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The Visva-Bharati Quarterly



यत्र विश्वं भवत्येकनीडम् ॥

(Where the whole world finds its shelter.)

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COMRADES

By Surendranath Kar

THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

November

New Series, Vol. V, Part III

1939

A SONG FROM THE KHYBER PASS

Sarojini Naidu

WOLVES of the mountains,
Hawks of the hills,
We live or perish,
As Allah wills.

Two gifts for our portion
We ask thee, O Fate !
A maiden to cherish,
A kinsman to hate.

Children of danger,
Comrades of death,
The wild scent of battle
Is breath of our breath.

More bright than the scarlet
On dawn clouds displayed
Is the colour of life-blood
That gleams on our blade.

And lovelier than cymbals
 That sound from the plain
 Is the wail of the vanquished
 Bemoaning their slain.

Yet sweet in the twilight
 When tumult has ceased,
 When red feuds are sated
 And honour appeased,—

Aloft in our watch towers
 Our arms to ungird,
 And quaff foaming goblets
 Of honey and curd.

And sweet in the stillness
 And fragrance of night,
 To find for a pillow
 Twin moons of delight ;

To find for a curtain
 A tent of dark tresses,
 And crowning our valour
 A wreath of caresses.

Wolves of the mountains,
 Hawks of the hills,
 We live or perish,
 As Allah wills.

THE IDEALISM OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Dr. P. T. Raju, M.A., Ph.D.*

TAGORE is one of the few philosophers who are great poets. And he is one of the few poets that have themselves given expression to their philosophy. His poetical works may be more widely read than his philosophical works, yet the former cannot be fully understood without the latter, which are their open sesame. The central theme of his poetry is the mystery of creation, which is also the subject matter of philosophy. No high class poet can be satisfied with things mundane or with things as they are. Tagore is not satisfied with mere lyrical outbursts, which are passionate cries against this or that imperfection in the world. He does not give us merely some scattered insights into this or that aspect of our experience. But like a true philosopher he sees the world as a whole, though from his own poet's point of view. Hence though he is a lyrical poet *par excellence*, yet in a very important sense he is a great epic poet. For, as in any great epic, in his works taken as a whole, we see the picture of the whole life and world as depicted from a particular view-point.

Love and death are the eternal themes of poetry. Men are happy when they love, but tremble before death. This raises the problem for philosophy as well. In the *Katha Upanishad* the question, what becomes of man after death, is raised and the

*The author is too well-known an interpreter of Indian Philosophy to need an introduction to our readers. The above article was originally delivered by him as one of a series of Extension Lectures on "Idealistic Thought of India" at the Andhra University. We are glad of this opportunity to publish the learned article in our Journal. We would, however, like to make it clear that the interpretation, or rather the particular emphasis placed on certain aspects of Rabindranath's thought as given therein, is entirely the author's own. We cannot help wishing that could the learned author have drawn as freely from Rabindranath's Bengali writings, in particular his songs and poems which embody his most direct perception and the subtlest expression of his idealism, as he has done from his English writings, the exposition would have gained considerably in scope.—Ed.

answer to it is valued as higher than even the undivided sovereignty of the earth. But what is the nature of love? If the nature of death too is the same in essence, or if the process of death can be turned into that of love, do not love and death ultimately become identical? Is not the fear of death then overcome? And does not death become as pleasant as love? That it does is what Rabindranath Tagore wants to prove. It is the basic idea of his works. No love is true love unless the lover is prepared to sacrifice and surrender his self to his beloved object. It is therefore the same in essence as the death of his ego. Death is fearful when we value our petty individual self as superior to the universal Self, that is, when we do not love God; otherwise, it would be the same as love.

This is the truth of the cult of *bhakti* or devotion advocated by Vaishnavism, as Tagore interprets it. The Supreme Being is a Person. He is full of love; his nature is love. He makes his advances in innumerable ways. Only we have to understand them. Tagore's poetry depicts the various ways in which the Supreme Person expresses his nature.

We are concerned mainly with the philosophical side of Tagore's ideas. His chief philosophical works are *Sadhana*, *Creative Unity*, *Personality*, and the *Religion of Man*. *Gitanjali*, his famous work, is a philosophical poem. The theism of Rabindranath Tagore is said by some to be a borrowing from Christianity. But this opinion has been once for all disproved; for it was based on the wrong assumption that India had no theism of its own. The discovery of the importance of Vaishnavism besides that of Saiva theism among Hindu religions, with its cult of *bhakti* or devotion, gave the lie to it. It has, of course, to be admitted that the Brahma Samaj to which Tagore belongs was not uninfluenced by Christianity.¹ But the influence

1. As a matter of fact, Rabindranath does not belong to that branch of the Brahma Samaj which "was not uninfluenced by Christianity." He belongs to the Adi or Original Brahma Samaj which drew its inspiration from the Upanishads and did much to counteract the anti-Hindu propaganda of some Christian missions.—*Ed.*

of Christianity went only so far as to make the theistic elements of ancient Hinduism popular with the learned leaders of the Brahma Samaj.

Though Tagore is a Vaishnava,¹ he is a Vaishnava in his own way. He calls his Supreme Person *advaitam*,² and his Vaishnavism, we may say, is Vaishnava *Advaita*. He does not seem to have any logical objection to the impersonal Absolute of Sankara. He writes: "In India, there are those whose endeavour is to merge completely their personal self in an impersonal entity which is without any quality or definition; to reach a condition wherein mind becomes perfectly blank, losing all its activities. Those who claim the right to speak about it say that this is the purest state of consciousness, it is all joy without any object or content. This is considered to be the ultimate end of *Yoga*, the cult of union, thus completely to identify one's being with the infinite Being who is beyond all thoughts and words. Such realization of transcendental consciousness, accompanied by a perfect sense of bliss, is a time-honoured tradition in our country, carrying in it the positive evidence which cannot be denied by any negative argument of refutation. Without disputing its truth, I maintain that it may be valuable as a great psychological experience but all the same it is not religion, even as the knowledge of the ultimate state of the atom is of no use to an artist who deals in images in which atoms have taken forms."³ The impersonal Absolute may be the scientific truth, but as a poet and a human being, Tagore would not have much to do with it. Man can take interest in the Absolute only if it is humanised. He says: "As our religion can only have its significance in this phenomenal world comprehended by our human self, this absolute conception of Brahman is outside the subject of my discussion. What I have tried to bring out in

1. Unfortunately Vaishnavism has become a cult and has been associated with such practices of excessive emotionalism that it is doubtful how far Rabindranath would relish being called a Vaishnav, even though "a Vaishnav in his own way".—*Ed.*

2. *Creative Unity*, p. 4. *Sadhana*, pp. 85, 154, and 156. *The Religion of Man*, p. 66.

3. *The Religion of Man*, p. 117.

this book¹ is the fact that whatever name may have been given to the divine Reality it has found its highest place in the history of our religion owing to its human character, giving meaning to the idea of sin and sanctity, and offering an eternal background to all the ideals of perfection which have their harmony with man's own nature."² So Tagore understands the Absolute as the Supreme Man,³ God humanised.⁴ It is personality, the Supreme Person. But what is this personality? "Limitation of the unlimited is personality: God is personal when he creates."⁵ That is, the Absolute, as Sir Radhakrishnan puts it, when pressed into the moulds of our thought, becomes a person. Obviously, Tagore does not deny the truth of the impersonal Absolute. Only he insists that if it is to be understood by human beings, it must be understood as a person.

But like a true *advaitin*, Tagore maintains that the Absolute Person is the only reality. The finite has no separate reality. And what is the ideal of the finite *jiva*? It is thorough merging or dissolving in the Absolute. It is complete self-sacrifice without any residue, it is fully surrendering the individuality of the *jiva*. This is what the cult of *bhakti* or love preaches. By this process the *jiva* becomes absolutely one with the Supreme Person. "As science is the liberation of our knowledge in the universal reason, which cannot be other than human reason, religion is the liberation of our individuality in the universal Person who is human all the same."⁶ "The individual *I am* attains its perfect end when it realises its freedom of harmony in the infinite *I am*. Then is its *mukti*, its deliverance from the thralldom of *maya*, of appearance which springs from *avidya*, from ignorance; its emancipation in *santam sivism advaitam*, in the perfect repose in truth, in the perfect activity

1. *The Religion of Man*.
2. *Ibid*, p. 205.
3. *Ibid*, p. 118.
4. *Ibid*, p. 17.
5. *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, p. 37.
6. *The Religion of Man*, p. 198.

in goodness, and in the perfect union in love."¹ "Intellect sets us apart from the things to be known, but love knows its object by fusion."² "Our soul can only become Brahman as the river can become the sea."³ "The highest wisdom in the East holds that it is not the function of our soul to *gain* God, to utilise him for any special material purpose. All that we can ever aspire to is to become more and more one with God."⁴ But in the sphere of religion so long as God remains humanised as an object of love, love implies unity as well as duality. "In love all the contradictions of existence merge themselves and are lost. Only in love are unity and duality not at variance. Love must be one and two at the same time. Only love is motion and rest in one. Our heart ever changes its place till it finds love, and there it has its rest. But this rest itself is an intense form of activity where utter quiescence and unceasing energy meet at the same point in love."⁵

This shows that Tagore places love higher than knowledge as the way that leads to the Brahman. Knowledge involves the distinction between subject and object, and where there is no such distinction there is no knowledge. But love aims at fusion or union. The distinction between subject and object vanishes in it. Yet love is not without knowledge. Only it is consummation of knowledge. ". . . he (God) can be known by joy, by love. For joy is knowledge in its completeness, it is knowing by our whole being. Intellect sets us apart from the things to be known, but love knows its object by fusion. Such knowledge is immediate and admits no doubt. It is the same as knowing our own selves, only more so."⁶ "Want of love is a degree of callousness; for love is the perfection of consciousness. We do

1. *Sadhana*, p. 85.
2. *Ibid*, p. 159.
3. *Ibid*, p. 156.
4. *Ibid*, pp. 154-5.
5. *Ibid*, p. 114.
6. *Ibid*, p. 159.

not love because we do not comprehend, or rather we do not comprehend because we do not love. For love is the ultimate meaning of everything around us. It is not a mere sentiment ; it is truth ; it is the joy that is at the root of all creation. It is the white light of pure consciousness that emanates from Brahman. So, to be one with this *sarvanubhub*, this all-feeling being who is in the external sky, as well as in our inner soul, we must attain to that summit of consciousness, which is love. . . . It is through the heightening of our consciousness into love, and extending it all over the world, that we can attain *Brahma-vihara*, communion with the infinite joy."¹

What does Tagore mean by saying that love is the perfection of our knowledge ? Is it a mystic utterance the *raison d'être* of which cannot be understood ? It simply means that truth is a unity, and that knowledge, if it is to be true, must comprehend that unity. But this unity cannot be experienced, Tagore maintains, except through love. For love is the only form of experience that comprehends unity. Intellect, on the other hand, cannot do away with the distinction between the subject and object, that is, with duality. It, of course, aims at unity, that is, truth ; but its own natural limitations, the very condition of its existence, namely, the duality of the subject and the object, precludes it from completely realising its aim. So long as this duality lasts, the core of the object can never be entered into by the subject, and knowledge at this level cannot be beyond doubt. Like Descartes it is always possible for us to doubt the existence of our object, to ask the question, is it a dream or hallucination ? But when the subject can penetrate the heart of the object, its very core and existence, it cannot and does not doubt the truth of the latter. But this penetration means identity and disappearance of duality. It means transcending the level of intellect. As Bradley puts it, thought in order to attain its ideal perfect truth, must become reality ; but in order to become reality it

1. *Ibid.*, pp. 106-7.

must destroy itself, for one of the conditions of its being is the distinction from reality and this distinction has now to be transcended. That is, the form of consciousness at the level of intellect must be changed into that of intuition. The comprehension of unity is called intuition from the standpoint of knowledge and love from the standpoint of human experience. As Tagore's philosophy aims at understanding the Supra-human in terms of the human, he calls it love.

Then what is the truth that our intellect can attain ? What is truth for it ? Tagore is not an academical philosopher, and so we do not get a definite answer to this question. But his utterances seem to support the coherence view, and remind us of Spinoza. He writes : "What is the truth of this world ? It is not in the masses of substance, not in the number of things, but in their relatedness, which neither can be counted, nor measured, nor abstracted. It is not in the materials which are many, but in the expression which is one. *All our knowledge of things is knowing them in their relation to the Universe, in that relation which is truth.*"¹ Just as Spinoza tells us that true knowledge consists in understanding the Modes in their relation to the one eternal Substance, Tagore tells us that true knowledge of things consists in knowing them in their relation to the supreme principle of unity. Of course Supreme Truth, even according to Tagore, must be beyond coherence. As an *advaitin* he has to admit that it transcends coherence. However, to press this technical question is to be unfair to the poet.

Just as Spinoza tells us that Substance is the only reality and yet there is difference between man and mouse and the two are not equally Substance, Tagore maintains that though God is everything, everything is not equally God. That is, Tagore admits degrees or levels of reality. In the empirical world man is the highest reality, because he approaches the idea of the Supreme Person closer than anything else. And it cannot be

1. *Creative Unity*, p. 5. Italics mine.

otherwise, because the Supreme Person is the Absolute humanised. Tagore mentions the *Upanishads* as his support, according to which "the key to cosmic consciousness, to God-consciousness, is in the consciousness of the soul."¹ One may detect a circle or *petitio principii* in this argument. For why is man of all creatures nearest to God? Because he conceived God in his own image. The same attitude is sometimes criticised as anthropomorphism. But Tagore would say that we as human beings cannot but think as human beings.

But if man is essentially identical with the Supreme Person and so infinite, why does the former experience finitude? How are we to account for his finitude? Tagore says that it is due to *maya* or *avidya*. It is an appearance and is not ultimately real. He writes: "Logically speaking, the distance between two points, however near, may be said to be infinite, because it is infinitely divisible. But we *do* cross the infinite at every step, and meet the eternal in every second. Therefore some of our philosophers say there is no such thing as finitude; it is but a *maya*, an illusion. The real is the infinite, and it is only *maya*, the unreality, which causes the appearance of the finite. But the word *maya* is a mere name, it is no explanation. It is merely saying that with truth there is this appearance which is the opposite of truth; but how they come to exist at one and the same time is incomprehensible."² But *maya* is not understood by Tagore as Sankara understands it. For Sankara it is neither real nor unreal: it neither is nor is not. But for Tagore it both is and is not. The followers of Vallabha sometimes use the words *maya* and *avidya* to denote that the experience of our separateness from the Brahman is only an appearance. But this *maya* is for them not a metaphysical entity. It is just ignorance that clouds our intellect and makes us see difference where difference is not. Tagore's conception of *maya* resembles

1. *Sadhana*, p. 80.

2. Cp. *Atō'smatpratyayo bhrānto māyāvṛtavilokanāt*. Hariraya: *Brahmarāda sangraha*, p. 1.

that of Vallabha, though the latter does not treat it as a metaphysical entity which both is and is not. *Maya*, according to Tagore, has being, because finitude is experienced; but it is non-being also because when our infinitude is realised it vanishes. Vallabha and his followers definitely reject Sankara's doctrine of *maya* and *upādhi*, and maintain that when they speak of the finitude of the *jiva* and his separateness from the Brahman they do not mean this.¹ The world is not unreal for them because it is a product of the Brahman. Unreality cannot come out of reality. Tagore certainly speaks of the world as unreal, as having no explanation and so forth. On this point also his view differs from that of Vallabha. Tagore says that the separateness of our self from the Brahman is an illusion or *maya*, "because it has no intrinsic reality of its own."² He pictures *maya* as the smoke that envelops fire and presages it.³ He speaks of it also as the process by which finitude is woven by the Supreme Person just as the artist weaves the art-product out of his imagination.⁴ Yet in spite of Tagore's treating the world as unreal also, one can easily see the similarity between his and Vallabha's positions. Anyway Tagore's *maya* is not that of Sankara.

Though Tagore calls the world *maya*, he maintains that it is of greater interest to us than the pure reality of the indeterminate and impersonal Brahman. We are interested in the Brahman not in its purity but as the *Mayavin* or the agent of *maya*, the person who weaves the web of appearance. We are concerned with him as the artist who has painted the picture of this world.⁵ It is the drawing or painting which is of value for us, and not the canvas on which it is done. The Brahman as the ground on which the world is superimposed has no value for us.

What is the relation of the Supreme Person to the manifold

1. *Ibid*, pp. 82-87.

2. *Sadhana*, p. 79.

3. *Ibid*, p. 80.

4. *The Religion of Man*, p. 141.

5. *Creative Unity*, p. 10.

of appearance? He is the unity of the manifold. He is the creative unity, not merely the organic unity. It is the presence of this unity that turns the manifold into a rhythm and harmony. Just as a true poem is not a construction according to the rules of rhyme and metre, but an expression or creation, so also the world is not a construction but an expression or creation. That is, the world is not created according to certain previously formulated laws, but is the expression of a single unity that diversifies itself; and the laws automatically formulate themselves *pari passu* with creation. The so-called laws are the reflections of unity in diversity, and the Supreme Unity therefore is the law of all laws. Tagore gives the example of a musical tune that expresses itself in various notes, and in which the notes have no meaning apart from the tune. Similarly, the world of the manifold loses its significance unless understood as the expression of an underlying unity.

If the Supreme Person is the law of all laws, if the so-called laws are the reflections of his unity in the manifold, then these laws will not be felt as restraining the activity and limiting the freedom of the finite human being if he surrenders his individuality to the Supreme Person and becomes one with him. Becoming one with him means losing ourselves in him through love. As we have already pointed out, according to Tagore, it is through love only that we can experience truth or the final unity. That is, we can transcend the restraint of law only through love. He writes: "It is only those who have known that joy expresses itself through law who have learnt to transcend the law."¹ Only when we transcend law through love can we experience our freedom. Freedom is not absence of all law, which is another name for chaos. It is to make the laws one's own. Joy, love, or unity expresses itself in various ways, which are the laws. The moment we realise our oneness with the Supreme Unity the laws become the forms of expression of our joy and lose their unpleasantness.

1. *Sadhana*, p. 119.

To realise our oneness with the Supreme Person is our highest aim in life, the greatest *dharma*. "We fulfil our destiny when we go back from form to joy; from law to the love, when we untie the knot of the finite and hark back to the infinite."¹ But what is this *dharma*? It is truth, law, existence, norm, and reality. Tagore says: "The Sanscrit word *dharma* which is usually translated into English as religion has a deeper meaning in our language. *Dharma* is the innermost nature, the essence, the implicit truth, of all things. *Dharma* is the ultimate purpose that is working in our self. When any wrong is done we say that *dharma* is violated, meaning that the lie has been given to our true nature."² "Only when the tree begins to take shape do you come to see its *dharma*, and then you can affirm without doubt that the seed which has been wasted and allowed to rot in the ground has been thwarted in its *dharma*, in the fulfilment of its true nature."³ Thus *dharma* is ideal or destiny. The Supreme Man is the *dharma* of the finite man.⁴ But he is the law of all laws: he is what makes the so-called laws laws. Hence the ideal of man is the truth of the whole world. It is the ideal towards which the whole creation moves.

