the present Matriculation Course, and the course for the Intermediate or F. A. Examination of the Calcutta University; and (3) Collegiate, including a four years' course in a single subject, literary or scientific with one allied subsidiary subject, equivalent to the B.A. Honour Course of the University.

The scheme of Technical Education has not yet

been completed. It will be settled after consultation with experts.

There will be three Public Examinations, one at the end of each course; and for some years there will be another examination at the end of the 5th year of the Secondary course.

I will not take you through the details of these courses but merely point out to you some of the special features of the scheme of education adopted by the Council.

1. The scheme attaches just importance to the *awakening* of the powers of *observation* and *thought* by means of Object Lessons.

2. It seeks to make education *pleasant* to the learner by prescribing lessons so as to alternately satisfy and stimulate natural curiosity.

3. It seeks to make education *easy* by imparting it through the medium of the learner's vernacular.

4. It seeks to make education *real* by insisting on the learner's acquiring a knowledge of *things* and *thoughts* and not merely of *words* and *sentences* which are only their verbal expression.

5. It seeks to *save* the learner's *time* by arranging the course of study so as to enable him to master in 5 years, after finishing his Primary Education, what he now takes 7 years to learn, the standard for the 5th year being equal to the present Entrance standard of the Calcutta University; while that for the 6th and 7th years is equal to the standard for its Intermediate Examination in Arts, attainable under the existing system only after 9 years' study.

This saving of time will be the result of imparting knowledge through the medium of the student's vernacular and of excluding from the course of study the encumbrance of unnecessary difficulties and unimportant details.

6. The scheme facilitates Technical Education by providing for its being taken up at three different stages of learner's progress, namely :—

(1) At the end of the Primary Course (*i.e.*, at the age of 9 years.)

(2) At the end of the 5th year of the Secondary Course (*i.e.*, at the age of 14 years.)

(3) At the end of the 7th year or the completion to the Secondary Course (*i.e.*, at the age of 16 years.)

7. The scheme specializes the collegiate course to a much greater extent than what is the case under the existing system, and thus affords better facilities for higher education to students who are excluded from it now by reason of their being required to attain proficiency in a multiplicity of subjects.

8. The scheme reduces within the narrowest limits the number of public examinations, which are a severe strain on students, and are hindrances rather than helps to real study.

9. The scheme provides for moral education by requiring teachers and professors to avail themselves of every opportunity afforded by the ordinary lessons, in imparting it and by requiring the enforcement of strict discipline in accordance with the best traditions of the country. The scheme also provides for physical

education and religious education subject to certain conditions.

10. The scheme as a whole seeks, on its liberal side, to train students intellectually and morally so as to mould their character according to the highest national ideals; and on its technical side, to train them so as to qualify them for developing the natural resources of the country and increasing its material wealth.

### *A Model College and School*

The Council has established a model college and a model school for imparting instruction in the courses prescribed, and appointed professors and teachers in the subjects likely to be taken up by students. Regarding the efficiency of the teaching staff I shall only say this for the present, that the gentlemen appointed are either experienced teachers or distinguished graduates of Indian or European Universities. I will not say more but leave their efficiency to be proved by their work. There is however one merit in our staff which is entitled to immediate recognition. It is the spirit of self-sacrifice which almost every member of the staff has shown. Every one of them has made some personal sacrifice in joining our institution, and is actuated by a real desire to serve his country. The best thanks of the Council are due to them.

### *Our Students and their Future Career*

Two important questions here arise,—first, what classes of students are likely to join our schools and



college?—and second, what future careers will their training under us qualify them for?

These are questions which demand careful consideration. They have occupied the attention of several members of the Council, and I shall briefly indicate to you the answers that have occurred to us.

We do not know what value will be attached by the Universities or by the Government and other employers of skilled labour, to the training we give and the tests we have prescribed; and we should therefore proceed upon the assumption that they will receive no recognition, except from Zemindars and private associations that may view this national movement with special favour. Students and their guardians must therefore clearly understand that those who join our school or college do so for the intrinsic benefits derivable from our training and not for any extrinsic advantages accruing out of it. Those who seek government scholarships, University degrees or Government service will not have much inducement to join our institution. But they who seek knowledge and culture for their own sake, and they who seek to earn their living otherwise than by Government service or the practice of the legal profession, may not feel the same hesitation in taking admission into our college or school. We shall give our students every facility for gaining sound and useful knowledge, for cultivating their mental powers, and for forming good habits. There will also be a few scholarships and fellowships available for deserving students. And these are all the advantages we can offer. In this state of things, we do not expect any great rush of

students at least for the present. Nor need we feel regret if this is the case. For if the number of our students is small, we shall be better able to look after them than if their number was large. There is one other class of students who will come to us, and they are those whom the University rejects or does not suit. They are an important class for whose education the National Council ought to provide. They may not be very brilliant students, but they are not all necessarily of inferior intelligence. The Calcutta University by insisting on proficiency in a multiplicity of subjects not unfrequently rejects candidates, who in their favourite subjects are fitted to do solid work and earn distinction. These students will naturally seek admission here and if properly directed, they may do work which will reflect credit on them and their teachers.

Moreover, our Primary, Secondary and High Proficiency courses are so adjusted that no class of students whatever their aims and aspirations may be, need be excluded from them. In our scheme, a student would ordinarily finish his Secondary course by the time he completes his 15th year, that is, one year before he is eligible for the Matriculation Examination of the University, and that Examination will be no difficult matter for him. So, that aspirants for University degrees may always avail themselves of the advantages of our system of education in the Secondary stage.

Then again, university graduates may join our institution for higher study and research work or for receiving training as teachers. But it should be understood that the Council does not intend to admit students

who are preparing for University Examinations, and convert our College into a coaching institution for those examinations. That would be contrary to one of our fundamental principles, which is to make Examinations serve as a test of study and not to make study serve merely as a preparation for examinations.

I come now to the second question, namely, what careers will the training we give qualify our students for?

Government service and the legal profession must be left out of consideration for sometime at least. This is a drawback, no doubt, but is it a serious one? The legal profession is overstocked, and Government service in the higher grades is available only for a small number among the best graduates. And it will perhaps tend to the benefit of all concerned, if the energies and aspirations of the rising generation are to some extent diverted to other directions. If the two great old avenues are closed for our students, in the self-adjusting beneficent economy of nature, fresh ones will be opened, for which the times are propitious.

Agriculture, manufacture, and commerce are the fields to which our educated young men must turn their attention; and the scheme of the study framed by the Council makes provision for qualifying students for work in those fields.

Lastly, there is the noble profession of teaching in which there is ample scope for work. And if the National Council of education can send forth from time to time bands of well trained teachers it will be doing substantial work to help the spread of education.

I have now given you a rough outline of the aims and plan of work of the National Council of Education. It remains for me to offer heartfelt thanks to Babu Brajendra Kishore Roy Choudhuri, Babu Subodh Chandra Mallick and Maharaja Surya Kanta Acharya whose munificent endowments have enabled the Bengal National Council of Education to commence its work. They have earned the lasting gratitude of the country and we hope their bright example will be followed by many. Nor must I omit to acknowledge our obligations to Babu Satis Chandra Mukerjee who has consecrated his life to the work of Education.

Though we have been proceeding with the utmost economy and have been fortunate in securing the service of a competent teaching staff on very small remuneration, we still want funds, and large funds, to enable us to give effect to our scheme. We must appeal to our countrymen for support and I hope we shall not appeal in vain.

### *Advice to Students*

Before I conclude I may be permitted to address a few words to our teachers and students. To the former I have very little to say. They have by accepting office under the Council at considerable sacrifice of personal interest, shown such genuine devotion to the cause of national education, that no words of exhortation are necessary from me. I will only remind them that our work will be keenly watched and severely scrutinised, and that we should always be prepared to be judged by the results of our labour.

Turning now to my young friends, the students, I would ask them to remember two things, first, that they are Indian students, and next, that they are students of institutions under the control of their National Council. As Indian students they should be true to the best traditions of student life in India which in the good old days was a life of *Brahmacharya*. Theirs should be a life of ascetic simplicity, spotless purity, and rigid discipline ; and they should cultivate habits of reverence for superiors, obedience to authority, and readiness to respond to the call of duty. In their youthful ardour they are full of enthusiastic love for their country. They cannot show that love better than by conducting themselves so as to make the work of their National Council of Education a complete success.

They should not allow the distressing phantom of an impending examination to haunt them in their hours of study ; but they should read with the pleasing assurance that they are gaining knowledge ; and they should remember that student life is a period of preparation, not merely for the temporary trial in the examination hall, but also for the continued trial in the world outside.

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**Babu Arabinda Ghose.**

# ARAVINDA GHOSH

## A STUDY

"Long after this controversy is hushed to silence, long after this turmoil, this agitation will have ceased, long after he is dead and gone, he will be looked upon as the poet of patriotism, as the prophet of nationalism and as the lover of humanity. His words will be echoed and re-echoed not only in India, but over distant seas and distant lands."

**S**UCH were the eloquent words with which Mr. C.R. Das brought to a close his magnificent oration in defence of Babu Aravinda Ghosh at the State trial which dragged its weary length from November to March in the court of Mr. Beachcroft, the Sessions Judge of Alipore. '*Poet of patriotism,*' '*prophet of nationalism,*' '*lover of humanity*'—what a ring of passionate emphasis there is in the words! and how fervently have they been re-echoed in the hearts of myriads of men and women, all over the country! And yet the man who called forth this remarkable eulogy in his favour, whose release has been hailed with quiet happiness even by those who are in no sense his followers in politics, whose every word is hung upon with fond and reverent enthusiasm by multitudes of admiring fellow-countrymen, who has inspired with wholesome terror, a bureaucracy, vigorous, triumphant, almost omnipotent, a man moreover against whom the police and the executive directed their whole artillery and whom yet they failed to crush—three short

years ago, what was he? An obscure school master in far-off province of India—one who had apparently failed in life and had retired into oblivion—a man unknown, unheard-of, an altogether negligible factor in the stirring and slow-heaving political atmosphere of the time. Even in 1905, when the clouds of coming unrest were gathering upon the political horizon of Bengal, when the country was passing through the birth-pangs of that National Movement which has since had such remarkable developments, who knew, who could even dream that Aravinda Ghosh would come up from his work in the far Western corner of India and would ‘ride the whirlwind and direct the storm’? Had we not leaders of our own-men of tried virtue and proved ability,—men of note, experience and tradition—veteran helmsmen who had weathered many of storm and grown grey in the service of the country? Would we not abide by their counsel, take our watchwords from their lips, and follow in their footsteps wheresoever they might lead? How was a young reticent stranger from distant Baroda to replace these giants of old? How was he to grasp in his young and unproven hands, the reins which were slipping from the tougher stronger hands of others? And yet these things have come to pass. The quiet and grave young man, “fresh from long years at Cambridge” (as Mr. Nevinson described him with a slight pardonable inaccuracy), with his many silences and his few golden utterances, has established himself firmly in the hearts and minds of his countrymen; and to-day the magic of his name has spread its spell over the whole broad

continent of India, and his every word comes as a gospel of healing, a message of salvation to thousands of people living therein.

How has this marvellous change come about? What is the secret of that mysterious personality which has drawn to itself so much love, hope and reverence? What sort of a man is Aravinda Ghosh? We propose in the following pages to lay before the reader such brief glimpses of the man as we have had from time to time, and leave him to draw his inferences therefrom. We shall attempt, in this paper, no analysis of the character of Mr. Ghosh. Such an attempt will be both futile and superfluous: futile, because the personality of man is elusive and defies analysis, and superfluous, because Babu Aravinda Ghosh in his public and general capacity is by no means an unknown quantity to the world. His faith, his creed, his views and opinions—he has laid them bare before the world, for men to read them and judge him thereby. Still we admit that there is a private aspect of a man's life, some knowledge of which may help men to a better understanding of his character, and, therefore, to a better appreciations of his views. Thomas Carlyle used to say that the authentic *portrait* of a man was worth bushels of nonsense written about him. Such an authentic portrait or rather the vague outlines of one, together with some slight estimate of Aravinda's distinctive contribution to the development of our National life—we shall attempt to present in the following pages.



## II. BEFORE SWADESHI

*(a) Birth : parentage : education*

Babu Aravinda Ghose was born at Calcutta on the 15th of August, 1872. His parentage and ancestry deserve some note. His mother was the eldest daughter of Babu Raj Narayan Bose, a man of the most striking and remarkable personality, and one who realised in his life the nationalistic aspirations of our country long before they found any definite or articulate expressions among any considerable body of men. He was called in his time — 'the grandfather of Indian Nationalism,' and right well did he deserve that name.

He lived at a time when Western influences and Western culture were first making head-way in the country, when their glamour and fascination had laid under its spell all young, ardent, and generous minds, and when the best spirits of the land were eager to mould their national life after the models of the West. But Raj Narayan Bose, though he was himself steeped in the culture and education of Europe, though his soul burned with a generous enthusiasm to reform the social abuses of his country, yet never lost the balance and sanity of his mind nor shut his eyes to the superior spirituality of Hindu civilization. He wrote and spoke most forcibly on 'The Superiority of Hinduism' and on the sad contrast between the 'Past and Present,' established societies for the conservation of the national principle, and instituted measures for improving the physique of the Bengalis. In all he said and did, there was that passionate attachment to his

country and his race, that strong resentment of the spurious affectation of superiority on the part of an alien people, which form a portion of that rich heritage of intellectual capacity, moral integrity, and spiritual fervour which has come down to Aravinda Ghosh from that most remarkable and original old man who was his grandfather.

But Raj Narayan Bose was something more than the passionate and impulsive lover of his country; and certainly he was no man to cling blindly to the old, worn-out rags of the past. His was a most complex and composite personality; and to gather with his intense love for India and Indian things, there was in his character a hatred of all sham and untruth, of whatever might hinder the free development of a virile manhood in the country. Thus there was realized in his character that rare and curious combination—the ardent, almost militant defender of his country and the institutions thereof dwelling side by side with the aggressive social reformer who shocked the effete orthodoxy of his time by the plainness of his speech and the directness of his action.

There was, however, little in common between this forceful and dominant old man and Aravinda's father, Babu Krishnadhan Ghosh. Sweetness, tenderness, geniality, and a perpetual sunshine in the heart which warmed and comforted whoever might come in contact with them—These were the common characteristics of both; but beyond this their path widely diverged. Mr. K. D. Ghosh was a doctor in established practice when he married the mother of

Aravinda; but afterwards he went to England to qualify for entering the Indian Medical Service. While he was still in that country, his affectionate father-in-law wrote often to him, fondly expressing the hope that he might never lose the distinctive features of his nationality in the midst of the coarse and more effective civilization of Europe. But these hopes, as the old man records with sad self-restraint in his autobiography, were destined not to be fulfilled. Mr. K. D. Ghosh came back to India more anglicised than Anglo-Indians themselves; but the veneer of English civilization never completely over-laid the real gold of the heart within. He was the same sunny, genial, sweet and tender-souled creature as before; and wherever he went in his professional capacity, the poor had reason to lift up their hands and bless him who was their friend.

He wanted to give his boys a thorough English training; and with that view sent young Aravinda, first to St. Paul's School, Darjeeling, and afterwards to England, when the lad was barely seven years old. It may be a matter of surprise to many, but it is nevertheless the literal fact, that Aravinda never knew any Bengali, till he was 18 or 19 years of age. And then he picked up a little smattering of his vernacular for passing the Civil Service Examination, just as many an English student pick up a little Sanskrit or Hindustani for the same purpose. But whatever that may be, in England, young Aravinda was first educated privately at Manchester and then sent to St. Paul's School, London. One little fact must be slightly touched on here. Aravinda's father had

a large professional income, but he had absolutely no knowledge of the world or worldly affairs. He spent large sums in charity, and so, it often happened that he had no money to send to his sons in England. Thus the boys had often to pass long months in utter destitution, and so became early injured to poverty and the hardships thereof.

*(b) C. S. Examination : Failure thereof*

In 1890, Aravinda appeared at the Civil Service Examination, passed the literary test successfully, and stood tenth in order of merit. But, as we all know, he failed to pass the riding test and thus was disqualified from entering the service. It will be a mistake to say—as so many have said before—that this failure to enter the Civil Service altered the whole subsequent course of Aravinda's life; and that, but for it, he would have been to-day a complaisant member of the Civil Service instead of being the fiery patriot that he is. This, besides being an utter misconception of the man's nature, is contradicted by the bare outer facts of his life. For, after his failure at the riding test, he entered a service which offered him prospects of worldly advancement almost as high as those which the Civil Service itself could offer. And yet, while there and drawing a comfortable salary as Vice-Principal of the Baroda College, he renounced comfort, position, wealth—all that men most set their hearts upon when the call of his country first sounded in his ears and smote the chord of his heart. But of this more at the proper place.

One curious fact has to be noticed in connection with this same Civil Service Examination. A young Englishman, Beachcroft by name, competed for it in the same year with Aravinda, and in the examination for Greek Beachcroft stood second, while Aravinda stood first. Eighteen years afterwards, the Englishman, then Sessions Judge of Alipore, was in the seats of justice, while before him in the prisoner's dock, chained and hand-cuffed, was Aravinda Ghosh awaiting his trial on a charge of treason and conspiracy. A curious trick of fate—was it not ?

Soon after his failure at the Civil Service Examination he entered King's College, Cambridge, as a scholarship-holder. His father had died in the meantime, and he had to depend for his expenses entirely upon the college-stipend. From King's College, he graduated in 1892, getting a first-class in the classical tripos.

Aravinda's educational career was now over : and he had to set about in right earnest for the adoption of a career in the world. Fortunately for him he had not to wait long. The young and enlightened Maharajah of Baroda had recently come to England for a visit. Aravinda happened to get acquainted with him in 1892, and next year took service under him as confidential personal assistant.

### (c) *At Baroda*

We may say that a new chapter opened in Aravinda's life with his arrival at Baroda. He was now 21 years old ; but the larger portion of this time he had passed



in England. In speech, dress, manners in all the external and outer aspects of his life, he was nothing short of an Englishman. But in spite of all this, he was an Indian at heart. Nay, his long, close and intimate familiarity with European life and habits had done an invaluable service to him: Western civilization had lost its gloss and glamour for him. He had penetrated behind its glittering outer shell of painted brilliance and had sounded to the depth all its baldness, coarseness, barrenness and the barbarism of its inner significance. The soulless splendour of the material civilization of Europe, its inadequate solution of the pressing problems of life and society, its failure to reconcile the respective claims of the individual and the community—all this had been forcing itself upon the attention of our quiet and heedful student of men and affairs, and his heart had long been wistfully yearning for that deep peace and harmony, that large synthesis of conflicting claims and jarring susceptibilities which is of the essence of the ancient civilization of the East. And now, at last, the time had come when he could steep himself in the culture and civilization of the land of his fathers, when he could reconstruct that link with his country and his race which had been snapped by his too early transference to England, and when he could readjust bit by bit his relations with that complex social structure, through which, and through which alone individual life can reach its highest manifestation in India. Indeed the 12 years of his residence at Baroda form a very important portion in the life of Aravinda Ghosh. They

were the seed-time of his soul in the strict literal sense of the word ; and, more than that, they were absolutely necessary in order that he might identify himself with the life, thought and culture of contemporary India.

At Baroda, Aravinda Babu worked successively in various capacities. Engaged in confidential work first, he was attached to the Dewani office afterwards, and from there was transferred to the State College where he continued to act as professor for sometime. Then he acted for a short while as Private Secretary to the Gaekwar and ultimately became the Vice-Principal of the College on a salary of Rs. 750 per month. As we have hinted before there is little which calls for notice in the outer life of Aravinda Babu at Baroda. The years he spent there were years of growth and silent evolution ; of study and heedful observation. This much however can be said with certainty that so far as worldly affairs were concerned he was extremely well-placed and comfortable there. He was popular among the students and well thought of by the public and held in high estimation by the Gaekwar. Still in the prime vigour of his life, he might have ascended if he had so liked, step by step, to the highest position of trust and dignity in the princely State of Baroda. But this life of rest and ease was not for him. The God of India had other and nobler work to do for her chosen son than to rust in disuse in the cloistered seclusion of Baroda.

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## III. THE 'NEW MOVEMENT.'

In the meantime great deeds had been doing in the far Eastern corner of India—in that province from whose loins, so many bards, heroes, and sages, and Aravinda himself had sprung. The New Movement—of which Aravinda was to be the chief prophet and apostle, and the glory whereof like a Pharos-light was to be the wonder and administration of a new universe—had come; and it had made its home in that soil, hot, damp, hospitable, and fertile as much in corn as in human greatness. But to understand to genesis of this New Movement, its why and wherefore, we shall have to go out of our way a little and take various historical facts into slight consideration.

In the first place then the birth of the New Movement had been precipitated by the action of the British Government itself. A reactionary viceroy—whom it has become almost conventional to call a brilliant proconsul—not satisfied with the humdrum course of the routine-work of daily life had made things hot and lively about us. He had destroyed the Municipal Self-Government of Calcutta, and had passed unpopular land-laws in both the Punjab and Bombay. But the mere unpopularity of the measures was the least thing about them. In all the steps he had taken, he had shown an insolent disregard of the wishes of the people and a callus apathy to their protest which had irritated their sensibility and goaded them to the verge of madness. Again, he had curtailed the sphere of high education in our

country ; had closed various avenues of useful employment to the children of the soil, by the issue of secret circulars ; had sought to explain away the Queen's Proclamation as a diplomatic pronouncement not worth the paper it was written upon ; and, worst of all, had insulted the manhood of the nation by accusing the people of a habitual proneness to untruth and falsehood. The cup of bitterness and humiliation which a subject people have ever to drink at the proud hands of their conquerors had thus become brimful during the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon. It overflowed when the Partition of Bengal—a measure of wanton outrage upon popular feelings and sentiments—was carried into effect in the teeth of the fierce, determined and unanimous opposition of the whole Bengalee-speaking community. Ostensibly dictated by reasons of administrative efficiency, this measure was too obviously prompted by a desire to cripple the growing solidarity of the Bengalees, and by an elaborate show of patronage towards the Mahommedans, to set class against class and creed against creed and thus to reawaken the smouldering flames of a bitter racial and sectarian controversy. The Viceroy undertook a peripatetic tour through East Bengal to reconcile the people to the proposed change by an avalanche of mellifluous oratory. One 'enormous' apostate he certainly gained over—but the rest of the people remained sullen and obdurate and only redoubled with vigour their passionate protest against the policy of the Government. But their opposition availed nothing. The measure became law in due course of time ; and then the long-restrained passion of the people, baffled

outraged and mortified so often, broke forth in a flood of volcanic impatience and rage; they resolved to observe the day of partition as a day of penance, fasting and sorrow, and in the meantime to enforce a rigid 'boycott' of British goods. And thus the New Movement in one of its most prominent and aggressive aspects was fairly launched at last.

But to take the New Movement as synonymous with Swadeshi and Boycott or to explain it as originating in a series of unpopular Government measures will be to put an altogether narrow, straitened and limited interpretation upon it. The New Movement is something wider than Swadeshi and Boycott, nay, it is wider than Politics itself. It embraces the whole life and activity of a people. It is, if we may so take it, a necessary phase in the evolution of all States and Nationalities. Such a New Movement came to India in the time of Sankaracharyya when the effete mummeries and juggleries into which Buddhism had regenerated were swept away to be replaced by the manly and rational philosophy of the Vedanta. Such a New Movement came to Europe in the 16th Century when the cobwebs of bigotry and superstition which the Roman Church had spun during long years of ease and indolence were brushed away before the virility and vigour of the Protestantism of Luther. It came to Europe again in the latter part of the 18th Century when the last vestiges of mediæval feudalism gave way with a mighty crash before the onflowing tide of *Liberte, Egalite* and *Fraternite*. Forty years ago, it came to Japan and raised a barbarous and primitive



people to the topmost heights of power, glory, and prosperity, and within the last decade or so it has come to China and India—twin homes as they are of the oldest if not also mightiest civilizations of the world. In fact, such a movement—call it Renaissance, New Birth, new movement, whatever you like—is bound always, to come, whenever a people becomes conscious of its corporate existence as a nation (or even the possibility of such existence as a nation), whenever it becomes conscious that in the economy of the world, it also has a mission which it must, realise or else stand guilty at the bar of the universe, whenever it feels an impulse to gather in its powers, to put forth its activities, and to give articulate expression to its aims, yearnings, aspirations and hopes. As we said before, this New Movement has been coming to India within the last decade or so. It owes its origin partly to that English education and that contact with the alien civilization of the West, which, whatever we may say to its disparagement, has no doubt stirred us up from that apathy, indifference and lethargy into which we had sunk. In a larger measure still it owes its origin to a better, closer, more intimate understanding of our past—its philosophy, its poetry, its theology, above all that marvellous social-polity of ancient India with its grand principle of synthesis and assimilation, the full significance of which we have not yet adequately realised. And lastly, we must mention that we owe something to Japan, to the victory and world-position she has achieved, and something also to that wide wave of enlightenment which seems to be passing over

the whole land of Asia, and regarding which it may truly be said, 'the spirit of God is moving upon the waters of the East.'

But will it then be said that the measures of the Government have nothing whatever to do with the genesis of the New Movement? That certainly would be going to the other extreme. The reactionary policy of the Government, and especially the 'crowning mercy' of the Partition of Bengal, has played an important part in giving body and shape to the New Movement and in determining the channel in which it was immediately to issue and make itself felt. But the effect of the Government Policy has been even something more than that. As in the individual life, it requires the collision of the 'not-self' to make us conscious of 'self,' so in politics, it requires a menace to the growing solidarity of our national life to make us conscious that such life is growing and forming within us. This menace came to us in the shape of the Partition.

The Partition made us conscious that we had a national life which was susceptible to wound and capable of expansion. Once consciousness had been awakened, the rest of the process was simple, nay it was inevitable; for with consciousness came strength; came desire to realise that new life to which we had awakened at last; desire led to action; and action multiplied our new-born strength. Thus the seed which had been sown in darkness and matured in silence, burst all at once into the broad light of day

and began to shoot and sprout and burgeon with wondrous vigour and rapidity.

#### IV. ARAVINDA AND THE NEW MOVEMENT

But where was Aravinda now? To him also in his loneliness, his seclusion, his aloofness, the call had come—the call to go forth and toil in the vineyard of the Lord. Aravinda has always regarded the New Movement as a special dispensation of God; and such it seemed to him in those early days of its inception and first execution. Already he had begun to take some, though but an inconsiderable part in the politics of the country. So far back as 1894, he had contributed articles to the *Indu Prakash* criticising the methods and policy of the Indian National Congress; and in the latter part of the year 1905, he came to Bengal partly with a view to see and study things for himself.

To understand the political situation of the time, we may as well briefly recapitulate some of the events which had already taken place. The resolution to enforce a boycott of British goods had been adopted by the Bengalees on the 7th of August 1905. The measure for the partition of Bengal had been passed into law on the 16th October of the same year. In the interval, various circulars had been issued prohibiting the shout of “Bande-Mataram” and forbidding student to take part in political agitation. Besides many public meetings in the new province had been broken up by the police under orders from the Executive Government. These repressive measures were strongly condemned by the Congress which assembled

at Benares in December, 1905, and at the same Congress, a resolution was adopted declaring that the boycott movement initiated in Bengal was justified under the special circumstances of the Sundered province. This we may notice, was the first notable victory achieved by the Reform party in the Congress. In the meantime, the Government went merrily on with its task of repression. The boycott had been most thoroughly enforced in the district of Backergunge in East Bengal; and so this district came in for the special attention of the Government. Gurkha soldiers were quartered as a punitive measure upon the small town of Barisal; and these soldiers indulged almost unchecked in a long course of license, intimidation and petty pillage. To crown all, the Bengal Provincial Conference, which met at Barisal in March, 1906, was dispersed by the orders of the District Magistrate, the delegates and volunteers were indiscriminately assaulted by the police, with *lathies* and batons, and Babu Surendra Nath Bannerjee was insulted by Mr. Magistrate Emerson, prosecuted for contempt of court and fined Rs. 200.

Aravinda Babu was present at the break-up of the Barisal Conference, and we find that on his return to Baroda, he gave a description of that scene at a public meeting held at that place. But this time his stay at Baroda was of very short duration. In July, 1906, he came back to Calcutta and definitely took up his abode there.

It was indeed high time that Aravinda Babu should return to Bengal; for here in the land of his birth work

was waiting for him to do which none but he could adequately perform. And so we find that immediately on his return to this province, he became prominently associated with two of the most notable institutions which the New Movement had called into existence. Of these one was:—

*The National Council of Education*

We have said already that in the latter part of 1905, various circulars had been issued, forbidding students to join in processions or other political demonstrations of that nature. For disobedience of these circulars—a disobedience in which they were fully backed by the moral sense of the country at large—many students were expelled from Government high schools and other institutions affiliated to the Calcutta University. Thus the educational career of these boys and their prospects of future advancement seemed to be marred for ever. At this crisis, the leaders of the country felt it to be their imperative duty to provide some means for the further education of these young men. Generous donors were not wanting who offered large sums of money to assist any scheme which might be formulated for this purpose; and aided by their munificent endeavours, the National Council of Education was launched into being on 17th of November. Such was the immediate occasion which led to the inauguration of a national system of education in our country. But the need for it was more fundamental and far-reaching than to provide a mere rest-house to those students who had been expelled from the official



University. To quote from the summer number of the *Swaraj*—the fortnightly organ of the Nationalists published under the auspices of Babu Bepin Chandra Pal from England :—

“The system of officially controlled education which had been tried in India for about half a century had proved an utter failure. It had been condemned by friends and foes alike. It was shallow and rootless. It imparted the shadow but not the substance of modern culture.

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It led to a fearful waste of time and energy by imposing the necessity of learning a foreign language and of receiving instruction through its medium in all the higher branches of study. It was controlled by an alien bureaucracy in the interests mainly of their own political position.

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It was excessively literary, and detrimental to the industrial and economic life of the country. The movement of national education was started to counteract these evils.

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It proposed to promote education, scientific, literary, technical, on national lines and under national control.”

It was dictated, in short, by the necessity of our people to develop for themselves a system of education which would bring them in harmony with the spirit of their ancient civilization and thus enable them to exert themselves most effectively in all spheres of national life. Its immediate practical step was to establish a National College in Calcutta; and Aravinda Ghosh became the first Principal of that College.