The peculiarity of Tagore's *Advaita* is that though it soars high and does not avoid the greatest speculative heights, it still wants to retain its hold on the lower levels of reality. Tagore is a mystic, but his mysticism is no bar to his interest in the temporal world. The value of his thought lies in the way he tries to reconcile the results of the *Advaita* with active interest in the practical world. The values of this world are not to be shunned. Asceticism and *jnanamarga* or the path of knowledge to truth are not the only ways of realising the Brahman. So long as we are human, to ask us to renounce the world, to exhort us to avoid its experiences, is to ask us to

1. *Ibid.*, p. 106.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

4. *The Religion of Man*, p. 144.

jump out of our skin. Asceticism and indifference to the values of the world cannot enable us to realise the underlying unity. The desire to be aloof from the world leads only to duality. It is only love, which is active unification, that can make us realise our aim of life. Thus there is an interesting blend in Tagore's thought of Vaishnavism and its cult of *Bhakti* with the *Advaita*. This is not absolutely a new feature of Indian thought. The philosophy of Vallabha, which has not received the due attention it rightly deserves from contemporary Indian thinkers, is Vaishnava *Advaita*. And Tagore's philosophy reminds us of Vallabha's. There are of course some differences, which we have pointed out. But the general tendency is the same in both. Both feel that logically the *Advaita* is irrefutable, and yet both refuse to regard the world which is a product of the Brahman as unreal and uninteresting. God is the ultimate principle of unity, and love, even Vallabha would say with Tagore, is the only form of experience in which differences are transcended.

MAITRI-SADHANA*

(THE PATH OF UNIVERSAL LOVE)

INTRODUCTION

Prof. P. B. Adhikari

THERE is an idea widely prevalent, particularly in the West, that love of humanity has no place in Indian Philosophy or Religion, and that the sentiment, where it is found to appear to-day in the land, is a borrowed one, being imbibed through and from the literature of the West, particularly from Christianity and the philosophy of life influenced by that faith. The opinion is excusable in the general public who are innocent of Indian thought and practice as taught in its ancient literature. They get the impression generally from what they believe to be true, from the writings, philosophical or otherwise, of those who are regarded as authorities on the subject. The wonder is that the opinion is endorsed even by some responsible Indologists otherwise noted for their scholarship in the literature of Indian Thought and Religion. The essay following this introduction, written on the basis of original ancient texts, is meant to dispel this mistaken idea by showing to what extent and depth the spirit of *Maitri* (universal love) was carried in our teachings. The writing offers ample illustration of the value that was put on the cultivation of this virtue, and the discipline of the mind needed for the purpose, in the general culture of the people of this land. A large number of the texts quoted in support of the thesis bear no doubt on the subject of the path of realisation (*sadhana*) of the virtue as taught in the *Madhyamika* School of Buddhism. It would be a mistake, however, to think, from

* Both the Introduction by Prof. Adhikari and the thesis following, by Pandit Sujit Mukherjee, are published here in an abridged form. The full versions, with complete original texts, etc. will shortly be published as a monograph by Visva-Bharati.—Ed.

these quotations, that the teaching and the spirit underlying it was confined to a narrow circle of Buddhists. To remove this possible mistake, texts have also been offered freely in support of the position from the *Vedas*, *Upanisads*, *Bhagavat-Gita* and other relevant ancient writings bearing on the subject.

Now of the true meaning of the term *Maitri* and of the nature of the idea expressed by the term. There appears to be some difference of opinion in its adequate interpretation. In the yoga-system of Patanjali there is a *sutra* or aphorism in which the term is found to occur (vide Pada I, *sutra* 33), and *Maitri* is mentioned there as one of the four virtues the cultivation of which is enjoined as an indispensable discipline for the attainment of that purity and calm of mind (*citta-prasada*) without which the required concentration of consciousness (*yoga*) is impossible. It is difficult to give a definite idea, by an English equivalent term, of what exactly is meant by *maitri* here. It is found to have been variously rendered into English by eminent writers on the system and particularly on the *sutra* concerned here. This is not to be wondered at, seeing that the term has been understood in somewhat different senses even by the commentators themselves. For instance, the original and authoritative commentator *Vyasa* on the system of Patanjali offers simply, on the basis of the *sutra* concerned, an explanation to the effect that *maitri* has to be cultivated as a *kindly* attitude of mind towards all living beings who are in the condition of enjoyment of pleasure or happiness. Vacaspati Misra, in his Gloss (*Vaisaradi*) on the commentary of Vyasa, explains the term as an attitude of sympathy (*sauharda*) towards those who are in a happy condition of life. Vijnanabhiksu in his *Yogavartika* renders the term simply by *Sauharda* (sympathy), and does not add anything more to elucidate the meaning. Other writers on the system do not appear to go further in their explanation of the term. Among English writers, mention may be particularly made here of the late Prof. Cecil Bendall who, in the learned Introduction to his edition of Santideva's *Siksa-samuccaya*, is found to render the term *maitri* by

charity at one place and at another place by *universal love* (as enjoined for one seeking *Bodhi* or highest enlightenment (*Bodhi-citta*). Of these various renderings of a Sanskrit term used in a peculiar and extensive sense, only the last one, namely *universal love*, may be said to come nearer to express the idea in a foreign tongue. But still this English version would not, it is feared, convey in an adequate way the full meaning of the term as used in the texts of the Buddhistic works quoted from. For instance, in the *Bodhi-caryavatara*, another notable work of the author of *Siksa-samuccaya*, the attitude of mind named *Maitri* is found to be likened (after the Vedic text quoted and giving the same sense) to the affection felt by parents to their children. The best way to have an adequate idea underlying the term would, therefore, be to refer to the texts themselves where it occurs, particularly the Buddhistic works quoted from, and to form oneself an idea of the meaning to be put on it. What is attempted below, by way of introduction, is to offer here in the briefest possible manner, an idea of the extent and depth to which the cultivation of the spirit of *Maitri* came to be enjoined in the Madhyamika School as a necessary discipline of the mind for the attainment of the condition of enlightenment, a condition characterising *Bodhisattvahood*, which is a preliminary indispensable stage in the final realisation of *Buddhabood*, according to the position of Mahayana Buddhism. The author of *Bodhicharyavatara* goes even to the extreme here by identifying the attitude of perfect *Maitri* with the realisation of the enlightenment (*Bodhi*) itself.

The author referred to above begins with the general definition of *Maitri* as consisting essentially in wide sympathy with the sufferings of living beings and selfless efforts to mitigate or remove them as far as possible. Next, an attempt is made to show how this noble attitude of mind and practice can be cultivated to its perfection and what should be the characteristics of the condition at its highest level. It is necessary to bear in mind in this connection the nature of the ideal which a *Bodhisattva*

sets before his mind and pursues with unstinted devotion, a Bodhisattva being one who has attained the highest level of enlightenment (Bodhi). The ideal is purely disinterested service, not of humanity alone, but of all living beings, removing their sufferings and helping them on to the attainment of that condition of freedom from all troubles which the enlightened ones have attained themselves. Though there is a positive joy of mind in this realisation, those who have it would not be fully happy until all others are made so with the same sort of realisation. But this identification of one's own self with the whole living world, suffering with their sufferings and joying with their enjoyments, is possible only by undergoing a systematic discipline of mind leading on to the attainment of the level of culture which is called here *maitri-bhava* (the attitude of *maitri*), otherwise regarded, and also called here, *Bodhi-citta* (the enlightened condition of mind). The first step in the discipline mentioned above is the exercise of thorough control over such passions of the mind, as anger, hatred, etc., which are likely to cause injury to others; and this is possible only by the cultivation of the virtues that are opposed to them, so that the mind may be ultimately free from their operation. Among these virtues, that of *Forgiveness* (*Ksama*) is regarded as the basic one, and so it is extolled as of the highest value. A thorough cultivation of this virtue is even considered as an indispensable condition for the attainment of *Bodhi-citta*, of which the essence is, according to the position in point here, *maitri-bhava* (the virtue of *maitri* or universal love).

The question now arises: how to attain this high and noble culture of the mind. The position of the Madhyamika School is defended and expounded here on fine psychological analysis of the emotional aspect of the mind, coupled with its metaphysical standpoint of *Sunyavada* (falsely called *Nihilism*), and also its high ethical ideal of life as based on its psychology and metaphysics. Into the details of the doctrines advocated by the school it is not necessary to go in an Introduction like the present. In

the body of the texts quoted, some references have been given to them, inviting readers for further information to the original works which embody the treatment of the doctrines. It would not, however, be out of place to mention one special doctrine of the whole Buddhistic thought on which are ultimately based, directly, the teachings of the different schools. I mean the doctrine of *Pratitya-Samutpada* (Pali, *Paticca-Samuppada*), the Law of Universal Causation, or more correctly, the law of conditional origin of things or events (both of the world and of life). This doctrine is so highly valued in Buddhism that Nagarjuna, in his *Madhyamika sutra*, writes to the effect that true knowledge of this law in its universal application is an indispensable condition for the attainment of *Nirvana*.

Now let us see the use that is made here of the doctrine in connection with what has been stated above about the cultivation of the virtue of *Forgiveness*. If every event, according to the doctrine, is conditioned by its cause, the wrong that is done must be regarded as an event in the causal chain over which there is no control. Considered in this light, no sane man who has realised the truth of the inevitable causal law, can possibly have any intellectual or rational ground for getting offended for a wrong done to him. On the contrary this thought would bring about a calm attitude of forgiveness.

A doubt is sure to arise here as to the soundness of the Buddhistic position as an ethical measure or incentive. The use of the doctrine as illustrated above would rather be regarded as opposed to any moral initiative, because of its deterministic character. If good or evil is due to nobody's agency but comes about as an effect in the causal chain of events, then there is no one to be praised or blamed, rewarded or punished for what is called a *deed*, and there is no use undertaking any moral discipline for the cultivation of virtue. It has to be admitted that this doubt is likely to arise here. But that is because of ignorance of the psychological and philosophical considerations on which the teaching is based. *Determinism* is not *Fatalism*, and no system of

thought or of practice is more emphatic in denying their identity, or even similarity, than Buddhism itself. Supposing that there is determinism even in moral deeds, the nature of this determinism has to be understood from the Buddhistic standpoint: no foreign interpretation of this situation would do here. Moreover it has been sufficiently indicated that among the conditions which bring about an event, thought, feeling, will and effort have their rightful place. It is a marked characteristic of Buddhism as a system of thought that it does not admit any current ideas uncritically, nor does it repeat slavishly the formulae which embody them. Its special merit lies in the intellectual freedom displayed in its speculations. This has to be always borne in mind by the critics of Buddhistic ethics.

Speaking of Buddhistic ethics we now come to the extreme to which the standpoint was carried by the *Sunyavadins*. The position is too subtle, and naturally, therefore, less convincing to the mind of a reader whose life is led on the ordinary human level. The teaching would appear rather curious in its own way. It runs thus: the man who does me wrong helps me on by his act to cultivate the virtue of forgiveness and thereby advances me in the pursuit of *Bodhi* (enlightenment), the core of which is universal love (*maitri*) as founded on an abiding spirit of forgiveness. Is the man then to be regarded as a friend or a foe? Certainly a friend, as he has, by his deed, however harmful that might appear to be to an onlooker, acted rather beneficially to me, although unaware of the good that he has thus rendered. If this *kindly* attitude could be cultivated and habitually maintained towards a wrong-doer, forgiveness would arise naturally in the mind of the sufferer. And this is the ideal of culture or self-discipline which must be cultivated by every devotee in the path of *Bodhi*, if he is to attain the goal. The attitude of *maitri*, it is further enjoined, must be characterised by this spirit of universal forgiveness. This last consideration shows how widely and deeply the idea of *maitri* was entertained by the Madhyamika school. No one is capable of attaining the status of a *Bodhi-sattva*,

nor deserves the name, until he has, by systematic discipline extending over years or ages, or even lives, so elevated his mental level that this attitude has become perfectly spontaneous, requiring no further exertion for its production or maintenance.

Now comes up a question in connection with the ideal teaching of the school as indicated briefly above. If a person causing pain to another does really a good to him by offering thereby an opportunity for the exercise of forgiveness and the cultivation of this virtue, then pain ceases to be an evil and causing pain to others is no moral sin. Why then is it inculcated that a man on the path to the achievement of *Bodhi* must cultivate widest possible sympathy for all suffering beings and should always be prepared to render unstinted service for the mitigation or removal of their miseries? Are not the two positions inconsistent with each other? How could we then expect a man, under the training and with the ideas inculcated, to feel the necessity of any service to his needy fellow-beings in misery? Would not the result of the training and the idea be the encouragement of an attitude of apathy (*upeksa*) to the sufferings of living creatures? The inconsistency, however, is more apparent than real. The following considerations may be offered in support of my point.

The teaching is, first of all, meant for one who is on the path of realisation of the ideal condition of *Bodhi*. Secondly, this high ideal does not offer any excuse for the neglect of the practice and discipline through and on the basis of which alone the necessary preparation has to be made before the true spirit of the ideal can be realised even in thought. The teaching begins by emphasising the point that so long as you yourself do not want to suffer pain but seek to remove it when it comes, there is no ground to allow its occurrence or continuance elsewhere. Pain and misery are by themselves undesirable things, irrespective of the place where they occur. If the condition is to be avoided in your case, it must be so in case of others. Thirdly, the spirit

of forgiveness enjoined here as a discipline does not mean that you are free to cause suffering to others with the object of helping them on to cultivate the spirit, nor does it mean to say that others are free to cause such trouble to their fellow beings without any stain of guilt. The fundamental principle is that this universal love and sympathy (*maitri*) should be cultivated by all.

In conclusion, it has been shown, on the basis of relevant texts quoted, that as a matter of fact the life of one who is on the path to *Bodhi* is not one of perpetual misery. It has no doubt its share of suffering arising out of its sympathetic or compassionate nature. But the amount of this suffering is negligible in comparison to the joy inherent in the noble condition achieved. At the same time, the teaching goes further in asserting the spirit of self-sacrifice to the effect that compassion (*karuna*) and the action which issues from it for the good of others is of much higher value than any such joy of life. The teaching goes even to the extent that this self-sacrifice for the good of all living beings is to be preferred to *Nirvana* itself. The ideal for which the Bodhisattva stands is thus no *personal* salvation, but the salvation of all; no nirvana for one's self, but for all. A Bodhisattva would not crave for any personal good that cannot be equally shared with all. His personality has ceased to be and has been merged in others.

It is strange that there is still an impression prevalent in respectable quarters that the idea or sentiment of *humanitarianism* is conspicuous by its absence in Indian thought and practice. It is further held that where it is found to be taught in any philosophical system or as an item of religious practice it is always as a means to a further end beyond itself and never as an end in itself. This idea can hardly be upheld after perusal of the texts quoted.

MAITRI-SĀDHANĀ

OR

THE PATH OF UNIVERSAL LOVE

By Sujitkumar Mukhopadhyaya

FROM time immemorial there has existed in India a spiritual discipline (*sādhana*) for promoting and practising Universal Love (*maitri*—lit., Friendliness). Almost every educated Hindu has heard the following verse of the well-known hymn regarding *maitri* in the *Rig Veda*:

“Do ye concur; be ye closely combined; let your minds be concurrent.”

In all the *Vedas* there is a reference to this *sādhana*. The Rishi sings in the *Yajur Veda*:

“May all the creatures look at me with the eye of a friend. May I look at all creatures with the eye of a friend. Abandoning violence and enmity, may we treat one another as friends.”¹

In the *Atharva Veda* the Rishi sings:

“Make me dear to Brahmin and Kṣatriyas; both to Śudra and to Ārya. Make me dear to those who see me, i.e., who are around me and to whomsoever we desire. Make me dear even to those who run after sin.”²

“Be your purpose the same, your hearts the same; your minds the same so that it may be well for you together.”³

As every creature loves his offspring and nourishes it, so does he who has attained Universal Love, love and nourish Life.

“Like-heartedness, like-mindedness, non-hostility, do I

1. *Vājasenīya*, XXXVI-18. 2. *Atharva*, XIX-32-8, XIX-62-1. 3. *Rig*, X-191-4; *Atharva*, VI-64-2.

create for you ; do ye show affection one towards the other, as does the cow towards her new-born."¹

Then all ill-will and hatred disappear, life is filled up with love for the pure and the impure, the high and the low ; they (those who have attained Universal Love) then dedicate themselves to the task of purifying the polluted, and elevating the low :

"O ye Brahmins, again raise the fallen, uplift the oppressed, purify the polluted, give new life to the sinner who is dying of sin."²

This is not, however, the final stage in the Discipline ; there is still a higher stage ; for even to love others like one's own son, is tainted with separateness. This barrier of separateness, too, must be crossed. One must look at Life as one indivisible whole :

"In this universe there is none else except me ; I alone exist ; I pervade it everywhere in myriads of forms. . . ."³

The universe is like a body with many limbs permeated by one soul ; when the ultimate stage in the Discipline is attained, this knowledge is born in the mind of the *sādhaka*.

"When all creatures have become one with the Self, then where is sorrow, where is delusion for the Wise One who sees unity ?"⁴

In this stage question of violence does not arise at all. Then love becomes natural. For who would not like ever to serve himself, or who would ever hurt himself ?

"As the same soul pervades equally every limb of the body, likewise in every atom of this vast universe there dwells the one person, or the one soul equally. He who has attained to this vision (of life), does never cause any injuries to himself ; and it is then only that one attains liberation."⁵

1. *Atharva*, III-30-1. 2. *Rig*, X-137-1 ; *Atharva*, IV-13-1. 3. *Atharva*, XIX-51-1 ; *Chāndogyaopaniṣad*, VII-25-1. 4. *Vājasenīya*, XL-7. 5. *Gītā*, XIII-28.

Such is the Discipline as laid down by the Hindus who believe in the existence of the soul. Now let us consider the viewpoint of the Buddhists who deny the existence of the soul, for that is the special purpose of this essay.

It is necessary to mention here that both Buddhists and Hindus alike, accept the truth that Universal Love (*maitri*) is the soul of the spiritual discipline. Without this Universal Love there is no possibility of one's attaining liberation or realizing God.

According to the Yoga system, without concentration of the mind, union with reality (*yoga*) is impossible ; and this concentration in its turn cannot be attained if the mind is impure or defiled. To remove the defilements or impurities of the mind, the *maitri* is indispensable.

"By the cultivation of friendliness in the happiness of others, compassion in their pain, and joy in their merit, and indifference to their demerit, the undisturbed calm of the mind is attained."¹

In the Hindu scriptures, love of all (creatures) is love of God ; reverence for all is reverence for God. Worshipping God by disregarding Life defeats the very end in view.

"I dwell always as the soul in every one. Disregarding every manifestation of Mine, man mocks at Me, by worshipping stocks and stones as My images. Abandoning Me, the God, who dwells in every one, the deluded devotee who worships stocks and stones, his worship is wasted as the clarified butter is wasted when sacrificed in the ashes (of sacrificial fire)."

"If you desire to worship me truly, then look at every one with an equal eye, look at every one with the eye of a friend ; give unto Life, reverence Life ; My dwelling place is the heart of every creature."²

"The body is a temple in which dwells none else but God."³

"O God ; thou dwellest in diverse forms in diverse bodies ;

1. *Pātañjaladarśana*, I-1-33. 2. *Bhāgavata*, III-29-21, 22, 27.
3. *Maitreyopaniṣad*, II-1.

in some as woman, in others as man, in some as youth, in others as maiden ; while in some others as a decrepit, tottering old man, wandering about with the aid of a staff. In the entire universe, in every direction, it is thou that hast come into being."

"It is the selfsame God Who has manifested Himself as father, as well as son ; as an elder, as well as a youngster. It is He Who has entered the heart and mind. The same Being Who was born at the beginning of creation, also exists now in the embryo."¹

The Buddhist scriptures also assert the same truth : "Ill-will for any living creatures cancels out one's good actions,—such as charity, worship of the Buddhas, etc., accumulated in the course of many aeons."²

"Worship of the incomparable leaders, the Buddhas, even if it is immeasurable and performed in various ways, in myriads of worlds, is not equal to a heart full of Universal Love."³

"Verily the Buddhas and the Bodhisatvas are seen here in the form of living creatures. How could one then disregard them ?"

"Just as even by fulfilling all desires, one cannot give any happiness to him whose body is all ablaze, likewise the compassionate Buddhas cannot be propitiated by any means, if any suffering is caused to living creatures."⁴

"Having meditated for aeons, the Buddhas have realized this to be the only blessing, because in this (Discipline) there is happiness from the very beginning ; and one need not go through any suffering in order to attain happiness. This is the only blessing, because multiplying itself it benefits the whole universe."

"They should never abandon the *bodhicitta* (aspiring to enlightenment for the sake of the deliverance of all living creatures) who desire liberation from the immeasurable sufferings

1. *Atharva*, X-8-27,28. 2. *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, VI-1. 3. *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, p. 157. 4. *Ibid*, p. 156.

of life, who desire to alleviate the miseries of all creatures, who desire to enjoy infinite bliss."

"All other good actions, like the plantain tree, bear fruit only once and then decay ; but the tree of *bodhicitta* ever bears fruit and never decays."

"May I become Buddha for the deliverance of the whole universe,—this very prayer (aspiration) alone surpasses the worship of the Buddhas, what is there then to be wondered at, if removing all the sufferings of all the creatures, the effort to give them every (kind of) happiness results in immeasurable merit ?"¹

According to the Buddhist, *maitri* means to consider the whole universe like one's only son.

"As a mother protects her only son even at the risk of her own life, in the same way one should enlarge his heart infinitely in compassion for all living creatures."²

"May I be a medicine to the sick, their physician ; may I continue to attend on them until they are healed and made whole."

"May I be an inexhaustible store for the poor ; may I attend on them in the form of a fulfilment of their manifold desires."

"May I be a helper to the helpless, a guide to the way-farer, a boat, a bridge, a dam to those who desire to cross over to the other shore."

"May I be a lamp to those who need a light ; may I be a bed to those who need a bed ; may I be a servant to those who need a servant."

"For the fulfilment of the needs of all the creatures (may) I surrender dispassionately my being in all my manifold existences, all my objects of enjoyments, all the merit accumulated by me in the past and in the present and that which I may acquire in the future."

"To attain liberation (*nirvāna*—lit. extinction of all

1. *Bodhi*, I-7,8,12,27. 2. *Suttanipāta*, I-8,-7.

attachment) one must abandon every thing. I long to attain liberation. Therefore I have to give up every thing. Then it is better to surrender it to all creatures."

"This body of mine is for the satisfaction of whatever pleasure they (creatures) desire; let them hurt it, censure it, soil it with dust."

"May I thus become an object of their various enjoyments to the countless creatures of the countless worlds in the universe, until all of them have attained to liberation."

"May all those attain to Buddhahood who would soil my fair name with falsehood, who would cause injuries to my body and mind, who would scoff at me. May others also attain to Buddhahood."¹

"May all those who are tyrannized over, who are suffering from bondage, who are steeped in manifold misfortunes, who are overcome by a thousand and one ills, who are overwhelmed with horrors of diverse kinds and dreadful woes, be set free from tyranny, bondage, misfortune, ills and woe. May all the condemned have life; may those who are woe-begone be fearless.

"May those who are hungry have food of various kinds. May those who are thirsty have drink of various kinds.

"May the blind see the variegated world. May the deaf hear the pleasing sounds.

"May the naked be clothed, may the poor have riches.

"Obtaining heaps of beautiful gems, wealth and grain, may all be happy. May none ever taste suffering.

"May all abandon sin, acquire merit and act benevolently."²

We shall now discuss here how the Bodhisattvas conquered anger and ill-will and practised forgiveness in order to advance on the path of Universal Love.

"Let us not be angry with the evil-doer. And if we have to be angry, then we should be angry first with the gall and other humours in the body; because it is these which, being excited,

1. *Bodhi*, III-7, 9, 17, 18, 10, 11, 12, 21, 16. 2. *Śikṣā*, p. 217-218.

produce diseases of diverse kinds and cause us manifold sufferings. And yet we are never angry with them, for they are not conscious and are themselves dependent on factors (beyond their control).

"They have not the capacity to get angry consciously and independently. It is these factors and conditions which force them to get excited. The same arguments apply also to conscious creatures. It is therefore not true that they do us harm or cause sufferings by becoming angry deliberately, consciously and independently. Their anger or ill-will is occasioned by their moral condition, i.e. by evil inherent in their previous actions, which therefore are the true foundation of their anger or ill-will."

"Thus conscious and non-conscious beings are both equally dependent. For example, colic pain is caused independent of whether the gall and other humours will it so or not. Likewise, whether the conscious creatures will it or not, their anger flames forth forcibly."¹

"Just as the non-conscious humours are not excited by any conscious volition on their part, in the same way conscious creatures, too, never think deliberately beforehand, 'now I shall be angry', before they burst forth into anger. And anger (in its turn) is also not self-created by any such previous volition or thought, as 'I shall now be born.'"

"All kinds of faults and all kinds of evil actions are produced by their respective causes and conditions; for none is independent, all of them being dependent."

"These causes and conditions, too, have no such conscious volitions or thought, 'we shall now cause it.' The thing which is produced, that too has no such consciousness that 'I am being produced or have been produced by this or that.'"²

"In this way everything in this world is dependent on some other thing and that too on which it depends is also not indepen-

1. *Bodhi*, VI-22, 23. 2. *Ibid.*, VI-24, 25, 26.

dent. Everything is worked like a marionette, pulled by something else. With whom then to get angry ?”

“Do not allow the calm of your mind to be ruffled when you see either a friend or a foe acting unjustly ; remain content, thinking that they are compelled by some evil-provoking cause or conditions to act in that particular way. They are thus dependent on others. Why then blame them ?”¹

“A person maddened by anger hurts himself by pricking his own body with thorns ; giving up food he starves himself. Others put an end to their life either by hanging themselves with a rope, or throwing themselves from a precipice, or by drinking poison, etc. Could they ever act in this way if they were independent and not dependent (on some other force or agency) ? Every one desires his own happiness ; who ever desires sufferings ? If the unfortunate creature who is under the sway of lust, anger, etc., hurts himself in this way, how can you expect that he would not hurt another.”²

“Just as we do not get angry but rather pity a person who is possessed (by some evil spirit) even when he acts in various harmful ways, in the same way, why should we not pity instead of getting angry with those who, possessed by the evil spirit of lust, anger, etc., commit suicide physically, as mentioned above, or spiritually by doing harm to others ?”

“It is the nature of fire to burn : everyone knows it very well. Therefore, when burnt by fire we do not get angry with it. Likewise, if we assume that it is the nature of an ignorant person to do harm to others, then we should not get angry with him, too, for he also acts according to his own nature.”³

“When some one strikes me with a stick or something else, I do not get angry with the stick but with him who wields it. Therefore when a person, ‘wielded’ by ill-will, strikes me, I should get angry with the ill-will and not with him.”

“The weapon with which I am struck and the body where

1. *Ibid*, VI-31, 33. 2. *Ibid*, VI-35, 36, 37. 3. *Ibid*, VI-38,39.

I am struck, both are the cause of suffering; with whom shall I get angry, the weapon-wielding foe or with myself who wields a body ?”

“The body is like a festering boil which feels pain easily (or quickly). Yet blinded by attachment, I have accepted that same body. Then when I feel the pain, with whom shall I get angry ?”

“I do not desire suffering (caused by some weapon), yet I desire the body, which is the cause of that suffering. Verily I am a fool. I am the main culprit. Why do I then get angry with others (who are only abettors or accomplices in the crime) ?”¹

“I acquire the virtue of forgiveness through the instrumentality of the person whom I think an evil-doer. This cancels out the demerits of the past. On the other hand, through my instrumentality is born in the evil-doer, violence, ill-will, etc., which drag him down to the hell of continuous and unbearable suffering. It is obvious, therefore, that he who seems to me to do me evil, is in reality my benefactor, and it is I who do him evil. O wicked mind, why, then, drawing contrary conclusions, dost thou get angry ?”²

“It is not meet for me to despise those who outrage or destroy the images, the relics, and the Good Law (of the Buddha) ; for these do not hurt at all the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas.”³

“Of what avail to man is praise, fame or honour ? These do not confer any merit on him, they do not even prolong his life or add to his strength ; neither do they cure disease, nor do they give any physical pleasure.”

“Praise or honour does not conduce to my welfare. On the contrary, they destroy it ; they produce in my mind envy of the meritorious. ‘My merit surpasses every one else’s,’ ‘I alone should get all the wealth’ : creating such a state of mind, they (praise, honour, etc.) give rise to envy of, and anger at, the wealth of others.”⁴

1. *Ibid*, VI-41,43,44,45. 2. *Ibid*, VI-48,49. 3. *Ibid*, VI-64. 4. *Ibid*, VI-90, 98.

"I desire liberation. The fetters of gain, praise or honour do not become me. How strange it is then that I have ill-will against those who (help me to) file away those fetters !"

"They bar the door against me when I desire to enter sufferings. They are as if made to act by the grace of the Buddha. How could I then ever have ill-will against such benefactors of mine?"¹

"Even when my meritorious act is obstructed by some one, then also I have no justification for getting angry with him ; for there is no greater virtue than forgiveness, and it is only due to him that I have an opportunity to exercise this virtue."

"If I am intolerant and do not forgive him, then the obstruction in my meritorious act is caused only by myself. Even when there was an opportunity of acquiring merit, I did not acquire it."²

"This fruit of forgiveness is acquired by his and my co-operation. He should therefore be the first to share it, for he is the primary cause of, and principal helper in, my earning it (the above-mentioned merit)."

"If one were to say that my enemy (the evil-doer) had no such intention of helping me to achieve merit through forgiveness, and so, even though he may be the cause of my acquiring the merit, he is not worthy of honour, then may I ask him why he worships the Good Law which is the cause of his acquiring merit, seeing that it also is void of intention?"

"My forgiveness is evoked precisely because he has the evil intention. Therefore, he is the cause of my forgiveness. Like the Good Law, then, he is also to be honoured."³

The sorrow of the whole world will have to be shouldered by him, his *all* will have to be surrendered, even his own life. Those who do not desire, thinking all of this, to advance on the path of *maitri*, to them says the Bodhisattva :

"To remove a greater suffering we all accept a lesser suffering ; e. g., to pluck out a thorn from any part of the body,

1. *Ibid.*, VI-100, 101. 2. *Ibid.*, VI-102,103. 3. *Ibid.*, VI-108,109,111.

causes suffering, yet we accept it quite willingly, because we know that this suffering is much less than the greater suffering caused by the thorn, and that the former can do away with the latter."¹

"The suffering experienced on the path of *maitri* which results in the acquisition of *bodhi* is like the suffering caused while plucking out the thorn."²

It is true that one has to accept great suffering while treading the path of *maitri*, such as sacrifice of one's own life, nay, of his limbs, one by one ; but it is also true that the result of such suffering will be enlightenment (*bodhi*) which is desired by every one.

"It is not unjustified to cause some pain to a patient while treating him. But the greatest physician who cures all diseases, the compassionate Buddha, does not in the initial stage of the treatment cause any pain to His patient. He treats His patient with soothing sweetness."³

"In the beginning He makes the pilgrim on the path of *maitri* give up things as worthless as a straw ; gradually and slowly He habituates him into giving up things which are comparatively a little more valuable and a little larger in quantity. In this way the pilgrim gradually reaches a stage when he gladly and effortlessly sacrifices even his own blood and bones."

"When this practice of giving reaches its highest peak, when one considers one's own flesh as worthless as a straw, then is it at all difficult to give up one's blood and bones?"⁴

But is there really any pain on the path of *maitri* ?

"For the treader of the path there is neither physical nor mental pain. As the giving up of evil-doing results in cessation of his physical pain, so the acquisition of wisdom leads to cessation of his mental pain ; the compassionate one who through the acquisition of merit and wisdom is happy both physically and

1. *Ibid.*, VII-20. 2. *Ibid.*, VII-22. 3. *Ibid.*, VII-24. 4. *Ibid.*, VII-25, 26.

mentally and who devotes himself to the well-being of others, is there then any suffering which can cause him pain ?”¹

“Who can ever feel despondent when, seated in the fatigue-saving chariot of *bodhicitta*, he treads his way through bliss after bliss !”²

“As happiness is dear to me, so it is to others. So where then is the difference between them and me so that I try to obtain my own happiness ?”

“As fear and sufferings are distasteful to me, so are they to others ; so where then is the difference between them and me, so that I do not protect others (against fear and sufferings) ?”³

“It may be argued that one’s suffering is increased when there is compassion in his heart ; (for) then he feels the sufferings of others as if they were his own. Therefore it is clear that it is compassion which multiplies sufferings. So it is better not to cultivate compassion.

“To this question the answer is, that there is no end to suffering in this world ; and if you could visualize the manifold infinite suffering of this world, you could realize then, that compared with that, the suffering created by compassion (in your heart) is not really great.”⁴

“Besides it stands to reason that if individual suffering can remove the suffering of many, then let the individual suffering be caused. The compassionate one, therefore, should (try to) create such suffering in his own heart as well as in the hearts of others.”

“The Bodhisattva Supuṣpacandra, knowing for certain that by going to the king he would have to put his own life into danger, yet he accepted the suffering thus caused, in order to remove the suffering of many others. He did not try to spare himself the suffering at the cost of the sufferings of many others.”⁵

1. *Ibid*, VII-28. 2. *Ibid*, VII-30. 3. *Ibid*, VIII-95, 96. *Śikṣā*, Ch. 1. p. 2. 4. *Bodhi*, VIII-104. *Śikṣā*, p. 360. 5. *Bodhi*, VIII-105, 106.

The story runs thus : There was a king by name Śūradatta. He had his capital

Those who are merciful and who suffer for others, do not at all look upon it as suffering, even though the latter may be infinite. It becomes natural and easy for them to sacrifice for the sake of others, their happiness, their all, their very life. They are ready to surrender heaven and even liberation in order to remove the pain of the sufferer.

“May I thus be an object of their various enjoyments to the countless creatures of the countless worlds in the universe, until all of them have attained liberation.”¹

“I shall stay behind in this world till the very end of it, in order to remove the suffering of even one individual.”²

From where do they, the treaders on the path of *maitri*, derive all this strength ? Where is the fountain-spring of their incomparable strength ? What is that wealth, possessing which they reject even the wealth of liberation as trash ? They themselves have unravelled this mystery.

“All-sufficing unto them is the contentment, the peace, the endless and ever-flowing joy which they experience when, through this kind of their incomparable service, they see the sufferers set free step by step from the bondage of pain. Of what avail to them, then, is dry-as-dust liberation ?”³

The nectar of this joy of serving all the creatures of the world does away at once with hunger, thirst, exertion,

at Ratnāvati. His subjects were given to evil ways. For their uplift therefore many Bodhisattvas were born in his kingdom. The king, however, banished all of them from his territory. These exiled Bodhisattvas then began to reside in a forest named *Samantabhadra*. Among them there was one Supuṣpacandra. Intensely pained at the evil ways of the people, he resolved to lead them to the path of Good. He told the others about his resolution. But they all tried to dissuade him from going back to the people and thus putting his own life in danger. He too knew the dangers, attending on his mission. Notwithstanding, he left the forest to preach the Good Law, and in due course he arrived at Ratnāvati, where he succeeded in bringing a large number of people to the path of Good. The royal priest and even the princes accepted his teaching. Seeing that the people were attracted to him in such large numbers, the king, in anger and envy, ordered that Supuṣpacandra be killed. The executioner, in accordance with the king’s order, then hacked his body, limb by limb, and plucked his eyes with a pair of tongs ; in the end his body was thrown on the high road.

1. *Ibid*, III-21. 2. *Śikṣā*, p. 14. 3. *Bodhi*, VIII-108 ; *Śikṣā*, p. 360.

fatigue, despondency and perplexity. Rantideva who was emaciated on account of his forty-eight-day fast, when his body was quaking with hunger and thirst, when his sight had become blurred and when he was gasping for life, surrendered the drinking water given to him, to another thirsty person ; and tasting the nectar of this joy, exclaimed:

“My hunger, my thirst, my fatigue, and penury, all are now at an end ; by offering the water given to me, to one who longed for life, the shaking of my body, weariness, despondency, perplexity, and sorrow, all have at once vanished.

“I do not desire the highest state which is endowed with supernatural powers ; nor do I desire liberation. I desire to take on the suffering, the penury, and misery of others. I shall stay behind until the last creature of the universe attains to liberation. I desire to be born again and again in the universe, and again and again in this way, willingly taking on the suffering of all the creatures, make them happy.”¹

(Translated from the original Bengali by Sj. Gurdial Mullik.)

1. *Bhāgavata*, IX-21, 13, 12.

King Rantideva who enjoyed great prosperity, was reduced to poverty, because he gave away in charity all his wealth to the hungry, the poor and the needy, so much so that in the end he was hard put to it even for food for himself. He along with his kith and kin then was forced to fast. For forty-eight days they had no food or water. On the forty-ninth day, in the morning, they got some cakes prepared with milk and clarified butter. Just when Rantideva with his hungry kinsmen was about to eat these, there appeared on the scene a Brahmin guest. The king who saw God in every creature, extended his hospitality to him, fed him on some of those cakes. The Brahmin then went away. Rantideva then thought of sharing the remaining cakes with his kinsfolk. Just then there came a Śūdra (a member of the menial class) asking for food. The king therefore fed him on a portion of what was left. The Śūdra then went away. Then came a Candāl (an untouchable) together with his dogs, and begged for food for himself and his companions. Rantideva then gave them all that was left over and bowed to them all respectfully. Now only some water was left for Rantideva and his kinsmen. But as soon as they thought of drinking it, a Pukkaśa (lower than Candāl, in caste) came there and said to the king Rantideva ; “O king, give water to this impure one.” Hearing his piteous appeal and seeing that he was very much fatigued, the king gave him the remaining water and uttered the immortal words mentioned above.



MAHATMA GANDHI

By Nandalai Bose

The original lino-cut was made by the artist at Santiniketan on the day Gandhiji set out from the Sabarmati Ashram on his famous Dandi March.

GANDHIJI ON INDUSTRIALISM & MACHINERY

Nirmal Kumar Bose

MANY of us have very vague ideas about Gandhiji's opinions regarding different matters. Thus, for example, some believe that he is against all machinery and all forms of modern civilization.¹ Others again hold that he is willing to use machinery to the extent it is consistent with human welfare, i. e. for purposes of lightening the load of all men on earth. And each can quote passages in order to support his own view.