It will be useless, however, to deny that the National

College did not offer adequate scope for the exercise of the vigorous patriotic activities of Babu Aravinda Ghosh. The new Council of Education, though owing its genesis to the endeavour of the national party in politics, passed almost immediately under the control of a timid and reactionary body. Forgetful of the fact that the movement was by its nature, a sort of counterblast to the efforts of the Government, these gentlemen betrayed from the first a nervous fear of offending the susceptibilities of the Government. Even in their prospectus they were careful to add that their object was "not to supplant but the supplement existing systems of education." This, though a very small matter in itself, was a sufficient indication of how things were drifting. In short, as has been well observed by the writer in the *Swaraj*, "the authorities of the National College had a real dread of the bureaucracy and no real confidence in their people." Thus the position of Aravinda in the new institution was slightly anomalous; and he was hampered in the carrying out of his cherished educational ideal—not so much by any measure of actual opposition as by the chill and ungenial atmosphere of the place. This was a matter of singular misfortune, not simply for the infant institution of Calcutta, but for the progressive advancement of the country at large. For the educational ideal which Aravinda had set before himself was a lofty and comprehensive one—its aim being nothing less than "to actualise the deepest God-consciousness of human life in the outer life and appointments of man.

But though thwarted in one of his endeavours

Aravinda was not disheartened; and a wider field of activity soon presented itself before him. The

‘*Bande-Mataram*’ newspaper—

had been started some little time before by Babu Bepin Chandra Pal with material assistance from the late Brahmabandhab Upadhyaya—than whom a more striking and forceful personality was never brought to the force even by the New Movement, rich as it has been in the discovery of latent talents and hidden forces of character. Immediately on his arrival at Calcutta, Aravinda was invited to contribute to its columns; and soon practically the sole editorial charge of the paper passed into his hands. A joint-stock company was floated to conduct the new daily paper and Aravinda became a director of the company and the leading spirit thereof. The *Bande-Mataram* leaped into popular favour almost in a day; and soon achieved for itself a remarkable position in the field of Indian journalism. The vigour and energy of its style, the trenchant directness of its tone, the fearless independence of its attitude, the high and inspiring ideal which it held up before the people, its passionate faith in the genius of the country—all combined to root the new paper in the hearts and affections of its ever-widening circle of readers. Moreover, the people knew that ‘*Bande-Mataram*’ was their very own—no organ of any clique set or faction, but wide as Indian nationality itself. No newspaper that we know of has ever evoked such passionate personal enthusiasm as the ‘*Bande-Mataram*’ did during its short tenure of life.

From the very first, the hand of the master was visible in the writings of the 'Bande-Mataram,' and that master the world tacitly agreed to accept as Aravinda Ghosh. And yet it will be a mistake to suppose that Aravinda did all or even much of the writing for the new paper. He was assisted in this undertaking by a fine band of co-adjutors, chief among whom must be mentioned Babu Shyam Sundar Chakravarti, since deported to Burma—a man of infinite sweetness and tenderness of nature and one, moreover, whose self effacement in the cause of the country was complete and absolute. In one respect, however, the judgment of the public was sure and unerring. Whoever the actual contributor to the 'Bande-Mataram' might be—the soul, the genius of the paper was Aravinda. The pen might be that of Shyam Sunder or who not—the world did not care about it; but the voice was the voice of Aravinda Ghosh; his the clear clarion notes calling men to heroic and strenuous self-sacrifice; his unswerving, unfaltering faith in the high destinies of his race; his passionate resolve to devote life, fame, fortune, all to the service of the Mother.

It was the 'Bande-Mataram' which first brought Aravinda into wide and intimate connection with the larger majority of our people. Hitherto he had been a fleeting and wondering voice, 'a mere name and a shadow'—but now he had become a definite entity, a recognised leader of the New Movement. And this position was further confirmed by his trial in the Police Court on a charge of sedition. The trial ended in his acquittal and its only palpable effect was to increase

the popularity of Aravinda ten-fold in the country. Two very unfortunate things happened at this time; but unfortunate as they were, they had a material influence upon the position of Babu Aravinda Ghosh. One was the imprisonment of Babu Bepin Chandra Pal for the offence of contempt of court, the other was the death of Upadhyaya Brahmabandhab, while still undergoing trial on a charge of sedition. The removal of these two notable personalities was a great blow to the cause of the New Movement, but at the same time, their removal left Aravinda the undisputed leader of the Nationalist Party in Bengal. It was as leader of the Nationalists that Babu Aravinda Ghosh took part in the Midnapore District Conference of November, 1907,—a conference made memorable by the first open rupture between the Moderates and Extremists of our Province. And it was as leader of the Nationalists again that Babu Aravinda Ghosh went and took part in the unfortunate Surat Congress of the same year. It cannot be said that in the bitter and acrimonious controversies which followed the break-up of the Surat Congress some little dirt was not thrown at Aravinda too. But, as I have said before, passions ran high in politics in those days; and what wonder, if in the rapier-play of controversy, the buttons should once in a while, come off the foils? Still it can safely be said that even in the midst of these bitter and heated polemics—no whisper was ever breathed against the personal honour and good faith of Aravinda Babu.

After the dissolution of the Surat Congress, Aravinda made a long tour in Bombay and the Central Provinces



speaking at all important places on Nationalism in its manifold aspects. From this tour he returned to Calcutta in the latter part of January 1903. And a little more than two months after, he was arrested and dragged to gaol on a charge of treason and conspiracy. Before, however, I come to deal with that, it will be convenient to indicate what precisely was the nature of the service which Aravinda rendered to the cause of Nationalism. What was the character of his teaching which distinguished Aravinda Ghosh in such a remarkable degree from the other exponents of Nationalism? What was the quality and value of his contribution to the development of the principle of swadeshism?

#### (a) LOFTINESS OF HIS IDEAL

In the first place, note the loftiness of the ideal which Aravinda has so consistently and courageously held up before his countrymen. This ideal is neither 'loyal co-operation with the Government,' nor 'obtaining for the people a large share in the administration of the country,' nor even the attainment of Colonial Self-Government; it is nothing more or less than the fulfilment of our life as a nation. Note by the way that this ideal is not only broader and loftier than the other so-called ideals which have been dangled before us time and again; it is the only adequate satisfaction of our legitimate aspirations, the only logical ideal which seems to be worth striving after. Alone among his compeers Aravinda Ghosh has boldly declared that it is as a nation that we claim

to live and to perish. But Aravinda has not been satisfied with merely stating the demand; he has placed it on a rational and philosophical basis. Intensely spiritual by nature, he holds that man's mission in the world, the task which he has been set to accomplish, is to realise God, to fulfil Him in our outer appointments. This realisation can be effected only by fulfilling ourselves—in our individual life, in the family, in the community, in the nation, and lastly in humanity at large.

But how is this 'fulfilment of our life in the nation' to be effected? Obviously it can never be done so long as all national life remains crushed and smothered by the perpetual domination of a virile alien civilization, nor can it be done by quietly merging our identity in the identity of an alien race and alien people. To quote the words of Aravinda himself: "We seek this fulfilment by *realising our separateness* and pushing forward our individual self-realization." And the readiest and most effective way in which this can be done is by Swadeshism—"Swadeshi in commerce and manufacture, in politics, in education, in law and administration, in short, in every branch of human activity." This then is the creed of Aravinda Ghosh; and observe how closely it hangs together:—to realise God is the mission of man; we can realise him only by fulfilling ourselves in our individual and national life, in order to fulfil our national life, we must realise our separateness as a people and we can best realise our separateness by being Swadeshi in all departments of human activity. Observe also that this creed of Aravinda is not merely political, behind it there is a

comprehensive world-philosophy, a philosophy which leads us back to the dimmest days on Indian antiquity, to the time of the Upanishads.

(b) 'CLAIM OF FREEDOM'

But it may be asked—the fulfilment of individual and national life, does it not presuppose freedom? No doubt it does; and this we take to be the special merit of Aravinda that alone among Indian politicians, he has displayed no nervous hesitation to claim 'freedom' in the widest sense of the word, as the goal of all true national progress. To quote his language again.

"There are some who fear to use the word 'freedom' ! but I have always used the word because it has been the *mantra* of my life to aspire towards the freedom of my nation. And through the mouth of my counsel, I used these words persistently : if to aspire to independence is a crime, you may cast me to gaol, and bind me with chains. If to preach freedom is a crime, I am a criminal and let me be punished. But freedom does not mean the use of violence, it means only the fulfilment of our separate national existence."

(c) FAITH IN HIS COUNTRY

It may be asked—how is it that this man has preached what no man has dared to say before him? How is it that he has dared to claim freedom for his country and people? The secret of Aravinda's boldness lies in one thing and one thing only—it is his fervent and passionate faith in his country. 'Love of country'—how common the words are ! how oft bandied

about from lip to lip! and yet how hollow, how false how utterly meaningless with most of us! We have had patriots in plenty, who have worked for the country sure enough, but have done so with an air of lofty and condescending patronage. But with Aravinda it has been for otherwise. Love of country is for him no mere phrase of conventional mockery, no tarnished homage to be laid at the feet of an exploded deity—it has been the one over-mastering passion of his life. This people, poor, sick, impoverished of hope and heart; this country, scourged, beaten, down-trodden—he has seen behind their wretchedness and misery and has closed them to his heart of hearts. For him the Mother has cost off the weeds and tatters in which she appears before a scoffing and unbelieving generation; to him, as to a favoured child of the Goddess, she has revealed her form in all its pristine beauty and majesty—radiant in glory and clad with strength and terror, strength, for the weak and terror for the wicked.

#### (d) NEED FOR STRENGTH

But it may again be said—has Aravinda rested content with merely preaching the ideal? Has he not shown us the way for its attainment? The way, it may be answered, is involved in the statement of the ideal itself. "We can realise our separateness," Aravinda has said, "by means of Swadeshi." Swadeshi then is the way whereby national well-being is to be secured. But to be Swadeshi in all matters, one thing is supremely and absolutely necessary—strength,

courage, manhood. The great words of the Upanishads have ever been toning in the ears of Aravinda Ghosh—"the Self is not to be realised by the weak." "Hold fast to your faith," he says, "and *act* upon your convictions; and if in so acting you are met with repression, *suffer* it with resolute patience. But whether acting or suffering, always be strong." To quote again the noble words of his Jhalakati speech, "*Feel* your strength, *train* your strength in the struggle with violence, and by that strength, hold down the roof of the temple."

## V. THE BOMB CASE AND AFTER

In the foregoing pages, we have tried to give an indication of Aravinda's special contribution to the development of the principle of nationalism. But the path of the reformer, of the man of ideas, is never smooth in this world; and Aravinda has not been without his fair share of the trials and tribulations of life. Of his prosecution on a charge of sedition, we have already made slight mention; and it only remains to give an account of his more memorable trial on a charge of treason and conspiracy. On the 30th of April 1908, there was a bomb explosion at Mozzafferpore resulting in the death of two European ladies. On the 2nd of May while Aravinda Babu was still in bed, his house was raided by a *posse* of constables headed by Supdt. Creagan and Inspector Benode Behari Gupta. They pointed—the cowards!—a revolver at the breast of Miss Sarojini Ghosh, the sister



of Aravinda; placed irons on hands, put a rope round his waist, and then haled him to the Central Police Office of Calcutta. It may be mentioned here that from sometime before Aravinda had received mysterious hints concerning a calamity which was impending over his head but with the confidence born of innocence he had disregarded them all. Be that as it may, on Monday, he was presented before Mr. Thornhill, the Police Magistrate of Calcutta, and afterwards before Mr. Birley, the Joint-Magistrate of Alipore.

The preliminary trial before Mr. Birley commenced on the 18th of May. By that time the list of the accused had swelled to 39—many of them being youngsters and mere slips of boys, with nothing very revolutionary about them, at least in their looks. There were some interesting features about the trial. For one thing some of the usual law officers of the Crown appeared on behalf of the prosecution; and the case was entrusted to Mr. Eardley Norton—that “Demosthenes from the benighted province,” as a Bengali barrister described him with irreverent wit. Again, unusual precautions, were taken for guarding the prisoners as well as the precincts of the Court-house; but these precautions, as we shall presently see, did not prove to be of much avail. The course of the trial was marked by many dramatic and tragic incidents. In the first place, one of the accused turned approver and, in his confession, he incriminated all sorts and conditions of men. The approver,—Narendra Nath Gossain,—was murmured by two of his fellow-accused, Kanai Lal Dutt and Satyendra

Nath Bose. Both of them were subsequently hanged, though at different dates—Satyendra having appealed against his sentence. The dead body of Kani Lal was allowed to be cremated outside the gaol compound and the procession that followed the body was probably composed of a larger number of persons than any funeral procession that Calcutta had ever seen.

In the meantime, the preliminary trial before the Magistrate came to an end. Of the original accused, one had been murdered, two had been hanged, and one was discharged. The rest were all committed for trial at the sessions.

The trial in the sessions court commenced on the 23rd of October. One interesting feature of the proceedings, namely, the previous accidental relation between judge and accused, we have already touched on before. But this trial too was not without a tragedy of its own. Babu Asutosh Biswas, who was assisting Mr. Norton in the conduct of the prosecution, was shot dead on the 10th February, 1909. The trial came to an end after Mr. Norton had spoken for 16, and Mr. C. R. Das, counsel for Aravinda, for 8 days. Perhaps this is not the place to make any comments on the speeches of the counsel ; but this we may say without fear of contradiction that the address of Mr. C. R. Das was a masterly specimen of forensic eloquence—nervous, compact, closely argued and with touch of genuine passion which is the essential characteristic of great oratory.

The Assessors delivered their opinion on the 13th of April. They unanimously declared Aravinda Babu not

guilty on all the charges ; and Mr. Beachcroft, who did not deliver his judgment till a month later, agree with the Assessors in this finding. On the 6th of May, more than twelve months after the day when he had been sent to gaol, Aravinda was released from captivity ; and on the same evening, he returned to the house of his uncle, Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra.

And here, when one chapter of his life has come to a definite close, we think it is time to part company with Babu Aravinda Ghosh. For a brief while we have accompanied him in his toilsome pilgrimage through the weary ways of the world. We have tried to give an outline of the short outer history of his life, and we have tried with the help of his speeches, writings and actions to get at a right understanding of the sort of man that he is. Since his release from gaol, Aravinda has gone about from place to place giving eloquent discourses on the doctrines of nationalism, and wherever he has gone, he has been greeted with fervent and affectionate enthusiasm. The people have drunk in his words with avidity and have lifted up their hands and blessed him for his message of strength, hope and consolation. His one year's seclusion in gaol has deepened the strength of his faith and has brightened, not quenched, the fire of his zeal. He is like gold, thrice tested in fire. There are who call him in mocking derision, a visionary—a dreamer. We shall not quarrel with them to-day ; nay, we shall accept their phrase and bind it as a crown of glory on his head. Yes, Aravinda Ghosh is a dreamer—but he has dreamt golden dreams for his country and people

—visions of glory and triumph, yet visions as they are, not untouched by a gleam of far-off prophecy.\*

Thus he has sown the seed of political side of a national movement to grow and fructify. Now he is at Pondicherry leading the life of a *Yogi*, under whose editorship a monthly magazine, ARYA of pure philosophy is being conducted to enlighten the down-trodden masses under western civilisation.

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*\*This sketch originally appeared in the MODERN REVIEW, November 1909. Owing to the author's illness it has not had the benefit of his revision.*

## THE AGE OF KALIDASA \*

Valmekie, Vyasa and Kalidasa are the history of ancient India, its sole and sufficient history. They are types and exponents of three periods in the development of the human soul, types and exponents also of the three great powers which dispute and clash in the imperfect and half-formed temperament and harmonise in the formed and perfect. For, their works are pictures at ones minute and grandiose of the three ages of our Aryan civilisation of which the first was predominatingly moral, the second predominatingly intellectual, the third predominatingly material. The fourth power of the soul spiritual, which can alone govern and harmonise the others by fusion with them had not, though it pervaded and powerfully influenced each successive development, any separate age of predominance, did not like others possess the whole race as with an obsession. It is because, conjoining in themselves the highest and most varied poetical gifts they at the same time represent and mirror their age and humanity by their interpretative largeness and power that our three chief poets hold their supreme place and bear comparison with the greatest world-names, with Homer, Shakespeare and Dante.

It has been said, truly, that the Ramayan represents an ideal society and assumed, illogically, that it must.

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\* Reprint from The Indian Review, 1902.



therefore represent an imaginary one. The argument ignores the alternative of a real society idealised. No poet could evolve out of his own imagination a picture at once so colossal, so minute and so consistent in every detail. No number of poets could do it without stumbling into fatal incompatibilities either of fact or of view, such as we find defacing the Mahabharata. This is not the place to discuss the question of Valmekie's age and authorship. This much, however, may be said that after excluding the Uttarakanda, which is later work, and some amount of interpolation, for the most part easy enough to detect, and reforming the text which is not unfrequently in a state of truly shocking confusion, the Ramayan remains on the face of it the work of a single mighty and embracing mind. According to the balance of probability the writer preceded even the original draft of Vyasa's epic and lived before the age of Krishna and the men of the Mahabharata. The nature of the poem and much of its subject matter justify, farther, the conclusion that Valmekie wrote in a political and social atmosphere much resembling that which surrounded Vyasa. He lived, that is to say, in an age of approaching is not present disorder and turmoil, of great revolutions and unbridled aristocratic violence, when the governing chivalry, the Kshatriya caste, in its pride of strength was asserting its own code of morals as the one rule of conduct. We may note the plain assertion of this stand-point by Jarasundha in the Mahabharata and Valmekie's emphatic and repeated protest against it through the mouth of Rama. This ethical code was like all aristocratic codes of conduct

full of high chivalry and the spirit of *noblesse oblige*, but a little loose in sexual morality on the masculine side and indulgent to violence and the strong hand. To the pure and delicate moral temperament of Valmekie, imaginative, sensitive, enthusiastic, shot through with rays of visionary idealism and ethereal light, this looseness and violence were shocking and abhorrent. He could sympathise with them, as he sympathised with all that was wild and evil and anarchic, with the imaginative and poetical side of his nature, because he was an universal creative mind driven by his art-sense to penetrate, feel and re-embody all that the world contained; but to his intellect and peculiar emotional temperament they were distasteful. He took refuge therefore in a past age of national greatness and virtue, distant enough to be idealised, but near enough to have left sufficient materials for a great picture of civilization which would serve his purpose—an age, it is important to note, of grandiose imperial equipoise; such as must have existed in some form at least since a persistent tradition of it runs through Sanskrit literature. In the frame work of his imperial age is puissant imagination created a marvellous picture of the human world as it might be if the actual and existing form and materials of society were used to the best and purest advantage, and an equally marvellous picture of another non-human world in which aristocratic violence, strength, self-will, lust and pride ruled supreme and idealised or rather colossalised; brought these two worlds into warlike collision by the hostile meeting of their champions and utmost

evolutions of their peculiar character-types, Rama and Ravana ; and so created the Ramayan, the grandest and most paradoxical poem in the world, which becomes unmatched by disdaining all consistent pursuit of sublimity, supremely artistic by putting aside all the conventional limitations of art, magnificently dramatic by disregarding all dramatic illusion, and uniquely epic by handling the least as well as the most epic material. Not all perhaps can enter at once into the spirit of this masterpiece ; but those who have once done so, will never admit any poem in the world as its superior.

My point here, however is that it gives us the picture of an entirely moralised civilisation; containing indeed vast material development and immense intellectual power but both moralised, subordinated to the needs of purity of temperament and delicate ideality of action. Valmekie's mind seems nowhere to be familiarised with the stern intellectual gospel of *nishkama dharma*, that morality of disinterested passionless activity, promulgated by Krishna of Dwaraca and formulated by Krishna of the Island, which is one great keynote of the Mahabharata. Had he known it, I doubt whether the strong leaven of sentimentalism and femininity in his nature would not have rejected it ; such temperaments when they admire strength, admire it manifested and forceful rather than self-contained. Valmekie's characters act from emotional or imaginative enthusiasm, not from intellectual conviction ; an enthusiasm of morality actuates Rama, an enthusiasm of immorality tyrannises over Ravana.

Like all mainly moral temperaments, he instinctively insisted on one old established code of morals being universally observed as the only basis of ethical stability, avoided casuistic developments and distasted innovators in metaphysical thought as by their persistent and searching questions dangerous to the established bases of morality, especially to its wholesome ordinairiness and everydayness. Valmekie, therefore, the father of our secular poetry, stands for that early and finely moral civilisation which was the true heroic age of the Hindu spirit.

Vyasa, following Valmekie, stood still farther on into the era of aristocratic turbulence and disorder. If there is any kernel of truth in the legends about him, he must have contributed powerfully to the establishment of those imperial forms of government and society which Valmekie had idealised. It is certain that he celebrated and approved the policy of a great aristocratic statesman who aimed at the subjection of his order to the rule of a central imperial power which should typify its best tendencies and control or expel its worst. But while Valmekie was a soul out of harmony with its surroundings and looking back to an ideal past, Vyasa was a man of his time, profoundly in sympathy with it full of its tendencies, hopeful of its results and looking forward to an ideal future. The one was a conservative imperialist advocating return to a better but dead model, the other a liberal imperialist looking forward to a better but unborn model. Vyasa accordingly does not revolt from the aristocratic code of morality; it harmonises with his own proud and strong spirit and he

accepts it as a basis for conduct, but purified and transfigured by the illuminating idea of the *nishkama-dharma*.

But above all intellectually is his grand note. He is profoundly interested in ideas, in metaphysics, in ethical problems ; he subjects morality to casuistic tests from which the more delicate moral tone of Valmekie's spirit shrank ; he boldly erects above ordinary ethics a higher principle of conduct having its springs in intellect and strong character ; he treats government and society from the standpoint of a practical and discerning statesmanlike mind, idealising solely for the sake of a standard. He touches in fact all subjects, and, whatever he touches, he makes fruitful and interesting by originality, penetration and a sane and bold vision. In all this he is the son of civilisation he has mirrored to us, a civilisation in which both morality and material development are powerfully intellectualised. Nothing is more remarkable in all the characters of the Mahabharata than this puissant intellectualism ; every action of theirs seems to be impelled by an immense driving force of mind solidifying in character and therefore conceived and outlined as in stone. This orgiastic force of the intellect is at least as noticeable as the impulse of moral or immoral enthusiasm behind each great action of the Ramayan. Throughout the poem the victorious and manifold mental activity of the age is prominent and gives its character to its civilisation. There is far more of thought in action than in the Ramayan, for less of thought in repose : the one pictures a time of gigantic ferment and



disturbance ; the other, as far as humanity is concerned, an age of equipoise, order and tranquillity.

Many centuries after Vyasa, perhaps a thousand years or even more, came the third great embodiment of the national consciousness, Kalidasa. Far more had happened between his own time and Vyasa's than between Vyasa's and Valmiki's. He came when the dæmonic orgy of character and intellect had worked itself out and ended in producing at once its culmination and reaction in Buddhism. There was everywhere noticeable a petrifying of the national temperament, visible to us in the tendency to codification ; philosophy was being codified, morals were being codified : knowledge of any and every sort was being codified : it was on one side of its nature an age of scholars, legists, dialecticians, philosophical formalisers. On the other side the enthusiasm and poetry of the nation was pouring itself into things material into the life of the senses, into the pride of life and beauty. The arts of painting, architecture, song, dance, drama, gardening, jewellery, all that can administer to the wants of great and luxurious capitals, received a grand impetus which brought them to their highest technical perfection. That this impetus came from Greek sources or from the Buddhists seems hardly borne out : the latter may rather have shared in the general tendencies of the time than originated them, and the Greek theory gives us a maximum of conclusions with a minimum of facts. I do not think, indeed, it can be maintained that this period, call it classical or material or what one will, was marked off from its predecessor

by any clear division: such a partition would be contrary to the law of human development. Almost all the concrete features of the age may be found as separate facts in ancient India: codes existed from old time; art and drama were of fairly ancient origin, to whatever date we may assign their development; physical yoga processes existed almost from the first, and the material development portrayed in the Ramayana and Mahabharata is hardly less splendid than that of which the Raghuvamsa is so brilliant a picture. But whereas before, these were subordinated to more lofty ideals, now they prevailed and became supreme, occupying the best energies of the race and stamping themselves on its life and consciousness. In obedience to this impulse the centuries between the rise of Buddhism and the advent of Sankaracharya became, though not agnostic and sceptical, for they rejected violently not doctrines of Charvak, yet profoundly scientific and materialistic even in their spiritualism. It was therefore the great age of formalised metaphysics, science, law, art and the sensuous luxury which accompanies art.

Nearer the beginning than the end of this period when India was systematising her philosophies and developing her arts and sciences, turning from Upanishad to Purana, from the high rarefied peaks of Vedanta and Sankhya with their inspiring sublimities and bracing keenness to the physical methods of Yoga and the dry intellectualism of the Nyaya or else to the warm sensuous humanism of emotional religion, before its full tendencies had asserted themselves, in some spheres

before it had taken the steps its attitude portended, Kalidasa arose in Ujjayini and gathered up in himself its present tendencies while he portended many of its future developments. He himself seems to have been a man gifted with all the learning of his age, rich, aristocratic, moving wholly in high society, familiar with and fond of life in the most luxurious metropolis of his time, passionately attached to the arts, acquainted with the sciences, deep in law and learning, versed in the formalised philosophies. He has some notable resemblances to Shakespeare; among others his business was, like Shakespeare's, to sum up the immediate past in the terms of the present: at the same time he occasionally informed the present with hints of the future. Like Shakespeare also he seems not to have cared deeply for religion. In creed he was a Vedantist and in ceremony a Sivaite, but he seems rather to have accepted these as the orthodox forms of his time and country, recommended to him by his intellectual preference and æsthetic affinities, than to have satisfied with them any profound religious want. In morals also he accepted and glorified the set and scientifically elaborate ethics of the codes but seems himself to have been destitute of the finer elements of morality. We need not accept any of the ribald and witty legends with which the Hindu decadence surrounded his name; but no unbiassed student of Kalidasa's poetry can claim for him either moral fervour or moral strictness. His writings show indeed a keen appreciation of high ideal and lofty thought, but the appreciation is æsthetic in its nature: he elaborates and seeks to

bring out the effectiveness of these on the imaginative sense of the noble and grandiose, applying to the things of the mind and soul the same sensuous standard as to the things of sense themselves. He has also the natural high aristocratic feeling for all that is proud and great and vigorous, and so far as he has it, he has exultation and sublimity; but æsthetic grace and beauty and symmetry sphere in the sublime and prevent it from standing out with the bareness and boldness which is the sublime's natural presentation. His poetry has, therefore, never been, like the poetry of Valmiki and Vyasa, a great dynamic force for moulding heroic character or noble or profound temperament. In all this he represented the highly material civilisation to which he belonged.

Yet some dynamic force a poet must have, some general human inspiration of which he is the supreme exponent; or else he cannot rank with the highest. Kalidasa is the great, the supreme poet of the senses, of æsthetic beauty, of sensuous emotion. His main achievement is to have taken every poetic element, all great poetical forms, and subdued them to a harmony of artistic perfection set in the key of sensuous beauty. In continuous gift of seizing an object and creating it to the eye he has no rival in literature. A strong visualising faculty such as the greatest poets have in their most inspired descriptive moments, was with Kalidasa an abiding and unfailing power, and the concrete presentation which this definiteness of vision demanded, suffused with an intimate and sovran feeling for all sensuous beauty of colour and form,

constitute the characteristic Kalidasian manner. He is besides a consummate artist, profound in conception and suave in execution, a master of sound and language who has moulded for himself out of the infinite possibilities of the Sanskrit tongue a verse and diction which are absolutely the grandest, most puissant and most full-voiced of any human speech, a language of the Gods. The note struck by Kalidasa when he built Sanskrit into that palace of noble sound, is the note which meets us throughout all this last great millennium of Aryan literature. Its characteristic features are brevity, gravity and majesty, a noble harmony of verse, a strong and lucid beauty of chiselled prose, above all an epic precision of phrase, weighty, sparing and yet full of colour and sweetness. Moreover it is admirably flexible, suiting itself to all forms from the epic to the lyric, but most triumphantly to the two greatest, the epic and the drama. In his epic style Kalidasa adds to these permanent feature a more than Miltonic fulness and grandiose pitch of sound and expression, in his dramatic an extraordinary grace and suavity which makes it adaptable to conversation and the expression of dramatic shade and subtly blended emotion.

With these supreme gifts Kalidasa had the advantage of being born into an age with which he was in temperamental sympathy and a civilisation which lent itself naturally to his peculiar descriptive genius. It was an aristocratic civilisation, as indeed were those which had preceded it, but it far more nearly resembled the aristocratic civilisation of Europe by its material



luxury, its æsthetic tastes, its polite culture, its keen worldly wisdom and its excessive appreciation of wit and learning. Religious and ethical thought and sentiment were cultivated such as in France under Louis XIV. more in piety and profession than as swaying the conduct; they pleased the intellect or else touched the sentiment but did not govern the soul. It was bad taste to be irreligious, but it was not bad taste to be sensual or even in some respects immoral. The splendid and luxurious courts of this period supported the orthodox religion and morals out of convention, conservatism, the feeling for established order and the inherited tastes and prejudices of centuries, not because they fostered any deep religious or ethical sentiment. Yet they applauded high moral ideas if presented to them in cultured and sensuous poetry much in the same spirit that they applauded voluptuous description similarly presented. The ideals of morality were much lower than of old; drinking was openly recognised and indulged in by both sexes; purity of life was less valued than in any other period of our civilisation. Yet the unconquerable monogamous instinct of the high-class Hindu woman seems to have prevented promiscuous vice and the disorganisation of the home which was the result of a similar state of society in ancient Rome, in Italy of the Renaissance, in France under the Bourbons and in England under the later Stuarts. The old spiritual tendencies were also rather latent than dead, the mighty pristine ideals still existed in theory, they are out lined with extraordinary grandeur by Kalidasa—nor had they yet been weakened and disheroized. It

was as has been said of the century of Louis XIV. an age of great sins and great repentances; for the inherent spirituality of the Hindu nature finally revolted against that splendid and unsatisfying life of the senses. But of this later phase Bhartrihari and not Kalidasa is the poet. The earlier writer seems to have lived in the full heyday of the material age before the setting in of the sickness and dissatisfaction and disillusionment which invariably follow a long outburst of materialism.