But this procedure is entirely unscientific. For a scientific study of Gandhiji's opinions, or, for that matter, of any other man's opinions, we should arrange the utterances in chronological order, and then try to understand each in relation to the circumstances under which it was written. Thus, a sermon on bodily labour addressed to those who habitually shirk it, should not be taken as a general advise given to all mankind. It would be out of place among a group of people composed of those who sweat from morning till night for their daily bread and yet have not enough to live a decent life. Each utterance of Gandhiji should therefore be viewed in its proper context ; and then only we shall be able to find out how his ideas and opinions on a particular subject have changed in course of time, if they have changed at all. Sometimes we may even find that only the connotation of certain terms have changed for him, while his fundamental opinions have remained substantially unaltered.

Let us, therefore, proceed to do so with regard to the question of industrialism and machinery.

In 1908, while in South Africa, Gandhiji published a small

¹ Mr. M. Sen in his *Outlines of Economics*, Part I (Tenth Edition Revised, 1989), quotes a passage in the footnote to p. 287 to support this view. Unfortunately the passage chosen is from a book entitled *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule*, (not the *Young India*) which was published as early as 1908. Gandhiji modified his ideas on machinery about 1924-27, but his later utterances have not been referred to.

book in Gujrati, which was later on translated into English under the title, *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule*. That book contained a severe condemnation of what was termed "modern civilization". In trying to explain his point, Gandhiji discussed the influence of railways and of machine-made goods upon Indian life and came to the conclusion that they were wholly evil. His argument was :

"Machinery has begun to desolate Europe. Ruination is now knocking at the English gates. Machinery is the chief symbol of modern civilization, it represents a great sin.

"The workers in the mills of Bombay have become slaves. The condition of the women working in the mills is shocking. When there were no mills, these women were not starving. If the machinery craze grows in our country it will become an unhappy land. It may be considered a heresy, but I am bound to say that it were better for us to send money to Manchester and to use flimsy Manchester cloth, than to multiply mills in India. By using Manchester cloth, we would only waste our money, but by reproducing Manchester in India, we shall keep our money at the price of our blood, because our very moral being will be sapped, and I call in support of my statement the very mill-hands as witnesses. And those who have amassed wealth out of factories are not likely to be better than other rich men. . . . I fear we will have to admit that moneyed men support British rule ; their interest is bound up with its stability Impoverished India can become free, but it will be hard for any India made rich through immorality to regain its freedom It is machinery that has impoverished India. I cannot recall a single good point in connection with machinery" (Chapter XIX).

In the above book, therefore, Gandhiji levelled a general charge against machinery as it was the symbol of the enslavement of human beings. Evidently his charge was not against machinery as such but in so far as it was the cause of human degradation. It is very important to remember this last point. For Gandhiji does not appear to have departed from this position

even now, although the meaning of the term "machinery" has undergone some amount of modification for him. In 1908, the term evidently meant for him something more than machinery itself, for he included in it the industrial system which went along with the use of power-driven mills in India at that time. The distinction between industrialism and machinery had not yet been drawn by him. As a matter of fact, his knowledge or experience of machines was very limited.

It is interesting to remember that later on Gandhiji wrote about his ignorance of machines during this period in the following terms:

"I do not remember to have seen a handloom or a spinning wheel till the year 1908, when in *Hind Swaraj* I described it as the panacea for the growing pauperism of India Even in 1915, when I returned to India from South Africa, I had not actually seen a spinning wheel. When the Satyagraha Ashram was founded at Sabarmati, we introduced a few hand-looms there. But no sooner had we done this, than we found ourselves up against a difficulty. All of us belonged either to the liberal professions or to business ; not one of us was an artisan."¹

Gandhiji's ideas regarding economic problems seem to have taken a more concrete and realistic shape during the Non-cooperation Movement of 1919-20. He became more specific with regard to his ideals of production and distribution. He began to say:

"Multiplication of mills cannot solve the problem. They can only cause concentration of money and labour and thus make confusion worse confounded" (10.12.19).²

"We want to organise our national power not by adopting the best methods of production only but by the best methods of *both* the production and the distribution" (28.7.20).

1. *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, 1922, Vol. II, p. 555-6.

2. Where only dates are given the reference is to the *Young India* of that date.

“What India needs is not the concentration of capital in a few hands, but its distribution so as to be within easy reach of the 7½ lakhs of villages that make this continent” (23. 3. 21).

His utterances on Khadi made about this date, as well as on subsequent occasions, as the following quotations will show, lay stress upon the same theme, viz. that distribution on an equal or equitable basis should be organized along with production. Mills and machinery were bad because they tended to concentrate wealth in some hands, and leave the rest without the wherewithal to feed or clothe themselves. This charge was thus not against machinery as such, but against the economic system which was responsible for its introduction and expansion. He had thus not departed in 1921 from the position of 1908.

“Our mills cannot today spin enough for our wants, and if they did, they will not keep down the prices unless they were compelled. They are frankly money-makers and will not therefore regulate prices according to the needs of the nation. Hand-spinning is therefore designed to put millions of rupees in the hands of poor villagers. Every agricultural country requires a supplementary industry to enable the peasants to utilise the spare hours. Such industry for India has always been spinning” (16. 2. 21).

“I would favour the use of the most elaborate machinery if thereby India's pauperism and resulting idleness be avoided. I have suggested hand-spinning as the only ready means of driving away penury and making famine of work and wealth impossible. The spinning wheel itself is a piece of valuable machinery, and in my own humble way I have tried to secure improvements in it in keeping with the special conditions of India.”

The last is a very significant statement. For here we first find him drawing a line between machinery of one kind and another. The Charkha, his *Kamdbenu*, his *jam-i-jam*, revealed to him for the first time, perhaps, that machinery as such was not bad; it could be used lawfully as well as unlawfully; for human good as well as for human exploitation. This became

increasingly clear to him between 1925 and 1927. He started saying :

“That use of machinery is lawful which subserves the interests of all” (15. 4. 26).

He came to recognise that,

“Machinery has its place : it has come to stay. But it must not be allowed to displace necessary human labour. I would welcome every improvement in the cottage machine, but I know that it is criminal to displace hand-labour by the introduction of power-driven spindles unless one is at the same time ready to give millions of farmers some other occupation in their homes” (5. 11. 25).

He described the Non-co-operation Movement as

“An attempt to introduce, if it is at all possible, a human or the humane spirit among the men behind the machinery. Organization of machinery for the purpose of concentrating wealth and power in the hands of a few and for the exploitation of many I hold to be altogether wrong. Much of the organization of machinery of the present age is of that type. The movement of the spinning wheel is an organized attempt to displace machinery from that state of exclusiveness and exploitation and to place it in its proper state. Under my scheme, therefore, men *in charge of machinery will think not of themselves or even of the nation to which they belong but of the whole human race.*¹ Thus Lancashire men will cease to use their machinery for exploiting India and other countries but on the contrary they will devise means of enabling India to convert in her own villages her cotton into cloth. Nor will Americans under my scheme seek to enrich themselves by exploiting the other races of the earth through their inventive skill” (17. 9. 25).

“Khaddar does not seek to destroy all machinery but it does regulate its use and check its weedy growth. It uses machinery for the service of the poorest in their own cottages. The wheel is itself an exquisite piece of machinery” (17. 3. 27).

1. Italics ours.

His idea regarding machinery thus showed some amount of change. In 1908, machines were for him a symbol of industrialism, which was bad because it led to human degeneration. But now the same love for mankind, the desire to lighten human labour, led him to distinguish between machinery and machinery. And his own economic programme of khadi was really intended to restore machinery to what he now began to call "its proper state" in the scheme of human life. His idea regarding large-scale machinery was bound to be affected thereby. And we find proof of that in an utterance of 24. 2. 27.

"Do I seek to destroy the mill industry, I have often been asked. If I did I should not have pressed for the abolition of the excise duty. I want the mill industry to prosper—only I do not want it to prosper at the expense of the country. On the contrary if the interests of the country demand that the industry should go, I should let it go without the slightest compunction."

But at the same time as Gandhiji was drawing nearer to machinery in its capacity of lightening the burden of human toil, his condemnation of the industrial system gained in emphasis. We find it clothed in severer language from 1926 to 1931 than in the earlier period of 1908-19. On 7.10.26, he wrote:

"The present distress is undoubtedly insufferable. Pauperism must go. But industrialism is no remedy. The evil does not lie in the use of bullock-carts. It lies in our selfishness and want of consideration for our neighbours. If we have no love for our neighbours, no change, however revolutionary, can do us any good."

"Indeed, the West has had a surfeit of industrialism and exploitation. The fact is that this industrial civilization is a disease because it is *all* evil. Let us not be deceived by catch-words and phrases. I have no quarrel with steamships and telegraphs. They may stay, if they can, without the support of industrialism and all it connotes. They are not an end. They are in no way indispensable for the permanent welfare of the human race. Now that we know the use of steam and electricity, we should be able to use them on due occasion and after we have

learnt to avoid industrialism. Our concern is therefore to destroy industrialism at any cost" (7.10.26).

"Industrialism is, I am afraid, going to be a curse for mankind. Industrialism depends entirely on your capacity to exploit, on foreign markets being open to you, and on the absence of competitors. It is because these factors are getting less and less every day for England that its number of unemployed is mounting up daily. The Indian boycott was but a flea-bite. And if that is the state of England, a vast country like India cannot expect to benefit by industrialisation. In fact, India, when it begins to exploit other nations—as it must do if it becomes industrialised—will be a curse for other nations, a menace to the world. And why should I think of industrialising India to exploit other nations? Don't you see the tragedy of the situation, viz., that we can find work for our 300 millions unemployed, but England can find none for its three millions and is faced with a problem that baffles the greatest intellects of England? The future of industrialism is dark. England has got successful competitors in America, Japan, France, Germany. It has competitors in the handful of mills in India, and as there has been an awakening in India, even so there will be an awakening in South Africa with its vastly richer resources—natural, mineral and human. The mighty English look quite pigmies before the mighty races of Africa. They are noble savages and in the course of a few years the Western nations may cease to find in Africa a dumping ground for their wares. And if the future of industrialism is dark for the West, would it not be darker still for India?" (12.11.31).

"What is the cause of the present chaos? It is exploitation, I will not say of the weaker nations by the stronger, but of sister nations by sister nations. And my fundamental objection to machinery rests on the fact that it is machinery that has enabled these nations to exploit others. In itself it is a wooden thing and can be turned to good purpose or bad. But it is easily turned to a bad purpose as we know" (22.10.31).

Gandhiji had thus changed from his attitude of 1908, when machinery was for him a symbol of the evil "modern civilization." He now narrowed down his charge, which became industrialism, i. e. centralized forms of production with profit as the motive. Machinery was absolved, in his mind, of part of its former blame and became "a wooden thing". Part of machinery could legitimately be used for human welfare.

" 'Are you against all machinery ?'

" 'My answer is emphatically, No. But, I am against its indiscriminate multiplication. I refuse to be dazzled by the seeming triumph of machinery. But simple tools and instruments and such machinery as saves individual labour and lightens the burden of millions of cottages I should welcome' " (17.6.26).

"What I object to, is the *craze* for machinery, not machinery as such. The craze is for what they call labour-saving machinery. Men go on 'saving labour', till thousands are without work and thrown on the open streets to die of starvation. I want to save time and labour, not for a fraction of mankind, but for all. I want the concentration of wealth, not in the hands of few, but in the hands of all. Today machinery merely helps a few to ride on the backs of millions. The impetus behind it all is not the philanthropy to save labour, but greed. It is against this constitution of things that I am fighting with all my might" (13.11.24).

" 'Then you are fighting not against machinery as such, but against its abuses which are so much in evidence today ?'

" 'I would unhesitatingly say, Yes; but I would add that scientific truths and discoveries should first of all cease to be mere instruments of greed. Then labourers will not be over-worked and machinery, instead of becoming a hindrance, will be a help. I am aiming, not at eradication of all machinery, but its limitation.'

" 'When logically argued out, that would seem to imply that all complicated power-driven machinery should go.'

" 'It might have to go, but I must make one thing clear. The

supreme consideration is man. The machine should not tend to make atrophied the limbs of man. For instance, I would make intelligent exceptions. Take the case of the Singer Sewing Machine. It is one of the few useful things ever invented, and there is a romance about the device itself. Singer saw his wife labouring over the tedious process of sewing and seaming with her own hands, and simply out of his love for her he devised the sewing machine in order to save her from unnecessary labour. He, however, saved not only her labour but also the labour of everyone who could purchase a sewing machine.'

" 'But in that case there would have to be a factory for making these Singer Sewing Machines, and it would have to contain power-driven machinery of ordinary type.'

" 'Yes, but I am socialist enough to say that such factories should be nationalised, or State-controlled. They ought only to be working under the most attractive and ideal conditions, not for profit, but for the benefit of humanity, love taking the place of greed as the motive. It is an alteration of the conditions of labour that I want. This mad rush for wealth must cease, and the labourer must be assured, not only of a living wage, but a daily task that is not a mere drudgery. The machine will, under these conditions, be as much a help to the man working it as to the State, or the man who owns it. The present mad rush will cease, and the labourer will work (as I have said) under attractive and ideal conditions. This is but one of the exceptions I have in mind. The sewing machine had love at its back. The individual is the one supreme consideration. The saving of labour of the individual should be the object, and honest humanitarian consideration, and not greed, the motive. Replace greed by love and everything will come right' " (13. 11. 24).

It was his belief that,

" 'If India takes to khaddar and all it means, I do not lose the hope of India taking only as much of the modern machinery as may be considered necessary for the amenities of life and for labour saving purposes' " (24. 7. 24).

The writings of 1924 thus marked another point of departure in this scheme of things. With his touch-stone of human welfare, he had already learnt to draw a line between machinery and industrialism. Now he seems to have recognised that all forms of industrial organization were not necessarily wrong. In certain cases, the centralized use of machinery might be unavoidable if the object was the lightening of human labour. When it was so, he would not object to it if it was conducted under ideal conditions and under full social control. In other words, industrial organization itself was now losing some of its former sting for him, and he was prepared to use it under certain conditions. He carried the same idea in 1937, and evidently carries it even today.

“‘You are against the machine age, I see.’

“‘To say that is to caricature my views. I am not against machinery as such, but I am totally opposed to it when it masters us.’

“‘You would not industrialize India?’

“‘I would, indeed, in my sense of the term. The village communities should be revived. Indian villages produced and supplied to the Indian towns and cities and their wants. India became impoverished when our cities became foreign markets and began to drain the villages dry by dumping cheap and shoddy goods from foreign lands.’

“‘You would then go back to the natural economy?’

“‘Yes. Otherwise I should go back to the city. I am quite capable of running a big enterprise, but I deliberately sacrificed the ambition, not as a sacrifice, but because my heart rebelled against it. For I should have no share in the spoliation of the nation that is going on from day to day. But I am industrializing the village in a different way’” (*Harijan*, 27. 2. 37).

“The revival of the village is possible only when it is no more exploited. Industrialization on a mass scale will necessarily lead to passive or active exploitation of the villages as the problems

of competition and marketing come in. Therefore we have to concentrate on the village being self-contained, manufacturing mainly for use. Provided this character of the village industry is maintained, there would be no objection to villagers using even the modern machines and tools that they can make and can afford to use. Only they should not be used as a means of exploitation of others” (*Harijan*, 29. 8. 36).

We thus come to the conclusion that formerly Gandhiji was against all machinery, in so far as it was a symbol of “modern civilization.” The latter was bad, not because it was modern, but because it was demonstrably responsible for the impoverishment and degradation of human beings. Later on, with his increasing experience of the spinning wheel, he drew a line between machinery designed for human good and that designed for human exploitation. On the whole, he found that centralized power-machinery was more readily capable of being used for purposes of exploitation than decentralized machinery.

The supreme consideration for him has always been the welfare of the individual; and he has subjected all things to this supreme test. Just as his insistence upon human welfare led him to absolve machinery itself from part of its blame, so now he began to find that even certain forms of centralized industrial organization could be turned to human good. But these had then to be under full social control and operated only under ideal conditions.

Thus Gandhiji has drawn nearer and nearer to the socialist point of view regarding machinery in practice, although he has kept himself remarkably independent in theory. At bottom, he prefers the village to the city; and would have as much of machinery as the villages can profitably absorb. He would like India to be a land of self-contained villages and no cities. If cities are proved to be inevitable for human welfare, he would vote for them but still look upon them as a necessary evil. It is here that he differs most from the champions of industrialization. Lately he has written :

“Remember that your non-violence cannot operate effectively unless you have faith in the spinning wheel. I would ask you to read *Hind Swaraj* with my eyes and see therein the chapter on how to make India non-violent. You cannot build non-violence on factory civilization, but it can be built on self-contained villages. Even if Hitler was so minded, he could not devastate seven hundred thousand non-violent villages. He would himself become non-violent in the process. Rural economy as I have conceived it eschews exploitation altogether, and exploitation is the essence of violence. You have therefore to be rural-minded before you can be non-violent, and to be rural-minded you have to have faith in the spinning wheel” (*Harijan*, 4.11.39).

LARGE SCALE AND COTTAGE INDUSTRIES *

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

I AM personally a believer in the development of large scale industries. Nevertheless I have wholeheartedly supported the khadi movement as well as the wider village industries movement for political, social and economic reasons. In my mind there is no essential conflict between the two, although there might occasionally be conflict in regard to certain aspects or developments of both. In this matter I do not represent Gandhiji's viewpoint to any large extent, but in practice so far there has not been any marked conflict between the two view-points.

It seems to me obvious that certain key and vital industries, defence industries, and public utilities must be on a large scale. There are certain others which may be on a large scale or a small scale or on a cottage scale. A difference of opinion might arise in regard to the latter. Behind that difference there is a difference of outlook and philosophy and, as I understood Mr. Kumarappa¹, he laid stress on this difference of outlook. His point was that the modern large scale capitalist system ignored the problem of distribution and was based on violence. With this I entirely agree. His solution was that with the development of cottage industries there was a much fairer distribution and the element of violence was much less. I agree with that, too, but it does not go far enough. Violence and monopoly and concentration of wealth in a few hands are produced by the present economic structure. It is not large scale industry that brings any injustice and violence but the misuse of large scale industry by private capitalists and financiers. It is true that the big machine multiplies the power of man exceedingly both for construction and destruc-

* We are grateful to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru for allowing these extracts from his letter to the Editor to be published as an article in the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*.—Ed.

¹ The reference is to certain discussions in the Planning Committee.—Ed.

tion, both for good or for ill. It is possible, I think, to eliminate the evil use and the violence of the big machine by changing the economic structure of capitalism. It is essentially private ownership and the acquisitive form of society that encourage a competitive violence. Under a socialist society this evil should go, at the same time leaving us the good which the big machine has brought.

It is true, I think, that there are certain inherent dangers in big industry and the big machine. There is a tendency to concentrate power and I am not quite sure that this can be wholly eliminated. But I cannot conceive of the world or of any progressive country doing away with the big machine. Even if this was possible, this would result in lowering production tremendously and in thus reducing standards of life greatly. For a country to try to do away with industrialization would lead to that country falling a prey, economically and otherwise, to other more industrialized countries, which would exploit it. For the development of cottage industries on a widespread scale, it is obvious that political and economic power is necessary. It is unlikely that a country entirely devoted to cottage industries will ever get this political or economic power, and so in effect it will not even be able to push cottage industries as it wants to.

I feel, therefore, that it is inevitable and desirable to encourage the use and development of the big machine and thus to industrialise India. I am convinced at the same time that no amount of industrialization in this way will do away with the necessity of developing cottage industries on a large scale in India, and this not merely as feeders but as independent units. I do not know what science may achieve in the course of the next generation or two, but, as far as I can see, cottage industries will be essential for India in addition to large scale industries, which should be encouraged in every way. The problem, therefore, becomes one of co-ordination between the two. It is a question of planning by the State. It cannot be successfully tackled under the present anarchic capitalist system.

I have tried to explain briefly my own views on this subject. I cannot presume to interpret any one else's views. But I do feel that it is easily possible for me to co-operate fully with the advocates of cottage industries, even though I might not accept their fundamental outlook.

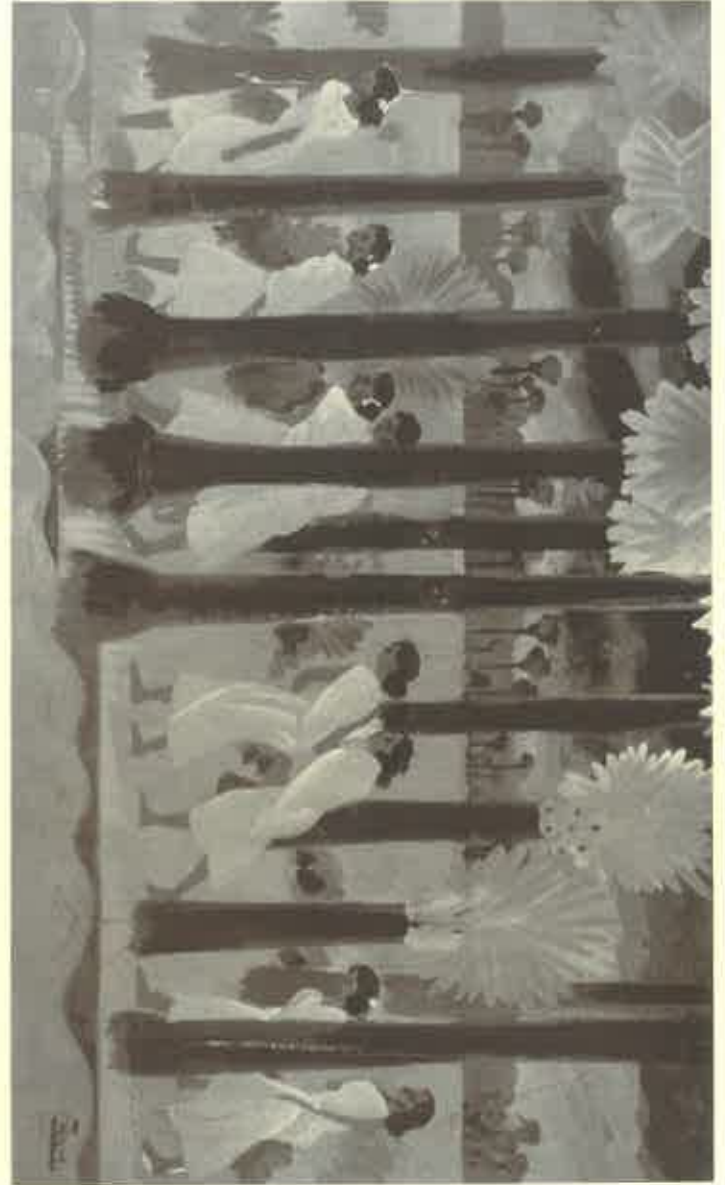
Unfortunately we are not dealing with a socialist State at present but are passing through a transition stage when the capitalist system is cracking up. This gives rise to innumerable difficulties. In any event it is clear that the principles to be applied even today should be those laid down by the Congress, that is, the State should own or control key industries and services, transport, etc. If the term "key industries" is held to include all vital industries, we get a large degree of socialisation. I would add further, as a necessary corollary to our policy, that where there is any conflict between a privately owned large scale industry and cottage industry, the State should own or control that large scale industry. The State would then have the power and liberty to adopt any policy which it lays down and it can co-ordinate the two.

With considerable experience of Congress policies during the last 20 years, I can say with confidence that they have been of great economic and social advantage to India. It is perfectly true that the Congress proceeded on the assumption that large scale industries were strong enough to look after themselves and therefore more attention should be given to cottage industries. This must be considered in a proper context. We were a non-official organization and the economic structure of the State was entirely outside our control. Encouraging large scale industries under these circumstances meant encouraging private vested interests, often foreign vested interests. Our objective was not only to increase production by utilising the wasted man power of India as well as the wasted time of large number of people, but also to create self-reliance among the masses of India. The Congress achieved a great measure of success in this.

This subject cannot be considered in the air as a matter of

pure theory but must be related to the circumstances and the facts of life as they exist in a country. We can never ignore the human factors. In China to-day there is no particular bent towards cottage industries. But circumstances have forced the Chinese to develop their village industries and co-operatives with extraordinary rapidity. There was the greatest interest in China in our village industries movement and I was asked to send some of our experts in these to China. It is possible that some Chinese experts may come to India to study our village industries methods.

PALM GROVE



By Nandalal Bose

ON THE ORIGIN OF CASTE IN INDIA *

Pandit Kshitimohan Sen

WE all have some idea as to what caste is. The real difficulty comes in when we are asked to put the idea in definite terms. Indologists of Europe have tried to do so, but not with much success so far. On the whole, our observation shows that caste is determined by birth and that inter-caste marriage is prohibited. Until now caste-rules were also rigid on the point of inter-dining and social intercourse.

In between the highest and the lowest caste there are any number of strata. *Ācharaniya* or socially more favoured classes of people are those from whom the Brahmins and other higher *Varnas* might accept water. Those who are permitted to offer preparations cooked with *ghee* and sweets to the higher castes are in an even better position in the social hierarchy. In passing, mention might be made of the fact that outside their own caste and class the Brahmins do not receive any other kind of cooked food.

Untouchability of a virulent nature is met with in the south of India. There those castes alone are *ācharaniya* whose touch does not defile the Brahmin and who can offer drinking water to him. In the same way the more favoured ones, proportionately speaking, are those who are regarded as *touchable* by Brahmin women and especially Brahmin widows.

It follows, therefore, that the untouchable classes are those who are non-*ācharaniya*, and whose touch leads to defilement. Over and above this, there are also degrees in untouchability. Among the non-*ācharaniyas*, the lowest are those whose mere entry in a village or township suffices to defile the whole place. Then there are those whose presence within the precincts

* Translated from the original Bengali by S. J. Kshitish Roy.—Ed.

pollutes the temple itself, whose touch renders metal utensils and earthenware pots fit only for the dung-heap. Mr. Sridhar Ketkar in his learned work, *The History of Caste in India*, has given a detailed and interesting account.

Nowadays ideas on the inviolability of the system of caste have undergone considerable change. Those who have the good fortune of being born in higher caste families prefer usually not to be unduly punctilious. In the same way, those who do not belong to the higher strata no longer agree to accept their position as the lowest and the lowliest. Nevertheless many members of the higher *Varnas* up till this day regard the caste-divisions as appropriate and calculated to augment social welfare. Mahatma Gandhi, though he leads a crusade against untouchability, the removal of which occupies a prominent place in his political programme, is one of the supporters of the institution of *Varnas* (*Varnasrama*). Mrs. Luxmi Narsu in her book, *A Study of Caste*, quotes Gandhiji's opinion on the matter. "*Varnasrama* is inherent in human nature," says Mahatmaji, "and Hinduism has reduced it to a science. It does attach by birth. A man cannot change his *Varna* by choice" (p. 131).

It is noticeable, therefore, that a belief in the caste system anticipates a belief in castes being determined by birth. Birth is what distinguishes the Brahmin from the rest. How and when was this distinction made? Some say that the earliest reference to the caste institution is to be found in the *Rigveda* (*Puruṣa Sukta* X. 90) where, we are told, the Brahmin issued out of the mouth of the *Puruṣa*, Kshatriya from the arm, Vaishya from the thigh, and Sudra from the feet. Others opine that this *Sukta* and the chapter it belongs to must be of later date. For, the reference there is only to the four *Varnas* but not to the numerous divisions and sub-divisions which constitute the system of Caste in India. Very rare are the references to the Brahmin in the *Rigveda*; and then too the term is used to connote the sage and the priest. The term Kshatriya occurs but rarely, whereas Vaishya and Sudra are mentioned in *Puruṣa Sukta* only.

The theory of the origin of the caste system as delineated in *Puruṣa Sukta* was not accepted as final or infallible, even in the earlier days. It gave rise to controversies and the opinions differed. According to *Visṇupurana*, Sounaka, son of Gritsamada, introduced the system.¹

Harivamsa in the twentyninth chapter of the book refers to Sunaka as the son of Gritsamada. Under the name of Sounaka many Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra sons were born to Sunaka.² It is *Harivamsa*, again, which says that once Brahma blest King Bali, son of Shibi, saying that he would establish the four-fold division of caste.³ In the same treatise there is further mention as to the origin of the four *Varnas*: Brahmins from *Akshara*, Kshatriyas from *Kshara*, Vaishyas from *Vikāra*, Sudras from *Dhūma Vikāra* (*Bhabishya*, CCXI, 11816). Different *Puranas* give divergent stories as to the origin; a comprehensive list of the views would be superfluous for the purpose of the present article.

In the *Mahābhārata* it is said that in the earliest times there was only one caste; namely, Brahmin, and one Veda (*Sānti Parva*, CLXXXVIII). Continuing, the author tells us there was originally no sin on earth.⁴

According to this book, caste was determined by physical, mental and spiritual qualities and also by natural inclination.

१ गृत्समदस्य शौनकश्चातुर्वर्ग्यप्रवर्तयिताऽभूत् ।

(*Visṇupurana*, IV, 8. 9.)

२ पुत्रा गृत्समदस्यापि शुनको यस्य शौनकाः ।

ब्राह्मणाः क्षत्रियाश्चैव वैश्याः शूद्रास्तथैव च ॥

(*Harivamsa*, XXIX, 1519-20.)

३ चतुरो नियतान् वर्णान् त्वं च स्थापयितेति ह ।

(*Ibid*, XXI, 1688.)

४ न विशेषोऽस्ति वर्णानां सर्वं ब्राह्मिदं जगत् ।

ब्रह्मणा पूर्वसृष्टं हि कर्मनिर्वर्णतां गतम् ॥

In the *Gita* Sri Krishna says that he created the four *Varnas* according as there were various people with various aptitudes and attainments.¹ But the *Puranas* and the various dramas in Sanskrit give numerous instances of a Brahmin lowly inclined and a Sudra with a higher nature. To say the least, as we do not find any dearth of Brahmins with Vaishya or Sudra propensities today, so it must have been in olden times. And hence a caste system based only on aptitude and attainment basis was not an easy proposition to accept even in those days. According to the *Sastras* a Brahmin who leads a "dog's life", *Svavrtti*, being in servile professions, serving a non-Hindu Yavana, or living on usury and in such other dubious ways, is lower than a Sudra even and likewise untouchable. Today the most rigid and orthodox persons, championing the cause of caste integrity, are often found to be recruited from such ranks of people who are securely established in *Sastra*-prohibited callings.

Perhaps there was a time when one could say that castes were determined by *Varna*. But the admixture of blood and races is so much in evidence nowadays that the contention has lost much of its force. We no longer associate fair Aryan complexion with Brahmins, nor do we expect every Sudra to be dark. A Bengali proverb makes reference to "dusky Brahmins and fair Sudras." Indeed even in the time of the *Mahabharata* the problem was exactly the same (*Santiparva*, Ch CLXVIII).

The Indian Census Reports go to prove that there is much disparity of feature and complexion among the members of the higher castes in different provinces. Some give indications of a large Dravidian mixture, some of the Scythian, while others of the Mongol and so on (Vide, *Census of India*, Vol. I, p. 489). If cephalic and other ethnological points are taken into consideration, then it will be difficult to find a pure-bred Aryan (*Ibid*, p. 500). Of course, such evidences may admittedly not be final.

Only the other day the Kocha, Tipprah, Garo, Hajong and

other races, who were regarded Non-*acharaniya* for ages together, have laid claims on being Kshatriyas. To a large extent they have succeeded in this attempt simply because of the force of their number and influence and also because times have considerably changed. (*Ibid* p. 520).

In spite of the static character of present-day society we find members of the lower *Varnas* being absorbed into the ranks of many higher castes by sheer force of money and position (*Ibid* Vol. II p. 351).

Many non-Aryan groups among the lower classes, by prohibiting widow-remarriage and "abominable" foods and encouraging untouchability and hatred, have now passed themselves off for members belonging to higher castes (*Ibid* 629). In doing so they have definitely gone down morally as well as physically. Their social structure has been hard hit due to this misdirected enthusiasm for being counted as one of the higher castes.

On the other hand, we discover that changes are not always devoid of better consequences. The Garo, Kocha, Dolu, Hajang etc. have been able to profit socially and in other respects just by reason of their Kshatriya pretensions. The Aryan blood becomes thinner as we proceed further from the Punjab. Heterogenous blood mingles with the Aryan and purity often times becomes a question of false pretences (*Ibid* p. 363). Ironically enough, fanaticism of an aggressive type is encountered more in these regions of mixed races than in those where the purity of Aryan blood retains in a large measure its original character.

History teems with instances of lower caste people laying claims on Kshatriyahood whenever and wherever they have succeeded in wresting royalty. For reasons best known to themselves, the Brahmins have very often supported such claims. Sometimes they have undoubtedly been swayed by motives of gain, whereas in others, especially in the case of Sivaji, the motives have been higher, predominantly political.

Though theoretically speaking we recognise only the four castes or *Varnas*, in fact there seems to be any number of castes and sub-castes, divisions and sub-divisions. A reference to the Census Reports goes to prove the existence of more than three thousand castes. What is even more confusing is a rich variety of surnames indicative of the different divisions. If we take the one instance of the Brahmins, we find that there are among them no less than eight hundred divisions and, in proportion, marriage and other inter-social dealings are impossible between them (Ketkar's *History of Caste*, p. 5.). Bloomfield goes a step further and opines that the Brahmins are a community with two thousand sub-divisions (*Religion of the Veda*, p. 6). The Saraswat Brahmins have 469 sub-sections, Kshatriyas 590, whereas the other two *Varnas* have more than six hundred branches (Lala Baijnath's *Hinduism, Ancient and Modern*, Meerut, 1869, p. 9). The condition is the very same in Bihar, Orissa, Bengal, Assam, Gujrat, Maharastra and in South India. In Gujrat there are small communities of Brahmins in some villages, constituted of not more than ten or twelve families, as for instance, Motala Brahmins of the Mota Village.

In spite of what Manu had said about there being four *Varnas* only and no fifth (X. 4.) we discover that contemporary conditions were in flat contradiction of his statements. It is evident he could not help referring to the circumstances. He had tried to explain away the phenomenon by mentioning the different species of the same genus, *i. e.*, caste. In the tenth chapter verses 8 to 39 refer to fifty different castes. The very next verse goes to say that, besides the fifty, there were many more castes. We encounter the names of sixty-two castes as we read up to the forty-fourth verse. Many among them were formed according to ethnic groups, race or tribe, as for instance, Māgadha, Vaideha, Ābhīra, Āvantya, Jhalla, Malla, Lichhavi, Khasa, Dravida, Andhra, etc. Apart from these we find mention of those castes whose contact was supposed to have contaminated religious activities. Such were Poundraka, Oudra, Dravida, Kambojo, Yavana, Saka,

Pārada, Pahlava, China, Kirāta, Darada, Khasa etc. Many of these were groups of foreign people who had joined the Aryan ranks.

What is more, it is probable that, though latterly all non-Aryans came to be referred to as Sudras, the Sudras during the Aryan colonization were merely a definite ethnic group. The Bangabasi edition of the *Mahabharata*, published from Calcutta, mentions names of many rivers and lands, tribes and races in the *Bhīsmaparva*, ninth chapter. There, as well as in *Dronaparva* VI. 6., it is seen that the Sudras are mentioned after a reference to the Ābhīras, Viras, Daradas and Kāshmiras. Even in the *Puranas* Sudras are brought in along with the Bahlikas, Ābhīras and others (*Vāmana Purana*, XIV, 38). Most probably Sudras are those people, who were described by the Greeks as Oxydrace. It may be presumed that all non-Aryans who had accepted Aryan domination and thus found themselves on the same plane of socio-political existence, came to be comprehensively known as Sudras.

The history of the times bears evidence to the genesis of new races and the dying out of old ones. That might explain why many castes referred to in the *Vedas* are not mentioned in the *Smritis* and *vice versa*. It is difficult to imagine what must have happened to these "Vedic" castes. It is quite likely that names might change according to changing times. That is why it is impossible to describe the ever-increasing stream of humanity in terms of the four *Varnas* alone.

As we have already said there are names of certain castes, referred to in the *Smritis*, which we do not come across in the *Vedas*. For instance, the Ugras (Ugra in *Bṛihadaranayaka* is not a caste). Māgadhas, Vaidehas were names according as they came from territories of those names. Chandalas also do not refer to a caste name. Āvirata, Ābhīra, Dhigvana, Pukkasa, Kukkutaka, Swapaka, Bena, Bhurja Kantaka, Āvantya, Vātadhana, Puspadhā, Shaikha, Jhalla, Malla, Lichhavi, Nata, Karana, Khasa Dravida, Sudhanvāchārya, Kārusha, Vijanma, Maitra, Sāttvata,

Sairindhra, Mārgava, Kārāvāra, Meda, Pāndu-Sopāka, Āhindika, Sopāka, Antyabasi, Oudra, Yavana, Shaka, Pahlava, Cheena, Darada, Chunchu, Madgu, Vandī, etc.—these castes are not mentioned in the *Vedas*. Hāndī, Doma, Bāgdi, Bauri, Kāora, etc, well-known castes of Bengal are not even remotely mentioned in the *Vedas* and *Smritis*, Pāṇa and Kandrā of Orissa, Pāsi, Dosād, Muśahar, Kāhār, Kūrmī, Khatik, Turha, etc, of Bihar and north western India, Thia, Cherumā, Pariāh, etc, share the same obscure fate. A reference to census figures shows that thousands of castes current in the present times are not even mentioned in the scriptures.

The authors of the *Puranas* realised this discrepancy and that explains why we come across names of certain castes not mentioned in the olden days. The 105th *sloka* in the tenth chapter, *Brahma khanda* of the *Brahma Vaivarata Purana*, refers to Hādi and Dom (हडी डोमौ). Bāgdi (*ibid*, 118 *sloka*) Jolā and Sharāka are also mentioned. The *Puranas* have followed Manu and other authors of the *Smritis* as regard their treatment of the history of the genesis of the different castes. This has given rise to surprising statements. For instance, “Jolās” originated from a “Mlechha” father and a “Kubinda” mother¹. Again “Jolā” father and “Kubinda” mother produce a Sharāka son.² Kubinda means weaver. Those weavers who embraced Islam were called Jolās. Sharāka is a name derived from that ancient word “Shrāvaka”. A history of the origin of castes based on such findings, it is evident, is without any value whatsoever. However that may be, this chapter of the *Brahma Vaivarta Purana* refers to the origin of such a wide range of castes as Kocha, Jugi, Rajbansi, Kāpālī, Mālākara, Karmakara, Sānkhari, Kumāra, Chhutāra, Swarnakāra, Patua, Rajmistri, Teli, Leta, Ganaka, Agradāni, Bede,

1. म्लेच्छात् कुबिन्दकन्यायां जोला जातिर्भुव ह ॥

Ibid 121

2. जोलात् कुबिन्दकन्यायां शराकः परिकीर्तितः ॥

Again

Baidya, Suta, Bhata, etc. Current researches do not always accept this history as authentic.