The flourishing of the plastic arts had prepared surroundings of great external beauty for Kalidasa's poetic work to move in. The appreciation of beauty in nature, of the grandeur of mountain and forest, the loveliness of lakes and rivers, the charm of bird and beast life had become a part of contemporary culture. These and the sensitive appreciation of trees and plants and hills as living things, the sentimental feeling of brotherhood with animals which had influenced and been encouraged by Buddhism, the romantic mythological world still farther romanticised by Kalidasa's warm humanism and fine poetic sensibility, gave him exquisite grace and grandeur of background and scenic variety. The delight of the eye, the delight of the ear, smell, palate, touch, the satisfaction of the imagination and taste are the texture of his poetical creation, and into this he has worked the most beautiful flowers of emotion and sensuous ideality. The scenery of his work is a universal paradise of beautiful things. All therein obeys one law of earthly grace; morality is æstheticised, intellect suffused and governed with the

sense of beauty. And yet this poetry does not swim in languor, does not dissolve itself in sensuous weakness; it is not heavy with its own dissoluteness, heavy of curl and heavy of eyelid, cloyed by its own sweets, as the poetry of the senses usually is: Kalidasa is saved from this by the chastity of his style, his aim at burdened precision and energy of phrase, his unsleeping artistic vigilance.

As in the Ramayana and Mahabharata we have an absorbing intellect impulse or a dynamic force of moral or immoral excitement driving the characters, so we have in Kalidasa an orgiastic sense impulse thrilling through speech and informing action. An imaginative pleasure in all shades of thought and of sentiment, a rich delight in their own emotions, a luxuriousness of ecstasy and grief, an entire abandonment to amorous impulse and rapture, a continual joy of life and seeking of beauty mark the period when India having for the time exhausted the possibilities of soul-experience attainable through the spirit and the imaginative reason, was now attempting to find out the utmost each sense could feel, probing and sounding the soul-possibilities in matter and seeking God through the senses. The emotional religion of the Vaishnava Puranas which takes, as its type of the relation between the human soul and the Supreme, the passion of a woman for her lover, was already developing. The corresponding development of Sivaism may not yet have established itself; but on a higher philosophical plane the same idea works itself into Kalidasa's poetry. The birth of the War-God is at once the Paradise Lost and the De

Rerum Natura of this age, its masterpiece and *magnum opus* on the epic level; and the central idea of this great representative poem, the marriage of Siva and Parvati, typifying undoubtedly the union of Purusha and Prakriti, the supreme soul and its material nature by which the world is created, but also and more definitely typifying the soul's search for and attainment of God. The two most spiritual and philosophical conceptions possible to religious thought are thus worked out through the sex-idea, and the culmination is one of the most glowing, voluptuous and human pieces of erotic descriptions in literature. We have, therefore, the last stage of the Vaishnava conception in the later Puranas anticipated by Kalidasa; for as I have already suggested, while summing up in himself the tendencies of his time, he often anticipates their later developments. Such are the philosophic conceptions, such the religious imaginings of the mediæval sense-civilisation in India. Of that civilisation the Seasons is the first immature self-expression, the House of Raghu the epic, the Cloud Messenger the descriptive elegy, Shakuntala with her two sister loveplays the dramatic picture and the Birth of the War-God the grand religious and philosophical fable. Kalidasa, who typified so many sides and faces of it in writing, stands for its representative man and genius, as was Vyasa of the intellectual civilisation and Valmiki of the moral.

It was the supreme misfortune of India that before she was able to complete the round of her experience and gather up the fruit of her long millenniums of

search and travail by commencing a fourth and perfect age in which moral, intellectual and material development should be all equally perfected and all spiritualised the inrush of barbarians broke in on her endless, solitary agony of effort and beat her national life into fragments. We see the first preparatory and initial striving towards such an age in the renovating work of Shankaracharya, restoring intellect and spirituality to their pinnacle high above the emotions, proving matter out of existence; in the dramas of Bhavabhuti in which the emotions themselves were purified and exalted from the service of sense to the service of the soul, and even sensuousness was forced to share in the general exaltation and obey the summons of purity; and in the re-assertion in social life of sobriety and purity as ideals imperatively demanded by the national conscience. But the work was interrupted before it had well begun; and India was left with only the dregs of the material age to piece out her existence. Yet even the little that was done, proved to be much; for it saved her from gradually petrifying and perishing as almost all the old civilisations of Assyria, Egypt, Greece, Rome, petrified, and perished, as the material civilisation of Europe, unless spiritualised, must before long petrify and perish. That there is still a vitality, that our country yet nourishes the seeds of re-birth and renewal, we owe to Shankaracharya and the men who prepared the way for him. Will she yet arise, now combine her past and continue the great dream where she left it off, shaking off on the one hand the soils and filth that have grown on her in her period of downfall



and futile struggle, and re-asserting on the other her peculiar individuality and national type against the callow civilisation of the West with its dogmatic and intolerant knowledge, its still more dogmatic and intolerant ignorance, its deification of selfishness, and force, its violence and its ungoverned Titanism. In doing so lies her one chance of salvation.

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## KALIDASA'S SEASONS

### I

#### ITS AUTHENTICITY

The Seasons of Kalidasa is one of those early works of a great poet which are even more interesting to a student of his evolution than his later masterpieces. We see his characteristic gift even in the immature workmanship and uncertain touch and can distinguish the persistent personality in spite of the defective self-expression. Where external record is scanty, this interest is often disturbed by the question of authenticity, and where there is any excuse for the doubt, it has first to be removed. The impulse which leads us to deny authenticity to early and immature work, is natural and almost inevitable. When we turn from the great harmonies and victorious imaginations of the master to the raw and perhaps faltering workmanship of these uncertain beginnings, we are irresistably impelled to cry out, "This is not by the same hand." But the impulse, however natural, is not always reasonable. The maxim that a poet is born and not made is only

true in the sense that great poetical powers are there in the mind of the child, and in this sense the same remark might be applied with no less truth to every species of human genius ; philosophers, sculptors, painters, critics, orators, statesmen all are born and not made. But because poetical genius is rarer or at any rate wider and more lasting in its appeal than any other, the popular mind with its ready gift for seizing one aspect of truth out of many and crystallizing error into the form of a proverb, has exalted the poet into a splendid freak of Nature exempt from the general law. A man without the inborn oratorical fire may be trained into a good speaker, another without the master's inspiration of form and colour works out for himself a blameless technique, but so many a meagre talent become by diligence a machine for producing correct verse. Poetical genius needs experience and self-discipline as much as any other and by its very complexity more than most. This is eminently true of great poets with a varied gift. A narrow though a high genius works best on a single line and may show perfection at an early stage ; but powerful and complex minds like Shakespeare or Kalidasa seldom find themselves before a more advanced period. Their previous work is certain to be full of power, promise and genius, but it will also be flawed, unequal and often imitative. This imperfection arises naturally from the greater difficulty in imposing the law of harmony of their various gifts on the bodily case which is the instrument of the spirit's self-expression.

To arrive at this harmony requires time and effort,

and meanwhile the work will often be halting and unequal, varying between inspiration expressed and the failure of vision or expression. There is no more many-sided, rich and flexible genius in literature than Kalidasa's, and in his case especially we must be on our guard against basing denial of authenticity on imperfection and minor differences. We have to judge, first, by the presence or absence of the essential and indefinable self of Kalidasa which we find apparent in all his indubitable work, however various the form or subject, and after that on those nameable characteristics which are the grain and fibre of his genius and least imitable by others. In the absence of external evidence, which is in itself of little value unless received from definite and contemporary or almost contemporary sources, the test of personality is all-important; accidents and details are only useful as corroborative evidence; for these are liable to variation and imitation, but personality is a distinguishable and permanent presence as fugitive to imitation as to analysis. Even a slight fineness of literary palate can perceive the difference between the *Nalodaya* and Kalidasa's genuine work. Not only does it belong to an age or school in which poetical taste was debased and artificial, the poetical counterpart of those prose works for whose existence the display of scholarship seems to be the chief justification,—but it presents in this matter of personality and persistent characteristics no sufficient point of contact either with the *Shakuntala* or the *Kumarasambhava* or even with the *House of Raghu*. But in the *Seasons* Kalidasa's

personality is distinctly perceived as well as his main characteristics, his force of vision, his architecture of style, his pervading sensuousness, the peculiar temperament of his similes, his characteristic strokes of thought and imagination, his individual and inimitable cast of description. Much of it is as yet in a half-developed state, crude consistence not yet fashioned with the masterly touch he soon manifested, but Kalidasa is there quite as evidently as Shakespeare in his earlier work, the *Venus and Adonis* or *Lucrece*. Defects which the riper Kalidasa avoids, are not uncommon in this poem,—repetition of ideas, use of more words than are absolutely required, haphazard recurrence of words and phrases not to produce a designed effect but from carelessness, haste or an insufficient vocabulary; there is moreover a constant sense of uncertainty in the touch and a frequent lack of finished design. The poet has been in too much haste to vent his sense of poetical power and not sufficiently careful that the expression should be the best he could compass. And yet immature, greatly inferior in chastity and elegance to his best work, marred by serious faults of conception, bearing evidence of hurry and slovenliness in the execution, the *Seasons* is for all this not only suffused by a high though unchastened beauty, but marked with many of the most individual and essential features of Kalidasa's strong and exuberant genius. The defects are those natural to the early work of a rich sensuous temperament eagerly conscious of poetical power but not yet instructed and chastened.

## II

## THE SUBSTANCE OF THE POEM

Kalidasa's *Seasons* is the first poem in any literature written with the express object of describing Nature. It is precisely similar in its aim to a well-known eighteenth-century failure in the same direction, Thomson's *Seasons*. The names tally, the forms correspond, both poems adopting the plan of devoting a canto to each season, and the method so far agrees that the poets have attempted to depict each season in its principal peculiarities, scenes and characteristic incidents. But here all parallel ends. Wide as the gulf between the genius of one of the greatest world-poets and the talent of the eighteenth-century versifier is the difference between the gathered strength and compact force, the masterly harmonies and the living truth of the ancient Indian poem and the diffuse artificiality and rhetoric of the modern counterpart. And the difference of spirit is not less. The poet of a prosaic and artificial age when the Anglo-Saxon emerged in England and got himself Gallicised, Thomson was unable to grasp the first psychological laws of such descriptive poetry. He fixed his eye on the object but he could only see the outside of it. Instead of creating he tried to photograph. And he did not remember or did not know that Nature is nothing to poetry except in so far as it is either a frame, setting or ornament to life or else a living presence to the spirit. Nature interpreted by Wordsworth as a part of his own and the universal consciousness, by Shakespeare



as an accompaniment or note in the orchestral music of life, by more modern poets as an element of decoration in the living world-picture is possible in poetry; as an independent but dead existence it has no place either in the world itself or in the poet's creation. In his relations to the external, life and mind are the man, the man senses being only instruments, and what he seeks outside himself is a response in kind to his own deeper reality. What the eye gathers is only important in so far as it is related to this real man or helps this expectation to satisfy itself. Kalidasa with his fine artistic feeling, his vitality and warm humanism and his profound sense of what true poetry must be, appears to have divined from the beginning the true place of Nature in the poet's outlook. He is always more emotional and intellectual than spiritual, like Shakespeare to whom he has so many striking resemblances. We must not expect from him the magical insight of Valmiki, still less spiritual discernment of Wordsworth. He looks inside but not too far inside. But he realises always the supreme importance of life as the only abiding foundation of a poem's immortality.

The first canto is surcharged with the life of men and animals and the life of trees and plants in summer. It sets ringing a note of royal power and passion and promises a poem of unexampled vigour and interest. But to ring variations on this note through six cantos seems to have been beyond the young poet's as yet limited experience and narrow imaginative mastery. He fell back on the life of sensuous passion with images

of which, no doubt, his ungoverned youth was most familiar. But instead of working them into the main thought he turned to them for a prop and, when his imaginative memory failed him, multiplied them to make up the deficiency. This lapse from artistic uprightness brought its own retribution, as all such lapses will. From one error indeed Kalidasa's vigorous and aspiring temperament saved him. He never relaxed into the cloying and effeminate languor of sensuous description which offends us in Keats' earlier work. The Malavas with all their sensuousness, luxury and worship of outward beauty were a masculine and strenuous race, and their male and vigorous spirit is as prominent in Kalidasa as his laxer tendencies. His sensuousness is not coupled with weak self-indulgence but is rather a bold and royal spirit seizing the beauty and delight of earth to itself and compelling all the senses to minister to the enjoyment of the spirit rather than enslaving the spirit to do the will of the senses. The difference perhaps amounts to no more than a lesser or greater force of vitality, but it is, for the purpose of poetry, a real and important difference. The spirit of delightful weakness swooning with excessive beauty gives a peculiar charm of soft laxness to poems like the Endymion, but it is a weakening charm to which no virile temperament will trust itself. The poetry of Kalidasa satisfies the sensuous imagination without enervating the virile chords of character, for virile energy is an unfailing characteristic of the best Sanskrit poetry, and Kalidasa is inferior to none in this respect. His artistic

error has nevertheless had disastrous effect on the substance of this poem.

It is written in six cantos answering to the six Indian seasons, Summer, Rain, Autumn, Winter, Dew and Spring. Nothing can exceed the splendour and power of the opening. We see the poet revelling in the yet virgin boldness, newness and strength of his genius and confident of winning the kingdom of poetry by violence. For a time the brilliance of his work seems to justify his ardour. In the poem on Summer we are at once seized by the marvellous force of imagination, by the unsurpassed closeness and clear strenuousness of his gaze on the object; in the expression there is a grand and concentrated precision which is our first example of the great Kalidasian manner, and an imperial power, stateliness and brevity of speech which is our first instance of the high classical diction. But this canto stands on a higher level than the rest of the poem. It is as if the poet had spent the best part of his force in his first enthusiasm and kept back an insufficient reserve for the sustained power proper to a long poem. The decline in energy does not disappoint at first. The poem on Rain gives of a number of fine picture with a less vigorous touch but a more dignified restraint and a graver and nobler harmony and even in the Autumn, where the falling off of vigour becomes very noticeable, there is compensation in a more harmonious finish of style, management and imagery. We are led to believe that the poet is finding himself and will rise to a finale of flawless beauty. Then comes disappointment. In the next two cantos

Kalidasa seems to lose hold of the subject; the touches of natural description cease or are, with a few exceptions, perfunctory and even conventional, and the full force of his genius is thrown into a series of extraordinary pictures, as vivid as if actually executed in line and colour, of feminine beauty and sensuous passion. The two elements, never properly fused, cease even to stand side by side. For all description of the winter we have a few stanzas describing the cold and the appearance of fields, plants, waters in the wintry days, by no means devoid of beauty but wanting in vigour, closeness of vision and eagerness. In the poem on Dew-tide the original purpose is even fainter. Perhaps the quietness of these seasons, the absence in them of the most brilliant pictorial effects and grandest distinctive features, made them a subject uninspiring to the unripeness and love of violence natural to a richly-endowed temperament in its unschooled youth. But the Spring is the royal season of the Indian year and should have lent itself peculiarly to Kalidasa's inborn passion for colour, sweetness and harmony. The closing canto should have been the crown of the poem. But the poet's sin pursues him and though we see a distinct effort to recover the old pure fervour, it is an effort that fails to sustain itself. There is no falling off, in harmonious splendours of sound and language, but the soul of inspired poetic observation ceases to inform this beautiful mould and the close fails and languishes. It is noticeable that there is a double close to the Spring, the two versions having been left, after the manner of the old editions, side by side. Kalidasa's

strong artistic perception must have suffered acutely from the sense of failure in inspiration and he has accordingly attempted to replace the weak close by an improved and fuller cadence. What is we may presume, the rejected version, is undoubtedly the weaker of the two but neither of them satisfies. The poem on Spring which should have been the finest, is the most disappointing in the whole series.

### III

#### ITS POETIC VALUE

Nevertheless the Seasons is not only an interesting document in the evolution of a poetic genius of the first rank, but in itself a work of extraordinary force and immense promise. Many of the most characteristic Kalidasian gifts and tendencies are here, some of them in crude and unformed vigour but characteristic and unmistakable, giving the poem a striking resemblance of spirit and to some extent of form to the House of Raghu with a far-off prophecy of the mature manner of Kalidasa in the four great masterpieces. There is his power of felicitous and vivid simile, there is the individual turn of his conceits and the single-minded force with which he drives them home, there is his mastering accuracy and life-likeness in description conspicuous especially in the choice and building of the circumstantial epithets. That characteristic of the poet, not the most fundamental and important, which most struck the ancient critics, *upamasu Kalidasa*, Kalidasa for similes, is everywhere present even in such early and immature.



work, and already they have the sharp clear Kalidasian ring, true coin of his mint though not yet possessed of the later high values. The deep blue midsummer sky is a rich purple mass of ground collyrium; girls with their smiling faces and lovelit eyes are "evenings beautifully jewelled with the moon;" the fires burning in the forest look far-off like clear drops of vermilion; the new blades of grass are pieces of split emerald; rivers embracing and tearing down the trees on their banks are evil women distracted with passion slaying their lovers. In all these instances we have the Kalidasian simile, a little superficial as yet and self-conscious, but for all that Kalidasian. When again he speaks of the Moon towards dawn growing pale with shame at the lovelier brightness of a woman's face, of the rains coming like the pomp of some great king all blazing with lights, huge clouds moving along like elephants, the lightning like a streaming banner and the thunder like a peal of drums, of the clouds like archers shooting their rains at the lover from the rainbow stringed with lightning, one recognises, in spite of the occasional extravagance of phrase and violent fancifulness, the Kalidasian form of conceit, not only in the substance which can be borrowed but in the wording and most of all in the economy of phrase expressing a lavish and ingenious fancy. Still more is this apparent in the sensuous and elaborate comparison of things in Nature to women in ornamental attire,—rivers, autumn, the night, the pale priyungou creeper.

Most decisive of all are the strokes of vivid description that give the poem its main greatness and

fulfil its purpose. The seasons live before our eyes as we read. Summer is here with its sweltering heats, the sunbeams burning like fires of sacrifice and the earth swept with whirling gyres of dust driven by intolerable gusts. Yonder lies the lion forgetting his impulse and his mighty leap; his tongue lolls and wearily from time to time he shakes his mane; the snake with lowered head panting and dragging his coils labours over the blazing dust of the road; the wild boars are digging in the dried mud with their long snouts as if they would burrow their way into the cool earth; the bisons wander everywhere dumbly desiring water. The forests are grim and parched, brown and sere; and before long they are in the clutch of fire. But the rains come, and what may be yonder writhing line we see on the slopes? It is the young water of the rains, a new-born rivulet, grey and full of insects and dust and weeds, coiling like a snake down the hillside. We watch the beauty of the mountains streaked everywhere with waterfalls, their high rocks kissed by the stooping clouds and their sides a gorgeous chaos of peacocks: on the horizon the great clouds blue as lotus-petals climb hugely into the sky and move across it in slow procession before a sluggish breeze. Or look at yonder covidara tree, its branches troubled softly with wind, swarming with honey-drunken bees and its leaves tender with little opening buds. The moon at night gazes down at us like an unveiled face in the skies, the racing stream dashes its ripples in the wild duck's face, the wind comes trembling through the burdened rice-stalks, dancing with the crowding courbours,

making one flowery ripple of the lotus-wooded lake. Here there can be no longer any hesitation. These descriptions which remain perpetually with the eye, visible and concrete as an actual painting, belong, in the force with which they are visualised and the magnificent architecture of phrase with which they are presented, to Kalidasa, alone among Sanskrit poets. Other poets, his successors or imitators, such as Bana or even Bhavabhuti, overload their description with words and details; they have often lavish colouring but never an equal power of form; their figures do not appear to stand out of the canvas and live.

And though we do not find here quite the marvellous harmonies of verse and diction we find in the Raghu, yet we do come across plenty of preparation for them. Here for instance is a verse whose rapidity and lightness restrained by a certain half-hidden gravity is distinctly Kalidasa's:

“ Seizing the woodland edges the forest fire increases with the wind and burns in the glens of the mountains; it crackles with shrill shouting in the bamboo reaches; it spreads wide in the grasses gathering hugeness in a moment and harasses the beasts of the wilderness.”

And again for honeyed sweetness and buoyancy what can be more Kalidasian than this?

“ The male cuckoo, drunken with the wine of the mango juice kisses his beloved, glad of the sweet attraction, and yonder bee in the lotus-blossom murmuring hums flattery's sweetness to his sweet.”

There are other stanzas which anticipate something

of the ripest Kalidasian movements by their gravity, suavity and strength.

“Setting the flowering branches of the mango tree quivering, spreading abroad the cry of the cuckoo to the regions the wind fares forth like a lover ravishing the hearts of mortals, by the passing of the dewfalls gracious in the springtide.”

If we take Kalidasa anywhere in his lighter metres we shall at once perceive their essential kinship with the verse of the Seasons.

It is the same suave and skillful management, the same exquisite and unobtrusive weaving of labial, dental and liquid assonance with a recurring sibilant note, the same soft and perfect footing of the syllables. Only the language is richer and more developed. We do not find this peculiar kind of perfection in any other master of classical verse. Bhavabhuti's manner is bold, strenuous, external; Jayadeva's music is based palpably upon assonance and alliteration which he uses with extraordinary brilliance and builds into the most enchanting melodies, but without delicacy, restraint or disguise. If there were any real cause for doubt of the authorship, this verse would clearly vindicate the Seasons for Kalidasa.

Such is this remarkable poem which some, led away by its undoubted splendours, have put in the first rank of Kalidasa's work. Its artistic defects and its comparative crudity forbid us to follow them. It is uncertain in plan, ill-fused, sometimes raw in its imagery, unequal in its execution. But for all that it must have come upon its contemporaries like the

dawning of a new sun in the skies. Its splendid diction and versification, its vigour, fire and farce, its sweetness of spirit and its general promise and to some extent actual presentation of a first-rate poetical genius must have made it a literary event of the first importance. Especially it is significant in its daring, gift of sensuousness. The prophet of a hedonistic civilisation here seizes with no uncertain hand on the materials of his work. A vivid and virile interpretation of sense-life in Nature, a similar interpretation of all elements of human life capable of greatness or beauty, seen under the light of the senses and expressed in the terms of an aesthetic appreciation—this is the spirit of Kalidasa's first work as it is of his last. At present he is concerned only with the outward body of Nature, the physical aspects of things, the vital pleasures and emotions, the joy and beauty of the human body ; but it is the first necessary step on the long road of sensuous and poetic experience and expression he has to travel before he reaches his goal in his crowning work, the Birth of the Wargod, where the Supreme Himself and the mystery of spiritual fulfilment are approached through the portal of the senses.

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## THE RIGHT OF ASSOCIATION

Speech delivered at Howrah in the year 1909.

*(Annual meeting of the Howrah People's Association.)*

My friend, Pandit Gispati Kavyatirtha has somewhat shirked to-day his duty as it was set down for him in the programme and left it to me. I hope you will not mind if I depart a little from the suggestion he has made to me. I would like, instead of assuming the role of a preacher and telling you, your duties which you know well enough yourselves, to take, if you will allow me, a somewhat wider subject, not unconnected with it but of a wider range. In addressing you to-day I wish to say a few words about the general right as association especially as we have practised and are trying to practise it in India to-day. I choose this subject for two reasons, first, because it is germane to the nature of the meeting we are holding, and secondly, because we have seen arbitrary hands laid upon that right of association which is everywhere cherished as a sign and safeguard of liberty and means of development of a common life.

There are three rights which are particularly cherished by free nations. In a nation the sovereign powers of Government may be enjoyed by the few or the many, but there are three things to which the people in European countries cling, which they persistently claim and after which, if they have them not, they always aspire.

These are, first, the right of a free Press, secondly, the right of free public meeting, and, thirdly, the right of association. There is a particular reason why they cling to these three as inherent rights which they claim as sacred and with which authority has no right to interfere. The right of free speech ensures to the people the power which is the greatest means for self-development, and that is the power of spreading the idea. According to our philosophy it is the idea which is building up the world. It is the idea which expresses itself in matter and takes to itself bodies. This is true also in the life of humanity ; it is true in politics in the progress and life of a nation. It is the idea which shapes material institutions. It is the idea which builds up and destroys administrations and Governments. Therefore the idea is a mighty force, even when it has no physical power behind it, even when it is not equipped with means, even when it has not organised itself in institutions and associations. Even then the idea moves freely abroad through the minds of thousands of men and becomes mighty force. It is a power which by the very fact of being impalpable assumes all the greater potency and produces all the more stupendous results. Therefore the right of free speech is cherished because it gives the idea free movement, gives the nation that power which ensures its future development, which ensures success in any struggle for national life, however stripped it may be of means and instruments. It is enough that the idea is there and that the idea lives and circulates. Then the idea materializes itself, finds means and instruments,

conquers all obstacles and goes on developing until it is expressed and established in permanent and victorious forms.

This right of free speech takes the form first of a free Press. It is the Press which on its paper wings carries the idea abroad from city to city, from province to province until a whole continent is bound together by the links of one common aspiration. The right of public meeting brings men together. That is another force. They meet together on a common ground, moved by a common impulse, and as they stand or sit together in their thousands, the force of the idea within moves them by the magnetism of crowds. It moves from one to another till the hidden *shakti*, the mighty force within, stirred by the words thrown out from the platform travels from heart to heart, and masses of men are not only moved by a common feeling and common aspiration, but by the force of that magnetism prepared to act and fulfil the idea. Then comes the right of association, the third of these popular rights. Given the common aspiration, common idea, common enthusiasm and common wish to act, it gives the instrument which binds men to strive towards the common object by common and associated actions: the bonds of brotherhood grow, energy increases, the idea begins to materialize itself to work in practical affairs and that which was yesterday merely an idea, merely a word thrown out by the eloquence of the orator, becomes a question of practical politics. It becomes work for it begins to work and fulfil itself. Therefore the people prize these rights, consider them a valuable asset,

cling to and cherish and will not easily sacrifice them. Therefore they resent the arbitrary interference which takes from them what they consider indispensable for the preparation of national life.

Association is the mightiest thing in humanity ; it is the instrument by which humanity moves, it is the means by which it grows, it is the power by which it progresses towards its final development. There are three ideas which are of supreme moment to human life and have become the watch-words of humanity. Three words have the power of remoulding nations and Governments, liberty, equality and fraternity. These words cast forth into being from the great stir and movement of the eighteenth century stir men because they point to the ultimate goal towards which human evolution ever moves. This liberty to which we progress is liberation out of a state of bondage. We move from a state of bondage to an original liberty. This is what our own religion teaches. This is what our own philosophy suggests as the goal towards which we move, *mukti* or *moksha*. We are bound in the beginning by a lapse from pre-existent freedom, we strive to shake off the bonds, we move forward and forward until we have achieved the ultimate emancipation, that other freedom of the soul, of the body or the whole man, that utter freedom from all bondage towards which humanity is always aspiring. We in India have found a mighty freedom within ourselves, our brother-men in Europe have worked towards freedom without. We have been moving on parallel lines towards the same end. They have

found out the way to external freedom. We have found out the way to internal freedom. We meet and give to each other what we have gained. We have learned from them to aspire after external as they will learn from us to aspire after internal freedom.

Equality is the second term in the triple gospel. It is a thing which mankind has never accomplished. From inequality and through inequality we move, but it is to equality. Our religion, our philosophy sets equality forward as the essential condition of emancipation. All religions send us this message in a different form but it is one message. Christianity says we are all brothers, children of one God. Mahomedanism says we are the subjects and servants of one Allah, we are all equal in the sight of God. Hinduism says there is one without a second. In the high and the low, in the Brahmin and the Sudra, in the saint and the sinner, there is one Narayana, one God and He is the soul of all men. Not until you have realised Him, known Narayana, in all, and the Brahmin and the Sudra, the high and the low, the saint and the sinner are equal in your eyes, then and not until then you have knowledge, you have freedom, until then you are bound and ignorant. The equality which Europe has got is external political equality. She is now trying to achieve social equality. Now-a-days their hard-earned political liberty is beginning to fall a little upon the people of Europe, because they have found it does not give perfect well-being or happiness and it is barren of the sweetness of brotherhood. There is no fraternity in this liberty. It is merely a political liberty. They have not either



the liberty within or the full equality or the fraternity. So they are turning a little from what they have and they say increasingly, "Let us have equality, let us have the second term of the gospel towards which we strive." Therefore socialism is growing in Europe. Europe is now trying to achieve external equality as the second term of the gospel of mankind, the universal ideal. I have said that equality is an ideal even with us but we have not tried to achieve it without. Still we have learned from them to strive after political equality and in return for what they have given us we shall lead them to the secret of the equality within.

Again there is fraternity. It is the last term of the gospel. It is the most difficult to achieve, still it is a thing towards which all religions call and human aspirations rise. There is discord in life, but mankind yearns for peace and love. This is the reason why the gospels which preach brotherhood spread quickly and excite passionate attachment. This was the reason of the rapid spread of Christianity. This was the reason of Buddhism's rapid spread in this country and throughout Asia. This is the essence of humanitarianism, the modern gospel of love for mankind. None of us have achieved our ideals, but human society has always attempted an imperfect and limited fulfilment of it. It is the nature, the *dharma* of humanity that it should be unwilling to stand alone. Every man seeks the brotherhood of his fellow and we can only live by fraternity with others. Through all

its differences and discords humanity is striving to become one.

In India in the ancient times we had many kinds of association, for our life was much more complex and developed than it became afterwards. We had our political associations. We had our commercial associations, our educational, our religious associations. As in Europe, so in India men united together for many interests and worked in association for common ideals. But by the inroads of invasion and calamity our life became broken and disintegrated. Still, though we lost much, we had our characteristic forms in which we strove to achieve that ideal of association and unity. In our society we had organised a common village life. It was a one and single village life in which every man felt himself to be something, a part of a single organism. We had the joint family by which we tried to establish the principle of association in our family life. We have not in our social developments followed the path which Europe has followed. We have never tended to break into scattered units. The principle of association, the attempt to organize brotherhood was dominant in our life. We had the organisation of caste of which now-a-days we hear such bitter complaints. It had no doubt many and possibly inherent defects, but it was an attempt, however imperfect, to base society upon the principle of association, the principle of closely organising a common life founded on common ideas, common feelings, common tendencies, a common moral discipline and sense of corporate honour. Then we had an institution which

in its form was peculiar to India which helped to bind men together in close brotherhood who had a common *guru* or the initiation into a common religious fraternity. All these we had. Then the impact of Europe came upon us and one by one of these institutions began to be broken. Our village life is a thing of the past. The village has lost its community, it has lost its ideals, has lost that mutual cordiality and binding together by an intimate common life which held it up and made its life sweet and wholesome. Everywhere we see in the village moral deterioration and material decay. Our joint family has been broken. We are scattering into broken units and brother no longer looks upon brother. There is no longer the bond of love which once held us together, because the old ties and habit of association are being broken up. Our caste has lost its reality. The life has gone from within it and it is no longer an institution which helps towards unity, a common life or any kind of brotherhood. For once the idea is broken, the ideal within which is the principle of life is impaired, the form breaks up and nothing can keep it together. Therefore we find all these things perishing.