It is now clear that many Indian castes have emerged as such from ethnic groups of people who have made inroads into the country from time to time. It is beyond calculation what a vast number of ethnic groups have struggled to establish themselves. Society in India has grown much in the same way as deltas are constituted, with layers of different castes rearing up the structure. Unlike the races in Europe the castes in India have never tried to exterminate one another. They have flourished side by side, busy with their own observances and rites, developing their own different cultures. This has brought in a rich variety of religions and doctrines and also a great number of castes.

The spirit of exclusiveness is a primitive instinct. Here, in India, for obvious reasons each group has attempted to keep up its own individuality with the help of a rigid exclusiveness. This phenomenon must have been a natural expression of the instinct of self-preservation and was certainly a habit which dated back much earlier than the time of the Aryan invasion. It is likely that the Dravidas, in this way, have remained true to their own culture up till this day. The Dravidas, in their turn, might have learnt the art of preserving the institutions, peculiar to themselves, from races who preceded them and set them a similar example. Thus several reasons have combined together to bring about what we call untouchability or exclusiveness. It is not true that untouchability is more pronounced among the higher castes. Among the lower castes it is even more virulent. If a Pulayana is touched by a Pariah he may purify himself after bathing five times over and letting out blood from his finger-tips. A Kurichhan, who himself belongs to a lower caste, coming into contact with other untouchables, has to undergo what may be described as an ordeal in order to go through the process of purification.

Though the Holayas are one of the lowest as a caste, they

regard their household defiled by the mere presence of a Brahmin therein. The Pariahs likewise avoid the touch of a Brahmin. They are some times known to kill a member of the highest class if by inadvertence he enters into Pariah quarters. Kumbhipatiyas of Orissa, who have no scruples on the score of caste distinctions, look upon Brahmins, Rajas, washermen and barbers as untouchables. Likewise there is a number of lower castes who, more or less, do to the Brahmins as they are done by.

At this stage we should consider if this exclusiveness was of Aryan importation. Have the various branches of the Aryans, found all over the world, encouraged this spirit of segregation? If so, to what extent? Is exclusiveness more pronounced in those regions which the Aryans first colonised (the Punjab) or is it more virulent further east and south? Has the spirit of separativeness proportionately increased during the passage of time or has it maintained a *status quo* even from the early days; *i. e.*, the days of the *Rig Veda*? If there is enough evidence to prove that there was no caste distinction as we know it today, or that it existed only in a milder form in the ancient Aryan regions, then, we may be led to believe that exclusiveness was of native origin and not introduced into India by the Aryans.

Ancient Greek, Roman and Teuton histories refer to the existence of oligarchies, but castes, as such, were unknown to them. The case is similar amongst the fire-worshippers of Persia. In the south of India there is a feeling of tension between the higher and lower castes, leading sometimes to bloodshed. The Nambudri Brahmins of Malabar live with Nair women, but to touch a Nair man marks a fall from Brahminhood. A Brahmin in the south is defiled even if a Kammalan (carpenter, *mistry* or blacksmith) stands at a distance of sixteen cubits. A Toddy maker, 24 cubits away, Palaya or Cheruma, 32 cubits away, and a Pariah 40 cubits away, may still contaminate the person of a Brahmin or any other member of the higher castes. Water, either of a tank or a well, is defiled and hence rendered unfit for the use of the Brahmins and other higher caste people, if a member of the lower

castes happens to pass in the proximity. If anybody happens to notice the process of cooking or the cooked food itself, the Vaishnavas of the south, belonging to the Rāmānuja sect, have to forego their meal for the day altogether.

In the Punjab or elsewhere, where the stock of Aryan extraction is in a majority, such tyranny in the name of caste is not only non-existent but also incomprehensible. It is only in the non-Aryan south that caste rules are rigid on the point of untouchability, and that too in the ranks of the so-called untouchables themselves. Even if the higher castes, by dint of their western learning and consequent liberal attitude and also by reason of various social and political considerations, make up their mind to resolve the tangled thread of the caste system, they are sure to encounter vigorous opposition from those whom they would like to emancipate. It has very often been observed that when idealist young men of the higher castes have actively engaged themselves in the work of social reform, they have been rewarded with ostracism by those very persons whom they had wanted to serve. In doing so they employ a queer logic. "Since this higher caste person interdines with me who belongs to the lower, who knows he might have accepted food from still lower castes?" and so on.¹

Thus, all these instances lead us to believe that perhaps the Aryans were not responsible for the introduction of the caste system. Their only failing lay in the fact that they could not outgrow the extant conditions of mutual exclusiveness and conflict among the existing castes of non-Aryan people. It is quite likely that they carried on an ineffective struggle against

1. Untouchability was made obsolete in Santiniketan long before the present Harijan movement was started in our country. When I joined the *asrama* in 1908 I found that almost all the servants were recruited from the two untouchable castes; *vis.* Hadis and Doms. With the exception of a very few, most of the inmates accepted food from their hands. About eight or ten years ago, on the occasion of a particular ceremony in my house, a number of or *Muchis* cobblers, came and asked for food. That was a famine year. My Hadi and Doma servants would not even allow the beggars to enter the house. We ourselves made them welcome and gave them the excess food from the kitchen. My servants went on hunger-strike in protest.

this separativeness before finally succumbing to it ; the force of numbers was against them. Now, with time and long habit, the idea of castes must have become deeply stamped on their own minds. In this connection, we must also remember that exclusiveness has become more and more a settled fact, with the progress of time as also with the increasing contact of a handful of Aryan colonizers with the non-Aryan natives.

The *Smritis* are the most authoritative documents on the origin and nature of the castes and amongst their authors the foremost place is assigned to Manu. Manu, the greatest legislator on caste system, belongs to a post-Vedic period and, according to Mr. Ketkar, was a native of Magadha. In his *History of Caste in India* (pp. 63), the learned scholar has given arguments in favour of this view. If what Mr. Ketkar says may be looked upon as a historical fact, then, our contention as to the non-Aryan character of caste-exclusiveness becomes considerably strengthened, especially in view of the fact that Magadha was outside the pure Aryan zone in those days.

In summing up, we discover that it was only gradually that the institution of castes came to be a rigid system in our society. Inter-caste marriages and inter-dining must have been a frequent phenomenon in the earliest times. Exclusiveness was of later evolution and that view is borne out by a careful study of the *Vedas*, *Smritis* and *Purānas*.

DESIRE FOR A HUMAN SOUL

ALL fruitless is the cry,

All vain this burning fire of desire.

The sun goes down to his rest.

There is gloom in the forest and glamour in the sky.

With downcast look and lingering steps

The evening star comes in the wake of departing day
And the breath of the twilight is deep with the fulness of
a farewell feeling.

I clasp both thine hands in mine,

And keep thine eyes prisoner with my hungry eyes ;

Seeking and crying, Where art thou,

Where, O, where !

Where is the immortal flame hidden in the depth of thee !

As in the solitary star of the dark evening sky

The light of heaven, with its immense mystery, is quivering,

In thine eyes, in the depth of their darkness

There shines a soul-beam tremulous with a wide mystery.

Speechless I gaze upon it,

And I plunge with all my heart

Into the deep of a fathomless longing :

I lose myself.

Rabindranath Tagore

[The above translation is interesting as being the first attempt made by the author (then a youthful poet—the translation is dated 1887) to render one of his Bengali poems into English. It was never intended for publication and has been only recently unearthed from among old files by his private secretary, S. Anil Kumar Chanda. We are grateful to the poet for allowing it to be published, as it is, in the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*.—Ed.]

LOOKING BACK

(*Continued*)

Rathindranath Tagore

AMERICA WELCOMES

AT about the beginning of the century—April 1906—a group of sixteen young men from Bengal ventured forth in quest of education or to seek their fortune in a decrepit cargo boat bound for the Far East. Their only resources were a concession passage provided by a benevolent society and a bunch of introductory letters. But the lack of material resources did not in any way cool the wild enthusiasm and the reckless spirit of this group, fresh from the political battle-ground of the Swadeshi upheaval of that period. Most of them wanted to acquire the technical knowledge and skill needed for modern industry and aspired to revive trade and commerce in India.* They had neither money, nor preliminary training and their ignorance of foreign countries whither they were bound was colossal. As a young boy of sixteen I did not find the company uncongenial, though strange and so utterly different from what we had got used to at Santiniketan.

Drifting from port to port along the coast of Malay and China we managed to reach Japan after about five weeks. Our admiration for Japan in those days was boundless. We looked upon every Japanese as a hero, who had helped to kill the spectre of the "foreign devil" in the Orient for good. Therefore we were overjoyed to arrive in Japan at the moment when they were celebrating the victory. I had a vivid recollection of how my father a few months ago had encouraged us to celebrate the

victory of Japan over the Russians at Santiniketan by lighting bonfires in several villages in the neighbourhood and unfurling a huge flag of the Rising Sun. We were conscious of the epoch-making character of this victory for Asia and readily joined in the round of festivities held in Tokyo. All the parks and public squares were tastefully decorated with piles of guns and ammunition captured from the Russians. We would everyday walk round and round these places with awe and veneration. Our regard for the Japanese rose to a still higher level when we found that on trams and other public conveyances the people, especially old men and women, would leave their seats to make room for us, all the time making deep obeisances, because we hailed from the country of Buddha's birth. We might have expected arrogance after such a military victory but not this touching humility to a spiritual ideal and it confirmed our faith in the Unity of Asia, so nobly preached by the great Japanese seer, Kakuzo Okakura.*

Most of my companions thought they had come far enough from home and their adventures ended on reaching that country. After many an amusing attempt to get passed by the American authorities the two of us who came from Santiniketan managed to get steerage passages in an American Pacific Liner. The American laws allowed only a small percentage of immigrants from Asia to land on the western coast. The poor doctor in charge of emigration had therefore to find some excuse to reject the others. After having been thus refused on the plea of an eye disease I went to consult a Japanese specialist. On learning the reason for my visit he laughed aloud and said he would give me a prescription not for treatment but for fooling the American doctor. It was nothing but a problem of mathematics. He asked me to appear before the doctor every day,—the man could not possibly remember all the faces as he had to examine thousands every day—, and it was only a question of luck how soon

* A good many of them are at the head of big industrial concerns at present.

* How strange and alien such a sentiment seems today! Japan in striving for the mastery of Asia has lost its leadership.

I would get included in the 10 per cent quota. I was indeed lucky to get approved on the third day.

A third class passage in the steerage was an experience worth having in those times. We were herded together, twenty-eight in a cabin, lined with five tiers of bunks. This cabin also served as the dining-room. The overcrowded condition, the filth and the wretched food that was served are beyond description. But the worst of the torture that we suffered for seventeen days across the Pacific was the dregs of American men and women (there was no segregation of the sexes) whom we had for company. We had a few Japanese fellow-passengers also. One day a Japanese inadvertently had taken the customary seat of an American at the dining-table. This giant of a fellow not only abused the diminutive Japanese in the filthiest language but pulled out a knife and showed fight. Our *amour propre* was terribly hurt when instead of standing up the Jap sneaked out of the room. In a few moments, however, he was back with a contingent of fellow-countrymen and announced that now that they were equal in number to the Yankees they were prepared to fight. The honour of Asia was saved!

On the second day we went up to the tiny deck allotted to us to get a breath of fresh air. But very soon the supercilious look of the first class passengers as they looked down with amusement upon this sorry lot of humanity huddled together was more than we could bear and during the rest of the days never once did we attempt to go up again. It was a godsend that I had the collected edition of my father's works, edited by Prof. Mohit Chandra Sen and published shortly before we sailed. By the time the voyage ended we had learnt almost every sentence by heart. We hardly knew when we had stopped at Honolulu, as on account of an epidemic in the islands the passengers were not allowed to go on shore. Thinking that at last the agony was over, one evening we had our things packed and lay down with hardly any sleep with the excitement of arriving at San Francisco the next morning. While it was still dark we

crept up on the deck and kept our eyes screwed on the horizon towards which the boat was moving. A beautiful dawn broke with such a fantail of brilliant colours as only the Pacific can boast. We noticed that every officer had his binoculars fixedly pointed shoreward. An ominous silence hovered over the ship. Whisperings and nodding of heads; then more binoculars brought out. Another long spell of silence. We on deck got nervous and suspicious. With a lurch the boat turned round. It was then that we saw what had seemed a mystery a few moments ago: the charred remains of a few sky-scrapers and thick black clouds of smoke slowly spreading out along the horizon in long serpentine coils and smirching with their foulness the brilliant sky. The boat stopped before the Golden Gate—no longer the golden gate leading to the Queen of Cities, but the gate leading to hell if any hell can be imagined on earth. Where the city had been there were heaped ruins, charred corpses and bewildered and famished animals roving about on roads twisted out of shape. Thus we learnt of the great earthquake and the fire that had devastated the city, and a shiver of horror ran through the boat. In those days the wireless had not been invented and we had no means of being warned about the disaster. This was the welcome we received from America, we two kids hugging to our breasts a solitary letter of introduction to somebody at Berkeley, which had been razed to the dust during the previous night.

FRONTIERS IN EUROPE

The tour of 1926 was a memorable one for various reasons. For those who had not been with my father on this tour, it is impossible to imagine the immense popularity and the ovation with which he was received in every country. At every place he visited he received not only a princely reception by the government officials as well as the populace but was treated with the

profound respect due to a prophet. At every railway station huge crowds would gather to have "darsan" or just touch the hem of his robe—a sight which hardly fitted in with our conception of the rationalistic and unemotional people of the West. From one end of Europe to the other we were carried along on the crest of this emotional tide. Towards the end of the tour we found ourselves in a more oriental setting in the Southern Balkans. After a short stay at Sofia, crowded with engagements and public receptions, we left this pretty capital of the Bulgars on the special train ordered by the king, and escorted by a host of officials, journalists and writers for a little town on the Roumanian frontier. It was a very short journey but the preparations for it were elaborate to the extreme. We had by this time become quite accustomed and almost indifferent to hearty welcomes, but such a demonstrative farewell seemed rather unusual. However, the royal suite of carriages soon reached its destination and we found ourselves on a wharf overhanging the banks of the Danube, which is the natural eastern boundary between the two countries. The river at these lower reaches is fairly wide and did indeed remind us of the Ganges. But imagine our surprise when we had to embark a battleship cruiser, gaily decorated with flags and buntings, to be ferried across the river to the Roumanian port-town on the opposite bank. This we did to the accompaniment of gun salutes and a brass band playing their loudest the national songs of the country. While all this noise was going on we noticed a certain amount of curiosity and eagerness on the part of our hosts scanning the scene on the opposite bank which we were approaching. This feeling very soon changed to one of amusement and then suddenly to hilarious mirth as the cruiser was banked on the side of a desolate pier with only one solitary person, who stood gesticulating and tearing his hair and gnashing his teeth at the approaching boat. A final salvo of guns and we were courteously escorted down the gangway into the arms of this wild-looking gentleman. As the boat moved out we could hear another loud burst of laughter and then the brass band

followed making incoherent noises. No explanation was offered to us at the time for the reason of these outbursts of vociferous mirth. The explanation came later from the disconsolate gentleman who received us and who happened to be the station master of the tiny railway terminus. The Bulgars had seen to it that no definite information of the time of our arrival reached the Roumanian government, so that there would be no previous arrangements welcoming father and conveying our party to the Roumanian capital. The discomfiture of the Roumanians on this occasion must have given the Bulgars many an hour of enjoyment afterwards.

A SWISS PEASANT

A summer holiday in the surroundings of St. Moritz, Switzerland, is a delightful experience. We were particularly fortunate in having the company of some Hungarian friends, which made the holidays still more enjoyable. We had chosen a comfortable but secluded hotel beside the lake at Sils Maria, just far enough from the sports-mad crowds that generally infest the famous summer resort. Our group of friends included the famous Hungarian violinist, Huberman. But we saw very little of him as he used to shut himself up in his suite and could rarely be persuaded to come down to the dining-room. We came to know of some of his idiosyncracies. Whenever he had to travel, not one but several contiguous suites and sometimes the whole floor had to be booked for him. Moreover, he always carried padded quilts which had to be fixed on to the doors and windows. Even after these precautions had been taken to make his room perfectly soundproof, he would complain of the noise.

One afternoon an excursion had been arranged to the Italian frontier. We sped on motor cars down winding roads through deep gorges and pine-covered valleys to this tiny hamlet

bordering on Italy. We stopped opposite a house where grew some palm trees and as I stood admiring these in such strange and foreign surroundings, a Hungarian friend suggested that we should call and find out more about the proprietor who had such taste. A very uncouth looking man came out and beckoned to us to go inside. But we had to discover one amongst our party who knew the particular dialect spoken amongst the peasants in this part of Switzerland before we could understand a word of what he said. One by one the whole party was introduced to him. When the names of my wife and myself were mentioned the man opened his mouth in astonishment and enquired if we had any connection with the poet. When the relationship was explained to him his astonishment knew no bounds and he began to shake with excitement. He ran inside, shouted for his sister and then catching hold of our hands dragged us upstairs to a room which to our great surprise we found filled from floor to ceiling with books. All the German translations of my father's works were there. But all this was nothing when to our intense astonishment the man dressed in the usual costume of the Swiss peasantry, with his rough hands pulled out a Sanskrit classic and began to recite poem after poem in the original. Through our interpreter I learnt that some years ago he had come across a translation of two lines from the *Upanishads* in a German book. These appealed to him so much that then and there he made up his mind to send for some Sanskrit books in order to learn the language and to read the original of those translations. His knowledge of Sanskrit which he had to pick up by himself without any help from anyone in that lonely spot in the mountains of Switzerland, forty miles away from any railway, seemed to me to cover a wide range of studies in literature and philosophy. We then met the sister who said that she was passionately fond of *Chitra, The Home and The World* and *Post Office*. Every evening she went out to give readings from these books to the other peasants of the village. For her livelihood she made leather cushions with Indian designs. The models of

the designs were taken from an old *bat-tala* edition of the *Ramayana*; how she secured it is a mystery.

We returned home much richer by our contact with the peasant savant and the spontaneous homage of the two simple unsophisticated souls to cultural India made us feel inordinately proud of our heritage.

A STILL-BORN TRIP TO NORWAY

It was in 1920, a year after the Great War, when Europe had not quite settled down to normal conditions and political espionage was still widely encouraged by all governments that I had accompanied father to England, where he was soon flooded with invitations from every corner of Europe. In 1913 when he was awarded the Nobel Prize, he could not accept the invitation of the Nobel Committee to go in person to Sweden to receive the prize, as is the custom. Then the War interfered and now that he was in Europe again and the invitation had been renewed he could not very well refuse it. So it was settled that the first country to be visited on the Continent would be Sweden and the party to accompany him was to consist of Willie Pearson, who had volunteered to act as his private secretary, Mr. B——, a Parsi gentleman from Bombay, my wife and myself. In the meantime an opportunity occurred to add another member to the party. Father who always enjoys company felt quite happy about it. A lady was introduced to him by a well-known Orientalist whom we knew to be connected with politics but never suspected of lending himself as a tool of a government department, about the time we were making our plans for the continental tour. She made herself quite at home in our flat in the manner only the continentals can adopt and greatly pleased father by her interest in Eastern philosophy. When she came to hear of our plans she immediately offered herself to act as a guide at her own cost, saying that she knew almost everybody worth knowing in the

Scandinavian countries and that this little service she offered would help to repay an infinitesimal portion of the gratitude her countrymen felt for the great poet. Obviously she could not be refused. She began immediately to write letters and work out the details of the tour and proved so efficient and at the same time so amiable that both Pearson and myself felt considerably relieved. It had been settled that we were to cross the North Sea from Newhaven and land at Bergen in Norway. On the very eve of our departure, as is always my custom when travelling with father, I went to Thos. Cook's to purchase our tickets for the boat. I was a familiar figure with the passage department and the clerk who had got used to our ways, when handing over the tickets warned me with a smile, "No refund this time!"

On returning to our flat in South Kensington that evening with passports, passages, luggage labels and what not, I was immediately treated to a romantic story by B——, who had it fresh from his Swedish masseuse. It was the usual sordid kind told about international spies, so familiar during the days of the War and which in this instance applied to our future travelling companion. Pearson's moral indignation made him rush out to confront the lady with the truth. On father it had a different reaction. He asked me immediately to change the programme and arrange to leave for Paris the next morning. I had long ago become used to such lightning changes and after all did manage to get the refund of the tickets bought a few hours ago from the same clerk, without any other loss save of what little reputation was still standing to my credit as a reliable customer in that office.

Next evening we were in Paris and a few days afterwards I received a huge pile of cuttings taken from newspapers in Bergen which I have carefully preserved. Big headlines and front page descriptions of our arrival at Bergen and even photos of the party disembarking from the boat! What a wonderful example of modern newspaper stunt! And the lady who had posted them to me, how she must have enjoyed her triumph!

AUTUMN



By Benodebhari Mukherjee

DĀRĀ SHIKUH

Bikrama Jit 'Hasrat'

"Indian tradition remembers Dārā Shikūh not so much as an emperor's son, but as a mystic philosopher. The great dream of his life—a dream shattered by his untimely death—was the brotherhood of all faiths and the unity of mankind. After him the vision of unity was lost in the atmosphere of hatred and rivalry created by the warring sects and religious schools, and even today we are living in this age of religious disintegration."

(*Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. II. p. 259.)

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

Prince Muhammad Dārā Shikuh, the eldest son of Shāh Jahan and the heir-apparent to the throne, was born in the suburbs of Sāgartāl lake, near Ajmer, on 29 Safar, 1024 A. H. (Monday, March 20, 1615.) In the pages of the *Safīnat-ul-Awliyā*¹, Dārā Shikuh describes the date of his birth and says that his father, at the age of twenty-four, frequented the tomb of the great saint Mu'inuddīn Chīṣṭī and earnestly prayed for the birth of a son as all his previous children had been daughters. According to the author of the *Pādshāhnāma*, the birth of the heir-presumptive to the throne was hailed with great joy and festivity. Jahāngir, the grand-father of the child, gave to the heir to his favourite son the name of Dārā Shikuh and the epithet of the

1 *Safīnat-ul-Awliyā*, an autograph MS. in the private collection of Raja Narendra Nath of Lahore (fol. 90. A.). The date of transcription of this valuable MS., which contains 224 folios 10" x 6", with written surface about 6½" x 8½", lines 15 per page, is 1049 A. H., i. e., the year in which it was compiled by the author.

Prince Rose of the Empire, which also gives the chronogram of his birth.²

Our sources on the childhood and early career of the prince are very scanty. It is indeed unfortunate that we know very little of his early life ; the contemporary Mughal chroniclers having left us very meagre information on this subject. The *Pādshāhnāma* or the court history of the reign of Shah Jahan is the most authoritative account of the period. It records very minutely the political career of Dārā Shikuh, his ranks and promotions, gifts of jewels and horses and royal visits with which he was honoured by his father, but on the other hand it entirely passes over the early career, education, literary activities and the religious views of the prince. Next comes *Amal-i-Sālih* of Muhammad Sālih Kambu : a history of the reign of Shah Jahan, from his birth to his death in 1665 A. D. ; it forms a supplement to the *Pādshāhnāma*. It also deals with the political events of the time and can hardly interest us. Other official and non-official histories of the reign of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb, viz., Muhammad Kāzim's *Ālamgīrnāma*, *Siyar-ul-Mutākebrīn*, *Latā'if-ul-Akbbār*, an anonymous account of the third siege of Kandhar, generally attributed to Badi'-ul-Zamān Rashīd Khan, Muhammad Ma'sum's *Tarīkh-i-Shuja'i*, Muhammad Hashim Khafi Khan's *Muntakhab-ul-Lubāb*, Shah Nawāz's *Ma'asir-ul-'Umera* and other semi-historical works do not throw much light on the childhood, education and literary and religious studies of Dārā Shikuh.

With such scanty external information we have no choice but to base our studies mainly on the writings of Dārā Shikuh ; from them, if no sufficient evidence is available, we unwillingly turn to the biassed accounts of the contemporary European travellers like Munacci, Bernier, Tavernier, Peter Munday and W. Irvine, whose incidental notices on the life of Dārā Shikuh we may accept with considerable caution and reserve.

2. Vol. I. p. 891.

EDUCATION AND STUDIES IN MYSTICISM

We know practically nothing about the progress made by the young prince in his studies. The *Pādshāhnāma* of Abdul Hamīd Lāhori³ only mentions "*ba maktab raftan*", or the going to the school of the prince at the age of thirteen and tells that Mulla Abdul Latīf Sultanpurī⁴ was appointed his teacher. The primary and secondary course of Dārā's studies seems to have been of the same stereotyped character as that of an average Mughal prince, who was usually taught the *Kuran*, the standard works of Persian poetry and the history of Timur. The chapter on "The Education of a Mughal Prince" by Sir Jadunath Sarkar in his *Studies in Mughal India* suggests the lines on which we may presume that our young prince was educated. He studied the *Kuran* and the *Hadith* but with his eyes open and rejected from his childhood the commentaries of the orthodox school. It was Mulla Abdul Latīf, as we know, who was responsible for the intellectual advancement of the prince, who developed scholarly habits and imbibed a passion for speculative sciences. His Sufistic leanings from an early age led him to study the well-known works on Islamic mysticism. This fact he mentions in his introduction to the *Sirr-i-Akbar* and a host of apt quotations from the various standard works on Sufism, given in the *Safīnat-ul-Awliya*, the *Sakinat-ul-Awliya*, the *Risala Hak Numa*, and his other works, bear equal witness to his extensive studies. Therein he works on the different Sufistic doctrines, but refrains from making a fetish of the stereotyped dogma. He traverses the same old ground as most of the earlier writers on mysticism had done, but arrives at reasoned conclusions independently.

3. *Ibid.* p. 844-845.

4. For an account of his life and accomplishments, vide. *Tadhkara -i-'Ulama-i-Hind* p. 88.

In his youth, he came into contact with many Muslim and Hindu mystics and acquired a knowledge of the devotional mysticism of the Sufis. Many of these were liberal thinkers who belonged to the catholic school of thought and were the exponents of "emancipation of the individual soul from the dead weight of dogma." His association with them widened his outlook and helped him to grasp the essence of religion through intuitive perception without attaching any importance to the dogmatic formalism of Islam.

Among other saints of different orders, whose life he has noticed in his works, especially the *Safinat-ul-Awliya* and the *Sakinat-ul-Awliya*, mention must be made of Mian Mîr (d. 1635 A. D.) and Mullah Shah Badakhshānî (d. 1661 A. D.), the most prominent saintly followers of the Kadirî Order, with whom he was on terms of the most affectionate intimacy, and both of whom exercised an overwhelming influence over his mind and finally initiated him into the most liberal and devotional teachings of the Sufism of the Kadiryā fraternity. To this fact he alludes in the *Risala Hak Numa* :

"This *fakir* Dārā Shikūh belongs to that class of devotees who are attracted to God naturally . . . He has come to know the mysteries of Godhead through the grace of saints and friends of God. He has hereafter benefited by the society of those masters and enquired into the truth of their teachings . . . One night he received the inspiration that the best path of reaching Divinity was the Kadiryā Order."⁵

Referring to this divine injunction he adds :

"In the prime of my youth, Hatif, addressing me four times said, 'God would give you such a gift which has not been bestowed upon any emperor of the world.' In time the foreshadowing of it began to be manifest and day by day the veil was lifted little by little."⁶

5. *Risala Hak-Numa*, Lithographed, Lucknow ; p. 8.

6. *Ibid.* This is also to be found in the *Sakinat-ul-Awliya* (Urdu Translation), Lahore, p. 5.

Again in the *Sakinat-ul-Awliya* he remarks that the interpretation of this dream according to some gnostics was that Divine Knowledge was promised to him. He says :

"When I got up I thought that it must certainly be the gift of Divine Knowledge that God would bestow upon me as His real favour. I was always looking forward to it. In the year 1049 A. H. , I succeeded in obtaining the favour of one of His friends (Mullah Shah). He showed to me every kindness and the doors to Divine Knowledge were thrown open to me . . . I gained in one month what others would have done in a year. Briefly, notwithstanding my outward adherence to external formalism, I am not one of those who observe it and without being among the saints I am one of them."⁷

His initiation into the Kadiryā Order provided much scope for his spiritual fulfilment and opened for him the path of self-realisation and purity. His contact with other mystics, both Muhammadan and Hindu, like Shah Muhibullah, Shah Dilruba, Shah Muhammad Lisanullah Rostaki, Baba Lal Das Biragi, the saintly follower of Kabir and the scholarly Jagan Nath Misra, suggested to his mind the idea of establishing a sort of *rapprochement* between the apparently divergent principles of Islamic mysticism and Hindu philosophy. Gradually his interest in Sufism inclined him towards the mystic systems of other religions and by his association with the divines of various religious thoughts he studied the *Psalms*, the *Gospel* and the *Pentateuch*. Following the esoteric path of Islam, like his great-grandfather Akbar, he also extended his theosophical studies to Brahmanical scriptures. He read Sanskrit and patronised Sanskrit scholars and with the help of learned pandits of Benares, made a Persian translation of the *Upanishads* which was soon followed by similar translations of the *Yoga Vasishtha* and the *Bhagwad-Gita*. His deep interest in the cosmogony, metaphysics and the mystic symbolisms of the Hindus is manifest from his *Discourses with Baba Lal*.

7. *Ibid.* p. 5.

It should not be considered, as is asserted by many⁸, that Dārā Shikuh's characteristic theosophist outlook and his leanings towards Hinduism were due to a political forethought and that he made most strenuous exertions as an heir-apparent to the much-coveted throne of Delhi, to overcome the difficulties which his predecessors might bequeath him—to become a more popular monarch to both the Hindus and the Mussalmans. That certainly was the case with Akbar who made an attempt to weld into a political synthesis, the divergent creeds and different racial elements of India. Dārā Shikuh's approach towards Hinduism was from a different point of view. It was the approach of a seeker of truth, in whose heart was burning passion for knowledge, and who, irrespective of the basis of its source, eagerly sought it wherever he could find it.

Let us now proceed to discuss briefly the main object of his approach towards Hindu philosophy. To quote his own statements which he makes in a lengthy introduction to the translation of the *Upanishads*, he observes that he had many opportunities of meeting savants of diverse religions and had heard their views on the Unity of God, but the doctrine as expounded in their theological books failed to satisfy him. Thus he remarks :

“And whereas I was impressed with a longing to behold the gnostic divines of every sect and to hear the lofty expressions of monotheism and had cast my eyes upon many theological books and had been a follower thereof for many years : my passion for beholding the Unity, which is a boundless ocean, became every moment increased. Subtle doubts came into mind for which I had no possibility of solution, and whereas the Holy *Kuran* is almost totally enigmatical and at the present day the understanders thereof are very rare, I became desirous to collect into view all the revealed books as the very word of God itself might be its own commentary and if

8. *Ruk'at-i- Alamgiri*, Vol I. Here it will be noted with great surprise and pain that even the modern Muslim writers misrepresent the basic ideas and aims of the chief exponents of the evolution of Indo-Muslim thought in Medieval India. *Vide* p. 343, 351-371 and 401.

in one book it be compendious in another book it might be found diffusive.”⁹

In his quest for Unity of God he came to know that Hindu monotheists had given a clear exposition of the same, and so turning towards Hinduism he observes :—

“Thereafter I considered on what account is Hindustan conspicuous for monotheism, is there so much discourse on Divine Unity and wherefore in the exterior and interior practices of this most ancient sect of Hind, is there no disavowal of the Divine Unity and no apostacy against the unitarians.”¹⁰

Proceeding, he remarks, that as a ‘mystic enthusiast and ardent advocate of the Unity of God’, he searched for Reality, no matter in what language, and that in quest for Truth, in the higher stages of its realisation, religion is of no matter.

“Whereas,” he goes on in the same strain, “this seeker of Truth had directed his views towards the origin of the Unity of Being in Arabic, Syrian, Chaldean, and Sanskrit language, he was desirous to comprehend the ‘Upenekhat’, which are a treasury of monotheism.”

Admitting the weight and superiority of Hinduism in point of the priority of the revelation of the four *Vedas* he continues that he translated the *Upanishads* in 1067 A.D. without any worldly motive and gave it the name of *Sirr-i-Akbar* (The Great Secret) because he regarded them as Divine Secrets and “without doubt or suspicion, the first of all heavenly books, in point of time, the source of the fountain of Reality and an ocean of Monotheism, in conformity with the Holy *Kuran* and even a commen-

9. *Sirr-i-Akbar* : An Introduction partly published at the Brijlal Press, Gujran-walla, under the title *Kulliat-i-Dārā Shikuh*, Vol 4 : also noticed in the *Historical Fragments of the Mughal Empire* (London 1782).

10. *Ibid* p. 2.

tary thereon.¹¹” In support of his assertion he cites the following verse from the *Kuran* :—

“Indeed the venerable *Kurân* is in a book, which is hidden. None shall touch it but the purified ones. It is a revelation by the Lord of the Worlds.”

(*Kurân* LVI ; 78-81.)

Commenting upon this verse he says :—

“It is evident to any person that this sentence is not applicable to the Psalms or to the Book of Moses or to the Gospel and by the word ‘revealed’, it is clear that it is not applicable to the Reserved Table (*Luh-i-Mahfûz*); and whereas the Upenekhets, which are ‘Secrets to be Concealed’, are the essence of this book and the sentences of the *Holy Kuran* are literally found therein, of a certainty therefore, the hidden book is this most ancient book . . .”¹²

While making such bold statements and being actuated by a desire to establish a fundamental similarity between the Islamic and Hindu doctrines on the Unity of God, he was conscious of the opposition of the narrow sectarianism of the orthodox school, to whom all referred on all questions on the Islamic law and doctrine. He treats these ‘*ignoramus*’ with contemptuous disregard and observes :—

“But there is even a stock of faith, in opposition to the blockheads of the present time, who have established themselves for erudite and who falling into the traces of murder and molestation and apostatising from and disavowing the true proficients in God and Unitarians, display resistance against all the words of monotheism as is most evident from the glorious *Kurân* and authentic Traditions of the indubitable Prophecy, are highwaymen in the Path of God.”¹³

11. *Ibid.* p. 3-4.

12. *Ibid.* Vol 4. p. 5. Italics mine

13. *Ibid.* Vol 4. p. 6.

RELIGION OF DARA SHIKUH : DARA SHIKUH AND ISLAM.

Politics had a secondary place in the thoughts of Dārā Shikuh ; his first concern being the study of religious mysticism. A close examination of his works in their correct chronological order will reveal the fact that his earlier studies were purely Sufistic and were not extended to a close examination of the mystic systems of other religions. His earlier works, the *Safinat-ul-Awliya* and the *Sakinat-ul-Awliya*, written in 1049 A.H. and 1056 A.H. respectively, were the outcome of his respect for the Sufis and the religious divines. The third work in this category is the *Hasnat-ul-‘Arifin* or the Sufic Aphorisms which appeared a little later in 1062 A.H. In all these treatises he sets forth in detail the lives and the teachings of the saints of the different orders with sidelights on his own personal religious experiences. Following the traditional method of Sufistic theology he “gives expression to his inner ecstasies and his ardent aspiration towards the Ineffable. The method of treatment is generally intuitive and tendency of his thought is essentially pantheistic, having for its fundamental motive the direct contact or the union of human spirit with the Divine Being and the transformation of duality into Unity.”¹⁴

Although his mystic biographies were characterised by a deep note of devotional fervour and he had not developed, by this time, that catholicity of outlook and heterodox Sufi pantheism, which he knew would be bitterly opposed by the diehards of the orthodox school, “the blockheads without insight”; yet he clearly states :—

“Before this time, in a state of ecstasy and enthusiasm, I uttered some words appertaining to the Sublime Knowledge, certain sordid and abject fellows and some dry, insipid and and bigoted persons, on account of their narrow outlook, accused me of heresy. It was then I realised the

14. Dr. Yusif Hussain in the *Prabudha Bharata* Vol. XLIV, No. 4.

importance of compiling the aphorisms of the great believers in Unity, the saints who have heretofore acquired the knowledge of Reality so that these may serve as an argument against the fellows who were really imposters (*Dajjals* : lit. Anti-Christ), although they wore the face of Christ and Pharaohs and *Abu-Jehls*, although they assume the guise of Moses and of the followers of Muhammad."¹⁵

The Risala Hak Numa, completed early in 1056 A. H., marks the first advance of his religious thought towards the esoteric faith of Islam. Herein he describes the four planes of existence; viz., the Physical Plane, the Astro-Mental Plane, the Plane of Bliss and the Plane of Divinity, corresponding respectively with the four states of human consciousness known as wakefulness, dream, sleep and trance-consciousness. Though as early as 1056 A. H. his works do not betray his leanings towards the Hindu doctrines and he says that the *Risala* records 'without a hair's difference the austere practices, meditations, method of sitting, moving and acting by the holy Prophet' and that it is a compendium of the standard works on Sufism like *Fatubat*, *Faşuş*, *Lawaih* and *Lam'ât*, etc., yet the account of the modes and internal significance of these practices seem to have been borrowed from the *Yoga* system of Hindu asceticism. So we find that gradually he was moving towards the study of asceticism, the various stages of spiritual development and the ways and means of reaching the pitch of spiritual perfection. These he considered essential for "becoming proficient in mystic contemplation and introspection."