Well, we have been losing these things which were part of our associated life. But on the other hand we looked at the civilised nations of the West who are rushing upon us and breaking our society to pieces, and we saw that in those nations there were other centres of association, other means of uniting together. However imperfectly we began to seize upon them and try to use them, our life in the nineteenth century was a weak and feeble life. It had no ideals, no mighty

impulses behind to drive or uplift it. It was bewildered and broken by the forces that came upon it ; it did not know how to move and in what direction to move. It tried to take whatever it could from the life of the rulers. It strove to take their political associations and develop that principle of association. But our political associations had a feeble life bound together only by a few common interests which by ineffective means they tried to establish or protect. Political association among us led to very little action, for it was an association which looked mainly to others for help and did not look to the sources of strength within. These and other kinds of associations which we then tried to form tended mainly in one direction. They were institutions for the exchange of thought, associations for the spread of knowledge, by which we instinctively but imperfectly tried to encourage and express the growing idea that was within us. This was the one real value of most of our political associations. Then there came the flood of national life, the mighty awakening which appeared first in Bengal. The principle of association began to take a new form, it began to assume a new life. It no longer remained a feeble instrument for the expression of the growing idea within us, it began to become an instrument indeed. It began to become a power. How did this new kind of association grow and to what objects did it address itself ? The movement was not planned by any human brain, it was not foreseen by any human foresight. It came of itself, it came as a flood comes, as a storm comes. There had been slow preparations

which we did not institute or understand. These preparations were mainly among the young men, the rising generation, the hope of India. There the spirit first awoke. At first it was not what we would call an association: it was only a temporary union of young men for a temporary cause. They called themselves by a name which has since become terrible to many of our friends of the Anglo-Indian Press. They called themselves volunteers. For what did they volunteer? They volunteered for service to the representatives of the nation who came together to deliberate for the good of the people. This is how it first came, as an idea of service, the idea of service to those who worked for the motherland. Out of that grew the idea of service to the Mother. That was the first stage and the root from which it grew into our political life. Then there was another stream which rose elsewhere and joined the first. Our Anglo-Indian brothers to whom we owe so much and in so many ways, did us this service also that they always scoffed at us as weaklings, men who were doomed to perpetual slavery and had always been a race of slaves, because the people of Bengal had no martial gift because they are not physically strong, because whoever chooses to strike them can strike and expect no blow in return. Therefore they were unfit for self-government, therefore they must remain slaves for ever.

Our Anglo-Indian friends do not proclaim that theory now. They have changed their tone. For the spirit of the nation could bear the perpetual reproach no longer, the awakening Brahman within our young men could



bear it no longer. Association grew up for physical exercise and the art of self-defence grew into those Samities which you have seen flourishing and recently suppressed. We were determined to wash the blemish away. If this was the blemish, to be weak, if this was the source of our degradation we were determined to remove it. We said, "In spite of our physical weakness we have a strength within us which will remove our defects. We will be a race of brave and strong men. And that we may be so we will establish everywhere these associations for physical exercise." That, one would think, was an innocent object and had nothing in it which anyone could look upon with suspicion. In fact we never thought that we should be looked upon with suspicion. It is the Europeans who have trumpeted physical culture as a most valuable national asset, the thing in which the English-speaking nations have pre-eminently excelled and which was the cause of their success and energy. That was the second seed of association.

There was a third seed and it was the thing for which our hearts yearned, the impulse towards brotherhood. A new kind of association came into being. That was the association which stood by labour and service and self-sacrifice, whose object of existence was to help the poor and nurse the sick. That was flowering out of the Hindu religion. That was what Swami Vivekananda preached. That was what Aswini Kumar Dutt strove to bring into organised existence. That was what the Ramakrishna Mission,

the 'Little Brothers of the poor at Barisal tried to effect. This was the third way in which the new association established itself, the third seed of union, the third stream of tendency seeking fulfilment. All these streams of tendency came together, they united themselves and have been in their broad united purifying current the glory of our national life for the last three years. These Samities of young men by labour, by toil for the country, worship of the motherland, held themselves together and spread the habit of association and the growth of brotherhood over the land. That is their spirit and ideal and that the way in which these associations have been established.

These are the associations which have now been crushed out of existence under a charge which cannot be and has not been maintained, a charge which has been disproved over and over again. It is a monstrous charge. The charge is that these associations are associations of hatred and violence, associations for rebellion and dacoity. That is the charge under which these associations have been suppressed. I have come recently back from Barisal. While I was there I heard and read something of the work of the young men's association in Barisal, the association called the Swadesh Bandhab Samiti which with its networks covered the whole district of Backergunge. This association grew out of a much smaller association started by Aswini Kumar Dutt called the Little Brothers of the Poor. What was the work commenced by these Little Brothers of the Poor? When epidemic broke out, when cholera appeared in all its virulence, the young

men of the Barisal Brajamohan College went out in bands. They nursed the sick, they took charge of those who had been abandoned, they took up in their arms those whom they found lying on the roadside. They were not deterred in those moments by the prejudice of caste or by the difference of creed. The orthodox Brahmin took up in his bosom and nursed the Mahomedan and the Namasudra. They did not mind the epidemic or fear to catch the contagion. They took up and nursed them as brother nurses brother, and thus they rescued many from the grasp of death. Aswini Kumar Dutt is in exile. How did he establish that influence, which caused him to be thought dangerous? By philanthropy, by service. While ordinary colleges under the control of the Government were mere soulless machines where they cram a few packets of useless knowledge into the brain of the student, Aswini Kumar breathed his own lofty and noble soul into the Brajamohan College and made it an engine indeed out of which men were turned, in which hearts and souls were formed. He breathed his noble qualities into the young men who grew up in the cherishing warmth and sunlight of his influence. He made his college an institution which in the essentials of education was a model for any educational institution in the world. This is how he built up his influence among the educated class. They followed him because he had shaped their souls between his hands. It is therefore that they loved him, it is therefore that they saw no fault in him. His influence among the common people was built up by love, service and philanthropy. It was

out of the seed he planted that the Swadesh Bandhab Samiti grew.

What was the work of this Samiti, the existence of which could no longer be tolerated in the interests of the peace and safety of the Empire. First of all it continued with that blessed work which the Little Brothers of the Poor had begun, nursing, serving, saving the poor, the sick and the suffering. They made it their ideal to see that there was no sick man or sick woman of however low a class or depressed a caste, of whom it could be said that they went unhelped in their sickness in the Backergunge district. That was the first crime the association committed.

The second crime was this. These young men went from house to house seeking out the suffering and the hungry when famine broke out in the country. To those who were patiently famishing they brought succour, but they did more. There were many people who belonged to the respectable classes on whom the hand of famine was laid. They would not go for help to the relief works; they would not complain and show their misery to the world. The young men of Barisal sought out these cases and secretly, without injuring the feelings of the suffering, they gave help and saved men and women from starvation. This was the second crime of the Swadesh Bandhab Samiti.

Then there was another. The social life of Bengal is full of discord and quarrels. Brother quarrels with brother and quarrels with bitter hatred. They carry their feud to the lawcourts; they sin against the Mother in themselves and in others; they sow the seed of

lasting enmity and hatred between their families. And beyond this there is the ruin, the impoverishment of persistent litigation. The young men of the Swadesh Bandhab Samiti said, "This should not be tolerated any more. We will settle their differences, we will make peace between brother and brother. We will say to our people, "If there is any dispute let us try to settle it first. If you are dissatisfied with our decision you can always go to the lawcourts; but let us try first." They tried, and hundreds of cases were settled out of court and hundreds of these seeds of enmity and hatred were destroyed. Peace and love and brotherhood began to increase in the land. This was their third crime.

Their fourth offence is a great crime now-a-days. These young men had the hardihood to organise and help the progress of Swadeshi in the land. There was no violence. By love, by persuasion, by moral pressure, by appeals to the Samaj and the interests of the country, they did this work. They helped the growth of our industries; they helped it by organising the condition for their growth, the only condition in which these infants, these feeble and languishing industries can grow, the general determination to take our own goods and not the goods of others, to give preference to our Mother and not to any stranger. In no other district of Bengal, in no other part of India was Swadeshi so well organised, so perfectly organised, so peacefully and quietly organised as in Barisal. That was the last and worst crime they committed. For these crimes they have been proclaimed, they have been forbidden to exist.



This Swadesh Bandhab Samiti carried organisation to a perfection which was not realised in other districts because it is not every district which can have an Aswini Kumar Dutt or a Satish Chander Chatterji. But the same impulse was there, the same tendencies were there. I do not know any single society of the kind in Bengal which has not made some attempt to help the people in times of famine or to bring succour to the sick and suffering or to remove quarrels and discord as well as to help the growth of Swadeshi by organising that exclusive preference to which we have given the name of Boycott. These were general offences, common crimes.

But there was another thing that led to the suppression. This was an association that had that very dangerous and lethal weapon called the lathi. The use of the lathi as a means of self-defence was openly taught and acquired, and if that was not enough there was the imagination of a very highly imaginative police which saw hidden behind the lathi the bomb. Now nobody ever saw the bombs. But the police were quite equal to the occasion; they thought there might be bombs. And what if there were not; their imagination was quite equal to realising any bomb that could not be materialised,—in baitakkhanas and elsewhere. The police suspected that the lathi was the father of the bomb. Their procedure was simple with the simplicity of the highest detective genius. When they heard of a respectable-sized dacoity, they immediately began to reason it out. They said "Now why are there so many dacoities in the land; obviously the

lathi fathered the bomb and the bomb fathers the dacoities. Who have lathis? The samities. Therefore it is proved. The Samities are the dacoits." Our efficient police have always shown a wonderful ability. Generally when a dacoity is committed, the police are nowhere near. They have not altered that; the golden rule still obtains. They are not to be found when the dacoity takes place. They only come up when the dacoity is long over and say "Well, this is the work of the National volunteers." They look round to see what is the nearest Samiti and, if they find any which has been especially active in furthering Swadeshi, they say, "Here is the Samiti." And if there is anyone who was somewhat active in connection with the work of the Samiti, they say at once "Well, here is the man." And if he is a boy of any age from twelve upwards, so much the better. The man or boy is instantly arrested and put into hajat. After rotting there some days or weeks, the police can get no evidence and the man has to be released. That does not frighten the courageous police; they immediately arrest the next likely person belonging to the Samiti. So they go on persevering until they lose all hope of finding or creating evidence. Sometimes they persist, and members of the Samities, sometimes mere boys, have to rot in hajat, until the case goes up to a court of justice and the judge looks at the case and after he has patiently heard it out, has to ask, "Well, but where is the evidence?"

Formerly, you may remember those of you who have lived in the villages, that wherever there was any

man in a village who was physically strong the police wrote down his name in the black book of bud-mashes. He was at once put down as an undesirable. That was the theory, that a man who is physically strong must be a hooligan. Physical development was thus stamped out of our villages and the physique of our villagers began to deteriorate until this movement of akharas and Samities came into existence to rescue the nation from absolute physical deterioration and decay. But this was an immortal idea in the mind of our police and it successfully effected transmigration. It took this form, that this Samities encourage physical education, they encourage lathi-play, therefore they must be the nurseries of violence and dacoity and factories of bombs. Our rulers seems to have accepted this idea of the police. So perhaps this is the crime these Samities have committed. Nothing has been proved of all this easy theorizing. It is yet to be known when and where the bomb has been associated with the work of the Samities in Eastern Bengal. There was indeed a great dacoity in Eastern Bengal and the theory was started that it was done by one of the Samities, but even our able detective police were unable to prove any association in that case. They did catch hold of some young men apparently on principle. There is a confidential rule,—it is confidential but the public have come to know of it,—that “somebody must be punished for the day’s work.” That was the circular of a Lieutenant-Governor of this province and the police no doubt thought it ought to be observed faithfully. So they caught hold

of some likely men and the people so charged were about to be "punished for the day's work;" but fortunately for them a judge sat upon the High Court Bench who remembered that there was such a thing as law and another thing called evidence, things whose existence was in danger of being forgotten in this country. He applied the law, he insisted on having the evidence, and you all know the result.

These associations, then, which were the expression of our growing national life and the growing feeling of brotherhood among us, did such work as I have described, and these were the ways, guiltless of any offence in the eyes of the law, in which they did their work. Still they have been suppressed not because they were criminal, but because their existence was inconvenient. It has always been the case that when established institutions of government were unwilling to move with the times, they have looked with suspicion upon the right of association and the right of free speech, they have discouraged the right of a free press and the right of public meeting. By destroying these instruments they have thought to arrest the progress which they did not love. This policy has never permanently succeeded, yet it is faithfully repeated with that singular stupidity which seems natural to the human race. The sword of Damocles hangs over our press. It is nominally free, but we never know when even that simulacrum of freedom may not be taken from it. There is a law of sedition so beautifully vague and comprehensive that no one knows when he is committing sedition and when he is not. There is a law against the preach-

ing of violence which enables a Magistrate whenever he chooses to imagine that your article advocates violence, to seize your machine. The Press is taken away and of course the case goes up to the High Court, but by that time the paper suffers so much that it becomes difficult or impossible for it to rear its head again. There is a notification by which as I pointed out in Beadon Square the other day, a meeting becomes peaceful or criminal not according to the objects or to the behaviour of the people assembled but according as the sun is up or the sun is down. There is a law of proclamation by which our right of association can be taken from us whenever they please by a stroke of the pen. The British people have certain traditions, they have certain ways of thinking and fixed ideas of which they cannot entirely get rid. It is for that reason they have not yet passed a law entirely and expressly suppressing the freedom of the Press or the right of public meeting. But even that may come. What should we do under these circumstances? We see the sword of Damocles hanging lower and lower over our heads. Our association may be declared criminal and illegal at any moment. The Executive can at any moment it pleases confiscate our Press. We ourselves are liable to be arrested and harassed at any moment without evidence, "on suspicion," by an irresponsible and apparently unpunishable police. Under whatever difficulties and whatever restrictions may be put upon us, we must of course go on. But the restrictions may be greater in future. The sword is hanging



lower and lower over our heads. Still we cannot stop in our work. The force within us cannot be baulked, the call cannot be denied. Whatever penalty be inflicted on us for the crime of patriotism, whatever peril we may have to face in the fulfilment of our duty to our nation, we must go on, we must carry on the country's work.

After all what is an association? An association is not a thing which cannot exist unless we have a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman and a Secretary. An association is not a thing which cannot meet unless it has its fixed meeting place. Association is a thing which depends upon the feeling and the force within us. Association means unity, association means brother-hood, association means binding together in one common work. Where there is life, where there is self-sacrifice, where there is disinterested and unselfish toil, where there are these things within us, the work cannot stop. It cannot stop even if there be one man who is at all risks prepared to carry it on. It is only after all the question of working, it is not a question of the means for work. It is simply a question of working together in common in one way or in another. It is a matter of asking each other from time to time what work there is to be performed to-day and what is the best way of performing it, what are the best means of helping our countrymen, what work we shall have to do to-morrow or the day after and having settled that to do it at the appointed time and in the appointed way. That is what I mean when I say that it is a question of working and not of means. It is not that these things cannot be done

except by the forms which our European education has taught us to value. Whatever may be the difficulties we can go on with the work. The association that we shall have will be the association of brothers who are united heart to heart, of fellow-workers joined hand-in-hand in a common labour, the association of those who have a common motherland. It is the association of the whole country, to which every son of India and every son of Bengal ought by the duty of his birth to belong, an association which no force can break up, the association of a unity which grows closer day by day, of an impulse that comes from on high and has drawn us together in order that we might realise brotherhood, in order that the Indian nation may be united and united not merely in the European way, not merely by the common self-interest, but united by love for the common country, united by the ideal of brotherhood, united by the feeling that we are all sons of one common Mother who is also the manifestation of God in an united humanity. That is the association which has been coming into being, and has not been destroyed, since the movement came into existence. This is the mighty association, which unites the people of West Bengal with the people of East and North Bengal and defies partition, because it embraces every son of the land,—*bhai bhai ek thain*, or brother and brother massed inseparably together. This is the ideal that is abroad and is waking more and more consciously within us. It is not merely a common self-interest. It awakens God within us and says, "you are all one, you are all brothers. There is one place in which

you all meet and that is your common Mother. That is not merely the soil. That is not merely a division of land but it is a living thing. It is the Mother in whom you move and have your being. Realise God in the nation, realise God in your brother, realise God in a wide human association." This is the ideal by which humanity is moved all over the world, the ideal which is the *dharma* of the Kaliyuga, and it is the ideal of love and service which is the young men of Bengal so thoroughly realised, love and service to your brothers, love and service to your Mother and this is the association we are forming, the great association of the people of Bengal and of the whole people of India. It increases and will grow for ever in spite of all the obstacles that rise in its way. When the spirit of Aswini Kumar Dutt comes into every leader of the people and the nation becomes one great Swadesh Bandhab Samiti, then it will be accomplished. This is for ever our national ideal and in its strength our nation will rise whatever law they make; our nation will rise and live by the force of the law of its own being. For the fiat of God has gone out to the Indian nation, "Unite, be free, be one, be great."

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Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy.

## DR. A. K. COOMARASAWMY

### A STUDY

**T**HE writings of Dr. A. K. Coomarasawmy act as a tonic on one's mind in these days of a nascent nationalism in India. They are charged just with that spirit which nationalism strives to express. They voice just that message which nationalism needs. Their refrain is India! India! What is Indian nationalism after all but the consciousness to her sons of a place found for India in the world? That India is not a mere geographical expression but a living organism; that India's past has not been in vain; that Indian life must continue to flow along the channels cut through ages, even while reinforced by the wealth of waters poured in by tributary streams in its onward march; that India stands to-day at the threshold of a future before whose brightness her past will grow dim; that her name is still potent to feed in the hearts of her children fires of endless sacrifice; that there is no joy more alluring to her sons and daughters, no privilege more priceless, than the vow of service to her; are not these things the inspiration of Indian nationalism? And these are the things of which Dr. Coomarasawmy's writings are an expression in language of striking beauty.

Dr. Coomarasawmy is a master of English style, and as purely literary productions alone his writings



have a high value. None who has not read them can realise their throbbing beauty of language. A chiselled simplicity, a limpid purity, a directness and pointedness of phrase—qualities like these lend to his style a force all their own. But perhaps it is vigour of thought more even than charm of style that is the secret of his power. The reader will have occasion to judge for himself from the extracts given in the course of the sketch, but we shall here quote one or two passages. The Doctor is describing an Indian musical party :—

Perhaps you are in the South. You have gone to a musical party, a wedding at the house of a friend, you are seated with many others on the cotton carpet, and before you is a band of drummers, oboists and players of the *vina* and *tamburi*. A Brahman drums on an earthen pot. A slender girl of fifteen years sits demurely on the floor, dressed in silk brocade and golden chains, her feet and arms bare, and flowers in her hair. Her mother is seated near, back against the wall ; she it is that trained the girl, and now she watches her proudly. The only sounds are those of the four strings of the ivory inlaid *tamburi* and the tapping of the drum. As you are waiting for the music to begin, a man with untidy hair and a saffron robe comes in, and your host gives him eager welcome, laying a white cloth on a stool for him to sit upon. All know him well—he is a *sanyasi* who wanders from temple to temple, preaching little, not performing many ceremonies, but singing *tevarams* and the hymns of Manikka Vachagar. As he sits silent, all eyes are turned towards him and conversation drops to a whisper. Presently he sings some hymn of passionate adoration of Siva. His voice is thin but very sweet, melting the heart ; his gentle strong personality holds every listener spell-bound, not least the little dancer to whom the words and music are so familiar ; he is the dancer's and the drummer's friend and hero as much as

yours. Some one asks for a special hymn, 'My God, why hast thou forsaken me?' and he sings :

Me, meanest one, in mercy mingling Thou didst make  
Thine own,  
Lord of the Bull ! Lo, thou'st forsaken me ! O Thou  
who wear'st  
Garb of fierce tiger's skin ! Abiding Uttarakosamangai's  
King !  
Thou of the braided lock ! I fainting sink. Our  
Lord, uphold thou me !  
What though I press no more the crimson lips of  
maidens fair,  
With swelling breasts ; behold ! Thou hast forsaken  
me ; thou in,  
Not out Thy worthy service, Uttarakosamangai's King,  
I am ! Thou mad'st false me Thine own, why dost Thou  
leave me now ?\*

Soon he rises, smiles at the musicians and speaks for a few moments with your host, and so goes away. And then you forget for a time this dreamer, in the beauty of the dance and the clamour of the drums. Of the dance you never weary ; there is eternal wonder in the perfect refinement of its grace, and the mental concentration needed to control each muscle so completely ; for this is not the passionate posturing born of a passing mood, but the elaborated art of three thousand years, an art that deceives you by its seeming simplicity, but in reality idealizes every passion, human and divine ; for it tells of the intensity of Radha's love for Krishna. Radha was the leader of the herd-girls in Brindaban, and she, more than any, realised the depth and sweetness of the love of Krishna.

Whatever place is held in the heart of Europe by the love of Dante for his Lady Beatrice, of Paolo for Francesca, of Deirdre for Naoisi, is held in India by the love stories of Rama and Sita, of Padmavati and Ratan Sen, and the love of Radha and Krishna. Most wonderful of these was the

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\* Adapted from the translation by Dr. Pope.

love of Radhā ; in the absolute self-surrender of the human soul in her to the Divine in Krishna is summed up all love. In this consecration of humanity there is no place for the distinction—always foreign to Indian thought—of sacred and profane. But when in love the finite is brought into the presence of the infinite, when the consciousness of inner and outer is destroyed in the ecstasy of union with one beloved, the moment of realisation is expressed in Indian poetry, under the symbol of the speech of Radha, the leader of the Gopis, with Krishna, the Divine Cowherd. And Krishna is the Lord, Radha, the soul that strives in self-surrender, for inseparable oneness. And so both have told of the Lord,—the ascetic, for whom all earthly beauty is a vain thing, and the dancing girl, who is mistress of every art that charms the senses.

The music is to last all night ; but you have to be home ere dawn, and as you pass along the road in the bright moonlight, you see that life, and the renunciation of life, lead both to the same goal at last. Both ascetic and musician shall be one Brahman with himself ; it is only a question of time more or less, and time, as every one knows, is unreal.

Oh Lord, look not upon my evil qualities !  
Thy name, O Lord, is same-sightedness,  
Make us both one Brahman.

This Hindu song of Sudras is said to have been sung by a dancing girl at a Rajput court. And there comes to you too the thought, that " Who so seeth all beings in That One, and That in all, henceforth shall doubt no more."

All this is passing away ; when it is gone, men will look back on it with hungry eyes, as some have looked upon the life even of Mediæval Europe, or of Greece. When civilization has made of life a business, it will be remembered that life was once an art ; when culture is the privilege of bookworms, it will be remembered that it was once a part of life itself ; not something achieved in stolen moments of relief from the serious business of being an engine-driver, a clerk, or a Governor.

Let those who are still part of such a life take note of it that they may tell their children of it when it is nothing but a memory. A 'practical' and 'respectable' world has no place for the dreamer and the dancer; they belong to the old Hindu towns where the big temples and the *chatrams* tell of the faith and munificence of kings and merchant princes. In Madras, there is the military band, or the music hall company on tour,—what does it want with ascetics or with dancing girls?

In the following passage he describes the present condition of India (the Doctor would of course admit that there is some hope in the new nationalism):—

Think of our duty from another point of view; is not the ancient virtue of hospitality binding on us? Yet now the shame of hospitality refused is ours; how many have come to India, reverencing her past, ready to learn of her still, and have been sent empty away! the student of Social Economy finds a highly organised society in the process of disintegration without any of the series and constructive effort required for its re-organisation under changed conditions; the student, architecture finds a tradition living still—but scorned by a people devoted to the imitation of their rulers, buildings, copies of English palaces and French villas in the very presence of men who still know how to build, and under the shadow of buildings as noble as any that the world has seen. The student of Fine Art is shown inferior imitations of the latest European 'styles,' where he should find some new and living revelation; the decorative artist sees the traditional craftsmen of India thrown out of employment by the mechanical vulgarities of Birmingham and Manchester, without the least effort made to preserve for future generations the accumulated skill and cunning of centuries of the manufacture of materials and wares which have commanded the admiration of the world. The musician of other lands hears little but the gramophone or the harmonium in India; the man of religion finds the crudest materialism replacing a reasoned metaphysic; the lover of freedom beholds a people who



can be imprisoned or deported for indefinite periods without trial, and too divided amongst themselves to offer adequate resistance to this *lawlessness*; in a word, every man seeking to widen his own outlook, sees but his own face distorted in an Indian mirror.

In another passage he deals with the education of Indian women and points out the danger of Christian Missionary efforts in that direction :—

Alas for wasted opportunity! To share in the true education of the Indian woman were indeed a privilege. Behind her are the traditions of the great women of Indian history and myth, women strong in love and war, sainthood, in submission and in learning. She is still a guarded flame, this daughter of a hundred earls. She has not to struggle for a living in a competitive society, but is free to be herself. Upon her might be lavished the resources of all culture, to make yet more perfect that which is already most exquisitely so. You that have entered on the task so confidently, with the ulterior motive of conversion, have proved yourselves unfit. Lay no blame on India for her slowness to accept the education you have offered to her women; praise her rather for the wise instinct that leads her to mistrust you. When you learn that none can truly educate those against whose ideals they are blindly prejudiced; when you realise that you can but offer new modes of expression to faculties already exercised in other ways; when you come with reverence, as well to learn as to teach; when you establish schools within the Indian social ideal, and not antagonistic to it—then, perhaps we may ask you to help us build upon that great foundation. Not I trust, before; lest there should be too much for the daughters of our daughters to unlearn.

But the writings of the Doctor have, as we have already said, a special significance for the present generation in India, because they mirror India to herself. At the present day every thinking man in India,



confronted with the spectacle of the collision and conflict of two great and sharply distinguished civilisations, is asking himself the question, what shall be chosen and what rejected, what preserved and what added? At such a juncture the views of a man, who has had special opportunities of studying and observing East and West and is moved by no inborn prejudice for or against either have incalculable value. To the East as to the West the Doctor would say 'Develop along your own line, preserve your integrity.' The world would grow monotonous and barren of beauty if it should be organised on a uniform method. Diversity of types contributes to the richness of all. Moreover every country and civilisation can grow only along its own lines, and blind imitation would spell death. The Doctor again and again in his writings quotes with telling effect, as if it had a special significance for the present age, the Biblical saying "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul." He writes in one place:—

The world may be likened to a vast, as yet unordered garden, having diverse soils and aspects, some watered, some arid, some plain, some mountain; the different parts of which should properly be tended by different gardeners, having experience of diverse qualities of soil and aspect; but certain ones have seized upon the plots of others, and attempted to replace the plants natural to those plots, with others more acceptable or profitable to themselves. We have not to consider only the displaced gardeners who naturally do not admire and are not grateful for the changes introduced into their plots: but to ask whether these proceedings are beneficial to the owner of the garden, for whom the gardeners work. Who is this

owner but the folk of the World of the future, which is ever becoming the present? Shall they be glad or sorry if uniformity has replaced diversity, if but one type of vegetation is to be found within their garden, flourishing perhaps in one part, but sickly in another; what of the flowers that might have flourished in that other part had they not been swept away?

Similarly to us the Doctor's counsel would be: "Shake off the hypnotic spell that the West has cast over you. Be true children of India. Forswear imitation. Flee from parasitism and denationalisation as from the plague. By anglicising yourselves you are robbing yourselves of the privilege of serving humanity and enriching the sum of human culture. You have a great deal to give to the world, and you need not always fawn upon the foreigner for leaves and crumbs from his table. By all means learn from the foreigner, but learn his best. But you cannot learn, neither assimilate what you learn, unless, you are true Indians and your heart is given first and foremost to your own Mother. Self-integrity, Self-realisation for evermore!" of the part that India has to play in the future evolution of humanity, the Doctor writes:—

Let us not forget that in setting this ideal of Nationalism before us, we are not merely striving for a right but accepting a duty that is binding on us, that of self realisation to the utmost for the sake of others. India's ancient contribution to the civilisation of the world does not and never can justify her children in believing that her work is done. There is work yet for her to do, which, if not done by her, will remain for ever undone. We may not shirk our part in the re-organisation of life, which is needed to make life tolerable under changed conditions. It is for us to show that industrial production can be organised on

socialistic lines without converting the whole world into groups of state-owned factories. It is for us to show that great and lovely cities can be built again, and things of beauty made in them, without the pollution of the air by smoke or the poisoning of the river by chemicals, for us to show that man can be the master, not the slave of the mechanism he himself has created.

It is for us to proclaim that wisdom is greater than knowledge; for us to make clear anew that art is something more than manual dexterity, or the mere imitation of natural forms. It is for us to investigate the physical and supersensual faculties anew in the light of the discoveries of Physical Science and to show that Science and Faith may be reconciled on a higher plane than any reached as yet. It is for us to intellectualise and spiritualise the religious conceptions of the West, and to show that the true meaning of religious tolerance is not the refraining from persecution, but the real belief that different religions need not be mutually exclusive, the conviction that they are all good roads, suited to the varying capacities of those that tread them, and leading to one end.

This and much more is our allotted task. Other peoples have found other work to do, some of which we may well share, and some leave to those still best fitted to perform it; but let us not turn from our own task to attempt the seemingly more brilliant or more useful work of others. "Better is one's own duty, though insignificant, than even the well-executed duty of another." Let us not be tempted by all the kingdoms of the earth; granted there is much that we have not, which others have, and which we may acquire from them; what is the price to be? "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

Of the action and interaction of East and West the Doctor writes :—

In the relations between India and England since the beginning of the nineteenth century, two different and

complementary tendencies have been at work the relative significance of which is sometimes overlooked. These are the respective influences exerted by the culture and civilisation of each country upon the other. It is true that the Anglicisation of the East has been sufficiently obvious: the corresponding Indianisation of the West is often overlooked. For the first process manifests upon the surface of things, the other in more hidden ways.

In the realm of the practical, empirical and material life, India has been roused to a realisation of the fact that, in her devotion to the highest things, she has carried too far her difference to the concrete. Stung by a sense of her own impotence, she seeks to day to hold her own in efficiency and in manufacture against the nations of the West. The impulse towards this mastery of the concrete; the critical and historical sense; and, above all, the re-statement of her own intuitions in the more exact terms of modern science, are the things which India will owe to the West.

The complementary lesson is the 'Message of the East.' The Western nations, after a period of unparalleled success in the investigation of the concrete world, the 'conquest of nature,' and the adaptation of mechanical contrivances to the material ends of life, are approaching in every department a certain critical period. The far-reaching developments of commercialism are undermining their own stability. One-tenth of the British population dies in the gaol, the workhouse, or the lunatic asylum. The increasing contrast between extremes of wealth and poverty, the unemployed and many other urgent problems point the same moral. Extreme developments of vulgarity and selfishness imply the necessary reaction. In science, the limit of possible investigation by physical means is in sight. The main body of scientific men cannot much longer avoid the necessity for the investigation of super-physical phenomena by new methods. The problems of the new psychology have made an absolute science of the old. In all the arts, the extreme development of the



critical, scientific and observing faculties has almost extinguished creative power. Science has corrupted art, until the aims of both are confused. And while on the one hand 'scientific materialism' is already out of date, the old religious formulæ are more and more rapidly losing their hold on the best and most sincere minds. Even the accepted formulæ of conventional morality are questioned by the most advanced thinkers. In every department of life there is evidence of the culmination for a particular line of development, and the imminent necessity of some new synthesis.

The inwardness of these circumstances has been obscured in various ways. England with a blindness characteristic of a youthful and materially successful country has conceived that it has been her mission not merely to awaken and unite, but to civilize India. Only very gradually is England realising the truth of Sir Thomas Munro's declaration, that if civilization were to be made an article of commerce between the two countries, she would soon be heavily in debt. There is already abundant evidence of that permeation of Western thought by Indian philosophy which Schopenhauer so clearly foresaw. The East has indeed revealed a new world to the West, which will be the inspiration of a 'Renaissance,' more profound and far-reaching than that which resulted from the re-discovery of the classic world of the West. It is the irony of fate that while the outward and visible Anglicisation of the East is only too apparent, this inward and subtle Indianisation of the West has, as it were, stolen a march in the night, and already there are groups of Western thinkers whose purposes and principles are more truly Indian than are those of the average English educated Indian of to-day. The west can no longer afford to ignore the wisdom of the East in any single department of culture.

The 'new theology' is little else than Hinduism. The Theosophical movement is directly due to the stimulus of Indian thought. The socialist finds that he is striving for



much that for two or three millenniums has been part and parcel of the fundamentally democratic structure of Indian society. Exhibitions of Indian art are organised in London for the education of the people. The profound influence which Indian philosophy is destined to exert on Western thought and life is already evident. Indian science had a far-reaching effect on the development of certain aspects of mathematics earlier in the XIXth century, and is now exerting its influence in other ways. Much of the modern theory of Western science goes to confirm and justify the intuitions of the old Indian religious-scientific writers, and they in their turn are proving suggestive to the modern worker. And finally, small groups of artists and musicians—those particularly whose minds are most attuned to the great art of Mediæval Europe—are turning their eyes towards the East for some renewed message.

The Doctor stands before us as a great apostle of Indian culture in all its aspects. In religion, philosophy, art, education, industry, his powerful voice calls on us to drink at our own wells and to return to our own ideals. In religion and philosophy, India has stood unmoved by its contact with the West. There is something peculiarly original and fascinating, in the way in which the Doctor places before us even the ideals of Hindu religion and philosophy. In the following passage he strikes the keynote of Indian (or Hindu) culture:—

What after all, is the secret of Indian greatness? Not a dogma or a book; but the great open secret that all knowledge and all truth are absolute and infinite, waiting not to be created, but to be found; the secret of the infinite superiority of intuition, the method of direct perception, over the intellect, regarded as a mere organ of discrimination. There is about us a storehouse of the As-Yet-Unknown infinite and exhaustible; but to this wisdom the way of

access is not through intellectual activity. The intuition that reaches to it, we call Imagination and Genius. It came to Sir Issac Newton when he saw the apple fall, and there flashed across his brain the Law of Gravity. It came to the Buddha as he sat through the silent night in meditation, and hour by hour all things became apparent to him; he knew the exact circumstances of all beings that have ever been in the endless and infinite worlds; at the twentieth hour he received the divine infinite sakvalas as clearly as if they were close at hand; then came still deeper insight, and he perceived the cause of sorrow and the path of knowledge. 'He reached at last the exhaustless source of truth.' The same is true of all 'revelation', the Veda (*sruti*), the eternal *Logos*, 'breathed forth by Brahma,' in whom it survives the destruction and creation of the Universe, is 'seen,' or 'heard,' not made, by its human authors..... The reality of such perception is witnessed by every man within himself upon rare occasions and on an infinitely smaller scale. It is the inspiration of the poet. It is at once the vision of the artist, and the imagination of the natural philosopher.

It is in the light of the canon formulated in the opening sentences of the foregoing quotation that Indian culture must be judged. There is no use in looking for something in a work which it is not the aim of the workman to give. In judging of Indian culture we should therefore ask ourselves if it has successfully expressed its own ideals. Unfortunately Indian culture has been in modern times judged by Greek canons and naturally found wanting. In art it has been assumed that though India may be great in architecture, her painting and sculpture are naught. 'Educated' India blown about with every wind of European opinion has faithfully said ditto. It was left for Dr. Coomaraswamy, Mr. Havell, and the late Sister

Nivedita to resuscitate Indian art in our estimation. In one sense, Dr. Coomarasawmy's life may be described as one dictated to the regeneration of Indian art. To him the painting and sculpture of India are at least of as great value as those of Greece, if we bear in mind that the ideals of the two are fundamentally different. What then are the aims and methods of Indian art? The Doctor says:—

It cannot be too clearly understood that the mere representation of nature is never the aim of Indian art. Probably no truly Indian sculpture has been wrought direct from a living model, or any religious painting copied from the life. Possibly no Hindu artist of the old schools ever drew from nature at all. His store of memory pictures, his power of visualisation and his imagination were for his purpose finer means; for he desired to suggest the idea behind sensuous appearance, not to give the detail of the seeming reality, that was in truth but *maya*, illusion. For in spite of the pantheistic accomodation of infinite truth to the capacity of finite minds, whereby God is conceived as entering into all things. Nature remains to the Hindu a veil, not a revelation: and art is to be something more than a mere imitation of this *maya*, it is to manifest what lies behind. To mistake the *maya* for reality were errors indeed:

“Men of no understanding think of Me, the unmanifest as having manifestation, knowing not My higher being to be changeless, supreme.

“Veiled by the Magic of My Rule (*Yoga-Maya*), I am not revealed to all the world; this world is bewildered and perceives Me not as birthless and unchanging” (*Bhagavad Gita VII.*, 24, 25.)

Of course, an exception to these principles in Indian art may be pointed to in the Mughal and Rajput schools of portrait miniature; and this work does show that it was no

lack of power that in most other cases kept the Indian artist from realistic representation. But there the deliberate aim is portraiture, not the representation of Divinity or Superman. And even in the portraits there are many ideal qualities apparent. In purely Hindu and religious art, however even portraits are felt to be lesser art than the purely ideal and abstract representations; and such realism as we find, for example, in the Ajanta paintings, is pure to the keenness of the artist's memory of familiar things, not to absorption in the imitation of appearances. For realism that thus represents keenness of memory picture, strength of imagination, there is room in all art; duly restrained, it is so much added power. But realism which is of the nature of imitation of an object actually seen at the time of painting is quite antipathetic to imagination, and finds no place in the ideal of Indian art.

Much of the criticism applied to works of art in modern times is based upon the idea of 'truth to nature.' The first thing for which many people look in a work of art, is for something to recognize; and if the representation is of something they have not seen, or symbolizes some unfamiliar abstract idea, it is, for them, thereby self-condemned as untrue to nature.

What, after all is reality and what is truth? The Indian mind answers that nature, the phenomenal word that is, is known to it only through sensation, and that we have no warrant for supposing the sensations convey to us any adequate conception of the intrinsic reality of things in themselves; nay, they have no such reality apart from itself. At most, natural forms are but incarnations of ideas, and each is but an incomplete expression.

The conception that the object of art is the reproduction of the external forms of nature, as in modern Europe, is the natural product of a life divorced from beauty. Pictorial imitations of nature are substitute in which men seek for compensation for the unloveliness of an artificial life. We are nowhere able to observe that realistic art is or has anywhere been the ideal of men whose lives have



been lived—as in Egypt, India, Persia or Mediæval Europe—in the real intimacy of nature herself. The imitation of nature, indeed, has been seen by all true artists and philosophers to be both impossible and unnecessary. "For why," as Deussen says, "should the artist wish to imitate laboriously and inadequately what nature offers everywhere in unattainable profusion?" viz., individual, and in so far, limited, manifestations of Ideas?

In the realm of nature we see the thousand fold repeated reflections of Ideas in these individual manifestations. It is for the artist by *yoga*, that is by self-indentification with the soul of such reflections, fully to understand them and explain their inner significance. "Guided by an insight into the nature of things which fathoms deeper than all abstract knowledge, he is able to understand the 'half uttered words of nature,' to infer from what she forms that which she intends to form, to anticipate from the direction she takes the end she is unable to reach." But it is further possible, by imagination, the first and essential quality of genius, to apprehend Ideas which, though subsisting in the cosmic consciousness, have not yet assumed, and may never assume, a physically visible form. Such are the forms of gods or nature spirits, and flowers or animals or scenes in 'other worlds'; personifications of abstract qualities and natural forces, and by no means least, the imagined forms of legendary heroes, in which the race-idea finds its most complete expression. The race expression is most perfect when, as is so often the case, hero and god are one.

It is for the artist to portray the ideal world of true reality, the world of imagination, and not the phenomenal world perceived by the senses.

The Doctor again and again insists that all great art has been at once religious and popular. Great art speaks to the many and not to a select few and in a language understood of the many. Great art, again, springs from the common life, and where that is weak or insincere,



art also will be mean. As great art speaks to the common people, the importance of convention and tradition is easy to see. Here are the Doctor's views on the point:—

Convention may be defined as the manner of artistic presentation, while tradition stands for a historic continuity in the use of such conventional methods of expression. Many have thought that convention and tradition are the foes of art, and deem the epithets 'conventional and traditional' to be in themselves of the nature of destructive criticism. Convention is conceived of solely as limitations, not as a language and a means of expression. But to one realising what tradition really means, a quite contrary view presents itself; that of the terrible and almost hopeless disadvantage from which art suffers when each artist and each craftsman, or at the best, each little group and school, has first to create a language, before ideas can be expressed in it. For tradition is a wonderful, expressive language, that enables the artist working through it to speak directly to the heart without the necessity for explanation. It is a mother tongue, every phrase of it rich with countless shades of meaning read into it by the simple and the great that have made and used it in the past.

It is usual now-a-days to demand what is called originality in works of art, to ask that they shall bear not only the artist's name, but the impress of his individuality, he is expected to 'be himself,' 'break away from tradition' and the like. Only with such work, do men now associate, that emotional intensity that men less feverishly seeking for some new thing, associated of old with the retelling of a twice-told tale.

For these nameless artists, the one great thing was not so much to express themselves in their work, but to tell the great thing itself that meant so much to them and which it was theirs to re-express. Not by their names do

we remember them. Theirs is an immortality more perfect, because more impersonal. Art that is altogether original can never be truly great. How could one man's labour rival the results of centuries of race-imagining? The true material of art must ever be that which has already commanded the hearts of men rather than any fancy of the passing hour.

Such, then, have been the aims and methods of Indian Art in the past. Two tendencies are manifested in the Indian Art of to-day, the one inspired by the technical achievement of the modern West, the other by the spiritual idealism of the East. The former has swept away both the beauty and the limitation of the old tradition. The latter has but newly found expression; yet if the greatest art is always both National and Religious (and how empty any other art must be), it is there alone that we see the beginnings of a new and greater art that shall fulfil and not destroy the past. When a living Indian culture arises out of the wreck of the past and the struggle of the present, a new tradition will be born, and new vision find expression in the language of form and colour no less than in that of words than rhythm. The people to whom the great conceptions came are still the Indian people, and, when life is strong in them again, strong also will be their art. It may well be that the fruit of a deeper national life, a wider culture, and a profounder love, will be an art greater than any of the past. But this can only be through growth and development, not by a sudden rejection of the past. A particular convention is the characteristic expression of a period, the product of particular conditions; it resumes the historic evolution of the national culture. The convention of the future must be similarly related to the national life. We stand in relation both to past and future; in the past we made the present, the future we are moulding now, and our duty to this future is that we should enrich, not destroy, the inheritance that is not India's alone, but the inheritance of all humanity.

The subject of Indian arts is so important and we

should only be doing injustice to the Doctor's views by giving fragmentary extracts as representative of his attitude. We must refer the reader to the Doctor's books for a complete exposition of his views.

The Doctor's views on Swadeshi, India can afford to neglect only at her own peril. There is infinite danger in running mad after Western industrialism which has brought in its train huge evils. We should not seek to create Manchesters and Birminghams in India. Industry without art is brutality. India must try to unite art with labour, and compete with Europe not on a basis of cheapness but on the basis of quality. In such a scheme of industry machinery will have but a secondary place. What are likely to be the consequences of an age of industrialism in India the Doctor depicts in the following passage :—

Do not then let us compete with Western nations by evolving for ourselves a factory system and a capitalist ownership of the means of production corresponding to theirs. Do not let us toil through all the wearisome stages of the industrial revolution—destruction of the guilds, elimination of small workshops, the factory system, *laissez faire*, physical degeneration, hideousness, trusts, the unemployed and unemployable, and whatever may be to follow. We may perhaps not think on these things now, we may be too much concerned with the political problems of to-day. But if we are wise, we, who want India to be free, must bethink ourselves that, when that freedom comes, these problems will be with us still ; the possibility of their solution depends on foresight and wisdom now. The history of the industrial revolution in Europe has been a long and sad one, and only now, and slowly, are some of its worst results being recognized, and their remedy devised. That this industrial revolution was

in a sense inevitable may be granted, and it may also be that at least the outlines of it must be imposed upon the development of the social organism in the East as well as in the West; and indeed, not only in Japan, but also in India, we see the process already at work. But it is probably possible for Eastern nations to run through some of its stages quickly, and with the experience of other nations as their guide, to avoid some of the worst evils. The Japanese, who are sometimes as much in advance of Europe, as India is behind it, have shown, in spite of the great disorganization and vulgarisation of their national life that has taken place already, some signs of this pre-vision.

The industrial system of the future should be based on a true economic science seeing the end of life in *men*, not in *things*. The Doctor says:—

Humanity is not in want of manufactures.

“Already, all over the world, man is labouring beyond all reason, and producing beyond all demand.....Longer, harder toil for the producer, frenzied, criminal extravagance in the consumer, these are the direct results of the development of manufacturing industries, which tends constantly towards increased production and lower prices.”—(Max Mordau).

This is not civilisation; this is not the art of living. Civilisation consists, not in multiplying our desires and the means of gratifying them, but in the refinement of their quality. Industry *per se*, is no advantage. The true end of material civilisation, is not production, but use; not labour, but leisure; not to destroy, but to make possible, spiritual culture. A nation which sees its goal rather in the production of things than in the lives of men must in the end deservedly perish. Therefore it is that the Swadeshi movement, a synthesis of effort for the regeneration of India, should be guided by that true political economy that seeks to make men wise

and happy, rather than merely to multiply their goods at the cost of physical and spiritual degradation.

What is then our duty? The answer is to be found in the following passage :—

Not infrequently the Swadeshi cry is an exhortation to self-sacrifice. It seems to me that this is an entirely false position. It is never worth while in the long run putting up with second best. Swadeshi for the very poor may mean a real sacrifice of money. But how far this is really the case is very doubtful. If one should regard a standard of simple living, conditioned by quality rather than quantity of wants, where durability of materials was preferred to cheapness alone, it is fairly certain that even the peasant would be better advised to use (real) Swadeshi than foreign goods. And for those better off, for those who have adopted pseudo-European fashions and manners to talk of Swadeshi as a sacrifice is cant of the worst description. It implies entire ignorance of India's achievement in the industrial arts, and an utter lack of faith in India. The blindest prejudice in favour of all things Indian was preferable to such condescension as that of one who casts aside the husks and trappings of modern luxury, to accept the mother's exquisite gifts as a 'sacrifice.'

Not till the Indian people patronize Indian arts and Industries from a real appreciation of them, and because they recognize them not merely as cheaper, but as better than the foreign, will the Swadeshi movement become complete and comprehensive. If a time should ever come—and at present it seems far off—when Indians recognize that "for the beautification of an Indian house or the furniture of an Indian home, there is no need to rush to European shops in Calcutta or Bombay," there may be a realisation of Swadeshi. But "so long as they prefer to fill their palaces with flaming Brussels carpets, Tottenham-court-road furniture, cheap Italian mosaics, French oleographs, Austrian lustres, German tissues and cheap brocades, there is not much hope." When will Indians



make it impossible for any enemy to throw in their teeth a reproach so true as this ?

Even more important, then, than the establishment of new Industries on Indian soil, are the patronage and revival of those on the verge of extinction, the purification of those which survive in degraded forms, and the avoidance of useless luxuries, whether made in India or not. Swadeshi must be inspired by a broad and many-sided national sentiment, and must have definitely constructive aims ; where such a sentiment exists, Industrial Swadeshi will be its inevitable outcome without effort and without failure.

• The Doctor is a passionate lover of Indian music. According to him the western system has developed harmony, and the Indian melody. India cannot afford to neglect her music without irreparable loss to the national life. The Doctor bemoans the vulgarity of taste that takes pleasure in the harmonium and the gramophone which latter instrument he describes as the " refinement of torture " considered with reference to musical purposes.

The most imperative need of India at present is according to the Doctor a true system of national education. He has no words strong enough to characterise the product of present-day English education. It may almost be said that the ' educated Indian ' is his pet abomination. He regards English education not as a blessing but as the very reverse. He writes :—

One of the most remarkable features of British rule in India has been the fact that the greatest injuries done to the people of India have taken the outward form of blessings. Of this, Education is a striking example ; for no more crushing blows have ever been struck at the roots of Indian National evolution than those which have been struck, often with other, and the best intentions, in the

name of Education. It is sometimes said by friends of India that the National movement is the natural result of English education, and one of which England should in truth be proud, as showing that, under 'civilisation' and the *Pax Britannica*, Indians are becoming, at last, capable of self-government. The facts are otherwise. If Indians are still capable of self-government, it is in spite of all the anti-national tendencies of a system of education that has ignored or despised almost every ideal informing the national culture.

Here is his characterisation of the educated Indian:—

By their fruits ye shall know them. The most crushing indictment of this Education is the fact that it destroys, in the great majority of those upon whom it is inflicted, all capacity for the appreciation of Indian culture. Speak to the ordinary graduate of an Indian University, or a student from Ceylon, of the ideals of the Mahabharata—he will hasten to display his knowledge of Shakespeare; talk to him of religious philosophy—you find that he is an atheist of the crude type common in Europe a generation ago, and that not only has he no religion but he is as lacking in philosophy as the average Englishman; talk to him of Indian music—he will produce a gramophone or a harmonium, and inflict upon you one or both; talk to him of Indian dress or jewellery—he will tell you that they are uncivilised and barbaric; talk to him of Indian art—it is news to him that such a thing exists; ask him to translate for you a letter written in his own mother tongue—he does not know it.\* He is indeed a stranger in his own land.

Yes, English educators of India, you do well to scorn the Babu graduate; he is your own special production, made in your own image; he might be one of your very selves. Do you not recognize the likeness? Probably you do not;

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\*I describe the extreme product of English education, as seen for example, in Ceylon. Not all of these statements apply equally to every part of India. The remarks on dress and music are of universal application.

for you are still hidebound in that impervious skin of self-satisfaction that enabled your most pompous and self-important philistine, Lord Macaulay, to believe that a single shelf of a good European library was worth all the literature of India, Arabia, and Persia. Beware lest in a hundred years the judgment be reversed, in the sense that Oriental culture will occupy a place even in European estimation, ranking at least equally with Classic. Meanwhile you have done well nigh all that could be done to eradicate it in the land of its birth.

National Education should preserve what the Doctor felicitously describes as the "Indian point of view," whose essentials are set forth in the following quotation:—

*Firstly*, the almost universal philosophical attitude, contrasting strongly with that of the ordinary Englishman who hates philosophy. For every science school in India to-day, let us see to it that there are ten to-morrow. But there are wrong as well as right ways of teaching science. A 'superstition of facts' taught in the name of science were a poor exchange for a metaphysic, for a conviction of the subjectivity of all phenomena. In India, even the peasant will grant you that "All this is *maya*;" he may not understand the full significance of what he says; but consider the deepening of European culture needed before the peasant there could say, however blindly, that "The world is but appearance, and by no means Thing-in-Itself."

*Secondly*, the sacredness of all things—the antithesis of the European division of life into sacred and profane. The tendency in European religious development has been to exclude from the domain of religion every aspect of 'wordly' activity. Science, art, sex, agriculture, commerce are regarded in the West as secular aspects of life, quite apart from religion. It is not surprising that under such conditions, those concerned with life in its reality, have come to feel the so-called religion that ignores the activities of life, as a thing apart, and of little interest

or worth. In India, this was never so; religion idealises and spiritualizes life itself, rather than excludes it. This intimate entwining of the transcendental and material, this annihilation of the possibility of profanity or vulgarity of thought, explains the strength and permanence of Indian faith, and demonstrates not merely the stupidity, but the wrongness of attempting to replace a religious culture by one entirely material.

*Thirdly*, the true spirit of religious toleration, illustrated continually in Indian history, and based upon a consciousness of the fact that all religious dogmas are formulas imposed upon the infinite by the limitations of the finite human intellect.

*Fourthly*, etiquette,—civilisation conceived of as the product of civil men. There is a Sinhalese proverb that runs, "Take the ploughman from the plough, and wash off his dirt, and he is fit to rule a kingdom." "This was spoken," says Knox, "of the people of Cande Uda (the highlands of Ceylon) because of the civility, understanding, and gravity of the purest men among them. Their ordinary Ploughmen and Husbandmen do speak elegantly, and are full of compliment. And there is no difference between the ability of speech of a Country man and a Courtier." There could be said of few people any greater things than these; but they cannot be said of those who have passed through the 'instruction machines' of to-day; they belong to a society where life itself brought culture, not books alone.

*Fifthly*, special ideas in relation to education, such as the relation between teacher and pupil, implied in the words of *guru* and *chela* (master and disciple); memorizing great literature, the epics as embodying ideals of character; learning a privilege demanding qualifications, not to be forced on the unwilling or used as a mere road to material prosperity; extreme importance of the teacher's personality.

"As the man who digs with a spade obtains water, even so an obedient (pupil) obtains the knowledge which

lies in his teacher." (Manu II. 218). This view is antithetic to the modern practice of making every thing easy for the pupil.

*Sixthly*, the basis of ethics are not any commandments, but the principle of altruism, founded on the philosophical truth : "Thy neighbour is thyself." Recognition of the unity of all life.

*Seventhly*, control, not merely of action, but of thoughts ; concentration, one-pointedness, capacity for stillness.

These are some of the points of view which are intrinsic in Indian culture, and must be recognized in any sound educational ideal for India ; but are in the present system ignored or opposed. The aim should be to develop the people's intelligence through the medium of their own national culture. For the national culture is the only *Aussichtspunkt* from which, in relation to a wider landscape, a man can rightly *sich am Denken orientieren*. To this culture has to be added, for those brought into contact with the modern idea, some part of that wider synthesis that should enable such an one to understand what may be the nature of the prospect seen from some other of the great headlands, the other national cultures, wherefrom humanity has gazed into the dim sea of the infinite Unknown. To effect this wider synthesis, are needed signals and interpretations, rather than that laborious backward march through the emptiness of a spiritual desert where one may perish by the way, or if not so, then weary and footsore arrive at last upon one of those other headlands, only to learn, it may be, that there is to be found a less extensive prospect and a more barren soil.

Foreign culture is necessary to India but it must form a post-graduate course.

The national movement in India affords, according to the Doctor, some hope for the future, but it is as yet hardly self-conscious. The essentials for the birth



of a nationality in a country are according to Doctor, a geographical unity and a common and India possesses both these elements in a high degree. The feeling of patriotism is not in the Indian breast but on the other hand finds a noble expression in Indian culture. Says the Doctor

No one can say that any such idea as of a Federated States of India is altogether foreign to the Indian mind. But more than all this, there is enough that the founders of Indian culture and religion (whether you call them Rishis or not) had this unity in view; and the manner in which this idea pervades the whole of Indian culture is the expression of the possibility of its rapid realisation now. For nothing that India's sacred shrines are many and apart; that one who would visit more than one or two of these must pass over hundreds of miles of Indian soil; there is the sacred city of Buddhist, and Hindu like; Samanala in Ceylon is a holy place for Buddhist, Hindu and Muhammedan. Is there no meaning in the sacred reverence for the Himalayas which every Indian feels? Is the geis altogether meaningless which forbids the orthodox Hindu to leave the Motherland and the seas? Is the passionate adoration of the Indian for the Ganges thrown away? How much is involved in such phrases as 'The Seven Great Rivers' (of India). The Hindu in the north repeats the mantram: when performing

Om gange cha yamene chaiva godavari, saras,  
narmade, sindhu kaveri jale'smin sannidhim ||\*

ceremonial ablutions; the Buddhist in Ceylon utters the same prayer on a similar occasion. Or take the case, to the foundation of India education and culture; or a poet like the Megha Duta, the best known and most recent work

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\*"Hail; O ye Ganges, Jamna, Godavari, Savati, Narmadi, Sindhu and Kaveri, come and approach these waters."

casa. Are not these expressive of love for and  
 ke of the Motherland ? The ' holy land ' of the  
 Inot a far-off Palestine but the Indian land itself.

whole of Indian culture is so pervaded with this  
 india as THE LAND, that it has never been necessary  
 upon it overmuch, for no one could have supposed  
 itise.

le Doctor's thinking India is actually a unity  
 w the fact is consciously realised or not by  
 Itthemselves. He says :—

often reminded of the Cairene girl's lute, in the  
 ta Mirium and Ali Nur-al-Din. It was kept in a  
 " satin bag with slings of gold." She took the  
 band opening it, shook it, whereupon there fell  
 th two and-thirty pieces of wood, which she fitted  
 or other, male into female and female into male, till  
 thame a polished lute of Indian workmanship. Then  
 shovered her wrists and laying the lute in her lap,  
 bever it with the bending of mother over babe, and  
 swthe strings with her finger tips ; whereupon it  
 mland resounded and after its olden home yearned ; and  
 it mbered the waters that gave it drink and the earth  
 wl it sprang and wherein it grew and it minded  
 thpenters who cut it and the polishers who polished it  
 an: merchants who made it their merchandise and the  
 shthat shipped it ; and it cried and called aloud and  
 md and groaned ; and it was as if she asked it of all  
 ththings and it answered her with the tongue of the  
 ca: Just such an instrument is India, composed of  
 ma parts seemingly irreconcilable, but in reality each  
 onunningly designed towards a common end ; so, too  
 whthese parts are set together and attuned, will India  
 tell the earth from which she sprang, the waters that  
 gather drink, and the Shapers that have shaped her  
 bei ; nor will she be then the idle singer of an empty  
 dayut the giver of hope to all, when hope will most  
 avaand most be needed.

The national movement must be based on a yearning love of India, but it is doubtful if such is the case at present. The Doctor writes :—

You see, this loss of beauty in our lives is a proof that we do not love India ; for India, above all nations, was beautiful not long ago. It is the weakness of our national movement that we do not love India ; we love suburban England, we love the comfortable bourgeois prosperity that is to be some day established when we have learned enough science and forgotten enough art to successfully compete with Europe in a commercial war conducted on its present lines. It is not thus nations are made.

We have heard much recently of the impatient idealist. According to the Doctor the impatient idealist is the man most indispensable to the building-up of a nation. He writes :—

Try to believe in the regeneration of India through art, and not by politics and economics alone. A purely material ideal will never give to us the lacking strength to build up a great enduring nation. For that we need ideals and dreams, impossible and visionary, the food of martyrs and of artists.

Let every true Indian take note of the warning contained in the following words :—

The highest ideals of nationality is that of service. India, by the scorn which she has cast upon her own arts, by the degradation of standard in her own culture, here sufficiently evidenced by the possibility of finding pleasure in a gramophone or a harmonium, is casting aside this highest privilege of service. Nations are judged not by what they assimilate, but by what they contribute to human culture. India, by her blindness to the beauty that till yesterday was everywhere in and around her in art and music, is forfeiting this privilege of service. For no man of another nation will come to learn of India, if her

teachers be gramophones and harmoniums and imitators of European realistic art.

Let every true son of India likewise consecrate himself to the vision of India "not less, but more strong and more beautiful than ever before, and the gracious giver of beauty to all the nations of the earth."

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## PREFACE TO "ESSAYS NATIONAL IDEALISM."

These Essays represent an endeavour towards an explanation of the true significance of the national movement in India. This movement can only be rightly understood, and has ultimate importance only, as an idealistic movement. Its outward manifestations have attracted abundant notice; the deeper meaning of the struggle is sometimes forgotten alike in England and in India. Were this meaning understood, I believe that not only the world at large, but a large part even of the English people, would extend to India a true sympathy in her life-and-death struggle with foreign bureaucracy and their parasitic dependents. For this struggle is much more than a political conflict. It is a struggle for spiritual and mental freedom, from the domination of, an 'alien ideal. In such a conflict, political and economic victory are but half the battle; for an India, "free in name, but subdued by Europe in her inmost soul," would ill justify the price of freedom. It is not much the material, as the moral and spiritual, subjection of

Indian civilisation that in the end impoverishes humanity.

William Morris wrote some twenty-seven years ago concerning Socialism,—and few have worked more whole-heartedly for a cause than he did for the ideal that he understood by Socialism,—“Meantime I can see no use in people having political freedom unless they use it as an instrument for leading reasonable and manlike lives; no good even in education if when they are educated, people have only slavish work to do, and have to live lives too much beset with sordid anxiety for them to be able to think and feel with the more fortunate people who produced art and poetry and great thought.”

To a few it may appear strange that in a book devoted to the ends of Indian nationalism, so much space should be given to art, so little said of politics. It is because nations are made by artists and by poets, not by traders and politicians, and because I wish to lay more stress upon things that are essentially and permanently true, than upon any sense, however justified of wrongs temporarily suffered. Art contains in itself the deepest principles of life, the truest guide to the greatest art, the Art of Living. The true life, the ideal of Indian culture, is itself a unity and an art, because of its inspiration by one ruling passion, the desire to realise a spiritual inheritance. All things in India have been valued in the light of this desire. No other ideal can ever ultimately shape or determine the Indian character. In the immediate future, this passion for self-sacrifice and self-realisation will find



expression in a nationalism which will be essentially religious in its sanction. Thus, once more by the inspiration of a ruling passion—the religious and national ideal in one—the Art of Life will be realised again ; only by thus becoming artists and poets can we again understand our own art and poetry, and thereby attain the highest ideal of nationality, the will and the power to give.