The year 1056 A. H. was a turning-point in his studies in religion. It marks the beginning of his examination of the system of various religions, but till 1062 A. H. he does not express his opinion. With an insatiable thirst for Knowledge and Truth he occupied himself in its acquisition. He patronised learned

15. *Ḥasmât-ul-'Arifîn* or *Shahhât-i-Dârâ Shikûh*. Ms. in the Punjab University Library. (fol 72 b.)

men of all denominations, saints, theologians, philosophers, poets and writers of every creed and community—Muslims, Hindus, Christians and Jews, etc. He studied Sanskrit and became deeply interested in the *Vedānta* and *Yoga* philosophy, Hindu ritual and mythology and from the learned pandits of Benares he learned the secrets of Hindu philosophy and legend and initiated himself into the practices of *Yoga* by contacts with *yogis* and *sadhus*.

Thus his religious outlook changed and a new idea of universal brotherhood dawned upon his mind, as a result of which appeared the *Majma'-ul-Babrîn*, or the Mingling of the Two Oceans, a treatise in which he made the first attempt of its own kind to reconcile the doctrines of *Brahma Vidya* and the tenets of *al-Kuran*. *Majma'-ul-Babrîn*, though a treatise on the technical terms of Hindu pantheism and their equivalents in Sufi phraseology, devoid of any deep insight or great spirituality, is of extreme importance to a student of comparative religion inasmuch as that therein Dārā Shikuh has tried to bring out the points of similarity and identity between Hinduism and Islam and has endeavoured to show where the two oceans of mystic thought meet. "His attempt to achieve this end," remarks Dr. Yusuf Hussain, "clearly shows that he did not want to engraft the one on the other through a shallow eclecticism like his grandfather Akbar. He was actuated by a desire to prove that both Islam and Hinduism, in appearance so fundamentally dissimilar, are essentially the same. Both represent spiritual efforts of man to realize Truth and God."¹⁶

This came as a bombshell to the orthodox Muhammadan circle, who denounced him as a heretic, atheist, hypocrite, opportunist and devoid of all religion. His fraternization with Hindus was ridiculed. While condemning his conception, which he had formed after much study and contemplation that there existed a fundamental unity between Hindu philosophy and

16. *L' Inde Mystique au Moyen Age* (Paris); also the *Prabuddha Bharata*, Vol. XLIV. No. 4.

Islamic mysticism, the author of the *Ālamōir-nāma* charges Dārā Shikuh with the zeal of an orthodox Mussalman :—

“Dārā Shikuh in his later years,” he remarks, “did not restrict himself to the free-thinking and heretical notions which he had adopted under the name of *Tasawwuf* (Sufism) but showed an inclination for the religion and institutions of the Hindus. He was constantly in the society of Brahmans, *yogis* and *sanyasis*, and he used to regard these worthless teachers of delusions as learned and true masters of wisdom. He considered their books which they call *Bed* (*Vedas*) as being the Word of God and revealed from heaven, and he called them ancient and excellent books, in the translation of which he was much employed. Instead of the sacred name of *Allah*, he adopted the Hindu name *Prabhu* (Lord) ... and he had this name engraved in Hindi letters upon his rings. . . . Through these perverted opinions he had given up the prayers, fasting, and other obligations imposed by the law and . . . it became manifest that if Dārā Shikuh obtained the throne, and established his power, the foundations of the faith would be in danger, and the precepts of Islam would be changed for the *rant* of infidelity (Hinduism) and Judaism.”¹⁷

It is no denying the fact that it was his interest in the Hindu scriptures and especially his writing of the *Majma'-ul-Babrîn*, which procured a decree from the legal advisers of Aurangzeb that “Dārā Shikuh had apostatized from the law and having vilified the religion of God had allied himself with heresy.” Consequently an order for his execution was given in 1659 A. D.

Let us now turn to the other side of the medal. In all his works, as will be shown in the following pages, there is not the slightest indication, that he had renounced Islam and become a Hindu, as is alleged by a biased section of the community. The very Introductions to his works, which he has begun with the praises of God, the Prophet, his companions and the descendants, will belie such presumption. With a unique idealism in view, he tried to liberate the spirit of Islam from the dogmatism of the time. In his ambition “to supplant exoteric Islam by esoteric mysticism as a living moral force among the Muslim intellec-

17. Muhammad Kāzīm in Eliot's translation : Vol. VII. p. 179.

tuals”, the forces of conservatism and reaction termed him as an apostate and a heretic. Like many Sufis of Islam, he too, differed from the orthodox in the interpretation of the true spirit of Islam and lost his head. Never refusing his outward conformity to Islam, he openly accepted the views of other religions and assumed a policy of *Ṣulh-i-Kul* or Peace with All. His attempts to prove that the ideas of the Hindu cosmogony are similar to those embodied in the *Kuran* might seem irreligious and ridiculous to an orthodox Mussalman, but to a man of wider outlook, be he a Hindu or a Mussalman, this came as an inspiration ; placing religion on a broader foundation, it tended to create a brotherhood of Universal religion between the Hindus and the Mussalmans. Such efforts, though startling innovations denounced by the orthodoxy as rank heresy, left a very deep impression in their wake. It harmonised for the time being the relations between them and swept away social and to some extent political disqualifications due to religious differences. Bernier graphically sums up Dārā Shikuh's attitude towards Islam and other religions in the following words :—

“Born a Muhametan, he continued in the exercise of that religion ; but although thus publicly professing his adherence to the faith, Dara was in private a Gentile with a Gentile and a Christian with a Christian.”¹⁸

Even European writers have jumped at wild and most absurd conclusions about the religion of Dārā Shikuh, simply because he showed proclivities to other religions and was “a Gentile with a Gentile and a Christian with a Christian.” Munacci says that Dārā had no religion but praised the doctrines of any religion with which he came in contact. Like his great-grandfather he took delight in polemic discussions between the doctors of different creeds. He was very fond of Europeans, especially of the Jesuit Father Buzee. Continuing, Munacci narrates a

18. *Travels* p. 6.

fantastic story to show that Dārā Shikuh died a Christian at heart. He writes :¹⁹

"During his confinement in the prison, just before his execution, when his son Siphar Shikuh was separated from him, he begged that Father Buzee or some other Christian priest should be brought to him and finding himself unable to obtain his wish he began in loud and heart-rending voice to say the words, 'Muhammad killed me and the Son of God (Christ) gave me life'."

Such illustrative accounts of the European writers must not be taken at their face value but accepted with great caution and reserve.

Neither was it his aim to adapt Muhammadan formulae contained in the Islamic theology to Hindu scriptures, but, as we have seen, as an ardent lover of comparative religion, he became familiar with the spirit of Hindu thought, mainly restricting his approach towards the various identical points of mythology, asceticism and religious practices of both. Though this was hateful to the *mullabs*, in reality Dara never discarded the fundamental principles of Islam and never wavered in the strict performance of his religious duties. He was most assiduous in paying visits to the shrines of the Muslim saints and treated with utmost reverence and admiration all the living saints who had acquired a fame for piety. This was because he did not regard Hinduism and Islam as two entirely independent camps. In his estimation they did not stand widely apart representing two irreconcilable religions. He knew that the conflict between the *pandit* and the *mullah* was on the ground of ritual, but that in spiritual matters they could be easily reconciled.

Overlooking the sectarian dogma or philosophical disputes, there exists upto this day a cultural unity and due to the free association of ideas, their ideals are related to each other. Such cultural bonds of Indo-Muslim thought, it is hard for anybody to deny.

19. *Storia de Mogor*. Vol. I pp. 221.

"Undoubtedly the prince struck an original line of investigation", says Dr. Kanungo, "which, if honestly perused, may achieve greater things for the benefit of the neglected commonalty, in the present century, when the fate of India depends on a fresh attempt at the mutual comprehension of two spiritual elements and an appreciative study of the two apparently discordant cultures."²⁰

Dārā Shikuh was a Muslim and a member of the Kadiryā fraternity. His toleration and admiration for other religions must always be taken in the light that it forms a starting-point in the evolution of Indo-Muslim thought,—an early attempt to transplant Indian thought into the Islamic world. John von Menon, the Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, pays a glowing tribute to Dārā Shikuh in the following words :—

"As the last continuator of a short line of activity begun by his great-grandfather, Akbar, he is also an historical figure in the development of Indian thought. For all these and many other reasons we welcome the present work (*Majma'-ul-Bahrin*) in which beyond the gulf of death, to the voice of Hindu-Muslim Unity, he has given life again, insistent, sincere and tragic."²¹

DARA SHIKUH AS A MAN

Before proceeding further, a word about Dārā Shikuh as a man may be mentioned. W. Irvine has summed up his character in these words :—

"He was a man of dignified manners, of comely countenance, joyous and polite in conversation, ready and gracious of speech, of extraordinary liberality, kindly and compassionate, but over-confident in his opinion of himself, considering himself competent in all things and having no need of advisers."²²

20. *Dārā Shikūh : A Biography*, Vol I.

21. *Majma'-ul-Bahrin* (Bib. Ind.) iii. 4.

22. Opt. cit.

Similar is the account given by other European writers. Bernier²³ also says that he entertained too exalted an opinion of himself, believed he could accomplish everything by the powers of his own mind...that he was also very irascible, apt to menace, abusive and insulting even to great *omrabs*. It is really unfortunate that the prince, who devoted the greater part of his life to carrying on a literary propaganda for the promotion of peace and concord between the two conflicting creeds of India, should be vilified thus. The European always judges the Easterner by his own standards. The losing side always gets scanty justice at his hands. Lanepool²⁴ calls him "inordinately conceited, self-satisfied and an emancipated antagonist." Had the vision of these European historians transcended the ordinary limitations imposed by worldly conventions, they would have certainly known Dārā Shikuh as a man, who was never proud and self-conceited. Notwithstanding his princely dignity and intellectual gifts, he was kind and humble and was never extremely intolerent of advice and contradiction. On the contrary, he accepted advice on philosophical and theological matters irrespective of the social status or the religious creed of the adviser, be he a Hindu mendicant like Baba Lal or a missionary of the Company of Jesus like the Reverend Father Buzee.

(*To be continued*).

23. *Ibid* p. 6.

24. Vide *Aurangzeb*. p. 22.

ANTARDEVATA*

Rabindranath Tagore

SORROW'S flood-tide sweeps the world to-day. Great memorials of history are being washed away, ancient boundaries of civilisation obliterated. Barbarism, robbed of its cloak, stands revealed; with arrogant mocking it flaunts destructive revelry against mankind. From the depth of man's anguished heart comes the cry—Why is this? Angry voices are raised refusing to recognise the presence of a benevolent principle anywhere in this cataclysmic fury.

To doubters I ask, were there no principle of goodness at the centre of creation, why does humanity, at the mortal struggle of an age, suffer from this world-wide agony? Does not disease, with its suffering, prove that in the freedom of health dwells life's inherent truth? Suffering is denial while health is affirmation of life; our body, acknowledging this, offers stout fight to the last. If disease had caused us no suffering, then indeed we could have accused life as being treacherous.

War has burst on all sides. Who causes this war? The insulted monarchy of the Good in the heart of the Universe. This insult was being heaped up for long under the far-flung patronage of power; filling its store-room with looted goods, power soon identified possessiveness with the principle of right. Practising oppression, it declared God to be on its side. Then destruction touched its own roots, all peace vanished, the entire race arrayed itself in weapons and military monstrosity; swollen-up munition dumps, like a red boil, became more inflamed. Mutual suspicion, unrest, repression's ugly trickery wrought by poisoned minds, sly diplomatic torture and sham decency spread their tentacles in lying politics and tyrannical government. If war stopped for

* Address delivered at Santiniketan Mandir on the 7th Pous (23rd. December, 1939). Translated by Dr. Amiya Chakravarty.

a while, peace did not arrive ; in the subterranean depths of history rumbling earthquakes heralded fresh disaster. Natural human contact daily grew impossible, barbed obstacles were raised in the path of hospitality, behaviour forgetting all civilised tradition reverted to savagery. The fact that deadly symptoms of evil can no longer be hidden proves that beneficence, abiding in human history, keeps vigilant judgment. In society, as in our bodily system, the principle of self-preservation remains active ; safeguarding humanity, it works in man's wakeful being. Violation of this principle has brought suffering to man, and death ; had this not been so, creation's law would have been suspect. In the world's history many races have perished, either for unpardonable weakness or for sinful lust of power. We were not sure if, today, some races have not been summoned for judgment at death's court.

Beneficent providence, in our scriptures, has never been reduced to mere mercifulness from whom men, like children, could crave indulgence. *Rudra yat te dakshinam mukham tena mam pahi nityam* : he is Rudra, the Terrible, who yet protects by his goodness whatever is true, courageous and pure : whatever testifies to man's faith in his unconquerable majesty. Helpless inanition Rudra never forgives.

Man's highest prayer is that he may reach from untruth to truth, from darkness to light, from death to immortality. This is not a prayer for the weak but a challenge from man's final blessedness, calling him toward fulfilment through toil and travail. It brings Rudra's inspiration from man's inner being, and sets him on the arduous path of truth.

Surprised I feel, and ashamed, when our literature offers petulant tirades against Providence, nasally intonated and garbed in ridiculous gesture, punishing him for not existing at all, simply because one has suffered personally or seen some one else suffer. We forget that our scriptures have said : *Varenyam bhargo devasya dheemahi*,—we contemplate the energy of the adorable God—*dhiyo yonah prachodayat*, who gives us Reason. It

has not been said that Providence nurses the inefficient weakling on his lap. He gives us Reason, that is to say, on ourselves we have to depend. We are forbidden by his ruling to knock tearfully at his door. To him I offer my salute because he has kept himself away from our sphere and does not, like an ever-anxious mother, constantly reveal his presence. My manhood he has dowered with respect, giving me the full right of responsibility. He does not lead the coward by the hand but makes him travel even through the experience of death so that he can live unafraid. Hence this paradox : those who rule out God from their belief can yet win the fruits of faith by using Reason to attain reality. Fulfilment awaits those who do not supplicate at God's shrine for removing disease, suffering, ignorance, inefficiency ; who have accepted him as divinely rational and not as Sarasvati or Ganesha ; who have realised him in their own creative power and magnified him, winning his companionship on the road of immortal life. They have not, as yet, discovered a cure for cancer but applying their Reason—that which dwells in the deep recesses of being—they have identified themselves with divine Reason, contemplating him in their enlightened mind ; they have never insulted their manhood by pursuing magical words and nostrums. To them will come the cure for disease, won by resolute conviction. But, on the opposite side, what wailing and complaint—the cry of children who boastfully refuse to acknowledge him ! Who has asked for their recognition ? Do they hope to minimise him by their refusal ! His punishment is not for those who reject specific names and forms in acknowledging him, but for those who frustrate his purpose by failing to recognise their own intelligence.

Do you not realise that birds and beasts have got their dress unasked, while to man, born naked, Providence has given far greater honour by uniting him with divine intelligence—*Dhiyo yonah prachodayat* ? Should we not remember this when we suffer from want of clothing ? No other living creature suffers so much, but through suffering he calls us—he who has

given us Reason. This call is not to any one of us, but to all mankind. Those who do not respond to it but rush to seek the protection of temple-guides and priests ever die unfulfilled, having disgraced their own divinity.

But Reason which comes to us is not of the category of mere knowledge, it has another aspect which is its highest—the will for goodness. *Sa no buddhya shubhaya sang junaktu* : may he become one with us through the union of good will. The frustration of intellectual knowledge, by man's physical nature, leads to distress in living ; the distortion of our sense of duty in the realm of moral life also brings disaster to human society. Led by passions we insult him who gives us Reason—*dhiyo yonah prachodayat*—and it leads to great destruction. Inauspicious signs of such destruction have suddenly overwhelmed us from all sides. Those who blame their opponents for iniquity and proclaim their own saintliness will not escape ; dexterity in special pleading will not bring mercy. *Mahatbhayam Vajramudya-tam*, the Great Terror is here, holding the Thunderbolt.

Following greed's path some have won temporal success, and in their drunken egoism ignored their own divinity ; using Science they have felt well-protected by their possessions and claimed the right to inflict injustice and oppression. But they are losing, from age to age, the contact of their godliness. The prescribed temple of worship can be entered with the accumulated load of unrighteousness, even the orthodox texts of prayer may not stick in their mouth, but in their heart the darkness of passion has shrouded the inner god. In that obscurity their path becomes difficult indeed ; blind forces are generated and strike at the roots of entire society ; at first slowly, then suddenly at last in terrific onslaught.

To those in our country who in weakling anger sit and lament that God does not come and wipe their tears, I would offer the following message from the *Upanishads* :

Atha yonyam devatam upaste, anyosau, anyo'ham, asmeeti na sa veda, yatha pashureva devanam.

He who worshipping separate divinity thinks that he is one and divinity another, is like an animal of the gods. On man's behalf no religious text, in any land, has dared to utter such mighty words, and yet in no other country but ours could more flagrant breach of it be witnessed.

Even like a beast man began his life, in want, ignorance, haunting fear. Had that been his true existence those conditions would have been permanent. But who has dragged man out of it—is he some external god with a special name ? Has some non-human entity, satiated with the blood of victims, offered man a boon ? Has man obtained reward from any god in exchange for flattering verses ? No, man is not an animal of the gods. Divine reality, united with man, has given us knowledge and science, our society and civilisation, and slowly revealed his luminous presence in history. That has been the result of no little suffering. Staking his life heroic man has controlled the primitive animal within, and also discovered his own godliness.

This discovery goes on through the fearless unremitting effort of brave generations. Where we are unsuccessful, where we are defeated, there must we suffer and never merit indulgence ; in shameless petulance let us not demand pity when we have insulted our own godliness, and then cry out that God is not there. If he is not there, whose fault is it ? Enmeshed in inertia the coward denies his own reality and then rushing to the feet of some *guru*, or bribing some priests, deafens his powers by the harsh clang of bells and cymbals. That is why I say, let us not forget the message of the *Brihadaranyaka* :

Atha yonyam devatam upaste, anyosau, anyo'ham, asmeeti na sa veda, yatha pashureva devanam,

We must remember, *yuktatmanah sarvamevabishanti* ; through the mastery of the power of his own being man enters everywhere, from the starry universe to the subtlest mysteries of the human heart. *Tam hi devam atmabuddhiprakasham*, in his own rational mind is that god revealed, and through it must come realisation. *Je purushe brahma viduste paramesthinam* : those who

know the Great in man know the supreme God. *Tam vedyam purusham veda* ; by hiding God in one's soul and proclaiming that he does not exist outside let us not vainly insult him.

The varied sufferings of worldly life need not be taken too seriously ; they come either because of natural laws or of some mental principles—both are external. But we have seen men conquering pain by undaunted prowess, plunging into fiery ordeals only to march forward with triumph. What striving is this?—The power that lies behind is neither physical, nor mental, it belongs to the inward self where man is united with his God. Realising greatness within himself man does not express sorrow at any sacrifice or pain : *yada pasyati anyam eesham asya mahimanam iti beetashokah*. He who has realised the glory of God in his own soul, freed is he from fear and suffering ; to whose door can he march ever with complaints, whom can he blame ? Those who have attained realisation within can offer their all without hesitation and with unbounded joy ; dedicating themselves wholly they lead history from life's daily niggardliness to the realm of perfection. If they have any complaints those are self-directed, the pain is terrible. Not that such heroes have never known defeat, but their banner is raised high over all failures.

Blessed are we, blessed is man, not because some god is ruling us, but because our own divinity is honouring us by sorrow after sorrow. Blessed is man that he is not an animal of the gods, but is one with God.

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