Something of this kind is the burden of my Essays,—that we should endeavour more to be great than to possess great things. All honour to those who have spent their lives in the political struggle ; yet I believe that it is not through politics that revolutions are made, and that National Unity needs a deeper foundation than the perception of political wrongs. The true Nationalist is an Idealist ; and for him that deeper cause of the Unrest is the longing for Self-realisation. He realises that Nationalism is a duty even more than a right ; and that the duty of upholding the national Dharma is incompatible with intellectual slavery, and therefore he seeks to free himself, and through others like himself, his country.

It is possible to find in true art not merely the spiritual, but, or rather therefore, the material regeneration of India. The educated Indian of to-day, says only too truly a sympathetic writer, is behind the rest of the world in artistic understanding. Few have realised in how far the inefficiency and poverty of modern India is the direct result of this. Contrast Japan.

Japan is to a large degree living upon the strength

of her past. That strength lies far more than we suspect, in her art :

“To many persons it may appear incredible that the consistence of Japan’s statesmanship and strategy, the far reach of her military plans, the splendid qualities of her soldiers and sailors, the steadiness of nerve, the accuracy of aim, the coolness of advance, the deadliness of attack, the self-immolation of regiments at the word of command, are not unconnected with the fact that she alone among living nations has a truly national art, that her senses are refined and her taste fastidious, that her poor love beauty and seek their pleasure amongst flowers. This is a hard saying, but the truth is even so.” \*

The causes which have led to the degeneration of Indian art, and prevent its revival, are identical with those that prevent the recovery of her political efficiency.

I do not believe in any regeneration of the Indian people which cannot find expression in art ; any reawakening worth the name *must* so express itself. There can be no true realisation of political unity until Indian life is again inspired by the unity of the national culture. More necessary, therefore, than all the labours of politicians, is National Education. We should not rest satisfied until the entire control of Indian education is in Indian hands. It is a matter in which no European should have a voice, save by the express invitation of Indians. For those only can educate who sympathise. Every Government and missionary college and school must be replaced by colleges and schools

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\* “ Hibbert Journal, ” October, 1905.

of our own, where young men and women are taught to be true Indians. So long as Indians are prepared to accept an education, the aim of which is to make them English in all but colour—and at present they do in the main accept such education—they cannot achieve a national unity.

An India, united by even one generation of National Education, would not need to ask or fight for freedom. It would be hers in fact, for none could resist that united aloofness of spirit which would make the mental atmosphere of India unbreathable by any but friends. The vital forces associated with the national movement in India are not merely political, but moral, literary and artistic ; and their significance lies in the fact that India henceforth will, in the main, judge all things by her own standards and from her own point of view. But the two sides of the national movement, the material and the spiritual, are inseparable and must attain success or fail together. Political freedom and full responsibility are essential to self-respect and self-development. Believing this, it will be understood how impossible it is that any supposed or real advantages resulting from the British dominion in India could ever lead us to accept the indefinite continuance of that dominion as part of our ideal. Granting the reality of some of these advantages—and no one would pretend that the Government of India by England has been an absolutely unmixed evil—the fact remains that we in India hold the price of any such advantages to be too high. In the words of Thoreau, the cost of a thing is the whole amount of what may be called

life, which has to be exchanged for it, immediately, or in the long run. The advantages such as they may be, are outweighed by the paralysis of the live moral forces of the nation, resulting from the removal of responsibility.

It is a paradox to speak of preparing a people for self-Government Alien government, by removing responsibility and the natural motives for public spirit; tends only to unfit a subject people for independent action. The chief lessons in self-government which England has given to India, have been given in the last few years; given, however, not in the officially controlled municipalities and universities, but in the necessity which the present situation has revealed to the Indian people,—the necessity for unity and combination in the national interest. In the words of one of our leaders, India is ‘learning through her own struggles all her lessons of a free and self-regulated and self-sustained national life.’ Those lessons, there is but too much reason to say, are being learnt in spite of, not with the help of, England.

The gift of a seat on the Executive Council, or of a few official posts, more or less, no more fulfils or tends to fulfil the objective of the national movement, than a seat in the cabinet for an Ulster Unionist would meet the Irish demand for Home Rule, or the elevation of Mr. Burns to the Presidency of the Board of Trade, the Socialist demand for the nationalisation of natural monopolies. The objective of the true nationalist is control of government—not a share in the administration of his country.

None can be truly qualified to educate or govern, who cannot, in the words of the great Sinhalese chronicle, 'make themselves one with the religion and the people.' "When," says Confucious, "the prince loves what the people love and hates what the people hate, then is he what is called the father of the people." These ideals are absolutely unattainable by Englishmen in India. However conscientious a civil servant or a governor may be, his heart is far away in England, and he counts the days till he returns. He is, at best, the conscientious bailiff of an absentee landlord ; a person profoundly ignorant of the nature of the soil that he attempts to cultivate.

It is not out of the hatred for England that India demands her freedom, it is partly for England's sake. The ownership of India is a chain about England's neck,—a weight not less hurtful, because scarcely felt as such. "When we learn to sing the Britons never will be masters we shall make an end of slavery," are true words spoken by a well-known English writer. No nation can serve faithfully two ideals without hypocrisy. In Italy, in Japan, in Persia, in Turkey, England's sympathies have been or still are, with the great idealist movements ; only in Egypt and India, where these movements clash with her material interests, her attitude is different ! The exercise of despotic power in India provides for England a large and powerful reactionary element in her own governance. Those who on the plea of necessity resort in India to punish men without trial, or the suppression of free speech, will be ready on the same plea to fall



back upon the same resources in the government of Ireland or the suppression of the unemployed or of women, in England. England may lose something of her own liberties, through the denial of liberty too others. Harmful, too, to England is that change that comes over nearly all Englishmen (of course, with noble exceptions), in the course of weeks or months after they set foot in India as rulers; the attitude of patronage and contempt, the conceit and aloofness of the Anglo-Indian do not drop like a mantle from his shoulder when he retires to England to spend the rest of his days in the enjoyment of an Indian pension, and qualities thus fostered scarcely tend to the progress of England towards an ideal life. More obviously and directly injurious to England's moral fibre are the partial justice she administers, and her reliance—an unavoidable reliance it may be for one in her position—upon informers, underpaid police and spies. As she sows, she must also reap; and it cannot be that she should escape the reaction upon herself of stooping to such means. For England's truest interests it were far best that she should be free of such a burden. The life of European nations is as yet so little ordered, so chaotic and unorganised that it were well for each of them had they more time to set in order their own house; but Imperialism and social reform are incompatible.

We do not stand alone in the awakening of our national genius; the phenomenon is world-wide, and may be studied in lands so far apart as Ireland and Japan. The movement is a protest of the human spirit.

against a premature and artificial cosmopolitanism which would destroy in nations, as modern education destroys in individuals, the special genius of each. It would take too long to correlate all the phases of nationalism in East and West; but to illustrate its unity of purpose, and the character of idealism, I make two quotations from its current literature elsewhere.

The first is a passage from a pamphlet issued by the Gaelic League, replacing only the word 'Irishmen,' by the word 'Indians.'

'Indians we all are, and therefore our only possible perfection consists in the development of the Indian nature we have inherited from our forefathers. Centuries of real development, of civilisation, of noble fidelity to all the highest ideals men can worship have fixed for ever the national character of India; and if we be not true to that character, if we be not genuine Indians, we can never be perfect men, full and strong men, able to do a true man's part of God and motherland. Our forefathers are our best models and patterns; they alone can show us what common Indian nature can and ought to be. We must copy their greatness and their goodness; truly worth are they of affectionate and reverent imitation, for were they not men of renown in their day, men of highest saintliness of Indian genius and learning and love of learning, of might and valour or the dread field of battle—saints, scholars, heroes.....Look to your forefathers, read of them, speak of them; not in unworthy mendicant eloquence, nor yet in vulgar boasting about our ancient glories while we squat down in disgraceful content

with our present degeneracy, nor least of all in miserable petty controversy with the hireling-liars who calumniate our dear India. No; but to learn from them what you ought to be, what God destined Indian to be."

One of the most beautiful of exhortations to a people in a position akin to ours, is the message which Pierre Loti addresses to the young Egyptians :

"Reawaken," he says, "before it be too late. Defend yourselves against the disintegrating invasion—not indeed by violence,\* not by inhospitableness or bad temper—but by despising this Western crowd that overwhelms you when it is weary of us. Try to preserve not only your traditions and your beautiful Arab tongue, but also all that went to make the grace and mystery of your town, the refined luxury of your homes. This is not a question of the fancies, or artists it is your national dignity that is in danger. You were *Oriental*s (I speak with respect when I use this word, that implies a past of early civilisation, and of pure greatness), but a few years more, and if you do not take heed, they will have made mere Levantine courtiers of you, interested only in the enhancement of land-values and speculations in cotton."

It is in this spirit that the other nations look to us for sincerity in our lives ; shall we answer them with

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\* Nothing could be more futile than a reliance upon violence as a means of achieving Indian national independence. It is not by destruction, but only through self-development that the end can be achieved.

lies or truth? Upon that answer depends our future as a nation.

The inspiration of our Nationalism must be not hatred or self-seeking; but Love, first of India, and secondly of England and of the World. The highest ideal of nationality is service; and it is because this service is impossible for us so long as we are politically and spiritually dominated by any Western civilisation, that we are bound to achieve our freedom. It is in this spirit that we must say to Englishmen, that we will achieve this freedom, if they will, with their consent and with their help; but if they will not, then without their consent and in spite of their resistance.

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### THE ORIENTAL VIEW OF WOMEN

It has been often assumed, by speakers and writers on the present and past position of women in the West that the Oriental view of woman is lower than the Western; and statements involving this assumption are often made, as if the assumption were an admitted fact. It must in the first place be observed that there is no "absolute Western" and no "absolute Eastern" point of view. It is a mistake to assume that "East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet;" attitudes of reverence, comradeship or contempt towards women find expression at various times in the history of civilisation alike in the West and in the East. It is sometimes suggested that Christianity, an Oriental religion, has imposed upon European women a position of inferiority. But it was certainly

not Christ, who was an Oriental, who treated women as inferior beings. It was Paul, a Greek, who was primarily responsible for the low spiritual status of woman in the Christian Church. From this position she only temporarily emerged in that Oriental period of post-classic European culture when the Church first accepted marriage as a sacrament, and men worshipped God in the form of woman—as they still do in the East.

It is noteworthy that we find in the writings of some of those Oriental philosophers whose work had so much influence in Europe at that time, pronouncements in favour of the social emancipation of woman which are almost verbally identical with those of modern Suffragists. "Our social condition," wrote Ibn-Rushd, "does not permit women to unfold all the resources that are in them; it seems as if they were only meant to bear children and to suckle them. And it is this state of servitude that has destroyed in them the capacity for great things. That is the reason why we seldom find among us women endowed with any great moral qualities; their lives pass away like those of plants, and they are a burden to their husbands. From this cause arises the misery that devours our cities, since there are twice as many women as men, and they are unable to procure their means of livelihood by their own industry." It is true that the early Germans honoured women; but the latter Germans thought that they knew better. It was the essentially Western materialism of Luther that had the main share in the degradation of woman accompanying the



Reformation. "If a woman becomes weary and at last dead from bearing," says Luther, "that matters not. Let her only die from bearing; she is there to do it." And, again, she "must neither begin nor complete anything with the man; where he is, there must she be, and bend before him as before her master, whom she shall fear, and to whom she shall be subject and obedient."\*

It is not, indeed, by contrasting the religious standpoints of the East and the West that the supposed inferior position of woman in the East can be demonstrated. At the present day there are millions of Orientals who worship the Divine life in the image of a woman. Woman is honoured in religious literature and art. Mahadev, addressing Uma, in the *Mahabharata* says, "Thou, O Lady, knowest both the Self and the Not-Self. . . . Thou art skilled in every work. Thou art endued with self-restraint and with perfect same-sightness in respect of every creature. . . . Thy energy and power are equal to My own, and Thou hast not shrunk from the most severe austerities." Again, in the *Ramayana*, when Rama leaves his kingdom to live as a hermit in the forest, Vasishtha, pleading that Sita should not follow him, suggests that she should reign in his stead: "Sita will occupy Rama's seat. Of all these that marry, the wife is the soul. Sita will govern the earth, as she is Rama's self." Sita, however, chooses to follow Rama.

In the great law book of *Manu* we find "Where

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\*See the Chapters on Luther in Karl Pearson's 'Ethic, of Freethought.'

women are honoured, there the gods are pleased ; but where they are not honoured, no sacred rite yields rewards." There is, too, the Indian saying : " Thou shall not strike a woman even with a flower."

In Sufi mysticism, the Beloved (feminine) is " all that lives "—God : the Lover (masculine), is " a dead thing"—the individual so lacking the Divine Life. These lines were written by Jalalud-din Rumi :

" Woman is a ray of God, not a mere mistress,  
The Creator's Self, as it were, not a mere creature!"

One must consider also the representation of Divinity symbolised as feminine in Hindu and Buddhist art ; there are forms ranging from the dread image of Kali, Destroyer of Time, to the compassionate, tender forms of Uma and of Tara. We must remember that the gods are shaped by human beings in their own image ; the status of women on earth is reflected in the status of a goddess.

On the other hand one might point out how the whole history of mythology and art in Greece reflects the gradual degradation from an ancient ideal of high companionship exactly corresponding to the Indian conception of the feminine principle in the cosmos as Sakti to that of the Hausfrau in a patriarchal community.\*

If we turn from this question of the inner attitude to that of social status, we shall find that the Oriental woman has always enjoyed certain advantages which the Western woman has, at the best, very lately won e.g., the universal right of Muhammadan women to

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\* See Fane E. Harrison *Prolegomena, to Greek Religion* pp. 273, 285.

hold and inherit property in their own names \* The Oriental woman has also more real power of control in her own home than most Western women; her world is law even to her grown-up sons. It is very well known that in Burma women are more independent and more happy than in perhaps any other country in the world; and, indeed, one has only to return to London from any Oriental country and contrast the facial expression of most women there with the facial expression of most women in the East to realise that the latter are the happier.

Both in the East and in the West the social position of woman needs reformation of a drastic character. When one reflects, however, upon the opposition to woman's advance characteristic of Western universities, legal and medical associations, and of Parliament and still more the manner than the fact of it, it is difficult to feel that the Western woman is so much to be envied.

It is surely a tragedy that of all the woman in England between the ages of fifteen and fifty scarcely more than half are married. In all that this implies lies the comparative wickedness of modern Western industrial civilisation, which sets a premium of vice by saying, "Seek indulgence, but beware of Children." Neither this, nor sweated labour, nor its result—street solicitation—are of the East.

I would admit women to absolute equality of opportunity with men in all respects. But I think that State most fortunate wherein most women between the ages of twenty and forty are primarily concerned with the

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\*See Burton, 'Arabian Nights' X. 195.

making of children, beautiful in every sense. To this end women must obtain economic security, either from individuals or from the State. There can be no freedom for women which does not include the freedom to have, as well as not to have children. It is ultimately I conceive—at least, I hope—for the right to be themselves, rather than for the right to become more like men, that Suffragettes are, however unconsciously, fighting. There can be no freedom for women till good motherhood is regarded as an intrinsic glory.

The East has always recognised the fundamental difference in the psychology of men and women. I do not think that any attempt to minimise or to ignore these differences can be successful. It is because men and women *are* different that they need each other. What is needed at present is that women should be allowed to discover for themselves what is their "sphere," rather than that they should continue to occupy perforce the sphere which men (rightly or wrongly) have at various times allowed to them in the patriarchal ages. This necessity is as much a necessity for the West as for the East.

Social status, as I have said, needs reformation both in the East and in the West. But the West far more than the East needs a change of heart. The Western view of sex is degraded and materially contrasted with the Eastern. Women are not lightly spoken of, or written of, in the East as they are so often in the West. Sex for the Oriental is a sacrament. For the European it is a pleasure.

With the consciousness of this, and much more that

might be added to it, I feel that the West has at least as much to learn from the East of reverence to women as the East has to learn from the West. And it is better for reformers, whether in East or West, to work together for a common end than to pride themselves upon their own supposedly superior achievement.





Sir Rabindranath Tagore.

# SIR RABINDRANATH TAGORE

## INTRODUCTION.

“IN the literary firmament of India, no star shines with greater splendour to-day than Sir Rabindranath Tagore, the greatest living poet of Bengal. One of the most striking figures in the literary revival in Bengal, he has been one of the chief formative influences of the new era on which Bengal has in recent times entered. His work is nothing if not a passionate expression of love for the motherland. He is indeed one of the greatest singers of nationalism. His songs have nerved a nation's heart and filled it with a new life. The influence of the poets is, after all, the deepest and most abiding, and if the dreams of the new nationalism in India are to be accomplished, a whole host of singers like Rabindranath will have to prepare the way for such achievement. Our debt to Rabindranath and his like can be repaid only in love and service to the land which he loves so well.

Rabindranath loves India, not with the love of a blind glorifier of the past, but of one who is awake to all the stir and the movement of the age and is illumined with the light of modern culture. The Indian spirit and the Indian point of view are traceable in his writings like a pervasive presence. His message relinks us to India in all essentials even while voicing the need of a new adjustment.

The work of Rabindranath has other than *patriotic* aspects. As pure *literature* alone it has surpassing worth. His writings will not be merely the glory of the hour but will continue to cheer and elevate generations yet to come. His writings are above all the outpouring of a soul which ceaselessly feels out towards God. They are full of the Vaishnava spirit which idealises and spiritualises every relation of life. His hymns breathe a profoundly meditative spirit. His songs open to us the roadways of beauty and blessedness in life. His short stories charm the reader, while an undercurrent of deep purpose runs through them. His musical pieces are full on an enchanting melody. His essays are the outcome of a searching reflection. Everything that he has written glows with the light of his rich genius and that spiritual fervour which is the heritage of the Hindu.

Rabindranath's character is even greater than his writings. In India, perhaps in India alone, the saint has been at the same time philosopher and poet. Rabindranath is poet and saint in one, and therefore doubly great. The joy of communion with God is his. Poet, dramatist, novelist, musician, patriot, meditative sage. Sir Rabindranath Tagore is at present one of the great assets of India."

#### INDIA : PAST AND PRESENT

In this brief sketch which aim of turning the gaze of the reader towards this shining light in the literary firmament of India and at kindling in the heart of every son and daughter of India a deep and passionate

yearning to lift our beloved land into a loftier plane of aspiration and achievement, it will be impossible to deal fully and adequately with those influences that have made modern India what it is to-day and that have given to us the supreme singer who voices the dreams and longings of modern India. But still we must try to bear in mind these influences and gauge their power and energy aright if we are to realise the significance of the great forward movement of life in India to-day and of Tagore's expression of that movement in perfect prose and verse. India from time immemorial has laid ceaseless emphasis on unity and harmony and has evolved a unique civilisation in which order and progress, wisdom and love, service of man and communion with God have been happily and harmoniously combined. She has, while achieving social harmony and conserving and perfecting the social energies required for efficient self-protection from disruptive forces within and from shattering forces from without, sought to spiritualise individual and social energies, and to bend all the powers and faculties of man and the institutions of society to the service of God, so that the human soul might by a ceaseless course of discipline of the mind and a ceaseless development and expansion of the spirit of love in the home and in society rise to the immortal raptures of the love of God. If we study Indian History aright and with true clarity of vision as to the fundamental underlying currents of national life flowing ceaselessly through the hastening centuries, we shall be able to realise the true unity and inwardness of Indian History,

and then only can we realise the truth of the above statement as to the loftiest ideals of the Indian mind. India waits in eager anticipation for the coming of the great historian dowered in a supreme measure with true historical imagination and vision and conscience who will recreate India's past by the magic wand of his learning and show India to herself in all her peerless beauty in the magic mirror of his marvellous mind. Though his great work which is of such supreme national importance has not yet been done, yet, if we let our minds range over the ages and try to understand the direction of the forward flow of India's national life through recorded time, we can see abundantly and well that India has been loyal to the light vouchsafed unto her and has always sought to realise her vision and her ideal in individual and national life. The consolidation of the ancient Hindu empires had their inspiration and guide in the immemorial Indian ideals unity and harmony. The Buddhistic age which began with an era of revolt against Hindu ideas of life and God ended in a reaffirmation of those ideas in a more dynamic and powerful form. The Mahomedan period shows how the ebbing away of the great Indian ideas as to individual and national life was followed by the decay of the racial powers of self-protection and how eventually the revitalisation of those ideas by the Bhakthi movement was followed by a new self-consciousness and a new vigour of social and racial life. The struggling elements of growth and consolidation needed an era of active and strenuous peace and the help of a fostering hand to emerge into full and



vigorous life. In the wisdom of Providence England has come into our beloved land to perfect such elements of growth and consolidation. England—the champion of growing nationalities everywhere, the lover of freedom, the emancipator of slaves—has come into our land bringing with her the healthy atmosphere of a higher civic and national life, and hence the elements of unity and progress and consolidation in our land will very soon attain full fruition.

#### DIFFERENTIA OF INDIAN LITERATURE AND ART

If such have been the ideals in individual, social, and national life in India we can well expect them to be given immortal and perfect expression in India's literature and art, because literature and art are the record of the intenser and happier moments and moods of the inner life of a people, and are not a mere ornament of life but are a revelation of life. Art is one of the natural forms assumed by joy, and the higher life is a life of increasing and glad realisation of the joy-elements in God's universe. The human soul rises for law into light and from light into love, and in the course of this flight into higher and higher regions of the inner heaven the mind becomes filled with beautiful images and ideas, the eyes acquire a new clarity and power of vision, and the utterance becomes musical and harmonious. Hence it is that "art idealises the real and reports the ultimate," and that the highest art is in perfect touch with life and at the same time is perfectly creative. Thus all true and great art must be joyful, creative, rhythmical, and harmonious and

poetry as the greatest of all the arts and as dealing with language which is the most subtle and spiritual of all media of self-expression must have these characteristics in a predominant measure. At the same time every great race has got its own ideals, its own dreams, its own aspirations; and its art, which is the expression of its higher life, must hence be thoroughly national. A great national art can come into existence only if certain pre-requisites exist. These are a passionate national spirit, an intense faith in the great future of the country based on an intense pride in the great past of the land, a capacity for measureless self-sacrifice, a rich and glorious past literary and artistic tradition, social sympathy and unity, and suitable assimilation (as opposed to imitation) of elements of the universal beauty from other great literatures of the world. Applying these tests, we realise what a great and wonderful national literature and art the Indian genius has developed for the greater happiness of man and the greater glory of God. The passionate worship of literature and art in our land is brought home to our minds by the beautiful stanza.

संसारविषवृक्षस्य द्वेफलेह्यमृतोपमे ।

काव्यामृतरसास्वादः साधुभिश्चसमागमः ॥

[The poison-tree of phenomenal life bears two ambrosial fruits, *viz.*, the enjoyment of the nectar of poesy and the enjoyment of the society of pure and godly natures]. Indian literature is remarkable for its serenity and its sanity and its vivid realisation of the sweetness of poetic emotion (रस and ध्वनि). *Rasa* and *Dhvani* are beautiful Sanskrit words the full meaning

of which it is impossible to convey by any words in any other language. A Sanskrit stanza says:—

प्रतीयमानं पुनरन्यदेव वस्त्वस्ति वाणीषु महाकवीनाम् ।

यस्तत्प्रसिद्धावयवातिरिक्तं विभातिलावण्यमिवांगनानाम् ॥

(In the words of the great poets there is a pervasive element of beauty and sweetness apart from individual delicacies of thought and beauties of expression, just as in the case of a radiantly beautiful woman there is a quivering splendour of loveliness apart from individual physical graces).

Further, the Indian conception of art is that art is creative and brings to us a revelation of infinite Beauty and Love

“The Light whose smile kindles the universe,  
The Beauty in which all things live and move.”

Mammata says:

नियतिकृत नियमरहितां हृदैकमयीमनन्यपरतंत्रा ।

नवरसरुचिरां निर्मितिमादधती भारती कवेर्जयति ॥

The poet's speech creates a world which is not fettered by the laws of destiny and which need not by a mere counterpart or imitation of the created world, which is of the very essence of joy, which is self-existent and not dependent on anything else, and which is made beautiful by the nine *rasas* or emotions.

The Indian mind has always recognised the truth of truths in the realm of art that natural forms are but the imperfect incarnations and expressions of ideas and that higher and higher visions of beauty dawn on the purified inner vision and must be realised in marble and on canvas, and by sound and by words. Further,

art has made a conscious and successful attempt in our land to realise the unity of things and has been in glad and holy alliance with religion. It has also tried to be popular and to appeal to the universal elements of thought and emotion. The temples which were the centres of the higher life of the people were made the true homes of artistic beauty, and in the presence of God the worker, the thinker, the dreamer, and the devotee met and fraternised as happy children of God.

#### REVELATION OF RACE-CONSCIOUSNESS IN TAGORE.

Tagore, being a great and representative poet and summing up in himself a great era, can be well expected to be an embodiment of our great racial ideas as described above; and if we study the inspired pages of Tagore's works, our expectations are abundantly fulfilled and realised. First and foremost should be mentioned Tagore's 'sacramental conception of life. God is the sustainer and upholder of life, and by ceaseless discipline and inner uplift He raises us to the heaven of His love. The very first poem in the *Gitanjali* says in famous words:

"Thou hast made me endless, such is thy pleasure.

This frail vessel thou emptiest again and again,  
and fillest it ever with fresh life.

This little flute of a reed thou hast carried over  
hills and dales, and hast breathed through it  
melodies eternally new.

At the immortal touch of thy hands my little heart  
loses its limits in joy and gives birth to utterance  
ineffable.

Thy infinite gifts come to me only on these very small hands of mine. Ages pass, and still thou pourest, and still there is room to fill."

Tagore's works show not only this Indian conception of the sacramental character of life but also the Indian conception of the sacramental character of love. Tagore says in his article on *Kalidasa the Moralist*: "The love that is self-controlled and friendly to general society, which does not ignore any one, great or small, kindred or stranger, around itself—the love which, while placing the loved one in its centre, diffuses its sweet graciousness within the circle of the entire universe, has a permanence unassailable by God or man.....When love occupies its proper place in subordination to virtue, it contributes its special element towards perfection, it does not destroy symmetry; because virtue is nothing but harmony—it preserves beauty, it preserves goodness, and by wedding the two together it gives a delicious completeness to both." Tagore's conception of the soul and function of art also shows how he is in harmony with the great traditions of our race in the realms of literature and art. According to him art is the opener of the gate of beauty through which we can pass to reach the very Throne of Grace. Two beautiful passages in the *Gitanjali* bring out this idea very well.

"My song has put off her adornments; she has no pride of dress or decoration. Ornaments would mar our union; they would come between thee and me, their jingling would drown thy whispers."

(*Gitanjali*, page 6.)



“ I touch by the edge of the far-spreading wing of  
my song thy feet which I could never aspire to  
reach.” (Gitanjali, page 2.)

In short, Tagore's great contributions in the realm of creative criticism show that he has vividly realised and accepted the canons of Indian art as described in the preceding pages. He says: “ Inasmuch as art restrains ‘ reality,’ it lets in truth, which is greater than ‘ reality.’ The professional artist is a mere witness to ‘ reality,’ while the real artist is a witness to truth. We see the productions of the one with our corporeal eyes, and of the other with the deeper eyes of contemplation. And to see anything in completion requires, first and foremost, that the obsession of the senses be curbed strongly and this declaration be made to all outward forms that they are never ultimate or final, never an end but always means to an end.” To sum up his views as to the fundamental conceptions of the Indian mind as to the meaning and purpose of life, I may well quote here the following passage from his *Mission of India* where he says: “ We see that throughout the ages India's only endeavour has been to establish harmony amidst differences, to incline various roads to the same goal, to make us realise the one in the midst of the many with an undoubting inner conviction; not to do away with outer differences and yet to attain to the deeper oneness that underlies all such differences.”

#### TAGORE'S DEBT TO THE PAST

It is a delightful and uplifting task to trace the sources of Tagore's mental and artistic endowment, the tributary

streams of thought and emotion that have fallen into the Ganges of his song, and have, while increasing its volume and its fruitfulness, become a portion of its life without altering its own native colour or purity or sweetness. It is the great Bhakti movement that blossomed in the songs of the Alvars and the philosophy of Ramanuja on the south and in the songs and poems of Jayadev and Sri Chaitanya and Vidyapathi and Chandidas in the north that has been the main source of Tagore's inspiration. The religion of Love proclaimed that this universe is a manifestation of His Love and Beauty and that His Love and Mercy are infinite. The heart of India leapt up in glad response to the clarion tones of the songs of the great lovers of God and even to-day these songs are our dearest inner possessions and bring us into immediate and ineffable touch with the divine presence. Tagore was indebted also in some measure to the great Sufi doctrines. The Sufis regarded the existence of the soul as pre-natal and held that the full perception of earthly beauty was the remembrancer of Supreme Beauty in the spiritual world and that in spite of the veil of the body the soul could behold the Divine Mysteries through love and ecstasy. Further, not only the higher elements of Islam but also the higher elements of Christianity have had a considerable share in moulding Tagore's genius. But in Tagore the Hindu genius is predominant and overshadows everything else. The great Hindu ideas of the immanence of God, of the unity of life, of God as the Eternal Bridegroom, of life being a joyful preparation for divine communion, of the immortality of the human soul, of

*Ahimsa*, of *Santhi*, of the spiritual kinship of all of the sovereignty of love, and of the love of God being the crowning glory and rapture of human life find again and again beautiful and immortal expression in Tagore's great poems and songs.

#### THE INDIAN RENAISSANCE AND TAGORE'S PLACE IN IT

Such has been the great past of India in life and art and such is Tagore's relation to that great and glorious past. But it is in relation to India's present and her glorious future that we see his genius in all its fullness of splendour. India is now on the threshold of a new era; and a wise and firm hold on her great ideals, a wise responsiveness to the call of the age, a wise evolution of her national life, a higher development of her literature and art, and a glad self-dedication of the lives of all Indians in their country's cause are required to make this era fruitful and to bring into existence the greater and happier India of the future. Even the most careless or indifferent or prejudiced observer of the Indian people to-day can see even on a superficial examination that a new spirit has been born in India. A new self-respect and self-consciousness, a passionate conception of our holy motherland as the sovereign of our hearts, a keen and overmastering desire to serve that finds a holy rapture in finding opportunities for service and an intense and poignant agony at being denied such opportunities—these are to be found in every Indian of to-day, be he young or old, whatever be his caste or creed. Unity of place, unity of manners

and traditions and culture, unity of religion, ethical unity, unity of history, the universal reverence for the divine Sanskrit tongue, and unity of laws and of Government have under the impact of the great Western civilisation brought about a real national self-consciousness, though India is continental in size and contains many languages and castes. This sacramental conception of the motherland and of the Indian people has naturally found its perfect and passionate expression in the literature and art of the time, because the soul of the artist and the poet is like the Aeolian harp from which God's breezes evoke passionate melodies. This is the true inwardness of what has been called the Indian Renaissance. The Renaissance in Europe owed its inspiration and power to a departed civilisation and a dead literature. We are fortunate in the circumstance that our Indian Renaissance owes its power and inspiration to a living civilisation and a vital literature. The great dreams of the past, the great stories of recording the doings and the thoughts of the heroes and heroines of our land, and the holy books bringing to us the message of God's love and the achievements of God's Incarnations in the direction of upholding Dharma and uplifting the lovers of God into the paradise of His Love are being related anew to life in modern times. In this impact of the thought of past times upon the life of the present is born the vivifying and beautiful flame of new and glorious thoughts and words and deeds, the warmth of which keeps our national life from decay and the light of which shows us our way through the utter darkness.

of the distant future. Tagore's genius can be understood by us properly when we seek to relate it to India's strenuous present and glorious future. He is the greatest poet and prophet of Indian Renaissance. All his works are either a passionate rendering of the infinite moods of the new-born spirit of patriotism and adoration of our motherland or a new and vital interpretation of India's great dreams and deeds in the past. I shall deal with his works in detail later on. But I shall quote here a few of his great patriotic songs which are among his greatest gifts to the nation.

"To thee, my Motherland, I dedicate my body, for thee I consecrate my life; for thee my eyes will weep; and in thy praise my muse will sing. -

Though my arms are helpless and powerless; still they will do the deeds that can only serve thy cause; and though my sword is rusty with disgrace, still it shall sever thy chains of bondage sweet mother mine."

"Blessed is my birth, because I was born in this country, blessed is my life, mother, because I have loved thee.

I do not know if thou hast wealth and riches like a Queen. I know this much that my limbs are cooled as soon as I stand in thy shade.

I know not what grove blossoms flowers that madden the soul with such scents—I know not the sky where the moon rises with such sweet smiles.

My eyes were first opened in thy light and they will be closed, finally, upon that very light."



## LIFE SKETCH

Sir Rabindranath Tagore was born in Calcutta in 1861. He is the son of Maharshi Debendranath Tagore, one of the founders of the Adi Brahma Samaj, and a man of singular purity and unworldliness of disposition coupled with a passionate love of the motherland. Tagore was the youngest of the Maharshi's sons, and lost his mother early in life. Ever since his youth nature was his dear and beloved mother. His school-life was not happy as the soulless, deadening, loveless, joyless routine of studies unrelated to actual life or future needs which goes by the name of modern education could make no appeal to his sensitive, fine-strung, and poetic nature. (His father took him along with him in his Himalayan trip and this period of his life was one of the happy and formative periods of his life. His literary career began very early, his genius having been kindled by the songs of Vidyapathi and Chandidas.) In *Sandhya Sangit* (songs of sunset) and *Prarbat Sangit* (songs of sunrise) he wrote original and romantic poems. At the age of fourteen, he produced a musical opera called the *Genius of Valmiki*. He used to write essays for different magazines, especially for his family magazine, the *Bharati*, now edited by his sister Sreemati Swarna Koomari Devi. (At the age of seventeen, he was sent to England and studied in the University College for sometime.) He returned to India after a year and subsequently went to England a second time. (He found law unsuited to his nature and came back to India.) (Since then poems, songs, stories, dramas, hymns and essays began to pour from him in

a ceaseless stream. Indeed his versatility is wonderful. He married in his twenty-third year. The Maharshi then asked him to go down and manage the Shilaida estate. Though Tagore did not at first like this enforced seclusion, his art became broader and deeper by reason of his self-communion and meditation and by his direct observation of peasant life in Bengal. There too he wrote some of his plays, especially *Chitvargada Visayan* and *Raja O Rani*. )Till his thirty-fifth year he wrote the most exquisite love-poetry in the Bengali language. This Shilaida period lasted about seventeen years. (Then he lost his wife, his daughter, and his youngest son. But these bereavements did not sour his nature but broadened his sympathies and introduced a higher and more spiritual note into his writings. It was during this period that the *Gitanjali* was written. He then went to England both for the sake of his health and to be with his son during his University career. After going to England he translated some of his poems in the books so well known to all:—*Gitanjali*, *The Gardener* and *The Crescent Moon*. His English lectures delivered in America and in England have been collected under the name *Sadhana*. In 1913 he was awarded the Nobel Prize. He devoted the entire prize amount of £ 8,000 to his school at Bolpur. In December 1913 the Calcutta University conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Literature. He was subsequently knighted.) He has now gone on an extended tour in Japan and America and proposes to devote to his school the sums received by him for his lectures. He has started an "Art House," which is a school for teaching arts

and industries. His Bolpur school is one of the most admirable educational institutions in our land. Among his works now available in English are *Gitanjali*, *The Gardener*, *The Crescent Moon*, *The King of the Dark Chamber*, *The Post Office*, *Chitra*, *Sadhana*, *Translation of One Hundred Poems of Kabir*, *Glimpses of Bengal Life*, *Fruit-Gathering*, *Hungry Stones and other stories*, etc. Many poems and essays and stories by him have been translated in the *Modern Review* since 1910 and his *Reminiscences* have been translated in that valuable monthly since January 1916. His *Letters* are going to be published in the *Modern Review* from January 1917.

#### TAGORE'S PERSONALITY

Tagore is a man of striking appearance. Mr. Basanta Kumar Roy says: "The Hindu poet's flowing hair, his broad, unfurrowed forehead, his bright, black, magnetic eyes, chiselled nose, firm but gentle chin, delicate sensitive hands, his sweet voice, pleasant smile, keen sense of humour, and his innate refinement make him a man of rare and charming personality. To look at him is to notice the true embodiment of the artist." He is a man of sweet and unselfish nature and kindles love and affection in every one who has the good fortune to meet him. He is fond of swimming and rowing but his chief joy and recreation are in singing. It is said: "Often he has been heard singing from early morning till late at night, with only a break of an hour or so for noon-day meal." His love of nature is the master passion of his life. It is this trait and his deeply religious spirit that keep up the

sweetness of his nature and the radiance of his vision amidst the hurry and bustle and worldliness of modern life. He is an ideal landlord and his practical and boundless love for them is one of the most fascinating traits of his life. He gives remissions of rent when inability to pay rent is shown. There are several primary schools, one secondary English school and charitable dispensary in the estate. There is also an agricultural bank there. In his Bolpur school he moves freely with his boys and is beloved by them. He has also taken part in the public life of the country though his chief activities lie elsewhere. He presided over the Provincial Conference at Pabna in 1903. His recent and famous refusal to lecture in Canada because of Canada's unsympathetic and unfraternal conduct towards India shows the strength and energy of his patriotic emotion. Every thought, word, and deed of his are inspired by his supreme love for India and desire to serve India. It has been very well said of him: "Here is a saint who is not afraid to be a saint, who dares to mingle with the commonest things of the world, and a poet the very closeness of whose contact with earth lifts him ever nearer to heaven."

#### "SHANTINIKETAN"

Tagore's famous school at Bolpur deserves a special mention. The modern schools in India are institutions which the India of the future cannot and will not tolerate. It is a healthy sign of the vitality and self protective power of the Indian genius that schools of the stamp of Tagore's school are springing into existence

as a growth from within. It is now recognised vividly that every movement of vital importance to the nation depends for its fruitfulness upon the educational movement, and that in matters educational constant vigilance is required because poison at the source will be felt everywhere and will have far-reaching consequences. In the ancient system of education in India there was the highest reverence for knowledge; the teacher was honoured widely; the boy's education was a discipline and preparation for taking an honourable part in the wider spheres of life and becoming worthy of the grace of God; the teacher as well as the student were free from a commercial conception of education; their life was spent in nature's loveliest spots and was in harmony with nature; and among the students a true and glad democratic spirit prevailed. We have to maintain the essential features of this system while adding thereto mass education and scientific, industrial, and commercial education. But modern education in India is onesided, inartistic, mercenary, loveless and irreligious; it does not provide an honourable place for the Indian languages, Indian culture, or Indian history; it is unreal and unrelated to life; its homage to science is more nominal than real and it is exultantly disloyal to art and religion; and it has not achieved any notable successes in primary or secondary or university education. Tagore's Bolpur school seeks to combine the peculiar graces and glories of the ancient and modern types and systems of education. In it the medium of instruction is the Bengali language. At 4-30 A.M. "a choir of boys go round the school singing songs and



rouse the sleepers up into the beauty and calm of the early dawn." The boys clean their own rooms. They then go through physical exercises in the open air, bathe and meditate for a quarter of an hour. Tagore has written in a letter to Mr. Rose: "To give spiritual culture to our boys was my principal object in starting my school in Bolpur. Fortunately, in India, we have the model before us in the tradition of our ancient forest schools. . . . Having this ideal of a school in my mind which should be a home and a temple in one, where teaching should be a part of a worshipful life, I selected this spot away from all distractions of town, hallowed with the memory of a pious life whose days were passed here in communion with God." After meditation, the gong sounds and the boys "go reverently in procession into the school temple." The boys have classes between 7 A.M. to 10 A.M. in the morning and 2 P.M. to 5 P.M. in the afternoon. All classes are held under the shade of trees when the weather is fine. In the evening the older boys go to the neighbouring villages to teach the village lads. The boys are trained in acting and music and have their artistic nature properly nurtured. There is no corporal punishment. It is a republic of the boys and the discipline of the school is in their hands. The teachers live with them and are quite happy. During holidays the teachers and the boys go on excursions to various places. The boys retire to bed at half-past nine and a choir of boys again go round the school singing evening songs. Thus they begin their days with songs and close them with songs. Such is this wonderful school

and such are its ideals and achievements. As Mr. Ramsay MacDonald says: "The Shantiniketan is no mere seminary for the education of boys. It is alive with the life of India. It is aware of what is going on outside. It shares in the larger Indian life."

#### TAGORE'S MIND AND ART

It will be impossible to reveal with any degree of fulness in this brief sketch the heavenly beauty of Tagore's mind and art. I shall, however, point out a few aspects of his genius so that the affluence of his mental endowment may be realised in some measure. His Bengali style is "full of subtlety of rhythm, of untranslatable delicacies of colour, of metrical invention." He has revealed to the world the wonderful potentialities and powers of the Indian languages and has won for his mother-tongue international recognition and homage. His English prose style has been well called as "this flower of English prose" by English critics and has discovered even to the English genius new possibilities in the English language. His style has spontaneity, freshness, simplicity, spiritual suggestiveness, golden felicities of phrase, and a pervasive melody. In regard to his mind and art we must remember the high and uplifting note of idealism and mysticism in his works. Mysticism is an inner faculty and endowment by which we realise the spiritual kinship of things and the divine elements radiating light and love and joy everywhere. Tagore's works are full of this wonderful mystical note and reveal his rare power of realising and expressing the spiritual significance and purpose and appeal of common things.

Another fact to be remembered in regard to his art is his lyrical supremacy.) The lyric mood consists in a rapturous flight into the realm of melodious thought followed by a quick descent. Though lyric poetry is intensely subjective, it contains universal elements because the greatest lyric poets in seeking and attaining perfect self-expression become also the interpreters and revealers of the universal human heart. Tagore's great lyric poetry is many-sided in its appeal and multiform in its loveliness. Tagore is a true embodiment of the Hindu genius which regards poetry and song not as mere ornaments of life but as the hand-maids of God leading our souls to His lotus feet. His "lyric love, half-angel and half bird" soars in the sunshine of the summer skies of the soul and sees the beauty of what is here and beyond, Nature and God, earth and heaven. As Mr. Basanta Kumar Roy, well says: Love flows from his heart, mind, and soul in a continuous stream, assuming all different forms in its windings from the gross to the spiritual, from the known to the unknown, from the finite to the infinite. He interprets love in all its multiform expressions—the love of mother, of son, husband, wife, lover, beloved, patriot, of the Dionysian, nature-drunk, and of the God-frenzied." His nature-lyrics mingle in a beautiful way the beauty of nature in itself and its spiritual and emotional appeal to the soul of man. His patriotic lyrics sweep us off our feet and lift us into a plane of passionate and powerful emotion and bring new energies of service into the heart while bringing gracious tears to the eyes and blissful thrills to the frame. His devotional lyrics bear our souls away

to the heaven of God's limitless love. Such is Tagore's lyrical genius. His prevailing lyric mood colours also his plays and stories. In addition to his mystical genius and lyric endowment, we must remember his simplicity, spontaneity, and universality. As the Rev. Mr. C. F. Andrews says well: "Rabindra appears to arrive at the universal, not like Shakespeare by many different roads, but always by the one pathway of simplicity. The simplest human affections, the child-heart of the young and innocent, the simplest domestic joys and sorrows, the purest and simplest yearnings of the soul for God, these go to form the unity towards which Rabindranath's poetic utterance is striving." (Again, Tagore's art is thoroughly national. His works are so alive with national feeling that they are, and for ever will be, the holy scripture of the lovers of our motherland.) In short, he is a shining incarnation of the soul of India and has revealed the soul of India to the world.

#### TAGORE'S POEMS

Among his great poems, *The Crescent Moon* deserves mention at the very outset. It reveals to us the heaven of the child's mind and soul in a new and vital manner. It makes us realise what a universal source of joy has been given to us in children how the child's nature is full of divine simplicity and sweetness. It makes us see in an intimate way the child's sportiveness and winsomeness, its exquisite delight in beautiful things, its gift of imagination, and its purity, and goodness. It teaches us how the diviner elements of life are kept alive in us by the child and how earth is kept in touch

with heaven by its influence. Tagore's *Gardener* deals with other aspects of love and contains exquisite love poetry, beautiful nature-lyrics, and lofty devotional poems. The love poetry in this volume of poems is as many-sided as it is beautiful and pure. It is given an exquisite setting amid the most attractive and picturesque natural scenes. The delicacy of touch and the keenness of intuitive vision evidenced in the devotional poems in the volume are equally wonderful. The innumerable miscellaneous poems of Tagore's as yet untranslated reveal the same rare gifts. The many miscellaneous poems translated but uncollected in book form and scattered over the pages of the *Modern Review* are equally beautiful. It was the similarity of mental endowment between Tagore and Kabir that led Tagore to translate and publish *One Hundred Poems of Kabir* with the collaboration of Evelyn Underhill. I come finally to the *Gitanjali*, though this was the first of Tagore's works to be translated into English and turned the gaze of the whole world to the greatness of his genius. In it we see the most perfect blossoming of all his varied and remarkable powers. It is a very mine of perfect gems of devotional poetry. It contains Tagore's translation of his own poems and shows what new cadences and harmonies of feeling and phrase can be evolved by the master of one language from another tongue. The peculiar glory of *Gitanjali* is the manner in which it relates to human life to the Divine till it is transfigured in the light of God. The whole world is felt by us as being immeasurably near to us in spirit, and our hearts become full of a new passion of love and peace



as we go through the fascinating poems. Mr. Yeats, says in his introduction to the *Gitanjali* : " Mr. Tagore like the Indian civilisation itself, has been content to discover the soul and surrender himself to its spontaneity. . . And innocence, a simplicity that one does not find elsewhere in literature makes the birds and the leaves seem as near to him as they are near to children, and the change of the seasons great events as before our thoughts had arisen between them and us. Tagore's *Fruit Gathering* is a sequel to *Gitanjali* and contains devotional poems of perfect loveliness. It contains the unique feature of revealing new elements of beauty and spiritual emotion in the great incidents in the lives of the heroes and heroines and saints of India. In fact all Tagore's poems, and especially *Gitanjali*, are full of true beauty and holiness and lift us to a higher plane of thought and emotion and bring to us.

" A tone

Of some world far from ours

Where music and moonlight and feeling are one."

#### TAGORE'S DRAMAS

I have already shown how Tagore's lyrical genius has given his dramas a peculiar lyric appeal. His plays are not those of the ordinary Western type in which the story is evolved by the clash of characters and is full of complexity and variety. The blessedness of the universal joys and duties of life and the spiritual significance of things are the inspiring ideas of his plays and the story of the play is only a means and not an end. *Valmiki Prativa* is his earliest play and

describes the episode of Valmiki's discovery of rhythmic and poetic expression consequent on the reformation and spiritualising of his life. In *Prakriti Pratisodha* Tagore shows the supremacy of love over knowledge. In *Achalayatan* we have a prose problem—play describing how a monastery degenerates by shutting out healthy contact with the world and is reformed and purified by healthy outside influences. Other plays by him are *Malini*, *Chitvargada*, *Visayan*. In *Chitra* we have the Mahabaratha story about Chitra and Arjuna lifted into a high plane of art. It describes the love that though rooted in physical attraction blossoms into the marriage of minds and attains the golden fruitage of union of souls. In the *Post Office* the problems of life and death and of the spiritual life are treated with a wonderful lightness of touch. In the *King of the Dark Chamber* we see the successful search of God by the human soul. In the *Phalguni* the gracious doctrine of the immortality of the soul is proved to us by the magic voice of poetry.

#### TAGORE'S STORIES

India has been the great story-teller of the world and Indian stories have been blown all over the world by the air currents of civilisation and the seeds have fructified everywhere. In India itself the great story-telling tradition has been preserved and perfected, and the Kathakas and ballad-singers are even to-day the real custodians of popular culture and reveals of God's message to men, even though modern habits of thought have been undermining the faith of the people and has

been hostile to real and genuine and passionate fervour in the tellers of the stories. Tagore's art shows the flowering of these pre-existing characteristics. His stories combine real life and romance and show the omnipresence of the Godward elements amidst the humblest aspects of life. The simplest and most universal elements of Indian life are mirrored in his pages while over all his creations there shines the radiance of a heavenlier light than that which shines before our eyes. The lyrical element in his stories forms their main charm but his lyrical genius while making his short stories perfect prevents his attaining equal success in his longer novels like *Gora*. His short stories are available to English readers in *Glimpses of Bengal Life* and *Hungry Stones* and *other stories*.

#### "SADHANA"

This book of meditations deserves a separate treatment because it gives his most mature ideas about the great problems of life. In the first discourse he makes us see how the Indian civilisation owes its peculiar features of repose and harmony and vision to the fact that it was not born in cities but in forests. He describes soul-consciousness in the second discourse. The third discourse deals with the problem of evil and the fourth with the problem of self. Man's highest duty and glory is the realisation of the unity of the self by thorough disciplining of the inner nature and perfection of the inner vision. The last four discourses deal with various aspects of realisation—realisation in lore, realisation in action, realisation of beauty, and realisation of the infinite. Tagore's central teaching is conveyed in

these words: "Man's abiding happiness is not in getting anything but in giving himself up to what is greater than himself, to ideas which are larger than his individual life, the idea of his country, humanity, of God."

#### MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS

These are innumerable and invaluable and deserve a full and reverent study. Tagore's innumerable articles on historical, social, literary, and other subjects and his great addresses on public occasions and sermons at Shantiniketan cannot be referred to here but should be carefully studied. His letters are full of feeling and wisdom and reveal his sweet and holy personality. They are being collected and will prove a precious human document. I shall refer here to one letter by him to our great patriot Mr. Gandhi when he refers to the struggle in South Africa as the "steep ascent of manhood, not through the bloody path of violence but that of dignified patience and heroic self-renunciation."

#### TAGORE'S APPEAL TO YOUNG INDIA

Such has been the life, personality, and genius of this great poet-saint. His appeal to young India is of unique value and power and may be summed up thus. Be proud to be yourself and glory and rejoice in your country's memorable past. Assimilate the best elements of modern Western civilisation in the realms of science commerce, and administration without surrendering your personality and becoming subdued in your soul. Be loyal to your wonderful art and religion and carry

them to higher stages of self-expression and self-realisation. Love your divine Sanskrit and beautiful vernaculars with passionate devotion and make your literature a daily light in the hearts of your brethren. Let India be the Goddess of your souls and gladly lay at her lotus feet the fairest flowers of good thoughts, words, and deeds. Be national in your habits and dress and deportment, in your speech and writings, in your thought and emotion. Relate life to love and joy and live in service of man and love of God. Let your motto be: Self-control in regard to yourself, self-respect in regard to all others, self-sacrifice in regard to your motherland, and self-surrender to God.

### CONCLUSION

Tagore | the Ganga of thy verse and prose  
Comes from His lotus feet to dower with grace  
The world in these most restless joyless days,  
A sweeter rapture in our bosom glows  
And in our eager hands a new strength grows  
To sing bright India in a thousand lays  
And serve her gladly in a thousand ways  
And turn to radiant raptures all her woes.  
Accept the homage of our head and heart  
And loveward, joyward, Godward lead us on  
From sloth and strife through paths of work and peace:  
God grant we bear in life a manly part  
Rejoicing in the shining inner dawn  
Revealing joys of God-love's mysteries.

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## SAKUNTALA : ITS INNER MEANING

(Translated from the Bengali of Rabindra Nath Tagore)

Wouldst thou the young years blossoms  
and the fruits of its decline,  
And all by which the soul is charmed,  
unraptured, feasted, fed,  
Wouldst thou the earth and heaven itself  
in one sole name combine ?

I name thee, O Sakuntala !  
and all at once is said.

Goethe.

Goethe, the master-poet of Europe, has summed up his criticism of *Sakuntala* in a single quatrain ; he has not taken the poem to pieces. This quatrain seems to be a small thing like the flame of a candle, but it lights up the whole drama in an instant and reveals its inner nature. In Goethe's words, *Sakuntala* blends together the young years' blossoms and the fruit of its maturity ; it combines heaven and earth in one.

We are apt to pass over this eulogy lightly as a mere poetical outburst. We are apt to consider that it only means in effect that Goethe regarded *Sakuntala* as fine poetry. But it is not really so. His stanza breathes not the exaggeration of rapture, but the deliberate judgment of a true critic. There is a special point in his words. Goethe says expressly that *Sakuntala* contains the history of a development,—the development of flower into fruit, of earth into heaven, of matter into spirit.

In truth there are two unions in *Sakuntala* ; and the *motif* of the play is progress from the earlier union of the First Act, with its earthly unstable beauty and romance, to the higher union in the heavenly hermitage of eternal bliss described in the last Act. This drama was meant not for dealing with a particular passion, not for developing a particular character but for translating the whole subject from the world to another,—to elevate love from the sphere of physical beauty to the eternal heaven of moral beauty.

With the greatest ease Kalidas has effected this junction of earth with heaven. His earth so naturally passes into heaven that we do not mark the boundary-line between the two. In the First Act the poet has not concealed the gross earthiness of the fall of *Sakuntala* : he has clearly shown, in the conduct of the hero and the heroine alike, how much desire contributed to that fall. He has fully painted all the blandishments, playfulness and fluttering of the intoxicating sense of youth, the struggle between deep bashfulness and strong self-expression. This is a proof of the simplicity of *Sakuntala* ; she was not prepared beforehand for the outburst of passion which the occasion of Dushyanta's visit called forth. Hence she had not learnt how to restrain herself, how to hide her feelings. *Sakuntala* had not known Cupid before ; hence her heart was bare of armour, and she could not distrust either the sentiment of love or the character of her lover. The daughter of the hermitage was off her guard, just as the deer there knew not fear.

Dushyanta's conquest of *Sakuntala* has been very

naturally drawn. With equal ease has the poet shown, the deeper purity of her fall,—her unimpaired inmate chastity. This is another proof of her simplicity.

The flower of the forest needs no servant to brush the dust off her petals. She stands bare ; dust settles on her ; but in spite of it she easily retains her own beautiful cleanliness. Dirt did settle on Sakuntala, but she was not even conscious of it. Like the simple wild deer, like the mountain spring, she stood forth pure in spite of mud.

Kalidas has let his hermitage-bred youthful heroine follow the unsuspecting path of Nature ; nowhere he has restrained her. And yet he has developed her into the model of a devoted wife, with her reserve, endurance of sorrow, and life of rigid spiritual discipline. At the beginning we see her self-forgetful and obedient of Nature's impulses like the plants and flowers ; at the end we see her deeper feminine soul,—sober, patient under ill, intent on austerities, strictly regulated by the sacred laws of piety. With matchless art Kalidas has placed his heroine on the meeting-point of action and calmness, of Nature and Law, of river and ocean, as it were. Her father was a hermit, but her mother was a nymph. Her birth was the outcome of interrupted austerities, but her nature was in a hermitage, which is just the spot where Nature and austerities, beauty and restraint are harmonised. There is none of the conventional bonds of society there, and yet we have the harder regulations of religion. Her *gandharva* marriage, too, was of the same type ; it had the wildness of Nature joined to the social tie of wedlock

The drama *Sakuntala* stands alone and unrivalled in all literature, because it depicts how Restraint can be harmonised with Freedom. All its joys and sorrows, unions and partings proceed from the conflict of these two forces."

Sakuntala's simplicity is natural, that of Miranda is unnatural. The different circumstances under which the two were brought up, account for this difference. Sakuntala's simplicity was not girt round by ignorance as was the case with Miranda. We see in the First Act that Sakuntala's two companions did not let her remain unaware of the fact that she was in the first bloom of youth. She had learnt to be bashful. But all these things are external. Her simplicity, on the other hand, is more deeply seated and so also is her purity. To the very end the poet shows that she had no experience of the outside world. Her simplicity is innate. True, she knew something of the world, because the hermitage did not stand altogether outside society ; the rules of home life were observed here too. She was inexperienced though not ignorant of the outside world ; but trustfulness was firmly enthroned in her heart. The simplicity which springs from such trustfulness had for a moment caused her fail, but it also redeemed her for ever. This trustfulness kept her constant to patience, forgiveness and loving kindness, in spite of the cruellest breach of her confidence. Miranda's simplicity was never subjected to such a fiery ordeal ; it never clashed with knowledge of the world.

Our rebellious passions raise storms. In this drama

Kalidas has extinguished the volcanic fire of tumultuous passion by means of the fears of the penitent heart. But he has not dwelt too long on the disease,—he has just given us a glimpse of it and then dropped the veil. The desertion of Sakuntala by the polygamous Dushyanta, which in real life would have happened as the natural consequence of his character, is here brought about by the curse of Durbasa. Otherwise, the desertion would have been so extremely cruel and pathetic as to destroy the peace and harmony of the whole play. But the poet has left a small rent in the veil through which we can get an idea of the royal sin. It is in the Fifth Act. Just before Sakuntala arrives at court and is repudiated by her husband, the poet momentarily draws aside the curtain from the King's love affairs. Queen Hansapadika is singing to herself in her music room :

*"O honey-bee ! having sucked the mango blossoms in your search for new honey, you have clean forgotten your recent loving welcome by the lotus !"*

This tear—stained song of a stricken heart in the royal harem gives us a rude shock, especially as our heart was hitherto filled with Dushyanta's love passages with Sakuntala. Only in the preceding Act we saw Sakuntala setting out for her husband's home in a very holy, sweet, and tender mood, carrying with herself the blessings of the hoary sage Kanva and the good wishes of the whole forest world. And now a stain falls on the picture we had so hopefully formed of the home of love to which she was going.

When the Jester asked, "What means this song?"



Dushyanta smiled and said, " We desert our lasses after a short spell of love-making, and therefore I have deserved this strong rebuke from Queen Hansapadika." This indication of the fickleness of royal love is not purposeless at the beginning of the Fifth Act. With masterly skill the poet here shows that what Durbasa's curse had brought about had its seeds in human nature.

In passing from the Fourth Act to the fifth we suddenly enter a new atmosphere ; from the ideal world of the hermitage we go forth to the royal court with its hard hearts, crooked ways of love-making, difficulties of union. The beauteous dream of the hermitage is about to be broken. The two young monks who are escorting Sakuntala, at once feel that they have entered an altogether different world, "a house encircled by fire!" By such touches at the beginning of the Fifth Act, the poet prepares us for the repudiation of Sakuntala at its end, lest the blow should be too severe for us.

Then comes the repudiation. Sakuntala feels as if she has been suddenly struck with a thunderbolt. Like a deer stricken by a trusted hand, this daughter of the forest looks on in blank surprise, terror, and anguish. At one blow she is hurled away from the hermitage, both literal and metaphorical, in which she has so long lived. She loses her connection with the loving friends, the birds, beasts and plants, and the beauty, peace, and purity of her former life. She now stands alone, shelterless. In one moment the music of the first four Acts is stilled !

O the deep silence and loneliness that then surround

her! She whose tender heart had made the whole world at the hermitage her own folk, to-day stands absolutely alone. She fills this vast vacuity with her mighty sorrow. With rare poetic insight Kalidasa has declined to restore Sakuntala to Kanva's hermitage. After the renunciation by Dushyanta it was impossible for her to live in harmony with that hermitage in the way she had done before.....She was no longer her former self; her relation with the universe had changed. Had she been placed again amidst her old surroundings, it would only have cruelly exhibited the utter inconsistency of the whole situation. A mighty silence was now needed worthy of the mighty grief of the mourner. But the poet has not shown us the picture of Sakuntala in the new hermitage,—parted from the friends of her girlhood, and nursing the grief of separation from her lover. The silence of the poet only deepens our sense of the silence and vacancy which here reigned round Sakuntala. Had the repudiated wife been taken back to Kanva's home that hermitage would have spoken. To our imagination its trees and creepers would have wept, the two girl friends would have mourned for Sakuntala, even if the poet had not said a word about it. But in the unfamiliar hermitage of Marich, all is still and silent to us; only we have before our mind's eye a picture of the world-abandoned Sakuntala's infinite sorrow, disciplined by penance, sedate and resigned,—seated like a recluse rapt in meditation.

Dushyanta is now consumed by remorse. This remorse is *tapasya*. So long as Sakuntala was not won by means of this repentance, there was no glory in

winning her....One sudden gust of youthful impulse had in a moment given her up to Dushyanta, but that was not the true, the full winning of her. The best means of winning is by devotion, by *tapasya*. What is easily gained is as easily lost.....Therefore, the poet has made the two lovers undergo a long and austere *tapasya* that they may gain each other truly eternally. If Dushyanta had accepted Sakuntala when she was first brought to his court, she would have only added to the number of Hunsapadikas, occupied a corner of the royal harem, and passed the rest of her life in neglect gloom and uselessness !

It was a blessing in disguise for Sakuntala that Dushyanta abjured her with cruel sternness. When afterwards this cruelty reacted on himself, it prevented him from remaining indifferent to Sakuntala. His unceasing and intense grief fused his heart and welded Sakuntala with it. Never before had the king met with such an experience. Never before had he had the occasion and means of loving truly. Kings are unlucky in this respect; their desires are so easily satisfied that they never get what if to be gained by devotion alone. Fate now plunged Dushyanta into deep grief and thus made him worthy of true love,--made him renounce the role of a rake.

Thus has Kalidasa burnt away vice in the internal fire of the sinner's heart; he has not tried to conceal it from the outside. When the curtain drops on the last Act we feel that all the evil has been destroyed as on a funeral pyre, and the peace born of a perfect and satisfactory fruition reigns in our hearts. Kalidasa has

internally, deeply cut away the roots of the poison tree, which a sudden force from the outside had planted. He has made the physical union of Dushyanta and Sakuntala tread the path of sorrow, and thereby chastened and sublimated it into a moral union. Hence did Goethe rightly say that *Sakuntala* combines the blossoms of Spring with the fruits of Autumn, it combines Heaven and Earth. Truly in *Sakuntala* there is one Paradise lost and another Paradise regained.

The poet has shown how the union of Dushyanta and Sakuntala in the First Act as mere lovers is futile, while their union in the last Act as the parents of Bharat is a true union. The First Act is full of brilliancy and movement. We there have a hermit's daughter in the exuberance of youth, her two companions running over with playfulness, the newly flowering forest creeper, the bee intoxicated with perfume, the fascinated king peering from behind the trees. From this Eden of bliss Sakuntala, the mere sweetheart of Dushyanta, is exiled in disgrace. But far different was the aspect of the other hermitage where Sakuntala,—the mother of Bharat and the incarnation of goodness,—took refuge. There no hermit girls water the trees, nor bedow the creepers with their loving sister-like looks, nor feed the young fawn with handfuls of paddy. There a single boy fills the loving bosom of the entire forest world; he absorbs all the liveliness of the trees, creepers, flowers and foliage. The matrons of the hermitage, in their loving anxiety, are fully taken up with the unruly boy. When Sakuntala appears, we see her clad in a dusty robe, face pale with austerities,...doing the penance of

a lorn wife, pure-souled. Her long penances have purged her of the evil of her first union with Dushyanta; she is now invested with the dignity of a matron, she is the image of motherhood, tender and good. Who can repudiate her *now*?

The poet has shown here, as in *Kumara-sambhava*, that the Beauty that goes hand in hand with Moral Law is eternal, that the calm, controlled and beneficent form of Love is its best form, that Beauty is truly charming under restraint and decays quickly when it gets wild and unfettered. This ancient poet of India refuses to recognise Love as its own highest glory; he proclaims that *Goodness* is the final goal of Love. He teaches us that the love of man and woman is not beautiful, not lasting, not fruitful,—so long as it is self-centred, so long as it does not beget Goodness, so long as it does not diffuse itself in society over son and daughter, guests and neighbours.

The two peculiar principles of India are the beneficent *tie of home life* on the one hand, and the *liberty of the soul* abstracted from the world on the other. In the world India is variously connected with many races and many creeds; she cannot reject any of them. But on the altar of devotion (*tapasya*) India sits alone. Kalidasa has shown both in *Sakuntala* and *Kumara-sambhava*, that there is a harmony between these two principles, an easy transition from the one to the other. In his hermitage human boys play with lion cubs, and the hermit-spirit is reconciled with the spirit of the householder.

• On the foundation of the hermitage of recluses Kalidas



has built the home of the householder. He has rescued the relation of the sexes from the sway of lust and enthroned it on the holy and pure seat of asceticism. In the sacred books of the Hindus the ordered relation of the sexes has been defined by strict injunctions and Laws. Kalidas has demonstrated that relation by means of the elements of Beauty. The Beauty that he adores is lit up by grace, modesty and goodness; in its intensity it is true to one for ever; in its range it embraces the whole universe. It is fulfilled by renunciation, gratified by sorrow, and rendered eternal by religion. In the midst of this Beauty, the impetuous unruly love of man and woman has restrained itself and attained to a profound peace, like a wild torrent merged in the ocean of Goodness. Therefore is such Love higher and more wonderful than wild and untrained Passion—*The Modern Review*.

JADUNATH SARKAR.

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## THE IMPACT OF EUROPE ON INDIA

(FROM THE BENGALI OF RABINDRA NATH TAGORE.)

We Indians are an old people—very ancient and very much worn out. I often feel in myself the immense antiquity of our race. Whenever I look carefully within, I find there only pensiveness, repose, and world-weariness,—as if there were a long holiday within me and without,—as if we had finished our

office-work, in the morning of the world's history, so that now in this hot noon when all other nations are busy at their tasks, *we* are resting peacefully within closed doors. We have earned our wages to the full, retired from active life, and are now living on pension. What a tranquil life is ours !

But now all of a sudden we find our circumstances changed. The rent-free land we have got long long ago has been escheated to the State under the new regime, as we have failed to show a valid title-deed. We have suddenly turned poor ! We too must now toil and pay rent like the peasants of the world. This ancient race has been suddenly called upon to put forth new efforts.

Therefore, we must quit meditation, quit repose, quit the cosy nook of the home. It will no longer do for us to remain absorbed in Sanskrit Grammar and Logic, Hindu Theology and Law, or daily rites and domestic duties. We must break clods of earth fertilise the soil, and pay the due revenue to the king of Modern Humanity ;—we must study in colleges, dine at hotels, and work in offices.

Alas ! who has demolished the city wall of India and dragged us out into this vast and unsheltered field of work ? We had thrown up intellectual embankments round our selves, dammed up the stream of Time, and were reposing quietly with all things arranged to our liking. Restless Change roared incessantly outside India like the encircling sea, but *we* sat rooted amidst unshaken tranquillity and forgot the existence of the moving changing universe outside. Just then

through some loophole the ever-restless human stream poured into our country and tore up our social order, it mingled the new with our old, doubt with our belief, discontent with our prevailing content, and thereby threw all into confusion.

If the mountain and sea barriers round us had been more thoroughly impassable, a race of men could have found the means of attaining to a contracted development in peaceful stillness amidst their obscure and isolating barrier walls. They would have learnt little of what was happening in the world, their knowledge of geography would have been very imperfect. Only their poetry, their social system, their theology, their philosophy would have gained matchless beauty, charm, and maturity. They would have seemed to be living in some smaller orb outside our earth ; their history, arts, science, wealth and happiness would have been confined to themselves,—even as in time layers of earth cut off a part of the sea, and turn it into a lonely, peaceful and lovely lake which flushes with the varied colours of the dawn and the sunset without even being thrown into a ripple, and in the darkness of the night, under the winkless stars broods in motionless, abstraction over the eternal mystery.

True, we can learn a very strong lesson and win a hardy civilisation, by being tossed about in the swift current of Time, at the centre of tumultuous Change, in the battlefield of Nature's countless Forces. But can we say that no gem is to be acquired by diving within solitude, silence and profoundness ?

No other race in this raging ocean of a world got the

chance of that stillness. Me-thinks India alone in a far off age by good luck attained to that perfect isolation, and dived into the Unfathomable. The human soul is limitless like the material universe. It is sheer scepticism to say that those who had explored that undiscovered inner world did not gain any new truth or new bliss.

India was then like a secluded mysterious laboratory closed from within,—a wonderful moral civilisation has been secretly tested within her. As the alchemists of mediæval Europe buried themselves in the secret studies to search for the *elixir vitæ* with the help of many strange instruments,—so did our sage in secrecy and caution search for the means of eternal *spiritual* life. They asked themselves, ‘What shall we do with things that cannot give us immortality?’ (*Upamshads*) And so they sought within themselves for that elixir of immortality by the most difficult processes.

Who can say what such a quest would have gained [if it had not been interrupted]? Who can say what secret new power would have been discovered for man from their ascetic devotion, just as alchemy has gained chemistry for us?

But suddenly the doors have been forced; men of violence have entered that holy laboratory of India, and the result of that spiritual experiment has been lost to the public for ever. Who knows if we shall ever again have the same full opportunity of making this experiment, amidst the tumult of modern civilisation?

What did the men of the outer world see on entering this laboratory of ours? An ageworn hermit, without

raiment, without ornament, ignorant of the world's history—who tried to speak of a subject which even now lacks an adequately expressive language, ocular proof, and tangible result.

Therefore, rise thou, pensive unworldly old man! Get up, and engage in political agitation, or lie in the bed of slothfulness, proclaim the valour of your long past youth, brandish your skeleton frame, and see if this conduct can hide your shame.

But such a course repels me. I cannot venture to steer into this vast world ocean with only a sail of newspaper sheets. When the wind is gentle and favourable, the sail will swell with pride; but suddenly a tempest may blow from the sea and tear into shreds our helpless pride.

If it had been so ordained that there was a safe harbour named Progress somewhere hard by, and we had only to reach it anyhow in order to have all cakes and no work, then no doubt I might have tried to cleverly cross to it after carefully watching the sky for an easy voyage. But I know that there is no terminus in the road of progress, there is no harbour where we can anchor our boat and enjoy a sleep,—ever the unsetting Pole star overhead and the shoreless sea in front,—the wind most often adverse, and the sea always rough. Who in such a case would wish to spend his time merely in making toy-boats of foolscap paper?

Yet I long to launch a boat of my own, when I see the stream of humanity moving on, all around me the mingled din of many sounds, impetuous forces, swift advance, ceaseless labour;—then my heart too is roused,



I too wish to cut off my old ties with home and set out in the wide world. But ah! the next moment I look at my empty hands, and ask myself, where have I the fare for the voyage? Where have I the boundless hope of heart, the tireless strength of vitality, the unconquerable vigour of confidence of Europe? Then it is better for me to live thus in obscurity in a corner of the world, it is enough if I can have this low content and lifeless repose.

Then in idle quiet I console myself by arguing. "We cannot manufacture machines, we cannot unravel the secrets of the universe, but we can *love*, we can *forgive*, we can *let live*. What's the good of roving restlessly in pursuit of ambition? What's the harm if we remain in an obscure corner, what's the harm if our names do not figure in the world's herald, *The Times* newspaper?"

But there is among us sorrow, there is poverty, oppression by the strong, insult of the helpless;—how would you remedy these by retiring to obscurity and practising the domestic virtues and charity to others?

Ah, that is the bitter TRAGEDY OF INDIA! Against what shall we fight? Against the eternal cruelty of the untamed human nature;—against that stone whose sterile hardness has not yet been softened by the pure blood of Christ! How shall *we* overcome the primitive animal instinct which makes Strength ever cruel to Weakness? By holding meetings? By submitting petitions? Receiving in reply a boon to-day and a reprimand to-morrow? No, never.

If not, we are to match the strong in strength, are

we ? That is possible no doubt. But when I reflect how very strong Europe is and in how many ways, when I fully realise within and without this impetuous strength of Europe, what hope of success is left in me. Then my heart sinks and I feel disposed to cry out, "Come, brothers, let us practise patience, let us love and do good only. Let our little work in the world be genuine work and not sham. It is the chief danger of Incapacity that as it fails to achieve great works, it prefers great make-beliefs. It knows not that in attaining to humanity a small truth is more valuable than a big unreality."

But I have not come here to read a lecture to you. I have been only trying to examine for myself our real condition. For this purpose we should neither depict an imaginary age by quoting favourable texts from our ancient Vedas, Puranas and Samhitas, nor should we erect a huge fort of ambition on the slender basis of our new modern education, by merging ourselves fancifully in the character and history of another race ; we must see where we *really* stand now. From our present position we behold the mirages of the Past coming from the East and of the Future from the West. Without looking upon either of these two as reliable truths, let us examine the solid earth on which we stand.

We live in a decayed old town,—a town so old that its history is well-nigh lost its monuments carved by the human hand are buried under moss. Hence we are apt to mistake this city for a thing outside human history, as an ancient capital of eternal Nature. Nature has effaced the marks of human history from India and

spread her own green characters all over our land in diverse forms. A thousand year's rain has left its streak of tears here ; a thousand year's spring has recorded in verdure the date of its visit on every chink of its foundation. From one point of view it is a city, from another a forest. Here dwell only shade and repose, thought and sorrow. Amidst its forest resonant with the hum of the beetle, amidst its fantastic Banyan branches dropping long slender roots to the ground, and its mysterious old palace ruins, we are apt to mistake countless shades for bodied beings, and bodied beings for mere vision ! Amidst this primeval all-embracing shade, Truth and Fancy live peacefully together-like brother and sister, *i.e.*, the real handiwork of Nature and the subjective creation of the human Mind have thoroughly intertwined and built shady arbours of various shapes. Here boys and girls play the livelong day without knowing that it is play only. Here old people dream day-dreams and believe it to be work ! When the noontide rays of the sun from the outer world enter in at the crevices of our roof, we mistake them for bits of gem ! The fierce storms of the outer world are so effectually barred out by our hundreds of closely interwoven branches that we hear them only as gentle sighings of the wind ! Here Life and Death, Joy and Sorrow, Hope and Despair, have removed their dividing lines ; here Fatalism and Activity, Indifference and Worldliness have marched arm in arm. The useful and the unnecessary, the Supreme Deity and clay idols, the uprooted withered Past and the newly budding living Present, have been equally valued. Our true scripture

lies where it has fallen down, and in our indolent piety we have not tried to remove the thousand ceremonies which have covered our scripture as with an anthill. We venerate equally as our sacred lore the letters of the book and the holes, made by the book-worms in its pages ! In our ruined temples, split by the roots of the Banyan tree, gods and goblins have taken shelter together.

Europe ! is such a country a suitable place for pitching your cantonments for the Armageddon ? Are our ruined foundations suitable for erecting your factories, and the workshops of your fire-spitting thousand armed iron demons ? The force of your restless energy can raze to the ground our old brick heaps ; but where then will this very ancient bed-ridden race of men find shelter ? If you destroy this motionless dense and vast forests of a city, its presiding old Dryad will be turned homeless after losing her intensely secluded abode of a thousand dead years !

Our subtlest thinkers declare it our greatest glory that for long ages we have not built any house with our own hands, we have not practised that art ! This boast of theirs is very true, true beyond the possibility of contradiction. We had indeed never had occasion to quit the ancestral home of the very ancient primeval man. We have never, when troubled by any inconvenience, presumed to build a new house or repair our old one with our own hands ! No, not even our enemies can accuse us of having displayed such activity or care for the material world !

In this dense forest deserted by its wood-goddess, in

this dilapidated city left lonely of its tutelary deity, we clothe ourselves in loose thin robes, step about languidly take a nap after our midday meal, play at cards or chess in the shade, very readily believe whatever is impossible and outside the range of the practical world, and can never fully conquer our scepticism about everything that is practical or visible! And if any young man among us displays a feather-weight of unrest against this social order, we all gravely shake our heads and cry out together, "This is running to an extreme!"

So lived we, when Europe suddenly arrived, we know not whence, vigorously nudged our worn ribs once or twice and shouted, "Get up! We want to set up an Office in this your bedroom. Don't imagine that the world was sleeping because you were sleeping. The world has greatly changed in the meantime. There goes the bell; it is the world's noonday, it is work time."

At this, some of us have started up and are fussing about the corners of the room in search of the work of themselves. But the fat and puffed up among us only turn in their beds and reply, "Hullo! who talks of work? Do you mean to say that we are not men of action? What a sad delusion! India has been the one field of action in the world's history——If you will not believe us, dig up with your antiquarian spade the layers of oblivion accumulated by ages over India and you will see the marks of our hands on the foundation of human civilisation. In the meantime, we shall take another nap.".....

But those of us who dream day-dreams, who waver



between thought and action, who realise the rottenness the old order and yet feel the imperfections of the new,—they repeatedly shake their heads and address Europe thus :

“ O New Men of the West, the new work you have begun has not yet reached completion, the truth or falsity of the whole of it has not been yet ascertained, you have not yet solved of the eternal problems of human destiny.

“ You have known much, you have acquired much, but have you gained happiness ? We sit down inertly regarding the material universe as a mere illusion, while you hold to it as an eternal verity and toil and moil for it ; but are you therefore happier than we ? You are daily discovering new wants, which deepen the poverty of the poor ; you are dragging your population away from the healthy refuge of the home to the whirl of incessant work ; you have crowned toil as the supreme lord of life, and seated Intoxication in the chair of Repose. But can you clearly foresee where your vaunted Progress is leading you ?

“ We know full well where we have arrived. We live at home, feeling few wants and deep affection, being mutually linked together, and performing our small daily social duties. What little of happiness and wealth we gained, we have distributed among our rich and poor, stranger and kinsmen, guests, servants and beggars. Our whole society is passing its days in as much happiness as is possible under the circumstances ; none wishes to exclude others, and none is

compelled by the struggle for existence [in such a "low standard" society] to exclude others.

"India never asked for pleasure. India asked for contentment, and that contentment she got and established in every department in all possible ways. So now she has no work to do. She would rather sit down in her parlour and gaze on your mad life-struggle and so feel a secret doubt about the final triumph of your civilisation. She may well doubt whether, when the day will at last arrive for you to stop your work, you will be able to retire to quiet as gently and easily as we have done. Will you be able to attain to a delicate and hearty maturity like ours? Will you succeed in gaining a sweet completion such as comes when effort gradually loses itself in the thing aimed at, or when the hot day, clothing itself in the fulness of its beauty, dips in the darkness of sunset? Or, will your civilisation rather end in a violent and terrible catastrophe, as when a machine is suddenly thrown out of work, a boiler bursts after accumulating excessive steam and heat, or two railway trains running towards each other on the same track crash together in a sudden collision?"

"Be that as it may, you have now set out to discover the unknown shore of an unexplored ocean. Go your own way, while we stay in our old home. That is best."

But men will not let us alone. While *we* want to repose, the rest of the world is still untired. While the householder is sunk in sleep, the houseless infest the streets in many guises.

Remember also that in this world as soon as you come to a standstill, your decay begins, because then

you alone shall be at a stay, while the rest of the world will be moving on. If you cannot keep pace with the stream of the world's advance, the full onset of the current will dash against you, either overwhelming you and at once or slowly sapping your foundations till at last you topple down and are swallowed up by the stream of Time. Advance ceaselessly and live, or take rest and perish : such is the law of Nature.

. . In sighing over our lot, we proceed on the belief that we had contrived to be an exception to the above general law for a long time,—even as our *yogis* had discovered the secret of living for ages in a death-like trance by suspending their own animation and thereby escaping the universal law of decay and death. In that trance their growth was arrested, no doubt, but so also was their decay. In general to arrest the movement of life brings on death, but in their case such a deliberate retardation made them deathless.

The analogy applies to our race. What kills off other races served as a secret for prolonging the life of *our* race. Other races decline and perish when their ambition loses its ardour, when their energy tires and slackens. But we had taken infinite pains to curb our ambitions and paralyse our energy, in order to prolong our life in the same peaceful even course. And it seems to me that we had gained some success in this direction.

They say that some years back a very old *yogi* absorbed in trance was discovered in a neighbouring forest nad brought to Calcutta. Here by all sorts of violent means he was brought back to consciousness,—and

immediately afterwards gave up the ghost. So, our *national* trance, too, has been broken by the violent impact of men from outside. We no longer differ from other nations except in this that having been for ages indifferent to external things, we are quite unaccustomed to the struggle for existence. From a world of religious trance we have been all of a sudden transported to a world of bustle and hubbub.

What then should we do? Let us for the present follow the natural laws and prevailing practices in order to preserve ourselves. Let us cut off our long matted locks and overgrown finger-nails, take the normal bath and dinner, dress like the moderns, and begin to exercise our [stiffened] limbs a little.

Our present condition is this: we have no doubt clipped our long hair and nails, we have entered the modern world and begun to mix with human society, but *our ideas are unchanged*. We sit on our doorsteps, cast idle indifferent looks at the busy world, and spend our days in merely "taking the air." We forget that conduct which was admirable in a *yogi* seated in a trance, is a piece of hideous barbarism in a member of society. A body without life is a thing defiled; so is ceremonialism without the proper spirit. Our society affords many examples of the latter in this transition period .....[We are the dress and language of the *rishis* of old, while living in the modern world, and observe ancient forms with which our entire life is at variance.]

Take the Brahmans, as an example. In primeval society they formed a special class, with a special task. In order to qualify themselves for that task,

they drew around themselves a boundary line of certain ceremonies and institutions and very needfully kept their hearts from straying beyond. Every function has its due boundaries, which in the case of all other functions become more hindrances. You cannot set up an attorney's office in a bakery, nor transport a bakery, to an attorney's chambers, without causing confusion, friction and waste.

In the present age the Brahmins have no longer that special function. They are no longer engaged solely in study, teaching, and religious culture. Most of them are professional men of the world, not one is an ascetic. They no longer differ *functionally* from the non-Brahmin castes, and in such an altered state of things there is neither gain nor propriety in keeping them confined within the strict limits of the ancient Brahmin mode of life.

We ought to realise clearly that, in the modern society to which we have been suddenly removed, it will not do for us to stickle about minute ceremonies and purifications, to draw up the hem of our dress scrupulously from the ground, sniff the air in scorn, and walk through the world with extreme caution,—if we at all wish to save our life and honour. If we wish to maintain ourselves in this age, we must have broad liberality of the heart, a well-balanced and sound healthy condition, strength of mind and limb, wide range of knowledge, and sleepless readiness.

I call it *spiritual foppishness* to scrupulously avoid contact with the common world and to keep our overweening selves washed and brushed clean and covered with a lid, while despising the rest of mankind as



impure! Such extreme delicacy gradually makes our manhood useless and barren.

It is only inanimate things that one keeps covered up in a glass case. If you put a living being there, you will keep its health out while keeping dust out. It will acquire very little dirt—and very little *life* too!

Our theologians say that the wonderful Aryan purity that we have acquired is the result of long endeavours and a thing to be carefully preserved, and that for its sake we try by every means to avoid contact with the non-Hindu *Mlechhas*. Now, two things have to be said in answer to this: First, it is not true that all of us cultivate purity with special care, and yet, by despising the vast majority of the human race as impure, we create a needless barrier of unjust opinion and false pride between them and us. Many of our conservatives deny that the cancer of unnatural race hatred has entered our hearts under cover of this sense of superior purity. But our conduct shows whether we hate all other creeds or not. Has any race a moral right to hate all the members of every other race indiscriminately?

Then, again, external impurity can defile inanimate objects only.....One who is strong in the consciousness of *internal* purity can afford to make light of the dirt outside....The fop who overvalues his delicate complexion, carefully avoids the dust and mud, rain, sunshine and wind of the natural world, and coddles his body, does no doubt dwell in safety, but he forgets that charming complexion is only an eternal ingredient of beauty, while *health* is its chief indwelling spirit. A

lifeless thing has no need of health ; you can safely keep it covered up to avoid dust. But if our *soul* be living and not dead, we must bring it out into the common world to let it gain strength and health, in scorn of the risk of its being soiled a little there.....

With us Hindus, religion exercises its sway over food and drink, sleep and repose, movement and recreation. We boast of it that in no other country does religion regulate every action of man's life and every rank of human society. But I regard this fact as our misfortune, because it can have only two possible consequences: we either place immutable Religion upon a basis of restless change, or we *make* changeable Society lifeless by confiding it within the unchanging rules of Religion. Hence, either Religion is constantly tossed about, or Society loses the power of growth and decay and stays in a condition of stony motionlessness.

We allow no liberty to the human reason in deciding how we should eat and sleep, whom we should touch and whom shun. We employ all our intellect to interpret the verses of our scriptures with minute literalness. We deem it needless to seek out the laws of God's great work, Nature, and to regulate our lives according to them. And the result is that our Society has become a lifeless clock-work, in which the *Shastras* wind the key and human automata move about with the utmost precision !...

We must bring our whole humanity into connection with mankind. We cannot last much longer on earth if we confine our human nature within lifeless rigid Brahmanism which only pampers our ignorance and

blind conceit, and makes our humanity bloated and useless like the fat and lazy spoiled children of aristocratic families.

But it cannot be denied that narrowness and langour are to a great extent causes of safety. A society in which there is full development of the human nature and the free current of life, has no doubt to pass through much trouble. Where there is exuberance of life, there must be much freedom and much diversity. Their good and evil are alike vigorous. The old nurses of our Society think that if they allow their charges to grow up in full health, then these healthy children will at times cry, at times race through the house, at times try to break out of doors, and thus give them infinite worry. So, these nurses wish to stupefy their babies with opium pills in order to get time to do their household work in peace!

[Take a familiar case.] If a daughter is allowed to grow up to youth without being married, the father runs some risks. If the minds of women are expanded by means of education, it will produce some incidental anxieties. Therefore, (our conservatives argue), it is better to give away little girls in marriage, and keep our women in ignorance, in order to escape much vigilance, self-control, and worry [on the part of the parents.] They further argue that there is no need for educating women, as they had hitherto done their domestic duties very well, without any education whatever. Their functions are to act as our cooks and mothers, and for these the full development of the mind is quite unnecessary!

But it is not enough if our works are done somehow or other. Man must do the world's work and be *something besides*. Nay, more, the higher our faculties are developed beyond the bare requisite for our worldly work, the fuller is our humanity. A cultivator who knows only how to cultivate, is (despised as a rustic and never treated as a man fully our equal, in spite of the benefit he does to society by his art.

Similarly, it is not enough for women to be able to render certain special tasks to man. They are not merely housewives and mothers, they are HUMAN BEINGS, and knowledge is as necessary for their improvements (as for the progress of males). Nay more if a park has been thrown open to the public, promenading there will certainly improve their health, cheerfulness, and charm. There is no reason why it should be necessary to exclude them from all the beauty, health, arts and sciences of this world, simply because they are to be our wives and mothers.....

Those men who, without having ever known educated women, fancifully ascribe to them heartlessness and other equally baseless defects,—thereby only show their ignorance and inherent barbarism. Those men who have the least experience of educated ladies have only verified the self-evident truth that women are by nature women, and that education cannot magically transform them into men. These men have seen how educated ladies nurse their dear ones in illness with all their hearts' devotion, pour the healing balm of consolation into grief-stricken souls with all their natural feminine sagacity, and shower their innate compassion

on the helpless and the afflicted, without the least diminution by reason of their education.

I have already said that marrying girls in youth and giving education to women, adds to our trouble and anxiety. But as Society advances its responsibilities must naturally increase and its duties grow more complex. If we now say that these higher responsibilities and duties are too much for our strength and energy,—that we do not want progress if it is to be accompanied by worry,—that we shall manage to live as we have done hitherto then I say, “ Better admit this weakness, on your part as weakness, than try sophistically to prove that this lifelessness is saintly purity and this incompetence is the highest merit,—for, if you do the latter you will close for ever the path of your social regeneration....

When we were a nation amidst the comity of nations, we had war, commerce and arts, foreign travel, interchange of various arts with foreigners, the power of conquest, and varied resources. But to-day, after an interval of many centuries and many changes, standing on the extreme margin of time, we picture that ancient Indian civilisation as an other-worldly thing, as a far-off holy and unreal sepulchral world formed by the smoke of *homa* sacrifice. We fancy that our modern cool, shady, lazy, drowsy and still hamlet, (called Hindu Society,) is akin to that far-off world and age. But such a belief is utterly false.

It is a fond delusion to imagine that our ancient civilisation was exclusively spiritual and that our ancestors of the primitive age famished themselves by



austerities and in lonely retirement spent their days only in refining the soul, regardless of the material world. Our ancient civilisation was really complete in all its parts, and not a spiritual shade devoid of a material body.

Why, the *Mahabharat*, to take only one instance, show how strong was the stream of life in the civilisation of that age. We see in that epic many changes, many social revolutions, many conflicts of opposing forces. The society of that age was not a delicate, neat and well-proportioned machine constructed by a very cunning artist. In that society the human character was constantly agitated and kept awake by the play of greed, jealousy, fear, hate and unbridled pride on the one hand, and of meekness, heroism, self-abnegation, broad-minded nobility, and matchless saintliness on the other.

It is not true that in that society every man was a saint, every woman a chaste person, and every Brahman a hermit. In that society Bishwamitra ranked as a Kshatriya, Drona, Kripa and Parashuram as Brahmans, Kunti as a chaste woman, the ever-forgiving Yudhishthira as a Kshatriya man and the blood-thirsty fiery Draupadi as a woman! The society of that age had good elements and evil, light and darkness,—all the characteristics of *life*, a human society was not like a clearly outlined, chequered, regulated and symmetrical piece of mosaic. Our ancient civilisation towered erect in its robust manly bulk amidst this society whose forces were ever kept awake by the conflict of the various storm-tossed human passions.

To-day we fondly picture that ancient civilisation as a very tame harmless unchanging peaceful and lifeless thing. And we brag that we are of that civilised race, we are those spiritual Aryans, and therefore—we must perform religious austerities and engage in factious squabbles; we must condemn sea-voyage, call all other races untouchable, sneer at Mr. A. O. Hume as a *Mlechha*, and boycott the Indian National Congress [as un-Hindu], and thereby act in a manner worthy of the great Hindus of old!

But suppose that we value TRUTH more [than such Hinduism]; suppose that we act up to our honest convictions; suppose that we teach truth to our boys and thus help them to stand erect with simplicity strength and grit of character,—instead of letting them grow into fat fools amidst a heap of lies; suppose that we cultivate a receptive liberality or spirit for welcoming joyfully and humbly knowledge and greatness from all quarters, suppose that we open out and develop ourselves on all sides by cultivating music, art, literature, history, science and various other accomplishments, by travelling in foreign parts, minutely observing the world's contents, and meditating deeply and impartially. In that case we may impair that we are pleased to call [modern] Hinduism, but we shall certainly be linked again with the living active and vigorous Hindu civilisation of yore.

To us in India to-day our ancient civilisation is like coal in a mine. It was once a vast living forest, subject to growth and decay, to giving and taking. It then flushed into new life at the coming of springtide and

the rains ; it had flowers and fruits which had their natural blossoming forth. Now it has no growth, no motion. But it is none the less necessary : the heat and light of many ages lie latent in it. [Let us put them to present use.]

If we have living humanity within us, then only can, we put to our use ancient and modern humanity, Eastern and Western humanity.

A dead man belongs only to the place where he lies. A living man stands at the focus of the world ; he can from a connecting link between contraries, establish harmony among conflicting elements, and thus lay claim to all truths as his own. Not to stoop to one side only, but to expand freely all around in his idea of true progress.—*Modern Review*.

JADUNATH SARKAR.

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